

PHYSICIAN-SEMINARIAN SPEAKS AT THE WHITE HOUSE

*on community faith-based organizations
and influenza*



SCOTT SANTIBANEZ MA(TS) '11 was invited by the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to speak at the White House on September 15. His presentation was part of Faith and Public Health Partners Working Together to Reduce Health Disparities, a health summit on the six-month anniversary of the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Santibanez, an infectious disease physician, is senior advisor in the Influenza Coordination Unit of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At the White House, he presented findings of a study published in the proceedings of the 2010 International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases. In this study, Dr. Santibanez and colleagues looked at nine sites across the country, through which networks comprising 4,606 community faith-based organizations (CFBOs) reached out to assure access to Influenza A (H1N1) vaccinations and the dissemination of accurate information to those beyond the traditional reach of public health. The researchers concluded that partnerships with CFBOs were a promising means of reaching vulnerable populations during the 2009 H1N1 response.

The Chicago site, for example, worked through a diverse network of 17 Asian Indian Temples, two Sikh Gurdwaras, 11 Mosques, 19 Indian Catholic churches, eight Buddhist temples, 21 community-based organizations, and 23 African American, Latino, and Eastern European immigrant congregations. More than 2,700 bulletin inserts were mailed to congregations, and 2,450 flyers with H1N1 prevention and health department information were distributed in African American congregations throughout southwest Chicago. ☩

Read more about Dr. Santibanez's work at [http://vantage.](http://vantage.ctsnet.edu)