

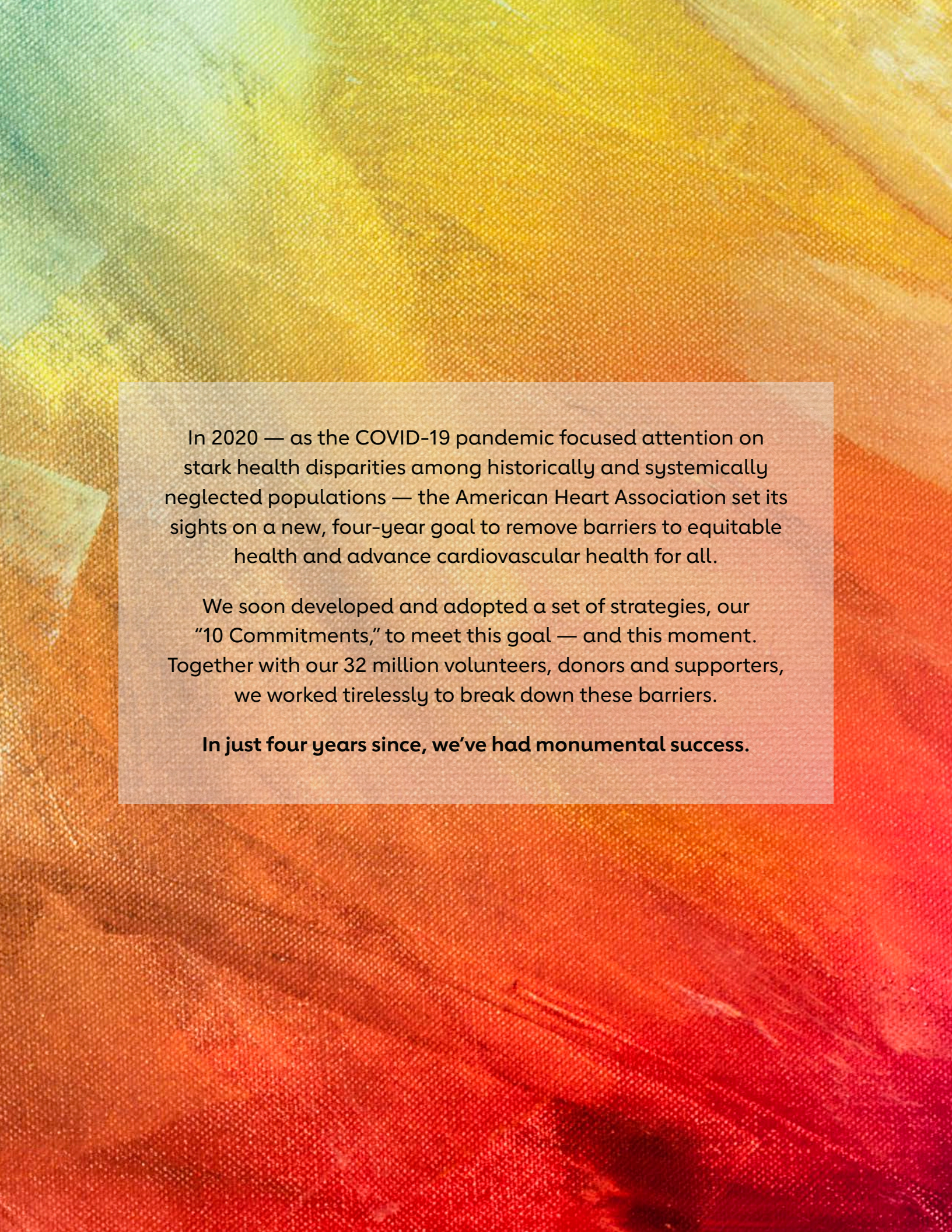
# 10

# COMMITMENTS

## 2020-2024 IMPACT REPORT

*Advancing  
health and hope  
for everyone,  
everywhere.*



The background is an abstract composition of warm colors, including shades of yellow, orange, and red, with a fine, repeating grid pattern overlaid. The colors transition from a pale yellow at the top to a deep red at the bottom. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the text.

In 2020 — as the COVID-19 pandemic focused attention on stark health disparities among historically and systemically neglected populations — the American Heart Association set its sights on a new, four-year goal to remove barriers to equitable health and advance cardiovascular health for all.

We soon developed and adopted a set of strategies, our “10 Commitments,” to meet this goal — and this moment. Together with our 32 million volunteers, donors and supporters, we worked tirelessly to break down these barriers.

**In just four years since, we’ve had monumental success.**

***We have advanced equitable health through:***

**RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP (COMMITMENT 1) 6**

by investing over \$210 million — more than double the initial goal — in new research programs, grants and support focused on equitable health.

**COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS (COMMITMENT 2) 7**

by investing over \$300 million — more than triple the initial goal — in on-the-ground, locally led solutions to address health inequities.

**GREATER HEALTH CARE ACCESS (COMMITMENT 3) 8**

by advocating successfully to retain and expand telehealth services and broaden Medicaid eligibility in six states.

**COMBATING UNHEALTHY PRODUCTS (COMMITMENT 4) 9**

by championing bans on the sale of menthol cigarettes and all flavored cigars, calling out Big Tobacco for disproportionately targeting Black communities, and advancing numerous anti-tobacco campaigns nationwide.

