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## **Distinguished Pediatrician, Epidemiologist and UCLA Professor Receives Prestigious Heinz Award**

*Dr. Richard Jackson demonstrates how poor community design and urban planning  
have led to an epic rise in health problems such as asthma and obesity*

**PITTSBURGH, September 12, 2012** – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Dr. Richard Joseph Jackson, a pediatrician and public health physician, as a recipient of one of five prestigious Heinz Awards. Following a distinguished career calling attention to the health risks of environmental contaminants, Dr. Jackson has sparked a national conversation about the relationship between the physical design of our communities and rising health risks. As the award winner in the Environment category, Dr. Jackson will receive an unrestricted cash prize of \$250,000.

“Dr. Jackson is changing how our society thinks about urban sprawl and the design of our communities by reframing them as public health challenges. That took immense courage and conviction at first, when many ridiculed him for seeing a link between how our neighborhoods are designed and the rise in obesity, diabetes and other health problems,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “But study after study has proven him correct, and like any good physician he has gone beyond diagnosing the problem to suggesting the cure by actively promoting the design of healthier communities, which by their nature are better for people and better for the environment.”

His interest in health stemmed from the loss of his young fighter-pilot father to polio when Dr. Jackson was just three years old. The experience eventually drew him to a career as a pediatrician and epidemiologist and created a deep interest in how the environment affects the health of children.

Dr. Jackson became convinced that the poor design of our communities was having the dual effects of exposing children to harmful contaminants and discouraging physical activity, contributing to higher rates of asthma, cancer, obesity and diabetes. His warnings, once considered controversial, have been borne out repeatedly by studies documenting airborne particulates from trucks and traffic congestion, the marked reduction in physical fitness in children of all ages and rising rates of obesity and diabetes in the U.S. population.

“We have the opportunity to re-think the design of our communities for the health of our children, our grandchildren and ourselves. It is a moral imperative, not just an environmental one,” said Dr. Richard Jackson. “Families shouldn’t have to get in their car just to buy a carton of milk, and our kids should be able to walk or bike to school. In so many ways, we have engineered walking and health out of our daily lives.”

Dr. Jackson in his lectures, books and recently-released *PBS* documentary, *Designing Healthy Communities*, has become a leading national voice for reinserting health considerations into decisions about urban, suburban and transportation design projects. In the *PBS* series, Dr. Jackson examines the link between urban sprawl and the national epidemic of obesity and Type 2 diabetes, intensified by our dependence on cars.

Early in his career, Dr. Jackson recognized the importance of tracking, collecting and analyzing data to identify health hazards. This work led to groundbreaking initiatives to monitor agricultural chemical levels that were causing birth defects. He served as director of the National Center for Environmental Health for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and later as head of public health in California. At the CDC, Dr. Jackson instituted the current federal effort to monitor chemical levels in the U.S. population to serve as a basis for responding to serious environmental threats to the health of the American public.

Dr. Jackson has served on numerous scientific committees including the National Academy of Sciences' committee that produced the seminal 1993 report *Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children*, which helped build support for the passage of the landmark Food Quality Protection Act in 1996. Dr. Jackson was the first pediatrician to serve on the board of directors of the American Institute of Architects and is an honorary member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. He is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences.

His dedication to public health has led him to posts at the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Michigan as well as his current position at UCLA, where he teaches and mentors the next generation of public health professionals.

In addition to Dr. Jackson, 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
- **Human Condition: Freeman Hrabowski, III, Ph.D.**, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, (Baltimore, Md.), for inspiring minority students to the highest levels of excellence in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)
- **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](http://www.heinzawards.net).

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