

**The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's)
2015 ORSI Science Symposium
April 27, 2015
SPEAKER ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES**

Speaker	Dr. Taha Kass-Hout
Title	FDA Chief Health Informatics Officer, CTO, and Director, Office of Informatics and Technology
Biography	<p>Taha Kass-Hout has been a leader in the fields of health and informatics for nearly two decades. He is the first Chief Health Informatics Officer of the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). A believer in open government, Kass-Hout is an advocate for innovation and public-private partnership and collaboration evident by his creation of openFDA. In alignment with the White House Cloud Initiative, Kass-Hout launched the first Department of Health and Human Services program to be completely hosted in the cloud in 2009. In 2012, he was co-chair of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Biosurveillance sub-committee, charged with “detecting aberrations from the norm.” Through his leadership in information management, Kass-Hout has frequently been involved in the response to global disease outbreaks. In 2003, with the outbreak of SARS, he helped to develop the eQuest data collection and analysis platform for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2009-2010, he supported CDC as it called for hospital emergency department monitoring in coordination with local, state and federal public health agencies during the H1N1 pandemic.</p> <p>Kass-Hout is credited with a number of humanitarian innovations. In 2010, for example, the Thomson Reuters Foundation used the InSTEDD Riff open source social networking platform he co-developed to communicate with survivors of the earthquake in Haiti. Free text messages sent to mobile phones allowed the people of Port Au Prince to receive the latest disaster-relief information. Kass-Hout earned a master of science degree from the Department of Biostatistics at the University of Texas School of Public Health. His MD degree is from the University of Texas Health Sciences Center in Houston, where he also completed some of his clinical training. Additional training was accrued at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, which is affiliated with Harvard University.</p>