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AMERICA'S LARGEST KIDNEY PATIENT GROUP OPENS NOMINATIONS FOR MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE

American Association of Kidney Patients Spotlights Leaders in Kidney Care Amidst COVID Pandemic

Washington, DC - The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the largest kidney patient organization in America, is now accepting nominations for its [2022 Medal of Excellence Award](#). **The deadline for submissions is October 1, 2021.** The award honors professionals who have made an impact on behalf of kidney patients through the aggressive advancement of the treatments that better align to patient aspirations and goals of maintaining full independence; advancement of kidney patient consumer care choice; advocacy for innovation and the inclusion of patient insight data and patient-reported outcome data across the medical product development lifecycle; and for creating greater awareness, understanding, and appreciation for kidney disease detection and early intervention.

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 life goals and aspirations. Candidates for the award may be nominated by colleagues, patients in their home institutions, or through professional affiliations. Candidates may also self-nominate.

Founded in 1969, AAKP is the oldest kidney patient organization in America and a national and international voice and organizer for transplant patients, organ donors, dialysis patients, and those suffering from chronic kidney disease. Over the course of the past year, AAKP has been a strong voice in defense of immunocompromised kidney patients and the need for federal officials and elected leaders to pay far greater attention to their unique vulnerabilities and need for greater protections and medical solutions during the COVID

pandemic. In 2019, AAKP declared the [Decade of the Kidney™](#) and organized their first [Global Summit on Kidney Disease Innovation](#) in partnership with the George Washington School of Medicine and Health Sciences, an event that has expanded to engage over 20,000 patients and professionals in over 80 countries.

“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, lifesaving impacts on the lives of kidney patients and their families.”

“During this unprecedented time, as the world continues to respond 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 preemptive transplantation,” stated AAKP Vice President and Chair of AAKP Veterans Health Initiative [Edward V. Hickey](#), USMC.

The 2022 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 Janice Lea, MD, MSc, FASN; Michael Alan Rees, MD, PhD; Katherine R. Tuttle, MD, FASN, FACP; John S. Gill, MD, MS; Barry Smith, MD, PhD; Lillian Pryor, MSN, RN, CNN; Tamara Kear, PhD, RN, CNN, FAAN; Rebecca Schmidt, DO, FACP, FASN; 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 2021 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 2022 honorees. Award recipients will be recognized throughout the 2022 year. Click [here](#) to access the online nomination form.

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About the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP): Founded in 1969, AAKP is the largest kidney patient organization driving policy discussions on kidney patient consumer care choice and treatment innovations. By 1973, AAKP patient collaborations with the U.S. Congress and White House helped gain passage of dialysis coverage for any person suffering kidney failure, creating the only disease specific, taxpayer-funded entitlement program in America. That program, the End Stage Renal Disease Program (ESRD) administered by CMS, has saved over one million lives. In the past decade, AAKP patients have helped gain lifetime transplant drug coverage for kidney transplant recipients (2020); new patient-centered policies via the White House Executive Order on Advancing

American Kidney Health (2019); new job protections for living organ donors under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) from the U.S. Department of Labor (2018); and Congressional legislation allowing HIV-positive organ transplants for HIV-positive patients (2013). AAKP virtual platforms and social networks are internationally known for their impact. Follow AAKP on social media at [@kidneypatient on Facebook](#) and [@kidneypatients on Twitter](#), and visit our website at www.aakp.org.