Awards Presentation
October 2021 — A Virtual Forum
Rachel Henke, PhD, is a Senior Director of Research at IBM Watson Health, where she conducts mixed-methods evaluations of employer efforts to support employee health and well-being. She is an extraordinarily accomplished researcher with over 15 years directing evaluation studies, including work with states, federal government, health plans, and large employers. In addition to her frequent quantitative research into the effectiveness of worksite-based health promotion programs, Dr. Henke has related mixed methods health services expertise in the opioid epidemic, behavioral health, Medicaid and Medicare and the role of the patient-centered medical home.

Dr. Henke has distinguished herself as a leader in workplace-based health promotion research both by her uncommon volume of published research articles and, as importantly, her authorship of high impact studies that are influential in the field as evidenced by how frequently her papers are read and cited by other health promotion leaders. Two research areas that stand out relate to her studies of best practices approaches to employee health and, more specifically, how organizations can improve the prevention and treatment of mental health issues. In an article co-authored with Ron Goetzel, Henke and Goetzel ask: “Do workplace health promotion (wellness) programs work?” Their answer, published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (56 (9), 927-934) can be summarized as follow, “it depends.” The article reviewed the research on evidence based best practices needed to attain population wide health outcomes in an employer setting. In another article co-authored with Deb Lerner, the authors asked: “What does research tell us about depression, job performance, and work productivity?” Published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (50 (4), 401-410), Henke and Lerner showed how “the work impact of depression is related to symptom severity and that symptom relief only partly reduces the adverse work outcomes of depression.”

Dr. Henke is also a co-editor of the Knowing Well Being Well section of the American Journal of Health Promotion. Dr. Henke completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School and has a PhD in health policy from Harvard University with a concentration in medical sociology. She received her B.A. in biology from Haverford College.

Mark Dundon Research Award
This award honors dedication and commitment to the field of health and well-being and acknowledges outstanding achievements in the area of research.

Mark Dundon contributed to the advancement of workplace health and well-being (HWB) for the decades he spent working in the healthcare industry. Best known within the ranks of the HERO membership as the co-founder and former Chairman of the Board of HERO, Mark’s contributions to the field of HWB research and the healthcare field include running a three-state healthcare system in Kentucky and providing the seed money for ground-breaking research. Each year at the HERO Forum, the Mark Dundon Research Award is presented to the professional who most closely embodies his outstanding work in the area of workplace HWB research.

PAST RECIPIENTS
2011 – Ron Goetzel, PhD, Truven Health Analytics / Johns Hopkins University
2012 – David Anderson, PhD, StayWell
2013 – Nicolaas Pronk, PhD, MA, FACSM, HealthPartners
2014 – Dee W. Edington, PhD, Edington Associates, LLC
2015 – Wayne Burton MD, American Express
2016 – Laura A. Linnan, ScD, UNC-Chapel Hill
2017 – Glorian Sorensen, PhD, MPH, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
2018 – Kerry Evers, PhD, and Sara Johnson, PhD, Pro-Change Behavior Systems, Inc.
2019 – Debra Lerner, MSc, PhD, Tufts Medical Center Institute for Clinical Research and Health Policy Studies
2020 – Victor J. Strecher, PhD, MPH, University of Michigan’s Schools of Public Health and Medicine
Raymond J Fabius, MD, has over thirty years of successful business experience as a global physician executive creating value in healthcare. He has led several iconic and successful companies including three through to transactions - US Healthcare to Aetna, Truven Health Analytics to Veritas Capital, and iTrax to Walgreens. As a consequence of this career journey, he has garnered medical and business leadership experience in an extraordinary variety of healthcare management areas including quality management, informatics, strategy, operations, network development and oversight, patient management, disease management, national accounts, occupational medicine, emergency preparedness, worker productivity, wellness and health promotion, travel medicine, web-based health content delivery and data warehousing and analytics. He has served in academics, private practice, managed care, the health insurance industry, e-health, corporate health, workplace health, the pharmaceutical industry and health informatics and analytics. Currently Ray serves as the co-founder and President of HealthNEXT, creating enduring “cultures of health” and impacting employer health care costs.

Prior to this role, Dr. Fabius held the position of Chief Medical Officer for Truven Health Analytics (now part of IBM Watson Health), where he provided analytical and thought leadership, strategic guidance and client support. He also served as Strategic Adviser to the President of Walgreens Health & Wellness guiding their approach to population health, and President & CMO of I-trax Health Solutions. Ray also has held key physician executive leadership positions in other large organizations including General Electric, Thompson Reuters, and Aetna.

Dr. Fabius has written numerous articles and four books including the leading textbook in its field, Population Health: Creating a Culture of Wellness (now in its 2nd edition), as co-editor and contributing author. He has been a keynote presenter at the CDC, the UN Sustainability Conference, the AMA National Meetings and the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchasing Coalitions. Dr. Fabius is an adjunct faculty member of Jefferson University, the American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine, the American Association of Physician Leadership and the Harvard School of Public Health. He serves on the editorial board of two premier medical journals: the Population Health Journal and the American College of Occupational and Environmental Journal.

