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2012 Ned R. McWherter Leadership Award Winner Announced

Dennis Vonderfecht, President of Mountain States Health Alliance, Receives Prestigious Honor

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) is pleased to announce that Dennis Vonderfecht, President and CEO of Mountain States Health Alliance (MSHA), has been named the 2012 Ned R. McWherter Leadership Award winner.

The Ned R. McWherter Leadership Award annually recognizes an individual who exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of performance excellence and has furthered performance improvement beyond the boundaries of his or her organization.

“Dennis has been a leader in working to improve health and healthcare in Tennessee and the nation,” said Tennessee Health Commissioner John Dreyzehner, MD, MPH. “We congratulate him and appreciate that he continues his leadership in lending his time and talent to Governor Haslam’s Health and Wellness Taskforce.

McWherter Leadership Award winners can come from any industry sector. They are committed to the core values of the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence and the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*, the nationally recognized framework that helps organizations align resources; improve communication, productivity, and effectiveness; and achieve strategic goals.

Vonderfecht leads a network of 13 not-for-profit hospitals that serves a 29-county, four-state region (Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, Southeastern Kentucky and Western North Carolina). He and his 13,500 team members, physicians and volunteers are committed to Mountain States’ mission of bringing loving care to health care. Vonderfecht uses the Baldrige criteria as a business model for attaining performance excellence for the health care system. Mountain States Health Alliance has been recognized twice as a TNCPE Excellence Award recipient (2009 and 2005). It is one of only two organizations to have realized this achievement.

“Dennis is a role model leader dedicated to performance excellence,” said TNCPE President and CEO Katie Rawls. “He has known and embraced for years what a national Thompson Reuters study recently confirmed that hospitals with Baldrige activity significantly outperform similar hospitals without Baldrige activity.”

The McWherter Award is named after former Tennessee Governor Ned R. McWherter, who was governor when TNCPE was founded in 1993. His support for the program acknowledged the value of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* as an integral tool that can help Tennessee businesses and organizations thrive. Previous honorees include Dr. Bob Bell (President Tennessee Tech University), Dr. Andy Czuchry (AFG Chair of Excellence ETSU), Jan McNally (Director Leadership Development Covenant Health), Ed Scott (Treasurer Caterpillar, Inc.), Dr. Susan Williams (Professor of Management Belmont University), Dr. R. Michael Browder (CEO Bristol Tennessee Essential Services), David McClaskey (President Pal’s Business Excellence Institute).

Vonderfecht will accept the award at the TNCPE Excellence in Tennessee Awards Banquet on February 22nd at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs. For more information, visit: www.tncpe.org/Excellence2012.

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