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40 UNDER 40

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AHP is honored to recognize the 2025 class of 40 Under 40 award winners. This program is designed to recognize rising leaders within the healthcare philanthropy community. These 40 young professionals are helping share the future of our industry.

Collectively, they are changing the world – one campaign at a time.

Within these pages, you'll meet each member of the 2025 class.

Alice Ayres, MBA

President & Chief Executive Officer



Carl Bell, MNM

Director of Philanthropy

PeaceHealth Oregon Network | Springfield, OR

Two reasons why Carl is one of the forty

- Carl led a successful three-year \$10 million fundraising campaign for the Institute for Nursing Excellence at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart, securing more than \$3 million in major gifts himself.
- He launched and led the implementation of a Grateful Engagement program across the Oregon Network, training 26 physicians and clinical leaders in donor engagement practices.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Healthcare is complex, and decision-making in a matrixed organization involves many layers. As fundraising professionals, our role is to align philanthropy with the hospital's strategy—not to drive it. Trust in your hospital partners' ability and motivation to chart the course for care in your community. Then, go out and invite donors to join you on that journey."

Jessica Benko, CFRE

Senior Engagement Officer

Beacon Health Foundation | South Bend, IN



Two reasons why Jessica is one of the forty

- Jessica co-founded Beacon's Physician Philanthropy Council (PPC)—a program that has attracted over 50 physician members, including 26 first-time donors, and funded 90+ grants since 2019. The Council earned AHP's 2024 Innovation in Philanthropy Award.
- She is leading Beacon's AI-driven grateful patient program, identifying high-potential prospects from patient data without relying on clinician referrals—leading to over 50% of her major gift portfolio being sourced through this strategy.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose to make healthcare philanthropy my career because I believe in the healing power of both medicine and genuine human connection. I've seen firsthand how gratitude can transform grief into hope, how generosity can drive innovation and save lives, and how expressions of thanks can celebrate and sustain our often burnout clinical colleagues. To me, it's the ultimate 'win-win-win.'"

While I can't perform surgery or be a steadfast clinical presence at a patient's bedside (weak stomach, poor science skills!) - I can genuinely connect with people who share a passion for healthcare, giving back, and celebrating outstanding providers."



Zain Bhanji, M.A

Philanthropy Officer

University Hospital Foundation | Edmonton, AB

Two reasons why Zain is one of the forty

- Since joining UHF in September 2023, Zain has more than doubled his personal fundraising targets, demonstrating strong leadership and initiative.
- While at Aga Khan Foundation, Zain secured 3.2 million dollars in funding for programs supporting gender equality, climate change action, and social development in Kyrgyzstan.

How did you get into healthcare philanthropy?

“For me, it was personal before it was professional. I’ve been surrounded by healthcare workers my whole life — people who quietly save lives and support patients every day, often without recognition. Watching their impact up close made me want to do something more than just admire their work. I realized I could use my skills in relationship-building, strategic communication, and community engagement to help bring their stories to the forefront — and more importantly, bring resources to where they’re needed most.

Healthcare philanthropy gives me the chance to shine a light on innovation, equity, and the critical gaps in our system. It allows me to connect passionate donors with high-impact solutions and ultimately support a stronger, healthier future for all.”

Jordan Brewer, MBA

Director of Philanthropy, IU Health MC & Metro Region

Indiana University Health Foundation | Indianapolis, IN



Two reasons why Jordan is one of the forty

- Jordan led his team at IU Health Foundation to raise \$11.6 million in 2024, surpassing their goal of \$7.6 million by \$4 million and achieving the highest fundraising total of any region in the system. He personally raised \$865,404 in 2024, exceeding his individual goal by 73% and demonstrating exceptional frontline fundraising success.
- Jordan guided his team through a reorganization while achieving a Gallup Employee Engagement Survey mean score of 4.6 out of 5 and ranking in the 87th percentile nationally. of her major gift portfolio being sourced through this strategy.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

“Be present and slow down. In healthcare, it can be easy to run full speed everyday in a number of competing directions. We too, with relative ease, often find ourselves handcuffed to our desks and offices, forgoing the importance of building that human friction with donors, patients, and community members alike. It is hard to slow down and to be present at all times. That’s why it is important to remember to take conscious steps to do so. To slow down, to remember the mission at hand, and the impact being made.”

