MY FELLOW ADVOCATES,

It is my pleasure to share the American Heart Association’s annual report of state and local public policy progress. As a volunteer with the organization and as a physician, I take pride in the diligent efforts of our advocates, volunteers and staff to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans. As you read this report, you will see unprecedented public policy success during this past fiscal year. These victories have a direct and profound impact on our 2020 goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent.

As we review 2013-2014, we can take great pride in our advocacy presence in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Volunteers and staff worked closely with partner organizations to support the passage of state laws and local ordinances that protect heart disease and stroke survivors, and that help others reduced their risks for these diseases. We provided staff support, policy resources and strategic campaign expertise to elected officials at the state and local level. The state advocacy staff teams led comprehensive campaigns that included media advocacy, grassroots advocacy and direct lobbying.

During the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the wide variety of legislation passed at the state level will move us closer to our lifesaving 2020 goal.

Here is a quick overview of our highlights:

- Policies enacted in 12 states this past fiscal year assure congenital heart disease screening before infants go home for the first time, bringing the total number of states with this lifesaving policy to 32.

- Six states enacted new laws requiring CPR training for high school graduation, ensuring a whopping 1 million students will graduate with this lifesaving skill every year.

STATE SUCCESS STORIES

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FOCUS ON...

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Protecting Babies from Heart Defects 17
Improving Quality Care 18
We increased access to critical preventive benefits in five states and tobacco cessation in four for American's enrolled in the Medicaid program.

Two states passed shared use laws that will expand opportunities for physical activity.

Three states enacted policy that will strengthen their systems of care for stroke and STEMI patients.

Six states increased their public funding for heart disease- and stroke-related programs.

We made significant progress toward ensuring clean air in all public places as over 20 communities moved to strengthen smoke-free air laws.

On behalf of the thousands of You’re the Cure advocates, association volunteers, donor, and staff, I am proud to present this annual report of state and local advocacy accomplishments. Together, we are building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

John Warner, M.D., M.B.A.
Chair, Advocacy Coordinating Committee

Wrap-up by state

ALABAMA
A resolution passed this year that recognizes food deserts are a serious problem and calls on state leaders to improve access to healthy foods for Alabamians. Volunteers and coalition advocates also worked to defeat a bill that left far too many people unprotected from exposure to secondhand smoke. The proposed legislation, backed by the tobacco industry, exempted employees and patrons in bars, cigar bars and tobacco retail shops, while also exempting e-cigarettes. Local smoke free efforts are gaining momentum and we will continue to urge the Legislature to pass a comprehensive clean indoor air law.

ALASKA
Volunteers and advocates secured an additional $399,000 for the state’s Obesity Prevention and Control Program, which uses various strategies to reduce obesity. One example is the Play Every Day campaign, which raises awareness about childhood obesity and the importance of families being physically active. This is the second year in a row that we helped increase this program’s funding. Volunteers and staff also helped reduce a proposed $1.6 million budget cut in tobacco prevention program funding to $400,000. As a result, funding for the Tobacco Prevention and Control program will remain at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommended level. Locally, advocates engaged the Anchorage School District to include CPR instruction in the eighth-grade health curriculum and continue to work to ensure that all 8th graders are trained in CPR.

ARIZONA
Volunteers and advocates passed key legislation related to pulse oximetry screening for critical congenital heart defects. During hearings on the bill, volunteers — including a child with congenital heart defects who was not screened in the hospital, a mother who lost her daughter to an undetected congenital heart defect and a mother whose son’s congenital heart defect was detected moments
A strong new voice for children’s health was heard across the U.S. over the past year:

**Voices for Healthy Kids**, a collaboration between the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation working to improve the health of communities and reverse the childhood obesity epidemic.

Voices for Healthy Kids engaged, organized and mobilized people toward this effort in its inaugural year. Thanks to the support of partners at the national, state and local levels, we set the stage for a transformation of the health of our nation’s children by building an infrastructure for immediate action and long-term success. We are working to shape environments where good health flourishes across geographic, demographic, and social sectors, ensuring that all children, especially those in underserved communities, are able to healthfully live, learn, and play.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIRST YEAR:**

- Since our launch, we have supported 22 state and local issue advocacy campaigns, with over $3.4 million in first-year grants to focus on multiple policy priority areas. In addition to building the foundation on which more than 100 state and local campaigns will stand in 2015, four of the campaigns we supported in year one were able to deliver early wins.

- Our team partnered with national, state, and local coalitions and advocacy organizations to conduct seven regional advocacy trainings to reach over 250 advocates in all 50 states from 107 organizations.
PreventObesity.net, an online community of childhood obesity advocates, offers tools, services and support to the people and organizations who are working in their states and communities to ensure children everywhere can eat healthier and become more physically active. In our first year, PreventObesity.net volunteers lent their voice to state and local issue advocacy campaigns as well as four national campaigns:

- **ACTIVE PLACES**: 10,802 individuals took action in the Safe Routes to School advocacy campaign Walk the Walk, Mr. Secretary.
- **HEALTHY DRINKS**: 1,200 supporters voted on ways to increase youth water consumption through the Increasing Water Intake campaign.
- **SMART SCHOOL FOODS**: Advocates submitted nearly 60,000 comments to the federal government on The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act because of the food marketing in schools campaign If You Can’t Sell It, You Shouldn’t Market It.
- **FOOD ACCESS**: The Food Access Challenge campaign educated 7,178 individuals about healthy food financing and why it is important to improved access to healthy foods in communities.

