



HERO News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH ENHANCEMENT RESEARCH ORGANIZATION NAMES LEON GORMAN RECIPIENT OF FIRST-EVER EXECUTIVE HEALTH CHAMPION AWARD

Chairman Gorman recognized for establishing successful wellness program at L.L. Bean

MINNEAPOLIS (October 3, 2012)—The [Health Enhancement Research Organization \(HERO\)](#) announced today that [Leon Gorman](#), chairman of the board, L.L. Bean, has been named the first-ever recipient of the [HERO Executive Health Champion Award](#).

The Executive Health Champion Award recognizes a person of senior leadership status who has made an outstanding contribution toward the advancement of employee health management within their company. According to HERO, the award was developed in acknowledgment of the significant role that leadership plays in establishing and maintaining a culture of health in the workplace.

“Research shows that companies with lower health care trend and the most successful employee health initiatives are those that have an engaged and supportive leadership team,” said Jerry Noyce, president and CEO of HERO. “Executive leaders that not only approve funding for workplace wellness programs, but that are visibly involved in and supportive of workplace health as a long-term corporate value are those that generate lasting results for their employees and their company.”

The Executive Health Champion Award was presented to Gorman during the [2012 HERO Forum](#) in Minneapolis earlier this week. Gorman is credited with introducing employee wellness at L.L. Bean in the early 1980’s, well before employers began to recognize the connection between employee health and workplace performance. According to information provided by L.L. Bean, the employee wellness program began with an onsite fitness room and a “heart club” that was focused on achieving healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Over the years, as Leon Gorman grew his grandfather’s business, he never lost sight of his early commitment to employee health. In fact, he continued to evolve the company’s wellness program into a comprehensive workplace health management program that has won numerous industry awards, including being a three-time winner of the coveted [C. Everett Koop Award](#) from The Health Project.

L.L. Bean’s wellness program is currently available to more than 5,000 employees and dependents and has generated positive results, including: an average participation rate of 85 percent over the last five years; a decline in smoking rates from 24 percent in 2005 to six percent in 2011; and an average medical trend of just 5.8 percent.

“When the Executive Health Champion Award was conceived earlier this year, we pictured a leader whose personal and professional influence had helped create a measurable culture of health for an organization,” said Philip Swayze, chair of the HERO awards committee and vice president health promotion development for Plus One Health Management. “Leon Gorman’s many years of dedication to improving the health of L.L. Bean employees and his community, in combination with his own love of fitness, exceeded the committee’s expectations for the first recipient of this award.”

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Based in Edina, Minn., the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the creation and dissemination of employee health management research, education, policy, strategy, and leadership.

For more information:

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