



# WOMENHEART

THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR  
WOMEN WITH HEART DISEASE

# Annual Report 2022



# Welcome!



## From the Board Chair, Kathy Webster

As a long-time WomenHeart Champion and Leader, I am pleased to have the opportunity to showcase WomenHeart's important work. WomenHeart is a patient-focused organization with the mission of improving the lives of women living with or at risk of heart disease, the number one health threat for women, while fighting for equity in heart health. We work with dedication, passion and resilience to fulfill our mission!



The last few years presented tremendous and unthinkable challenges to the entire world, and WomenHeart was not spared. Heart disease didn't take a break--it stayed with those of us who already live with it, and it presented itself to some of us for the first time. Like always, we knew that women would need access to reputable guidance from medical providers, and we knew they would need education and support to help navigate the difficult and downright scary times.

This is why I am so proud of WomenHeart and our Champions - we didn't stop. We have navigated the tough times - thinking about ways to do things better and safer and more equitably - without ever losing sight of improving the lives of women. Having pivoted to virtual support groups and online education opportunities in the early months of the pandemic, many Champions continue to combine tech skills with their entrepreneurial spirit to engage community members online, while also incorporating in-person and hybrid events - whatever meets the needs of the community. Kudos to all of you!!

In 2022, we started to put our new strategic plan - adopted at the end of 2021 - into practice. We invested in our social media presence to help expand our reach, we took the necessary steps to ensure that WomenHeart was financially sound with the capacity to grow, and we increased our efforts focused on healthy equity, diversity and inclusion.

As you read this Annual Report, please reflect on our many accomplishments and our mission, and know that we are committed to growing and improving our reach in the future. We can do this because of the dedicated work of Celina and her team and because of WomenHeart Champions throughout the United States. And finally, we can do what we do because of the generous support of our partners. Our hearts are filled with gratitude for all who work to improve the lives of women, and we hope you will continue to value and support the important work that we have ahead of us.

*Kathy Webster*

# From the Desk of the CEO



## Celina Gorre

In 2022, WomenHeart had one of its best years in its 23-year history. Now, why would I say that, given we didn't raise the most money, recruit the most Champions or reach the most women? This assertion comes from the fact that in the first year of our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, we achieved three key aims: 1) taking our experience with the COVID-19 pandemic and harnessing the lessons learned to feed into our strategic goals; 2) establishing WomenHeart as a leading voice in the heart health equity space; and 3) reaching into the WomenHeart Champion community to expand our reach and engagement of and by Champions.



I can still remember the day – March 13, 2020 – when we decided to suspend all WomenHeart activities for what we all assumed would be a few weeks at most. When it became clear that the crisis would be much longer, every single part of the WomenHeart community rolled up our sleeves. The staff, Board, Champions, Scientific Advisory Council, our Corporate Advisory Council, donors and additional funding partners worked together to ensure that women across the country, and in some cases around the world, had access to critical information and support about their risks, diagnoses, treatment and management of heart disease. Fast-forward to 2022 to celebrate the resilience that the entire community has shown in the face of the global COVID-19 crisis.

The year also saw WomenHeart kicking off its health equity initiative with the aim of giving voice to the inequities that all women face when it comes to addressing their risk factors, getting a diagnosis and then being treated and managed once a diagnosis has been established. At each step along the way, women, and especially women from communities of color as well as those who face barriers from multiple social determinants of health, still experience the unjust burden of poorer health outcomes than men given a similar diagnosis.

Finally, 2022 gave WomenHeart its first-ever Champion Advisory Team (CAT) – a representative group of our amazing volunteers. The aim of the CAT is to provide the staff and Board of WomenHeart direct access to Champions who can share their perspective on ways that we can continue to improve our programs to effectively achieve our mission. As WomenHeart continues its own journey in building back better, I am extremely proud of the work of the staff, the Board and the Champions, which continues to shore up the solid foundation on which WomenHeart can flourish for many more years to come. Thank you for joining us on this journey to better heart health for all women.

Together we are saving lives,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Celina'.



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# WomenHeart Mission

WomenHeart is the first and only national patient-centered organization dedicated to serving women living with or at risk of heart disease.

WomenHeart's mission is to improve the lives of women with or at risk of heart disease, while fighting for equity in heart health.

## OUR VALUES

**PATIENT-CENTERED.** WomenHeart is committed to serving the needs of women with diagnosed heart disease.

**EMPOWERMENT.** WomenHeart believes that education, support and training enable women to take charge of their heart health and advocate for other women.

