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**19th Heinz Awards Recognizes New Mexico Physician  
Sanjeev Arora for Groundbreaking Medical Education and Workforce Model**

*Dr. Arora's Project ECHO Honored for Improving Care for  
Patients in Rural and Underserved Communities*

**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 Sanjeev Arora, M.D., as one of the five recipients of the 19th Heinz Awards. The winner of the Public Policy award, Dr. Arora is being recognized for his creation and expansion of 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.

“Millions of Americans live in what can be considered medical ‘deserts,’ communities that lack access to medical specialists expert in treating chronic conditions like Hepatitis C, HIV and mental illness. More than a decade ago, Sanjeev Arora set out to change that, and through Project ECHO, he succeeded. What began as a way to educate medical professionals in rural New Mexico has become not only a national, but even an international model for community-based telemedicine, and it is providing first-class care to patients who otherwise would not have access to such services. We are proud to award Dr. Arora the Heinz Award for Public Policy,” said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation.

A liver disease specialist at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, Dr. Arora originally established Project ECHO to address his frustrations with his inability to provide care to the thousands of New Mexico residents suffering from Hepatitis C. Many were driving hundreds of miles to seek treatment from far-away specialists. Using widely available video conferencing technology and case-based learning, Project ECHO expands the capacities of primary care clinicians to manage serious, chronic, complex conditions they were not trained to manage in school, including Hepatitis C, HIV, chronic pain, rheumatoid arthritis and psychiatric disorders.

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“Nothing is more fulfilling than to have a measurable impact on people across the country and around the world who can’t get the quality health care they need,” Dr. Arora said. “Project ECHO not only helps patients struggling to find treatment close to home, but it also provides valuable education to medical professionals looking to expand their areas of expertise and address the most pressing health needs in their communities. It is, as we say, a ‘force multiplier.’”

Project ECHO’s footprint has expanded from its origins in New Mexico to more than a dozen states, including Illinois, Nevada, Massachusetts, Texas and Washington, as well as to India and Uruguay. It now maintains 29 hubs in the United States and four more globally that are connected to 700 clinics. It is working directly with the U.S. Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs and also with the Department of Health and Human Services through a demonstration project supported by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation.

In addition to Dr. Arora, 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.

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- **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](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, 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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