

PRESS RELEASE

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Manhattan Institute Awards \$225,000 to Entrepreneurs with Innovative Solutions to Nation's Most Pressing Social Problems

New York, NY: Throughout our history, the United States has been distinguished by the capacity of citizens to address social problems through new organizations established through their own initiative. At its 11th annual Social Entrepreneurship Awards, the Manhattan Institute will recognize entrepreneurs whose creative approaches to some of society's greatest challenges influence the way we think about helping those in need.

A prize of \$100,000 will be presented to the winner of the William E. Simon Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Social Entrepreneurship and \$25,000 will be presented to each of the five winners of the Richard Cornuelle Award for Social Entrepreneurship.

This year, the Manhattan Institute also honors the work and memory of Richard Cornuelle, whose original idea to champion creativity and volunteerism in the nonprofit sector inspired the Manhattan Institute's Social Entrepreneurship Awards. In his best-known book, *Reclaiming the American Dream*, Cornuelle urged that social problems such as poverty, unemployment, delinquency, and urban blight be ameliorated without government intrusion.

"Dick Cornuelle did so much to foster public understanding of the crucial role which the independent non-profit sector plays in American life—both in his philanthropy and in *Reclaiming the American Dream*, which remains a book with great contemporary importance," said Howard Husock, vice president of policy research at the Manhattan Institute and director of the Social Entrepreneurship Initiative. "It's an honor for the Manhattan Institute to name our award for innovation in social entrepreneurship after him."

The 2011 William E. Simon Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Social Entrepreneurship winner:

Geoffrey Canada -- Harlem Children's Zone (New York, NY)

www.hcz.org

Hailed by *The New York Times Magazine* as "one of the most ambitious social experiments of our time," the Harlem Children's Zone brings a range of comprehensive support services to more than 8,000 children and 6,000 adults in Upper Manhattan. Under Geoffrey Canada's leadership, HCZ addresses the interconnected problem that poor families face, including failing schools, violent crime, family disorganization, and chronic health problems. Canada also founded the six nationally-known HCZ Promise Academy charter schools which focus on getting students on grade level and keeping them there. One hundred percent of Promise Academy II 3rd graders tested at or above grade level on the 2008 New York State math exam.

The 2011 Richard Cornuelle Award for Social Entrepreneurship winners:

Maile Broccoli-Hickey – English at Work (Austin, TX)

www.EnglishatWork.org

Working at an Austin restaurant in 2004, Maile Broccoli-Hickey saw firsthand the devastating effects limited English skills had on immigrant workers and their employers. Broccoli-Hickey decided to offer an English class at the restaurant which led to ENGLISH @ WORK being founded in 2005. Based on the core belief that English proficiency can lift people out of poverty, E@W provides customized English instruction during and after work hours with classes offered through employers, who have all reported a positive return on investment associated with the program. E@W currently

partners with 17 businesses where students advance one proficiency level after 72 hours. E@W's student completion rate is 75 percent (compared with 57 percent at other providers), and over the past year, 75 percent of E@W businesses promoted students after hosting the program.

Rachel Doyle – Glamour Gals (Commack, NY)

www.GlamourGals.org

At 17 years old, Rachel Doyle organized a school based volunteer program called GlamourGals, which provided ongoing companionship and beauty makeovers to women living in senior homes. Soon after, GlamourGals (GG) was featured in *The New York Times* and on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, inspiring her to form GlamourGals Foundation, Inc. Today, GG organizes almost 1,000 volunteers in 55 chapters spanning 12 states. In the past two years, GlamourGals has provided approximately 75,000 hours of service, which go beyond makeovers and manicures, to foster intergenerational relationships and encourage compassionate teen leadership.

Barbara Elliott and Sandy Schultz – The WorkFaith Connection (Houston, TX)

www.WorthFaithConnection.org

Serving the “hardest of the hardest” is a difficult task, one that Barbara J. Elliott felt as calling for when she started the WorkFaith Connection (WFC) in 2007, a job readiness initiative that transitions people from prison, homelessness, addiction, or unemployment into a new job and a new life with faith. After graduates hold one job for one year, the WFC supports them with career planning to further their advancement. Although 60 percent of their graduates have felonies, in just four years, the WFC has graduated 1,400 men and women, 78 percent of whom are employed, and earn on average \$10 per hour from 450 employers.

Ann Higdon – Improved Solutions for Urban Systems (ISUS) (Dayton, OH)

www.isusinc.com

Improved Solutions for Urban Systems is not just a successful charter school network, ranked as the top three of all 59 public schools in the city of Dayton, OH by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. With its non-traditional combination of vocational and academic curricula, founder Ann Higdon seeks both to serve industries in need of skilled employees as well as to assist difficult-to-reach students, including those who have already dropped out of high school, most of whom were involved in the juvenile court system.

Dr. Lee Ponsky – MedWish International (Cleveland, OH)

www.MedWish.org

Dr. Lee Ponsky saw firsthand the tremendous healthcare disparity between Western countries and the developing world when, as a college student, he participated in a medical mission to Nigeria. Upon returning home, Lee took it upon himself to start MedWish International, collecting boxes of medical surplus in his family's garage. MedWish has grown significantly – in 2010 alone, MedWish provided some 668,000 pounds of discarded medical supplies equipment in 47 40-foot cargo containers to 54 countries around the world. Since its founding in 1993, MedWish has saved some 2.6 million pounds of medical surplus from ending up in Northeast Ohio's landfills and served over 90 countries.

The 2011 Manhattan Institute Social Entrepreneurship Awards will be presented in New York City on November 3rd by Howard Husock. Mr. Husock, also a contributing editor of *City Journal*, is a former research fellow at the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Harvard University. Next week, a podcast with each of the award winners will be released.

Tune in online at www.manhattan-institute.org.

To learn more about this year's awards or to speak with any of the winners, contact Kasia Zabawa at 646-839-3342 or at kzabawa@manhattan-institute.org.

Established in 2001, the Manhattan Institute Social Entrepreneurship Awards are supported by organizations including the William E. Simon and JM Kaplan Foundations of New York. Nominations are made by outsiders who have supported the organizations which they nominate. After initial screening by Manhattan Institute staff, ten finalists are chosen by the award program's selection committee, consisting of leaders from the philanthropic and academic community. Winners are chosen only after a site visit to the program and an extended in person interview.

For more information on the Manhattan Institute's Social Entrepreneurship Initiative, please visit

http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/social_entrepreneurship.htm

The Manhattan Institute is a think tank, 501 (c)(3), whose mission is to develop and disseminate new ideas that foster greater economic choice and individual responsibility.