



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
November 9, 2022

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
Jennifer Rate  
Marketing & Communications Manager  
(813) 400-2394  
[jrate@aakp.org](mailto:jrate@aakp.org)

## **KIDNEY GROUP INVITES 2023 MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE NOMINATIONS**

### ***American Association of Kidney Patients Defines High Care Standards***

Washington, D.C. — The American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP), the oldest and largest independent kidney patient organization in the U.S., has issued its call for nominations for its 2023 Medal of Excellence Award. The deadline for submissions is November 30, 2022. The AAKP Medal of Excellence Program elevates renal healthcare professionals in seven categories: Transplant Surgeon, Transplant Professional, Physician, Nurse, Social Worker, Dietitian, and Dialysis Technician.

Medal of Excellence recipients are selected by a panel of patient advocates based on their demonstrated ability to provide quality patient-centered care as defined by the patient community. This includes strong patient advocacy, a commitment to care innovation, and advancement of disease education and treatments that fully align with patient aspirations—including the pursuit of full-time or part-time work in a career path of their choice.

AAKP is a driver behind greater national and global patient consumer care choice and access to new therapies to delay disease progression, stop kidney failure, and transform outdated, high-mortality status quo kidney care. The organization has elevated the voices of kidney patients within every major national decision related to kidney transplantation, pre-emptive transplants, wider utilization of home dialysis, and the rapid development of safe, artificial implantable and wearable organs.

Candidates for the award may be nominated by colleagues, patients in their home institutions, or through professional affiliations. Candidates may also be self-nominated. Visit <https://aakp.org/programs-and-events/medal-of-excellence/> to access the [online nomination form](#).

“The AAKP Medal of Excellence Award recognizes the extraordinary commitment and talents of professionals who put patients first while setting consistently high care standards for the kidney community,” stated AAKP President [Richard Knight](#), a former dialysis patient and current transplant recipient of 16 years. “Our past honorees have each made considerable contributions to the history of kidney medicine and the patient community.”

“AAKP is honored to recognize frontline healthcare professionals who continue to provide superb care for vulnerable immunocompromised and immunosuppressed kidney patients during the ongoing COVID-19 threat. We salute every professional working to transcend status-quo kidney care through earlier screening and intervention, increased access to home dialysis, and pre-emptive transplantation,” stated [Edward V. Hickey](#), USMC, AAKP Vice President and Chair of the [AAKP Veterans Health Initiative](#).

[Paul T. Conway](#), Chair of AAKP's Policy and Global Affairs and a 42-year kidney patient, stated, "The Medal of Excellence program is an extension of our national strategy to redefine high-quality kidney care based on the standards and needs of kidney patient consumers. Individuals selected for this award directly reflect the level of professional education, training, and commitment to substantive patient engagement that AAKP expects from leaders in the field of kidney medicine." Conway also serves on the American Board of Internal Medicine's Nephrology Specialty Board.

The 2023 honorees will join a list of esteemed professionals that are staunch patient advocates with a demonstrated commitment to research, innovation, and the transformation of status-quo kidney care. Past awardees include Eli Friedman, MD, the late Christopher Blagg, MD, and many other pioneers in kidney care. Other nationally-recognized kidney professionals include Stephen Fadem, MD, FACP, FASN; Janice Lea, MD, MSc, FASN; Matthew Cooper, MD; Rebecca Schmidt, DO, FACP, FASN; Alan Kliger, MD; 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; and Tamara Kear, PhD, RN, CNN, FAAN. [Click here for a list of 2022 award recipients in all categories.](#)

Criteria for nominations focus on ways in which an individual has made an impact through the advancement of patient-centered care and patient consumer care choice, being a strong patient advocate, and creating awareness for health education, earlier kidney detection, and disease intervention. A selection committee will convene to select the 2023 honorees, with an announcement in early 2023. Award recipients will be recognized throughout the 2023 year. Visit <https://aakp.org/programs-and-events/medal-of-excellence/> to access the [online nomination form](#).

###

**About the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP):** AAKP was founded in 1969 by six dialysis patients determined to extend life-saving kidney treatments to every American at risk of kidney failure. By 1973, AAKP patient collaborations with the U.S. Congress and White House had resulted in guaranteed dialysis coverage and the only disease-specific, taxpayer-funded entitlement program in America, the End Stage Renal Disease Program (ESRD), administered by CMS. The program has saved over two 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 its website at [www.aakp.org](http://www.aakp.org).