By the time you read this, my time as chairman of the board for the American Heart Association will have just concluded. As I reflect on my tenure, I’m proud of the advancements we’ve made in cardiovascular health and brain health, which is attributed to your unwavering support. In fact, you not only contributed, but you also served as my inspiration.

As you give your time, talents and commitment to fighting these deadly diseases, we work to find solutions so that fewer will suffer. We know that people are counting on us, and that serves as a daily reminder for the work that we do. Thank you for your dedication to our mission.

In this issue, you’ll read about our work in precision medicine, leveraging technology in the healthcare space for better patient outcomes. You’ll also see how we’re focusing on helping children grow up healthier. By working with carefully selected strategic partners like The Children’s Heart Foundation, and through programs like Voices for Healthy Kids, CPR in Schools, Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart, we can help future generations. In all that we do, our priority is to enhance and save lives.

Last, connecting with our volunteers and supporters is critical to our work, and we take your insights to heart. Earlier this year, many of our Cor Vitae Society members were asked to take a survey about their interactions with the American Heart Association. Thank you for your valuable feedback, which will enhance our communication with you and allow us to better share our work and the profound impact you make through your support. We always welcome questions or any feedback you may wish to provide. You can reach us at corvitae@heart.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you again for everything you do to advance our mission.

Alvin L. Royse, J.D., CPA
Chairman of the Board
Patron’s Circle Member

Our Mission

To build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.
Precision medicine has changed the healthcare treatment landscape forever. This innovative approach considers a person’s genetics, environment and lifestyle to inform medical treatment and procedures. The American Heart Association Institute for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine is the only entity focused exclusively on advancing precision medicine in cardiovascular care.

Discovering tailored treatments requires knowing people’s health information and understanding why we react differently to treatments and medicines. To gather and learn from this information, the AHA institute has created the AHA Precision Medicine Platform, a state-of-the-art data discovery marketplace (powered by Amazon Web Services).

This platform uses cloud technology to allow academic institutions, industry, healthcare systems and researchers to access newly unlocked research information and analytics in one secure space. By aggregating large pools of data in one platform, scientists can speed up the discovery of new patterns, leading to possible new solutions to unsolved problems.

The institute also invites you to be a part of cardiovascular research solutions. The newly established My Research Legacy collects health data from thousands of people, whether they’re healthy or not, in a secure online research network. Volunteers like Emily W. provide information like lifestyle, health and genetic data, stripped of personal information. The platform then looks for new patterns that could be explored for personalized treatments to cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Information added to My Research Legacy will fuel the AHA Precision Medicine Platform. To learn more about My Research Legacy or get involved, visit: myresearchlegacy.org.

More information on the AHA Institute for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine can be found at institute.heart.org.

Hope found in precision medicine

“If one person’s life can be saved as a result of my stroke experience, I would relive May 21, 2013 in a heartbeat.” — Emily W. / My Research Legacy volunteer

Precision Medicine Pioneers: Paul and Joan Rubschlager

Powering the AHA Institute for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine and its research requires the passion and vision from supporters like Cor Vitae Society Heart & Torch Circle members Paul and Joan Rubschlager of Chicago.

The Rubschlagers generously gave $2 million to create the Paul and Joan Rubschlager Precision Promise Fund. This fund offers grants to scientists and the next generation of researchers who are focused on propelling precision cardiovascular medicine.

“We hear about precision medicine at other medical research groups with which we are involved,” Paul said. “Without a doubt, precision medicine is the foundation for future successful medical treatment. We believe that this gift will allow the AHA to get a running start with their precision medicine program.”

The Rubschlagers are long-time donors and friends of the American Heart Association. Their early commitment to the institute can help change the trajectory of cardiovascular diseases and stroke for future generations.
Cardiac arrest survivor now plays college hoops

By American Heart Association News

J. Galloway had just come off the court during a summer league basketball game when he suddenly collapsed. The seemingly healthy 16-year-old was in cardiac arrest.

His coach, Willie Swinney, knew exactly what to do. He started CPR. A parent from the opposing team, John Knight, joined him. They continued until paramedics arrived 15 minutes later.

“God had all the right people in the right place at the right time,” said E.J.’s mother, Ollie Galloway. E.J. doesn’t remember what happened that June 2, 2014. He does recall regaining consciousness three days later at the hospital.

“When I woke up, I was just hungry,” E.J. said. His legs were a little sore, but he was ready to play basketball again. It would be six months before he could resume playing, doctors warned. “It broke my heart,” he said.

During his time sitting out, E.J. had an implanted defibrillator placed in his chest to help prevent future cardiac arrests. The device delivers an electric shock to restore a normal heartbeat if necessary. It’s just there for support,” said E.J., now 19. “I get to play as normal. It’s not stopping me.”