**EQUALITY.** WomenHeart is dedicated to ensuring that women have equal access as men to accurate cardiac diagnostic testing and proper treatment.

**INCLUSIVENESS.** WomenHeart believes that diversity strengthens and enriches every aspect of our organization.

**COLLABORATION.** WomenHeart actively seeks meaningful and productive partnerships with other organizations to educate women about heart disease.

**QUALITY.** WomenHeart is committed to rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement of all aspects of our organization.



# WomenHeart Looks Back



## Timeline of 2022



January 13th SAC Meeting

February #29DaysOfHeart Campaign

February 25th HeartTalks on Thriving

March 2nd Virtual Lobby Day

April 3-4th ACC Meetings

May 22nd In-Person Board Meeting

May 23rd Wenger Awards

August HeartTalks on Vaccines

September 15th NHA Meeting

October 7-10th Science & Leadership Symposium

October 17th HeartTalks on Sleep

November 4-7th AHA Meetings

December 10th Virtual Board Meeting



# Wenger AWARDS

On May 23, 2022, guests gathered in the Intercontinental Hotel in Washington, DC to celebrate four individuals for their extraordinary contributions to women’s heart health. The night also included a presentation by WomenHeart Champions recognizing Dr. Sharonne Hayes and her impact as the Medical Director of our annual Science & Leadership Symposium for the last two decades. They announced that in 2023, WomenHeart would start awarding a WomenHeart Champion with the Dr. Sharonne N. Hayes Award for Champion Excellence.



Rachel Bond, MD, FACC  
Excellence in Medical Advocacy



Shelley Wood  
Excellence in Media



Harmony Reynolds, MD  
Excellence in Medical Leadership



Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (D-IL)  
Excellence in Public Policy



Dr. Sharonne Hayes & Dr. Nanette Wenger



# Champions in the Spotlight

WomenHeart released short videos that spotlighted the misdiagnosis stories of three WomenHeart Champions – each unique, but in all cases, it didn't have to be this way. Glenda visited several doctors before anyone thought to look for heart disease. She ended up having a heart attack and being put in a medicated coma. Florence was in and out of the ER for months with chest pains, sweating, shooting arm pain and more – she was told it was all in her head. She was denied diagnostic tests because she didn't have insurance. Charity went through her pregnancy and then weeks of postpartum with risk factors and signs of a potential heart problem. No one ever mentioned the risk of heart disease, until it was almost too late.



WomenHeart's social media channels helped WomenHeart Champions shine! We hosted several live interviews throughout the year, told the stories of many others, and started to feature newly trained Champions.







# WomenHeart Programs



The SisterMatch app continued to grow and allowed women to connect 1:1 with a WomenHeart Champion for peer support from their handheld device. The app also connects women with a local or national support group.



## Heart Scarves

HeartScarves are hand-made red scarves gifted to women heart patients in hospitals and at Support Network meetings. Volunteers knit, crochet or weave red scarves and donate them to WomenHeart. They are then distributed by WomenHeart Champions across the country.

Offering comfort, support and encouragement to women with heart disease, red heart scarves become part of their healing journey.

## Red Bags of Courage™

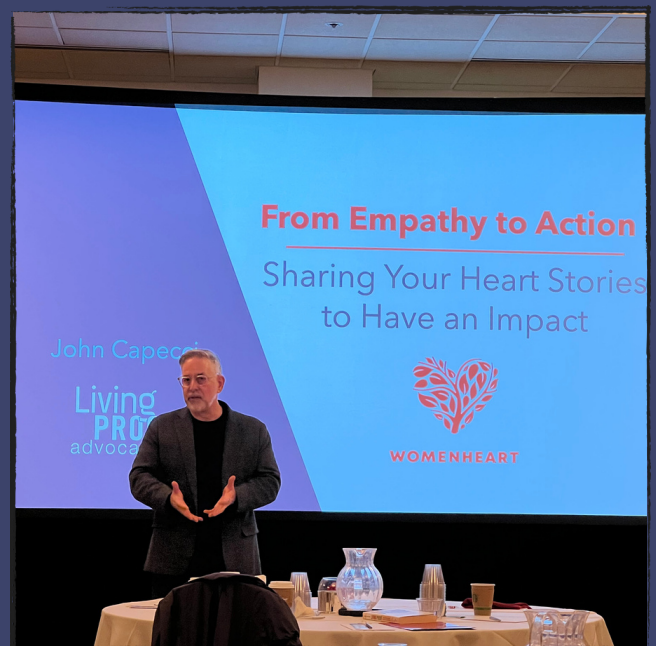
WomenHeart's Red Bags of Courage™ are packed with information about heart disease in women. They are distributed by Champions to Support Network participants, heart patients in NHA-member hospitals, and at educational events in the community. Also available online, the bags contain fact sheets and infographics about the signs and symptoms of heart disease in women, specific heart conditions, prevention information, and the support and services offered by WomenHeart.