**BLOOD PRESSURE CONTROL (COMMITMENT 5) 10**

by enlisting community health centers and workers in a nationwide blood pressure initiative and providing vigorous education, training and support that has reduced rates of uncontrolled hypertension.

**NEW SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE (COMMITMENT 6) 11**

by capturing more data related to social drivers of health and demonstrating and disseminating the benefits of guideline-driven care in underrepresented populations.

**WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT (COMMITMENT 7) 12**

by devising and promoting numerous health equity tools, resources and initiatives for employers.

**A FOCUS ON LEARNING (COMMITMENT 8) 13**

by creating a new digital learning platform, developing courses focused on equitable health and social factors in health, and enlisting a greater diversity of speakers at scientific meetings.

**OUR JOURNALS' INFLUENCE (COMMITMENT 9) 14**

by diversifying the pool of authors and reviewers and creating a growing collection of content addressing essential health equity topics.

**AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION STAFF INITIATIVES (COMMITMENT 10) 15**

by surpassing diversity hiring targets, fostering dialogue among employees, and benchmarking leaders' skills and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion.

***And we're hardly finished. We will continue to put our resources behind this work because it's central to our mission.***

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

The American Heart Association recently celebrated an incredible milestone: its Centennial birthday.

For the past century, saving and improving lives has been at the heart of everything we do. But we're not standing still. Our mission calls us to take bold actions as a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

In 2020, the American Heart Association made a series of unprecedented strategic commitments to directly address social drivers of health — the conditions in which people are born and live that are barriers to achieving equitable health for all.

We declared 10 Commitments intended to focus transformational investments that would accelerate our historic efforts to remove these barriers and ensure equitable health for all. We've intensified our efforts to address health inequities everywhere and tackle the unique health challenges in rural America.

Our progress over the past four years has been extraordinary.

We've funded millions in groundbreaking science and research, advocated for transformative health policies at all levels, and invested in community-based solutions.

In the pages that follow, you'll read about many of these successes and the momentum we've built. But the true impact of our 10 Commitments is found in the lives of individual people and communities across the nation who are living healthier, longer lives because of these efforts.

And while we've achieved much in our quest for health equity, *we're not through yet* — to echo a phrase recited by one of our visionary founders, Dr. Paul Dudley White.

As we step into our second century, we will continue to relentlessly break down barriers and advance health and hope for everyone, everywhere.

Thank you for being part of this journey.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy A. Brown".

**Nancy A. Brown**  
Chief Executive Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerald Johnson, II".

**Gerald Johnson, II**  
Executive Vice President,  
Health Equity and Chief Diversity Officer

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

As we reflect on the 10 Commitments the American Heart Association set in 2020, we are delighted by the extraordinary progress made as we accelerated investment to remove barriers to equitable health across the nation. We couldn't have done it without the incredible efforts of our volunteers, partners, supporters and staff.

Together, over the past four years, we have:

- Invested more than \$210 million in new research programs, grants and support focused on science-based solutions to health inequities.
- Raised and invested more than \$300 million through community issue-based fundraising campaigns to increase health impacts nationwide, including \$59 million in support for our Social Impact Fund and Bernard J. Tyson Social Impact funds.
- Advocated for improved access to and quality of health care coverage for under-resourced populations. As a result, 40 states and Washington, D.C. now have expanded coverage, plus postpartum Medicaid extensions in 48 states.
- Increased the percentage of women and people from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to hold faculty roles at our annual scientific meeting as well as serve as authors and reviewers on our scientific journals.
- Surpassed our goal, every year, to fill at least one-third of open staff positions at the American Heart Association with people from diverse backgrounds. In 2024, the Association was also named the #1 Top Company for Board of Directors by Fair360, a leading source of data and insights on human capital diversity, equity and inclusion.

The successes featured in this report highlight the many ways we have met the moment. However, while we have demonstrated tremendous accomplishments within the framework of our 10 Commitments, overcoming barriers to equitable health remains a critical concern at the forefront of all we do, as it has for more than a century. It is a perfect complement to our vision for our second century: *to advance health and hope for everyone, everywhere.*

We successfully completed these specific 10 Commitments, and our overarching commitment remains. We will continue to drive breakthroughs and implement proven solutions in science, policy and public health across the nation, meeting people where they are.

Thank you for your continued support. We are sincerely grateful.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marsha Jones".

**Marsha Jones**  
Chairperson of the Board, 2023-25



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Wu".

**Joseph Wu, M.D., Ph.D., FAHA**  
President, 2023-24



## The AHA's Guiding Values

All of our work reflects:

- Bringing science to life
- Improving and extending people's lives
- Building powerful partnerships
- Speaking with a trustworthy voice
- Inspiring passionate commitment
- Making an extraordinary impact
- Meeting people where they are
- Ensuring equitable health for all

## THE 10 COMMITMENTS: A COMPELLING CALL FOR ACTION

### What: Equitable Health for All

The American Heart Association is committed to advancing health equity — which can exist only when all people can have the opportunity to enjoy healthier lives.

### Why: The Human Toll

We are striving toward equitable health for a simple reason: Lives are at stake. People often get sicker and die younger when they lack access to quality care, nutritious food and other basic health needs.

### When: 2020-2024 and Beyond

In 2020, we committed to taking bold actions — which we called our 10 Commitments — to remove barriers to health. We set our sights on meeting benchmarks in four years. Though much as been achieved, our work will continue.

