



For Immediate Release
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News Release

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Academic Health Centers Major Force in Global Knowledge Economy *New international organization to address critical health infrastructure*

WASHINGTON, April 2. "Academic health centers, both established and under development, may well determine a major part of the future course of countries around the globe," Dr. Steven A. Wartman, president and CEO of the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC), told academic health center leaders from the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Mideast at the AAHC's 2008 International Forum in Washington this week.

Wartman warned that because academic health centers hold the keys to knowledge, discovery, and health for billions of people worldwide, academic health center leaders must "continually strive to ensure that our work is not politicized for economic or other purely self-serving gains."

Calling academic health centers "unique trans-global organizations," Wartman proposed the newly established AAHC International™ as the organization to promote academic health center collaboration worldwide and to ensure that academic health center leaders have a voice in international matters affecting health, research, and the economy.

An international organization not only offers academic health center leaders the opportunity to enhance collaborative, interprofessional research, education and scholarship but also to address the infrastructure for health professions education, biomedical and clinical research and patient care, according to Wartman, who reminded leaders that academic health centers will "be among the critical forces shaping the 21st century."

Wartman cautioned leaders about finding "the right balance between the benefits and costs associated with globalization," noting that "the benefits of progress and economic growth cannot be limited to one country or one segment of a population." The AAHC International will be dedicated to addressing these key issues, said Wartman, by forging beneficial collaborations. "Together, we can help each other build a viable...academic health center infrastructure worldwide—one that can truly change the fabric of society," said Wartman.

The Association of Academic Health Centers is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the nation's health and well-being by mobilizing and enhancing the strengths and resources of the academic health center enterprise in health professions education, patient care, and research.