Kristen Daniel

Senior Director of Philanthropy

Jupiter Medical Center Foundation | Jupiter, FL



Two reasons why Kristen is one of the forty

- Kristen has personally raised an astounding \$32,784,833 since joining the organization in 2019 and currently leads a very high-performing philanthropy team which collectively raised \$63 million in FY 2023, \$62.4 million in FY 2024, and \$63.3 million six months in FY 2025.
- She is the fastest-promoted fundraiser at Jupiter Medical Center Foundation, rising from Development Manager to Senior Director of Philanthropy within three years and now leading four top-performing Major Gift Officers.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"In my 14 years of fundraising, I have always sought out organizations where I can directly see the impact of philanthropy. For me, that was Jupiter Medical Center Foundation. I enjoy the opportunity to interact with patients, donors, and community members. Working at a rapidly growing community hospital provides a unique chance to demonstrate to both patients and donors, in real time, how their contributions benefit our programs."



Parker Douglas

Director

Phoebe Foundation | Albany, GA

Two reasons why Parker is one of the forty

- Under Parker's leadership, the Phoebe Foundation raised \$4.8 million dollars in one year, which was 2 million dollars more than the previous fiscal year, significantly benefiting trauma and critical care services in Southwest Georgia.
- She led six classes of Phoebe 101/Earn Your Scrubs, helping over 50 participants become ambassadors for the health system and deepening community connections.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"I would tell anyone coming into healthcare philanthropy to build relationships with your clinical providers! They help you better understand their struggles and needs. They are boots on the ground, and you need to understand everything about what they do so you can support them effectively."



Rachel Du

Director of Portfolio Strategy & Analytics

Bon Secours Mercy Health Foundation | Cincinnati, OH

Two reasons why Rachel is one of the forty

- Rachel successfully led BSMHF's portfolio strategy and analytics efforts, helping the Foundation achieve its best fundraising year ever in 2024 by exceeding its target by almost 33%.
- She collaborated with the annual giving team and hospital EHR partners to expand patient donor acquisition initiatives, generating over 1,200 new donors in 2024.

How did you get into healthcare philanthropy?

"As a student, I held a volunteer position assisting with the development of various public and private grants for my academic department. I grew that experience into an internship, which eventually led to a full-time role as a development analyst for a small nonprofit."

Joshua Glover

Manager of Donor Stewardship

Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation | Alexandria, VA



Two reasons why Joshua is one of the forty

- Under Joshua's leadership, Conquer Cancer's Donor Lounge at the 2024 ASCO Annual Meeting welcomed 1,277 unique visitors, facilitated 72 donor meetings, and generated over \$14,000 in direct donations during the event.
- He has successfully expanded the use of personalized video messages as part of Conquer Cancer's donor stewardship efforts, creating innovative campaigns that meaningfully engage and inspire supporters.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"My greatest passion (while unrelated to work) is travel. Being exposed to new cultures and gaining fresh perspectives never gets old. Leaving behind my typical routines and surroundings in exchange for exploring a new place is deeply rewarding."

Evie Haertl

Senior Director, Philanthropy

St. Joseph's Foundation a Dignity Health/CommonSpirit
Health Member | Phoenix, AZ



Two reasons why Evie is one of the forty

- Evie raised the largest estate gift in the history of St. Joseph's Foundation, securing over \$4 million to support the hospital's mission.
- Each year, she submits and wins multiple grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$150,000 from respected organizations including the National Breast Cancer Foundation and the Arizona Cancer Society.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"Professionally, my greatest passion is creating spaces where people feel truly seen and heard, whether that's a grateful patient sharing their story or a donor sharing their why. In a world full of noise, I believe every voice matters, and when we listen with intention, we can make people feel valued in ways that leave a lasting impact.

Personally, I'm passionate about living every moment fully, embracing the big, the small, the meaningful, and even the quiet moments of life. I want to be someone who is always evolving, continuously learning and growing along the way."



Payton Hardinge

Senior Director of Development

Children's Hospital Foundation | Richmond, VA

Two reasons why Payton is one of the forty

- Payton has consistently met or exceeded her annual fundraising goals over the past five years, securing an average of \$2 million per year and over \$3 million from new major donors in FY25 alone.
- She developed and manages the Community Internship Program at Children's Hospital Foundation, an immersive donor engagement initiative that has attracted 88 participants and inspired several six- and seven-figure gifts.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Don't be afraid to take on opportunities that challenge you or even scare you, that's where the most meaningful growth happens. Whether it's making your first big ask, speaking up in a meeting, or learning a new area of medicine, leaning into discomfort is often where confidence and competence are built. Healthcare philanthropy is complex and ever-evolving, but if you stay curious and open to growth, it's incredibly rewarding."