### How: 10 Commitments

The 10 Commitments are the major actions we have taken to remove barriers to equitable health in all areas of our work, focused on three key areas:

- **Social factors:** These include the conditions in which people live, shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources.
- **Rural health:** People who live in rural America face increased health risks, often because they live in remote areas.
- **Structural racism:** This is a system in which historical and current public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and norms perpetuate racial inequity.

*Read on to learn what we've accomplished for each of our Commitments.*

## THE SCIENCE JOURNEY | WORKING TOWARD HEALTH EQUITY



## The Science Behind Our Work

When the American Heart Association was founded 100 years ago, little was known about heart disease. We focused primarily on research, education and establishing specialized care. Once we learned more, we focused on developing better treatments for heart attacks, cardiac arrests and other emergencies. Then we realized we needed to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent heart disease and stroke from arising at all.

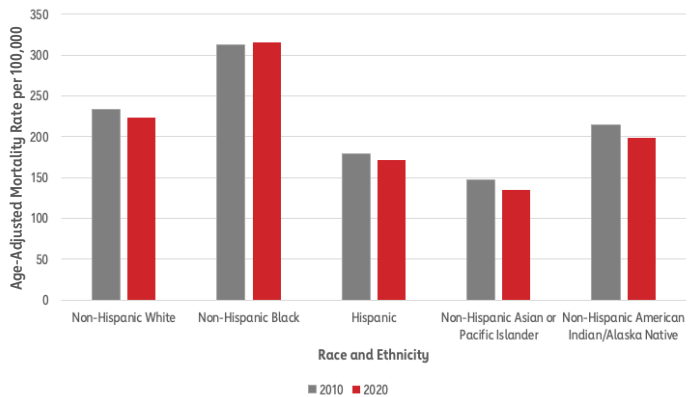
Over the years, heart and brain health did improve — but not for everyone. Statistics showed Black, Hispanic, Indigenous and Asian people often suffered disproportionately. Equitable health also lagged for many people living in rural America.

It became clear that we needed to fiercely transform this picture.

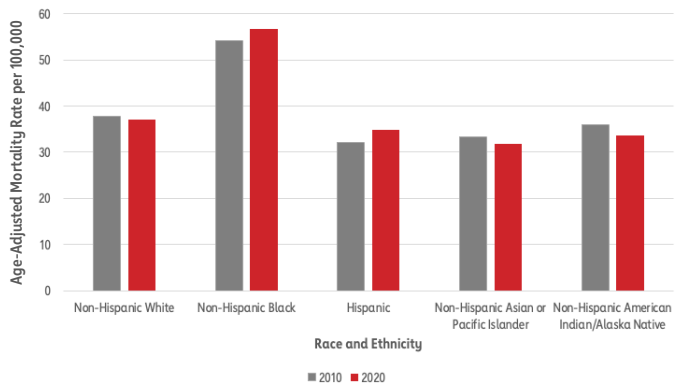
That led us to work toward equitable health by addressing social drivers of health — including food insecurity, housing insecurity, education level and employment — that in the past had not been thought of in relation to health.

We focused more on overcoming societal barriers to better health created by structural racism. We know that these barriers contribute significantly to the disproportionate burden of cardiovascular risk factors in underrepresented communities. We outlined steps the association would take to address and mitigate the root causes of health care disparities.

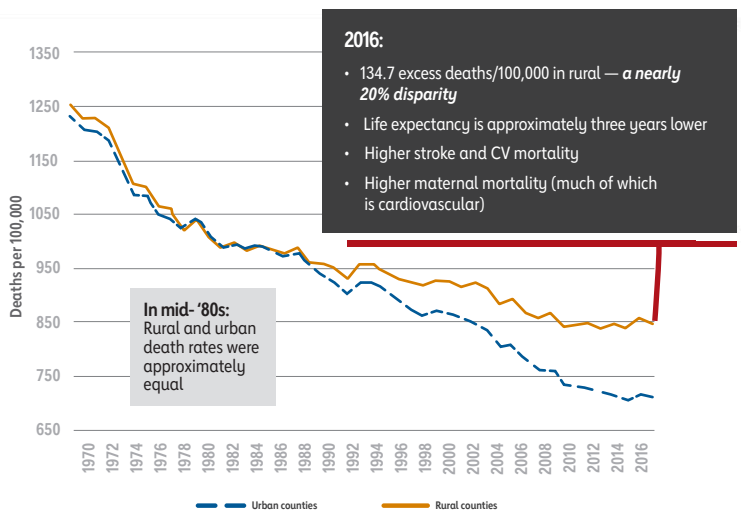
## CVD AGE-ADJUSTED MORTALITY RATES (2010 versus 2020) by race/ethnicity



## STROKE AGE-ADJUSTED MORTALITY RATES (2010 versus 2020) by race/ethnicity



## MORTALITY IN RURAL AMERICA



© American Public Health Association, from Cosby et al., American Journal of Public Health, 2019 January; 109(1): 155–162.

## COMMITMENT 1 IN ACTION

### EmPOWERED Alumnus Takes on Mental Health

Growing up in Wichita, Kansas, Ngoc Vuong had many Vietnamese friends in his neighborhood. But at school, he struggled with his identity.

His guiding force was his mother. "My mom taught me the importance of kindness and to help those less fortunate," he said.

