AHP

40 UNDER 40

2026 Association for Healthcare Philanthropy | www.ahp.org

AHP is honored to recognize the 2026 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 shape 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 2026 class.

Alice Ayres, MBA
President & Chief Executive Officer

Emma Bachelder, MPA

Director, Annual Programs

Bon Secours Mercy Health Foundation | Columbus, Ohio

Reasons why Emma is one of the forty:

- Emma Bachelder served as the lead for a major digital fundraising transformation at Bon Secours Mercy Health Foundation, partnering with organizational leadership to implement Blackbaud Luminate Online and help grow online revenue from $220,000 to over $1 million annually while increasing digital giving to approximately 16%–20% of total annual fundraising revenue.

- She drove significant improvements in donor engagement and campaign performance through advanced segmentation and communications strategy, scaling email outreach to more than 1 million emails annually and increasing online gift volume from fewer than 1,000 to over 3,000 gifts per year, while improving response rates by 29% and ROI by 14%.

- She played a central role in the enterprise-level modernization of annual giving infrastructure, managing the implementation of a centralized digital fundraising website and integrated programs model that drives $5 to $6 million in annual revenue and generates approximately $260,000 in cost savings per market through improved efficiencies.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I didn't choose healthcare philanthropy because it was the most obvious career path. I chose it because I learned that I need to believe in the impact of the work I do. Early in my career, I experienced roles that sounded good on paper but left me feeling...disconnected. I was raised to be compassionate and conscientious, and those principles continue to guide my decisions today. Healthcare philanthropy allows me to use my professional skills to help improve the health and well-being of people and communities across the country. It sits at the intersection of empathy and impact. Whether I'm building fundraising programs, strengthening the donor experience, or creating systems that support a critical need, I am motivated by the knowledge that the work serves people beyond myself. That connection between purpose and profession is why I have remained committed to this field and why I believe so strongly in advancing philanthropy in healthcare."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I am the oldest of 5 children, and between us siblings and our parents, we hold a combined 10 (!) degrees from The Ohio State University. "

Samantha Barakat

Director of Philanthropy

Parkland Health Foundation | Dallas, Texas

Reasons why Samantha is one of the forty:

- Built a decade-long career in healthcare philanthropy focused on improving access to care, starting at the National Breast Cancer Foundation where she helped distribute grant funding across all 50 states for mammography and patient navigation programs before moving into fundraising to more directly connect donors to patient impact.

- At UT Southwestern Medical Center, helped launch a Grateful Patient Program, managed a 300+ foundation and corporate donor portfolio, and secured over $12 million in funding for research, patient care, and education in a complex academic medical system.

- Now leads major gifts at Parkland Health Foundation as Director of Philanthropy, overseeing a team and generating $5M+ annually, securing multiple seven-figure gifts, and launching a corporate sponsorship program that created a new revenue stream for the organization.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I always knew I wanted to pursue a career where I could make a positive impact on people's lives. Early in my career, I learned that many individuals in our own community were going without access to lifesaving healthcare, and I was motivated to be a part of the change. Healthcare is a uniquely dynamic field, and there are so many ways for philanthropy to drive innovation, improve patient care, and address health disparities. No two days are the same and I find that both challenging and incredibly rewarding."

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

"Take the time to get to know your colleagues and their work, both within the development/philanthropy team and across the health system. Healthcare is incredibly complex, so it is important to gain a strong understanding of the organization beyond your own role. Curiosity and relationship-building go a long way in this field. When you build strong relationships with colleagues, providers, and administrators, you'll be so much better equipped to tell your institution's story and connect donors with opportunities for impact."

A fun fact about yourself:

"Up until I went to college, I was a competitive Irish Step Dancer! My dancing days are behind me, but I can still do a jig when properly motivated. "

Courtney Bloniasz, CFRE

Strategic Projects and Operations Manager

MaineHealth | Portland, Maine

Reasons why Courtney is one of the forty:

- In just three years, Courtney advanced from Leadership Gifts Associate to Manager of Analytics and Strategic Projects at MaineHealth , where she now leads the organization's largest and most critical strategic initiative—a comprehensive data integration and governance project designed to transform fundraising operations across a unified 10-hospital system.

- Leveraging her frontline fundraising experience and Master's degree in Analytics, Courtney has advanced data operations at MaineHealth by establishing best practices, improving system consistency, and creating the infrastructure needed for more effective fundraising analysis, reporting, decision-making, and AI adoption.

- Courtney extends her impact beyond her professional role through significant leadership and volunteer service, including serving as Commencement Speaker and fundraising volunteer at Northeastern University's Roux Institute, Chair of Smith College's Philanthropy Committee, and implementing the first CRM system for an emerging nonprofit organization dedicated to providing community and access to mental health resources for grieving fathers. Her strategy work supported their first fundraising appeal that raised $138,00 in a single week.

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

"Pursuing graduate studies in analytics while working full-time fundamentally changed how I viewed my career. It gave me the technical skills to complement my fundraising experience and challenged me to rethink how data, technology, and processes can drive better decisions. I stopped seeing myself as someone who maintained systems and started looking for opportunities to improve them. That shift opened doors to lead enterprise data governance, AI adoption, and change management initiatives I never would have imagined early in my career. More importantly, it reinforced that healthcare philanthropy has a strong foundation, but there is always room to innovate. The people who make the greatest impact are the ones who respect what works, ask thoughtful questions, and have the courage to make good work even stronger."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I have a playlist that's more than a decade old where I add songs during meaningful moments in my life. Every song marks a milestone—a graduation, a vacation, a family celebration, or even an ordinary good day. Looking back through it is like scrolling through a musical scrapbook, and I can tell you exactly where I was and what was happening when I added each song. It's my favorite way to revisit the chapters of my life."

Phillip Brown, MBA

Senior Data Analyst

CommonSpirit Health | Murrieta, California

Reasons why Phillip is one of the forty:

- Led the design and implementation of a standardized month-end accounting reconciliation process across CommonSpirit Health's national network of 80 foundations, reducing manual reconciliation errors by more than 30%, improving month-end close efficiency by 20%, and streamlining workflows for 20 foundation accountants and data analysts.

- Built and manages the data infrastructure supporting CommonSpirit Health's national direct mail program, centralizing previously fragmented processes and enabling the efficient deployment of more than 5 million donor communications annually while improving data integrity, lowering print costs, and increasing fundraising return on investment.

- Serves in dual roles across Operations Shared Services and Business Intelligence, providing strategic financial analysis and executive reporting that informed a recent system-wide campaign resource reallocation projected to increase major gift pledges by 15% in targeted regions, while helping support multiple award-winning philanthropy programs across CommonSpirit Health.

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

"A pivotal point in my career was when I shifted to our national team. I was able to extend my impact beyond a single team and begin supporting system-wide initiatives; working with 80 foundations and 300 philanthropy staff members across the nation. I work to improve how data is structured, interpreted, and delivered across multiple markets, enabling fundraising teams to operate more consistently and effectively. That experience reinforced my belief that operational excellence behind the scenes directly translates into stronger fundraising outcomes and greater support for patient care and community health."

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

"My advice to someone new to healthcare philanthropy is to stay focused on the mission and the people behind the work. This field is about relationships between donors, patients, families, and the teams who serve them. Whatever your role, your impact comes from helping others succeed in advancing that mission. Be curious, build strong partnerships, and look for ways to remove barriers so frontline teams can focus on meaningful donor engagement and impact. The most effective contributions often come from enabling others to do their best work. "

Jared Bulluck

Director of Philanthropy

Regional One Health Foundation | Memphis, Tennessee

Reasons why Jared is one of the forty:

- Helped to secure more than $20 million in philanthropic support in just 2.5 years, advancing critical hospital priorities including NICU, maternal and child services, trauma, emergency department efficiency, HIV care, hospital-based violence intervention, and social work/case management.

- Closed the largest gift in Regional One Health Foundation history while building strategic corporate partnerships and aligning donor investments with institutional priorities, strengthening programs and reducing pressure on operating and capital budgets.

- Provides leadership beyond his organization as Treasurer and incoming Board Chair of AFP Memphis, helping advance ethical fundraising practices across the region while earning recognition as a Memphis Business Journal Top 40 Under 40 honoree in 2025.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"My career began in leadership development and museums, but a unique opportunity to help build something transformative in Memphis led me to healthcare. What started as a commitment to community growth became a passion for advancing the mission of Regional One Health and helping shape the future of healthcare in our region. Every day, I am inspired by the innovation, resilience, and compassion I see across the healthcare landscape. From lives saved and families restored to the pursuit of better health outcomes for all, the impact is both immediate and lasting. I am deeply grateful to work in a field where philanthropy serves as a catalyst for change, extending quality care, advancing innovation, and improving lives throughout our community. "

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

"A pivotal step in my career was learning to distinguish between leadership that simply manages and leadership that truly inspires. Throughout my career, I have worked with a wide range of leaders, and there were moments when I questioned decisions or struggled to understand the paths they chose. Over time, however, experience has given me a greater appreciation for the complexities of leadership and the importance of vision, accountability, and courage. Those experiences have shaped my own leadership philosophy and helped me identify the qualities I value most in others. Today, I know that great leaders create a clear vision, empower their teams, and challenge organizations to think bigger than the status quo. I am grateful to work alongside leaders who are deeply committed to improving the health of our community and who continuously inspire others to pursue meaningful change. Their vision motivates me every day and reinforces the impact we can achieve when leadership and purpose align."