Voices for Healthy Kids distributed four toolkits to thousands of advocates across the country to help power their campaigns to make an impact in their communities:

- **ACTIVE PLACES**: Unlock the Doors
- **HEALTHY DRINKS**: Don’t Sugarcoat Our Future
- **SMART SCHOOL FOODS**: Make Food Choices an Easy A
- **FOOD ACCESS**: What’s in Store for Us

Mobilized six leading national partners to provide policy expertise, technical assistance, and other critical abilities through a network of hubs leads:

- **SMART SCHOOL FOODS**: Pew Charitable Trusts
- **HEALTHY DRINKS**: The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity
- **MARKETING MATTERS**: Berkley Media Studies Group
- **FOOD ACCESS**: The Food Trust
- **ACTIVE PLACES**: Safe Routes to School National Partnership
- **ACTIVE KIDS OUT OF SCHOOL**: YMCA of the USA

Our work doesn’t happen alone. The Voices for Healthy Kids Strategic Advisory Committee is a committee of AHA’s national board of directors. This committee brings together experts from more than two dozen leading health and civil rights organizations to support our policy change work.

For more information on Voices for Healthy Kids and the movement to reduce childhood obesity, visit voicesforhealthykids.org.
before leaving the hospital — testified on the importance of this screening. The measure passed through the Legislature nearly unanimously and took effect in July. We also helped pass legislation that limited the liability of schools that allow the community to use facilities after hours. This legislation received bipartisan support and took effect in July.

ARKANSAS

After multiple defeated votes, the Legislature finally passed a budget bill with funding for the Private Option healthcare plan, which is Arkansas’ alternative to Medicaid expansion. The Private Option uses federal funds to buy private health insurance plans for over 200,000 low-income Arkansans. These plans are critical to providing coverage for important preventive health services, including those related to cardiovascular health. The measure was signed into law in March 2014. The association was integrally involved in the effort to sustain the Private Option and ensure coverage is preserved. Advocates and volunteers also successfully fought alongside partner organizations to preserve critical funding for state tobacco-control programs.

CALIFORNIA

Volunteers and advocates successfully passed legislation that keeps nutritional standards in vending machines in state buildings. The bill is expected to be on the governor’s desk for signature by the close of session on August 31st. We also preserved funding in the state budget for the Safe Routes to School program and defeated numerous pro-tobacco bills. Volunteers and advocates nearly passed a bill that would have had a major impact in the obesity fight by requiring warning labels on some sugar-sweetened beverages. The bill passed in the Senate despite heavy opposition from the beverage industry, but died in the Assembly Health Committee after falling short of just three votes.

COLORADO

Advocates and volunteers celebrated two major successes this year, CPR in Schools and Safe Routes to School. Powerful volunteer stories shared with lawmakers were critical to the CPR in Schools effort. Like Lindsay Hayden, who had a cardiac arrest at high school, classmate Cameron Oliver was the only person in the room who knew CPR and saved Lindsay’s life. Nearly 30 years after Mike Butler took a CPR class, he saved his wife Joni when she had a cardiac arrest. This inspired their daughter Shea to become CPR-certified, and just weeks later she used CPR to save a classmate. These advocates worked hard to secure a $700,000 appropriation for Safe Routes to School to help make Colorado communities more active, healthy and safe. These campaigns were supported by three state lobby days, including Colorado’s largest ever Go Red For Women lobby day.

CONNECTICUT

With the help of stroke coordinators and neurologists, Connecticut volunteers and advocates helped pass legislation creating the framework for a statewide stroke system of care. There was also major progress in educating lawmakers about key issues. Association and Voices for Healthy Kids staff presented an overview of the state’s obesity crisis to the General Assembly’s Task Force on Childhood Obesity, and highlighted the need for state nutritional standards and healthy food choices. After extensive advocating, the State Board of Education passed a resolution calling for school districts to include Hands-Only CPR training in their health and wellness curriculum. The resolution directed the Department of Education to work with the association and other groups to identify resources and help provide access to materials.

DELWARE

The year brought progress on preventive benefits, CPR in schools and the built environment. In May 2014, regulations were published ensuring that Medicaid
Stopping Tobacco

PROBLEM:
Tobacco is the leading controllable risk factor for cardiovascular diseases and stroke in this country. In fact, smoking or secondhand smoke cause about 440,000 U.S. deaths a year. About 35 percent of all tobacco deaths are related to heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases. The American Heart Association works closely with partner organizations at the national, state and local level to advocate for policies that reduce tobacco use and keep kids from picking up that first cigarette.

SOLUTIONS:

Smoke-Free Air Policies
Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work face 25-30 percent higher risks for heart disease and 25-30 percent higher risk for lung cancer, according to the U.S. Surgeon General. That’s why the association advocates for comprehensive smoke-free workplace laws at the state and local levels. Thanks to the work of advocates across the country, about half of Americans now live in communities that keep smoke out of all workplaces, restaurants and bars. And it’s paying off. A recent study in Circulation showed that heart attacks dropped by as much as 17 percent in communities where such laws had been in place for a year. Further research will continue to quantify the important health impact of these laws.

