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University of Maryland, Baltimore County President Receives Prestigious Heinz Award

*Dr. Freeman Hrabowski honored for increasing diversity
among science, engineering and math majors*

PITTSBURGH, September 12, 2012 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Dr. Freeman Hrabowski III, a leading advocate for greater diversity in higher education, as a recipient of one of five prestigious Heinz Awards. Dr. Hrabowski serves as President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where he has made it his mission to enable more students of all backgrounds to realize their dreams of becoming scientists, engineers and mathematicians. Honored in the award category of the Human Condition, Dr. Hrabowski will receive an unrestricted cash prize of \$250,000.

“At a time when our country is desperate to attract more students into the sciences, mathematics and engineering, Dr. Hrabowski is lighting the way. Refusing to accept traditionally low participation by minorities as a given, he has significantly increased both the diversity of students pursuing these disciplines and the research excellence of his university,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “His methods for engaging students while at the same time setting even higher standards are being copied elsewhere, and deservedly so, as his example shows what can happen when we stop lamenting our educational challenges and really get serious about unlocking the potential in every student.”

Due to the significant impact Dr. Hrabowski has had on UMBC and several other universities, in July, President Obama named him chair of the newly created President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans.

Quickly recognizing the challenges many minority students faced soon after he arrived at UMBC in 1987, Dr. Hrabowski vowed to change things. One of the first steps he took was partnering with Baltimore philanthropist Robert Meyerhoff to create the Meyerhoff Scholars program. The program was initially created for African American men interested in science and engineering, but is now serving all students who are committed to the advancement of minorities in the sciences. It has demonstrated that good mentoring and a high-quality undergraduate education can change lives.

To date, the program has had an overwhelming impact on UMBC by graduating more than 800 students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields and nearly doubling the number of science majors at the university. Additionally, UMBC is now one of the nation’s leading universities for producing African American bachelor’s degree graduates who go on to complete STEM Ph.D.s.

Under the program, selected students attend special summer classes to sharpen academic skills and are taught to help one another by studying in groups. The group-study component is a vital aspect and is ingrained within the program. It has helped revolutionize teaching methods at the university. Dr. Hrabowski's work at UMBC has earned the university praise, oftentimes being described as the "blueprint" for overhauling STEM education at other institutions.

"The next generation of scientists should reflect the diversity that helps make America a leader in the world. A college education and all the opportunities that it brings should be within reach of every young person who is willing to work hard," said Dr. Freeman Hrabowski. "I am humbled by the fact that our program has served as a model to other universities."

Beyond his work at UMBC, Dr. Hrabowski also serves as a consultant to the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health and the National Academies, among others and holds honorary degrees from more than a dozen institutions, including Harvard, Princeton, Duke, Georgetown and the University of Michigan.

Dr. Hrabowski completed high school at just 15 and at 19 graduated from Hampton University with the highest honors in mathematics. By the age of 24, he had already received his M.A. in mathematics and his Ph.D. in higher education administration/statistics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

U.S. News has ranked UMBC fourth nationally for "Best Undergraduate Teaching" – tied with Yale University.

In addition to Dr. Hrabowski, the 18th Heinz Awards honor the following individuals:

- **Arts and Humanities: Mason Bates**, Ph.D., Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, (San Francisco, Calif.), for dissolving the traditional boundaries of classical music and moving orchestral music into the digital age
- **Environment: Richard J. Jackson**, M.D., M.P.H., University of California, Los Angeles, Fielding School of Public Health, (Los Angeles, Calif.), for his visionary approach to promoting public health through smarter urban planning and designing healthy communities
- **Public Policy: KC Golden**, Climate Solutions, (Seattle, Wash.), for his role in bringing the Pacific Northwest to the forefront of communities taking action to curb climate pollution and promote sustainable prosperity
- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Jay Keasling**, Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley; Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Joint BioEnergy Institute, (Berkeley, Calif.), for his innovations in the emerging field of synthetic biology impacting medicine, chemistry and clean energy

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 celebrate 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, annually 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. Award recipients are ultimately selected by the Board of Directors.

In addition to the monetary award, recipients are presented with 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. The Heinz Awards will be presented at a ceremony in Pittsburgh, Pa. on October 11. For more information about the Heinz Awards or the recipients, including photographs, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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