The 6-foot-9 power forward now plays for Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, where he is studying public health.

He has not had another heart episode like the one he experienced in 2014. Doctors don’t know exactly why he went into cardiac arrest that day. “His heart rhythm, they told us it sped up so fast that it stopped,” explained Ollie.

E.J. is advocating for healthy lifestyles and medical research as an American Heart Association volunteer. He and his mom traveled to Washington, D.C., in 2015 to lobby Congress for more National Institutes of Health funding.

“We try to bring awareness for what happened to me. We’re trying to do something positive. Anything can happen in the blink of an eye, before you know it. I believe you should live your life to the fullest,” E.J. said, adding that eventually he may write a book to inspire others.

E.J. emphasizes the importance of knowing CPR, especially among his peers. The Jackson Heart Foundation, partnering with the AHA, purchased a CPR in Schools kit for E.J.’s high school and other schools so that students can learn the lifesaving skill. Mississippi law now requires CPR training for high school students in physical education or health classes.

Swinney said even though he had long been CPR-certified, he never thought he would need to use it. He and Knight were awarded the 2015 Heart Saver Award by city and school officials for what they did, and the city has “embraced” E.J., his mother said.

“It was a team effort,” she said. “E.J. was a life that was saved.”
Today, 37 states and Washington, D.C., have passed legislation that requires high school students to learn CPR to graduate. That adds more than 2 million new lifesavers to our communities each year!

“We chose to participate in the CPR in Schools program because we know that our donation creates positive action that directly affects people. Allowing high school students to learn CPR by using the kits our donation provides, we know that many of them will pay it forward by training family members and friends — and that increases heart attack survival odds exponentially. We are pleased to work with the American Heart Association to grow CPR in Schools.”

— Champion’s Circle members Nancy and Dave Garell, Lake Forest, California
LOCAL EVENTS

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA:

Philadelphia Men Go Red For Women held an intimate dinner at Del Frisco’s Steakhouse with new Cor Vitae Society members, featuring NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Marino and two-time Super Bowl champion Jim Stuckey.

Dan Marino, Champion’s Circle member Matt Austin, M.D., and Jim Stuckey

Dan Marino, Champion’s Circle member Dawn Zier, Jim Stuckey, Champion’s Circle members Joyce and Michael Hagan

AHA Central Region national team lead Darryl Griffin, Dan Marino, President’s Circle and Philadelphia Cor Vitae Society chair Mark R. Nicoletti, Sr., Jim Stuckey and Doug Hutcherson

Champion’s Circle member Dawn Zier and Patron’s Circle member Brian Tierney
Bill Wood credits his late beloved wife Lee with giving him two things in life: a family and the joy of giving back.

The Woods have been dedicated advocates of the mission for more than 20 years. Years ago, they established a pediatric fund through the American Heart Association in memory of Lee’s son who had a congenital heart defect. Since then, Bill has served in various volunteer roles, including being part of the Western States Affiliate Board.

A little more than a year after Lee’s passing, he could think of no better way to honor her than to invite his friends and family members to join him in supporting one of his and Lee’s favorite causes — the American Heart Association.

In May, Bill threw a fabulous party at his home in Hollywood Hills and created a tribute web page to help raise funds. More than 150 guests attended his fiesta to honor Lee and learn more about the important advancements of the American Heart Association. His friends and family also have flooded Lee’s page with messages of love and fond memories. It should be no surprise that so many people are eager to support Bill and Lee.

“The American Heart Association has been one of the most treasured organizations that Lee and I have supported over the years,” Bill said. “As I sit here on the one-year anniversary of Lee’s passing, I am inspired to honor her once again, by giving back to the organization that works tirelessly to build healthier lives for all.”

Bill is a heart attack survivor, and believes in health equity. But perhaps even stronger than his support of the AHA mission is the relationships he and his late wife formed through the association.

“Lee and I have seen the amazing work of the association, and we have made life-long friends through their events,” he said. “We will always consider ourselves part of the Heart family.”

One of those friends is Alice Jean Zuccaire, a resident of New York. More than 10 years ago, they met in Dallas, Texas, as honored guests at Scientific Sessions, the leading cardiovascular science conference that brings together researchers, cardiologists and exhibitors from around the globe. Upon Lee’s passing, Alice wanted to do something special for Lee, so she established The Lee Stein-Wood Heart of Gold Award at the 2016 Los Angeles Heart & Stroke Ball with a $100,000 grant from the non-profit Paul W. Zuccaire Foundation, in memory of Alice’s father. A year later at the 2017 Los Angeles Heart & Stroke Ball, Alice generously gave her personal contribution of $100,000 supporting the work of the AHA and her dear friends.