Tobacco Excise Taxes
Taxes are one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use, especially among kids. In fact, every 10 percent increase in cigarette prices has been shown to reduce youth smoking by about 7 percent and total cigarette consumption by about 4 percent, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The association’s support of these taxes is producing impressive results. In every state that has significantly raised its cigarette tax rate, pack sales have gone down sharply. The average state tax is now $1.54 a pack, up from 42 cents in 2000. States can realize even greater health benefits and cost savings by allocating revenue to programs that prevent children from smoking and help smokers quit.

Funding Tobacco Prevention and Control
Combining tax increases with statewide tobacco prevention campaigns reduces tobacco use – which saves lives. Advocates worked hard to make sure state budgets include substantial funds for prevention programs. These efforts prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit, protect people from secondhand smoke and reduce tobacco-related healthcare costs.

Helping Smokers Become Quitters
Despite the efforts of the AHA and our partners in tobacco prevention, 20.5 percent of men and 15.8 percent of women in the U.S. still smoke. To help save these lives, the association advocates for insurance to cover medications, counseling and other tools that help people quit.
Helping People Eat Healthy

PROBLEM:
Nearly one in three kids and teens are overweight or obese. Adults as well as children are still eating too many foods high in saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt and refined grains. They are eating more food away from home, where portion sizes are larger and calories are higher. Following healthy eating patterns – like those recommended by the American Heart Association – is one of the best, easiest and smartest ways people can keep their hearts healthy. Even small changes can bring long-term benefits.

SOLUTIONS:
Voices for Healthy Kids
Voices for Healthy Kids works to engage, organize and mobilize people to improve the health of their communities by helping children achieve a healthy weight. The inaugural year of this collaboration between the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation set the stage for a transformation of the health of our nation’s children. The team has set a plan in motion to accomplish sweeping policy change to help all Americans to live longer and healthier lives for generations to come.

Voices for Healthy Kids is working to shape healthy environments across geographic, demographic and social sectors, ensuring all children, especially those in underserved and at-risk communities, are able to healthfully live, learn and play. Voices for Healthy Kids focuses on key issue areas, including:

- Eliminating food deserts and improving access and affordability of healthy foods.
- Strengthening nutrition standards in schools and in all government nutrition assistance or feeding programs.
- Addressing food marketing and advertising to children.
- Limiting added sugar and sodium in the food supply.

recipients will receive evidence-based preventive screenings and services. Additionally, after more than six years of advocating for CPR in schools, Delaware volunteers celebrated progress with passage of a regulation requiring CPR awareness training. The regulation did not require hands-on learning; however, advocacy on the issue continued, resulting in funding for CPR in Schools in the 2015-16 school year. An anticipated amendment will bring CPR as a graduation requirement in 2015-16. Delaware also has risen to fourth in the rankings of “Most Bicycle Friendly States.” In partnership with Bike Delaware and other health groups, efforts are underway to advocate for infrastructure investments and to put on 2014’s annual Bike Summit.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Volunteers and advocates achieved several priority legislative successes in 2014. The 2015 DC budget includes a $2.75 million appropriation to support the tobacco prevention and control programs, up from nothing only three years ago. The Council also approved the recommendation to tax non-cigarette tobacco products at the same rate as cigarettes. The Workplace Wellness Act was adopted, establishing a workplace wellness policy for DC government agencies and requiring District vending and service procurement to meet federal nutrition standards. The Healthy Tots Act was also passed, creating healthy nutrition standards in childcare facilities and establishing a fund to support nutrition initiatives. Due to the District’s unique relationship with the federal government, all of these measures require approval Congress, which was expected in late 2014.

FLORIDA
Volunteers and advocates fought for a bill that would give schools liability protection so they can allow community organizations, students
Saving Lives with CPR

PROBLEM:
Over 420,000 people have cardiac arrest outside of a hospital every year, and only about 10 percent survive — most likely because they don’t receive timely CPR. Sudden cardiac arrest can happen any place, at any time. The best chance for survival is receiving CPR until EMTs arrive. When given right away, CPR doubles or triples survival rates.

SOLUTIONS:

CPR in Schools
Teaching students CPR can save thousands of lives, which is why the AHA advocates for state laws requiring this lifesaving as a graduation requirement. Thanks to the work done so far by the AHA and our partners to pass such laws, more than 1 million high school students will be trained in CPR every year.

and families to use school grounds for physical activity. The bill made it through the House but was thwarted in the Senate. Volunteers and advocates laid important groundwork this year and will continue advocating for the bill in coming years. Progress continues in the efforts to ensure that every baby is screened for critical congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. The Department of Health formed an implementation team and has begun issuing recommendations for hospitals to perform this simple, inexpensive and effective test.

GEORGIA

At the statehouse, advocates helped pass a bill that bans the sale of e-cigarettes to minors and bans their sale on the Internet. Additionally, the Board of Regents, which governs all 31 state universities and colleges, banned all tobacco use, including e-cigarettes, on all campuses. After multiple years of advocacy, working closely with partner organizations, Georgia is one step closer to screening all babies for critical congenital heart defects. The Department of Health issued rules in May 2014 that include CCHD as a required screening. Efforts will continue on this issue until the new Newborn Screening Manual for hospitals is complete and all babies are screened.

HAWAII

Volunteers and advocates participated in Hawaii’s State Stroke Task Force, which was created as a result of a legislative resolution we advocated for and helped pass in the 2013 session. As a result of the task force’s work, a new uniform stroke code was adopted by the state’s EMS agencies and hospitals, enabling EMS personnel to quickly assess when a patient is suffering a stroke and transmit that assessment to the hospital emergency department before the patient arrives. The task force is also developing a legislative proposal to be presented during the 2015 session to establish a state stroke registry that would help improve the state’s stroke system.

