

**Anthony D. So \*86**

Baltimore, MD

*Graduate Alumni Trustee Candidate*

Now a distinguished professor of the practice at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Anthony So reflects on the past 25 years as dedicating his life “to lowering the price of hope for those suffering from disease and disadvantage, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.”

Following high school, So enrolled into the University of Michigan’s six-year, Integrated Premedical-Medical Program. The program gave him the opportunity to take two years off to become one of the first medical students to attend the School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA). After his residency in internal medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, he joined the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program at University of California San Francisco-Stanford, an interdisciplinary fellowship dedicated to training physicians to become change agents in healthcare. He returned to Philadelphia to take a position in the Health and Public Policy Division of the American College of Physicians.

In 1995, So was selected as a White House Fellow, serving under Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala. Then, making a transition to global health, he joined the Rockefeller Foundation as associate director in health equity. There he learned “how making a small difference can catalyze much greater change.” His first grant ultimately led to the market entry of generic HIV therapy and a massive reduction in price, thereby helping to make feasible the financing of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Another grant seeded the

founding of the regional Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, still going strong two decades later.

His work at the foundation laid out his mission: “Reshaping the forces of globalization to ensure greater health equity, sharing knowledge between the haves and have nots in the world, harnessing technology to lift up the world’s poor and excluded, and making markets work to reduce disparity have motivated my work since joining the academy.”

In 2004, So moved to Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy, where he founded the Program on Global Health and Technology Access. Since 2016, he has continued this work by founding the Innovation+Design Enabling Access, or IDEA, Initiative at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Over the years, he has worked to mentor future leaders, from a Global Health Fellows program placing students in Geneva to Innovate4Health, a global student design sprint to encourage innovation in tackling emerging infectious diseases.

So endeavored to lift the challenge of antimicrobial resistance from the backwaters of global health to a priority that has since come before the U.N. General Assembly. Named a co-convenor of the U.N. Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, he delivered recommendations on this global health challenge to the U.N. Secretary-General in 2019. He also cofounded the Antibiotic Resistance Coalition, bringing together an intersectoral alliance of civil society groups and the South Centre, an intergovernmental think tank for 55 developing countries. In recognition of this work, he received the Bloomberg School’s 2024 Faculty Award for Excellence in International Public Health Practice.

So's board appointments have included support for student-led organizations and start-up social entrepreneurs, from the American Medical Student Association Foundation to Echoing Green. Others have spanned consumer and public interest organizations, including Community Catalyst, Clean Water Fund, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum and presently Public Citizen.

He has also given lengthy periods of service on the University's Advisory Council for the Center for Health and Wellbeing (2013-24) and SPIA's Advisory Council (2000-08). He is quick to share that the University seeded his commitment to public service and that his courses at SPIA gave him the tools to affect public policy. In the service of humanity, he observes that "those of us who work in global health feel acutely how our time is measured in lifespans and the change we seek in generations."