The overwhelming love and support that the Woods and their friends and family have given to the American Heart Association is making a profound impact on so many.

“It is critical we help improve the health of our community, band together for those who need it most, and most importantly, save lives,” Bill said.
Allan and Maria Acton | Cary, North Carolina

CHAMPION’S CIRCLE

At her 18-week ultrasound for her second pregnancy, Maria’s doctor delivered grim news: “There’s a problem; we think there’s something wrong with your child’s heart.”

Jack was born with Heterotaxy Syndrome, a rare medical condition that affects the arrangement of organs in the chest and abdomen, including the heart. His heart formed with only two chambers, significantly impacting the blood circulation throughout his body. He would need three open heart surgeries by the time he was 3 ½ years old.

The entire family knows that advancements in science saved Jack’s life. “When we first found out that we would have a child with Heterotaxy Syndrome, we googled it and found next to nothing,” Maria said. “In six short years, there’s so much information and awareness online, including parents groups. What the AHA is pouring into ongoing research will be everything as far as Jack’s medical future goes.”

Even big sister Molly is aware of the significance research has on her brother. She’s been a Jump Rope For Heart participant for five years, raising nearly $11,000. For every $100 donation she receives, she personally knits a red eternity scarf. Her thank you note says: “Your donation is helping to fight heart disease, raise heart awareness and hold families (like ours!) together.”

Today, Jack is a full-of-energy 7-year-old who will be starting tennis and t-ball this year. His cardiologist calls him a poster child for successful cardiac surgery.

Janice Halle | Bedford, New Hampshire

COR VITAE SOCIETY MEMBER

After Janice’s mom suffered a heart attack at a relatively young age, she became determined to “course correct” for her tween daughter.

“When I learned that my mother’s heart attack was caused by several risk factors, I became passionate about raising awareness to other women, and being a healthy role model for my 13-year-old daughter,” she said. “It is important to me to incorporate healthy eating and exercise on a daily basis so this becomes a way of life for my daughter.”

Janice focuses on making a positive impact in her community as chair of the New Hampshire Advocacy Volunteer Committee. She has also served as a board member in New Hampshire, and as a member of the executive leadership team for Go Red For Women in Boston.

“Being able to focus on reducing sugar in schools, teaching CPR, raising the minimum age to buy tobacco and supporting Complete Streets that make it easier and safer to walk neighborhoods will lead to healthier environments for our children to grow up in and lead to the prevention of heart disease,” Janice said.
Larry, Maureen, Michael and Melissa Scholl | Midwest Affiliate

**PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE**

Maureen Scholl has been an active volunteer for the Midwest Affiliate for six years. She was one of the first members of the Go Red executive leadership team and currently serves on the Chicago Board of Directors.

Maureen’s connection to the American Heart Association is her friends and family.

“Too many people I love have been impacted by heart disease, and I believe much of it could have been prevented through better education and understanding of the risk factors,” she said. “One of the reasons we decided to support the AHA (in addition to inspiring others to do the same) is to put more focus on preventing heart disease. As wonderful as it is to hear survivor stories, it would be so much more wonderful for people never to go through it in the first place.”

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Leigh Anne and John Raymond | Houston, Texas

**COR VITAE SOCIETY MEMBERS**

While Leigh Anne was pregnant with her youngest son Charlie, he was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot, a congenital heart defect that causes oxygen-poor blood to flow out of the heart and into the rest of the body. Charlie’s life-changing surgery was performed by Dr. Charles D. Fraser, Jr.—Surgeon in Chief at Texas Children’s Hospital and past Cor Vitae Society member. Today, Charlie is 2 years old and doing extremely well.

John and Leigh Anne’s commitment for heart health is deeply rooted in their experience with Charlie’s congenital heart condition. They are passionate about funding research to find treatment and cures, and supporting other families with similar experiences.

Leigh Anne and John Raymond are the 2018 Paul “Bear” Bryant Award co-chairs. The Bryant Award is given to the top college football coach of the year. Upon Bear’s passing of a heart attack, the Bryant family approached the AHA to create a meaningful partnership that would raise funds for heart research. The Bryant Awards have raised more than $8.5 Million in 32 years for research, advocacy and educational programs for heart disease and stroke. John also serves on the Houston Board of Directors. Through their involvement with the AHA, the Raymonds have had the opportunity to connect with several other families whose children also suffer from Tetralogy of Fallot.
Lauren Lindberg — Grandpa is Why
Like many Jump Rope For Heart participants, 12-year-old Lauren Lindberg has a special reason why she participates each year in the AHA program.

“I became interested in donating to the American Heart Association because my mom’s dad died of a heart attack, and because of that, I never got to meet him,” Lauren said.