Nicholas Burgess

Executive Director, Pasco County Foundations

AdventHealth | Zephyrhills, Florida

Reasons why Nicholas is one of the forty:

- Nicholas Burgess has emerged as a leading healthcare philanthropy professional in Pasco County, overseeing fundraising strategy for three AdventHealth hospitals and helping achieve record-breaking philanthropic support for patient care and community health programs.

- He secured a transformational $3 million gift to establish AdventHealth Wesley Chapel's open-heart program, while also advancing funding for state-of-the-art cardiac, imaging, and neonatal transport resources that are enhancing healthcare access across the region.

- Recognized for his leadership both professionally and civically, Nicholas earned Lifetime Member status through Leadership Florida in 2025 and serves in key community leadership roles, including a governor-appointed board position and leadership positions with the Greater East Pasco Chamber of Commerce and Habitat for Humanity.

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

"One of the most significant pivot points in my career was transitioning from the private sector into healthcare philanthropy. My professional journey began in software sales, where I learned how to build relationships, understand client needs, and communicate value. I later owned and operated a general contracting business, which strengthened my leadership skills, entrepreneurial mindset, and ability to manage complex projects and diverse stakeholders."

"I went from building businesses and projects to helping build healthier communities. This decision allowed me to combine my business experience with a mission-driven purpose, helping connect donors with opportunities to transform patient care and improve community health. Looking back, that pivot was less about changing professions and more about discovering where my skills could make the greatest difference. It taught me that career growth is not always a straight line, and that some of the most impactful opportunities come from having the courage to pursue a new path."

A fun fact about yourself:

"A fun fact about me is that I compete in local BBQ competitions with my best friend as Smokin' Bros BBQ. We've earned multiple top finishes, including 1st Place Brisket against professional pitmasters. It's a hobby that has taught me patience, attention to detail, and the value of teamwork. Plus, it's a great excuse to spend a weekend around good food and good people."

Lindsay Burkowski

Immersion Program Manager

IU Health Foundation | Indianapolis, Indiana

Reasons why Lindsay is one of the forty:

- Lindsay transformed donor engagement at IU Health through the Experience the Difference program, creating personalized, immersive experiences that have connected donors, prospects, and community leaders directly with the organization's mission and impact.

- Her innovative approach to relationship-building has helped generate and inspire more than $25 million in philanthropic commitments and matching funds, supporting initiatives including nursing education, emergency department patient resources, workforce wellbeing programs, and groundbreaking mental health treatment services across Indiana.

- Recognized as a rising leader in healthcare philanthropy, Lindsay was selected for IU Health's 2024 Emerging Leaders program and continues to make an impact beyond her professional role through volunteer leadership with Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and other community-focused organizations.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Feeling connected to a mission has always been important to me. Working in healthcare philanthropy allows me to carry that out. I find it most meaningful to help donors connect with the impact of their generosity while also helping healthcare providers see the difference they make in the lives of patients and families. Bridging those connections between giving, patient care, and impact is what makes this work so rewarding."

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

"Introducing a donor to IU Health's Integrative & Creative Arts Therapies program - an area I had previously managed in a different role - was a full-circle moment in my career. By creating an experience that allowed the donor to see the program's impact firsthand, I helped inspire a meaningful gift. It demonstrated how the power of authentic storytelling and genuine connections can turn inspiration into action."

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

"Take time to get to know the people behind the work. Building relationships across the organization has helped me better understand the many perspectives that drive our mission and where philanthropy can make the greatest difference. Be intentional about getting to know people in all types of roles - you never know whose perspective, partnership, or expertise will make all the difference."

Jennifer Choi Weinstein, MA

Major Gifts Officer

Northwell Health Foundation | New York, New York

Reasons why Jennifer is one of the forty:

- Jen secured multiple seven-figure commitments over the past year, including funding for her first endowed professorship at Lenox Hill Hospital. This transformational gift will support the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in perpetuity, advancing clinical care, research, and education for generations to come.

- Jen cultivated trusted relationships with physicians and department leaders, helping translate clinical priorities into compelling philanthropic opportunities and creating a model for successful partnership between development and clinical teams.

- Jen has become a driving force in strengthening philanthropy across her organization, developing a replicable engagement framework that combines faculty coaching, proposal development, and stewardship planning to accelerate donor cultivation and foster a culture of philanthropy among clinical leaders.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"While I don't have a medical degree to directly provide care, this field offers a powerful way to contribute to medical advancements and patient support. It's a deeply fulfilling way for me to make a tangible and lasting impact on the lives of those in need and improve healthcare outcomes."

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

"A crucial moment in my career was understanding the impact of aligning personal philanthropic goals with institutional needs. A prime example was facilitating an endowed professorship for the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Lenox Hill Hospital, driven by a grateful donor's desire to honor his surgeon for saving his life. This experience demonstrated the power of connecting deeply personal motivations with strategic institutional priorities."

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

"Take the time to build relationships with your physician partners. Their trust in you is critical to having successful relationships with prospects and donors."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I enjoy hiking, playing tennis, and gardening."

Stephen Clatos, MA, CFRE

Director of Philanthropy – Individual Giving

Bluegrass Care Navigators | Lexington, Kentucky

Reasons why Stephen is one of the forty:

- Stephen Clatos has built an impressive philanthropy career marked by consistent leadership growth and advancement, earning multiple promotions across three organizations before becoming Director of Individual Giving at Bluegrass Care Navigators, where he now leads a team of major gift officers while managing his own portfolio of donors.

- Most recently, as campaign manager for Bluegrass Care Navigators' two-year comprehensive campaign, Stephen helped raise more than $7.7 million, exceeding the campaign goal by 10%, including securing a $1 million lead gift, increasing major gifts by 275%, and helping generate nearly $2.8 million in planned gift commitments.

- Beyond his fundraising success, Stephen is committed to strengthening the profession through mentorship, education, and volunteer leadership. He leads monthly training sessions for fundraising staff, serves in leadership roles with the Association of Fundraising Professionals Bluegrass Chapter and the Kentucky Association of Hospice & Palliative Care Philanthropy & Marketing Peer Group, and actively works to advance philanthropy across Kentucky.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"The majority of my fundraising career has been spent in healthcare philanthropy, helping healthcare systems deliver innovative, high-quality care to Kentuckians. The landscape is constantly evolving through new technologies and government policies. I believe that access to high-quality care is something everyone deserves. Through my work in healthcare philanthropy, I get to help share that vision with others and make it a reality."

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

"Earning my CFRE certification in 2020 helped me build confidence as a professional fundraiser and garner credibility among my peers, employers, and donors. Ultimately, I believe that becoming a CFRE has opened doors to new career opportunities, allowing me to reach my full potential as a professional fundraiser and leader."

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

"For someone new to healthcare philanthropy, I would encourage them to anchor their work in the privilege of the moment. Having worked in hospice care philanthropy for the past five years, I have become keenly aware that many of us stand at the intersection of love, loss, legacy, gratitude, and deep human connection. While our work may be consistently measured through goals and key performance indicators, staying grounded in helping your donors create an impact that is meaningful to them will ultimately lead to the deepest and most lasting results."

Bethany Dainton

Manager, Philanthropy

Regional Health Centre Foundation | Peterborough, Ontario

Reasons why Bethany is one of the forty:

- Bethany Dainton quickly emerged as a leader in healthcare philanthropy, advancing from major gifts coordinator to philanthropy manager while helping guide fundraising efforts for two major hospital foundations and supporting transformative healthcare campaigns across Ontario.

- During the We Care, We Can Campaign for the redevelopment and expansion of Bowmanville Hospital, Bethany played a key fundraising leadership role in helping secure more than $40 million in campaign gifts, revitalizing the planned giving program, and contributing to the successful acquisition of $45 million in municipal and regional government funding for the project.

- Bethany's impact extends beyond fundraising results. In her current role with the PRHC Foundation, she continues to advance philanthropic growth while becoming a recognized voice within the profession through leadership roles with the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, speaking engagements at industry events, and her work advancing integrated strategies across annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, and community engagement.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"My connection to healthcare philanthropy feels very full circle. I have always volunteered and even completed my high school community service hours as a porter at PRHC. Although I began my career outside of healthcare philanthropy, I found the most meaningful moments were always those where I had the opportunity to give back to my community. Moving from the banking world into healthcare philanthropy brought all of those pieces together for me. I genuinely find so much joy and purpose in the work I do, connecting people to opportunities to make a meaningful impact in their community."

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

"After more than five years in major gifts and planned giving, I moved to a new organization to lead an annual giving program, choosing what felt like an unconventional path and the opposite of the traditional fundraising career trajectory. Now back managing a major gifts portfolio, that experience has completely changed my perspective. I better understand how every area of philanthropy connects and the importance of collaboration across teams. It has shaped how I lead and approach my work every day: keeping our focus on the donor and their journey, rather than the portfolio or role we happen to hold."