Only 15 when his mother died, Vuong became depressed. "It was hard to see a way out," he said. "In the Vietnamese community, and really in general, there's that stigma that comes with seeking mental health treatment."

He has worked since then to reduce the stigma about mental health. He's particularly interested in helping underrepresented and under-resourced communities because "they are excluded from the decision-making table."

In 2020, Vuong received an EmPOWERED to Serve scholarship from the American Heart Association for his efforts. At 23, he became the youngest person elected to Wichita's public schools board and the first Vietnamese-American board member.

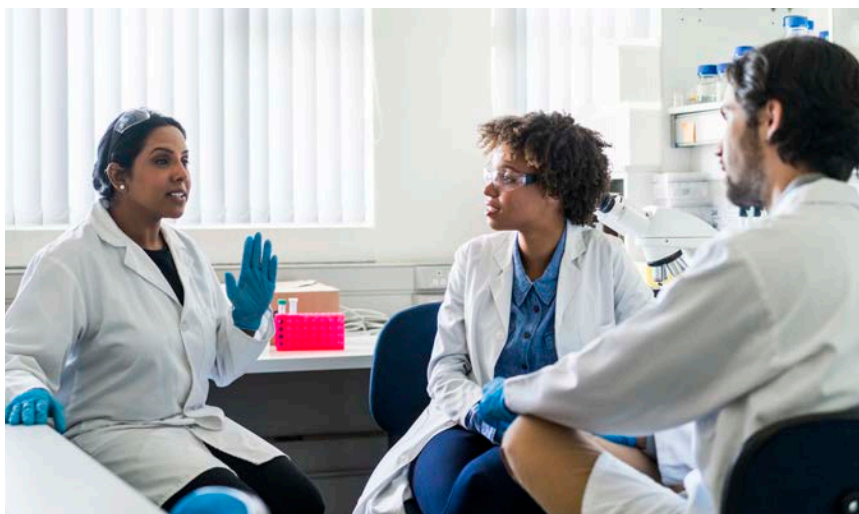


## COMMITMENT



## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

**INVESTING** \$100 million in new research programs and grants focused on science-based solutions to health inequities and structural racism. We also will expand diversity-research opportunities for underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in science and medicine through grant funding, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs and our HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and EmPOWERED to Serve Scholars programs.



### Our Impact

During the past four years, investments in research and scholarship targeting health inequity exceeded \$210 million — *more than double our initial goal.*

Those investments include:

- More than \$143 million in **new research awards, grants or programs** related to equitable health and social drivers of health.
- Over \$53 million in funding **support for investigators** from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.
- More than \$18 million to lay a **foundation for future impact through our scholars programs**: EmPOWERED to Serve, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and National Hispanic Latino Cardiovascular Collaborative Scholars.



## COMMITMENT



## COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

**INVESTING** in community-led solutions to address health inequity and structural racism. Specifically, we will raise and invest at least \$100 million to address the barriers to health equity at the community level through our Social Impact Fund, the Bernard J. Tyson Social Impact Fund and our community issues campaigns, including Voices for Healthy Kids.

### Our Impact

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The people who best understand inequalities in their communities are putting solutions into place — with vital support from the American Heart Association. Since 2020, the AHA has invested more than \$300 million in these community-led solutions — *more than triple the initial goal*.

Those investments include:

- \$59 million in support for our Social Impact and Bernard J. Tyson Social Impact funds.
  - » In four years, those entities have **funded 143 groups** across 18 states and in the District of Columbia.
  - » Nearly 90% of investees are led by **entrepreneurs who are women or are from racially or ethnically underrepresented groups**.
  - » 98% of all investees are **meeting or exceeding metrics** for performance.
- Voices for Healthy Kids fosters healthier children and communities. Supporters have included the Pritzker Children's Initiative, Bezos Family Foundation, The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
  - » Voices has provided **147 grants to community organizations**, totaling nearly \$15 million.
  - » The initiative has helped support **209 policy victories** and secured over \$7 billion in **state and local public funding** to improve health and promote health equity.



### COMMITMENT 2 IN ACTION

## Georgia Entrepreneur Addresses Local Food Insecurity

In 2022, Atlanta Harvest received funding from the AHA's Bernard J. Tyson Social Impact Fund to help it expand access to affordable and healthy food. Atlanta Harvest is a Black-owned, family-operated, multigenerational farm and food hub within food-insecure counties in Georgia.

Here is what owner and farmer EliYahu Ben Asa and farmer Raphaela Polanco shared with us:

There's nothing like a farmer's market south of Atlanta where people can see the food being grown and purchase it. Through the AHA's help, we were able to build a storefront in Ellenwood.

We had a customer checking out with fresh fruits and vegetables. We told her if she was paying with EBT, an electronic system that allows someone to pay for food with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, she'd get 50% off.

She started crying and said, "I have children at home. I've been struggling." She went back for more. After we rung her up, she said, "I got all this for \$25? ... You really don't know what this means to me."

That's why we do Atlanta Harvest.



COMMITMENT



GREATER HEALTH CARE ACCESS

**IMPROVING** access to and the quality of health care for under-resourced populations and those in rural communities, as part of our 50-state focus on Medicaid expansion. We also will dedicate our advocacy and community resources to secure this coverage in all states lacking expanded access.

