



NEWS RELEASE

(For immediate release)

HERO announces winners of 2019 Health and Well-Being Awards

Annual HERO awards honor dedication and commitment to advancing health and well-being

WACONIA, MN (September 19, 2019) — The Health Enhancement Research Organization ([HERO](#)) recognized excellence in the field of workplace health and well-being with the presentation of the 2019 [HERO Health and Well-Being Awards](#) during the recent HERO Forum in Portland, OR.

Award recipients included: Fikry Isaac, MD (**Bill Whitmer Leadership Award**), Debra Lerner, MSc, PhD (**Mark Dundon Research Award**), Craft O'Neal (**Jerry Noyce Executive Health Champion Award**), Philip DiRusso (**Heart of HERO Award**), and Keara Vance (**Healthy HERO Award**).

“As the field of workplace health and well-being continues to evolve, we need leaders working to advance the field, improve our understanding, and increase adoption of best practices and emerging practices in workplace health and well-being. This year’s award recipients have been champions in this cause for years,” said Karen Moseley, President, HERO. “Their work is evidence of the good that can happen when you bring collaboration to the workplace.”

About the winners:

- 2019 **Bill Whitmer Leadership Award** winner Fikry Isaac has long exemplified what it means to be an outstanding leader for health and well-being on a global scale. Formerly Vice President of Global Health Services for Johnson & Johnson and Chief Medical Officer for Johnson & Johnson’s Health & Wellness Solutions, Isaac is now Founder and CEO of WellWorld Consulting and a published author in the well-being field. Isaac continues to pursue his passion for introducing excellence in health, searching for innovative approaches to optimize population health.
- Debra Lerner, Director of the Program on Health, Work and Productivity at Tufts Medical Center and Director of Organizational Impact for the Tufts Clinical and Translational Science Institute, is this year’s recipient of the **Mark Dundon Research Award**. She has dedicated her career to improving the health and well-being of working people. Lerner and her colleagues have extensive expertise in survey research and have developed the widely known Work Limitations Questionnaire (WLQ). Lerner’s team has also developed innovative intervention programs aimed at improving employee functional performance and work productivity.
- CEO of O’Neal Industries, Craft O’Neal is this year’s winner of the **Jerry Noyce Executive Health Champion Award**. O’Neal’s passion for health and well-being has led to the

success of **LIVESMART**, his company's award-winning wellness program. O'Neal's colleagues describe him as a great leader, passionate, dependable, and loyal.

- For more than 20 years, **Heart of HERO Award** winner Philip DiRusso, Wellness Manager at MaineGeneral Medical Center, has worked tirelessly to enhance the health of the environment in which he works and the communities that benefit from his public health efforts and grant writing. His work demonstrates the strength of his leadership, values, abilities, advocacy, and positive impact.
- The **Healthy HERO Award**, sponsored by WorkPartners, a health and productivity solutions company and affiliate of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and UPMC Health Plan, recognizes individuals who have improved their overall health and well-being by making a significant lifestyle change. The 2019 Healthy HERO Award recipient is Keara Vance, a Program Specialist at Wesley Family Services who changed her lifestyle after finding out she had Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome. Vance changed her diet, started exercising regularly, quit smoking by utilizing her employer's smoking cessation program, and is a Wesley on Wellness committee member.

To learn more, visit <https://hero-health.org/forum/awards/>.

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About HERO – Based in Waconia, MN, HERO (the Health Enhancement Research Organization) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 corporation that was established in 1997. HERO is dedicated to identifying and sharing best practices that improve the health and well-being of employees, their families and communities. To learn more, visit www.hero-health.org. Follow us on [Twitter](#) @heroehm, [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).