



## Dr. James O'Connell Named J.H. Kanter Prize Laureate

*Awarded \$100,000 for Enhancing Health Care Delivery*

*Four Practicing Physicians Named Runners-Up, also Awarded Cash Prizes*

WASHINGTON, Aug. 11 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Dr. James O'Connell of Boston has been awarded the prestigious J.H. Kanter Prize for his exceptional work to enhance health care delivery for hundreds of low income and homeless people in Boston.

The inaugural prize, named for Joseph H. Kanter, a pioneering advocate for electronic medical records, is sponsored by the Health Legacy Partnership (HELP) a public private partnership with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ.) Dr. O'Connell will receive a \$100,000 award to help continue his amazing work.

Dr. O'Connell is President of Boston's 'Health Care for the Homeless' and on the front lines in his service to the poor. Often referred to as a "street doctor," he created a model of healthcare for the homeless, bringing care to them where they reside: on the street. He established integrated relationships with Boston area hospitals so patients typically arrive with medical charts and have received enhanced outpatient strategies prior to acute hospitalization. Dr. O'Connell designed and implemented a medical records system for the care of homeless patients and authored books on care of the homeless.

"Through the profound example of his daily commitment, Jim (O'Connell) gently nudges us to re-examine the fundamental questions of human existence. How do we live the ordinary life extraordinarily well," said Dr. Howard Koh, Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. O'Connell, selected from more than 50 practicing physicians submitted from around the nation, military and US territories, was nominated by the Massachusetts Medical Society which receives \$10,000 for nominating him.

Four runners-up each also receive prizes in the amount of \$25,000: Jeffrey Henderson, M.D. of South Dakota, Neil Calman, M.D. of New York, Sister Anne Brooks, D.O. of Mississippi, Herbert Smitherman Jr., M.D. of Michigan.

These front-line physicians have dedicated themselves to optimizing U.S. health care for all patients, regardless of gender, ethnicity, geography, language, education, religion, employment or insurance.

"The Kanter Prize recognizes the true calling of medicine-- to deliver health care to those in need," said Dr. Alan R. Leff, MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Chicago. "This is both the greatest privilege and highest obligation of a physician."

The award winning runners-up:

**Herbert Smitherman Jr., MD**, is President and CEO of the Health Centers Detroit Foundation, Inc. in Detroit, Michigan. Running three community-based health centers in urban Detroit, he works with culturally diverse communities to improve urban-based primary care delivery systems. He is dedicated to organizing, expanding and improving access to cost effective, high quality healthcare for the uninsured and has volunteered his time without pay to see that patients get the care they need, regardless of income. Dr. Smitherman was nominated by the Michigan State Medical Society and the Wayne County Medical Society of Southeast Michigan.

**Jeffrey Henderson, MD**, serves as the President and CEO of Black Hills Center for American Indian Health in Rapid City, South Dakota. He is committed to addressing health disparities seen in Native Americans, focusing on their broader health problems through research, service, education, and culturally sensitive health delivery. His center collected evidence of effective practices that may lead to changes in the guidelines for managing type II diabetes. Dr. Henderson was nominated by the South Dakota State Medical Association.

**Neil Calman, MD**, the President and CEO, of the Institute for Family Health in New York is dedicated to improving the quality and availability of primary care services to medically underserved communities in New York City and the Mid-Hudson Valley. He founded "Bronx Health REACH" which works with community and faith-based organizations, health care providers and public health officials to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes in diabetes in the southwest Bronx. Dr. Calman was nominated by: Medical Society of the State of New York.

**Sister Anne Brooks, DO**, the Founder and Director of the Tutwiler Medical Clinic in Tutwiler, Mississippi, started medical training at age 43 and currently provides multi-disciplinary care to some of the nation's most impoverished and medically underserved, offering not just primary health attention but education and resource assessment. She challenges entrenched civic, political and health care entities in the Mississippi Delta region to recognize and address the cumulative effects of social disadvantages on critical health needs. She has been known to accept payment from patients in bushels of squash. Dr. Brooks was nominated by the Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association.

A team of dean designated medical students from two medical schools in Arizona made the initial review of scores of qualified nominees. Ten finalists were evaluated by a panel of distinguished physicians and scholars with broad knowledge, both clinical and academic, in the field of healthcare disparities across the nation.

SOURCE The Health Legacy Partnership

---

 [back to top](#)

**Related Links:**

- <http://www.msms.org>

---

 **POWERED BY**  [Blogs Discussing This News Release](#)

---

Issuers of news releases and not PR Newswire are solely responsible for the accuracy of the content.  
[Terms and conditions, including restrictions on redistribution, apply.](#)  
Copyright © 1996-2009 PR Newswire Association LLC. All Rights Reserved.  
A [United Business Media](#) company.