

GRANT  
MAKERS  
IN  
HEALTH



YEAR IN REVIEW

2024

# CONTENTS

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| Letter from the President and CEO ..... | 3  |
| 2024 Overview .....                     | 4  |
| Strategic Plan Update .....             | 11 |
| 2025: A Look Ahead .....                | 22 |
| About Grantmakers In Health .....       | 23 |



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

# Steady Leadership in a Time of Change

Grantmakers In Health (GIH) had a busy and productive 2024 as we implemented many elements of our [strategic plan](#) and leaned into our [policy and advocacy priorities](#) in support of our vision of advancing better health for all through better philanthropy. We worked closely with funders and other partners to strengthen collaborations and are well positioned to address the challenges that lie ahead in 2025.

As part of our partner-centric approach, we started the year by conducting a Funding Partner engagement survey to gather valuable feedback to inform our work and address Funding Partner needs. We applied the lessons learned from the survey into our work—from the types of programming and products we offer to how we bring health funders together.

We also deepened our partnerships with other philanthropy-serving organizations. Our collaboration with Grantmakers In Aging (GIA) in support of the reauthorization of the [Older Americans Act \(OAA\)](#) was at the center of our policy and advocacy efforts. Working hand in glove with our GIA colleagues, we brought philanthropy together in support of this essential legislation. The Senate ultimately passed the reauthorization in December; however the House did not put it to a vote before the end of Congress. We will continue our efforts on behalf of the OAA in the new Congress in 2025.

Other collaborations with philanthropy serving organizations included an exploration of the intersection between health and wealth with Asset Funders Network at our respective conferences and a special funders salon at the GIH Annual Conference with Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement (PACE) that explored what democracy means and how funders can broadly support democratic processes.

The [GIH Annual Conference on Health Philanthropy](#) in Portland, Oregon, *Bold Results Through Courageous Action*, was our largest in-person event in many years, bringing together over 600 attendees to explore how having the courage to invest in innovative new ideas and approaches can return considerable dividends for improving health. The [Health Policy Exchange](#), our

reimagined Fall Forum, was also similarly successful, convening over 150 policy-focused funders and stakeholders in Washington, DC, just following the 2024 presidential election to discuss how the new administration might change the policy landscape. The longstanding Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership Meeting, co-sponsored by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the National Rural Health Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office of Rural Health, welcomed foundations, federal entities, and other partners to Bethesda, Maryland, to discuss how our combined efforts might produce better health outcomes for rural communities. We also launched new [online community spaces](#) for our Communications and Firearm Violence Prevention Learning Communities with the hopes of expanding them to include other priority topics in the future.

With a new presidential administration taking office, 2025 will be a time of great transition for those of us working to advance health and well-being. I want to reiterate GIH's commitment to our core goal of ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve their highest level of health. We have built a durable infrastructure to support health philanthropy and further its voice and influence in support of better health for all, and we look forward to working with funders to identify ways to collaborate, change systems that contribute to poor outcomes, and address the challenges that lie ahead.

**SINCERELY,**



Cara V. James  
President and CEO  
Grantmakers In Health





# OVERVIEW

## 2024 Overview

Grantmakers In Health (GIH) supports health funders of all sizes and interests through education, networking, and leadership. We convene the field of health philanthropy through our Annual Conference on Health Philanthropy, Health Policy Exchange conference, webinars, and other meetings, reaching over 2,000 event attendees in 2024.

GIH expands the health philanthropy knowledge base through publications, newsletters, surveys, reports, and articles; advocates for public policy outcomes related to health philanthropy's priorities; helps CEOs and foundation executives learn and connect through invitation-only CEO events; hosts learning communities centered around key areas of interest; invests in the next generation of philanthropic leaders through the Terrance Keenan Institute and other workshops and professional development opportunities; and offers direct one-on-one strategic guidance.

Our team is comprised of public health and health philanthropy experts who serve as an essential resource to health funders, others working to improve health in the United States, and the public. The following is an overview of GIH's work throughout the year.

### Policy and Advocacy

In 2024, GIH ramped up our policy and advocacy work, fulfilling the promise set out by the leadership and influence pillar of our strategic plan to take a

more active role in defining the key issues that will advance better health for all and providing health philanthropy with the thought leadership and programming to create lasting impact by influencing advocacy, policy, and funding in targeted areas.

We were excited by the positive response to our [Health Policy Update](#) newsletter—produced in partnership with Trust for America's Health—when it launched in late 2023 and built on that momentum this year to provide Funding Partners with a comprehensive roundup of health policy news from both the administration and the Hill. Working with Leavitt Partners, a leading bipartisan health care policy and marketing consulting firm, we will expand the Health Policy Update in 2025 to provide additional analysis on health policy in Washington, DC. Our goal is to provide Funding Partners with high quality policy information that they can use in developing their own policy and advocacy strategies without needing to duplicate efforts by engaging outside consultants.

Our most significant foray into the policy space was our [partnership](#) with Grantmakers In Aging (GIA) to advocate for the reauthorization of the [Older Americans Act \(OAA\)](#). First signed into law in 1965, the OAA provides critical services that address the social drivers of health for older adults such as nutrition, transportation, senior centers, elder rights protections, caregiver support, and health promotion. Working closely with GIA, we issued [recommendations](#) for the OAA, [convened GIH Funding Partners and GIA](#)



[members](#) throughout the year to discuss [opportunities to engage](#) on the reauthorization, brought funders together in conversation about public-private collaboration at the National Council on Aging's [Age + Action conference](#), and [made the case](#) for OAA renewal in the media, among other efforts. Despite our hard work, the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2024 did not pass. Regardless, we remain committed to advocating for a reauthorization in 2025.

Policymakers and advocates appreciated the philanthropic sector's activation around the OAA and were influenced by our perspective. In addition to responding to the bipartisan Senate request for feedback on the draft legislation, GIA and GIH responded to requests for technical assistance from multiple congressional offices on both sides of the aisle, focusing on OAA reauthorization and other aging-focused legislation. We also worked together to educate funders on ways to engage in the policy process.

