

# News

**For: Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**

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## **HILTON HUMANITARIAN PRIZE GOES TO PARTNERS IN HEALTH INNOVATIVE PIONEER BRINGING QUALITY HEALTH CARE TO THE POOR**

- **\$1.5 million prize to PIH founded by Dr. Paul Farmer**

LOS ANGELES – September 26 -- Partners In Health, an innovative health care leader for poor societies, will receive the 2005 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1.5 million, the world's largest prize. It is awarded annually by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to an organization that is significantly alleviating human suffering.

"Partners In Health (PIH) provides 'first world' health care to the poorest societies, creating an innovative model that successfully has reversed the most devastating illnesses and returned people to productive lives," said Steven Hilton, chairman and CEO of the Hilton Foundation. "The PIH model of training local people to be the community-based health care delivery system has transcended country and cultural boundaries and is now being adopted by governments and health organizations around the world," he added.

Founded in 1987, Partners In Health successfully established its first community-based health project in Cange, a small impoverished settlement in Haiti. Today that project serves nearly a million people, treating diseases while also tackling the conditions of poverty that cause disease.

Dr. Paul Farmer, co-founder of PIH, said, "The prestigious Hilton Humanitarian Prize is a terrific boost as we seek not only to provide direct medical services in seven countries, including our own, but also to bring countless supporters into a broad and global movement to promote

basic rights for the poor. Winning the Hilton Prize is the greatest recognition yet received by Partners In Health, and we are proud, honored and grateful.”

While still expanding its work in Haiti, the organization has taken its pioneering model of care for the poor to Peru, Russia, inner-city Boston, Mexico, Guatemala, and most recently, Rwanda. Its HIV Equity Initiative, developed in Haiti, has paved the way for antiretroviral therapy for AIDS patients in resource-poor countries, and its protocol for multidrug-resistant tuberculosis has been adopted by countries around the world.

In praising the selection of PIH for the Hilton Prize, Dr. LEE Jong-wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization, said, “Partners In Health has been a pioneer in demonstrating that quality care can be provided in a sustainable way in the poorest of settings. This life-saving model will have an impact on global public health for decades to come.”

Noted Ophelia Dahl, executive director of Partners In Health, “We realized that, if we were to truly improve the lives of the poor, we must tackle the root causes of their illnesses. As a result, we address health care in the broadest possible sense—not just providing medicine, but also education, water, and housing.”

Dr. Farmer and Partners In Health were the subject of a recent best-seller, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, by journalist Tracy Kidder.

Partners In Health relies on longstanding institutional support in Boston from Harvard Medical School and one of its teaching hospitals, the Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Much of the organization’s early funding came from a Boston philanthropist, Thomas White, who is a co-founder and PIH’s major donor over the years.

Another co-founder who was also a Harvard medical student with Paul Farmer, Dr. Jim Yong Kim, is now Director of the HIV/AIDS Department at the World Health Organization. He commented, “Due to the groundbreaking work of PIH, the global community has moved from asking ‘should’ antiretroviral treatment be provided to people living with HIV/AIDS in the poorest countries to demanding to know ‘when’ it will happen and ‘how’ to do it most effectively.”

“The Hilton Prize was established in 1996 to call attention to organizations that are effective and innovative leaders in addressing humanitarian needs and to encourage others to contribute to their good work,” according to Judy Miller, vice president of the Hilton Foundation and director of the Hilton Prize.

## ***CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION***

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Partners In Health was one of nearly 200 nominees for the 2005 Hilton Prize. A distinguished international jury makes the final selection following a rigorous examination of the organizations' work.

This is the tenth anniversary of the Hilton Prize. Previous recipients are: **Heifer International** (Arkansas) 2004; **International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims** (Denmark) 2003; **SOS Children's Villages** (Austria) 2002; **St. Christopher's Hospice** (England) 2001; **Casa Alianza** (Costa Rica) 2000; **African Medical and Research Foundation** (Kenya) 1999; **Doctors Without Borders** (France) 1998; **International Rescue Committee** (New York) 1997; and **Operation Smile** (Virginia) 1996.

The Hilton Foundation was created in 1944 by hotel entrepreneur and business leader, Conrad N. Hilton, who left his fortune to the foundation with instructions to help the most disadvantaged and vulnerable throughout the world. Along with its related entities, the foundation has total assets of approximately \$2.5 billion and, since its inception, has provided nearly \$450 million in grants to organizations throughout the United States and the world. It is one of the few U.S. foundations with a worldwide mission, in keeping with the wishes of Conrad Hilton who noted that the Hilton fortune was built on the international as well as the domestic hospitality industry.

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