



**Chairman of the Board**  
Bernard P. Dennis

**President**  
Mariell Jessup, MD, FAHA

**Chairman-elect**  
Alvin L. Royse, JD, CPA

**President-elect**  
Elliott M. Antman, MD, FAHA

**Immediate Past  
Chairman of the Board**  
Ron W. Haddock

**Immediate Past President**  
Donna K. Arnett, PhD, MSPH, FAHA

**Treasurer**  
David A. Bush

**Directors**  
Joyce Beatty, MS  
Mark A. Creager, MD, FAHA  
Mary Cushman, MD, MSC, FAHA  
Steven R. Houser, PhD, FAHA  
Willie E. Lawrence, Jr., MD, FAHA  
Johnny Lee, MD  
Pegui Mariduena, CMC, MBA  
John J. Mullenholz  
James J. Postl  
Bertram L. Scott  
David A. Spina  
Bernard J. Tyson  
Raymond P. Vara, Jr.  
Henry J. Wasiak, MBA

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Nancy A. Brown

**Chief Mission Officer**  
Meighan Girgus

**Chief Diversity Officer**  
Gerald Johnson, II

**Chief Administrative Officer &  
Chief Financial Officer**  
Sunder D. Joshi

**Chief Science & Medical Officer**  
Rose Marie Robertson, MD, FAHA

**Chief Development Officer**  
Suzie Upton

**Deputy Chief Medical Officer**  
Eduardo Sanchez, MD, MPH

**Executive Vice President  
Corporate Communications &  
Brand Content**  
Matthew Bannister

**Executive Vice President,  
Corporate Secretary &  
General Counsel**  
Lynne M. Darrouzet, Esq.

**Executive Vice President  
ECC Programs**  
John Meiners

**Executive Vice President  
Strategic Markets &  
Consumer Business Innovation**  
Kathy Rogers

**Executive Vice President  
Advocacy & Health Quality**  
Mark A. Schoeberl

**Executive Vice President  
Business Technology**  
Roger Santone

October 31, 2013

The Honorable Mark Kirk  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kirk:

On behalf of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and the estimated 7 million Americans living with stroke, thank you for introducing the Return to Work Act.

As you know, stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability, and among survivors who were working at the time of their stroke, only about half are able to reenter the workforce within one year. As a result, stroke cost our nation more than \$33 billion in lost wages and productivity in 2012. As the retirement age and the risk of stroke among those ages 45-64 increase, lost productivity due to stroke is projected to reach \$56.5 billion by 2030. In addition to the financial consequences to patients and their families, some studies suggest that stroke survivors who are unable to return to work have poorer psychosocial outcomes.

Our nation is strongest when everyone who wants to work is able to do so. By encouraging employers to use the resources of the Job Accommodation Network within the Department of Labor to help stroke survivors return to work, your legislation can give hope and help to future survivors and strengthen our nation economically.

Thank you again for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy A. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Nancy A. Brown  
Chief Executive Officer