

2010 Basil Hetzel Award

Nicholas D. Kristof

New York Times

Dr. Basil Hetzel has been at the forefront of the global campaign to overcome iodine deficiency and its associated mental impairment, firmly establishing the causal role of iodine deficiency in brain damage to newborns. To honor his leadership, the International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency annually honors the person making the most significant public reportage of iodine deficiency disorders and the necessity of sustainable national programs.

Nicholas D. Kristof of the New York Times is the inaugural winner of the Basil Hetzel Award. Mr. Kristof has displayed an unerring understanding of the crucial role of micronutrients and of iodized salt in sustaining adequate iodine nutrition. Using columns in the opinion-leading New York Times, Mr. Kristof has stimulated sympathy for the cause of iodine nutrition, popularized understanding of the "hidden hunger" of micronutrient malnutrition and called the attention to the role of iodized salt in "Raising the World's I.Q."

Without his work, the world would not know the pennies-per-year cost and compelling cost-benefit ratios of various public health interventions and that iodizing salt and fortifying other foods with micronutrients is an unrivaled public investment opportunity. Effective journalists understand the importance of putting a "human face" on news reportage. Mr. Kristof's understanding of the crucial contribution of salt iodization, happily, has been married to his compassion and communication skills. His stories from South Asia and West Africa have universal application, enormous power and compelling character. Like Dr. Basil Hetzel, Mr. Kristof has seen an important problem, taken time to understand the problem and its causes, and projected himself in leadership to make the world a better place for us all.

Reference:

"Raising the World's I.Q." December 4, 2008

"The Hidden Hunger" May 24, 2009

"The Women's Crusade" August 23, 2009

Gerard N Burrow

Gerard N. Burrow, chairman, ICCIDD

June 24, 2010