**Our Impact**

Vigorous advocacy is ongoing to improve health care access and equity. Since 2020, AHA efforts have supported:

- **Expanded Medicaid eligibility** in six additional states, leading to over 21 million lower-income residents in 40 states plus the District of Columbia enrolling in Medicaid health coverage. An additional 1.6 million uninsured adults could benefit from Medicaid expansion in the 10 remaining states.
- **Extended postpartum Medicaid coverage** across the U.S. Just two states, Arkansas and Wisconsin, have not yet lengthened the period of Medicaid coverage for new mothers to a full year after delivery.
- **Preservation of pandemic-era telehealth coverage and further growth in access.** Telehealth can be a lifeline for many patients, especially those in rural and under-resourced communities nationwide.

COMMITMENT 3 IN ACTION

**Postpartum Medicaid Expansion Saves Lives**

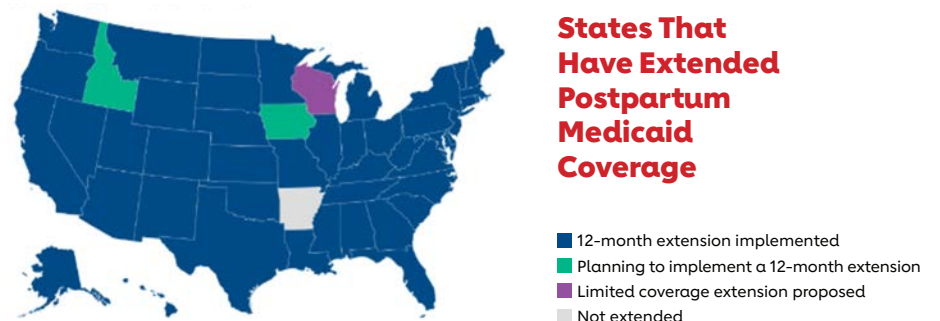
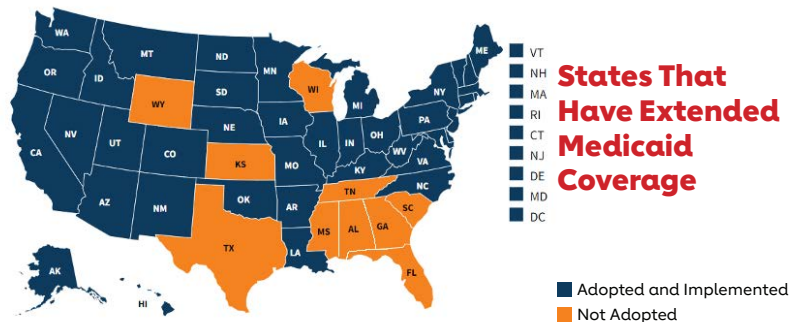
At 28, Tina Marie Marsden was diagnosed with a form of pregnancy-related heart failure called postpartum cardiomyopathy, or PPCM.

Early warning signs were missed throughout her pregnancy. Four months after having her baby, the shortness of breath continued, but she feared going to the hospital because she no longer had health coverage.

Marsden eventually sought emergency care, but the debilitating shortness of breath persisted. Further tests led to her diagnosis. Marsden's inability to recover from PPCM resulted in her needing a mechanical heart pump/LVAD. It also impacted her mental health.

"PPCM has had a lifelong impact, which is why access to postpartum health care is such an important issue for me," Marsden said.

As an AHA volunteer, Marsden shared her story with Georgia's Senate Health and Human Services Committee in 2022, after which extended postpartum Medicaid coverage passed unanimously.



## COMMITMENT



## COMBATING UNHEALTHY PRODUCTS

**LEVERAGING** our advocacy, science and news media enterprise against companies targeting people in disadvantaged communities with unhealthful products, including sugary beverages and tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) with addicting flavors and menthol.



### Our Impact

For decades, Big Tobacco has used predatory marketing and deadly products to target Black people, LGBTQ+ communities and young people. The American Heart Association's commitment to equitable health and holding the tobacco industry accountable has remained steadfast. Successes over the past four years include:

- Advocating for **178 tobacco-related state and local policy wins**, resulting in smoke-free rates reaching their best level at 63% overall.
- Campaigning to **keep proposed rules to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars** on the Food and Drug Administration's agenda (see sidebar).
- Commissioning two spoken-word videos from artist Ryon Everidge calling on lawmakers to take action to **prevent Big Tobacco from disproportionately targeting Black communities** (see sidebar).
- Supporting **graphic warnings about smoking's dangers** on cigarette packs and in ads as the tobacco industry unsuccessfully challenged the warnings up to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Campaigning to hold the tobacco industry accountable to a court order to post — in more than 220,000 stores nationwide — **corrective statements about the health risks of tobacco**.

## COMMITMENT 4 IN ACTION

### Tightening the Rules to Help Save Lives

Menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars make it easier to start smoking and harder to quit. That's why banning them from the U.S. market is an AHA priority.



Our advocacy on the issue has been fierce and far-reaching, earning more than 2.1 billion media impressions. On Nov. 5, 2023, we joined 79 other groups nationwide in a full-page ad in the Sunday Washington Post to support proposed FDA rules prohibiting menthol cigarette and flavored cigar sales.

We also commissioned spoken-word artist Ryon Everidge to release three original videos, "How Long Will You Target Me?" and "I Already Know" in 2023 and "What Would They Say?" in 2024. The videos call on lawmakers to stop Big Tobacco from disproportionately targeting Black communities with flavored products.