Steven Dasher, CFRE

Executive Director

Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation | Athens, Georgia

Reasons why Steven is one of the forty:

- As the youngest Executive Director in the history of the Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation, Steven Dasher transformed the Foundation into a fully integrated fundraising operation, leading record-breaking growth in philanthropic support and increasing annual fundraising from $919,930 in FY23 to more than $1.7 million in FY25.

- Steven's strategic leadership has strengthened both fundraising performance and team effectiveness. He implemented a comprehensive fundraising plan, established quarterly performance goals, and guided his team to exceed fundraising targets by more than 20% in each of the first two quarters of FY26, helping position the Foundation for another record-setting year.

- A Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) and Fellow in Charitable Estate Planning (FCEP), Steven combines expertise in annual, major, and planned giving to advance impactful initiatives, including a $250,000 matching gift campaign for National Grateful Patient Day and the creation of an endowment supporting Piedmont Athens Regional's Beautiful You Boutique, while fostering stronger partnerships across hospital leadership and service lines.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I always knew I wanted to be in healthcare, but I realized early on that the clinical path wasn't for me. I took a detour or two, but quickly learned that philanthropy gave me another way to be part of the impact. In our work, we have the unique role of connecting people who want to give back to their communities with opportunities to make a real difference for others. That combination of purpose and relationships is what drew me in and has kept me here."

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

"Don't overthink it. Healthcare philanthropy provides us with an incredible opportunity to make a positive difference in people's lives, whether that's colleagues, clinicians, donors or patients. Take the time to understand your role, and the donor's role, but most importantly, learn to listen. That's the single most important skill in this work, and the sooner you develop it, the better. It allows you to truly understand what motivates people to invest in their community."

Jennifer (Jenn) Davis, GPC

Senior Director of Development, Pediatric Grants and Neurosciences

Dell Children's Foundation | Austin, Texas

Reasons why Jenn is one of the forty:

- Jenn has transformed philanthropic support for Dell Children's, growing from raising approximately $1 million annually to more than $8 million annually and consistently exceeding fundraising goals, including securing $6.1 million on a $5.3 million goal in FY25 and $4 million on a $3 million goal in FY24. In FY26, she raised $10 million!

- Recognized for her strategic leadership and results-driven approach, Jenn advanced from Director of Development to Senior Director of Development and then to the lead role of Senior Director of Pediatric Grants & the Neuroscience Service Line within five years, recently expanding her leadership portfolio to include Mental Health services.

- Jenn has reimagined pediatric grants strategy by strengthening cross-functional collaboration, streamlining processes, and identifying new funding opportunities that advance critical pediatric neuroscience and mental health initiatives. Her ability to align clinicians, administrators, finance teams, and donors around shared goals has made her a trusted leader across the Ascension Texas network.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"After a significant family member's healthcare experience, I was inspired to impact healthcare as directly as possible as a professional."

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

"During the Covid-19 Pandemic, I began writing grants as more of a side hustle. Quickly, I found success and a deep connection between my skills and interests and grant work. Now, more than 6 years later, I am so grateful for that accidental leap of faith that brought me to where I am now."

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

"Patience and persistence are paramount. In the beginning, progress will feel slow and the work will seem constantly uphill. Then, it will (hopefully) all click, you will gain momentum and the work will become so much fun."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I am celebrating 10 years of work at Dell Children's this month."

Lauren Day, MA, CFRE

Philanthropy Executive

Adventist Health Central California Foundation | Hanford, California

Reasons why Lauren is one of the forty:

- Lauren Day has transformed philanthropy across Adventist Health's Central California Network, helping grow fundraising from approximately $300,000 annually into a sustainable multi-million-dollar program that supports eight hospitals and 137 clinics serving communities throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

- Lauren cultivated and secured the largest philanthropic gift in Adventist Health history, a transformational $7 million commitment that will expand access to quality healthcare in Corcoran, California, while also helping secure multiple seven-figure gifts and advance critical capital projects, including expanded cardiac care services for underserved communities.

- Recognized for her collaborative and mission-driven leadership, Lauren was recently promoted to lead fundraising efforts across Adventist Health's Central California Network, where she continues to strengthen partnerships with physicians, board members, community leaders, and donors to advance healthcare access and improve patient outcomes across the region.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose healthcare philanthropy because it brings together two things I have always loved: healthcare and people. My mom is a nurse, and I grew up walking the halls of hospitals, developing a deep appreciation for the caregivers who show up every day to serve others during their most vulnerable moments. I've also always been drawn to people's stories—what shapes them, what inspires them, and what gives their lives meaning. Healthcare philanthropy allows me to connect those stories with opportunities to make a lasting impact. It is incredibly rewarding to help generous people create a legacy of healing, hope, and better care for the communities we serve."

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

"One of the most defining moments in my career came when my six-month-old son was hospitalized with RSV and spent 15 days in intensive care on a ventilator. During that time, I experienced healthcare not as a philanthropy professional, but as a mother. I witnessed firsthand how donor generosity made advanced technology, specialized care, and healing environments possible. A mentor once told me, "God never gives you a trial He can't use for good." That experience transformed my perspective and deepened my connection to donors, reminding me that behind every gift is a patient, a family, and a story."

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

"Listen deeply, lead with gratitude, and remember that every gift begins with a genuine relationship and a heart for healing."

Tam Fiddler

Director, Impact & Accountability

Alberta Cancer Foundation | Edmonton, Alberta

Reasons why Tam is one of the forty:

- Tam Fiddler has played a pivotal leadership role in some of the largest healthcare philanthropy initiatives in Western Canada, helping guide more than $320 million in philanthropic investment through the Alberta Cancer Foundation's landmark We Cross Cancer and OWN. CANCER campaigns.

- As Director of Impact & Accountability, Tam has overseen the alignment of donor investments with healthcare priorities, including more than $30 million in capital renovation projects and $290 million in campaign spending plans, ensuring transformational gifts translate into meaningful outcomes for patients, researchers, and healthcare providers across Alberta.

- Tam is helping shape the future of cancer care and innovation through her leadership of a groundbreaking $72 million Cancer Research & Innovation Challenge, while also leading the implementation of the historic $50 million naming gift for the Arthur J. E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre—the largest philanthropic gift in Alberta Health Services history for cancer care.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I've always had an affinity for healthcare, but my skills leant themselves more to business. This is the perfect alignment."

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

"My heart belongs to fundraising, and my brain belongs to operations. Recognizing that this is relatively unique allowed me to imagine how I could bring value without fitting cleanly into either."

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

"Regardless of what your role is, apply yourself to learning the key aspects of fundraising. It's at the core of what we do and a baseline understanding of that subject matter is critical to contributing meaningfully and to reaching your full potential."

A fun fact about yourself:

"My first role in healthcare philanthropy was in the same hospital I was born in."

Kirsten Halden, CFRE

Director of Major Gifts and Stewardship

St. Boniface Hospital Foundation | Winnipeg, Manitoba

Reasons why Kirsten is one of the forty:

- Kirsten Halden has built an impressive fundraising career spanning more than 15 years across healthcare, education, environmental, and social service organizations. Her progression into senior leadership roles reflects a proven ability to drive results, build relationships, and advance philanthropy across diverse sectors.

- Under Kirsten's leadership, the Foundation's Major Gifts program grew from $2.5 million to more than $6.6 million in annual revenue, and she personally secured a transformational $5 million gift commitment. Earlier in her career, she also negotiated and secured three separate eight-figure gifts that established lasting endowment funds and strengthened community organizations for generations to come.

- After joining St. Boniface Hospital Foundation, Kirsten expanded her leadership responsibilities to oversee Major Gifts, Planned Giving and Stewardship, hired and onboarded three new team members, and helped modernize fundraising and stewardship processes to support long-term philanthropic growth and stronger donor engagement.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Like many others, I fell into fundraising as a career by meeting the right mentor at the right time. As I worked for and with more organizations, I realized the greatest impact could be seen through healthcare philanthropy. I wanted to make a difference that was literally life changing and saving for people now and into the future."

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

"I have had the privilege of building relationships with incredible donors, supporting people through challenging times, and working on transformational donations I only dreamt of when I first began my career. While those all mean a great deal to me, it is actually stepping into my role at St. Boniface Hospital Foundation that has felt the most authentic and fulfilling. I have found my place, my role and my team. That is pivotal!"

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

"It's okay to not know all the answers. Leading with vulnerability and curiosity is the path to deeper connections and trusted relationships. It's not going to be perfect, but it will be authentic."

Mara Hammond

Chief Impact Officer

Naples Comprehensive Health | Naples, Florida

Reasons why Mara is one of the forty:

- Since joining NCH as Chief Impact Officer in 2023, Mara Hammond has led a remarkable transformation of the organization's philanthropy and community impact efforts, growing the Impact team from approximately 10 to more than 30 professionals and positioning philanthropy as a strategic driver of organizational success.

- Under Mara's leadership, annual fundraising has increased from an average of $20 million to $100 million, demonstrating her ability to build high-performing teams, engage community partners, and align philanthropic investment with institutional priorities.

- Mara is leading NCH's first-ever comprehensive campaign, with a working goal of $850 million, while serving as a key advisor to organizational leadership through her participation on the NCH Board, Finance Committee, Impact Committee, and Campaign Cabinet. Her vision and strategic expertise are helping shape the future of healthcare philanthropy at NCH.