Bill Whitmer Leadership Award

As the co-founder and former CEO of HERO, Bill Whitmer (and HERO) issued a loud Wake UP Call for America that our nation was in the midst of a perfect storm of poor health, an aging population, and rising health care costs. Bill spent years bringing together leaders in the workplace HWB industry — employers, researchers, providers, payors and consultants — and insisting that, together, we represented a powerful force with the ability to positively impact the health of our nation. Building on the foundation that Bill laid, HERO’s membership, and its voice and power as an agent for change, have increased dramatically over the past 20 years.

PAST RECIPIENTS

2011 – Michael O’Donnell, American Journal of Health Promotion
2012 – John Harris, MEd, FAWHP, Performance pH
2013 – David Anderson, PhD, StayWell
2014 – David Hunnicutt, PhD, WELCOA
2015 – Bill Baun, EPD, CWP, FAWHP, MD Anderson Cancer Center
2016 – Jerry Noyce
2017 – La Vaughn Palma-Davis, MA, University of Michigan
2018 – Shelly Wolff, MBA, Willis Towers Watson
2019 – Fikry W. Isaac, MD, MPH, FACOEM, WellWorld Consulting
2020 – Pamela Hymel, MD, MPH, FACOEM, Disney Parks, Experiences and Products (DPEP)
Joe Kenner was named president and CEO of Greyston in April 2020. His innovative leadership, experience, and expertise in collaborating with diverse stakeholders have served him well as a champion both within and outside of the workplace walls.

Joe joined the Greyston executive team in 2018 as the vice president of programs and partnerships, responsible for directing Greyston Workforce Development and Community Wellness strategies and activities. Since then, Greyston has delivered millions of dollars in economic impact through job placements, and expanded employer and service provider relationships.

Kenner previously served as deputy commissioner at the Westchester County (NY) Department of Social Services, and spent 14 years in corporate America, working insurance underwriting/risk management, capital markets, and sales strategy. He was first appointed and then twice-elected a Village of Port Chester (NY) Board of Trustee member, and also served as Deputy Mayor of Port Chester. He holds an MBA (financial management) from Pace University’s Lubin School of Business, is a graduate of Williams College (MA), and attended Oxford University (Exeter College).

As the leader of one of the country’s most well-known social enterprises, Joe frequently shares his experience on purpose-driven business, and building a more inclusive economy through employment, workforce development, and social service. He serves on the Board of Directors of Conscious Capitalism, Inc., the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation, the New York City Workforce Investment Board, and is an Advisory Council member of the REDF Impact Investing Fund (RIIF). He has been featured in a variety of local and national media, including Bloomberg, CNBC, Yahoo Finance, Forbes, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal and Quartz.

Jerry Noyce Executive Health Champion Award
This award honors a person of senior leadership status (CEO, CFO, VP) who has made an outstanding contribution towards the advancement of health and well-being within their company.

HERO understands the importance of recognizing the corporate leaders who make the meaningful execution of employee wellness possible. As former CEO of a national provider and former CEO of HERO, Jerry Noyce has always put the practice of good health and well-being at the top of the corporate agenda. This award is presented annually to a person of senior leadership status (CEO, CFO, VP) who, like Jerry, has made outstanding contributions towards the advancement of workplace health & well-being within their company. Jerry’s leadership in the industry has modeled the behavior we want every executive to emulate.

In his honor, we wish to recognize individuals who have been instrumental in the success of their company wellness program through professional dedication and a personal commitment to creating a culture of health.

PAST RECIPIENTS
2012 – Leon Gorman, L.L. Bean
2013 – Hank Orme, Lincoln Industries
2014 – James R. Ramsey, PhD, University of Louisville
2015 – Scott Peterson, EVP, CHRO, The Schwan Food Company
2016 – Jodi Leigh Berg, Vitamix
2017 – Catherine M. Baase, MD, The Dow Chemical Company
2018 – Elizabeth Bierbower, MPM, Humana
2019 – Craft O’Neal, O’Neal Industries, Inc. (ONI)
2020 – Shane Jackson, MBA, Jackson Healthcare
Immediately upon starting at UPMC, I became aware of the multitude of benefits available related to health and wellness. It took me about 18 months, though, to initiate the support of a UPMC Health Plan Health Coach. Starting a weight loss coaching program right before the holidays, in November 2019, felt like a daunting challenge, but I had no idea how much the habits that I built through this relationship would come to help me in the following year!

Carla, my coach, helped me to find a balanced approach to my weight loss journey. I had been tracking my food and trying to exercise consistently for years (my whole life, truly), but Carla created a personalized approach to meet me where I was! I was able to develop tangible goals, and for the first time, focus on my health rather than just weight loss. Ironically enough, when I stopped obsessing over weight loss, I was able to lose 40 pounds!

During COVID-19, focusing on health and fitness became my main priority. Rather than spending lockdown as a couch potato, as I certainly would have done prior to my UPMC Health Coaching, I planned my days around exercise and cooking healthy meals. Per Carla’s suggestion, I integrated morning mindfulness and gratitude into my routine, which helped immensely during the stressful and uncertain times during the pandemic. I think that mental health and physical health are closely linked!

