

IFBA Biosafety Heroes

The IFBA has created a Biosafety Heroes program to identify and celebrate extraordinary individuals who make significant contributions to help others in the field of biosafety and biosecurity. IFBA Biosafety Heroes are exceptional and inspiring individuals honored by the global biosafety community as having made a difference for the better. Biosafety Heroes serve as role models, showing others that each individual is important and can contribute to the global fight against infectious diseases.

Who are our Heroes?

Nominees are selected on their uniqueness, the specific accomplishments they achieved that are truly remarkable, and the impact their work has had on others.

Preference is given to individuals who:

- Operate in an environment where biosafety funds are limited, and/or where the importance of biosafety is not fully appreciated.
- Have not yet been recognized with other biosafety awards.

The following are the outstanding individuals who, through recognition by an international panel of their peers, have been awarded the distinction of being named IFBA's 2015 Biosafety Heroes.

T.S. Saraswathy

*Biorisk Officer,
Institute for Medical Research
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

*IFBA Certified Professional (Biorisk Management, Biological Waste Management)
Vice-President, Asia-Pacific Biosafety Association*



Ms. T.S.Saraswathy is a founding member of the Malaysian Biosafety & Biosecurity Association (MBBA) and the current Vice-President of the Asia-Pacific Biosafety Association. She is an IFBA Certified Professional in both Biorisk Management & Biological Waste Management. From 2011 until 2015, during her term as President, she promoted the Association's linkages with the Biosecurity Engagement Program, US Dept. of State, the Malaysian Society for Microbiology, Sandia National laboratories and the American Society for Microbiology. Under her direction a variety of biosafety and biosecurity projects and outreach programs were successfully carried out including the Malaysian Advanced Biorisk Officers Training (ABOT) courses, the TB Biorisk Management Workshop, and the Ebola Biorisk Management Workshop. MBBA has now grown to more than 139 active members and is affiliated with the International Federation of Biosafety Associations. Ms. Saraswathy currently serves as a Senior Research Officer and Biorisk Officer at the Institute for Medical Research in Kuala Lumpur where she is responsible for biomedical research, outbreak investigation, biorisk management and training. In addition, Ms. Saraswathy has represented the Ministry of Health on national and international expert committees. She has provided expertise and leadership in the development of biosafety and biosecurity regulatory and guidance documents, policies and standards including the new Malaysian Standards for Biocontainment and Biosafety in Microbiology Laboratories, which was published in 2015. Ms. Saraswathy actively contributes to national outreach & training workshops organized by government agencies and academia to disseminate information on the safe handling of specimens and biorisk management. She has previously represented Malaysia as technical expert in EU pilot projects in biosafety and biosecurity and attended the Meeting of Experts to the Biological Weapon Convention in Geneva, Switzerland.

Albert Wamukota Bunyasi

*Head, Biosafety and Biosecurity,
Biorisk Management Consultant, National Public Health Laboratory Services
Ministry of Health, Nairobi, Kenya*

*IFBA Certified Professional (Biorisk Management)
IFBA Regional Program Coordinate, East Africa*



Mr. Albert Wamukota Bunyasi was born on the slopes of Mt. Elgon in the western region of Kenya. He received his Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Wales and was later educated in biosafety and biosecurity at courses held in the UK, US, Canada, South Africa, Austria, Georgia and other countries around the world. Mr. Bunyasi was the first individual in Kenya to receive the IFBA's Professional Certification in Biorisk Management. In 1982 he joined the Kenyan Ministry of Health with a deep passion for medical laboratory medicine. He assisted the Ministry of Health with the establishment of the ISO 15189 certified national HIV Reference Laboratory. He was then asked to champion biosafety and biosecurity, a new challenge for Kenyan laboratories. With limited funding, Mr. Bunyasi focused his efforts on developing solutions that were locally practical, affordable and sustainable. In his role as Head, Biosafety & Biosecurity for the Ministry of Health, and Biorisk Management Consultant to the National Public Health Laboratory Services, he has raised awareness and disseminated biosafety and biosecurity knowledge to approximately 4000 healthcare workers. He led the development of the Kenya's new national Biosafety and Biosecurity Policy Guidelines, has developed biosafety and biosecurity job aids, and pocket hand books for quick reference by laboratorians. Mr. Bunyasi also provides technical assistance to Kenya's National Police Service in the Disaster Management's Department of Biosecurity. For several years now, Mr. Bunyasi has also acted as IFBA's program coordinator for East Africa to continue strengthening biosafety and biosecurity throughout the region.

Leila Macedo

*President, ANBio, Brazilian Biosafety Association
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*



Dr. Leila Macedo is the founder of the Brazilian Biosafety Association (ANBio) and is a past Co-Chair of the International Federation of Biosafety Associations. After receiving her Masters and Doctorate degree in Microbiology & Immunology, she joined the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in the Brazilian Ministry of Health where she was responsible for establishing new biosafety programs throughout Brazil. She was instrumental in translating CDC's Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories into Portuguese. She has worked steadily and tirelessly to promote biosafety in Brazil, has served as President of the Brazilian National Biosafety Technical Commission and Chair of the Brazilian Biosafety Committee which was established in law in 1999. Dr. Macedo successfully coordinates Brazil's Biosafety Congress which is held every two years and attended by professionals throughout the Latin American region. Under her leadership, ANBio received public recognition for its activities including the Medal of the German Parliament and the REDBIO Medal Award from the FAO and the University of Cambridge. In partnership with the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development, Dr. Macedo is responsible for the highly successful Brazilian Biology Olympiad which challenges gifted students to expand their scientific talents and become aware of biosafety issues. Dr. Macedo has published many scientific papers and books on biosafety in both Portuguese and English. Her mentorship and capacity building activities have strengthened biosafety and biosecurity across Brazil and Latin America.