Stephany Intriago

Director, Transformational Giving

SickKids Foundation | Toronto, Ontario

Reasons Stephany is one of the forty:

- Promoted to Director, Transformational Giving in 2024, Stephany Intriago has played a central role in shaping SickKids Foundation's historic $2.5 billion Heal the Future Campaign, leading development of the campaign's case for support and helping align philanthropic investment with the hospital's most ambitious clinical, research, and education priorities.

- Stephany recently helped secure a $40 million transformational gift—the largest commitment in the history of the Heal the Future Campaign—while building a track record of successfully advancing multiple seven- and eight-figure gifts that support innovation, access, and improved outcomes for children and families.

- Through disciplined strategy and cross-functional leadership, Stephany helped grow the Transformational Giving pipeline by 620%, from $200 million to $1.44 billion, while strengthening collaboration between hospital and foundation leaders, improving pipeline management, and accelerating philanthropic opportunities across the organization.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose healthcare philanthropy because it sits at the intersection of compassion, innovation, and impact. Every day, I have the privilege of connecting the community with opportunities to improve the lives of children and families. It's incredibly rewarding to help turn someone's desire to make a difference into meaningful change."

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

"A pivotal moment in my career came when I was at a crossroads early on, working in an administrative role and exploring different career paths. A colleague, who became a close friend, saw fundraising potential in me long before I saw it in myself. She invested in me, shared her expertise, and encouraged me to pursue opportunities that felt beyond my reach. Her mentorship changed the course of my career and reminds me of the power of believing in others."

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

"Stay curious. Every person you meet has something to teach you. Some of the most valuable lessons in my career have come from asking questions, listening carefully, and being open to learning from others. Curiosity leads to deeper relationships, better questions, and ultimately, greater impact."

Ashley Jones, MPA, CFRE

Director

The Bellin Health Foundation | Green Bay, Wisconsin

Reasons why Ashley is one of the forty:

- Ashley Jones has quickly risen from grant writer to Director of the Bellin Health Foundation, demonstrating exceptional leadership and strategic vision. Since joining the organization, she has built and expanded Bellin's first-ever grants program, creating the infrastructure, policies, and processes needed to secure transformational philanthropic investments.

- Ashley's grant leadership has generated extraordinary results, securing more than $2 million in grant funding in her first year alone and an additional $5.7 million since then. Her work has unlocked critical resources that advance population health initiatives, innovation, and strategic priorities across the health system.

- Under Ashley's leadership, the Bellin Health Foundation has achieved record-breaking growth in fundraising and donor engagement, including raising approximately $8.6 million across fiscal years 2022 and 2023, increasing donor participation by 45%, and helping drive a record $5.7 million in contributions in fiscal year 2025 through annual giving, employee engagement, events, and philanthropic partnerships.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose (and continue to choose everyday) healthcare philanthropy because it allows me to connect generous people with opportunities to make a real difference in the lives of others. Healthcare is deeply personal, and many of the people we serve are navigating some of the most vulnerable and challenging moments of their lives. I love to help create the resources, programs, spaces, and experiences that provide support, dignity, and hope during those times. What motivates me the most is seeing how philanthropy can turn compassion into action and make a lasting impact on patients, families, caregivers, and entire communities. It's just such an incredible honor to be a part of that."

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

"Never forget that philanthropy is ultimately about people. It's easy to become focused on campaigns, metrics, proposals, and revenue goals, but it takes trust building first. Take time to listen, learn what matters to donors, patients, and colleagues, and stay connected to the mission. The technical skills can be learned, but genuine curiosity, empathy, and relationship-building are what create lasting impact and a fulfilling career. I know people don't give to me because I am "Ashley at the Foundation" - they are giving because they had a good experience with the frontline workers that I am honored to work with. I am a shepherd, dot connector, and storyteller in this work that's all about the people."

Matthew Long

Director, Major Gifts

Akron Children's | Akron, Ohio

Reasons why Matthew is one of the forty:

- Since joining Akron Children's in 2023, Matthew Long has quickly established himself as a transformational fundraising leader, guiding his team to secure more than $10.1 million in philanthropic support and achieving a nearly 80% over-goal performance in 2025 through strategic alignment with the hospital's highest-priority needs.

- Matt's leadership has helped advance critical initiatives that are improving care for children and families, including securing a $2.32 million lead gift for Akron Children's new inpatient behavioral health unit and helping drive fundraising efforts for the Tom and Jill Zidian Family Autism Center, accelerating access to specialized services for the community.

- Through a focus on mentorship, accountability, and strategic donor engagement, Matt has elevated team performance across the Foundation, increasing fundraising activity by 14.2% year over year while developing innovative approaches such as a regional medicine fundraising strategy that generated more than $2.4 million in support for community-based pediatric care.

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

"The advice I would give to someone entering healthcare philanthropy is to never lose sight of the fact that this work is about people first. When someone comes into a hospital, they're usually not having a good day. It can be easy to define success by dollars raised, goals achieved, or projects completed. Those things matter because they allow us to advance our missions. But the real value is that the work is helping people. And people aren't a metric you put on your resume. Take time to listen. Learn the stories of the patients and families you serve. Understand the physicians, nurses, researchers, and caregivers whose work you represent. Get to know donors not simply for what they can give, but for what they care about and the legacy they hope to create. I would also encourage someone new to the field to embrace growth. Be willing to take on challenges before you feel fully ready, learn from the people around you, and understand that setbacks are often some of the greatest opportunities for development."

A fun fact about yourself:

"My wife and I are welcoming our first child, a daughter named Noah Grace, in September"

Jonathon Maple, CFRM

Executive Director

Margaret Mary Health Foundation | Indianapolis, Indiana

Reasons why Jonathon is one of the forty:

- As Executive Director of the Margaret Mary Health Foundation, Jonathon Maple has led a remarkable period of growth, expanding the Foundation's donor base by 60%, increasing total funds raised by 51% year over year, and growing the organization's endowment from $5.5 million to more than $9 million.

- Jonathon played a key leadership role in the Foundation's most ambitious philanthropic effort to date, helping secure more than $10.7 million for the campaign supporting a new Margaret Mary Health hospital and surpassing the campaign's original fundraising goal ahead of schedule.

- Through innovative, mission-driven fundraising and community partnerships, Jonathon has expanded philanthropy's impact beyond traditional fundraising events, launching initiatives that support hospice care, cancer services, mental health awareness, and regional public safety efforts, including a collaborative project to equip law enforcement vehicles across two counties with life-saving AEDs.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I have come to realize that my greatest passion is bringing people together around something bigger than themselves. Healthcare philanthropy gave me the opportunity to turn that passion into action by helping build a healthier future for my community. Healthcare philanthropy allows me to build relationships, inspire generosity and create an impact."

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

"During our most recent campaign, I saw how trust, consistency and authentic connection became the foundation for positive results. Together, with an incredible community, we didn't just reach our campaign goal - we exceeded it more than a year and a half ahead of schedule. As I met with donors and community members - the excitement about building a new critical-access rural hospital was palpable. Truly the experience of the capital campaign reinforced a core belief that I have: when people feel connected to a vision and see impact, they don't just give, they invest. Seeing this belief play out has been a major step in my career journey."

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

"Don't chase the gift - build the relationship. Successful fundraising takes time. Philanthropy is personal and making meaningful connections will allow the generosity to follow naturally. While the numbers matter, the connection, relationship and trust will be the most important part of healthcare philanthropy."

Jeff McGinn, CFRE, CAP

Vice President of System Philanthropy

Eventide Foundation | Omaha, Nebraska

Reasons why Jeff is one of the forty:

- As Vice President of System Philanthropy for the Eventide Foundation, Jeff McGinn successfully led the integration of two legacy healthcare foundations into a unified multi-state fundraising program, aligning donor engagement, development operations, and philanthropic strategy across Nebraska, North Dakota, and Minnesota during a period of significant organizational change.

- Jeff strengthened the foundation's long-term fundraising capacity by modernizing donor systems, transitioning both organizations to Raiser's Edge NXT, and expanding the development team from two to four professionals. Under his leadership, the combined foundations raised $1.96 million in FY25 and have already exceeded their $2.3 million fundraising goal for FY26.

- Throughout his career, Jeff has consistently delivered exceptional fundraising results, including leading a university fundraising team that generated $17.8 million annually, directing a Giving Day campaign that raised $12.7 million, and securing a $5 million corporate gift for United Way of Dane County—the largest in its history.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose healthcare philanthropy because it combines two things I care deeply about: people and purpose. I enjoy building meaningful relationships with donors and families and helping them invest in causes that improve health and quality of life. There is something incredibly rewarding about connecting a person's values and generosity to an opportunity that makes a real difference for residents, patients, and caregivers. Seeing that impact in real time is what inspires me and reinforces why I love this work."

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

"One of the greatest strengths of healthcare philanthropy is the willingness of professionals to support one another. If you're new to the field, seek out peers and mentors, ask questions, and stay curious. Throughout my career, I've never been turned down for a conversation with someone willing to share ideas and experiences. While we may work for different organizations, we're united by a common mission to improve the health of our communities. Lean into those relationships, continue learning, and embrace the many opportunities this rewarding profession has to offer."

