



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

Hilton Prize international jury selects NYC-based global organization whose innovative clubhouse program helps people living with mental illness lead productive lives

NEW YORK CITY – July 18, 2014 – [Fountain House/Clubhouse International](#), a pioneering organization that has created a successful model to help those suffering from mental illness to reclaim their lives and realize their potential through work and the support of a caring community, has been selected to receive the 2014 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize of \$1.5 million. The [Conrad N. Hilton Foundation](#) presents the annual award, the world's largest humanitarian prize, to an organization that is doing extraordinary work to alleviate human suffering. An independent international jury makes the final selection.

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.

“The problem is staggering in its global impact and scale with significant repercussions that adversely affect millions of families and society as a whole,” said Steven M. Hilton, Chairman, President and CEO of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. “Mental illness is an issue that touches significant areas the Hilton Foundation has been working on for many years, such as chronic homelessness and substance use. The Fountain House/Clubhouse International program of social relationships and meaningful work has literally saved thousands of lives over the past 66 years. Its program is a beacon of hope for those living with mental illness who are too often consigned to lives of homelessness, imprisonment, social stigma and isolation.”

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.

“I have been moved by the fact that Fountain House purposefully depends on people with mental illness for its daily operation and future from answering phones to designing and running programs and serving on the board of directors,” said Glenn Close, who has been a volunteer at Fountain House New York and previously nominated the organization for the Hilton Prize. “Shared responsibility builds self esteem and alleviates the stigma and isolation that so often haunt people with mental disorders.” Close, inspired by what she learned at Fountain House, teamed with them and several other key mental health organizations to launch her own anti-stigma campaign [BringChange2Mind](#).

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., Cravath Swaine & Moore and many others.

“It is with enormous gratitude that Fountain House/Clubhouse International accepts the Hilton Humanitarian Prize,” said Kenneth Dudek, President of Fountain House. “With this award, the Hilton Foundation and its international jurors recognize mental illness as a global humanitarian crisis and acknowledge Fountain House/Clubhouse International’s evidenced-based approach to empowering people living with mental illness throughout the world. The prize belongs to the courageous and hardworking people connected to clubhouses everywhere.”

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.

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.

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. There are 10 Clubhouse International training centers in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia and Australia. 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.

Poor preventive care is an epidemic among people with serious mental illness, resulting in a life expectancy in the United States that is 25 years shorter than the national average. In October 2011, Fountain House opened the Peter B. Lewis and Adam Lewis Wellness Center in its New York location to promote healthy diets and exercise and to reduce obesity, smoking and diabetes rates. The Wellness Center coordinates with the Sidney Baer, Jr. Center, a joint medical facility of Fountain House and St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospital in New York. The Baer Center has doubled the number of club members who receive psychiatric services from 300 to 600 and primary medical care from 500 to 1,000. The re-hospitalization rate at the center is 7 percent compared with 50 percent for the U.S. population living with mental illness.

“Fountain House is an organization whose work has never been more relevant in our world as we sadly see in daily headlines,” says Hilton. “Its work demonstrates that we can unshackle those with mental disorders from isolation and stigma and embrace them as productive independent people with talents and contributions important to our society.”

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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.