



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 13, 2019

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**AAKP PREVIEWS DECADE OF THE KIDNEY AT 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY MEETING
LEADERS IN KIDNEY MEDICINE AND ADVOCACY RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARDS**

Washington, D.C. – The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) celebrated its 50 Year Anniversary as the oldest and largest fully independent kidney patient organization in the USA with their highest attended National Patient Meeting and awards program in over ten years. The meeting, entitled *Driving Innovation & Changing the Status Quo*, was held in Washington D.C., September 6-8, 2019. Thousands of patients and medical professionals engaged via live streaming and meeting space hit capacity as hundreds of attendees engaged in-person. Over 30 pharmaceutical, diagnostic and device companies and non-profits exhibited.

Participants were invited to offer recommendations for the AAKP initiated Decade of the Kidney™, a ten-year national and international effort starting in 2020 designed to intensify the focus of policy-makers, researchers and the private sector on a broad, patient-focused agenda targeting kidney diseases, new care innovations and an aggressive expansion of patient care choice. AAKP unveiled Decade of the Kidney™ at its June 20, 2019 National Policy Summit in Washington, D.C. Interest in Decade of the Kidney™ has accelerated since both President Donald Trump’s signing of the [Executive Order on Advancing American Kidney Health](#) and [AAKP’s accompanying joint statement of support](#) for the Trump Administration’s kidney actions by AAKP leaders, President Richard Knight and Chair of Policy and Global Affairs, Paul T. Conway.

“AAKP’s national strategy to improve patient outcomes, drive innovation and expand patient choice continues to produce solid results due to our non-partisan efforts to engage patients directly with key allies and policymakers at every level. AAKP national awards recognize those who share our principles and long-term mission to defend patient choice and to genuinely respect the intelligence and dignity of all kidney patient consumers,” stated Richard Knight, AAKP President, former hemodialysis patient and current kidney transplant recipient. Knight is also a patient engagement leader for the NIH/NIDDK Kidney Precision Medicine Project.

AAKP conference speakers included senior federal officials from the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services along with experts from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Other speakers included key kidney stakeholders including the American Society of

Nephrology, the Renal Physicians Associations, the American Society of Transplant Surgeons and the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute. AAKP's national strategic communications partner, Briar Patch Media, under the leadership of proprietor Jonathan St. John, filmed sessions to be posted to the [AAKP YouTube Channel](#) in September.

AAKP national awards were presented for extraordinary leadership and excellence in the fight against kidney diseases. Awards are inspired by AAKP founders such as Shep Glazer, a kidney patient and former AAKP Board Member who dialyzed in front of the U.S. Congress 50 years ago to show that dialysis was a life-saving bridge to kidney transplantation and a return to the workforce. His brave act helped facilitate the 1972 Congressional passage, and subsequent signing by former President Richard M. Nixon, of legislation that created the modern Medicare ESRD Coverage Program.

AAKP President's Award

Paul T. Conway, AAKP Chair, Policy & Global Affairs and Co-Chair, AAKP/GWU School of Medicine & Health Sciences Inaugural Global Summit

The Peter Lundin, MD Award - awarded for a lifetime of devoted service to patients:

Dominic Raj, MD, DM, FASN, Professor of Medicine and of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and Director of the Division of Renal Disease and Hypertension, George Washington University School of Medicine & Health Sciences; Co-Chair, AAKP/GWU School of Medicine & Health Sciences Inaugural Global Summit

AAKP National Public Service Award

Paul Kimmel, MD, MACP, U.S. Civil Service; Program Director; Division of Kidney, Urological, and Hematologic Diseases, National Institutes of Health; Professor, Division of Renal Diseases and Hypertension, George Washington University School of Medicine & Health Sciences

AAKP National Journalism Award

Rajnish Mehrota, MD, FASN, Editor-in-Chief, Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology and architect of the new CJASN Patient Voice editorial program

The Samuel J. Orenstein Award – awarded for extraordinary service:

Janice Lea, MD, MSc, FASN, Emory University, a Principal Investigator for PCORI Grants and AAKP National Board of Director

AAKP National Social Media Education and Advocacy Award

Individual Category: Jennifer Jones, USMC, veteran combat videographer, Global War on Terror (GWOT) Iraq and AAKP Ambassador

Organization Category: Urban Kidney Alliance, a Baltimore-based non-profit, focused on advocating, and empowering individuals in urban cities at-risk for chronic kidney disease (CKD) and other conditions. Award accepted by Founder, Steven Belcher, RN

AAKP National Patient Engagement and Advocacy: *The Bill Murray Patient Voice Award*

Individual Category: Mr. Bob Abbott of Little Rock, Arkansas, retired entrepreneur and lifetime patient advocate

Organization Category: Center for Dialysis Innovations, a collaboration between UW Medicine and the University of Washington Dept. of Bioengineering. Award accepted by Glenda Roberts, Director of External Relations & Patient Engagement, Kidney Research Institute, transplant recipient and AAKP Ambassador

Public Servant Category: Mr. Kyle Hill, staff, U.S. Congress Kidney Caucus and Legislative Director for Representative Suzan DelBene.

The Dominick Gentile, MD Memorial Award - awarded for ESRD Network Program Excellence:

End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) National Coordinating Council. Award accepted by Jerome Bailey, Associate Director of Communications for ESRD NCC at Health Services Advisory Group, Inc.

AAKP National Kidney Patient Support Group of the Year

Kerrville Texas Transplant Support Group, Award accepted by Kent Bressler, Co-founder of the Kerrville Support Group, pre-emptive transplant recipient, AAKP Board of Director, and AAKP Ambassador

The AAKP thanks its 2019 National Patient Meeting sponsors - Amgen, Inc.; Horizon Therapeutics; Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals; CareDx; NxStage; Akebia; Baxter Healthcare; Bayer; Dialysis Clinic, Inc.; Retrophin; Reata; Hansa Biopharma; Nestle Health Science; Advicenne; VidaFuel; Somatus and OPKO Renal and its over 30 exhibit hall vendors.

For highlights of this year's meeting visit www.aakp.org/programs-and-events/national-patient-meeting or search [#KidneyPatients19](https://twitter.com/KidneyPatients19). Continue to visit www.aakp.org and follow us on social media (Facebook [@kidneypatient](https://www.facebook.com/kidneypatient) or Twitter [@kidneypatients](https://twitter.com/kidneypatients)) for information on AAKP National Patient Meeting 2020.

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