

National Heart News

May 2014

A heartfelt message from Mended Hearts National President, Gus Littlefield.

As we jump into May, there is so much happening with Mended Hearts I don't know where to begin. First and foremost, our 1st ever National Day of Giving campaign is just a few weeks away! I'm excited to hear about the various events chapters are doing, from partnering with the Oakland A's to be their charity of choice for a silent auction to hosting a virtual tea party, the creative juices are flowing! The funds that the national office will receive for this fundraiser will be used for additional educational programs and outreach. Make sure you send us the details of your event so we can help promote it via social media.

Let's not forget our flagship educational event is also around the corner. Valve Repair & Replacement Innovations, Treating Afib and Preventing Strokes, and Angina Awareness are just a few of the sessions you'll learn from during our National Education and Training Conference. Mended Little Hearts has a full agenda too, from their annual Leadership Training and their first ever CHD Symposium being held on June 21. This symposium is open to the public at a cost of \$35, and will feature wonderful speakers from highly regarded children's hospitals in the nation. Don't delay in registering for these events; we are certain this year will provide valuable education to all chapter members!

I'm thrilled that our new Executive Director, Michele Packard-Milam, has been a guest speaker at two of our regional connection meetings - the Northeast and Southwest - with a third coming up in the Southern Region. She has had the opportunity to meet leaders from several chapters, and begin to get a feel for how daily chapter life goes on. It is important to see firsthand how many of the chapters rely on just a few individuals to drive their work forward; and that, as with most organizations, there aren't quite as many volunteers as there are tasks to accomplish. It's a challenge in many associations to recruit and retain members and to keep them engaged, but I know we can find new ways to do it.

I am pleased to report that Mended Hearts won a \$100,000 grant from Amgen to execute a Cholesterol Education Program. The focus of the program is to raise awareness of the need to test for high cholesterol, including familial hypercholesterolemia; communicate existing therapies and new therapies; and to provide education to patients, caregivers and members of the public on the need to effectively treat hypercholesterolemia. The online educational tool kit will be showcased during the 2014 National Education and Training Conference.

Mended Hearts also won a \$100,000 grant from BMS for an AFib/Afib-Related Stroke Education Project. This project is being implemented in partnership with HeartCaring, a program of Spirit Health Group. The goal of this program is to increase awareness to action as consumers learn about atrial fibrillation (AFib) and resulting increased risk of AFib-related

stroke. We will be recruiting 50 chapters to participate in this project by using the new educational tools developed on this topic in their patient visits and chapter meetings. The project will officially launch in September 2014.

In addition to these newly funded programs, Mended Hearts has recently submitted grant requests to Amgen and Novartis for a patient education program on chronic heart failure. We have also partnered with the National Stroke Association on a grant proposal to BMS for a web based health game advancing education about stroke risk reduction in non-valvular atrial fibrillation. In addition to new programs, Mended Hearts routinely seeks support for our core programs.

I'm certain you'll agree that everyone at Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts is focused on growing our organization and reaching new members. We are reaching new heights and may go through some growing pains, but I'm certain the Mended Hearts of the future is an organization everyone will be excited to be a part of!

Heartfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gus Littlefield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "L".

Gus Littlefield, President, MHI