

Heart N Hands Launches Houston Affiliate, Continues to Promote Better Heart Health in Young Women

The New Orleans nonprofit is celebrating the opening of their Houston chapter with the intention of ongoing national expansion.

HOUSTON , TEXAS, USA, May 3, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The CDC reports that heart disease is "the leading cause of death for women in the United States." About 1 in every 5 deaths among women results from heart disease. With this statistic in mind, Heart N Hands has [made it their mission to educate and raise awareness](#) of heart disease prevention and provide heart-healthy education to young women ages 10-18.

Heart N Hands has its beginnings as a Louisiana nonprofit organization founded in 2014 by heart disease survivor, Essence Harris Banks. Since then, the nonprofit has expanded its reach nationally to affiliate chapters in Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee, and is proud to announce its newest affiliate in Houston, Texas. Through their Houston outreach, Heart N Hands hopes to continue its mission of educating over 6500 women and their families in partnership with the American Heart Association.

Banks is thrilled to launch the Houston affiliate office and expand Heart N Hand's reach and brand. Stacy Halley, Jeannette Woodley, LaTonya White, and LaKeidru Blaylock, join Banks in her mission and dedication as heart disease has affected each of their lives.



Heart N Hands hosts several fitness events each year and provides heart related sessions with community partners and organizations focused on the health and wellness of their community.

Stacy Halley, an advisory council member of [Heart N Hands-Houston](#), is thrilled about the Houston

launch: "Expanding Heart N Hands to Houston will continue the mission to educate young girls and women specifically here in the Gulf Coast Region about heart health and heart disease prevention. Houston and surrounding areas have so many opportunities for Heart N Hands to

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Stacy Halley, Director of Heart N Hands Houston

truly make an impact, and I’m honored to be an ambassador in this endeavor." Halley adds, "I look forward to expanding existing relationships with agencies like American Heart Association, Girls Scouts, and Girls on the Run in addition to building new partnerships in the Houston area with our universities and community colleges."

After experiencing a massive heart attack three days after giving birth to her daughter, Jeannette Woodley underwent a triple bypass open heart surgery. She has since decided to dedicate her time to advocate and help spread heart disease awareness. "My mission in life is to leave a legacy

and to advocate for my daughter and other girls who will one day become a part of the statistics of heart disease," she says.

Heart Disease is no stranger to LaTonya White's family. Her mother suffered a mild heart attack many years ago and she is blessed to live and tell about it today. She intends to use her background as an educator and lead school counselor in the Houston area, to further the mission of Heart N Hands. "I am dedicated to helping our young women be healthy and strong. Our goal is to teach them to take care of their bodies as well as to expand their minds into believing they can do anything they set out to do", she says.

With twenty years experience in healthcare, LaKeidru Blaylock has always been an advocate for ensuring those in marginalized and economically disadvantaged communities are educated and empowered with information to assist them in making better healthcare decisions. Her goal is to "build a strong network of resources to allow us the voice, energy and resources to make the change we want to see".

One of the nonprofit's trademark events is the "Running for Heart 5K," which will be hosted in New Orleans this year on Saturday, September 17. The run serves as a great example of heart-healthy exercise and as an awareness campaign fueled by the success stories of its participants on social media. In addition to the annual run, Heart N Hands regularly hosts fitness and wellness sessions full of activities to promote heart health, including Zumba, yoga, high-intensity interval training, and mindfulness meditation. Their partnership with No Kid Hungry led to the creation of "Fruit Friday," which provided over 400 area children in need with fresh fruit and a

dose of heart health education. The nonprofit has also partnered with Girl Scouts Louisiana East to design and offer a "Love Your Heart" patch that over 100 scouts have earned.

The organization aims to promote better heart health in women through its comprehensive, interactive sessions where young women can learn more about taking care of the heart and the specific risk factors for women. These sessions teach the importance of daily physical activity combined with heart-healthy cooking demos, grocery store tours, and food label education. CPR training is also a staple of this preventative approach to heart health and discussion on the cardiac impact of smoking, drinking alcohol, and other substance abuse. Heart N Hands has trained over 300 girls in hands-only CPR through their initiatives.

In February, Heart N Hands celebrated American Heart Month with its "Know Your Four" campaign, intended to educate on heart disease's four major risk factors. The nonprofit also provides scholarship fund awards to graduating High School Seniors in each chapter's area.

The organization says it will continue to expand and open affiliate chapters nationwide, with the launch of a chapter in Atlanta not too far into the future. Banks, a heart disease survivor of 16 years, founded Heart N Hands when she realized heart disease could affect anyone. "I thought the diagnosis of heart disease was impossible since I did not have any risk factors. I'm not



Heart N Hands' mission is to empower, educate and raise awareness of heart health, heart disease prevention, provide heart health education, integrate physical fitness/exercise/sport activities and encourage healthy lifestyle choices for young girls ages 10-18.



Over 100 Girl Scouts from Girl Scouts Louisiana East have earned their "Love Your Heart" patch, inspired by Heart N Hands.

overweight, I don't smoke and don't have any of the typical risk factors," Banks said. "That's when I decided to educate young women, especially young girls. 80% of heart disease is preventable. That's why I tell people if you feel something is wrong, get it checked out."

Board member Dr. Tripti Gupta stressed the importance of Heart N Hands' work, saying, "Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and it is only with prevention, education, and guidance that this can be changed in the future. Organized activities such as 5K run, yoga, Boot Camp classes, etc. encourage girls to participate with their families in physical fitness while educational sessions at schools help them learn how to identify risk factors, signs of heart disease, and stroke. For me, being a part of Heart N Hands is not only a fulfilling way to give back to society but also a way to invest in the future of our country's health."

Heart N Hands is a nonprofit organization based in New Orleans, Louisiana, whose mission is to spread heart health awareness, prevention, and education for young girls in our community. For more information, you can visit

<https://www.heartnhands.org/>.

Essence Banks
Heart N Hands

This story can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/570322502>

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Director of Houston's Heart N Hands, participating in a Heart N Hands 5K Race



Heart N Hands promotes heart health awareness1

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