Alicia Harrelson

Senior Philanthropy Officer

Dayton Children's Hospital | Dayton, OH

Two reasons why Alicia is one of the forty

- Alicia has contributed to more than \$16 million in philanthropic revenue at Dayton Children's Hospital, directly benefiting children and families in the community.
- She is an active volunteer at her children's schools, chairing and planning major fundraising events that provide vital scholarship support and keep tuition affordable for families.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I've always been drawn to health and wellness. As a young child, health class was my favorite subject - for a time I even considered becoming a dentist! But I discovered in college, through my extracurriculars, that my true strength and passion was in community involvement, leadership, and fundraising. Healthcare philanthropy was the perfect intersection of my interests: it allows me to stay connected to a field I care about deeply while utilizing my skills to truly make a difference."

Elizabeth Hormann

Executive Vice President and Special Projects Lead

CCS Fundraising | Chicago, IL



Two reasons why Elizabeth is one of the forty

- Elizabeth has led planning and management efforts for campaigns and philanthropic growth plans with goals surpassing one billion dollars, delivering customized strategies that maximize donor engagement and impact.
- She was instrumental in designing and implementing the collaborative fundraising model for the new \$5 billion pediatric campus shared by Children's Health and UT Southwestern Medical Center, one of the largest healthcare capital projects in the United States.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"I am passionate about guiding my client partners toward exponential and sustainable growth in the most efficient and effective way. Whether I am advising on transformational gift strategy, designing collaborative models, or mentoring early-career professionals, I am driven by the opportunity to strengthen the capacity of people and institutions to advance their mission."

Jake Johnson, CFRE

Market Director, Development

CHI Memorial Foundation | Chattanooga, TN



Two reasons why Jake is one of the forty

- Jake has successfully led two major capital campaigns for CHI Memorial Foundation, including the \$21 million Invest in the Best campaign, which has already secured \$15 million in gifts, and the Care Closer to Home campaign for the new CHI Memorial Georgia Hospital, opening in December 2025.
- In 2023, he was a major contributor to CHI Memorial Foundation's selection as CommonSpirit Health's Foundation of the Year, a top distinction among one of the country's largest nonprofit health systems.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"The healthcare learning curve is steep. My advice would be to learn a little bit about a lot."



Ryan King-Washburn

Philanthropy Officer - Annual Giving

Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD) | Norfolk, VA

Two reasons why Ryan is one of the forty

- Ryan played a key leadership role in Riverside's first comprehensive campaign in support of Neurosciences, helping the Foundation raise \$11 million in under three years - successfully reaching its goal ahead of schedule.
- At CHKD, Ryan led strategic updates to the hospital's Giving Day, incorporating a print mailing strategy that resulted in a 92.9% increase in dollars raised compared to the previous year.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"Honoring the dignity and worth of every person. We only get one go-round in this life, and I believe we're called to protect each other, lift each other up, and celebrate what connects us. Personally, that means fiercely advocating for the LGBTQ+ community - to ensure everyone can live, love, and thrive without fear. At its core, philanthropy is about recognizing another's need and choosing to respond with compassion. I try to live that out every day for my husband, family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors."



Chelsea Kirk

Director of Development

Johns Hopkins Children's Center | Baltimore, MD

Two reasons why Chelsea is one of the forty

- Since joining Johns Hopkins Children's Center in 2017, Chelsea Kirk has raised more than \$20 million in philanthropic support for pediatric care, research, and education.
- She led the creation and launch of a new fundraising 5K event that brought together over 1,700 participants and raised \$140,000 in its inaugural year.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"It provides me the opportunity to feel like I'm making a difference in the world, and I get to see the best of people—from donors that give \$1 all the way up to those who make large transformational gifts."

Julia Leggett, CFRE

Special Events Manager

Norton Healthcare Foundation &
Norton Children's Hospital Foundation | Louisville, KY



Two reasons why Julia is one of the forty

- Julia has raised more than \$9 million through her work with the Norton Healthcare and Norton Children's Hospital Foundations, helping introduce hundreds of thousands of new donors through her events and campaigns.
- Additionally, she played a key role in fundraising for Norton West Louisville Hospital, the first hospital to open west of Ninth Street in more than 150 years, which directly addresses healthcare access in historically underserved communities. engage and inspire supporters.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Ultimately, I didn't choose a field in healthcare philanthropy a decade ago, but I am honored that I get to choose this field every day. The impact we can create as healthcare philanthropists is at the heart of what we do. I chose this field because there is a tangible impact. Daily, our foundation and healthcare philanthropists all over are fulfilling the needs of our community."