Other policy and advocacy priorities in 2024 included continued support for the reauthorization of the Farm Bill, the launch of our ballot initiative process work, and GIH signing an organizational commitment to the [Thrive Through Civic Health: We Will Vote Initiative](#).

## Learning Communities

Our Funding Partners have indicated that they want more opportunities for networking and engagement on the issues that matter most to them. As a result, [GIH Learning Communities](#), which provide ongoing opportunities for sharing, networking, and collaborating around specific topics or functions in health philanthropy, were a significant priority in 2024. Each Learning Community uses its own mix of webinars, in-person meetings, resource sharing, and surveys to provide an in-depth look at its subject.

We are currently hosting four communities:

- CEO Working Group
- Communications Learning Community
- Firearm Violence Prevention Learning Community
- Policy Staff Roundtable

In late 2024, we launched a new [community platform](#) to encourage direct engagement between Funding Partners. It began as a pilot for the



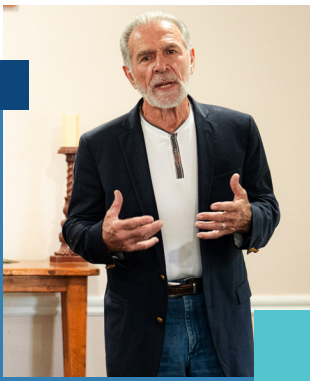
Communications and Firearm Violence Prevention Learning Communities, and we will expand the platform for other communities in 2025, including one for our long-standing CEO working group.

## Terrance Keenan Institute

The [Terrance Keenan Institute for Emerging Leaders in Health Philanthropy](#) is a biennial professional leadership development opportunity for our field's next-generation leaders. Fellows spend two days with seasoned leaders from the field of health philanthropy who share their expertise and offer insights and advice. The institute focuses on leadership development, exploration of critical issues facing philanthropy, and building collegial connections that can endure throughout fellows' careers. It features a retreat-like format that includes a mix of structured discussions and unstructured networking.

The 2024 class of Terrance Keenan Institute Fellows met in Washington, DC, for two days in early October. They used the Drive, Influence, Support, and Clarity (DiSC) behavioral self-assessment tool to better understand themselves as leaders, received coaching and training from executives in philanthropy, and learned how they can lead systemic change in their organizations.





This year's [Terrance Keenan Institute Fellows](#) are:

- **Jordan Bellassai**, *Program Officer*, Health Foundation for Western & Central New York
- **Rebeckah Berry**, *Grant Program Director*, The Roundhouse Foundation
- **Monica Beltran**, *Program Officer*, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- **Karen Ben-Moshe**, *Policy Program Officer*, Blue Shield of California Foundation
- **Mason Chiang**, *Associate Director*, The Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation
- **Brittney Daniel**, *Senior Health Program Officer*, California Community Foundation
- **Jan Delatorre**, *Senior Program Officer*, Michigan Health Endowment Fund
- **Megan Folkerth**, *Program Director of Health Policy and Systems*, Interact for Health
- **Courtney Frost**, *Senior Program Officer*, Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health
- **Brittany Giles-Cantrell**, *Program Director*, de Beaumont Foundation
- **Sarah Hashmall**, *Program Officer*, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
- **Jennifer Holland**, *Policy & Community Engagement Director*, Horizon Foundation
- **McClain Bryant Macklin**, *Vice President of Policy and Impact*, Health Forward Foundation
- **Christine Marcos**, *Senior Program Officer*, Moses Taylor Foundation
- **Rachel Powell**, *Director, Health Equity & Strategy Office*, CDC Foundation
- **Liza Primeau**, *Managing Director of Programs*, Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- **Danielle Reed**, *Director of Data and Impact*, Mat-Su Health Foundation

- **Krista Scott**, *Senior Program Officer*, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- **Natalia Valenzuela Swanson**, *Senior Program Director*, Mary Black Foundation
- **Chloe Wiley**, *Initiatives Manager*, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation
- **Katherine Wright**, *Deputy Director, Strategic Initiatives*, The Rippel Foundation

## In-Person Meetings

GIH's in-person meetings saw increased excitement and attendee growth in 2024. With over 600 attendees, the [GIH Annual Conference on Health Philanthropy](#), *Bold Results Through Courageous Action*, was our largest in-person event since 2019. The conference highlighted the innovative approaches funders and grantees are taking to address some of the most pressing health challenges of our times, from firearm violence prevention to community-driven health solutions to strengthening the well-being of children and young people. We also brought attendees on site visits that showcased local approaches to difficult health challenges and offered a focused post-conference session on climate change and health.

Immediately following the GIH Annual Conference was the Birth Equity Funders Summit in Chicago, Illinois. Co-hosted by bi3, March of Dimes, Pritzker Children's Initiative, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Irving Harris Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, the summit brought funders together to align strategies for advancing equitable birth outcomes and improving maternal health.

The GIH Fall Forum, our annual fall policy conference, was reimaged as the [GIH Health Policy Exchange](#),

sharpening its purpose as GIH's flagship policy-focused event. This year's theme—*Beyond the Ballot: Advancing Policy in a New Administration*—served as a springboard for health funders to reflect on how the new presidential administration will affect health policy and philanthropy's investments in better health.

We also continued our long commitment to co-hosting the [Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership Meeting](#) with our colleagues at the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the National Rural Health Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office of Rural Health. Attendees from communities across the country joined us to delve into the meeting's theme, *Thinking Anew: Innovative Approaches to Advance Rural Health*. As with the annual conference and Health Policy Exchange, the Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership Meeting saw a large increase in attendance over previous years, as well as a large number of new funders in attendance.