## COMMITMENT 5 IN ACTION

### 'There Are People Who Care About You'

In 2021, the National Hypertension Control Initiative began supporting Damian Family Care Center, a federally qualified health center in the Bronx, New York, that serves a large Latino and Black population. The center provides training and technical support for a self-measured blood pressure, or SMBP, program, allowing patients to monitor their blood pressure at home.

Michael Febre, a patient at Damian and SMBP program participant, has been living with stage 1 hypertension. He lost over 100 pounds by improving his eating habits and working out. Now his blood pressure is normal.

"When I look in the mirror, I actually smile from not only the weight loss but how far I've come changing those little habits. **You enroll in a program like this, and you have your team messaging you through the app, or they give you a phone call when your numbers are off to make sure you're OK,**" Febre said.

"The SMBP program is giving patients the authority to take control of their health," said Lysna Paul, hypertension manager at Damian.

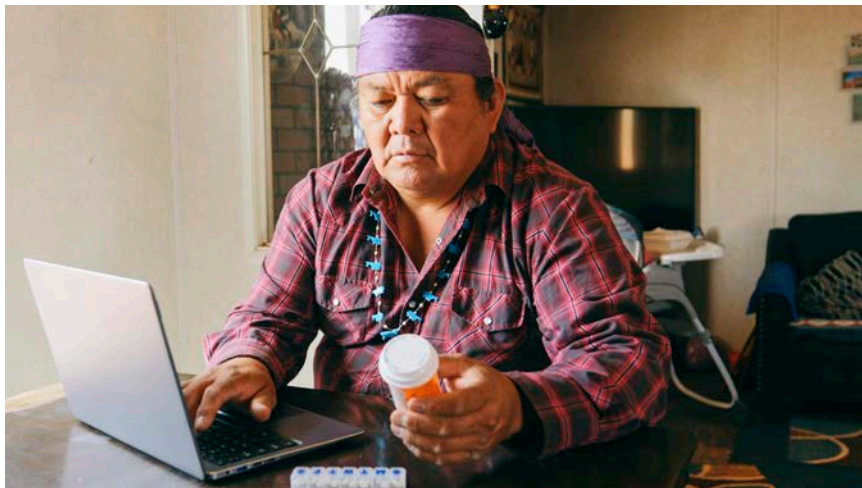


## COMMITMENT



## BLOOD PRESSURE CONTROL

**PARTNERING** with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on a more than a \$121 million nationwide hypertension initiative to address a main source of poor cardiovascular health in Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities, funded by the federal government. The goal is to improve blood pressure control through health centers that connect with those communities.



### Our Impact

The National Hypertension Control Initiative (NHCI) partnership was launched in December 2020, with \$32 million awarded to the American Heart Association in cooperative agreements with the Department of Health and Human Services.

The initiative has recorded substantial achievements:

- The NHCI **recruited and onboarded 100% of the 350 targeted community health centers**, funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, to help deepen knowledge-sharing and education about blood pressure.
- Following a steep decline in 2020, **high blood pressure control rates rebounded** nearly to pre-pandemic levels, with rates rebounding faster in Federally Qualified Health Centers that received NHCI support.
- Community health centers that received training and technical assistance from the initiative saw **blood pressure control rates reach nearly 61%** in 2023 — almost 10% higher than rates reported in 2020.
- **More than 9 million people were served annually** in the NHCI health centers that received training and technical assistance from the AHA.
- In 2024, the initiative's **Community Health Worker Training Program portal opened** with more than 500 initial registrants. The training program empowers participants to transform their communities with a focus on enhancing cardiovascular care and improving hypertension rates.

**USING** our extensive clinical registry programs to capture data and create new scientific knowledge on the health effects of social determinants of health and health care quality variances among racial and ethnic groups and reporting on this data regularly through our quality improvement programs.

## Our Impact

Get With The Guidelines® — a science-based approach to treatment based on patient data registries — has evolved over more than two decades to reduce biases and variations in patient care. GWTG programs are critical tools in filling knowledge gaps to help hospitals better serve the unique needs of their patients and communities.

Here's how we've deployed GWTG to advance the cause of equitable health:

- By expanding the data that GWTG programs collect — including factors such as social drivers of health, race, gender identity and sexual orientation — **critical information is captured to facilitate care improvements.**
- This past year, we've been **ensuring the new data fields have been implemented across more than 2,900 U.S. hospitals** enrolled in one or more GWTG modules, as well as **training health care professionals** to use them to support patient care.
- Since 2020, we've secured **1,700 new GWTG contracts** and published over **168 studies showing GWTG improves quality of care** and outcomes for patients.
- As part of a three-year initiative targeting rural health disparities, in 2022 we launched the Rural Health Care Outcomes Accelerator **providing up to 700 rural hospitals with no-cost access to GWTG quality programs** for coronary artery disease, heart failure and stroke.

### Commitment 6's Foundation

- More than 2,900 U.S. hospitals participate in GWTG.
- About 88% of the U.S. population can receive more equitable care through GWTG.
- More than 800 published studies have shown that GWTG improves quality of care and outcomes for patients.
- Since GWTG started, 17 million U.S. patient records have been entered into the registries.
- Rural residents are at 30% higher risk of stroke, 40% more likely to develop heart disease and live an average of three years fewer than urban counterparts.