Maria Mengual-Paredes, MA

Director of Philanthropy

San Ysidro Health | San Diego, California

Reasons why Maria is one of the forty:

- Maria Mengual-Paredes is a bilingual philanthropy leader who has built a successful fundraising career spanning healthcare, higher education, and the arts. Since joining San Ysidro Health as Director of Philanthropy in 2025, she has strengthened fundraising operations, enhanced donor stewardship, implemented major gifts infrastructure, and aligned philanthropic strategy with organizational priorities.

- Throughout her career, Maria has delivered strong fundraising results, securing gifts from $25,000 to $1.5 million, helping advance a $16 million annual fundraising goal at California Lutheran University, and creating fundraising structures and materials for key healthcare initiatives in collaboration with physicians and the Chief Philanthropy Officer at Providence Tarzana Foundation, resulting in $4.5 million in gifts for priorities including the Heart Center, cardiovascular and stroke care, and maternal-child health.

- In less than six months at San Ysidro Health, a Federally Qualified Health Center, Maria launched the La Casita Fund, raising $100,000 from 156 donors, helped lead the organization's annual golf tournament to more than $433,000 in corporate support, and contributed to growing philanthropic revenue from $616,000 to more than $1.6 million, demonstrating her ability to quickly build momentum, strengthen team collaboration, and deepen donor engagement.

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

"First, learn how to hold many perspectives at once. Healthcare philanthropy means understanding patients, care teams, donors, and the communities we serve. The best fundraisers know how to translate between those voices and perspectives to create the greatest impact. Second, listen to the people who love you when you are thinking about your next career move. Sometimes they can see your gifts, courage, and next step before you can. I have my husband to thank for some of my most important career milestones because I trusted his advice, and he helped me believe I was ready before I fully believed it myself. Third, stay close to the human reason behind the work, and take care of yourself too. Healthcare philanthropy helps make sure healing has the resources and support it needs. And because this work takes heart, resilience, and occasionally a very strong coffee, we have to stay grounded ourselves."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I believe fundraisers deserve a Nobel Peace Prize, or at the very least honorary Jedi status, because we broker world peace every day. We listen across differences, navigate power dynamics and competing priorities, translate big visions into fundable causes, and keep humanity at the center of the conversation. And somehow, while doing all of that, we still make generosity feel joyful."

Kacie Merrick

Managing Senior Director

UC Davis Children's Hospital | Sacramento, California

Reasons why Kacie is one of the forty:

- Kacie Merrick has built and stewarded some of the most significant corporate partnerships in pediatric healthcare philanthropy, securing landmark commitments including Panda Express ($8.3M over 10 years), Ovintiv ($3M), Ent Credit Union ($2.5M endowed chair), Marriott ($1M), and the Colorado Rockies ($1M), creating lasting investments that continue to benefit children and families across the region.

- During her time at Children's Hospital Colorado Foundation, Kacie delivered record-breaking results by helping establish the #1 Walmart fundraising market in the United States for five consecutive years, generating more than $1 million annually, while increasing Extra Life revenue by 53% and participant engagement by 19%, earning her the Victoria Enmon Award of Excellence for her impact on Children's Miracle Network fundraising.

- Since joining UC Davis Children's Hospital, Kacie has successfully expanded Children's Miracle Network fundraising into a new market, launching the hospital's first Radiothon, exceeding goal by 170%, growing the signature golf event by 15%, strengthening corporate partnerships, and positioning the program for long-term growth while continuing to lead strategic hospital engagement through the Children's Miracle Network Executive Committee.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"There's an old joke that anyone who works in the nonprofit sector arrives there by accident and simply never leaves - I suppose that holds true for my career as well. I originally found my way into healthcare philanthropy through special events, looking to build on the event planning experience I gained throughout college. After transitioning into corporate fund-raising and learning more about the hospital, I was undeniably hooked by the impact of the work. Philanthropy is unique because it is built on relationships rooted in generosity rather than quotas or sales. While that remains true in healthcare, what inspires me most are the connections with the patients, families, and care teams we have the privilege of supporting. They demonstrate extraordinary courage, vulnerability, resilience, and hope every day. It is an incredible honor to help tell their stories, connect donors to that mission, and play even a small role in improving the care they receive."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I carry a nose flute with me wherever I go!"

Kathleen Michalakos, CFRE

Director, Philanthropy

Trillium Health Partners Foundation | Mississauga, Ontario

Reasons why Kathleen is one of the forty:

- Kathleen Michalakos has been instrumental in helping raise more than $100 million for Trillium Health Partners Foundation, including several seven-figure and eight-figure gifts, and played a key role in securing a historic $5 million gift from the Muslim community, the largest gift to a hospital by the Muslim community in Canadian history.

- As a people-first leader and mentor, Kathleen has strengthened organizational fundraising capacity by coaching and developing emerging fundraisers, including mentoring a direct report through the successful closure of their first $1 million gift, creating a lasting culture of learning, mentorship, and fundraising excellence.

- Kathleen transformed the Foundation's third-party fundraising program into a strategic partnership model, expanding corporate relationships into multi-year, blended giving partnerships that combine community fundraising, sponsorship, and major gifts while driving long-term revenue growth and donor engagement.

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

"I would tell someone new to healthcare philanthropy to focus on relationships first. Genuine connection is at the heart of this work. From a donor perspective, be authentic, stay curious and take the time to understand what inspires people to give. When you understand a donor's "why" you can better connect their passions to the impact they can make in their community. Relationships built on trust and shared purpose are what make philanthropy so rewarding. From a hospital staff perspective, take the time to understand what makes their work meaningful. Creating opportunities for staff to connect directly with donors and see philanthropy in action fosters a deeper sense of purpose, strengthens their understanding of fundraising and reinforces the difference they make every day. As a colleague, invest in relationships across your organization. A team-first mindset not only creates a more positive and enriching workplace but also leads to stronger outcomes for everyone. Never underestimate the contributions of enabling teams. Their support is essential to every fundraising success. Build connections with senior leaders, ask questions, seek out mentors and embrace every opportunity to learn and grow. Above all, remember that healthcare philanthropy is about people. When you lead with empathy, curiosity and a genuine desire to help others succeed, you'll build partnerships that create lasting impact."

A fun fact about yourself:

"Early in my career at Trillium Health Partners Foundation, the youth leaders of SCREEN of Peel Community Association convinced me to join them in performing a surprise Tamil cinema dance for their Board of Directors at their year-end showcase. After months of Sunday rehearsals, I took to the stage and learned that sometimes the best community-building happens in unexpected ways."

Andrew Miller, MBA

Director of Development , Neurosciences and Behavioral Medicine

Children's National Hospital | Washington, D.C

Reasons why Andrew is one of the forty:

- Andrew Miller has driven significant growth in pediatric neuroscience philanthropy at Children's National Hospital, helping achieve a 24% year-over-year increase in fundraising while securing transformative support, including a $1.5 million in-kind gift for advancing pediatric brain cancer research equipment, a $650,000 gift for one of the nation's leading pediatric neuroimmunology programs, and helping raise millions in support for rare pediatric brain tumor research leading to the rapid development of first-in human clinical trials.

- During a period of staffing shortages and organizational transition, Andrew stepped into leadership roles supporting both the Cancer and Blood Disorders Center and the Center for Neuroscience and Behavioral Medicine, ensuring continuity in donor engagement, fundraising strategy, and institutional partnerships across two critical service lines.

- Andrew helped secure Children's National's first philanthropic investment dedicated to pediatric stroke care, partnering with NFL Walter Payton Man of the Year recipient Bobby Wagner to establish a $100,000+ commitment that advanced pediatric stroke prevention and research while elevating national awareness through features on HBO and NFL Network programming.

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

"Relocating my family from Massachusetts to the Washington, DC area to accept a director-level position at Children's National Hospital was both a personal and professional leap of faith after more than a decade building my career in New England. It has proven to be the most transformative career decision I have made, providing the opportunity to help advance some of the most innovative and impactful philanthropic investments in pediatric healthcare and research."

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

"Develop a strong understanding of the research, clinical care, and emerging treatments within the field or institution you support. Donors — particularly grateful patient families — are seeking a trusted philanthropic partner who not only understands the complexity of the work, but also genuinely shares their passion for advancing it. The ability to connect donor interests with meaningful impact is one of the most important skills in healthcare philanthropy."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I am the proud new dad to my first child and daughter Ada Juliette Miller born this year in May."

Danielle Neveles-McGrath, MBA

Chief Impact Officer

Humana Foundation | Chicago, Illinois

Reasons why Danielle is one of the forty:

- As the inaugural Chief Impact Officer of the Humana Foundation, Danielle Neveles-McGrath designed and launched the Foundation's first enterprise-wide impact evaluation framework, positioning the organization as a national leader in evidence-based philanthropy and enabling measurable improvements in health outcomes for older adults, children, and veterans. Danielle also leads the publications strategy at the Humana Foundation where she develops and publishes data, insights and learnings from the grantmaking portfolio to advance knowledge and inspire adoption of promising practices.

- Danielle has led transformative, equity-focused initiatives throughout her career, including directing a $25 million racial equity grant strategy for the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, investing more than $12 million in community organizations, and creating the Indy Racial Equity Pledge, which evolved into the region-wide Business Equity for Indy movement.