Hailey Lemasters

Assistant Director for Corporate and Foundation Relations
Rutgers University Foundation | New Brunswick, NJ



Two reasons why Hailey is one of the forty

- In 2022, she was invited to serve on a panel of experts for the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the National Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement to discuss research trends and best practices.
- She was the first person under 30 years old to be elected to The Center for Contemporary Art (Bedminster, NJ) Board of Trustees in its 50-year history. In this role, she chaired the Fund Development Committee, providing strategic guidance to the Center's Executive Director and the Board of Trustee President.

What piece of advice would you give to someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"My greatest piece of advice for someone new to healthcare philanthropy is to build and maintain strong relationships with the faculty and physicians you work with. They're all doing incredible work and keeping track of who is who helps to proactively support a wide range of funding needs."



Melanie Matzan

Director of Internal Operations
AdventHealth Foundation West Florida | Tampa, FL

Two reasons why Melanie is one of the forty

- Since joining AdventHealth Foundation West Florida in 2022, Melanie has transformed operations support for 12 hospital foundations, improving processes around gift processing, finance, reporting, CRM, and prospect research.
- Melanie's undergraduate research has been featured in scientific journals, PLOS One and Landscape and Urban Planning. With a background in biology and published academic research, Melanie brings analytical precision and evidence-based thinking to her work, using data and testing to drive strategic operational improvements in philanthropy.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose healthcare philanthropy because I witnessed firsthand the profound impact that healthcare providers can have. Observing a loved one struggle to receive quality care in a for-profit hospital underscored for me the essential need to prioritize patient-centric care over profit. This experience inspired me to leverage my skills to help ensure that hospitals receiving support from our Foundation can deliver the comprehensive, compassionate care that is often lacking in profit-driven settings."



Nicole Mead

Senior Vice President, Operations

Ryan Seacrest Foundation | Nashville, TN

Two reasons why Nicole is one of the forty

- Nicole led the strategic expansion of five Seacrest Studios in major pediatric hospitals, overseeing every phase from hospital selection to architectural planning and construction logistics. She is currently managing two more studio builds in progress.
- She launched and produced a benefit concert at Seattle Children's Hospital in collaboration with KEXP Radio, exceeding initial fundraising goals by 450% through corporate sponsorships and donor engagement.

Tell us about a pivot point or crucial step in your career journey.

"When I began a new job in my 20s, I expected a learning curve—but I didn't expect full staff turnover within my first month. What could've felt like a setback became one of the most transformative leadership experiences of my career. With no "how it's always been done" playbook to follow, I was forced to listen deeply, build trust quickly, and get comfortable making decisions in ambiguity. I learned to lead not by authority, but by clarity, collaboration, and shared purpose."

Kate Merritt-Dupelle, CFRE

Development Officer, Major Gifts

North Bay Regional Health Centre Foundation | North Bay, ON



Two reasons why Kate is one of the forty

- Kate led the North Bay and Area Community Foundation as its first Executive Director, where she helped the organization deliver more than \$5 million in regional impact and establish over twenty new funds, securing its sustainability and growth and contributed significantly to a \$4.3 million fundraising initiative for the hospital's Nuclear Medicine Department, equipping it with two advanced SPECT/CT machines that greatly improved diagnostic capabilities.
- She chaired the Marketing and Promotions Sub-Committee for AHP's Convene Canada 2024 and served on the 2025 committee as well, demonstrating her commitment to advancing healthcare philanthropy at the national level.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Take your time and savour the journey. The heart of building meaningful relationships lies in the quiet conversations, the unexpected moments of connection, and the privilege of being invited into someone's story. Listening and sharing those stories grounds us, builds trust and inspires generosity. The small moments often lead to the biggest impact."

