



Suncoast women honored by American Heart Association

The new initiative, Women of Impact honors women changemakers, dedicated to their communities and raising awareness of women's No.1 health risk, heart disease

Sarasota, FL. May 19, 2021 — For decades, communities across America have joined together to bring awareness to our nation's number one killer, heart disease. Despite the devastating toll of COVID-19, heart disease remains the #1 cause of death in the U.S and worldwide. In fact, heart disease claims more women's lives than all forms of cancer combined. One in three women is dying from heart disease today, and the truth is, one is too many.

The American Heart Association's Woman of Impact Campaign advocates for more research and swifter action for women's heart health; to help all women take charge of their health. After all, 80% of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education & action.

Every year, a select group of individuals is nominated to be a part of this initiative because of their passion and drive to make a difference here in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. The Suncoast American Heart Association is honoring five local women (Beth Nusman, Debbie Plotts, Jennifer Martinez, Kristie Kindstrom and Allyssa Tobitt) who have joined this movement and are dedicated to raising awareness and making a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of our community.

"Over the past couple of weeks, we have seen our nominees leverage their networks to inspire change among our community. I am truly honored to be able to work alongside these women and celebrate their accomplishments" said Amanda Wagner, Regional Director of the Suncoast American Heart Association.

The American Heart Association recently noted an alarming decline in awareness that cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of women –and too many women, particularly our youngest most diverse women, remain unaware. Research shows heart attacks are on the rise in younger women and new data from a study published in *Circulation* suggests younger generations of women, Gen Z and Millennials, are less likely to be aware of their greatest health threat, including knowing the warning signs of heart attacks and strokes [1]. That's why it's important for all women to take charge of their heart health and encourage others to do the same.

“2020 was a year like no other, but we’re still standing. When women come together, there is nothing we can’t achieve,” said Amanda Wagner, Regional Director of the Suncoast American Heart Association.

To learn more about the Women of Impact initiative and get involved in the Suncoast Division of the American Heart Association, contact Amanda.Wagner@Heart.org.

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About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public’s health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for nearly a century. Connect with us on heart.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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[1] Arora S, Stouffer GA, Kucharska-Newton AM, et al. *Circulation*. 2019;139:1047–1056. Twenty Year Trends and Sex Differences in Young Adults Hospitalized with Acute Myocardial Infarction: The ARIC Community Surveillance Study. <https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.118.037137> *Circulation* Published Feb. 19, 2019.