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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**LARGEST KIDNEY PATIENT ORGANIZATION IN U.S. CALLS FOR NOMINATIONS  
FOR ITS 2021 MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS  
HONORING KIDNEY COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE – AAKP MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Tampa, FL** - The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the oldest and largest fully independent patient-led kidney patient organization in America is now accepting nominations for its 2021 Medal of Excellence Award. **The deadline for submissions is November 30, 2020.** AAKP is a strong champion for patient consumer care choice and, since 2018, has run the largest national voter registration program serving the kidney community, the [Am a Kidney Voter](#) campaign. Since 2019, AAKP has expanded internationally and now conducts the largest online, patient-led international kidney disease meeting, the Global Summit on Kidney Disease Innovations, in partnership with The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences ([learn more](#)).

The AAKP Medal of Excellence Program recognizes renal healthcare professionals in seven categories: Physician, Transplant Surgeon, Transplant Professional, Nurse, Social Worker, Dietitian, and Dialysis Technician. Recipients demonstrate the skills and compassion that reflect AAKP's mission of providing patients with quality care in order for them to understand their condition, make informed decisions regarding their treatment plan, and align their course of care to achieve their aspirations. Candidates for the award may be nominated by colleagues, patients in their home institutions, or through professional affiliations. Candidates may also self-nominate.

"The AAKP Medal of Excellence Award recognizes the extraordinary and unparalleled talents of individuals whose impact and genius have left an indelible mark on the kidney community," stated AAKP President Richard Knight, former dialysis patient and current transplant recipient of 14 years. "When I look at the outstanding slate of past honorees, I am struck by a powerful common theme—they all have pushed the limits of their gifts as healthcare professionals to make long lasting, life-saving impacts on the lives of kidney patients and their families."

"During this unprecedented time, as the world responds to the coronavirus, AAKP has never been more honored to recognize healthcare professionals on the frontline who care for their patients and diligently work to transcend status quo kidney care by increasing access to home dialysis and pre-emptive transplantation. During this [Decade of the Kidney™](#), AAKP calls for greater kidney patient inclusion in COVID-19 clinical trials and the safe and equitable allocation of a vaccine allocation, including access for high-risk kidney patients." stated Edward V. Hickey, U.S.M.C., AAKP Vice President and Chair of AAKP Veterans Health Initiative.

The 2021 honorees will join a list of esteemed professionals that are staunch patient advocates and demonstrate a commitment to research, advancements, and changing the status quo of kidney care. Prior recipients have included Katherine R. Tuttle, MD, FASN, FACP; John S. Gill, MD, MS; Tamara Kear, PhD, RN, CNN, FAAN; Rebecca Schmidt, DO, FACP, FASN, former president of the Renal Physicians Association, member of the AAKP Medical Advisory

Board; and pioneers in the field of nephrology such as Eli Friedman, MD; Christopher Blagg, MD; and Stephen Fadem, MD, FACP, FASN. [Click here for a list of 2020 award recipients in all categories.](#)

Criteria for nominations focus on ways in which an individual has made an impact by the advancement of patient-centered care and patient consumer care choice; being a strong patient advocate; and creating an awareness for health education and earlier kidney detection and disease intervention. A selection committee comprising highly renowned healthcare professionals in the renal community, members of the AAKP National Board of Directors, and past Medal of Excellence recipients will convene to select the 2021 honorees. Award recipients will be recognized throughout the 2021 year. Visit <https://aakp.org/programs-and-events/medal-of-excellence/> to download the 2021 AAKP Medal of Excellence Award Nomination form and for program sponsorship opportunities.

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**Founded in 1969, the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP)**, is the largest and oldest independent kidney patient organization in America. Governed by a patient-majority Board of Directors, AAKP executes a national advocacy strategy in conjunction with allied kidney organizations designed to insert the patient voice into proposed policies, research efforts, and care deliberations before the Executive Branch and the U.S. Congress.

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