



Business Excellence, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dr. Manu Vora, Recipient of 2011 Ellis Island Medal of Honor

NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS, May 11, 2011 - The National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO) selected **Dr. Manu Vora** as a recipient of the **2011 Ellis Island Medal of Honor**. The Medal was presented in a special ceremony on **Saturday, May 7, 2011** on the Ellis Island in New York.

Each year since 1986, NECO – whose mission is to honor our diverse Past, to advocate for positive change in the Present, and to build strong leaders for the Future – has honored our nation's diverse past by sponsoring the Ellis Island Medals of Honor. The Ellis Island Medals of Honor annually pays tribute to the ancestry groups that comprise America's unique cultural mosaic. The Medals are presented on Ellis Island, in a dramatic ceremony, to American citizens of diverse origins for their outstanding contributions to their communities, their nation and the world.

Past Ellis Island Medal of Honor recipients include six Presidents of the United States, Nobel Prize winners, athletes, leaders of industry, artists and others whose work has made a lasting impact on humanity. They are awarded annually to outstanding American citizens, from all walks of life, who have distinguished themselves through their significant contributions to this country. The Ellis Island Medal of Honor ranks among the nation's most prestigious awards. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have officially recognized the Ellis Island Medals of Honor, and each year the recipients are listed in the Congressional Record. To date, more than 1,600 American citizens have received Ellis Island Medals of Honor.

Dr. Manu Vora of Naperville, Illinois is Chairman and President of Business Excellence, Inc., a global quality management consulting firm. He serves as an Adjunct Professor at the Northern Illinois University's College of Business. He has delivered over 270 presentations on business excellence and quality management topics around the world in Africa, Asia Pacific, Caribbean and Central America, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the United States. He served as a Chief Judge at the Illinois Team Excellence Award Program from 1993-1999 and is serving on the Board of Examiners of the Global Performance Excellence Award Program since 2004.

He has served on the board of directors of the American Society for Quality (ASQ), the world's largest network of quality resources and experts. He has been honored with the ASQ's Distinguished Service Medal, Grant Medal and Lancaster Medal. He is an ASQ Certified Quality Engineer and a Fellow member of ASQ. He holds B.S. in chemical engineering from Banaras Hindu University, India, M.S. and Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), Chicago and an MBA with marketing management from Keller Graduate School of Management, Chicago. In 1968, he came to the United States on a J. N. Tata Endowment Scholarship to pursue his graduate work at IIT, Chicago.

Vora is the founding director and president of the Blind Foundation for India (BFI) which has since 1989 raised over \$3.5 million to serve over 15 million blind people in India. The mission of BFI is to prevent and cure blindness and educate and rehabilitate permanently blind people in India. BFI has supported 100,000 free Cataract operations, donated 96 mobile vans, distributed 10,000 Braille kits to blind children, performed eye sight checkup for over one million people and completed child sight projects for over 400,000 school-aged children. For his BFI service, he has received Paul Harris Fellow Medal from The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. For further information about BFI, please visit: www.blindfoundation.org.

He also served as a chair of "Save The Children Holiday Fund Drive" at AT&T Bell Laboratories/ Lucent Technologies from 1986 through 1999 sponsoring 52 children in 19 countries around the world. He has been honored with the Save The Children Federation's Distinguished Service Award in 1990. He served as a president of the Pratham Chicago chapter in 2009. Established in 1994 in Mumbai, India, Pratham is the largest non-governmental organization working to provide quality education to the underprivileged children of India.



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From 2000-2010, he served as an Executive Director for the GOSUMEC Foundation to support the Seth G.S. Medical College and K.E.M. Hospital in Mumbai, India with over \$225,000 in health care technology and educational projects.

Dr. Vora was recently honored with “The President’s Call to Service Award” for his lifetime volunteer service. The US President’s Volunteer Service Award program is managed by The President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation in conjunction with Corporation for National and Community Service. The award is part of the President’s Volunteer Service Award program and honors individuals, families and groups for service earned over the course of a lifetime.

Some previous Medalists include: U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist; Generals Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin Powell; Sen. John McCain; Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell; Mayor Rudolph Giuliani; U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno; FBI Director Louis Freeh, Lee Iacocca; Dr. Michael E. DeBakey; Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao; Rosa Parks; Elie Wiesel; Frank Sinatra; Bob Hope; Opera diva Renee Fleming; Yogi Berra; Muhammad Ali; Arnold Palmer; Tom Brokaw; Walter Cronkite; Barbara Walters; Mike Wallace; Quincy Jones; Gloria Estefan, Jane Seymour, Siegfried & Roy, Gary Sinise, H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President – United Nations 61st Session General Assembly (International Recipient), just to name a few.

According to Nasser J. Kazeminy, Chairman of NECO, “NECO is about investing in the power of caring, whereas people from all cultures and walks of life stand together arm in arm to make a real difference in our world through shared compassion and philanthropy – not just for now, but to also inspire future generations who will continue to preserve and build upon the legacy that each of our cultures has contributed. With our Medalists, we will see America – at its best. We will see every color, every race from so many walks of life – together – celebrating – the magic that is America. Our Medalists’ influence and achievements truly inspire and touch the lives of people everywhere.”

About NECO

NECO was created in 1984 on the conviction of its founder, William Denis Fugazy, Sr. that the diversity of the American people is what makes this nation great.

NECO's mission is simple: to honor our diverse Past, to advocate for positive change in the Present, and to build strong leaders for the Future.

NECO does this with one goal in mind: Unity through Diversity: Investing in the Power of Caring.

NECO is a non profit 501(c)(3) organization with strategic alliances that allow us to support a range of diverse programs and insure that every dollar we spend goes to creating a better world in the future for us all.

In addition to hosting the Ellis Island Medals of Honor, NECO is proud to have formed meaningful and lasting partnerships with some of the most revolutionary humanitarian causes in the world. In these uncertain and difficult times, our promise to make the world a better place and uphold the integrity of all contributions still rings true. Some of these include the Gift of Life International, Children In Need Institute (CINI), The Ellis Island Immigration Museum, The Peopling of America Center, National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame, Boys Hope Girls Hope and Concern Worldwide.

For further information about NECO and the Ellis Island Medals of Honor, please visit: www.neco.org.

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