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**Best-Selling Author Dr. Abraham Verghese Honored as
One of Five Recipients of 19th Heinz Awards**

*Doctor's Critically Acclaimed Writings Offer Poignant Look at
Practice of Medicine, Power of Healing*

PITTSBURGH, February 25, 2014 – [The Heinz Awards](#), established by Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation to honor the memory of the late U.S. Senator John Heinz, today recognized Abraham Verghese, M.D., as one of the five recipients of the 19th Heinz Awards. The winner of the Arts and Humanities award, Dr. Verghese is a critically acclaimed, best-selling author of both fiction and non-fiction. Eloquent as a writer and compassionate as a physician, Dr. Verghese brings a unique perspective to healing as an art in an era when the scientific details of medicine often overshadow the patient.

“Abraham Verghese is, in the truest sense of the word, a healer. He was on the front lines of the fight against AIDS when it first became part of the public consciousness in the 1980s, and he used what he learned there to transform clinical practice in a way that values the full humanity of patients. His mastery of the art of medicine has made him the premier physician of our time, but that artistry extends also to his writing, which he has used to touch the hearts, lift the spirits and inform the minds of millions,” said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation. “He has reframed how we view healing and, perhaps even more powerfully, how we view ourselves. I am proud to count him among this year’s recipients of the Heinz Awards.”

Currently serving as the Linda R. Meier and Joan F. Lane Provostial Professor and as Vice Chair for the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Department of Medicine at Stanford University, Dr. Verghese’s writings document his belief and practice that healing must go beyond cures, diagnostic tests and technological advancements and must also address the sense of profound vulnerability that patients feel when they are facing a major health crisis. *My Own Country*, his memoir about treating patients with AIDS in rural Tennessee, was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and was made into a film. His most recent book and first novel, *Cutting for Stone*, was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for more than two years.

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“Technology has revolutionized the practice of medicine, bringing about ground-breaking cures and treatments for some of the most cunning diseases. Despite these advances, and especially when dealing with chronic illness, I believe my profession is in danger of losing some of the more traditional and powerful rituals such as actually listening to the patient and examining them skillfully, which can, even in the absence of a cure, bring about a healing, by which I mean a coming to terms with the illness,” Dr. Verghese said. “In my work as a writer, I have always tried to convey the notion that medicine is a uniquely human, person-to-person endeavor. In my view, it is a ministry with a calling.”

Dr. Verghese is considered by many to be the nation’s premier instructor of bedside treatment and is frequently invited to speak with medical students across the country to share his techniques. He is also an influential advocate for the role of the physician as healer. Under his direction, Stanford University’s School of Medicine has developed the Stanford 25, a comprehensive list of physical examinations that Stanford medical students are required to perform on all of their patients. This ensures that the students understand the importance of direct examination and one-on-one interaction with those in their care.

Dr. Verghese’s stories have appeared in publications that include *The New Yorker*, *Texas Monthly*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Granta* and *The Wall Street Journal*. *The Tennis Partner: A Story of Friendship and Loss*, also a bestseller, is his compelling story about his friend and tennis partner’s struggle with addiction and was named a *New York Times* Notable Book.

In addition to Dr. Verghese, the 19th Heinz Awards honored the following individuals:

- **Environment: Jonathan Foley, Ph.D.**, of St. Paul, Minn. Dr. Foley is the director of the Institute on the Environment (IonE) at the University of Minnesota, where he is also a professor and McKnight Presidential Chair of Global Environment and Sustainability and director of the Global Landscapes Initiative, a collaborative of multiple stakeholders to address the challenges of population growth, climate change and food security. The Heinz Awards recognizes Dr. Foley for his pivotal research on the global environmental impact of agriculture as the world seeks to feed an ever-growing population.
- **Human Condition: Salman Khan**, of Mountain View, Calif. Mr. Khan is founder of Khan Academy, a nonprofit educational organization that has revolutionized how millions of children and students of all ages across the globe are learning subjects as diverse as mathematics, biology, economics, art history and astronomy, all at their own pace. Khan Academy has grown into one of the most frequently used online education and learning tools in the world, providing more than 5,000 free tutorials and educational videos as well as real-time performance tracking analytics for students and teachers.

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- **Public Policy: Sanjeev Arora, M.D.**, of Albuquerque, N.M. Dr. Arora is a liver disease specialist at the University of New Mexico. He is receiving the award for creating and expanding Project ECHO, or Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes, a growing national and global model that exponentially increases access to high-quality care by expanding workforce capacity and use of evidence-based medicine. Project ECHO, which uses widely-available video conferencing technology, has been replicated nationally and internationally and allows primary care clinicians to more effectively treat patients in rural and underserved areas who suffer from chronic conditions such as Hepatitis C, HIV, diabetes and psychiatric disorders.
- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Leila Janah**, of San Francisco, Calif. Ms. Janah is a social entrepreneur with a passion for empowering the impoverished to gain employment and improve their lives. She is being recognized for founding Samasource, a nonprofit that uses the power of technology and the Internet to provide training and employment or “microwork” opportunities, which are small, computer-based tasks, for women and youth in some of the poorest regions of the world. She has extended the concept with a similar program called SamaUSA, which is aimed at low-income digital workers at community colleges in the United States.

Recipients will officially receive their awards at a ceremony in Pittsburgh, Pa., on April 3, 2014. In addition to the monetary award of \$250,000, each recipient will receive a medallion inscribed with the image of Senator Heinz on one side and a rendering of a globe passing between two hands on the other.

EDITORS/REPORTERS: *To obtain photos of the recipients, please contact Christina Binz at christina.binz@bm.com or 412.394.6662.*

About the Heinz Awards

Established by Teresa Heinz in 1993 to honor the memory of her late husband, U.S. Senator John Heinz, the Heinz Awards celebrates the accomplishments and spirit of the Senator by recognizing the extraordinary achievements of individuals in the areas of greatest importance to him. The awards, administered by the Heinz Family Foundation, recognize individuals for their contributions in the areas of Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment. Nominations are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously, and are reviewed by jurors appointed by the Heinz Family Foundation. The jurors make recommendations to the Board of Directors, which subsequently selects the Award recipients. For more information on the Heinz Awards, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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