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**Social Entrepreneur Receives Heinz Award  
for Providing Digital Employment to the Disenfranchised**

*Leila Janah Honored for Samasource; Provides New Hope for  
People Isolated from Employment Opportunities*

**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 Leila Janah, a social entrepreneur and the founder of Samasource, as one of the five recipients of the 19th Heinz Awards and one of the youngest people to be recognized by the program. The winner of the Technology, the Economy and Employment award, Ms. Janah's organizations, Samasource and more recently SamaUSA, leverage the power of current technology and the reach of the Internet to empower individuals, including those in some of the world's poorest regions. Using its "microwork" model, Samasource connects workers to digital training and on-the-job experience with a wide variety of companies and organizations, opening the door for other long-term employment opportunities.

"For too long, the accepted thinking of our times has been that the technological revolution transforming societies here at home and around the globe must inevitably leave poor and less skilled workers behind and deepen levels of social inequity. Leila Janah refuses to accept that. With Samasource, she has given people living in poverty access to meaningful work and the opportunity to participate in a new economy that others said had no room for them. Her work has not just changed thousands of lives, it has illustrated how we can turn conventional wisdom on its head and use technology to expand work and opportunities for poor families," said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation.

Ms. Janah started Samasource shortly after graduating from Harvard University in 2005. Since then, the program has enabled employers both large and small to connect with employees in developing countries who are often women, youth and refugees. The "microwork" model works much like a modern-day digital assembly line and breaks down large-scale projects into smaller, computer-based tasks that include data entry, photo tagging, content management translation and transcription. In doing so, it enables Samasource's digital workers to master smaller tasks and provides them with the ability to earn a wage that can lift them and their families from poverty.

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“What I’ve come to realize is that people are often poor because they have not been given the opportunity to take a job with a paycheck that can make a difference for them and their families,” Ms. Janah said. “Samasource removes the geographical constraints and opens up an entirely new pool of prospective employees, all through the use of technology.”

Since its founding in 2008, Samasource has grown in only five years to provide employment opportunities to nearly 5,000 people, lifting as many as 20,000 people out of poverty. In 2012, Ms. Janah launched a domestic program, called SamaUSA, which targets low-income community college students of all ages in both rural and urban areas. Students in the three programs in northern and central California are taught technical skills and digital literacy to allow them to market themselves and find employment in this growing digital marketplace. SamaUSA plans to expand to more than 1,000 students in California next year and then to scale its model nationally to community college students across the United States.

In addition to Ms. Janah, the 19th Heinz Awards honored the following individuals:

- **Arts and Humanities: Abraham Verghese, M.D.**, of Stanford, Calif. Dr. Verghese is being recognized for his work as a critically acclaimed best-selling author. His poignant stories 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 patients feel when they are facing a major health crisis. Dr. Verghese is the Linda R. Meier and Joan F. Lane Provostial Professor and Vice Chair for the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Department of Medicine at Stanford University.
- **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.

- **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.

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](mailto: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, 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. 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](http://www.heinzawards.net).

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