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## UMMS alum Raghu Kiran Appasani addresses UN General Assembly on global mental health

By Lisa Larson  
UMass Medical School Communications

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UMass Medical School alumnus Raghu Kiran Appasani, MD, SOM '18, addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York City recently to help launch the United for Global Mental Health campaign.

"I was honored to have had the opportunity launch this campaign," said Dr. Appasani, a psychiatry resident at the University of Southern California. "It was a packed room of over 500 attendees and a dream come true to see so many folks and leaders there, committed to acting now for mental health equity."



*UMass Medical School alumnus Raghu Kiran Appasani, MD, SOM '18, addresses the United Nations General Assembly in New York City.*

Appasani co-hosted the event with Elisha London, CEO of the United for Global Mental Health campaign, and Cynthia Germanotta, Lady Gaga's mother, who runs the Born This Way Foundation.

"With a rise of a lot of global conflicts, increasing suicide rates, enormous youth population and potential, the time really is now to act. We've waited long enough," Appasani told the U.N. Assembly. "We need to come together now to bring about political change, financial change and advocacy to scale these promising interventions that are already in place."

The event was organized by leaders from Canada, Ecuador, Belgium, the Netherlands, the World Health Organization and the Born This Way organization.

Appasani said he became involved in global mental health in 2010, when he founded [The MINDS Foundation](http://www.mindsfoundation.org/) (<http://www.mindsfoundation.org/>) to bring high-quality mental health care to rural India.

"Through this campaign and through my work in the global mental health space, I aim to bring attention, funding and an understanding toward mental health around the world," he said. "The key is to bring people from all sectors together to make a positive change and achieve my vision—a world without shame, in which everyone has access to equitable mental health."

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