Courtney Moore, MBA, CFRE

Development Director/Executive Director

Carson Valley Health/Carson Valley Health Foundation |
Gardnerville, NV



Two reasons why Courtney is one of the forty

- Courtney co-founded and currently leads Project Prom of Northern Nevada, a nonprofit organization that hosts an annual event providing a memorable prom experience for adults with developmental disabilities, promoting inclusivity and community involvement.
- Since her promotion to Director of Development in 2023, Courtney has led a comprehensive fundraising strategy that resulted in a 121% increase in funds raised for Carson Valley Health, totaling over \$326,000 in just two years.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"My greatest passion is fundraising—not just as a profession, but as a way to create meaningful change in the community I love. I've always been drawn to the idea that a well-executed fundraising effort can turn compassion into action. That passion extends beyond healthcare. I co-founded Project Prom of Northern Nevada to provide an unforgettable prom experience for adults with developmental disabilities, and I've served on boards like Tahoe Youth & Family Services. Helping build a more vibrant and connected community is what drives me."



Nicole Papst Vashi, CFRE

Manager of Sustained Giving

Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation | Athens, GA

Two reasons why Nicole is one of the forty

- Nicole designed and implemented a new direct mail appeal for National Grateful Patient Day that resulted in Piedmont Athens Regional exceeding its direct mail goal by 189% as of February 2024.
- Through her leadership of the Count Me In employee giving program, Nicole re-engaged staff and department leaders, restoring employee giving participation to levels seen before COVID-19.

Tell us about a pivot point or crucial step in your career journey.

"A pivotal moment came when I transitioned from a generalist fundraising role to a more focused position as an Annual Gifts Officer. Initially, I worried that narrowing my scope would limit my growth, but the opposite happened. It allowed me to develop deep expertise in sustained giving and to better understand how all the pieces of a comprehensive fundraising strategy fit together. That focus has made me a more strategic and effective fundraiser."



Ashley Perkins Bedard

Program Manager, Constituent Research

CHRISTUS Health | Tyler, TX

Two reasons why Ashley is one of the forty

- Ashley successfully collaborated with ten CHRISTUS Health ministries to ensure that major gift portfolios were completed on time, helping set the stage for more than \$22 million in cumulative fundraising results for FY 2025. She created and implemented new dashboards that provided foundation leaders with actionable insights, enabling better portfolio management and tracking of key performance indicators.
- She played a key role in helping several regional ministries—including Northeast Texas, Louisiana, Southeast Texas, and New Mexico—reach 50% of their annual fundraising goals just halfway through the fiscal year.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

“Working in healthcare philanthropy, we are positioned to combine our passion for healthcare with the rewarding opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of patients and their families.”

Katherine Pui, MD

Associate Vice President, Philanthropy

VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation | Vancouver, BC



Two reasons why Katherine is one of the forty

- Katherine leads a 14-person team responsible for generating over 70% of VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation's annual revenue, currently projected to surpass \$110 million—a record-setting year for the organization.
- As a licensed physician and former clinician trained across Russia, the UK, Malaysia, and Canada, Katherine bridges the gap between healthcare professionals and philanthropy—earning the trust of physician partners and donors alike.

What is your greatest passion and why?

“Mentorship. I have benefited from having wonderful mentors throughout different phases of my career, and we have since built lifelong relationships, often becoming like family. It is so important to have your trusted circle along the way to be your best self. I have since become a mentor to others. It has been an enriching journey.”

Amy Ramnarine, MA, CFRE

Director of Annual Giving

Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation | Edmonton, AB



Two reasons why Amy is one of the forty

- Amy developed a data-driven direct mail strategy that streamlined operations, reduced expenses, and increased net revenue by 400% within her first year at the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation.
- She successfully relaunched and rebranded the Foundation's grateful patient program, doubling the number of donations to the "Amazing at the Alex" program and deepening relationships with patients and their families.

What piece of advice would you give to someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Never forget: your voice matters. Your ideas matter. And your presence makes a difference."

Healthcare philanthropy places you at a unique intersection of innovation, compassion, and community. Never underestimate the impact one donor, one story, or one conversation can have. Show up with your whole heart—this work is a gift, and so are you."



Laura Richard

Foundation Director

Ephraim McDowell Health Care Foundation | Danville, KY

Two reasons why Laura is one of the forty

- Laura's leadership has propelled the Foundation's annual fundraising from \$276,031 in FY23 to \$400,667 in FY24, and is on track for \$467,653 in FY25 year-to-date, reflecting sustained growth and impact.
- To diversify engagement, Laura introduced Tiptoes & Tuxedos, a new event aimed at cultivating younger donors, and revitalized the Ephraim McDowell Health Care Foundation's payroll deduction program through strategic orientations, which enhanced digital outreach, and a loyalty program with prize drawings.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"My greatest passion is building — whether it's an idea, a team, or a transformative project that makes a lasting impact. There's something incredibly rewarding about watching a vision become reality — especially in healthcare philanthropy, where that often means expanded services, new spaces for healing, or innovations that directly improve lives. My passion for this work is grounded in my faith. I believe God calls us to give generously, to serve others, and to do good. If I can spend my days being a small part of something that can help others, I believe I am blessed just as much as the recipient."