# Science & Leadership Symposium at the Mayo Clinic

In October, WomenHeart was back in person at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN for the first time since 2019, hosting our annual Science & Leadership Symposium. Over the course of three days, Mayo Clinic faculty and WomenHeart staff and volunteers trained 29 new WomenHeart Champions who joined us from 19 states and ranged in age from 30 to 76 years old. In addition to learning how to provide peer support, educate their community about heart disease, and share their heart stories, they bonded with one another, celebrated their completion of the Symposium and became part of the WomenHeart community.





# WOMENHEART NATIONAL HOSPITAL ALLIANCE

In 2022, WomenHeart announced a revamp of the National Hospital Alliance structure. The program continues to provide NHA members with several benefits, including patient support services via local WomenHeart Champions, an annual conference, networking opportunities, and more. However, the fee for participation has dropped significantly, opening the door to many new members across the country. We also launched a new membership seal that NHA hospitals can showcase on their websites.

Much of the year was spent supporting NHA members and Champions as hospitals slowly re-opened, but with new protocols and a different level of patient access than had been possible pre-pandemic. Highlights from the year include the addition of four hospitals who joined (or rejoined) the NHA program, including in Ohio where there had not been any NHA members previously. New member Cottage Health in Santa Barbara launched a patient visitation program. And long-time member University of Kansas (KU) Hospital had over 500 in-patient virtual or in-person in 2022.

- Boca Raton Regional Hospital
- Columbia Memorial Hospital
- Chandler Regional Medical Center
- Cottage Health
- El Camino Hospital
- Katz Institute for Women's Health
- Lenox Hill Hospital
- Maimonides Medical Center
- Lankenau Heart Institute
- Mayo Clinic
- Mercy Gilbert Medical Center
- Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute
- Morristown Medical Center
- NYU Langone Hospital - Long Island
- Temple University Hospital

- Texas Heart Institute
- The Christ Hospital Health Network
- University of Alabama Birmingham
- University of Florida Health, Shands Hospital
- University of Kansas Hospital





## Committing to Health Equity & Meeting Unmet Needs

WomenHeart was founded on the premise that women experience disparities in healthcare access and outcomes. We recognize that Black, Latina, Asian American and Native American women experience a disproportionate burden of heart disease compared to White women. WomenHeart is committed to addressing those inequities. With new funding, we started an effort to fill critical gaps in support for women, especially those who experience health inequities. In July 2022, we conducted a survey of over 1,300 women living with heart disease or a diagnosed risk factor, as well as held a small number of focus groups, to discover women’s perception of heart disease and risk and their preferences for support and education. The diverse sample included women of all ages; represented nearly all states; and among all the racial and ethnic groups represented, over one-third of participants (37%) identified as Black or African American and 30% identified as Hispanic or Latina.

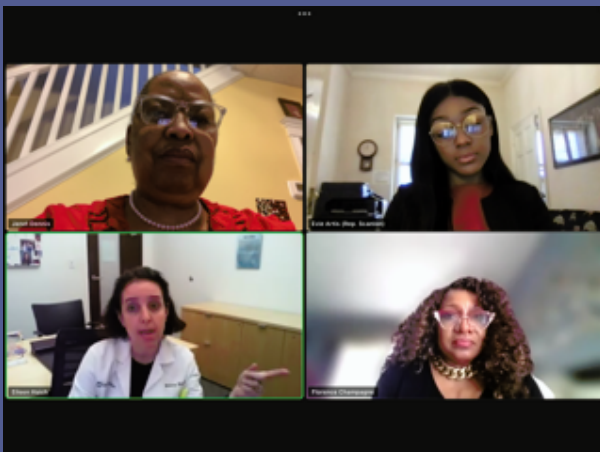
Preliminary findings reveal key insights: Women want language and content that’s actionable and communicates hope and that invites them into the conversation, rather than lectures. They are open to online channels for support and education, and they want to learn more about living a heart-healthy lifestyle, weight and stress management, and the link between diabetes and heart disease.