The following is a full list of GIH's in-person meetings:

- [Driving Change through Public-Private Collaboration at Age + Action 2024](#)  
Co-hosted by Grantmaking In Aging  
May 7 | Age + Action Conference, Arlington, VA
- [GIH Annual Conference on Health Philanthropy](#), *Bold Results Through Courageous Action*  
June 4 – 6 | Portland, OR
- [Birth Equity Funders Summit](#), *Aligning Strategies to Advance Equitable Birth Outcomes*  
Co-hosted by bi3, March of Dimes, Pritzker Children's Initiative, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Irving Harris Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois  
June 11 – 13 | Chicago, IL
- [Improving the Lives of Children and Families —The Hidden Gem of the Tax Code](#)  
Co-hosted by Grantmakers in Health, Children, Youth and Family Funders Roundtable, Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, Economic Opportunity Funders, Funders Together to End Homelessness, and Funders for Maternal Mental Health  
September 5 | 2024 Prosperity Summit, National Harbor, MD
- [Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership Meeting](#), *Thinking Anew: Innovative Approaches to Advance Rural Health*  
Co-sponsored by Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the National Rural Health Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office of Rural Health  
October 24 – 25 | Bethesda, MD
- Mapping the Terrain: Philanthropy's Evolving Approaches to Health Equity  
October 29, 2024 | APHA 2024 Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN
- [Health Policy Exchange](#), *Beyond the Ballot: Advancing Policy in a New Administration*  
November 11 – 13 | Washington, DC





## Webinars and Virtual Convenings

In addition to our in-person events, GIH organized or co-sponsored 36 webinars, roundtable discussions, working groups, and other virtual convenings covering a range of topics such as the LGBTQ+ community and the U.S. census, the impact of the post-Chevron legal regime, the role of philanthropy in furthering health equity, a series of workshops with the Tulane University Ceilia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine focused on health equity, and many more. These online meetings offer deep dives into their subject areas, provide access to experts both inside and outside of health philanthropy, and serve as networking opportunities.

Webinar and virtual convenings highlights include:

- [The Role Community Health Workers Can Play to Improve Maternal Mental Health](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Funders for Maternal Mental Health*  
January 18
- [Firearm Violence Prevention Learning Community: Evidence-based Prevention Strategies](#)  
February 16
- [State-based Advocacy for the Public's Health](#)  
March 14

- [Advocacy for the Older Americans Act Reauthorization: What Can My 501c 3 Foundation Do?](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Grantmakers In Aging*  
April 4
- [Responsible and Equitable Use of Artificial Intelligence by Foundations](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Technology Association of Grantmakers*  
April 9
- [One Year Later: Medicaid Enrollment After the End of the Public Health Emergency](#)  
May 14
- [Investing in Inclusion: The LGBTQ+ Community & the Census](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Census Equity Initiative*  
June 13
- [How Expanding School-Based Medicaid Can Support Youth Mental Health & Well-Being](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Grantmakers for Thriving Youth, Grantmakers for Education, and Youth Transition Funders Group*  
July 27
- [Better Health for All: The Role of Philanthropy in Advancing Health Equity \(Four-Part Online Workshop Series\)](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Partners for Advancing Health Equity (P4HE Collaborative)*  
September 18 – October 23
- [Press Forward: Revitalizing Local Journalism and Restoring Trust in Media](#)  
September 23
- [Connecting Pediatricians, Families, and Schools for Thriving Youth](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Grantmakers for Thriving Youth*  
October 23
- [Bridging Health Equity in Indian Country: Navigating the Public Health Crisis](#)  
*Co-sponsored by Native Americans In Philanthropy*  
November 8
- [Medicaid: Protect and Defend](#)  
*Co-sponsored by the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative*  
December 5



## Reports, Surveys, and Publications

GIH produces original [reports, surveys, and other publications](#) on important health philanthropy issues every year. These publications help Funding Partners understand critical health issues and develop a deep understanding of the current state of policy and program implementation.

Publication highlights include:

- [2024 Survey Summary: Health Workforce Strategies](#)  
April 10
- [Issue Focus: Advancing Health and Creating Lasting Impact: MacKenzie Scott's Grants to Health Foundations](#)  
April 15
- [Fact Sheet: Five Ways Congress Can Strengthen the Older Americans Act, and What Philanthropy Can Do](#)  
June 4
- [Spotlight: Celebrating Civic Health Month!](#)  
August 19
- [Spotlight: Reflections and Strategies on Tax Equity](#)  
September 16
- [Report: Diversity in the Leadership, Staff, and Boards of Health Philanthropy](#)  
October 8

## GIH Bulletin

The monthly GIH Bulletin newsletter delivers the latest news and commentary from the field of health philanthropy, including articles on timely topics and early information on grants and awards, reports, transitions, and requests for proposals. [Past issues are available on our website.](#)

## Views from the Field

As part of the GIH Bulletin, we invite Funding Partners; Philanthropy Support Partners; grantees; federal, state, and local government officials; and other experts to contribute to our ongoing [Views from the Field](#) series. These articles provide detailed learnings from on-the-ground work to help shape philanthropy's investments in health; examine critical issues like health equity, social justice, and climate change; explore strategies for community engagement and empowerment; and serve as a forum for funders to discuss topics seen as critical to the field's shared goal of achieving better health for all. GIH also conducts in-depth Views from the Field interviews with funders and grantees about their work, providing another format for learning and reflection.