Tracie Saitta

Executive Program Director

Northwell Foundation | New Hyde Park, NY

Two reasons why Tracie is one of the forty

- Tracie built and led Northwell's Employee Giving Program, which since its inception in 2017 has raised more than \$20 million from tens of thousands of employees, fostering a strong culture of philanthropy across the organization.
- She created and managed Team Northwell, the organization's official charity partner running team for the New York City Half and Full Marathons, engaging employees and donors in new and meaningful ways.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Our mission of providing the best quality care for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, is what has fueled me to work to my best ability, no matter what my job title was at that moment. I've seen firsthand the impact that philanthropy has across Northwell and I want to be a part of that continuous impact."

Erin Sanderson

Vice President, Sanford Health Foundation Sioux Falls

Sanford Health Foundation | Sioux Falls, SD



Two reasons why Erin is one of the forty

- Under Erin's leadership as Vice President, annual revenue for the Sanford Health Foundation grew from \$5 million to over \$11 million, marking a 120% increase.
- Through securing a \$4 million philanthropic investment in rural women's health, she helped bring 3D mammography equipment to underserved areas—dramatically improving early detection rates and patient outcomes.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Remember that this work is deeply human. It's about relationships, not transactions. You'll be trusted with people's stories... some joyful, some heartbreaking... and it's a privilege to hold that space with care and intention. And above all—stay authentic. You'll work with a wide range of people, personalities, and thought processes. Not everyone will approach problems the same way you do—and that's okay. What matters is that you stay grounded in who you are. Leading with honesty, consistency, and integrity might take time to build trust, but when people see that you're showing up as your true self, that trust will run deep. Authenticity isn't just a strength—it's a foundation for meaningful, lasting impact."

Angela Saraceno, CFRE

Philanthropy Manager

St. Charles Foundation | Bend, OR



Two reasons why Angela is one of the forty

- Angela streamlined staff roles to allow fundraisers to focus more than 90% of their time on donor relationships, which contributed to one team member closing a \$1 million gift and another securing a \$500,000 bequest.
- Since joining the team, Angela helped drive a remarkable 487% growth in St. Charles Foundation's first quarter 2025 revenue compared to the same period in 2024.

Tell us about a pivot point or crucial step in your career journey.

"Working in philanthropy can be a tough industry. During COVID, I had the fortunate opportunity to work on my health system's community benefit team. That time proved to me that my passion and love for this work ran deeper than I knew. I feel very fortunate that I was able to transition from that role into a leadership role at the Foundation to make an even greater impact on the organization and community."



Chandel Schmidt, CFRE

Vice President of Philanthropy

Kelowna General Hospital Foundation | Kelowna, BC

Two reasons why Chandel is one of the forty

- Chandel secured a \$1 million endowment gift in May 2023 to support brain health care at Kelowna General Hospital, demonstrating her ability to inspire major philanthropic investments in critical health initiatives.
- She supported a \$1 million family foundation gift to advance Parkinson's care at KGH in January 2024 and helped the family organize two fundraising events that collectively raised over \$200,000.

How did you get into healthcare philanthropy?

"I was job-hunting and attended a networking event at the University I graduated from where I met a KGH Foundation Board Director. She shared a short-term opportunity to cover a Coordinator position at the organization. After meeting with the Executive Director, I joined on a three-month term and nearly 15 years later, I'm still here."



Óscar Segura Guerrero

Philanthropy Manager

St. Joseph's Foundation of San Joaquin | Stockton, CA

Two reasons why Óscar is one of the forty

- Óscar successfully managed St. Joseph's Foundation's annual Fun Run/Walk for Wellness for the past three years, increasing revenue by 35% and participation by 23.5%, significantly enhancing community engagement.
- He was selected to present at the CommonSpirit Health Annual Philanthropy Summit, where he shared best practices on strategic stewardship with over 300 attendees. Óscar's annual giving work contributed significantly to St. Joseph's Foundation's nomination for Foundation of the Year within the CommonSpirit Health system.

Tell us about a pivot point or crucial step in your career journey.