I also find joy and motivation in helping to motivate others, so I was quick to bring my coworkers into my new lifestyle. I created a “Wellness” Microsoft Teams page for my team of 50, implementing multiple challenges to help my colleagues (and myself!) to prioritize our fitness and wellness during a stressful time. One of the challenges was “75 Hard,” focused on achieving 90 minutes of exercise, drinking one gallon of water and meeting eating goals for 75 days. While I chose fairly strict challenges for myself, I made sure to leave the team-wide challenges open for folks to set their own goals. Sometimes, this was as straightforward as challenging to make the bed every day! Our group has also focused on the UPMC Weight Race, Take a Healthy Step Challenges, water challenges, and even participated in a Virtual 5K for the Alzheimer’s Society earlier this year.

I hit a bit of a roadblock in my journey after lockdown ended. While lockdown was stressful, it also provided space and time for me to focus on myself. With the country opening back up and my work schedule becoming increasingly challenging, I found myself losing track of the routine that made me feel so positive during the previous year. It took a couple of months for me to recognize that I can always create space for wellness — regardless of what my circumstances are.

I have come to realize that I feel best when I am taking care of myself, which currently includes taking walks outside as often as possible, riding my Peloton, cooking healthy meals, and continuing the habit of one gallon of water a day from my 75 Hard challenge last year! I am thrilled to report that the Wellness Teams page is still active and engaging, despite the fact that I left my previous team a few months ago.

I look forward to continuing to prioritize myself and to hopefully inspire others to do the same. I think that we are our best selves at work when we care for ourselves outside of work. I am incredibly honored to be a recipient of the Healthy HERO Award and am committed to role modeling healthy behaviors in the workplace!

Healthy HERO Award
The Healthy HERO Award program enables sponsoring organizations to highlight the successes of individuals who participate in their health and well-being program. This year’s Healthy HERO Award sponsor is WorkPartners, a health and productivity solutions company and affiliate of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and UPMC Health Plan.

WorkPartners’ Role Model Program recognizes employees who improved their overall health and well-being by making a significant lifestyle change, such as quitting smoking, losing weight, becoming more active, eating healthier, or managing stress.

PAST RECIPIENTS
2019 – Keara Vance, WorkPartners
2020 – Deborah Moon, UPMC
Julie Andrews is the Global Well-being Leader for HP, where she oversees their award-winning, global well-being program, Well Beyond. In her role, she is responsible for selecting, managing, and implementing physical, financial and life balance resources for the company’s 50,000 employees, across 60+ countries. “The most rewarding part of my job is finding and bringing innovative well-being solutions to our employees, and knowing that these programs help them feel and perform their best.”

Throughout her career, Julie led a wide range of benefit outsourcing functions while with Aon including outsourcing, consulting, finance, internal operations and client management. After joining HP in 2015, she relied on these experiences to help usher in a new era of well-being for the company, leading the development of the Well Beyond strategy and brand.

The coronavirus pandemic presented challenges that Julie quickly turned into opportunities for HP to refocus and reinvent their well-being program. She enlisted executive and vendor support, and as a result two of HP’s well-being focus areas – life balance and physical well-being – leveled up with new opportunities for HP employees. Julie immediately responded with mental awareness campaigns and innovative weight management initiatives. Despite the barriers of a global pandemic, Julie reinforced her commitment to a culture of well-being through campaigns focused on cancer prevention and the Global Wellness Challenge.

The impact of Julie’s efforts has been demonstrated through leadership kudos and industry recognition. HP realized a significant move up the Forbes World’s Best Employers list and Healthiest Employers’ Healthiest 100 Employers in America list. Julie has also received Platinum, Gold, and Honorable Mention MarCom Awards and Hermes Creative Awards for several HP communication campaigns.

Married to her college sweetheart and the mom of three handsome boys, Julie loves spending her free time going to sporting events, traveling and being with friends and family. Grateful and blessed for all that have helped her get to this point in her career, Julie aspires to offer programs to HP employees that amaze, motivate and inspire them to keep reinventing.

Heart of HERO Award

This award honors a health and wellness practitioner (Wellness Directors, Health Managers, Human Resource) who has made an outstanding contribution towards the advancement of HWB within their company.

The Heart of HERO Award recognizes health and wellness practitioners who have directly impacted the health and well-being of their organization through their demonstrated leadership, personal commitment to health, and systematic application of industry best practices.

PAST RECIPIENTS
2014 – Rebecca Kelly, PhD, The University of Alabama
2015 – Joni Troester, MA, MBA, University of Iowa
2016 – Jody Ensman, MS, University of Kentucky
2017 – Mark Poindexter, Shell Oil Company
2018 – Sheri Snow, MEd, RD, CDE, AMERICAN Cast Iron Pipe Company
2019 – Philip DiRusso, MaineGeneral Medical Center Workplace Health
2020 – Patricia Benson, formerly University of Louisville
Our sincere gratitude to the HERO Awards Committee and the dedication they put forward to honor the achievements of those making exemplary contributions to the workplace health & well-being industry.