



American Heart Association Idaho Newsletter

August 2024

Advocacy & Grassroots

Erin Bennett
Grace Henscheid

Marketing & Communications

Jen Merback

Community Impact

Catherine
Wisniewski

Youth Engagement

Lauren Blue

Impact Campaign Development

Director
Brooklyn Sanchez

Advocacy & Grassroots

New Year, New Goals!

After a very productive 2024 Legislative Session, we want to carry the momentum into the 2024-2025 community and statewide work! We're planning our 2025 Legislative Session agenda and begun conversations with legislators and partners to determine our priority issues and create collaborative strategies for success. We're also working to recruit more advocates for health across the state and add to our efforts to improve the health of all Idahoans.

Some of the key issues we're currently moving forward include community complete streets, which helps all types of cities and towns across the state fund projects focused on walking and biking and opportunities for creating more active spaces. We've also started discussing cardiac emergency response plans, which help place AED's in schools to respond to sudden cardiac events and improve outcomes for these emergencies. We'll continue our efforts around a comprehensive tobacco package that will place a fee on tobacco retail licenses to ensure compliance for age verification and prevent tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, from being sold to youth. The tobacco efforts will also include removing exemptions from the Idaho Clean Indoor Air Act to guarantee everyone is protected from the harms of secondhand smoke, that electronic products are included in tobacco taxes and to increase the tax on all tobacco products in line with the national average. We anticipate the continued defense of the Medicaid Expansion program and are exploring produce prescriptions and other nutrition incentives to help reduce the health disparities for Medicaid participants.

We have big goals for the coming year and plenty of opportunities for volunteers and advocates to engage and help us move these efforts forward. If you are interested in getting involved with any of our priority issues or becoming a member of the Idaho Advocacy Steering Committee to help us with future plans, please reach out to Erin or Grace. We welcome your involvement!

Marketing & Communications

We continue to highlight our local work on Facebook, Instagram and X. Be sure to follow us on one or more of these platforms using our handle @AHAIdaho. Feel free to like, comment on or share our social media posts.

We also plan on promoting flu prevention, World Heart Day (Sept. 29th) and World Stroke Day (Oct. 29th) to local media. If you'd like to be part of these promotions, please email me at jennifer.merback@heart.org or call me at 801-205-2489.



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Sports Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

AHA collaborated with Magic Valley Baseball & Softball League in Twin Falls to write and implement a cardiac emergency response plan (CERP). The American Heart Association Cardiac Emergency Response Plan is a written document that establishes the specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting. The League also received a subgrant to purchase an AED to keep on-site and serve the hundreds of children and adults that visit the area weekly, either as a young athlete or spectator.

Community Partners

One of our priorities is reaching out to potential community partners to make introductions and learn about the needs in communities. Please help connect Catherine (catherine.wisniewski@heart.org) with any community organization, non-profit or Federally Qualified Health Center you think would be a beneficial partner.

Nutrition Security Funding Opportunity

We have a new funding opportunity to work on nutrition security in three ways: writing a nutrition policy for a food bank or pantry, expanding produce capacity on sites for any organizations (churches, food banks, homeless shelters, schools, etc.), and implementing a nutrition screening and referral process to connect food insecure individuals to resources.

The deadline to submit an application is September 6, 2024. Please share Catherine's email with any organization who may be interested: catherine.wisniewski@heart.org.

Youth Engagement

Kids Heart and American Heart Challenge *Now Registering Schools for the 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR!*

Educational resources on topics like teamwork, kindness, anti-vaping, positive thinking, sleep, STEM and physical activity.

Students will take on heart-healthy challenges, earn volunteer hours, receive thank-you gifts and can apply for scholarships.

Benefits to schools including the ability to earn grant funding, wellness resources and equipment, direct givebacks and educator professional development.

Staff, students and families will learn how to make healthy lifestyle choices to improve their mental and physical well-being.

Campus engagement through staff and students uniting around a shared vision of building a community of lifesavers by learning Hands-Only CPR.

Turnkey and flexible program that can be completed in 2-4 weeks!

We are signing schools up for this school year! Connect with Lauren Blue at lauren.blue@heart.org to register your school for heart-healthy fun!



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Impact Campaigns

Each year across the country, a select group of individuals, are nominated to be a part of our **Women of Impact** and **Teen of Impact** initiatives because of their passion and drive to make a difference.

This **9-week blind competition** is relentlessly focused on women's heart health. Launching on National Wear Red Day, nominees work to build campaign plans, recruit Impact Teams, and inspire their networks to support the **American Heart Association's** life-saving mission. At the end of the campaign, this special group will be celebrated for the overall impact they have on our mission and community.

If you would like to nominate someone to be among our class of nominees for 2025, please contact Brooklyn Sanchez (brooklyn.sanchez@heart.org).

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