## COMMITMENT 7 IN ACTION

### CEO Roundtable Spotlight: Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente is working toward advancing equitable health for all its employees. It has developed:

- **A national HR strategy.** Inclusion and well-being are grouped together, becoming one of five HR strategic priorities for the organization.
- **Business Resource Groups.** These are a primary vehicle to deliver culturally relevant health and well-being messages to diverse employee populations.
- **A Well-Being Action Plan Framework.** This provides a standardized set of evidence-based actions and corresponding process and outcome measures that can be adopted anywhere across the enterprise.
- **Supporting policies.** New and existing policies strengthen the commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity, as well as ensure the work environment fosters belonging and supports total health.
- **The Community Resources Directory.** This online and searchable social services network, available to all Kaiser Permanente members, was created to address social drivers of health within Kaiser Permanente's care delivery model.

## COMMITMENT



## WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

**COLLABORATING** with our CEO Roundtable to create a road map, conceptual framework and related tools for employers to identify and dismantle practices and policies in the workplace that contribute to structural racism and health inequities, all based on the AHA Presidential Advisory Call to Action: Structural Racism as a Fundamental Driver of Health Disparities.

### Our Impact

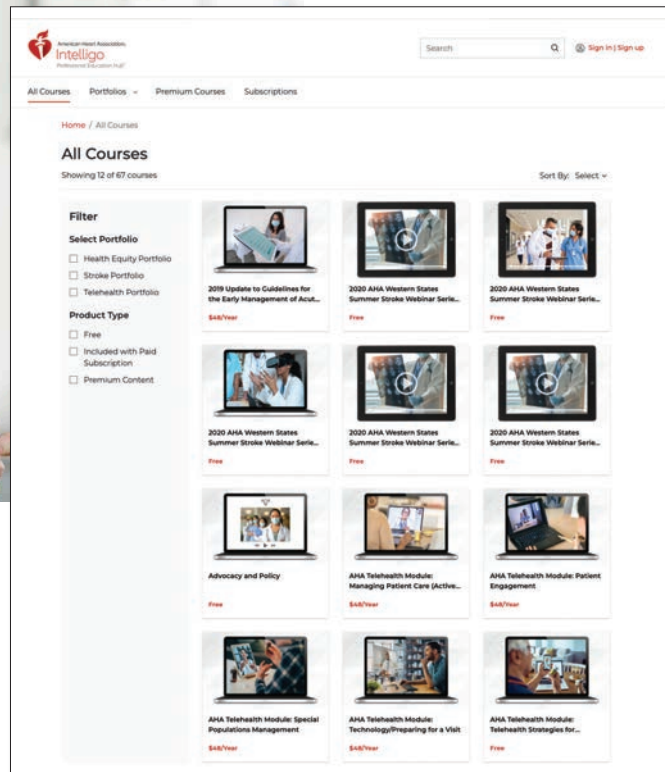
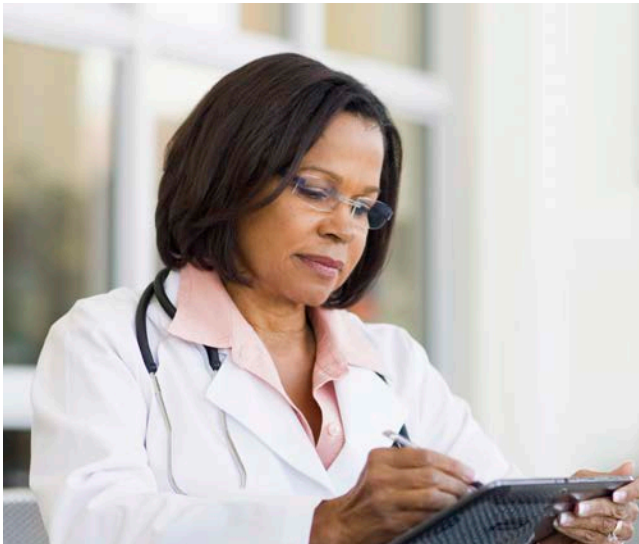
The American Heart Association CEO Roundtable, consisting of nearly 50 CEOs from major employers, met its goals in the first year. Since then the group has accelerated its commitment to advancing well-being and health equity in the workplace.

Among its achievements, the Roundtable initiative:

- Created "Driving Health Equity in the Workplace," an **evidence-based road map offering employers practical strategies and guiding principles** to advance health equity.
- **Reached over 3,500 executives with health equity resources** since the inception in 2023 of the Health Equity in the Workforce Initiative. In all, more than 92 million people have been touched.
- Implemented a health equity program as **a new component to the American Heart Association's Well-being Works Better™ website.** In 2023 alone, the website attracted 97,000 visits, while our organic social media content reached over 3.2 million users.
- **Continually provides new or updated employer tools and resources,** ensuring companies have the latest insights and best practices for equitable health.



**CREATING** a digital learning platform for clinicians, health professionals and scientists with courses on issues of reversing structural racism and improving health equity in the delivery of health care, and courses on professional development of the science and clinical workforce. In our scientific meetings, we will continue pushing for a diversity of speakers and commentators.



## Our Impact

Since the inception of the 10 Commitments, the American Heart Association has expanded the universe of opportunities for professionals interested in learning more about health equity. The association has also made important strides toward more equitable representation among faculty at scientific meetings.

