



HERO **News Release**

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HERO SELECTS DAVID ANDERSON AND JOHN HARRIS TO RECEIVE INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP AWARDS

*Awards recognize leadership in research and practice of employee health
management*

MINNEAPOLIS (October 2, 2012)—The [Health Enhancement Research Organization \(HERO\)](#) announced today the recipients of two awards that recognize leadership and research excellence in the field of employee health management.

“These awards recognize the important role that strong leadership and high-quality research play in improving the health of the nation’s workforce,” said Jerry Noyce, president and CEO of HERO. “Since Bill Whitmer and Mark Dundon founded HERO in 1996, the organization has provided industry leadership and research that have helped demonstrate how employee health management can improve health outcomes, control health care spending, and improve productivity. This year’s recipients exemplify these traits and both have amassed long track records of success.”

[John Harris, M.Ed.](#), was named the recipient of the [HERO Bill Whitmer Leadership Award](#) for his sustained leadership in enhancing the practice of employee health management and for fostering measurable improvements in behavior change and workplace health.

Harris is currently forming a new company called Performance pH, which helps companies improve business performance using a number of strategies. He was previously chief well-being officer and vice president of innovations at Healthways. Before joining Healthways, he was the co-founder of Harris HealthTrends, Inc., an entrepreneurial corporation specializing in the prevention of disease and the reduction of health care costs. Harris HealthTrends became part of Axia Health Management, which was ultimately acquired by Healthways.

Harris serves on the boards of Mercy Health Partners, Lourdes University, and Health Promotion Advocates. He speaks internationally on the subject of population health management and has authored numerous publications on employee health, including *Why and How People Change Health Behaviors*, co-authored with Dr. Joseph Leutzinger and *Integrating Wellness Into Your Disease Management Programs*, co-authored with Dr. Dexter Shurney.

“I am deeply honored to receive the Bill Whitmer Leadership Award because it is named after a person who contributed so much to the field, and for whom I have so much respect,” said Harris. “The fact that Bill is retiring in the near future makes receiving this award all the more special. It is gratifying to be recognized by your peers. We have all worked hard to advance this field, and I appreciate what we have achieved together.”

[David Anderson, Ph.D.](#), was named the recipient of the [HERO Mark Dundon Research Award](#). This award recognizes an individual who has consistently worked to enhance and promote research that advances the science of employee health management. The recipient must be a published author of peer-reviewed articles, have served as principal investigator on original studies, and helped facilitate research by other health management professionals.

Anderson is currently senior vice president and chief health officer at StayWell Health Management. In his role at StayWell, Anderson oversees the design and validity of StayWell's health assessment and behavior change models. He is a nationally recognized expert in research that addresses population health management, behavior change, and the financial impact of workplace health initiatives. Anderson has authored or co-authored more than 50 peer-reviewed journal articles and given more than 100 presentations at national wellness and benefits conferences.

"When I began my career, few employers knew what wellness was or saw the relevance for their business. Furthermore, many practitioners had the naïve idea that knowledge would yield behavior change, and we had no evidence wellness could improve business outcomes. It was clear to me that research was essential to creating a strong employer wellness market," said Anderson. "Thanks to the leadership and support of visionaries like Mark Dundon and Bill Whitmer, I'm pleased to say we've built a solid evidence base linking wellness to lower health care costs and improved employee performance. The focus has now shifted to increasing engagement in effective programs, and I suspect research will again play a central role in defining this."

According to [Philip Swayze](#), chair of the HERO awards committee and vice president of health promotion development for Plus One Health Management, candidates for the two awards were nominated by their peers and selected based on a review of their overall body of work in the field of employee health management. Applications were reviewed and rated by a committee of industry-leading professionals with extensive experience in designing and implementing workplace wellness programs.

"This year we received nearly double the nominations. All of them were highly qualified nominees who have made significant contributions to the practice of employee health management," said Swayze. "But in the end, John Harris' decades of innovative work in employee health management and prevention-focused leadership, and the incredible volume of impactful research and extensive thought leadership generated by David Anderson led the committee to honor these men with HERO awards."

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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:

Barbara Tabor, APR
651-230-9192
barbara@taborpr.com