Views from the Field highlights include:

- [A Compass of Indispensable Leadership Attributes to Guide Health Philanthropy](#)  
**Havaca Ganguly, MPA**, Executive Director, The Middendorf Foundation  
**Jennifer Wright, MPH**, Senior Program Officer, The California Wellness Foundation  
**Rabera, MA**, Program Lead for Health Justice Organizing & Advocacy, Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut  
**Erica Browne, DrPH**, Senior Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation  
January 26
- [Leading Boldly, Building Trust: Lessons from a Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process](#)  
**Kerry Darragh**, Senior Communications Officer, The Horizon Foundation  
**Nikki Highsmith Vernick**, President and CEO, The Horizon Foundation  
March 25
- [Q&A: Exploring the Tides Foundation's Efforts to Support Civic Engagement and Protect Reproductive Health](#)  
**Beth Huang**, Program Officer, Civic Engagement and Democracy, Tides Foundation  
April 15



- [How Philanthropy Can Support Los Angeles Homeless Providers Facing Challenges Accessing California Housing Services](#)  
**Brittney Daniel**, *Health Program Officer*, California Community Foundation  
**Alex Chan**, *Director*, Nonprofit Finance Fund  
**Eskedar Getahun**, *Consultant*, Nonprofit Finance Fund  
**Alexa Eggleston**, *Founder*, Audacia Consulting  
May 20
- [The Crucial Role of Philanthropy in Nurturing Equitable Local Journalism](#)  
**Melissa Davis**, *Vice President of Informed Communities*, Gates Family Foundation; *Executive Director*, The Colorado Media Project  
**Taryn Fort**, *Senior Director of Communications and Influence*, The Colorado Health Foundation  
**Johanna Ulloa Girón**, *Advocacy Program Manager*, The Colorado Trust  
**David Rousseau**, *Executive Director of Journalism and Information Technology*, KFF; *Publisher*, KFF Health News  
July 15
- [Elevating Quality to Achieve Equity in Free and Charitable Clinics: The Work of 'Roadmap to Health Equity'](#)  
**Cat Hulburt**, *Senior Director*, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares  
**Ashley Edwards**, *Director*, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares  
**Madison Bates**, *Associate*, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares  
August 19
- [Advancing Health Equity and Fostering Collaboration through Black Maternal and Child Health Initiatives](#)  
**Loreen Chant**, *President and CEO*, Health Foundation of South Florida  
September 16

- [Safeguarding Health Care Access for Transgender Communities](#)  
**Saida Agostini-Bostic**, *President*, Funders for LGBTQ Issues  
**Hez Norton**, *Senior Portfolio and Partnerships Director*, Laughing Gull Foundation  
October 18
- [Sustainability? No, It Is about Building Durability!](#)  
**Rick Ybarra**, *Senior Program Officer*, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health  
December 9

## Grantmaker Focus

Our ongoing Grantmaker Focus series showcases GIH Funding Partners, offering a look into their funding priorities and unique approaches to investing in health. The profiles provide insights into how Funding Partners vary based on budget, geographical location, and mission focus.

This year's Grantmaker Focus profiles included:

- [Stupski Foundation](#)
- [Humana Foundation](#)
- [Mid-Iowa Health Foundation](#)
- [Interact for Health](#)
- [The Joyce Foundation](#)
- [IEHP Foundation](#)
- [Stanford Medicine Children's Health](#)
- [Pallottine Foundation of Buckhannon](#)
- [Delta Dental Foundation of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and North Carolina](#)

## Health Policy Update

The Health Policy Update is a monthly newsletter produced in collaboration with Trust for America's Health. Drawing on GIH's policy priorities outlined in our 2024 policy agenda and our strategic objective of increasing our policy and advocacy presence, the Health Policy Update provides GIH Funding Partners with a range of federal health policy news. GIH Funding Partners can access past issues [on our website](#).

# UPDATE

## Strategic Plan Update

GIH's strategic plan is rooted in a vision of *better health for all through better philanthropy*. Health equity and social justice continue to be at the heart of our ongoing strategic plan implementation, informing everything we do. An important example of this is our annual board and staff retreat, which focuses on the health equity challenges facing communities across the country, bringing our team into direct contact with people whose lived experiences are shaped by health inequities. This past March, we brought our Board of Directors and staff to McAllen, Texas, to learn firsthand about the disparities faced by migrant and immigrant families in the Rio Grande Valley.

As part of our visit to McAllen, we met with funders and nonprofits working together to improve outcomes; volunteered at a Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley Humanitarian Respite Center and spoke with migrants who recently crossed into the United States; engaged directly with LUPE, a local nonprofit serving residents of South Texas' unincorporated *colonias*, which are low-income, largely Spanish-speaking communities; broke bread with a family living in a colonia and learned about challenges they face in sanitation and infrastructure; and visited the Museum of South Texas to find out more about the unique history of the border region and how it affects health today. We left with a sharpened understanding of health equity issues faced by migrants and multigenerational immigrant families and incorporated those lessons into our greater body of work.

We also continued to build out our four strategic pillars. As part of our work under the first pillar, that GIH is valued for our partner-centric approach, we conducted a detailed Funding Partner engagement survey to inform our priorities and better serve our constituents. We leaned into our second pillar, that GIH is seen as the hub of health philanthropy, by programming our [largest annual conference](#) in many years, reimagining the Fall Forum as the dynamic new [Health Policy Exchange](#), and finding new ways for Funding Partners to connect, as through our new [Learning Communities platform](#). As detailed extensively in our update on our policy and advocacy work, we pushed forward the pillar that GIH is known for visionary leadership and influence by partnering with Grantmakers In Aging to advocate

for philanthropy's priorities in the reauthorization of the [Older Americans Act](#), further expanded the monthly Health Policy Update newsletter, and engaged on other policy issues such as the Farm Bill reauthorization. Finally, we supported our fourth pillar, that GIH is recognized as a high-performing organization, by conducting an extensive systems review to revolutionize our communications and IT systems, among other major projects and initiatives.

The challenges we are trying to solve cannot be addressed by philanthropy alone—the only way we can make change is through interdisciplinary partnerships with colleagues from the public and private sectors. This year saw major collaborations with organizations like Partners 4 Health Equity at the Tulane University Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine on a four-part virtual learning series about challenges in health philanthropy and social justice; the American Public Health Association in a session at their annual conference about philanthropy and health equity; the Tax Equity Funders Network for a Prosperity Summit session on improving the lives of children and families through the tax code; and the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the National Rural Health Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office of Rural Health for the annual Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership Meeting.

In addition to our vision and strategic pillars, GIH also utilizes five focus areas—[Health Equity and Social Justice](#), [Access and Quality](#), [Community Engagement and Empowerment](#), [Philanthropic Growth and Impact](#), and [Population Health](#)—to drive much of our programming. What follows are highlights of that work in 2024.







