



Fountain House/Clubhouse International Receives \$1.5 Million Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize

Hilton Foundation CEO Steven M. Hilton presented award to NYC-based global organization whose innovative clubhouse program helps people living with mental illness lead productive lives

Prize ceremony caps day-long Hilton Humanitarian Symposium that focused on challenges and opportunities in Africa

NEW YORK CITY – October 27, 2014 – The [Conrad N. Hilton Foundation](#) tonight presented the 2014 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1.5 million to [Fountain House/Clubhouse International](#), a pioneering organization that has created a proven model to help those suffering from mental illness reclaim their lives and realize their potential through work and the support of a caring community. The Hilton Foundation gives the annual award, the world’s largest humanitarian prize, to an organization that is doing extraordinary work to alleviate human suffering. Fountain House/Clubhouse International was selected for the 2014 Prize by a prestigious independent international jury.

The 2014 Hilton Prize was formally presented to Kenneth Dudek, President of Fountain House, by Steven M. Hilton, Chairman, President and CEO of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation at a special ceremony at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City as the capstone to the Hilton Foundation Humanitarian Symposium that brings together leaders from government, academe, and non-governmental organizations. This year’s Symposium focused on the challenges and opportunities in Africa, including health, economic growth, governance, women’s leadership and early childhood education. Helen Clark, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator and former Prime Minister of New Zealand, delivered the keynote for the Prize dinner.

“Over the past 66 years, Fountain House/Clubhouse International has developed an extraordinary program to help those with severe mental illness thrive and find purpose through employment and socialization, rather than isolation and stigmatization from society,” said Hilton. “The mental health crisis in this country and globally can no longer be overlooked. It is a virtual epidemic when one out of four families includes a member with mental illness. We hope the

Prize will spotlight the work of this organization and lead to more clubhouses in the U.S. and the world, providing opportunity and hope for more and more individuals and families.”

Today Fountain House/Clubhouse International directly affects the lives of more than 100,000 people who participate in 340 clubhouses in 32 countries. The concept of membership underpins every aspect of the community. Clubhouse members have shared ownership and shared responsibility for their community starting with the “work-ordered day” that provides structure for their lives by assigning them duties to work side-by-side with staff to run the clubhouse.

“This is a great victory for the mental health community,” said Dudek, accepting the Prize for both Fountain House and its sister organization Clubhouse International. “We accept this award on behalf of the brave and dedicated team of men and women who strive determinedly to make our clubhouses a sanctuary where people living with mental illness can learn to be empowered and thrive. We are grateful to the Hilton Foundation and its panel of international jurors who, through this award, acknowledge that the Fountain House/Clubhouse International model works and that people living with mental illnesses can lead meaningful lives.”

About 450 million people worldwide suffer from mental and behavioral disorders, according to the World Health Organization. The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that one in four people in the United States develop some kind of mental illness during their lives, most often during younger years. Half of cases begin by age 14 and three-quarters by 24. Mental disorders are a factor in 90 percent of the nearly one million global suicides each year.

A second pillar of the Fountain House model is a transitional employment program in which local employers provide members with paid employment of 15-20 hours a week for six to nine months. A staff member trains with the clubhouse member and fills in if the member is unable to work. The program has proven benefits for members and employers. For example, Dow Jones & Company has employed over 360 members in New York, London and Tokyo. Other employers have included American Express Publishing, Estee Lauder Companies, Fox Television, HBO, Young & Rubicam, Museum of Modern Art, Pfizer Inc. and Cravath Swaine & Moore.

Fountain House has compelling data to support its effectiveness. It is listed in the US Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Clubhouse members have longer job tenure and higher earnings and double the employment rate as compared to individuals living

with mental illness who are not clubhouse members. It also has clear economic advantages. A two-week stay in a New York City hospital averages \$28,000. For this amount, Fountain House can secure member housing for an entire year plus access to community services, health care, education, employment and social support.

