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# The Pulse

Quarterly Newsletter – Winter 2021



## ***Selfless Acts of Kindness Changing Lives - Bringing Hope and Healing***

***A Message from HealthWell Foundation  
President, Krista Zodet***

I believe that I can safely share the sentiments of everyone who is reading this letter when I look forward to a better and healthier 2021. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc on our world, we begin a new year hopeful that new vaccines, vigilance in following safety precautions, and continued support and compassion for those who are struggling through

these unprecedented times will pave the way for a bright 2021.

Although 2020 was a difficult year, we are humbled that, through the continued generosity of our individual and corporate donors, we were fortunate to have exceeded our 2019 revenue. Given the impact that COVID-19 has had - and continues to have - on our economy, our families, and our friends, we do not take this good fortune lightly, but with humble and gracious hearts. As a result of the selfless generosity of our donors, we were able to say, "Yes, we can help you" to a record number of patients in need. During 2020, we were able to provide a financial lifeline to close to 170,000 underinsured American's who had nowhere else to turn, making 2020 a record year and our most impactful since awarding our first grant in 2004.

We are saddened that the non-profit industry has been particularly hard-hit by the pandemic, requiring many organizations to make the heart wrenching decisions to reduce staff or, for some, to close their operations all together. The economy has suffered tremendously, placing extreme financial stress and strain on millions of Americans. It is during times like these that we realize just how much of a difference we can make in the lives of those so negatively impacted by the pandemic. Words cannot express our thankfulness and gratitude to our donors for their selfless generosity and continued commitment which allows us to carry out our mission. On behalf of our Board and my dedicated corporate and contact center teams, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for helping us help so many in need.

As we continue to weather the storm, the teams and I would also like to express a sincere thank you to first responders, health care workers and volunteers who are on the front lines not only during the pandemic, but every day. Thank you for all you do and for all you have sacrificed to keep us safe!

In spite of the difficult circumstances that continue to consume our daily lives, we remained steadfast in identifying and implementing new programs and initiatives to assist those in need of our services. I'm honored that we were fortunate enough to launch or reopen multiple funds, bring on new corporate and contact center team members, and assist a record number of patients during 2020. I'll have more details on these accomplishments later in this issue, so I hope you'll continue to read.

## Foundation Update

We are, indeed, humbled by the outpouring of support we have received from our dedicated individual and corporate donors who so graciously stepped up during this trying time to make sure that those who are in dire need of our services have access to them. As a result of their continued generosity, since 2004, HealthWell has been honored to serve as a safety net across over 80 disease areas for more than 615,000 underinsured patients by providing over \$2.1 billion in grant support to access life-changing medical treatments patients otherwise would not be able to afford.

One thing we've learned through this difficult situation is that people care – they want to help those who are in need. They want to make a positive difference in someone's life. They recognized the undue hardships that many were facing and let us know they would help. In fact, our individual donors grew from 33,000 in 2019 to more than 39,000 in 2020. We were also honored to welcome new corporate donors whose generosity allowed us to launch nine new funds and reopen multiple funds to assist those who had nowhere else to turn.

In December, we received the prestigious rank of #29 on the 2020 *Forbes* list of [The 100 Largest U.S. Charities](#) and were also recognized for our 100% fundraising efficiency. While we are proud to be recognized, we don't do this for the accolades. Our commitment to those we serve and to ensuring that every donated dollar goes to assist those in need is, and will always be, our number one priority.

As mentioned in my previous letters, most of our corporate and contact center teams continue to work remotely. While there haven't been any disruptions in our operations, for many members of our teams, the public health crisis has presented many challenges, especially for those who are caregivers, parents who are not only working full-time, but also assisting children with online school, or facing health issues of their own. The dedication and loyalty of the HealthWell teams is a true testimony to their commitment to assist those in need. From the bottom of my heart, I'd like to thank each and every member of my corporate and contact center teams for your hard work and devotion to helping HealthWell carry out its mission.

## Meet the Team

As we continue to expand our programs to assist even more patients in need, we are honored to be able to strengthen our teams in order to provide the best experience possible for those we serve. Most recently, we were excited to welcome Sam Sappor – Data Analytics Manager to our corporate team. I hope you'll take a moment to learn more about [Sam](#) and join me in welcoming him.

We were also excited to welcome almost 60 new members to our contact center team in 2020! As many of our new members have never met the team in person, I applaud them for their amazing ability to jump right in to make sure that those who reach out to us



have the best customer service possible. Thank you for your valiant efforts and welcome to the team!

## Fund Openings and Updates

2020 was a busy year for HealthWell with the launch of nine new funds to assist patients in a variety of disease areas including adrenal insufficiency, B-cell lymphoma, hyperoxaluria, and sickle cell disease. We were also proud to open two funds to assist those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our COVID-19 Ancillary Costs Fund opened in mid-March to assist at risk or quarantined patients with reimbursement costs for delivered food and medication, and transportation costs to manage COVID-19, while maintaining social distancing protocols, including drive-thru testing, delivery of test kits and future treatments.