# Health Equity and Social Justice

GIH's Health Equity and Social Justice programming focuses on ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve their highest level of health regardless of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, or other determining factors like socioeconomic status. GIH's work in this area includes applying a health equity lens to all our focus areas and explores the partnerships, programs, and policy changes necessary to eliminate disparities; addresses the social determinants of health; and institutionalizes internal diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Health Equity and Social Justice is not just a focus area for GIH, it is also at the center of our vision of better health for all through better philanthropy, and much of our programming touches on it to some degree.

All the [GIH Annual Conference](#) site visits in Portland, Oregon, showcased community efforts to reduce health inequities and advocate for social justice. For example, Central City Concern, Portland's largest provider of health care, housing, and recovery services for people experiencing homelessness, showed attendees firsthand how their whole person and systems approach to homelessness helps improve the lives of the people they serve. Other site visits focused on climate justice, a unique program of wraparound services for vulnerable families, treating substance abuse disorder in urban Native American youth, and a hospital-linked firearm violence intervention program.

The conference's opening plenary, Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize: 60 Years After the Civil Rights Act, featured a conversation about the legacy of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Another plenary session, What Happened to the War on Poverty?, examined how Lyndon Johnson's campaign to end poverty prompted a decline in the percentage of people living in poverty, but decades later, many families are still struggling to afford housing, education, and health care. Additional topics of discussion included food systems, transgender health care access, racial justice-centered research, Black maternal and infant health, and immigrant voices and experiences.

Immediately following the GIH Annual Conference, we co-hosted the [Birth Equity Funders Summit](#) with Funders for Birth Justice & Equity, bi3, March of Dimes, the Pritzker Children's Initiative, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Irving Harris Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and BlueCross Blue Shield of Illinois. A follow-up to the 2022 summit, this meeting brought funders together to align strategies to advance equitable birth outcomes. We elevated birth equity later in the year as part of the 2024 [Health Policy Exchange](#) with a session on the changing policy landscape of women's reproductive and maternal health.

In the fall, we hosted a four-part virtual learning series in collaboration with Partners for Advancing Health Equity (P4HE Collaborative) to explore pressing challenges in health philanthropy and social justice. The series was called, [Better Health for All: The Role of Philanthropy in Advancing Health Equity](#). The series emphasized strategies to address power dynamics, foster authentic community engagement, and advance inclusive approaches to health philanthropy. Participants gained tangible insights from peer health funders and community-based grantee partners on driving forward equity-centered health initiatives.



Finally, we published nine Views from the Field articles on health equity and social justice. Although there are too many to list in full, here are a few highlights:

- [Elevating Quality to Achieve Equity in Free and Charitable Clinics: The Work of 'Roadmap to Health Equity'](#)  
**Cat Hulburt**, Senior Director, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares  
**Ashley Edwards**, Director, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares  
**Madison Bates**, Associate, U.S. Programs, AmeriCares
- [Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation's Persistent Journey toward Equity](#)  
**Heather Higgins Alderman**, President and CEO, Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation  
**Santrice Martin**, Chief Operating Officer, Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation
- [Q&A: How the Chicago South Side Birth Center is Championing a Better Approach to Maternal Health](#)  
**Jeanine Valrie Logan**, Founder + Lead Steward, Chicago South Side Birth Center  
**Shruti Jayaraman**, Chief Investments Officer, Chicago Beyond



# Access and Quality

GIH's Access and Quality programming focuses on improving health by expanding access to quality, affordable health services. GIH's work in this area includes topics like health coverage, the safety net, and workforce development.

Three areas of interest were central to GIH's access and quality work in 2024—behavioral health, ongoing workforce challenges, and access to Medicaid.

We started off the year with [Connecting Mental Health and Wealth in North Carolina](#), a Views from the Field article about how two North Carolina foundations are embedding equity in their behavioral health work in low income and rural communities. A later article recounted how [Independence Blue Cross Foundation and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#) partnered to expand access to mental health services in Philadelphia schools, starting with a pilot program at an independent boarding school serving a majority Black student body.

Youth behavioral health took center stage at the GIH Annual Conference in a plenary titled [The Kids Are Not Alright: Strengthening Child Well-Being](#).

This session explored youth mental and behavioral health challenges, their root causes, promoting optimal health and well-being in youth, and what health funders can do to help youth to thrive. Approximately 400 people attended this session.

Two separate [annual conference](#) sessions provided additional case studies of philanthropy's positive impact on behavioral health in state and local communities. The first offered a look at the creation of a policy initiative that is collaboratively driving behavioral health change at community and state levels in Oklahoma. The second showcased a cross-system behavioral health diversion program in Michigan's Wayne County that was established as a collaboration between government, courts, law enforcement, and community mental health.

In partnership with Grantmakers for Thriving Youth, Grantmakers for Education, and Youth Transition Funders Group, we co-hosted [How Expanding School-Based Medicaid Can Support Youth Mental Health & Well-Being](#), a webinar that examined how expanding school-based Medicaid can be a game changer for supporting youth well-being—and how funders can help catalyze action.

[Connecting Pediatricians, Families, and Schools for Thriving Youth](#), a webinar co-sponsored by GIH and Grantmakers for Thriving Youth, detailed the successful case study of EdNavigator, an innovative organization that partners with pediatric clinics, hospitals, and other health care agencies to match families referred by pediatricians with Navigators who help with school enrollment issues, special education support, and other academic concerns.

At the end of the year, we launched a survey which examines funder engagement in behavioral health, including strategies, successes, and challenges related to behavioral health investments. This survey represents a new research method for GIH by asking all health funders involved in behavioral health to respond—and not just GIH Funding Partners as we have done in the past. The final survey results will be available in Spring 2025.

We were also pleased to partner with Mindful Philanthropy, Inseparable, Funders for Maternal Mental Health, and the Foundation for Social Connection on additional programming related to behavioral health.