As more people learned about Fountain House and how it benefitted members, they began to establish clubhouses in their communities. Fountain House recognized the need for a central global resource to assure its program was replicated properly in new clubhouses and formed Clubhouse International in 1994 to establish and certify International Standards. Fountain House/Clubhouse International clubhouses now span the globe and independent studies have found that, compared with people living with mental illness in other programs, clubhouse members are more likely to report being in recovery; work longer and earn more; show significant improvement in their symptoms, self-esteem and quality of life after attending a clubhouse for six months; along with decreased use of psychiatric inpatient care and other social and health services.

Fountain House/Clubhouse International started in the early 1940s at Rockland State Hospital in Orangeburg, New York. Seven patients formed a self-help group that met in a hospital “club room” to prepare themselves to be discharged and cope with the challenges of finding shelter and work and dealing with relationships and inevitable relapses. Soon after leaving the hospital, they began to meet on the steps of the New York City Public Library to re-create the clubhouse experience, believing that it would sustain their recovery, provide a mutual support system and ultimately lead to changing society’s perception of people living with mental illness. They called it the “We Are Not Alone Society” which became Fountain House in 1948, named for its West 47th Street building that had a fountain in its garden.

“For almost 20 years the Hilton Prize has recognized the extraordinary work of so many remarkable humanitarian organizations that are tireless in their efforts to relieve the suffering of some the world’s most in need populations,” said Judy Miller, vice president of the Hilton Foundation and director of the Hilton Humanitarian Prize. “We know that Fountain House/Clubhouse International’s inspiring work will initiate even more focus on what is finally being recognized as a serious global issue—the mental wellbeing of our world’s men and women.”

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About the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize: The 2014 Hilton Prize will be presented at the annual Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize Dinner on October 27, 2014 at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City following a one-day Humanitarian Symposium. The symposium gathers policymakers and leaders in the humanitarian field to address the most challenging issues facing the billions of people who make up the world's most vulnerable populations. **Africa: Continent at the Threshold** is the theme this year.

The current Hilton Prize jury includes: **Princess Salimah Aga Khan**, international ambassador for SOS Kinderdorf International; **Catherine A. Bertini**, professor of public administration, Syracuse University, and former executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme; **Gro Harlem Brundtland, MPH**, former director-general of the World Health Organization and former prime minister of Norway; **James R. Galbraith**, director, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; **Strive Masiyiwa**, humanitarian, founder and executive chairman of Econet Wireless; **Hawley Hilton McAuliffe**, director, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; and **Professor Amartya Sen**, Nobel Prize Laureate in economics and Lamont University professor at Harvard University.

The **Hilton Prize Laureates** have formed a Collaborative to combine forces in the field in order to leverage their unique missions and achieve collective impact globally. These recognized leaders in the humanitarian world, include: **ECPAT International** (Thailand) 2013; **Help Age International** (United Kingdom) 2012; **Handicap International** (France), 2011; **Aravind Eye Care System** (India) 2010; **PATH** (Washington), 2009; **BRAC** (Bangladesh), 2008; **Tostan** (Senegal), 2007; **Women for Women International** (Washington, DC), 2006; **Partners In Health** (Massachusetts), 2005; **Heifer International** (Arkansas), 2004; **International Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims** (Denmark), 2003; **SOS Children's Villages** (Austria), 2002; **St. Christopher's Hospice** (United Kingdom), 2001; **Casa Alianza** (Costa Rica), 2000; **AMREF Health Africa** (Kenya), 1999; **Doctors Without Borders** (France), 1998; **International Rescue Committee** (New York), 1997; and **Operation Smile** (Virginia), 1996.

About the Hilton Foundation: The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation was created in 1944 by international business pioneer Conrad N. Hilton, who founded Hilton Hotels and left his fortune to help the world's disadvantaged and vulnerable people. The Foundation currently conducts strategic initiatives in six priority areas: providing safe water, ending chronic homelessness, preventing substance abuse, helping children affected by HIV and AIDS, supporting transition-age youth in foster care, and extending Conrad Hilton's support for the work of Catholic Sisters. In addition, following selection by an independent international jury, the Foundation annually awards the \$1.5 million Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize to a nonprofit organization doing extraordinary work to reduce human suffering. From its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants, distributing \$92 million in the U.S. and around the world in 2013. The Foundation's current assets are approximately \$2.4 billion. For more information, please visit www.hiltonfoundation.org.