"A crucial pivot point in my career was when I transitioned from general event planning to healthcare philanthropy. That shift happened because I realized I wanted my work to have a deeper, more lasting impact on people's lives. Moving into healthcare fundraising challenged me to develop new skills, like building meaningful donor relationships and understanding complex medical needs, but it also opened doors to incredible opportunities, like working with influential leaders and supporting life-changing initiatives. That step not only shaped my professional path but also reinforced my commitment to making a real difference through my career."

Emily Shipman, MBA

Lead Foundation Specialist, Pipeline Development and Analytics

Corewell Health Foundation West Michigan | Grand Rapids, MI



Two reasons why Emily is one of the forty

- Emily built a successful grateful patient and pipeline development program at Michigan Medicine and later led the launch of a comprehensive analytics strategy for Corewell Health, significantly advancing fundraising operations.
- She serves on the board of APRA Michigan, where she contributes to advancing professional standards and innovation in fundraising research and strategy.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"My biggest piece of advice for someone new to healthcare philanthropy is to stay curious and stay connected. This field is always evolving, programs shift, priorities change, and there's always something new to learn. Don't be afraid to ask questions, seek out different perspectives, and lean into your network. Building relationships, both within your organization and with peers across the field, can open up so many opportunities for growth and collaboration. The more you engage, the more you'll understand the impact of your work and how to make it even more meaningful."

Ashley Smith

Associate Director, Philanthropy
SickKids Foundation | Toronto, ON



Two reasons why Ashley is one of the forty

- Ashley has secured more than \$12.5 million in major gifts at SickKids Foundation, including gifts as large as \$7.5 million, significantly advancing the hospital's mission.
- She co-launched and led the Breakthrough Fund, Canada's first venture philanthropy program focused on pediatrics, raising \$1.9 million and bringing in 27 new donors to SickKids.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"My kids are my number one passion – I have a 3-year-old daughter and (almost) 6-year-old son. They always keep me busy and on my toes! Prior to becoming a parent, I would have said travelling is my greatest passion. I love exploring new areas of the world and going on adventures. So combining those two things, my ultimate answer is travelling with my kids. Seeing the world through their eyes makes every travel even more special and rewarding."



Caleb Sturup

Philanthropy Officer
The MetroHealth System | Cleveland, OH

Two reasons why Caleb is one of the forty

- Since joining MetroHealth Foundation in 2022, Caleb has secured \$1.4 million in philanthropic support, advancing critical programs and helping meet the health needs of Northeast Ohio's most vulnerable communities.
- He maintains and cultivates a portfolio of 150 donors and prospects, focusing on building deep relationships and securing major gifts that align donor passion with MetroHealth's mission.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Stay inquisitive and ask questions to learn about the healthcare space."



Kate Throneburg

Senior Director of Development

UCLA Health | Los Angeles, CA

Two reasons why Kate is one of the forty

- Kate brings a robust educational and professional background to her work, holding dual degrees in History and Linguistics from UC Santa Cruz and having completed both Plus Delta and the Johns Hopkins Medicine Philanthropy Institute, where she continues to mentor peers and participate in alumni programming.
- She exceeded her annual fundraising goals by a wide margin, securing nearly \$4 million in total gifts last year through 226 meaningful contacts, 136 qualifications, and 27 solicitations, significantly surpassing her targets in each category.

Tell us about a pivot point or crucial step in your career journey.

"I have tried to be intentional in each change I've made in my career, identifying areas where I need more experience or improvement, and finding opportunities to fill in those gaps. There is always more to be done, but reaching a point where I check most if not all the boxes for new and exciting opportunities has been gratifying. It's a reminder to continue to learn, grow, and take chances when they arise. You never know when the next pivot point or crucial step will be there."

Ellen Tompkins, CFRE

Director of Development

UNC Health Foundation | Chapel Hill, NC



Two reasons why Ellen is one of the forty

- In Fiscal Year 2024, Ellen exceeded her fundraising goal by 361%, a remarkable accomplishment that highlights her effectiveness as a major gift fundraiser.
- Ellen collaborates closely with Cancer Center faculty to identify funding priorities and align donor interests with impactful opportunities, strengthening the connection between philanthropy and patient care.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I am in awe of the families I have met who translate pain into purpose through their generosity."