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IDaho

Volunteers and advocates helped pass regulations requiring CPR for high school graduation for all students entering ninth grade in 2015. The Legislature also appropriated the most money to tobacco prevention and cessation in the Millennium Fund’s history. This will ensure smokers have the resources to quit and that Idaho children never start. We also worked closely with the Legislature to pass the Time Sensitive Emergencies bill that authorizes the Department of Health and Welfare to establish systems of care for trauma, heart attacks and strokes — three of the top five causes of deaths in Idaho. A TSE system of evidence-based care addresses public education and prevention, 911 access, response coordination, pre-hospital response, transport, hospital emergency/acute care, rehabilitation and quality improvement. This program will get the patient to the right place in the right time with the right care.

Illinois

Volunteers and staff successfully advocated for the passage of a bill ensuring all babies born in Illinois are screened for critical congenital heart defects via a pulse oximetry test. All high schools must begin training students in CPR and how to use an AED thanks to the Lauren Laman Law. The training, a mandatory part of the health curriculum, will create a new generation of life-savers every year. Advocates also worked hard to pass a new law to improve the system of care for stroke patients through hospital designation, EMS transport protocols and a state stroke registry. The Legislature took important steps toward creation of an excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. These bills did not pass, but they did succeed in starting a conversation about the health impact of sugar-sweetened beverages. Illinois also took steps to curb childhood obesity with the help of a newly created Enhanced PE Task Force. The Chicago Board of Education recently voted unanimously to adopt a new Physical Education Policy that recognizes physical education as a core subject within Chicago Public Schools and required daily PE in all CPS schools. This policy reflects years of dedication from our advocates and will impact 400,000+ kids in the CPS system and is likely to positively influence PE policies statewide and beyond. Finally, the city of Chicago increased the tax on cigarettes by 50-cents per pack, making the total combined local, state and federal tax $7.17 per pack, which is the highest in the nation. This will result in fewer smokers and thousands of lives saved.

Indiana

Advocates and volunteers made great progress by passing a law requiring schools to offer CPR training to students. We will continue to work closely with partners and the Legislature to ensure all students receive that training before they graduate. Also beginning this year, schools will share information with all coaches, student athletes and their parents about the risk of sudden cardiac arrest and steps will be taken if symptoms appear. Advocates and volunteers worked hard to improve the state healthcare system by establishing a medical director to oversee all emergency medical services and by passing a law to create an electronic health data work group. We were also successful in advocating for funding for the Indiana Office of Minority Health.

Iowa

Advocates and volunteers worked hard to ensure Iowa Health & Wellness Plan would provide coverage for critical preventive services to all enrollees. In partnership with Voice for Healthy Kids, we have begun to build a strong coalition interested in passing policies to help prevent obesity. This new group, Bridging Solutions to a Healthier Iowa, is working to open the door for future initiatives including shared use of schools and funding Safe Routes to Schools. The Iowa
Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program received a $100,000 increase in funding to continue its successful work, helping users quit and keeping kids from ever starting. Since passage of a bill requiring screening for congenital heart defects, we continue to work through the regulatory process to ensure screening is done through pulse oximetry.

KANSAS

Volunteers and partners played a key role in progress toward screening every baby for congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. The Kansas Department of Health is working to increase hospital participation in this program while we continue to work with lawmakers to make sure it is solidified through policy. Again this year, advocates and volunteers worked hard to defeat efforts to scale back or overturn the clean indoor air law. Outside of the capitol we partnered with the Kansas Health Foundation to create the Kansas Alliance for Wellness an effort to help advocate for state and local policies that support the consumption of healthy foods and beverages.

KENTUCKY

After two years of hard work by advocates, the state’s regulation requiring pulse oximetry screening for newborns became final in June 2014. Advocates also fought for CPR in schools legislation, moving the bill through the House before meeting opposition in the Senate. Volunteers continued to build support for this policy after the legislative session and plan to bring the issue back in 2015. Finally, the Smoke Free Kentucky campaign brought hundreds of advocates to the Capitol in February, mounting impressive legislative, grassroots and media tactics; however, House leadership refused to call the bill for a vote, so coalition partners are regrouping with the goal of passing a statewide comprehensive smoke-free bill in the next session.

LOUISIANA

The bill requiring students to learn and practice CPR and how to use an AED before they graduate from high school had tremendous support, with over 60 co-authors and unanimous passage in the House and Senate. Working closely with volunteers and coalition partners, the association also saw passage of a bill that helps Louisianans get more physically active. The law requires a Complete Streets Policy and creates the Complete Streets Advisory Council that will help increase walking and biking throughout Louisiana communities. Advocates supported a bill that would have added calorie information to all menus, menu boards and food tags in restaurants with 15 or more locations, but the measure fell short in the Senate.

MAINE

State residents will have access to tobacco cessation medication and counseling, thanks to advocates’ success overriding a governor’s veto and passing an enhanced MaineCare tobacco benefit. A bill that would have dedicated tobacco settlement dollars to public health initiatives failed, but the money was protected so it cannot be spent on anything else until it is allocated by the next Legislature. Maine volunteers and advocates continued to make progress toward ensuring that all babies are screened using pulse oximetry, with expectations for a new rule in place in 2015.

