



WOMENHEART

THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR
WOMEN WITH HEART DISEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WomenHeart Celebrates 20th Annual and First Virtual Wenger Awards

Washington, D.C.— October 23, 2020 – WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease recognized contributions to women’s heart health at its 20 annual and first virtual Wenger Awards last night.

“This year has thrown many new challenges our way and yet we have amazing stories of our resilience and perseverance, despite these setbacks,” said Gayathri Badrinath, Acting Chair of the Board of Directors. “We reinvented our support model, switching rapidly from in-person to virtual support groups, produced a new educational webinar series and launched an app that connects women seeking one-on-one support with our trained *WomenHeart Champions*. We also continue to advance a strong government policy agenda.” Women living with or at risk of heart disease can participate in and view [HeartTalks](#) webinars and connect with a Champion through [SisterMatch](#) free of charge thanks to the generous support of our donors.

Celina Gorre, CEO of WomenHeart, added, “As we look forward, WomenHeart will build on the successes of reaching into the homes of women with heart disease to expand the number of women we support and redouble our efforts in addressing health disparities in the hardest hit communities.”

Wenger Award recipients include Representative Pramila Jayapal, Nakela Cook, M.D., Martha Gulati, M.D., the filmmakers of *Ms. Diagnosed* and the Preeclampsia Foundation who were recognized at the virtual awards ceremony.

Named after Nanette Kass Wenger, M.D., a pioneer in women’s cardiovascular medicine and research, the Wenger Awards is the only annual event that recognizes individuals and organizations for their extraordinary contributions to women’s heart health.

The 2020 Wenger Awards Honorees were recognized for their contributions in public service, medical leadership, public policy, media and patient advocacy:

- **Nakela Cook, MD, MPH, FACC—Excellence in Public Service**— Dr. Cook is the Executive Director of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Prior to that, she was Chief of Staff and Senior Scientific Officer at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) at NIH where she established several trans-Institute teams on women’s health, expanding efforts to address the critical research needs of women living with or at risk of heart disease.
- **Martha Gulati, MD, MS, FACC, FAHA— Excellence in Medical Leadership**— Dr. Gulati is the Division Chief of Cardiology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine and a member of WomenHeart’s Scientific Advisory Council. She is a steadfast leader of

patient education and empowerment as the Editor-in-Chief of CardioSmart and at the forefront of policy and practice within the field, having a significant impact on the diagnosis and treatment of women with heart disease.

- **Honorable Pramila Jayapal (D-WA)— Excellence in Public Policy—** Congresswoman Jayapal has been a member of Congress representing Seattle, WA since 2017. She is a fearless advocate for women’s health care and has worked to address health disparities through the introduction of bills such as the South Asian Heart Health Awareness and Research Act.
- **Filmmakers of *Ms. Diagnosed*— Excellence in Media—** Tricia Regan, Director, Producer, Cinematographer; Jennifer Mieres, MD, Executive Producer; Stacey Rosen, M.D., Executive Producer; Lori Russo, Executive Producer *Ms. Diagnosed*, a documentary about misdiagnosis of heart disease in women, uncovers the nearly lethal misdiagnosis of three women due to a health care system that often fails women patients. It is a call to empower and engage all of us to demand change to the medical system and to advocate for ourselves.
- **Preeclampsia Foundation — Excellence in Patient Advocacy—** The Foundation works to improve diagnosis, management and prevention of preeclampsia through research and improved healthcare practices. The organization has helped increase patient education and awareness of preeclampsia and heart disease, enhanced legislation to ensure the inclusion of patients in research, and advanced research through the Preeclampsia Registry, with over 5,000 patients.

The event’s sponsors include Bristol-Myers Squibb, Pfizer, Novartis, Amgen, Esperion, Abbott and NovoNordisk.

To learn more about the Wenger Awards, visit <https://www.womenheart.org/wenger-awards/>

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WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

As the leading voice for the nearly 48 million American women living with or at risk of heart disease, WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease is the nation's only patient-centered organization solely dedicated to advancing women's heart health through patient support, community education, and advocacy. To donate, visit www.womenheart.org.