One of the trends we observed throughout the year was philanthropy's interest in investing in community health workers (CHWs), frontline public health workers embedded in the communities they serve. We collaborated with our colleagues at Funders for Maternal Mental Health to [host a webinar](#) that looked at how community health workers have been shown to be effective in expanding access to health and mental health services for pregnant and parenting women. Two separate Views from the Field case studies examined how philanthropy's role in strengthening CHWs, including a [piece by the CHW Center for Research and Evaluation](#) that looked at the role philanthropy can play in supporting Community Health Workers to achieve their full potential, and another from the United Health Ministry Fund and Health Forward Foundation about their [five-year campaign](#) to ensure CHW sustainability in Kansas.

In terms of a broader look at philanthropy's efforts related to workforce development, we released [Health Workforce Strategies](#), an info sheet detailing the results of a survey about funders' strategies related to their health workforce investments. Key takeaways included that health workforce is a priority area for survey respondents, funders support both health workforce retention and the pipeline, most funders investing in workforce tend to fund in their own states and local communities, and partnerships with educational institutions and care delivery entities are a key interest for funders.

Policy changes during the COVID-19 pandemic made many more Americans eligible for Medicaid, opening access to health care for millions. However, in 2023, the federal government began "unwinding" that access, causing many to lose their health care coverage as stricter eligibility restrictions were once again in force.

This year, we looked at the effects of this change and philanthropy's role in coverage at an annual conference session entitled Medicaid Unwound: What Comes Next?, as well as in [One Year Later: Medicaid Enrollment After the End of the Public Health Emergency](#), a webinar marking the first anniversary of the end of the unwinding. Both sessions explored the real-life effects on people's health.

In addition to the response to the post-pandemic unwinding, we also looked at other key aspects of Medicaid coverage in webinars about protecting and defending Medicaid from [expected policy changes and cuts](#) in the incoming administration and the importance of [school-based Medicaid](#) for youth mental health and well-being. A Views from the Field article, [Medicaid Managed Care Contracts are a Powerful Tool for Change](#), detailed advocacy for improving Medicaid in Kansas.

Other Views from the Field articles looked at access and quality through a variety of lenses. [Safeguarding Health Care Access for Transgender Communities](#) by Funders for LGBTQ Issues and Laughing Gull Foundation discussed the barriers to care transgender people face, community-led solutions to help them access care, and how philanthropy must step up at this critical time. Authors from the Lucille Packard Foundation for Children's Health (LPFCH) and the WITH Foundation contributed [Investing in Inclusion: How Health Philanthropy Can Prioritize the Needs and Perspectives of Individuals with Disabilities](#), which explored special access challenges faced by disabled young adults after they turn 18 and how LPFCH and WITH are making disability inclusion a funding priority.



# Community Engagement and Empowerment

GIH's Community Engagement and Empowerment programming focuses on working collaboratively with communities to address issues affecting their well-being while promoting shared decisionmaking, authority, and power.

When addressing the causes of health inequities like the social determinants of health, community engagement—especially [civic engagement](#)—can be an instrumental factor in improving outcomes. Many funders have put a special emphasis on partnering with community in determining how to direct their support, how to structure their grants and reporting requirements, and even what issues they should focus on. GIH has likewise brought funders together to share strategies on how best to engage with community, as well as elevated community success stories from around the country.

We opened our [annual conference](#) with two pre-conference workshops focused directly on community engagement—Building a Community Violence Intervention Ecosystem brought attention to a rapidly growing community-driven ecosystem of collaborative partners focusing resources on populations at the highest levels of risk of gun violence; while Conditions for Thriving: Insights and Practices to Deepen Trust with Community introduced attendees to preliminary research findings of what contributes to thriving for leaders of color and their organizations. This was followed the next day by a set of site visits that brought funders to community organizations such as homelessness service provider Central City Concern, Oregon Community Foundation, and their partners in creating a model of wraparound services for parents and families, the Coalition of Communities of Color, the Oregon Health and Science University emergency department, and the Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest Youth Addictions Treatment Program.

Several funders contributed Views from the Field articles about how they are bringing community into their work. The Horizon Foundation [provided insights](#) into their experience incorporating local Maryland community voices into their strategic planning process. An [article](#) by Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation (IVWF) and Alliance Healthcare Foundation describes how the IVWF became a Rural Development Hub focused on advancing asset-based, wealth-building approaches to rural community engagement and economic development in Imperial County, California.

A two-part series of stories, beginning with an article entitled [Engaging Youth to Guide Research on Their Own Well-Being](#), explored how Annie E. Casey Foundation's Equity and Inclusion unit and their partners from the Aspen Institute's Fresh Tracks program brought Black, Latino/Hispanic, and Native American young people ages 16 to 24 together to create well-being toolkits based on their own lived experiences. The [second part](#) of the series was an interview with some of those young people about their engagement with the project and its value to them.



As described earlier in an overview of our policy and advocacy work, civic engagement is a top priority for GIH such as in our advocacy for the renewal of the [Older Americans Act](#), our organizational commitment to the [Thrive Through Civic Health Initiative](#), and our support for [Civic Health Month](#). We highlighted the Tides Foundation’s support for civic engagement on reproductive health in a [Views from the Field interview](#), and we published a [thought piece](#) from The Colorado Media Project, The Colorado Health Foundation, The Colorado Trust, and KFF on the importance of philanthropy nurturing equitable local journalism. Community was also strongly featured at our two largest in-person events, with a post-conference session at the GIH Annual Conference focused on advancing community-driven solutions to health equity and climate resilience and a major Health Policy Exchange funder discussion on community empowerment. We also continued our series of [online roundtables](#) for health funders’ policy staff, offered a webinar on how [501c3 foundations can advocate for policy](#), and organized [an online panel](#) with Press Forward about their work to revitalize local journalism and restore trust in media.