MARYLAND

The session yielded many legislative wins, including “Breanna’s Law” requiring all public high school students to complete training in CPR, including hands-on practice. The law, starting with the freshman class of 2015, also requires AED training. Another victory came in legislation that enables the Maryland Neighborhood Business Development Program to provide funds to businesses in food deserts so they can provide fresh fruit, vegetables and other healthy foods. Another new law requires child-care centers to limit screen time, comply with USDA standards for beverages served to children and promote breastfeeding. Additionally, regulations were adopted to extend preventive benefits to all Medicaid patients, eliminating barriers to coverage and health disparities.

MASSACHUSETTS

Volunteers and advocates helped pass a law requiring all newborns to be screened for congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. Advocates worked closely with partners in tobacco prevention to successfully pass an increase in the state tobacco tax. Now at $3.51 per pack, this will help keep kids from smoking. The association also worked to ensure that cities and towns are incentivized to include walking and biking when they construct new roads or fix existing roads. This was achieved by including important language on complete streets in the Transportation Bond Bill. Additionally, communities will have better access to fresh fruits and vegetables thanks to a new law that includes fresh food financing.
MICHIGAN

Advocates and volunteers successfully advocated for $1.3 million in increased funding for the development and implementation of trauma, stroke and STEMI systems of care, helping to ensure patients get the right care at the right time. With our partners, we also helped pass a law requiring pulse oximetry testing for all babies born in Michigan to help detect congenital heart defects. We also worked with legislators to pass a law creating cardiac emergency response plans in schools. Advocates and volunteers helped secure $500,000 in appropriations for physical activity and nutrition programs in schools. We worked alongside many business, healthcare and consumer advocacy organizations to pass the expansion of the Medicaid program to ensure more access to quality health care for patients with cardiovascular disease.

MINNESOTA

Volunteers and advocates successfully secured $1.25 million for Safe Routes to Schools to make it safer for Minnesota kids to walk and bike to school. The state took a big step in building the Minnesota Systems of Care by strengthening participation in Minnesota’s Stroke and STEMI Registry Programs. The required data collection and participation from all Primary and Comprehensive Stroke Centers will help ensure stroke survivors will get the best care possible. To help further strengthen the chain of survival, beginning in August, all public automated external defibrillators will be registered in maintenance programs that alert owners when updates and new equipment are needed.

MISSISSIPPI

Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, all high school students will learn CPR as part of physical education class, ensuring they are prepared to save a life by the time they leave high school. Volunteers, staff and partners helped 14 municipalities adopt comprehensive clean indoor air laws this year, bringing the state’s total to 83 smoke-free cities and towns. Efforts to help all Mississippi residents have access to healthy food were not as successful as we had hoped, but advocates laid important groundwork in setting up the infrastructure and will remain committed to improving healthy food access by working toward funding.

MISSOURI

In January, Chloe’s Law went into effect in Missouri, requiring every baby to be screened for congenital heart defects with a pulse oximetry test. Advocates and volunteers helped secure nearly $50,000 to help implement the new screening. With our partner organizations, we worked to ensure a veto of a bill that would have severely weakened statewide tobacco regulation by exempting e-cigarettes. In a challenging budget year, we preserved funding for the Show Me Healthy Women Program with $500,000. This program funds Missouri’s WISEWOMAN program, which helps underinsured and low-income women obtain screenings to help prevent heart disease and stroke. In addition, we secured $350,000 to be allocated toward the Missouri Quit Line to help people stop using tobacco.

MONTANA

The Secretary of State signed into code a mandate for more stringent newborn health screenings, including a mandatory pulse oximetry test. There was also significant progress locally about normalizing healthier behaviors. Let’s Move Missoula is leading the charge in several areas to fight for healthier policies which include physical activity, nutrition in schools, school gardens and active families. Although this is a local initiative, there is precedent for this work to be adopted around the state. We have made important progress on the issue of shared use of school facilities by partnering closely with local districts and the Office of Public Instruction.
Helping America Get Moving

PROBLEM:
The U.S. is in the grip of a full-blown obesity epidemic. In fact, up to 35 percent of people in some states are obese. It is critical to find ways to increase physical activity opportunities in the places where people live, work, learn and play: making the healthy choice the easy choice. However, nearly 50 percent of U.S. adults and 65 percent of adolescents don’t get the recommended amount of daily physical activity.

SOLUTIONS:

Physical Education
The association advocates for quality physical education in all schools — an important part of a student’s comprehensive, well-rounded education that increases life-long health and well-being. Kids need to be active, and school is the perfect place for that every day.

Shared Use
People who have easy access to parks or recreational facilities exercise 38 percent more than those who don’t, research shows. Shared use agreements allow school districts, local governments, and community organizations to share costs and responsibilities of opening school property to the public after hours.

Built Environment
The association advocates for policies that will build more physically active communities by making everyday activities easier and safer. This includes safe routes to schools and complete streets programs.

NEBRASKA
Advocates and volunteers worked tirelessly through the regulation process to ensure all babies are screened using pulse oximetry for all newborns, following passage of the Critical Congenital Newborn Screening Act last year. At the AHA advocacy day at the Capitol in February, advocates spoke with policymakers about CPR and making it a graduation requirement. Advocacy efforts including media efforts and public testimony this year helped educate the Board of Education and state senators about the importance of CPR and learning it in school. We will continue these efforts next year to ensure CPR becomes a graduation requirement.

