

CHAPTER 8

A CHALLENGE: BUILD THE BEST FOR THE HEALTH OF OUR NATION

I dedicated this book to my son, who I said is as much a voice as I am in this book. He railed against inequities in our society, had a strong social conscience and stood up for what he believed in. The day before he died he was on Northwest Afternoon, on KOMO-TV telling parents and grandparents not to buy Starter Jackets for their children and grandchildren, because stealing them was an initiation rite for gangs. He had been assaulted three times in one month in three different places by three different groups of kids the month before he died. Instead of hiding out, he spoke out publicly to warn families about what can happen.

He taught me how so very precious and what special gifts our children are. They are the true miracles. I know that too well because he is gone. I have wanted to leave something in his name that would honor him and honor the young people of this country who also want to make a difference as my son wanted to do and did. Here it is.

CHALLENGE TO THE UNIVERSITIES OF AMERICA

I want you to put the energies, creativity and abilities of the next generation to the task of designing a better health care system for America. In much the same way that engineering students compete to build a better robot or solar-powered car, I want to see graduate students in a variety of disciplines – business, medicine, public health, social work, public affairs, or others come together to devise a way out of the mess we are in.

Leaving the task to the special interest groups that keep bringing the same tired cliches and decades-old battles to the table doesn't work. It is time to open the competition to aspiring young professionals with everything to gain and no baggage. Let's see what they come up with.

To that end, I propose the following "*For the Health of the Nation Competition*." I challenge:

- Interdisciplinary teams from universities to compete to develop the best plan for a reformed health care system for the U.S.

- Teams that participate will compete within their state/region, with the finalists competing nationally.

THREE TYPES OF PRIZES WILL BE OFFERED.

- a) The top three will win cash prizes to be awarded to their universities: \$3,000, \$2,000, and \$1,000 respectively, along with a citation.

- b) Contest organizers will enlist a bi-partisan group to introduce the winning idea as a bill, for consideration by the U.S. Congress.
- c) Funds from my estate will also be donated to the winning university to create a scholarship in my son's name: "The **Remi Miles Kaemke** Making a Difference Scholarship."

The contest will be in effect through Calendar Year 2002, with an announcement of the winners on June 15, 2003.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CONTEST

Entries will be rated on overall quality, as well as on ability to incorporate the following elements. To be competitive an entry must:

- 1) **Incorporate the principals** outlined in the Health Care Magna Carta in Chapter 7; teams wishing to add to, or refute, them must explain why.
- 2) **Be interdisciplinary.** More than one academic or professional discipline must be involved. (e.g., a university's team cannot consist solely of medical students or business students. At a minimum Universities are encouraged to include team members from their schools of Business, health sciences, and public affairs; other disciplines are welcome as well, such as psychology, anthropology, art, engineering, social work, law, or others).

3) Take the needs of all key players into account. Businesses, government, providers and consumers, voters—all have a stake in any solution, and their interests must be considered.

4) Demonstrate a sustainable financing mechanism. If you truly figure this out, you will also receive an honorary genius award.

5) Find a way to assure everyone has insurance and is protected, and must describe any financial contributions expected.

6) Demonstrate accountability and responsibility from all the stakeholders.

7). Be workable.

THE JUDGES

Every state electing to participate in the contest will be asked to form a panel of 9 judges for this contest, drawn from the following categories:

Employers: large and small

Consumers

Health care providers

Independent Foundations

Public policy officials

Former government officials

Former elected officials

Unions

THE PROCESS

Each university that elects to participate must send us a letter of intent no later than June 1, 2002. We will then work with student and professional leadership associations regionally and nationally to select state and national review panels.

Using the Federal region model, we will have 10 regional contests, select 10 finalists who will then present to the national review panel.

Winners will be announced on June 15, 2003.

So, get going. We're busy here working out the review details.