# Philanthropic Growth and Impact

GIH's Philanthropic Growth and Impact programming identifies, disseminates, and supports best practices in the ongoing operations of health funding organizations. GIH's work in this area addresses governance, grantmaking, evaluation, communications, and the myriad ways health funders are advancing diverse public policy, advocacy, and civic engagement goals.

Our philanthropic growth and impact work offers important professional development opportunities for grantmakers at all levels to improve their processes, operations, and relationships with their grantees. It nurtures the growth of early-career staff, gives important opportunities to mid-career funders, and provides an important forum for CEOs to connect and learn from each other.

This year, we hosted the biennial [Terrance Keenan Institute for Emerging Leaders in Health Philanthropy](#) (TKI), which brought a cohort of exceptional grantmakers to Washington, DC, for an intense three-day retreat-style meeting where they were mentored by veteran funders and shared their own experiences and viewpoints with each other.

In addition to TKI, we offered other professional development opportunities for early and mid-career grantmakers, including a well-received annual conference session with philanthropic leaders to explore career journeys in the field. This meeting was an excellent opportunity for foundation staff members to learn about how they might develop their skills and strategies for growing their careers.

One key piece of feedback we have heard repeatedly from senior leaders at grantmaking organizations is the need for more opportunities to meet and discuss common challenges with their peers. In addition to maintaining our regular CEO working group activities, we also offered more opportunities for CEO engagement at the Annual Conference and Health Policy Exchange.

Career development and engagement with colleagues of similar levels of experience were not the only way we provided opportunities for development. We also offered annual conference networking sessions for different types of funders, including funders with limited assets and corporate foundations, as well as funder roles, such as communications staff and trustees.

Diversity has long been a priority for health funders. To help grantmakers assess the state of diversity within the field, GIH [released Diversity in the Leadership, Staff, and Boards of Health Philanthropy](#), a comprehensive report on a survey of the demographic composition of the leadership, staff, and boards of GIH Funding Partners. Among the key findings was that a higher proportion of Chief Executive Officers and Executive Directors leading health funder organizations identify as Black, Indigenous, or Other People of Color (BIPOC) (31 percent) compared to leadership from the broader field of philanthropy (14 percent). In addition, we found that a higher proportion of staff employed by health funders identify as BIPOC (49 percent) compared to staff from the broader field of philanthropy (31 percent).



Although many of our Views from the Field articles offer ideas to further philanthropic growth and impact, some are specifically focused on helping funders think about how they approach their work. For example, a grantmaker from the Hogg Foundation [offered a look](#) at how funders should consider building durability rather than sustainability into their support for grantees. Another article from the John Muir Community Health Fund [made the case](#) for developing a new funding framework for emerging, BIPOC-led grantees in an effort to create an equitable nonprofit ecosystem.

Finally, every year, GIH recognizes the outstanding grantmakers and advocates who have advanced health and social change.

The annual Terrance Keenan Leadership Award celebrates grantmakers whose thoughtful use of philanthropic dollars has had an impact on human health at any level. Award recipients' work demonstrates responsiveness to the people in their communities, large or small, with a particular focus on those in the greatest need. This year's Terrance Keenan Leadership Award recipient was [Billie Hall](#), President and Chief Executive Officer of the Sunflower Foundation in Kansas.

The Andy Hyman Award for Advocacy is presented each year to an outstanding advocacy grantee from the nonprofit or public sectors who embodies a commitment to principled action, leadership to advance social change, and dedication to making progress in policy and practice despite challenging political environments. 2024's Andy Hyman Award winner was [Joan Alker](#), Executive Director and a cofounder of the Georgetown Center for Children and Families (CCF) in Washington, DC.



# Population Health

GIH's Population Health programming focuses on the health outcomes of a group of people, whether defined by age, geography, or other factors. GIH's work in this area explores public health, prevention, and the mobilization of multiple disciplines to better health for all.

A Health Policy Exchange session, Protecting the Public's Health: Opportunities for Cross Sector Collaboration, brought together speakers from the American Public Health Association, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, Trust For America's Health, CDC Foundation, New York Community Trust, and United Methodist Health Ministry Fund to discuss how philanthropy can work with government, nonprofits, and community to further public health.

We cannot address health inequities without first putting a spotlight on the specific challenges faced by populations around the United States. In 2024, GIH dedicated a significant amount of programming to issues relating to Black, Indigenous, and people of color; LGBTQ+ people; rural communities; older Americans; and women and children, among others.

As detailed throughout this report, GIH partnered with Grantmakers In Aging (GIA) to make advocacy for the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) the centerpiece of our policy work for the year. Together, we convened funders at the National Council on Aging's Age + Action conference to learn how to [bridge connections](#) between the public and private sectors to improve the health and well-being of older adults. An annual conference session focused on optimizing health and well-being through the OAA, and GIH meetups brought both groups' constituencies together to discuss the reauthorization of the act. In addition, GIH President and Chief Executive Officer Cara V. James and GIA Chief Executive Officer Lindsay Goldman [coauthored an op-ed](#) arguing that the OAA is not keeping pace with today's older adults.

Rural health continues to be an important topic of GIH programming. In partnership with the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the National Rural Health Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office of Rural Health, we co-hosted the annual [Rural Health Philanthropy Partnership](#) meeting. This year's theme, *Thinking Anew: Innovative Approaches to Advance Rural Health*, focused on how many times the best solution to rural health challenges can be found in rural communities themselves. At the annual conference, representatives from the HEAL alliance, AMMA Empowerment Services, Missouri Foundation for Health, REACH Health Care Foundation, and St. David's Foundation shared how three foundations are changing the game for rural health by being "unapologetically rural."

An important area of population health is the role equitable food access can play in improving health in vulnerable communities. A GIH Annual Conference session, Progressing Towards Health Equity: Community Controlled Food Systems and Assets, brought together representatives from Black Oaks Center for Sustainable Renewable Living, La Semilla Food Center, Fresh Future Farm, and EFOD Collaborative to discuss how community organizations are working throughout the country to improve equitable access to healthy food.