NEVADA
This year Nevada achieved school-related success with the creation of the Nevada School Wellness Policy. Volunteers and staff also were part of an advisory committee tasked with rewriting the wellness policy and advocated for and language that prohibits school fundraising events that do not meet the SMART SNACK guidelines. In addition, all marketing during school hours must meet the SMART SNACK guidelines. Locally the association is working with the Las Vegas City Council on adopting a healthy vending policy and for public funding for CPR in Schools.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
The Legislature in April passed a measure to accept federal Medicaid money to buy private health insurance for thousands of low-income adults. The state is now awaiting a waiver from the federal government to allow the plan to move forward. Work continued on CPR in Schools efforts, with outreach to the largest school districts to encourage CPR training for all graduates. This effort will continue in 2015. Finally, the NH Stroke Collaborative and its workgroup members met monthly to build support toward developing a coordinated system of care for stroke patients. EMS, acute care hospitals and other stakeholders are looking at policies and practices to ensure timely, appropriate treatment to reduce disability and death.
NEW JERSEY

Volunteers and advocates worked with lawmakers to require CPR training for high school graduation, and the measure was signed into law in January after passing through the Legislature with near-unanimous support. (There was only one dissenting vote in the Senate.) The Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act also included a requirement that all high school coaches be certified in CPR. The association also continued to work with partners to reinstate public funding for tobacco control. While efforts to get funding included in the 2015 state budget were not successful, a bill to create tax parity between cigarette and other tobacco products is still being considered. The bill dedicates a portion of that revenue ($11 million) to tobacco control.

NEW MEXICO

Volunteers and staff helped pass a law ensuring all infants get screened for critical congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. Governor Susana Martinez supported the bill throughout the process and even attended a Go Red For Women luncheon in Albuquerque and declared her intention to sign this important bill, doing so in March 2014. Legislative champions and advocates joined with the family of a survivor who had advocated for the law at the signing. The New Mexico Department of Health also promulgated rules that set up statewide STEMI and Stroke registries. Appropriations for the registries were secured last session.

NEW YORK

The Legislature passed a proposal calling for consideration of CPR/AED instruction in the state school curriculum. Lawmakers were touched by advocates’ outreach, with New Yorkers sharing a real story a day about how they were impacted by CPR and AED use. Legislation creating a state campaign encouraging physical activity and wellness also passed in both houses. Both the CPR and the physical activity measures await signatures from the governor. New York City mandated tobacco packaging requirements, strengthened penalties and established a minimum price of $10.50 for all packs of cigarettes. The city also increased the legal age to purchase tobacco and e-cigarettes to 21 and restricted the use of e-cigarettes to only locations where smoking is permitted. The association is championing new legislation to require CPR training in all city high schools, further increasing the price of tobacco with a dramatic tax increase, as well as addressing obesity through several policy proposals.

NORTH DAKOTA

Volunteers and staff worked closely with the Department of Health leadership to increase capacity to support stroke and cardiac systems of care. This step ensures continuity of work on stroke systems of care, while providing an important transition of the Mission: Lifeline STEMI project to a state-led cardiac system of care. A number of schools also enacted “CPR SMART” graduation requirements, as part of efforts to tap into a special fund established in 2013 to support CPR training in schools. We continue to push for a statewide law requiring CPR for high school graduation. While this was not a legislative session year, volunteers made 185 presentations and requests for CPR in Schools during the year.

NORTH CAROLINA

Supported by grant funding from Voices for Healthy Kids, North Carolina launched a campaign to improve access to healthy foods in underserved neighborhoods. Advocates gathered nearly 2,000 cards urging the governor to improve healthy food access. Hypertension awareness and prevention efforts received further spotlight in a Governor’s Proclamation, Senatorial
Statement and House Resolution. Building on this momentum, nearly 50 advocates participated in more than 125 legislative meetings on state lobby day. Although a healthy corner store or healthy food financing initiative did not pass this year, advocates laid the groundwork for 2015 and will continue to engage lawmakers on the issue.

OHIO

After a three-year process, Ohio finalized Medicaid smoking cessation coverage. Also, the smallest Ohioans will now benefit from newborn screening for critical congenital heart defects. The law passed through the legislative process thanks to active participation of families affected by congenital heart defects and healthcare professionals. The bill was written broadly to accommodate future changes in science, so the advocacy team worked through the regulatory process to ensure pulse oximetry is the method for screening. In the area of childhood obesity, Ohio received one of the first grants from Voices for Healthy Kids to address shared use liability. The team assembled a broad coalition of partners and educated the public and decision makers about the need to clarify liability laws so schools will consider opening facilities after hours for increased physical activity opportunities. The measure moved through the House and is awaiting action from the Senate this fall.

OKLAHOMA

The legislative session culminated with a law requiring CPR as a graduation requirement, making Oklahoma the 16th state with such a law and ensuring that more than 1 million students nationwide will graduate with this lifesaving skill every year. Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, students will learn CPR and the purpose of an AED. This achievement was a direct result of a three-year campaign involving collaboration with numerous stakeholders and volunteer advocates, and encompassing a range of grassroots and media advocacy tactics such as postcard petition collection, letters to the editor, social media “calls to action,” and advocacy days at the Capitol. Additionally, the advocacy team worked closely with national partner organizations to promote legislation defining e-cigarettes and vapor products as tobacco products, while fighting against bills that do not define these products as such.

