



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMERICA'S TOP KIDNEY PROFESSIONALS RECEIVE EXCELLENCE MEDALS

Largest Kidney Patient Group Honors Care and Innovation Leaders

Washington, D.C. - The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), America's oldest and largest independent kidney patient advocacy organization, announced the recipients of its 2022 Medal of Excellence today. The awards, presented by kidney patient consumers, is one of the nation's highest honors for kidney healthcare professionals and elevates local, national, and international figures who have been at the forefront of advancements in patient care choice, medical innovation, and the delivery of high-quality care as defined by patient advocates.

AAKP defines high-quality kidney care as patient consumer choice of, and access to, medical care and innovations that best enable patients to pursue their own aspirations, including meaningful part-time or full-time jobs in a career field of their choice, owning a home, starting or having a family, and building a secure retirement.

AAKP aggressively supports early disease diagnosis, pre-emptive transplantation, home dialysis, and is [leading global patient demand](#) for innovations in artificial implantable and wearable kidneys. In 2022, AAKP is publicly highlighting administrative barriers to new kidney drugs and devices being erected by health insurers and other payors as examples of how third-party interference in medical decisions exacerbates disparate kidney treatment and results in burdensome roadblocks to further medical innovation and patient care choice.

"AAKP is honored to elevate professionals who have consistently put patients first and who are committed to transcending status quo kidney care through greater research, innovation, and expanded patient care choice during this [Decade of the Kidney™](#)," stated [Richard Knight](#), AAKP President. Mr. Knight is a former in-center dialysis patient and 15-year kidney transplant recipient who has served as a U.S. Congressional staff member and lecturer at Bowie State University College of Business.

"Our 2022 Medal of Excellence recipients exceed the highest levels of professional excellence within their respective disciplines from the standpoint of patient consumers, and are fully committed to improving and extending the lives of patients while simultaneously reducing care burdens on their families and loved ones," said [Edward V. Hickey, III, USMC \(ret.\)](#), AAKP Vice President and Chair of the AAKP [Veterans Health Initiative](#). Mr. Hickey is a kidney patient and has served in several presidential administrations as well as on Capitol Hill.

“COVID-19 exposed the vulnerabilities of America’s immunocompromised and immunosuppressed kidney patient populations, and these professionals demonstrated how research and innovation coupled with more common-sense policy solutions can transform kidney care while saving lives and reducing long-term costs for both patients and taxpayers,” stated [Paul T. Conway](#), AAKP’s Chair of Policy and Global Affairs. Mr. Conway is a 40-year kidney patient and has served in multiple presidential administrations, including as the Chief of Staff for the U.S. Department of Labor.

The 2022 award categories and honorees are:

Special Recognition – Breakthrough Innovations

Shuvo Roy, PhD (San Francisco, CA), 2021 KidneyX Artificial Kidney Prize Winner; Technical Director, The Kidney Project; and Professor, Departments of Bioengineering and Therapeutic Sciences and Surgery, is recognized for his excellence regarding innovations in support of [artificial implantable organs](#) through the leadership of The Kidney Project.

Robert Montgomery, MD, DPhil, FACS (New York, NY), Chair of the Department of Surgery, Director of the NYU Langone Transplant Institute, and heart transplant recipient, is recognized for his excellence in regard to [xenotransplantation](#).

Drs. Roy and Montgomery will be honored at AAKP’s Global Summit on Kidney Disease Innovations held May 24-25. Register at <https://bit.ly/AAKPGlobalSummitRegistration22>.

Nephrologist/Physician

William H. Fissell, IV, MD (Nashville, TN), Medical Director, The Kidney Project, and Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Dr. Fissell will be formally recognized at a virtual AAKP Medal of Excellence event held at the Renal Physicians Association (RPA) Annual Meeting, March 22-27, 2022.

Transplant Surgeon

Juan Carlos Caicedo, MD, FACS (Chicago, IL), Professor of Surgery and a multi-organ adult and pediatric Transplant Surgeon at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Lurie Children’s Hospital; Surgical Director of the Northwestern Liver Transplant Program; and Director of the Living Donor Liver Transplant Program and Hepatobiliary Surgery.

Robert M. Merion, MD, FACS (Ann Arbor, MI), Professor Emeritus of Surgery, University of Michigan; Distinguished Research Scientist, Arbor Research Collaborative for Health; and former President/CEO, Arbor Research Collaborative for Health (2009-2021). Drs. Caicedo and Merion will be honored at the American Society of Transplant Surgeons Winter Symposium, August 4-7.

Transplant Professional

Elisa J. Gordon, PhD, MPH (Chicago, IL), Professor, Department of Surgery-Division of Transplantation, Center for Health Services and Outcomes Research, and Center for Bioethics & Medical Humanities, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Dr. Gordon will be formally recognized at a virtual AAKP Medal of Excellence event held during the American Society of Transplantation Town Hall at the American Transplant Congress, June 4-8.

Nursing

Miranda Kilby, DNP, FNP (Shelby, NC), Nurse Practitioner at Nephrology Associates of the Carolinas. Ms. Kilby will be formally recognized at a virtual AAKP Medal of Excellence event held at the American Nephrology Nurses Association’s Annual Symposium, May 22-25.

Dietetic

Emily Greenough, RD, CSR, CD (Longview, WA), Renal Dietitian, Fresenius Kidney Care, Pacific Northwest. Ms. Greenough was recognized during a virtual AAKP Medal of Excellence event held at the Northwestern Renal Dietitians' Annual Meeting, March 3-4.

Dialysis Technician

William Macias, CHT (San Jose, CA), Biomedical Applications Manager, Satellite Healthcare. Mr. Macias will be formally recognized at a virtual AAKP Medal of Excellence event held at the National Association of Nephrology Technicians DTX22 Conference, March 22-25.

Social Work

Helen Rose, MSW, LCSW (Tampa, FL), Executive Director, ESRD Networks 7, 13, 15, 17, and 18. Ms. Rose will be recognized during AAKP's 47th Annual National Patient Meeting, September 21-23.

A review committee selected this year's honorees based on numerous nominations. Honorees are recognized at various virtual events hosted throughout the year. AAKP has worked extensively throughout COVID-19 to make certain new therapies are developed to prevent and treat COVID-19 infections and to ensure flexibilities like telemedicine and telework are kept in place to allow immunocompromised and immunosuppressed kidney patients the ability to safely access ongoing medical services while maintaining their ability to work and prevent further disability and dependency. COVID-19, and variants like omicron and omicron BA.2, pose serious and ongoing threats to the health and lives of the kidney patient population. In the case of kidney transplant recipients, vaccines have had very limited effectiveness, even after multiple doses.

For additional information on this year's award recipients, recognition events hosted by AAKP allies, or to sponsor the 2022 Medal of Excellence Award program, please visit <https://aakp.org/programs-and-events/medal-of-excellence/> or contact Erin Kahle, Director of Patient Insights, Data Analytics, and Advocacy at ekahle@aakp.org or (813) 400-2393.

Please consider joining us for AAKP's 2022 FREE virtual events. Register today!

- **4th Annual Global Summit on Kidney Disease Innovation** (hosted in partnership with The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences)
May 24-25: <https://bit.ly/AAKPGlobalSummitRegistration22>
- **5th Annual AAKP Policy Summit**
June 30: <https://bit.ly/AAKPPolicySummit>
- **47th Annual AAKP National Patient Meeting**
September 21-23: <https://bit.ly/AAKPNationalPatientMeeting>

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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. 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 their website at www.aakp.org.