

President of Heart N Hands, Essence Harris Banks, Honored as one of New Orleans Magazine 's Activists of the Year

In her 20th year as a heart disease survivor and 10th year as Heart N Hands' President, Banks has educated 6,500 girls on heart health and disease prevention.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES, December 12, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Heart N Hands](#) is pleased to announce that its Founder and President, Essence Harris Banks, was honored as one of New Orleans Magazine's 2023 Activists of the Year. The nonprofit organization focuses on increasing awareness and educating young girls about heart disease prevention in the community.

Heart N Hands aims to EMPOWER, EDUCATE, and RAISE AWARENESS of heart health and heart disease prevention, provide heart health education, integrate physical

fitness/exercise/sports activities, and encourage good healthy choices. Heart N Hands promotes physical activity, heart-healthy eating, and heart-healthy habits. "Our GOAL is to achieve improved heart health and increased education and awareness in young girls with a focus on heart disease prevention - the no. 1 killer of women," said Banks.

In 2004, at the age of 30, Essence Harris Banks discovered she had a coronary artery disease following a diagnosis requiring three emergency stents. While Bank's family had a history of heart disease risk factors, "No one had what I did," she says. Coronary artery disease is caused by plaque buildup in the wall of the arteries that supply blood to the heart. While she was in the hospital recovering, Banks promised her mother that she would overcome heart disease and devote herself to bringing awareness about it to young women. In her 20th year as a heart



Essence Harris Banks, Founder and President of Heart N Hands.

disease survivor and 10th year as the President of Heart N Hands, she has educated over 6,500 girls on heart disease prevention.

Banks founded Heart N Hands in 2014 to bring awareness to her community, turn her heart journey into a success story, and inform others about cardiovascular disease and its impact. "I want to share my story and message with as many women and girls as possible to create stronger communities," she says.

Heart N Hands specifically focuses on educating girls 10-18 years old because if the girls are educated at an early age, this will inevitably decrease the number of women with heart disease. "These young ladies are soon-to-be the CEOs of the family. If you raise awareness during this age, when they are older or become family caregivers, they can make heart-healthy decisions and be equipped to create generational health," Banks says.



Heart N Hand's mission is to empower, educate and raise awareness of heart health and heart disease prevention.

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*Essence Harris Banks,
Founder and President of
Heart N Hands.*

Before starting Heart N Hands, Banks studied dance at Alvin Ailey in New York. When she returned to New Orleans, she began her career at Entergy in Human Resources and then in the hospitality industry. First, she was a part of Starwood Hotels & Resorts' executive team and then worked in the Marriott's Corporate Global Quality Division for Luxury Brands. Most recently, she was an integral part of the opening team of the Four Seasons New Orleans Hotel.

Banks has been featured in The Times Picayune/NOLA.com (New Orleans), Woman's Day Magazine, SELF Magazine, Shape Magazine, Today Show, WWL TV, several Clear

Channel Radio Stations, American Heart Association National Awareness Campaigns, WomenHeart Champion & Spokeswoman, to name a few. She has also received the Champion for Change in Healthcare Award from the Crescent City Chapter (LA) of Links, Inc, City Business

Woman of the Year in 2017 and 2020. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the American Heart Association Circle of Red, a board member of Friends of Lafitte Greenway, a past board member of Dress for Success, a past board member of Emerging Philanthropists of New Orleans, and was the past treasurer for Luke's House Clinic.

About Heart N Hands

Heart N Hands is a Louisiana nonprofit 501c3 organization founded in 2014 by heart disease survivor Essence Harris Banks. The organization's mission is to spread heart health awareness,

prevention, and education for young girls. Since its start in New Orleans, Louisiana, the nonprofit has expanded its reach nationally to affiliate chapters in Nashville, TN, Memphis, TN, and Houston, TX. It is proud to announce its newest affiliate in Atlanta, GA, led by Advisory Council Leader JoiAnquli Scott (College Junior at Clark Atlanta University). Heart N Hands hopes to continue its mission of educating thousands of women and their families through its multiple affiliates. For more information on the Heart N Hands ATLANTA, visit <https://www.heartnhands.org/hnh-atlanta.html>. Heart N Hands has plans to expand to Austin and Dallas, Texas, in 2024. For more information, you can visit <https://www.heartnhands.org/>.



Heart N Hands Annual "Running for the HEART" 5K | 10K Run/Walk/Bike Race.

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