OREGON

Volunteers and advocates worked for CPR in schools, tobacco control and new initiatives to fight childhood obesity. Volunteers and advocates made critical progress by educating legislators and their staff about the importance of hands-only CPR education in our schools. Joining forces with partners who have received
Improving Public Health

PROBLEM:
About 83 million U.S. adults suffer from cardiovascular diseases. These life-threatening conditions include coronary heart disease, heart failure, stroke and high blood pressure. More than 2,200 people die from cardiovascular diseases each day—one death every 39 seconds. The burden can be particularly problematic for those without health insurance or with inadequate coverage. The uninsured experience higher mortality rates and worse blood pressure control. The uninsured and underinsured are also less likely to take medications or get preventive care. A 2010 American Heart Association survey found that more than half of patients with cardiovascular diseases had difficulties paying for medical care, even though most had insurance. Forty-six percent of those who had difficulty paying said they had delays getting needed care.

SOLUTIONS:

Funding for Critical Public Health Programs
The association advocates for an increased investment of public funds to combat heart disease, stroke and the factors that increase risk for these diseases. By championing public funding for cardiovascular disease and stroke prevention programs and actively partnering with our public health partners and agency authorities, we can help ensure financial resources are available to help support and enhance lifesaving state and community programs.

Ensuring Access to Quality, Affordable Care
The association is working to ensure health coverage is universal, continuous and affordable to individuals and society. This includes promoting public policies that ensure quality health care, efforts to decrease disparities in health care and creation of an environment where science-based treatment guidelines can be put into practice. About 16 million adults with a history of cardiovascular diseases and stroke are covered through Medicaid. The association advocates for states to accept federal funds to provide insurance coverage for lower-income people as authorized under the Affordable Care Act. Advocates also work in each state to ensure that Medicaid programs are providing coverage for evidence-based preventive benefits.

grants from Voices for Healthy Kids, we are working on two policy initiatives aimed at reducing childhood obesity. The first is a regional campaign to secure funding for Safe Routes to School programs and infrastructure at every metro-area school district. The second is a bill that would define what “junk food marketing” is and ban it from schools. The association also helped establish the Oregon State Stroke Committee and the state’s first statewide stroke registry.
PENNSYLVANIA

After several years of work, the Legislature passed a transportation bill in November establishing a Multi-Modal Fund that will provide an annual appropriation of $144 million. Volunteer advocates were successful in the efforts to ensure walking and bicycling be included, meaning projects that support those activities, including Safe Routes to School, are eligible to apply for funding. Additionally, the first-ever dedicated state appropriation ($2 million) for walking and bicycling initiatives was made. In July 2014, a law requiring pulse oximetry screenings for newborns was signed into law. Young advocates and their families came to the State Capitol to rally for the law. They also wrote letters, drew pictures and educated decision makers about the importance of pulse oximetry screening. Passage of this legislation means all five Great Rivers Affiliate states now have pulse oximetry screening in place. Staff also led the Breathe Free Pennsylvania coalition through tremendous growth while working to strengthen the state’s smoke-free law.

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island advocates worked closely with state health officials to help implement the 2013 CPR in schools law. Advocates also launched a campaign to secure state funding for new CPR manikins for schools. This will continue to be a priority in 2015. A bill that would have weakened the state’s stroke registry did not pass, thanks to concerned advocates who questioned the proposal and criticized the impact it would have on the registry that’s designed to improve patient care. Rhode Island is one step closer to mandating pulse oximetry screening for all newborns, thanks in part to the outreach of “little heart heroes” who wore their superhero capes while meeting with the governor.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers and partners, every baby born in South Carolina will now be screened for congenital heart disease using pulse oximetry. Advocates and volunteers successfully protected $5 million in funding for tobacco control received from cigarette tax revenue and three more communities adopted smoke-free ordinances, for a total of 58 cities and counties covering 39 percent of the state’s population. The association continues to work on legislation requiring foods to meet federal nutrition guidelines for competitive foods sold in schools. The legislation stalled in the Senate late in the session, though. For the past two years, the CPR in Schools bill slowly worked its way through the Senate and finally to the House, where it also fell short late. It will be again be a top priority in 2015.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Volunteers and advocates made great progress toward ensuring every student is trained in CPR before graduating from high school. We took a big step by helping pass a bill that encourages the South Dakota Department of

Protecting Babies from Heart Defects

PROBLEM:
Congenital heart defects are the most common birth defect in the U.S. and the leading killer of infants with birth defects. More than 1,500 babies each year do not live to celebrate their first birthday. Beyond the terrible toll, families endure physical and mental pain.

SOLUTIONS:

Pulse Oximetry Screening for Newborns
There is a non-invasive screening test can save lives by identifying infants with congenital heart defects before they show any signs. The test — pulse oximetry, or pulse ox — is very simple. Sensors are placed on a baby’s hand and foot to check blood oxygen levels. In 2011, the federal government recommended pulse ox as a standard procedure after birth. The AHA and our partners have successfully advocated in over 30 states for pulse ox screening policies that will help babies live longer and fuller lives.
Education to provide CPR instruction in schools. Throughout the legislative session, we partnered with South Dakota’s emergency medical technicians on shared priorities and co-hosted a legislative reception. We also worked with coalition partners to amend a dangerous e-cigarette bill into a law that prohibits children from purchasing the products by defining nicotine-containing e-cigarettes as tobacco. We also continued efforts with coalition partners to encourage the expansion of Medicaid to improve access to health care, especially preventive services.