Shortly after opening the fund, we recognized that we could do more to lend a helping hand to those impacted by the pandemic and opened our second COVID-19 fund to provide insurance premium assistance to workers who had been laid off or furloughed as a result of the public health crisis. Through our [COVID-19 Insurance Premium Payment Assistance Fund](#), we are able to provide up to \$6,000 in financial assistance for 3 months following grant approval to eligible households where the policyholder or covered member of the policy has a diagnosis of cancer or chronic illness and is in active treatment where disruption of therapy could cause serious, potentially life-threatening, consequences for the patient.

It warms my heart to share that through these unique, HealthWell-sponsored COVID-19 relief funds, we were able to provide a financial lifeline to more than 9,000 families who otherwise would have forgone critical, possibly lifesaving, medical treatments and services.

In addition, and thanks to our dedicated donors, in 2020 we were thrilled to reopen funds to assist people living with multiple sclerosis, SLE (lupus), ovarian cancer, and pulmonary fibrosis.

We hit the ground running this year and were excited to launch our [Pulmonary Hypertension Fund](#) in early January. Through the fund, HealthWell is able to provide up to \$10,000 in medication copayment or insurance premium assistance to eligible Medicare patients living with Pulmonary Hypertension.

To learn more about our funds and how we may be of assistance, visit our [Disease Funds](#) page. I look forward to sharing more details about our 2020 efforts and achievements in our Year-In-Review, which will be available in the coming months.

## Resources from Our Valued Alliance Partners

Since my last letter, we continued our outreach to non-profit organizations to help us spread the word about our programs, cross refer patients, and promote special initiatives within disease specific communities. I'm proud to welcome our newest partner, the Lupus Foundation of America (LFA), who played a pivotal role in spreading the word about the reopening of our SLE Fund. Through the new partnership, HealthWell and LFA will work together to develop strategies and programs to assist the lupus community. The combined strengths of our

organizations will allow us to provide essential financial and educational resources to those living with lupus. To learn more about LFA, visit: [www.lupus.org](http://www.lupus.org).

Most recently, we were honored to join forces with the Pulmonary Hypertension Association (PHA) to help us spread the news about our new Pulmonary Hypertension Fund to PH community members to assist more people living with this potentially deadly disease. Visit [PHAssociation.org](http://PHAssociation.org) to learn more about their initiatives and resources.

## Making a Difference – Not Just A 9 to 5 Job

So, you may have noticed that my photo is a little different in this issue. Since going into lockdown in March of 2020, I had been toying with the idea of cutting and donating my hair. By the end of 2020, after many months working remotely, isolating with my immediate family, and watching the unfolding social turmoil, like so many, I had reached the end of my rope and needed a reset from the resulting anxiety and depression.

As a first, small step, with the encouragement of my amazing son, and the support of my wonderful daughter and husband, I did it! On New Year's Day, I cut and clipped my hair and was able to donate four 17" ponies to [Locks of Love](http://Locks of Love). It certainly helped make "this year" feel different than "last year" and I hope someone else can get the same feeling as they work through their difficult cancer journey.

My heart goes out to everyone during these difficult times and I encourage all of us to try and find a way to re-set in 2021 that helps others – every little bit helps both the giver and the receiver!

I wanted to add another quick note and word of thanks to our corporate team for their participation in the 2020 Marines Toys for Tots campaign. Even though we were not physically in the office to contribute to the donation box, the team went to heroic measures to make sure we did our part. I'm so proud to say that we filled the box and dropped off dozens of new toys for our local drive. Thank you all for going the extra mile to make the holidays a little happier for children in need.



Brian Katz, HealthWell Foundation  
Manager, Development & Individual Giving

## Your Support is More Critical Than Ever

As the need for our services continues to grow, your support of our mission is more critical than ever. Without the support of individual and corporate donors like you, we would not be able to provide a financial lifeline to the thousands of patients who reach out to us each year to help with the cost of life-changing medical treatments. During these challenging times, and always, HealthWell stands by its commitment to ensure that no one goes without critical, often lifesaving, medical treatments simply because they can't afford them. We can't do this without you! 100% of your tax-deductible donation will be put to work immediately to assist people living with chronic, life-altering, illnesses.

There are many ways you can support our life-changing work!

1. Create a Facebook [fundraiser](#) to commemorate a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion.
2. Make a tax-deductible [contribution](#).
3. [Donate](#) in the name of a friend or loved one.
4. Include the HealthWell Foundation in your [estate plans](#).
5. Spread the word about the important work we do by [sharing](#) your HealthWell story.

Can't make a financial contribution? You can help by spreading the word about the life-changing work we do. Connect with us through our social communities!



Helping us spread the word is also a critical and valued contribution to the HealthWell Foundation. Thank you for helping us help others in any way you can!

*May 2021 bring hope, peace and good health to you and yours.  
The HealthWell Team*

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