- A recognized leader in social impact and philanthropy, Danielle has mobilized cross-sector coalitions to address complex community challenges—from increasing COVID-19 vaccination access in underserved communities to expanding suicide-prevention resources for veterans—and was selected for the prestigious Council on Foundations Career Pathways Program, which prepares the next generation of philanthropic C-suite leaders.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I believe access to healthcare should be a right for everyone regardless of income or circumstance, and I believe that philanthropy can innovate and test scalable solutions to make that achievable. That is why I chose this career."

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

"Seeing the amount of people dying from COVID at the height of the pandemic coupled with the racial reckoning of George Floyd's murder challenged me to get more involved and do more to be a part of the change. That year, I pivoted into healthcare philanthropy. I wanted to help amid the crisis."

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

"Learn as much as you can about the various sectors of healthcare and how systems can work together to improve the health of people. I've benefitted from working for a payer and biopharma, and I believe there is value in gaining insight across the sector."

Warren Northern

Senior Manager, Development and Government Relations

Universal Community Health Center | Los Angeles, California

Reasons why Warren is one of the forty:

- Warren Northern transformed Universal Community Health Center's development and government relations function from a one-person operation into a growing team of three, securing more than $6 million in grant funding over three years and doubling the organization's grant revenue to support care for more than 15,000 patients annually in South Los Angeles.

- Warren's fundraising leadership has fueled innovative health equity initiatives, including launching UCHC's first Food Pantry and Food as Medicine program, which has distributed more than 150,000 pounds of food to over 4,300 community members, while also expanding chronic disease management and transportation access programs for underserved patients.

- Recognized with the 2025 AFP Greater Los Angeles Outstanding Emerging Professional Award, Warren has strengthened UCHC's voice in healthcare advocacy by leading government relations efforts, organizing annual Capitol Hill visits, and helping lead a $3 million capital campaign to secure the organization's first permanently owned clinic facility.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose healthcare philanthropy because I genuinely believe in the work, and I see myself in the patients we serve. Growing up with limited access to care gave me a firsthand understanding of what it means to fall through the cracks of a broken system, and I wanted to be part of closing that gap. This is one of the few careers where I can directly see the results of my work improving someone's health and quality of life, and that connection to impact is what keeps me going every day."

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

"Relocating from Chicago to Los Angeles and joining UCHC without a formal fundraising background was the pivot point that changed everything for me. I was drawn to the organization before I fully understood the field, and that connection to the mission pushed me to learn development on the ground, building the function from an early stage while figuring out the craft in real time. Looking back, stepping into something unfamiliar because it felt right turned out to be the best professional decision I have ever made."

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

"Find an organization whose mission genuinely fills your cup, because when you are connected to the patients and community you serve, this work becomes one of the most rewarding careers you can choose. There will be challenges and slow seasons, but caring deeply about the work means the wins feel that much more meaningful. That sense of purpose is what will fuel your growth, sustain you through the hard days, and ultimately make you a better advocate for the people who need it most."

Madison O'Neill

Interim Director, Marketing & Communications

Mackenzie Health Foundation | Oakville, Ontario

Reasons why Madison is one of the forty:

- Madison O'Neill has established herself as a strategic communications leader in healthcare philanthropy, supporting fundraising efforts that have contributed to more than $40 million in major and transformational gifts across Mackenzie Health Foundation and William Osler Health System Foundation.

- In just two years at Mackenzie Health Foundation, Madison advanced from Manager to Senior Manager and then to Interim Director, Marketing & Communications, where she led the launch of a comprehensive mental health fundraising campaign while providing leadership during a period of organizational transition. And just recently, Madison has taken on a new role as Director, Major and Transformational Gift Communications at Mackenzie Health Foundation.

- Madison has played a key role in some of Ontario's most successful healthcare fundraising initiatives, including communications supporting a $10 million transformational gift, the $12 million Tour de Bleu fundraising initiative at William Osler Health System Foundation, a $5 million gift for urology, and the development of a new grateful patient program designed to strengthen long-term philanthropic engagement.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"A close friend encouraged me to apply for a role at a hospital foundation, and I'm so glad she did. I've found so much meaning in supporting healthcare because at some point, we'll all rely on it. Whether it's you or someone you love, those moments remind you just how much trust we place in our doctors, nurses and healthcare teams. This career means that I get to play a small part in inspiring generosity that ensures they have the equipment and resources they need to provide the best possible care."

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

"I don't think my career has been shaped by one defining moment as much as a mindset I've tried to carry throughout it. I've intentionally sought out mentors, stayed curious and tried to be open to feedback (even when it's been uncomfortable). I've also learned that growth usually comes from saying yes to opportunities that feel a little intimidating. Some of the best decisions I've made have involved taking a leap before I felt completely ready, trusting that I could learn along the way and that the people around me would support me."

A fun fact about yourself:

"After years of admiring pottery and taking courses, I've recently become a member at a local studio. It's become one of my favourite ways to slow down and be present. I have a feeling my friends and family are about to end up with a lot of handmade trinket bowls!"

Brian Pecor, MBA, CFRE

Associate Vice President of Development

Duke Health Development and Alumni Affairs | Durham, North Carolina

Reasons why Brian is one of the forty:

- Brian Pecor has secured more than $100 million in philanthropic support throughout his career, including over $60 million between 2022 and 2026, highlighted by a transformational $20 million lead gift that launched the Imagine Campaign, the first comprehensive campaign in the history of Roper St. Francis Healthcare.

- A recognized innovator in healthcare philanthropy, Brian has designed and launched grateful patient fundraising programs at multiple health systems, creating the data infrastructure, physician engagement strategies, and governance frameworks that have generated millions in new philanthropic support and established sustainable fundraising pipelines.

- Brian's leadership trajectory has been exceptional, advancing from frontline fundraiser to serving as Interim Foundation President at Roper St. Francis Healthcare before being recruited into the inaugural Associate Vice President of Development role at Duke University Health System, where he now leads system-wide fundraising strategy and philanthropic infrastructure for one of the nation's premier academic health systems.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I didn't start out chasing a career in fundraising. My first job after college was running youth mentorship programs in Corvallis, Oregon, where I managed a small staff and raised money to keep those programs alive year to year. That work taught me something I've never unlearned: sustained investment in people changes the trajectory of their lives, and philanthropy, done with integrity, is one of the most powerful tools we have to make that investment at scale. When I moved into higher education and then health care advancement, I found the same principle at work, just with higher stakes. A gift can fund the research that leads to a cure, the scholarship that puts a first-generation student through medical school, or the program that helps a grateful patient turn gratitude into something lasting for the next person who walks through the door. Health care philanthropy sits at the intersection of science, compassion, and human potential, and that combination is what keeps me in this work."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I am an Oregonian at heart, but have had the incredible fortune of living in some of the best cities across the county including San Diego, Austin, Charleston, and now Durham, thanks to this amazing career."

Samantha Rogers

Director, Community Engagement

VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation | Vancouver, British Columbia

Reasons why Samantha is one of the forty:

- Samantha Rogers has quickly emerged as a dynamic healthcare philanthropy leader, advancing to Associate Vice President, Community Giving at VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation where she oversees a complex portfolio spanning annual, leadership, and legacy giving, corporate partnerships, events, and other strategic community engagement.

- Under Samantha's leadership, the Community Giving team at VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation achieved 18% year-over-year revenue growth, generating $12.1 million for healthcare research and patient care, while the Leadership Giving program more than doubled in revenue from $600,000 to over $1.35 million in its first year.

- Samantha is recognized for building high-performing teams and sustainable organizations. She increased staff engagement scores from 39% to 73% in just nine months and previously quadrupled revenue as Executive Director of Elements Society, leading extra-provincial program expansion and securing a $1 million partnership to launch a flagship environmental education initiative.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Simply put, it gives me purpose. I'm inspired by the power of philanthropy to accelerate innovation. From advancing breakthroughs in Cancer and Alzheimer's research to addressing historically understudied areas like women's health. I find it incredible that each individual person has the ability to help make that possible through philanthropy."

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

"Rather than a single pivot point, I've relied on two pieces of advice that have helped me navigate many pivotal moments. The first, delivered with equal parts wisdom and humor: sometimes you just need to put on your big girl pants and do it. The second: at some point, you will be offered an opportunity you feel entirely unqualified for, say yes. Trust the people who see potential in you, then accept the groundswell of support that follows. Those lessons have given me the courage to take risks, have brave conversations and step confidently into opportunities."

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

"Getting started can feel uncomfortable, especially when you're learning a complex health-care environment. Focus on progress over perfection. It's easy to find reasons to wait to make an ask, or take on a new challenge. Take the next step, even if it feels uncomfortable. The sooner you start, the sooner you learn."

Chris Ruemenapp, MSOL

Director of Major Gifts

Henry Ford Health | Detroit, Michigan

Reasons why Chris is one of the forty:

- Chris Ruemenapp has rapidly advanced at Henry Ford Health, earning two promotions in just over four years from Senior Development Officer to Lead Development Officer to Director of Major Gifts, where he now oversees major gift fundraising for the cancer service line and two regional hospitals within one of the nation's largest, leading comprehensive healthcare systems. Prior to joining Henry Ford, Chris was a dynamic leader and fundraiser for seven years at Regis University in Denver, Colorado where he consistently led production for all gift officers, took on progressively responsible management roles, and earned his Master's degree in Organizational Leadership.

