



MEDIA ALERT | For Immediate Release
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Contact: Connie George
Mobile: 412.638.7029
GeorgeC@CarnegieScienceCenter.org

Contact: Megan McKenzie
Mobile: 304.723.8660
McKenzieM@CarnegieScienceCenter.org

PA SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND DIRECTOR OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH

DEPARTMENT JOIN PANEL DISCUSSION ON VACCINES

***FREE, VIRTUAL WEBINAR ADDRESSES VACCINE HESITANCY AND WHY VACCINATION IS KEY
TO THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19***

PITTSBURGH, June 29, 2021 – [Carnegie Science Center's Vaccine Speaker Series](#) final event is **Thurs., July 1 at 7 pm**. The lineup of **high-profile panelists** will discuss what's next for public health and the lessons learned from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event is free to attend, but [preregistration](#) is required to receive the webinar link. A sign language interpreter will be present for the webinar.

Featuring conversations with:

- **Alison Beam**

Acting Secretary of Health, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Alison Beam is currently the Acting Secretary of Health for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Ms. Beam has experience advising and supporting key health care priorities, such as stabilizing and sustaining the health insurance markets, increasing access to health care for all Pennsylvanians, and ensuring the high caliber of health care delivered in the commonwealth continues. Ms. Beam most recently served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Wolf, where she coordinated policy development, fiscal and legal management, legislative initiatives, and communications and stakeholder engagement across Pennsylvania's departments of Health, Human Services, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Aging and Insurance. Prior to transitioning to the Governor's Office, Alison served as the Chief of Staff to the Insurance Commissioner. She also previously served as the Director of Public Policy and Associate Counsel for Independence Health Group in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she guided interactions with regulators, legislators, and national trade associations and developed and implemented internal response strategies.

- **Dr. Debra Bogen, MD**

Director, Allegheny County Health Department

Dr. Debra L. Bogen is the Director of the Allegheny County Health Department. She assumed her leadership role in March 2020, nearly two months in advance of her scheduled start date, to address the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since taking the helm of the Health Department, Dr. Bogen has guided Allegheny County through the numerous and unpredictable challenges of a global pandemic. Most recently, she prioritized an equitable and universal distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. Even while facing a pandemic, she and her ACHD team also advanced

significant regulatory improvements for environmental health during her first year, including overhauling plumbing and air quality regulations. In response to need, she launched the COVID-19 Field Response Team in July 2020 to visit area food establishments and conduct education and compliance assistance with state and local COVID-19 health orders. Dr. Bogen is absolutely committed to improving community and family health using public health data to drive policy and practice. She has proven a strong partner for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and community organizations and is committed to working with groups that share a passion for the mission of public health.

- **Dr. Ariangela Kozik, PhD**

Research Investigator, *University of Michigan*;

Co-founder and Vice President, *Black Microbiologists Association*

Dr. Kozik is a Research Investigator at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor-Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, where she studies microbial-immune relationships in adult asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Her work on the microbiome is currently focused on the contribution of the respiratory microbiome to adult asthma phenotype and treatment response. She is also the Co-Founder and Vice President of the Black Microbiologists Association, and a member of the Microbes and Social Equity Working Group. Dr. Kozik has been engaged in outreach efforts to various groups throughout the pandemic to address topics including pathogenesis, mitigation strategies, and vaccination.

- **Dr. Anuradha Ray, PhD**

Professor, Department of Immunology, *University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine*

Dr. Ray is a basic/translational scientist with a long-standing research interest in molecular mechanisms of inflammation and tolerance to understand the role of immune dysfunction in the pathogenesis of lung diseases like asthma. She is also interested in mucosal defense mechanisms against respiratory pathogens. Dr. Ray's early research identified a central mechanism for the anti-inflammatory actions of corticosteroids and defined GATA-3 as the master regulator of Th2 cells, which promote asthma and allergic diseases. GATA-3 was subsequently successfully targeted in allergen-provoked mild asthma in humans with relief of symptoms. In ongoing research, she and her colleagues are investigating immune dysfunction in severe asthma that unlike milder asthma is refractory to corticosteroid treatment. In recently published work, she and her colleagues have identified two clusters of severe asthma patients with very similar clinical presentations but with strikingly distinct immune profiles and associated biological pathways. These findings would pave the way for novel therapeutics for steroid-resistant asthma for which 28 billion dollars are spent annually in healthcare costs in the United States.

[Questions for the panelists](#) are asked to be submitted ahead of time for inclusion in the moderated Q&A.

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Vaccine Speaker Series is sponsored by Highmark.

About Carnegie Science Center

Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center's goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh's premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes, and off-site education programs.

Accessibility: Features for All

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Please note that requests for accommodations should be made at least two weeks prior to your visit. For specific questions about wheelchairs, strollers, or other programmatic or equipment needs, see the ticket counter located on the first floor of the main building or contact Customer Service at 412.237.1641 or info@carnegiesciencecenter.org. Please contact Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh's Accessibility Coordinator with concerns regarding accessibility for visitors with disabilities at the museums. On weekdays, call 412.622.6578 or email accessibility@carnegiemuseums.org.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, [Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh](#) is a family of four dynamic, distinctive museums: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. The museums reach 1.5 million people a year through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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