[Food and Nutrition Policy in Indian Country](#), a webinar co-sponsored with Native Americans in Philanthropy, highlighted a rapidly growing movement across Native American communities working to improve access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food and support food sovereignty. Speakers from Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance and Native American Agriculture Fund discussed the federal and state policy landscape, opportunities and challenges facing advocates, and how philanthropy can play a vital role partnering with Tribal communities to create food systems that lead to better health.

In addition to food policy, GIH also shined a spotlight on other issues critical to improving Native American health. A November webinar co-sponsored by Native Americans in Philanthropy, [Bridging Health Equity in Indian Country: Navigating the Public Health Crisis](#), provided an in-depth briefing on the urgent public health crisis impacting Native American communities across the country and offered concrete action steps that funders can take at the local, regional, and national levels to make meaningful improvements in Native American health.

Two annual conference sessions explored Indigenous health issues, including Making a Meaningful Impact in Indian Country Health Workforce, which looked at the unique workforce challenges faced by Tribal communities, and Treating Addiction and Healing Native Youth in Urban America, a site visit that brought attendees to a Portland organization focused on helping Native youth recover from substance use disorder.

Children and young adults were another key demographic group whose challenges were given prominent attention at the GIH Annual Conference—a plenary session focused on strengthening child well-being and a conference session highlighted the importance of youth-led participatory grantmaking in empowering young people to improve their own health.

In recent years, HIV and AIDS infections have seen a dramatic decline, with the public health response to the decades-long crisis serving as an example of philanthropy partnering with community to solve seemingly intractable problems. A [Views from the Field article](#) explored how the Washington AIDS Partnership took big risks and moved quickly to dramatically reduce new HIV and AIDS infections in the Washington, DC, metro area, offering important insights into how philanthropy can respond to future public health crises. With the success of their work and the minimization of new HIV infections, the Washington AIDS Partnership has closed its doors.

# 2025

## 2025: A Look Ahead

Following the 2024 presidential election, there are many questions about how the new administration will shape health policy, many of which will undoubtedly affect health philanthropy and our shared efforts to achieve better health for all. The challenges are significant, but our values and goals remain unchanged, as is our commitment to health equity. GIH will be nimble in our support for collaboration and collective action to respond to critical health challenges and advance our goals throughout 2025 and beyond.

Part of this work includes continuing our ongoing partnership with Trust for America's Health to produce the Health Policy Update newsletter. We will build on the Health Policy Update by collaborating with leading bipartisan health care policy monitoring firm Leavitt Partners on additional installments of the newsletter to augment our coverage. It is our hope that we will strengthen our Funding Partners' capacity for advocacy, as well as bolster their ability to respond to the changing landscape.

The Older Americans Act was not renewed, so our advocacy for its reauthorization is not finished. Partnering closely with Grantmakers In Aging, we will continue our efforts to support its passage into law. As 2025 marks the 60th anniversary of the passage of the OAA in 1965, we have an excellent opportunity to highlight the evolving needs of older adults, as well as the Medicare and Medicaid programs on which their health depends.

There are two important GIH surveys of the field in the works for release in the new year. First, we will publish the results of our 2024 Health Equity Survey: Understanding the Changing Landscape, which will provide insights into how funders have responded to recent setbacks for health equity. Later in the year, we will release the results of a survey examining funder engagement in behavioral health with the intention that they will contribute to the sector's collective knowledge, highlight opportunities for potential funder collaboration, and inform GIH's future programming in behavioral health.

With the completion of our year-long systems review project, we will shift towards the end-goal—modernizing GIH's various systems into an integrated platform to better serve the needs of our Funding Partners.

Rural health has long been a priority at GIH and we will be expanding that work in the coming year. Through a partnership with the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution, we are creating a philanthropy community of practice to improve economic opportunity, strengthen community well-being and health outcomes, enable civic leadership, and address structural inequities at the intersection of race, place, and class. About 20 foundations will be represented in the conversation, and we will share the community of practice's learnings with the broader GIH network. In addition, we are partnering with the Georgia Health Policy Center and the National Rural Health Association in a project to reimagine rural health and well-being and begin development of a shared vision and roadmap to address rural health disparities.

We also look forward to connecting with Funding Partners and others at the 2025 GIH Annual Conference in Health Philanthropy, *Forging Partnerships for a Better Tomorrow*, on June 16–20, 2025 in New Orleans, Louisiana. At the conference, we will mark the 60th anniversary of the Medicare and Medicaid Act and the start of a new administration, as well as reflect on 20 years of rebuilding since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and how the two events are instructive for how we respond to climate disasters today.

Finally, we want to thank our Funding Partners and Philanthropy Support Partners for their engagement and support of GIH. We are excited about continuing and growing our work together in pursuit of better health for all through better philanthropy.



## About Grantmakers In Health

Grantmakers In Health (GIH) is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to helping foundations, corporate giving programs, and other philanthropic organizations improve the health of all people. Its mission is to foster communication and collaboration among grantmakers and others and to help strengthen the grantmaking community's knowledge, skills, and effectiveness. GIH develops programming, provides technical assistance, and hosts convenings to help funders learn, connect, and grow. Visit GIH on the web at [www.gih.org](http://www.gih.org).

## Funding Partners

GIH Funding Partners are philanthropic organizations and advisors that make annual financial contributions to support GIH's work. They are a diverse constituency of foundations, corporate giving programs, philanthropic advisors, government agencies, and other health funders. Learn more about how to become a GIH Funding Partner and view the full directory at [www.gih.org/join](http://www.gih.org/join).

## Philanthropy Support Partners

GIH Philanthropy Support Partners are philanthropy serving organizations with whom GIH has formal partnership agreements. Learn more about how to become a Philanthropy Support Partner at [www.gih.org/join](http://www.gih.org/join).







Grantmakers In Health  
1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036

[info@gih.org](mailto:info@gih.org) | [www.gih.org](http://www.gih.org)