- Since joining Henry Ford Health in 2022, Chris has secured more than $23 million in philanthropic support, including multiple seven-figure gifts each year. His fundraising success includes a transformational $5 million gift for lung cancer research, a $5M capital gift for the Henry Ford Health + Michigan State University Health Sciences Partnership, a $2.5 million gift for our sickle cell disease program, and several other $1 million gifts supporting cancer care, research, and patient programs.

- Beyond his fundraising results, Chris is recognized as a collaborative, thoughtful and strategic leader who helps foster a culture of professionalism, ethics, collegiality, empathy and excellence within Henry Ford Health's Development Office, while also sharing his expertise through professional development initiatives and volunteer service on the University of Detroit Jesuit High School Advancement Committee. In four and a half years, Chris has undoubtedly helped our team grow. He helps to make us better as an organization, he is a highly supportive, trusted and motivating manager, and we are proud to have him as a leader on our team. We are especially grateful for the profound dedication, passion and commitment that he displays daily toward improving equity, care and outcomes for all those impacted by cancer throughout our southeastern Michigan communities, and beyond.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I grew up in a family of healthcare professionals - with my dad a physician assistant and my mom a nurse - and my now wife of 3 years a long-time pediatric nurse. All throughout my life, I have been inspired by the compassionate impact they've been able to have on other people's lives; and while I am not clinically trained like they are, I've always been driven to make a living doing something that effects positive change and can make a difference for others. Working as a healthcare philanthropy professional empowers me to do just that. It is a privilege to wake up each day and inspire both engagement and hope with members of our community. And ultimately, a career in healthcare philanthropy allows me to serve as a bridge-builder to the deep longing and capacity that countless others also have for improving people's lives."

Brittany Saadiq, CFRE

Executive Director, Principal Gifts

Wellstar Foundation | Marietta, Georgia

Reasons why Brittany is one of the forty:

- Brittany Saadiq has helped drive more than $100 million in philanthropic investments throughout her career, including leading strategy and stewardship for multiple seven-figure gifts, supporting a transformational $50 million naming gift for a children's hospital, and helping complete a $44 million comprehensive campaign for a startup organization in Atlanta.

- Brittany expanded from an individual contributor role to now leading and developing a six-person fundraising team, comprised of two direct reports and four indirect reports, while driving enterprise-wide principal gifts, planned giving, and donor pipeline strategy through mid-level.

- Brittany is deeply committed to advancing the fundraising profession through her leadership with AFP Atlanta, serving as Vice President of Membership and Vice President of Programming, teaching fundraising education courses, mentoring emerging professionals through the Diversity Fellows Program, and earning her CFRE credential in 2021.

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

"A pivotal moment in my career was helping lead a transformative capital campaign. The experience expanded my understanding of what philanthropy can accomplish when people rally around a shared vision. It challenged me to think more strategically, navigate complex relationships, and inspire others to invest in something larger than themselves. That experience continues to shape how I approach leadership, partnership, and philanthropy today."

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

"Success in healthcare philanthropy happens at the intersection of learning and doing. Be curious, ask questions, and immerse yourself in the mission, but don't be afraid to jump in and gain experience. The knowledge and confidence you need are built through both study and action."

A fun fact about yourself:

" I've seen Beyonce in concert eight times!"

Leah Sarango

Executive Director

Capital Care Foundation | Edmonton, Alberta

Reasons why Leah is one of the forty:

- Leah Sarango has dedicated more than 25 years to improving the lives of seniors through CapitalCare, progressing from Recreation Therapy Assistant to Executive Director of the CapitalCare Foundation. Her career reflects a longstanding commitment to enhancing the quality of life for residents in continuing care through philanthropy, community engagement, and compassionate leadership.

- Leah has played a pivotal role in creating and growing some of CapitalCare Foundation's most successful fundraising initiatives, including the Charity Golf Classic and Feast on the Field, which together have generated more than $2 million in support for seniors in care and become signature community events in Edmonton.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, Leah demonstrated exceptional innovation by reimagining major fundraising events and expanding community support programs. She successfully transformed in-person events into virtual experiences that maintained fundraising performance and led the growth of the Christmas Angels program, which has delivered more than 1,100 gifts and over $113,000 in donated support to vulnerable continuing-care residents without family support.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I've always believed that everyone deserves to live a life of dignity and joy no matter life's circumstances. This includes having moments that matter in our lives regardless of age are ability. It's a value that I learned from my mom when she would take me to work with her to a continuing care centre at a young age. Healthcare philanthropy allows me to combine purpose with action by connecting people who want to make a difference with opportunities to improve lives. Supporting seniors and residents in care has shown me that even small acts of generosity can have an extraordinary impact."

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

"Lead with heart, curiosity and relationships. Take time to understand the people you serve, your donors, and your colleagues. The technical skills will come, but genuine connection, empathy, and authenticity are what create your community of giving and purpose. Never lose sight of the human stories behind the mission—they're the reason we do this work and will give you the inspiration and momentum you need."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I've traveled around the world ukrainian dancing with the Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Company."

Rachel Spillane

Director of Major Gifts

Jupiter Medical Center Foundation | Jupiter, Florida

Reasons why Rachel is one of the forty:

- Since joining Jupiter Medical Center Foundation in 2023, Rachel Spillane has raised more than $17 million in philanthropic support, consistently exceeding her fundraising goals and establishing herself as one of the organization's top-performing major gift fundraisers.

- Rachel secured the Foundation's largest blended gift of $5 million in FY25, supporting the expansion of the hospital's Breast and Imaging Center, while also securing a $2.3 million gift for the new 92-bed Patient Care Tower. Her expertise in major, blended, and planned giving has helped transform donor relationships into lasting philanthropic investments.

- Through thoughtful stewardship and strategic donor engagement, Rachel has successfully elevated several long-time supporters from annual gifts of approximately $100,000 to transformational seven-figure commitments, strengthening the Foundation's culture of philanthropy and creating long-term impact for patient care and healthcare innovation.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Becoming a mother changed my perspective on what I wanted from my career. I realized I wanted a career where I could make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Healthcare philanthropy gives me that opportunity every day. I'm fortunate to work at the same hospital where all three of my children were born, giving me firsthand experience with the exceptional care our team provides. That personal connection inspires me to help ensure other families have access to the same quality care."

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

"One of the most important pivot points in my career was realizing where I truly thrived in fundraising. I started my nonprofit career as a Special Events Manager and enjoyed the fast-paced work, but I discovered that the part I loved most was building meaningful relationships with donors. That insight led me to transition into a major gifts role and later into a leadership position overseeing our advisory board. These opportunities allowed me to connect with individuals, understand their motivations, and help them make a lasting impact. Understanding my strengths ultimately shaped the direction of my career."

A fun fact about yourself:

"My family owns and operates a pizzeria, so I spend my time raising dough both for great pizza and great causes."

Emily Steinbach

Senior Development Officer

The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation | Toronto, Ontario

Reasons why Emily is one of the forty:

- Since joining The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation in 2023, Emily Steinbach has rapidly expanded her fundraising portfolio from approximately $800,000 to more than $4.2 million, tripling annual revenue while managing a high volume of major gift activity and building strong partnerships with donors, clinicians, and hospital leaders.

- Emily has secured transformational philanthropic investments, including $1.5 million and $3.5 million major gifts, while consistently advancing complex donor opportunities and helping generate additional revenue through collaboration with corporate partnerships, estate giving, and leadership teams.

- Beyond her fundraising results, Emily has emerged as a strategic leader within the organization, helping shape the Department of Supportive Care's strategic plan, strengthening clinician engagement and grateful patient philanthropy, mentoring new fundraising professionals, and contributing to campaign readiness initiatives that will support long-term philanthropic growth.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Healthcare philanthropy is deeply human. It allows me to build meaningful relationships while contributing to something bigger than any one person, and that is what continues to inspire me."

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

"A pivotal point in my career was moving back to Canada from Australia. It was a transition that pushed me to rebuild, adapt, and be intentional about the kind of work I wanted to pursue. Through that experience, I found my way more deeply into healthcare philanthropy and into work that continues to challenge, motivate, and inspire me."

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

"Listen first and stay curious. There is so much to learn from donors, clinicians, researchers, patients, and colleagues, and taking the time to understand their perspectives is what helps build trust. The work can move quickly, but the strongest relationships are built with patience, thoughtfulness, and care."

Vanessa Stevens

Associate Director, Development

BC Cancer Foundation | Vancouver, British Columbia

Reasons why Vanessa is one of the forty:

- Vanessa Stevens has advanced from Development Officer to Associate Director at the BC Cancer Foundation in just five years, earning increasing leadership responsibilities through a proven track record of fundraising excellence, strategic thinking, and collaboration across complex philanthropic initiatives.

- Vanessa has secured more than $10 million in directly raised and strategically influenced gifts throughout her career, including her first $1 million gift, nearly $3 million raised in FY25, and a FY26 performance that exceeded fundraising targets by 57%, with more than $2.5 million secured and an additional $4.5 million in active proposals.

