

PRESS RELEASE

COVIDoutlook Founders Receive Commendation from NY Governor

June 11, 2021

Earlier this month, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo recognized the contributions of COVIDoutlook's founders, Michael Donnelly and Professor Michael LeVasseur, with an official commendation on behalf of the State of New York. In the citations, the governor praised their efforts as **“invaluable to helping New York address one of the biggest public health crises in our history, saving countless lives and protecting the health of our residents and communities from the threat of COVID-19.”**

Since March 2020, the COVIDoutlook team has advised officials in federal and state government with analyses and forecasts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While most of the work was not made directly available to the public, NY Governor Cuomo included several COVIDoutlook charts and forecasts during his widely viewed press conferences in the spring of 2020.

“After working behind the scenes with New York’s dedicated public servants for the past fifteen months, it is a special honor to have our work recognized in this way by the governor. I will be forever grateful to have played a part in helping New York respond to the COVID-19 crisis faster, tailor its mitigation measures, and plan for a reopening sooner than most others thought possible.

“To receive this honor during **LGBTQ+ Pride Month** is particularly meaningful to me, as both Prof. LeVasseur and I are gay. **The LGBTQ+ community is all too aware that epidemics happen, and can bring tragic consequences, especially when governments fail to act.**

“My analyses in early March 2020 would not have had the impact they did without support from members of the LGBTQ+ community like NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Demetre Daskalakis (the CDC's Director of the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention); two openly gay men whose own tireless efforts last year saved innumerable lives.” - **Michael Donnelly**

“Policy decisions that affect the lives and livelihoods of millions of people should not be made lightly or blindly. It is equally important to have accurate data, and also to have an accurate understanding of what might happen next. In the face of a public health crisis where we have limited information on the

behavior of an infectious agent and unreliable data on how many and who are infected, making such decisions can be extremely challenging. It has been an honor and a privilege to share my passion and expertise with the State of New York and I am humbled to receive this honor from the Governor.

“There are countless others who have put their lives and livelihoods on the line: teachers pivoting to remote learning; grocery store clerks, truck drivers, and mail carriers making sure we have food and supplies; sanitation workers who kept our cities clean; everyone who stayed home to protect their neighbors and loved ones; and, of course, the physicians, nurses, emergency personnel, and hospital staff who were on the front lines. When this pandemic began, I thought ‘we’re all in this together and that’s the only way we’re going to get out of it.’ While we’re not completely out of this just yet, there is a very bright light at the end of this tunnel.” - **Prof. Michael T. LeVasseur**

Countless public servants made personal sacrifices throughout the pandemic to protect the public. First responders and medical professionals have rightly been singled out for praise. COVIDoutlook would also like to thank the public health officials and analysts who worked nights and weekends to translate research and data into effective policies that saved lives and limited hardship. We would also like to express our deep gratitude to the volunteers behind the [COVID Tracking Project](#), whose data was indispensable to our efforts.

For more about us and our ongoing analyses and forecasts, see: www.COVIDoutlook.info

Photos of the citations are attached.

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COVIDoutlook.info



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Citation

Whereas, the Empire State is proud to bestow commendation upon individuals who have served New Yorkers with distinction and it is therefore appropriate to recognize Michael Donnelly for his extraordinary work and partnership in our efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Michael's tireless efforts and innovative analyses have been invaluable to helping New York address one of the biggest public health crises in our history, saving countless lives and protecting the health of our residents and communities from the threat of COVID-19; and

Whereas, Michael's epidemiological projection model served as an indispensable tool in informing and guiding New York's response to COVID-19, providing critical data that allowed us to communicate vital, timely information to New Yorkers and create the most informed decisions on keeping our residents and their families safe; and

Whereas, in lending his invaluable expertise to our efforts to combat this devastating virus, Michael has exemplified civic commitment and selflessness and served as an extraordinary, life-saving resource to New Yorkers across the state; and

Whereas, all New Yorkers are proud to join in extending our deepest gratitude and respect to Michael for his extraordinary work in the fight against COVID-19, which has saved lives, inspired countless others, and provided us all with a lasting example of leadership and public service;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby confer this Special Citation upon

MICHAEL DONNELLY

in recognition of his exemplary service and commitment to helping combat the COVID-19 pandemic in New York State.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Andrew M. Cuomo'.

Governor
June 2021



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Citation

Whereas, the Empire State is proud to bestow commendation upon individuals who have served New Yorkers with distinction and it is therefore appropriate to recognize Professor Michael LeVasseur for his dedicated work and partnership in our efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Professor LeVasseur's expertise, insights, and commitment have been invaluable to helping New York address one of the biggest public health crises in our history, saving countless lives and protecting the health of our residents and communities from the threat of COVID-19; and

Whereas, Professor LeVasseur's counsel was critical to helping inform and shape New York's response to COVID-19, helping to create a data-driven approach that allowed us to communicate vital, timely information to New Yorkers and make the most informed decisions on keeping our residents and their families safe; and

Whereas, in lending his expertise to our efforts to combat this devastating virus, Professor LeVasseur has exemplified civic commitment and selflessness and served as a vital, life-saving resource to New Yorkers across the state; and

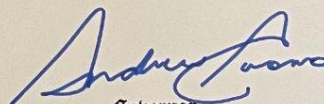
Whereas, all New Yorkers are proud to join in extending our deepest gratitude and respect to Professor LeVasseur for his dedicated work in the fight against COVID-19, which has saved lives and provided us all with a lasting example of leadership and public service;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby confer this Special Citation upon

PROFESSOR MICHAEL LEVASSEUR

in recognition of his dedicated service and commitment to helping combat the COVID-19 pandemic in New York State.




Governor
June 2021

