

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

MEDIA RELEASE

Dr. Paul Farmer: "A Man Who Would Save The World" *

April 21 -- Global Health Leader Says Healthcare is a Basic Human Right

For Immediate Release

(ELIZABETHTOWN, PA April 3, 2009) – Say, "quality healthcare cannot be delivered in resource-poor communities," and Dr. Paul Farmer would vehemently disagree. A "genius," a leading social entrepreneur, a humanitarian and a physician -- these are characterizations of Dr. Paul Farmer, a man who co-founded a global health concern at the age of 28, believing that healthcare is a basic human right of every person. On April 21, 2009 Dr. Farmer joins Elizabethtown College as part of the campus's annual Scholarship and Creative Arts Day, an annual celebration of scholarly and creative accomplishments of E-town students including academic presentations, performances and exhibits. The all-day event features Dr. Farmer as the keynote speaker at 11:00 a.m. in the Leffler Chapel.

Dr. Farmer, currently the Presley Professor of Medical Anthropology at Harvard University and an attending physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, grew up in humble but loving circumstances, living in a bus and then a houseboat with his family of eight. That, he feels, taught him to be resilient rather than hungry for wealth. Farmer graduated summa cum laude from Duke University and he received his M.D. and Ph.D. degrees in medical anthropology, both from Harvard. With a specialty in infectious diseases, he co-founded [Partners in Health](#) in 1987. PIH is an organization that considers its mission both medical and moral, not founded simply on charity. Dr. Farmer's specialties include treatment of AIDS and tuberculosis.

Thirteen years after startup, his organization received \$44 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to study MDR-TB (multi drug resistant) research and treatment with Harvard Medical School. His hospital in Haiti, once serving a few hundred patients, had almost 2 million patient visits last year. He estimates that ten million

* From the title of a book about Dr. Paul Farmer by Tracy Kidder titled "'Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure The World'"

people globally die each year from treatable diseases. And he hasn't stopped his global trek, bringing medicine, hope and healthcare; literally giving lives back to millions of poverty-stricken people in nine countries, including the United States. His priority now is training the next generation of physicians to carry on his mission through PIH.

Farmer has written several books including "Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights and the New War on the Poor," and has received many awards including the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Award for Humanitarian Contributions to the Health of Humankind, the American Medical Association's International Physician (Nathan Davis) Award, the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship and the MacArthur Foundation "genius award" in recognition of his work. He donated the proceeds of this award to create the Institute for Health and Human Justice, the research and advocacy arm of PIH.

Dr. Farmer's message will have special significance here at Elizabethtown College, a small but distinguished college whose very mission is "Educate for Service." As President Ted Long put this, "Our belief that learning is most noble when used to benefit others – in our communities, the country and the world – is exemplified by Dr. Farmer. He will be an inspiration to our students and teach them how they too can use their knowledge, ideas and expertise to make the world a better place. I am eager to hear Dr. Farmer's ideas on bringing modern healthcare options to the neediest of people around the world."

Located in southeastern Pennsylvania, Elizabethtown College offers its 1,900 students more than 50 academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences and professional studies. Driven by its motto to "Educate for Service," Elizabethtown centers learning in strong relationships, links classroom instruction with experiential learning emphasizes international and cross-cultural perspectives and nurtures the capacity for lives of purpose.

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