- As a senior fundraising leader supporting the BC Cancer Foundation's historic $529.6 million Beyond Belief Campaign, Vanessa has helped advance major organizational priorities through clinician-partnered stewardship, donor-advised fund engagement, and regional fundraising strategies, while also co-chairing the Foundation's IDEA Committee to strengthen inclusion, culture, and team effectiveness.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose a career in healthcare philanthropy because a cancer diagnosis is one of the most frightening and life-changing experiences a person and their loved ones can face. It is a privilege to work alongside donors, clinicians, researchers, patients, and families to help make meaningful advances in cancer care possible. Every day, I have the opportunity to contribute to discoveries that are improving outcomes here in British Columbia and around the world. There are few careers where you can help create a future where, if someone you love ever needs cancer care, their journey is met with more hope, more effective treatments, and better outcomes. That possibility is what inspires me every day."

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

"One of the biggest turning points in my career was realizing that growth often comes from stepping into the gaps rather than waiting for opportunities to fall into my lap. By identifying unmet needs within my organization and taking the initiative to address them, I discovered leadership abilities I didn't know I had. Those moments of saying "yes" to challenges beyond my role have shaped my career far more than any job title ever could."

A fun fact about yourself:

"My dog, Monroe, is named after the father of bluegrass, Bill Monroe."

Caitlin Still

Director of Annual Giving

Piedmont Healthcare Foundation | Atlanta, Georgia

Reasons why Caitlin is one of the forty:

- Caitlin Still has been a driving force behind philanthropy at Piedmont Healthcare Foundation, helping secure more than $5 million in gifts over the past five years, including the lead seven-figure gift supporting the Piedmont Transplant Institute Clinic Renovation and playing a key role in the successful completion of Piedmont's historic $150 million capital campaign.

- As Director of Annual Giving, Caitlin has transformed and expanded the Foundation's annual giving program, launching Piedmont's first dedicated digital philanthropy and annual giving fundraising positions. Under her leadership, annual giving has generated an average of $1.03 million annually while engaging more than 4,300 donors each year.

- Caitlin is leading the development of Piedmont's first fully integrated, HIPAA-compliant Grateful Patient Program, creating a new pathway for donor engagement that is projected to identify and cultivate more than 96,000 prospective donors. Her innovative approach is helping build a sustainable pipeline for future philanthropic growth across the health system.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Like many fundraisers, healthcare philanthropy kind of chose me. My early career was shaped at healthcare-adjacent non-profits, and in 2017, at a pivotal moment in my personal life, opportunity knocked, giving me the chance to join Piedmont Healthcare. In 2017, my older sister passed away after a four-year battle with adrenal cancer. During those four years, I witnessed firsthand the impact of philanthropy. She participated in numerous research trials and received cutting-edge, compassionate care that was fueled by philanthropy at an institution dedicated to ending cancer. Because of the care she received — and because of philanthropy — I had more time with my sister. This experience was transformative for me, so when I had the opportunity to join Piedmont, I had no hesitation. I wanted to give others the same gift I received: more time with their loved ones."

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

"Prior to joining Piedmont, I worked for Wholesome Wave Georgia, an amazing nonprofit working in the food access and local food space. We were a small but mighty organization-I was employee number 3 and the only one fully dedicated to fundraising. This role truly shaped how I work today. It taught me the importance of strong organizational operations, building relationships with your program partners, and weaving the fundraising message into every part of your organization's work. It was hard work, but incredibly formative, and it definitely prepared me for the role I'm in today."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I'm a huge Formula 1 fan! I grew up watching Grand Prixes with my family and went to my first F1 race when I was 8!"

Macey Terrell, MPA, CFRM

President & CEO

Navicent Health Foundation | Macon, Georgia

Reasons why Macey is one of the forty:

- As President & CEO of Navicent Health Foundation, Macey Terrell has led the organization through a pivotal period of growth and transformation, strengthening partnerships with Atrium Health Navicent and increasing the Foundation's annual financial commitment to the health system by an additional $2.5 million each year to support critical patient care programs and capital needs.

- Under Macey's leadership, Navicent Health Foundation has awarded more than $1.7 million in grants to community organizations advancing healthcare across central Georgia, while also establishing new scholarship funds to support future healthcare professionals and expanding philanthropic investment in initiatives ranging from cancer care and mental health to primary care access and pediatric health.

- Macey has championed innovative fundraising initiatives that have generated significant support for children's healthcare, including a $618,000 benefit concert with country music star Jason Aldean and the launch of a hospital Facility Dog program that began with a $150,000 grant and is now fully sustained through philanthropy, helping improve the patient experience for children and families. In addition, Macey has just recently secured the largest seven-figure planned gift in the history of the Foundation and local healthcare system.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Healthcare philanthropy is where my career started years ago and where I have had the privilege to continue learning and growing. I am passionate about giving donors an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others through their generosity. Healthcare is a basic need and often lacking for so many in rural communities. The power of philanthropy is incredible when generosity and gratitude is the at the forefront of the work we do every day!"

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

"This is an incredibly rewarding field of work and there are so many smart people that are willing to connect and share best practices and help you grow! Never lose your drive to continue learning and always be open to connecting with your peers in the industry."

A fun fact about yourself:

"I live on a farm and love to ride and compete my horses in my free time!"

David Theby, CFRE

Director of Development – College of Medicine and Life Sciences
University of Toledo Foundation | Toledo, Ohio

Reasons why David is one of the forty:

- David Theby has generated more than $7 million in philanthropic support for education, research, and patient care across the University of Toledo and its healthcare enterprise, including more than $6.1 million for the College of Medicine and Life Sciences and over $2.4 million dedicated to scholarships that expand access for future healthcare professionals.

- David has developed innovative philanthropic programs that have strengthened long-term donor engagement and institutional sustainability. His creation of the M1 Family Open House established a new parent giving pipeline that has generated more than $1.5 million in support, while initiatives such as the Medical Research Society and Honored Alumni Grand Rounds have become enduring components of the College's advancement strategy.

- Recognized as a rising leader in healthcare philanthropy, David was selected for the prestigious Johns Hopkins Medicine Philanthropy Institute, earned his Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) credential, and serves in national leadership roles with the Association of American Medical Colleges, helping shape best practices in advancement across academic medicine.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"I chose to make healthcare philanthropy my career because I wanted to play a role in work that impacts the health of my community, advances research, and trains the next generation of caregivers. These caregivers may one day impact my family, friends, neighbors, and the broader community we all depend on."

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

"I would say it was the first time a donor thanked me for the work we had done to create a scholarship in honor of a loved one. It was incredibly special to witness, for the first time, the passion donors bring to this work and the impact it can have on students when their lives become a little easier. I have been fortunate to experience several more moments like that throughout my career, but I will always remember the first time a donor expressed such sincere gratitude for helping turn their loved one's legacy into meaningful support for students."

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

"The one piece of advice I would offer is to become comfortable with change. In this work, priorities shift, donor interests evolve, schedules change, and flights get canceled. The ability to adapt, stay focused, and continue moving the work forward is essential."

Macy Ware

Director

Children's Miracle Network Carilion Clinic | Roanoke, Virginia

Reasons why Macy is one of the forty:

- Macy Ware has driven remarkable growth as Director of Children's Miracle Network at Carilion Children's, achieving the highest percentage fundraising increase among more than 170 Children's Miracle Network hospitals in the U.S. and Canada in both 2023 and 2025, resulting in a 93% increase in revenue compared to 2022.

- Macy made history at Carilion Clinic by establishing the organization's first-ever endowed chair, securing a $1 million endowment to create the CMN Endowed Chair in Pediatric Medicine, a lasting investment that will advance pediatric care and support future generations of children and families.

- Recognized as a rising leader in healthcare philanthropy, Macy is a sought-after national speaker on fundraising strategy, donor stewardship, and corporate partnerships. Her ability to build high-impact relationships and innovative campaigns has generated sustained six-figure corporate support while expanding the reach and influence of Children's Miracle Network both locally and nationally.

Why did you choose to make healthcare philanthropy your career?

"Healthcare philanthropy found me long before it became my profession. Through the Miss America Organization, I had the opportunity to fundraise and advocate for Children's Miracle Network from a young age. Those experiences showed me that generosity has the power to change a child's life."

"Today, leading Children's Miracle Network at Carilion Children's feels like a full-circle moment. Every day I have the privilege of connecting generous donors with the life-changing care happening inside our children's hospital. Knowing that every dollar raised stays local and directly impacts children and families in our community makes this work incredibly meaningful."

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

"One of the biggest turning points in my career was realizing that fundraising isn't about asking for money, it's about building authentic relationships and connecting people to a mission they want to be part of. Early in my career, I shifted my focus from transactional fundraising to strategic partnerships, stewardship, and long-term engagement. That mindset has helped grow our Children's Miracle Network program significantly while creating lasting relationships with corporate partners, community leaders, and donors who continue investing in children's healthcare. It changed not only how I fundraise, but how I lead."

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 2025 40 Under 40 class selected the members of the 2026 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 2027 40 Under 40 class. Applications open in early 2027 at www.ahp.org/40under40

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