A full report of the findings will be released in 2023, and the data will be used to inform WomenHeart’s programmatic efforts going forward.

### Making Strides in Public Policy

On March 2, WomenHeart hosted a virtual Advocacy Day. Nearly 40 WomenHeart Champions, Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) and Board members conducted over 65 meetings with members of Congress and their staff. Champions shared their journeys with heart disease, made the case for why we need more research on heart disease in women and urged members of Congress to pass the CAROL Act, a bill that supports research, education and awareness of heart valve disease. Less than a year later – in December 2022 – Congress passed and President Biden signed the CAROL Act into law. WomenHeart is grateful to Rep. Andy Barr (R-KY) for championing the bill and for recognizing WomenHeart’s support on the floor of the House of Representatives.

*Champions Janet Dennis & Florence Champagne and Dr. Eileen Hsich meet with Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon's legislative aide*





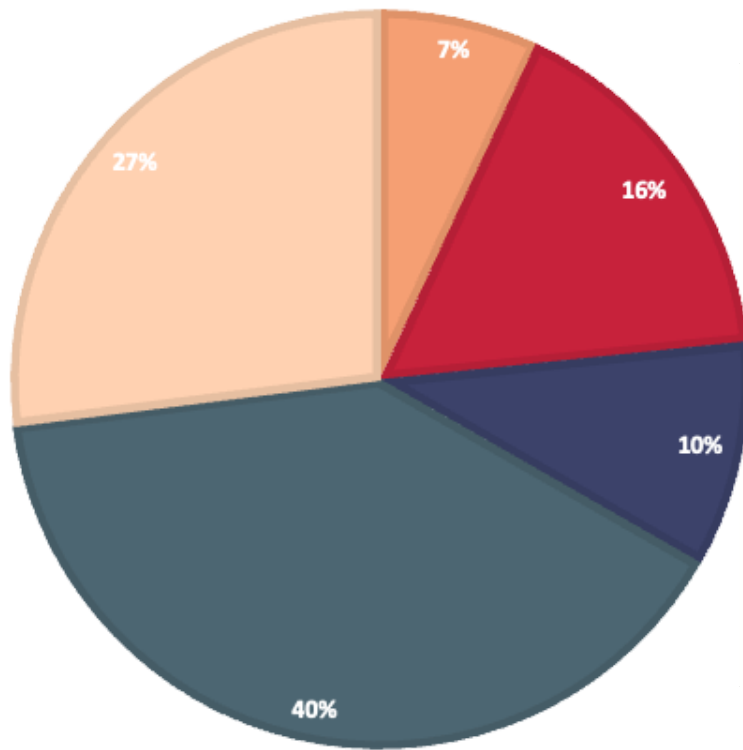
# Corporate Advisory Council



# Financial Information

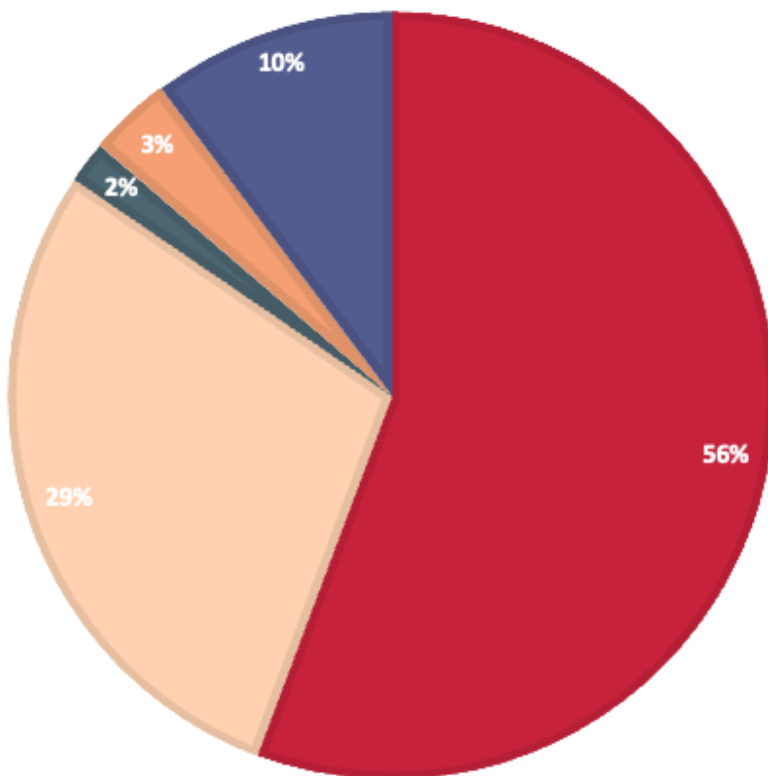


## Expenses



- Public Policy
- Patient Support
- Community Education & Outreach
- Fundraising
- Administrative