Claire Veazey, MPH

Director of Development

UNC Health Foundation | Chapel Hill, NC



Two reasons why Claire is one of the forty

- Claire successfully led the fundraising campaign for the Dr. Joseph Bell Scholarship Endowment, exceeding initial goals and building authentic relationships with stakeholders to honor the legacy of North Carolina's first American Indian pediatrician.
- Over the past two years, Claire has consistently outperformed benchmarks by surpassing her visits and proposals goals by nearly 250%.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to healthcare philanthropy?

"Trust the process."

It's a mindset I'm still working towards achieving, but one that's already making a meaningful impact on how I approach my work. As someone who is naturally driven by goals and metrics, I often find myself wanting to see immediate results—but in major gift fundraising, progress is rooted in long-term relationship building, and often not linear. I'm incredibly grateful to my supervisor, Jeanine, who is constantly reminding me of the importance of patience and perspective in this field. Her guidance has helped me stay grounded while focusing on the bigger picture and long-term impacts."



Carol Ann Willhite

Development Officer, Legacy & Gift Planning

Children's Medical Center Foundation | Dallas, TX

Two reasons why Carol Ann is one of the forty

- In her first year in planned giving at Children's Medical Center Foundation, Carol Ann raised over \$1 million in planned, outright, and blended gifts, including securing 18 new planned gifts.
- She retained 87% of her donors compared to a goal of 68% and upgraded 36% of donors compared to a goal of 24%, demonstrating exceptional donor stewardship.

How did you get into healthcare philanthropy?

"I was recruited by Children's Medical Center Foundation for role-related expertise, and once I started talking with my (future-at-the-time) colleagues, their passion shone so brightly that I couldn't help but jump at the chance. What's more, I had seen how quality healthcare — or a lack of access to it — impacted clients at every organization I'd worked with before. The ripple effects of healthcare can lead all boats to rise, and I love that our mission reverberates for individuals, families and institutions. A shared cause, cutting-edge solutions, tangible impacts — what could be better than that?"



Kirby Zdrill

Director of Communications

Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation | Edmonton, AB

Two reasons why Kirby is one of the forty

- Kirby played a key role in developing the branding, messaging, and promotional efforts that helped the Alberta Women's Health Foundation secure a \$10 million legacy grant from the Government of Alberta which is one of the largest single contributions in the foundation's history.
- He helped launch the Alberta Women's Health Foundation in 2021 and was a lead author and strategist behind three major provincial research reports. These publications influenced provincial conversations around women's health disparities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is your greatest passion and why?

"Tricky question, but for me it probably boils down to helping people near and far find a reason to smile and feel a bit of relief from the pressures of life—whether that's by helping work toward a much-needed breakthrough in healthcare, helping a friend or colleague see the bigger picture, sharing a simple thank you, or (perhaps most likely) cracking a corny dad joke to try brighten someone's day. As for why, I'm reminded of a quote from the show *After Life*, 'Happiness is amazing. It's so amazing it doesn't matter if it's yours or not.'"

Jodi Zerbe, CFRE

Director of Donor Experience

The Christ Hospital Foundation | Cincinnati, OH



Two reasons why Jodi is one of the forty

- Jodi has led The Christ Hospital Foundation's Annual Giving program to record-breaking success, increasing dollars raised from \$666,949 in FY21 to over \$1.13 million in FY24, marking sustained growth each year.
- She played a critical role as the lead for the Project Heart ReStart campaign, raising over \$500,000 to equip nearly 250 first responder vehicles with life-saving AEDs and successfully expanding the program into Northern Kentucky.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I believe access to healthcare is a basic human right, and philanthropy plays a key role in making that a reality. As healthcare systems work to close the gap between reimbursements and the actual cost of delivering quality care, philanthropy helps fill that space so more people can get the care they need. I'm really proud of the work we're doing at The Christ Hospital Health Network. We've been named the #1 hospital in the Cincinnati region several years in a row, and that kind of recognition doesn't happen without strong community support. It's rewarding to know that I'm part of the team that helps make it all possible."

About the Program

AHP's 40 Under 40 recognition program honors those who are making a significant difference in healthcare philanthropy.

Nominees must be employed in the healthcare development profession. They should be established professional leaders with a strong record of innovation and outstanding performance. Nominations are judged on professional accomplishments, awards and milestones.

Volunteers from the 2024 40 Under 40 class selected the members of the 2025 class from a pool of outstanding applicants, each of whom is making a difference within their healthcare organization and their community.

Do you know someone under 40 who is making a difference in healthcare philanthropy? Nominate them for the 2026 40 Under 40 class. Applications open in early 2026 at www.ahp.org/40under40

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