Accomplishments in these areas include:

- With an investment of more than \$7 million, **creating and launching a new digital learning platform**, the Professional Education Hub, to make health science education more accessible and relevant in all communities.
- **Developing the education platform's health equity portfolio**, currently consisting of 28 courses for health care professionals. The courses address topics including structural racism, social drivers of health, LGBTQ+ health and removing barriers to health equity.
- Exceeding our goal for **more equitable gender, racial and ethnic representation among faculty at our scientific meetings**. This year, of more than 4,100 faculty at AHA scientific conferences, about 500 speaker or moderator roles were filled by people from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and about 1,600 by women.

## COMMITMENT 8 IN ACTION

Nearly 90,000 users have accessed the American Heart Association's **Professional Education Hub™**, which includes more than two dozen health-equity themed courses.



## COMMITMENT 9 IN ACTION

### Voices Heard

We're broadening the pool of invited journal authors and reviewers.

Invited women authors

# 32%

(2019-20 baseline: 17%)

Invited women reviewers

# 28%

(2019-20 baseline: 19%)

Invited authors from underrepresented groups

# 11%

(2019-20 baseline: 6%)

Invited reviewers from underrepresented groups

# 8%

(2019-20 baseline: 5%)

## COMMITMENT



## OUR JOURNALS' INFLUENCE

**ELEVATING** the focus of our scientific journals, including *Circulation* and *Stroke*, on disparities, anti-racism, health equity, community-engaged/ community-based participatory research and implementation science. We will ensure these topics are prioritized for publication, and we will assess the diversity of authors in our journals, including editorial commentaries.



### Our Impact

The American Heart Association's 14 peer-reviewed scientific journals continue to build momentum in their focus on disparities and health equity.

Milestones in this area include:

- **Increasing diversity in our pool of invited authors and reviewers.** Now there are more women and people from underrepresented groups, nearly doubling the percentages of authors from each group compared with figures from four years ago (see sidebar).
- **Launching the journals' Health Equity Collection.** It features over a decade's worth of research and review articles, scientific statements, guidelines and more addressing topics such as treatment disparities, discrimination and social drivers of health.
- **Spotlighting health equity challenges in an increasing number of articles.** The percentage published in the Health Equity Collection doubled from about 4% to nearly 9% since the collection's inception in 2021.
- **Formation of the Journal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Editorial Board** in 2022 (recently renamed the American Heart Association Journal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Editorial Board). Its mission is to present more and better science on equitable health and to broaden representation. In two years, this board has completed 399 reviews on 340 unique manuscripts.
- **Special issues devoted to equitable health.** This year, *Circulation* published its annual issue on disparities, four journals published Go Red for Women issues and a special issue of *Circulation: Cardiovascular Imaging* focused on disparities in cardiovascular imaging.



## COMMITMENT



## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION STAFF INITIATIVES

**INCREASING** the diversity of our workforce, including leadership. We are committed to filling at least one-third of hires with diverse individuals. We will mitigate bias in the recruitment, development, advancement and retention of diverse colleagues by providing ongoing learning and development experiences, leveraging our behavioral and integrated interviewing system, incorporating industry leading platforms and working with diverse alliance partners.

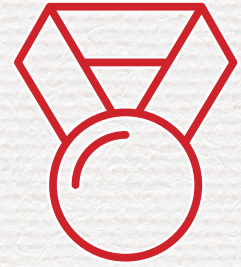
### Our Impact

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Ongoing efforts to increase diversity and representation within the American Heart Association's workforce, and to foster dialogue and understanding among employees remain a priority.

Here's what we've achieved:

- In the first year of this commitment, **we surpassed our goal to fill at least one-third of open positions with people from diverse backgrounds.** We have continued to surpass this goal every year.
- Our "Courageous Conversations," an interactive educational series launched four years ago for staff, is a key internal learning platform. Over 120 sessions have taken place so far. **"Courageous Conversations" focus on mission-related topics such as maternal health, rural challenges, mental health, well-being and more.** Staff ask questions, engage in meaningful dialogue and explore the complexities of equitable health.
- **More than 500 employees have taken an instructor-led course on structural racism and health equity.** The course was launched in 2021.
- **Over 330 employees have graduated from the McKinsey Connected Leaders Academy** since 2021 in the Black, Hispanic and Latino, and Asian American/Pacific Islander cohorts.
- **Ten voluntary Employee Resource Groups bring staff together** based on shared interests, backgrounds or other characteristics.
- As part of ongoing leadership development, this year **94% of AHA leaders completed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion assessment skill benchmark** in our online educational portal.



## COMMITMENT 10 IN ACTION

### And the Honor Goes to...

- The National Organization on Disability recognized the AHA as a leading disability employer for the fifth consecutive year.
- Fair360 chose the AHA as the Top Company for Board of Directors and a Top 50 Noteworthy Company. Fair360 (formerly DiversityInc) is a leading source of data and insights on human capital diversity, equity and inclusion.
- The Age-Friendly Institute certified the AHA as an age-friendly employer.

Achieving equitable health is core to the American Heart Association's Guiding Values, mission and 2024 Impact Goal. Addressing underlying factors that lead to health disparities, including social drivers of health, health challenges in rural America and structural racism, is essential to ensuring equitable health and well-being for all.

Though much has been achieved over the past four years, our work is not finished. As we enter our second century, we will continue to prioritize these efforts in support of our vision of advancing health and hope for everyone, everywhere.





American  
Heart  
Association.

Visit [heart.org](https://heart.org) to stay up to date and join us as our work continues to achieve equitable health for all.