## Revenue



- Contributions & Grants
- Corporate Advisory Council
- National Hospital Alliance
- In-Kind
- Other

~ not reflecting the final audited financials for 2022



# Board of Directors



Kathryn Webster  
Chair



Gayathri Badrinath  
Immediate Past Chair



Lyn Behnke  
Chair Elect, DNP



Jessica Stitt  
Treasurer



Elinor Shin  
Secretary, JD, PhD



Courtney Jordan Baechler  
MD



Cherie Black  
MPH



Phyllis Blaunstein\*



# Board of Directors



Rashida Bobb  
MPH



Adrienne Coleman\*



Robin Olson\*  
CRT



Dave Parkash  
MD, MBA



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Scott Widmeyer



Laura Walhberg





# Scientific Advisory Committee



Eileen Hsich  
MD, Chair



Theresa M. Beckie  
PhD, RN, FAHA



Susan Bennett  
MD, FACC



Kathy Berra  
MSN, ANP, FAAN, FPCNA, FAHA



Nieca Goldberg  
MD



Martha Gulati  
MD, MS, FACC, FAHA



Sharonne N. Hayes  
MD, FACC, FAHA



Alexandra Lansky  
MD



Alanna Morris  
MD, MSc, FHFSa, FACC, FAHA



Jeanne Poole  
MD



Stacey E. Rosen  
MD, FACC, FACP, FAHA



Amparo Villablanca  
MD



Annabelle Santos Volgman  
MD, FACC, FAHA



Mary Norine Walsh  
MD



Karol E. Watson  
MD, PhD, FACC



Nannette Kass Wenger  
MD, FAHA, MACC, MACP



Susan Wood  
PhD



# WomenHeart Staff



Celina Gorre, MPH, MPA  
CEO



Amy Friedrich-Karnik, MPP  
Vice President,  
Advocacy & Communications



Evan Riggs  
Senior Manager, Development



Samantha Bohrt, MPH  
Senior Manager, Programs &  
Hospital Partnerships



Stephanie Silva  
Operations Manager



Calondra Tibbs, MPH  
Special Advisor



Erin Milone  
Consultant



Beyond Business Solutions  
Social Media Consultant

Samantha Bohrt, MPH, MCHES, was hired in March 2022 as WomenHeart's new Senior Manager of Programs and Hospital Partnerships. Samantha has a background in volunteer management, community health education and wellness, with a passion for mission-driven community work. Originally from Bolivia, she lives in Dallas with her husband, two fur babies, and one-year-old human baby. Samantha has proved to be a tremendous asset to the team. She quickly got to work, forming relationships with the Champions and NHA members, recruiting new volunteers and NHA members, planning and leading the 2022 S&L Symposium, and launching the newly formed Champion Advisory Team (CAT).

# Thank you to our generous supporters

## \$5,000+

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority -  
Gamma Zeta Omega Chapter  
Dan Posel & Jean Lenihan  
Barbara A. Tombros  
Francis Craig

## \$2,500-\$4,999

Christopher Mulley  
Elinor Shin  
Harmony Reynolds  
Joori Jeon  
Phyllis L. Blaunstein  
Scott Widmeyer

## \$1,000-\$2,499

Amanda Daniels  
Eileen Hsich  
Janet Dennis  
Mary Norine Walsh  
Mary Saily  
Nanette Kass Wenger  
Dane Hansen  
Darius Deak  
Kim Piazza  
Rashida Bobb  
Annabelle Volgman  
Debra Davidson Niedbalski  
Susan Spencer Cramer  
The Doctors Management Company  
Janice Imoisi  
Nancy R. Bartley  
Robin Olson  
Dave Prakash

## \$500-\$999

Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses  
Association  
Valerie Swisher  
Courtney Jordan Baechler  
Nicole Schuette  
Jenna Crago  
Evan C. McCabe  
Evan Neufield  
Gartner, Inc  
Jessica Stitt  
Rebecca Prince

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