

As Healthcare Costs Escalate, A New George and Regi Herzlinger Industry Award Shines a Spotlight on Innovation Education

The winners of the first ever CAHME/George and Regi Herzlinger Innovation Education Award have just been announced. Regi Herzlinger explains why rewarding, supporting, and encouraging innovation education is so critical to solving the challenges of our industry.

Three very different institutions of higher learning have been honored for their excellent work in healthcare innovation education by receiving the new national George and Regi Herzlinger Innovation Education Award. Trinity University, Florida International University, and Thomas Jefferson University are the first ever recipients at the Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) Accredited programs 7th annual Awards for Excellence ceremony

Regina E. Herzlinger who, with her husband George, created the award, is passionate about innovation. The Nancy R. McPherson Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School, she teaches innovation courses that are in high demand. Her Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the subject attracted 17,000 global viewers the last time it was shown in 2021. And now she has a new book, *Innovating in Healthcare: Creating Breakthrough Services, Products and Business Models*, due out in 2023.

Herzlinger says the idea behind the new award is to recognize and encourage schools that are bringing much-needed education about innovation to healthcare management programs.

“Healthcare is wonderful, but it needs innovation,” she asserts. “The cost of hospital services has risen rapidly over the past decades—it has outstripped virtually every kind of consumable. We need to control these costs because too many people can’t get access to healthcare. Innovation can play a huge role in keeping goods and services affordable.”

“What’s more, students want to work for innovative firms,” she adds. “They’re going less to hospitals, health systems and physician practices but instead are more interested in what they perceive to be innovative organizations—for example, those focused on pharma, biotech, medical devices, insurance, and digital health.”

Given these realities, there is a big opportunity for schools to place more focus on innovation, says Herzlinger. She and Eugene Schneller, a professor at Arizona State University, researched what CEOs, Human Resource professionals, and recruiters want to see from healthcare graduates. They matched the findings to a word cloud depicting the concepts most frequently mentioned in descriptions of health management courses offered by many of the leading schools in the field.

programs can have in providing the foundation in the principles of innovation education for future leaders.

The CAHME/George and Regi Herzlinger Innovation Education Awards were presented during CAHME's 7th annual Awards for Excellence ceremony during the ACHE Congress on Healthcare Leadership on March 27-31, 2022.

“We were thrilled to partner with CAHME to select the diverse array of winners—ranging from the long-established program at Trinity, to FIU with its many first-generation and non-traditional programs, to Thomas Jefferson Medical School with its amazing medical innovation and accompanying business plan,” says Herzlinger. “It was great to recognize this gamut of schools, students, and approaches.”

The applicants were judged by a committee of Blue-Ribbon Panelists:

Regi Herzlinger, DBA, Professor, Harvard Business School

Quint Studer, MS, Founder & CEO, Studer Community Institute

Dr. Andrew Jay, General Partner, Barna Health Fund

Eugene Schneller, PhD, Professor, Arizona State University

Tom Robinson, MBA, Managing Partner & Co-Founder, RobinsonButler, LLC

Panelist Quint Studer also spontaneously and graciously helped supplement the grant.

Here is a quick look at why each recipient was selected:

GOLD Recipient: Trinity University Department of Healthcare Administration (HCAD) Program. Panelists felt it was evident that innovative principles are woven into the program's curriculum, with a thoughtful design of course progression to ensure all students are exposed to innovation content across multiple courses. They were particularly impressed by the program's Tiger Tank competition, and the launch of the inaugural Healthcare PRISm Pitch Competition, which is intended to widely disseminate student ideas about healthcare innovation.

Healthcare PRISm prompts students to explore, identify, and validate current challenges and problems in healthcare. Each small team independently develops an innovative solution to their identified problem through human-centered thinking and creative problem solving. The award fund to grow the Healthcare PRISm Pitch Competition will engage diverse innovators across the country, supporting the development of healthcare innovation.

SILVER Recipient—Florida International University Healthcare Master of Business Administration (HCMBA) Program. Panelists felt that faculty research, local partnerships, coursework, and complimentary certifications for students clearly illustrate the uniqueness and innovative qualities of FIU's program. One example that stands out is Marketing Management course MAR 6805. The curriculum is designed for students to provide actual marketing plans for use by West Kendall Baptist Hospital and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, respectively. These two local hospitals are the first to enter into partnerships with the FIU HCMBA program to implement the marketing strategy curriculum but they expect to expand to other organizations as well.

The panelists were also impressed by the program's dedication to embracing diversity and by FIU's commitment to multicultural and working students. The use of award funds for faculty research grants and student scholarships is critical to developing innovative future leaders.

SILVER Recipient—Thomas Jefferson University Healthcare Quality & Safety (HQS) Program. Panelists noted the rigor of the program and the students' Capstones as an essential component of developing innovative future leaders. In their Capstones they need to show how they have convinced others to change, through stakeholder analyses; how they have measured their change, with leading, lagging, and balancing measures; how their project comports with the best evidence out there, through Cochrane models and academic references; and how their project is sustainable, through a business case and financial return on investment.

The panelists were also impressed by the student project and the business plan to assure that it would be implemented --Improving Compliance with Preoperative Nasal Povidone-Iodine to Prevent Surgical Site Infection: A Pilot Quality Improvement Project in Vascular and Neurosurgery Units in a Community Teaching Hospital—and believe it is critical to share with the field.

“We were blessed with great applicants and a terrific blue ribbon committee,” says Herzlinger. “We had a hard time choosing the winners. And we were also honored that CAHME, which is an extraordinarily wonderful organization, and our Blue Ribbon Committee agreed to partner with us.”

“Programs like these, and the new ones I feel confident will arise in the future, will a major role in innovating the status quo in healthcare and implementing new solutions that lower costs while increasing both quality and access,” she adds.

###