TENNESSEE

Working closely with partners in tobacco prevention, volunteers and advocates were able to stop two bills that would have allowed e-cigarette smoking indoors. The American Heart Association was honored to be asked to be a partner in the formation of the Nutrition Caucus, a bipartisan group of House and Senate members wanting to address the issues for kids who don’t know where their next meal is coming from. Advocates supported the Healthy Food Financing Act, which would provide incentives to help stores sell affordable, healthy and fresh foods. The bill had strong support but fell short.

TEXAS

The Legislature was not in session so the advocacy team and volunteers focused on the regulatory arena. Rules were enacted for the Texas CPR in Schools law, which was passed in the previous session. Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, high schools will provide CPR education to all students prior to graduation. AHA volunteers and staff also made significant progress toward finalizing rules ensuring all infants are screened for critical congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. The advocacy team also worked with smoke-free coalition partners to enact local smoke-free ordinances in San Marcos, Weatherford, Harlingen and Wichita Falls – ordinances that will protect almost a quarter of a million residents from secondhand smoke.

UTAH

After years of collaborating with the Utah Department of Health, the Utah Hospital Association and many others, new administrative rules have been published that that require the department to recognize nationally accredited stroke facilities throughout the state. Additionally, an appropriation bill passed that will provide teachers with the resources they need to train high school students in CPR, including hands-on practice. During Lobby Day in February, “Heart Savers” who have used CPR to save lives were honored in the House and the Senate. Working with state officials and with news agencies, we helped drive public support for the CPR bill. As a result, legislators approved $200,000 a year for CPR training, and a provision requiring development of state performance measures associated with CPR and AED training. All high school students will now receive CPR training in 10th-grade health class.

Improving Quality of Care

PROBLEM:

Despite successes in disease prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, there are significant obstacles to ensuring scientific advances are translated into medical practice. The problems can often be traced to the fact that healthcare facilities, government agencies and healthcare professionals are not integrated in their approach. That can prevent quality healthcare from being delivered across communities.

SOLUTIONS:

Stroke and STEMI Systems of Care

A system of care provides seamless transition from one stage of patient care to the next, from the 9-1-1 call, to the ambulance, to the ER and to rehabilitation. Employing a statewide systems approach to treat strokes and STEMI heart attacks that require urgent care enables health professionals to determine what is working best and where things can improve. The American Heart Association advocates for coordinated systems implementation in all 50 states to assess each state’s level of stroke and STEMI care, evaluate available resources, and to identify and implement opportunities for improvement.
VERMONT

Counseling to help people quit smoking was made available to Medicaid recipients in the state this year, after many years of advocating from the association and our partners. Volunteers and advocates were also successful in partnering with the state Medicaid office to extend coverage for prevention-related benefits to all participants. These two successes will ensure patients are able to work with their doctor to stay health and prevent heart disease and stroke. The AHA, along with the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Vermont, worked to pass smoke-free legislation that protects residents from secondhand smoke in hotels, state-owned property and motor vehicles when kids are present. The measure also prohibits e-cigarettes on public school grounds and events. The State Board of Education included language requiring schools to offer options for students in grades K-12 to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. Lawmakers increased the cigarette tax by 13 cents and increased the tax on snuff and new smokeless tobacco.

VIRGINIA

Thanks to the hard work of key volunteer leaders and Mended Little Hearts volunteers, a new law requiring all newborns to receive pulse oximetry or other Board of Health-approved screening unanimously passed the General Assembly and was signed into law. Virginia staff and volunteers are monitoring the regulatory process to specify that screening use pulse oximetry. The final budget enacted includes $800,000 for 12-lead ECGs. With the help of Mission: Lifeline partners, the advocacy team identified approximately $2 million in need to fully equip Virginia with 12-leads. Added to the $400,000 from 2013, the association has now successfully advocated for $1.2 million in appropriations for this lifesaving equipment. The final budget requires Medicaid to include benefits to help patients quit smoking, ensuring all patients have access to best practices.

WASHINGTON

Advocates and volunteers helped with a regulatory victory that gave thousands access to important services that can help prevent chronic disease, including heart disease. Washington expanded its Medicaid program early on as part of the Affordable Care Act, and this year the state went a step further by extending coverage for preventive services to all Medicaid participants. Additionally, for the first time in more than four years, the Legislature invested $1.5 million in the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. When this program was funded it had been shown to save the state $5 in healthcare costs for every $1 invested. We were also a proud partner in a coalition successfully advocating for funding for the governor’s Healthiest Next Generation Initiative, which will coordinate childhood obesity prevention efforts across three state agencies.

WISCONSIN

Advocates and volunteers worked hard to successfully ensure all babies born in Wisconsin will be screened for congenital heart defects using pulse oximetry. We also supported efforts to pass the Healthy Jobs Act, which allocates $15 million to small businesses to help create new worksite wellness programs. Progress was made on efforts to strengthen the state 9-1-1 system, and we will continue to work toward this next session. Advocates were also successful in defeating a bill that would have exempted e-cigarettes from the state smoke-free law.

WYOMING

The focus during this year’s budget-only legislative session was securing funding for CPR in Schools. Grassroots advocates were recruited and efforts were undertaken to secure the support of the governor and the Department of Education. The CPR in Schools budget amendment went to a conference committee but was stripped of all of its funding. Fortunately, the committee left in place instructions directing the Department of Education to review data on CPR to students and report on it. The AHA will draw from this report and use this momentum to secure CPR in Scho