Lauren began homeschooling in 2014 and continued her involvement in Jump Rope For Heart. She collaborated with the AHA to develop Homeschoolers Act 4 Heart Health so that homeschool students around the country could participate in JRFH. To date, she has raised an incredible $380,000 through Jump Rope For Heart and Homeschoolers Act 4 Heart Health.

“It’s a very great feeling to know that while I may not have been able to meet my grandpa, I may be able to save another little girl’s grandpa,” she said. “It means a lot to me to be able to donate to the AHA and see the impact it has on everyone — it’s really cool.”

Jump For Heart Health
Fourteen million kids participate in Jump Rope For Heart or Hoops For Heart, two American Heart Association school-based programs that teach kids:

- It’s important to develop heart-healthy habits.
- Being physically active can be fun.
- Raising funds to support cardiovascular research and education helps save lives in their community and across the country.

Episcopal School of Dallas, Dallas, TX

Growing Up Healthy
Almost one in three children and adolescents, ages 2–19, are overweight or obese — nearly triple the rate in 1963. The American Heart Association provides tools and resources to encourage kids and families to eat healthy and engage in physical activity. Here are a few ways the AHA is working to help ensure future generations grow up healthy and strong:

NFL PLAY 60 Challenge and NFL PLAY 60 App
The AHA and the NFL are proud to partner in empowering kids to get active and healthy. Since the launch of the AHA-NFL PLAY 60 Online Tracker in 2013, more than 185,000 youth have logged more than 150 million minutes of physical activity. The NFL PLAY 60 Challenge provides teachers with resources for students, including a physical activity tracker, NFL player videos, lesson plans and downloadable materials. The free NFL PLAY 60 app encourages players to get their 60 minutes of daily recommended physical movement in a virtual adventure by running, jumping and pivoting with device in hand. Be on the lookout for updated game features available this September!

Life’s Simple 7® for Kids
Life’s Simple 7® for Kids helps kids and their parents understand the seven components of heart health and lets them know how to keep them in healthy ranges:

- Avoid smoking and using tobacco products.
- Be physically active every day.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Keep your blood pressure healthy.
- Keep your total cholesterol healthy.
- Keep your blood sugar healthy.

All of the recommendations have some important things in common: any person can follow them, the steps are not difficult or expensive to take, and even adding small parts of these recommendations into your life can go a long way toward helping you feel your very best.
Saving Lives Through Research

One of the pillars of the American Heart Association is its commitment to fund innovative research that saves and improves lives. For tomorrow’s generation, this includes a focus on congenital heart defects (CHD). The AHA and The Children's Heart Foundation have formed a partnership to fund up to $22.5 million in CHD research through 2021. Congenital heart defects are the most common birth defects in the United States and are the leading killer of U.S. infants with birth defects. Although the rate of CHDs has not decreased, more infants with heart defects are surviving to adulthood because of advancements made through research.

One factor that may contribute to survival among infants born with CHD is a simple screening that detects heart defects before an infant leaves the hospital. This screening, known as pulse oximetry screening, measures blood oxygen levels and heart rate, which can detect seven defects that could go unnoticed. Because of the efforts of the American Heart Association, passionate parent advocates and partner organizations, 45 states and Washington, D.C., now have regulations in place requiring more than 3 million newborns each year to be screened for critical congenital heart defects immediately after birth.

In June, the AHA announced the centers selected as part of the new Strategically Focused Research Network (SRFN) on Children. The four institutions selected are Children’s National Health System in Washington, D.C., the University of Utah, Northwestern University and the Duke Center for Pediatric Obesity Research. The aim of the SRFN on Children is to help children reach ideal cardiovascular health through studies focused on childhood obesity, congenital heart disease, rheumatic heart disease and the gap in heart-health knowledge between birth and early adulthood.

Today, 45 states plus D.C. require pulse oximetry screening in infants before they leave the hospital.

Babies born in February receive red hats knitted by AHA volunteers to raise awareness for children’s heart defects.

A NETWORK
is composed of
3 TO 5 INSTITUTIONS/CENTERS
WORKING ON 3 PROJECTS EACH
focused on one of the following
STRATEGIC AREAS:
- BASIC SCIENCE DISCOVERY
- CLINICAL SCIENCE DISCOVERY
- POPULATION SCIENCE DISCOVERY

The AHA is currently funding eight research Networks: ASA/AHA/Bugher Centers for Excellence in Stroke Research and seven Strategically Focused Research Networks with focuses on prevention, hypertension, disparities, Go Red For Women, heart failure, obesity and children. Two additional research networks will be added in 2017-18: one focused on vascular disease and another focused on atrial fibrillation.
Students and Jump Rope For Heart participants at Van Buren Elementary in Douds, Iowa