



2025

The
American Hospital
Association
Foster G. McGaw
Prize Honorees



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INSIDE



WINNER

Fairview Health Services | Minnesota
Showing up in trusted spaces



FINALIST

Inova Health Care Services | Fairfax, Va.
Connecting with the voice of the community



FINALIST

LifeBridge Health | Baltimore
Breaking the cycle of violence



FINALIST

Rush University System for Health | Chicago
Powering economic vitality and health



About the Foster G. McGaw Prize

The prestigious Foster G. McGaw Prize recognizes diverse health delivery organizations throughout the United States that demonstrate a passion for community health and an exceptional commitment to co-designing innovative partnerships and collaboratives that improve the health and well-being of their communities. The 2025 Foster G. McGaw Prize winner and finalists demonstrate that health delivery organizations working with community partners can be the cornerstone of a healthier America.

The Foster G. McGaw Prize is generously sponsored by the Baxter Foundation and administered by the American Hospital Association. This year, the winner received \$100,000 and each finalist received \$10,000. The award winner and finalists were recognized in July at the AHA Leadership Summit conference. For more information about the prize, visit <https://aha.org/fostermcgaw>.



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Fairview Health Services Minnesota

Showing Up in Trusted Spaces

Every year hundreds of mobile clinics pop up at churches, mosques, schools, community centers, food pantries and homeless shelters to provide health services. Fairview Health Services, a health system with 10 hospitals and more than 40 primary care clinics in Minnesota, conducts the clinics with support from more than 125 community organizations. “When we show up in trusted spaces with community partners, we are able to reach a lot of folks who wouldn’t otherwise be able to receive these services,” said John Swanholm, vice president of community advancement.

Fairview prioritizes community advancement as a core aspect of its mission. By collaborating with partner organizations to co-design and co-implement all programs, Fairview fosters a shared sense of ownership among stakeholders. This inclusive approach motivates participants to actively support and contribute to the success of these initiatives, strengthening partnerships and driving meaningful outcomes.

In 2015, Fairview convened the East Side Health & Well-Being Collaborative, comprising more than 20 community organizations, to identify priorities for improving the health of residents on the East Side of St. Paul. Monthly meetings were scheduled at churches or meeting spaces in the community. The health system’s senior executives and physi-

cian leaders participated to demonstrate their commitment to understanding community needs.

“We took time to have an approach that always included locally sourced food so that we could nourish folks and have the kind of conversation that happens over sharing a meal and getting to know each other,” said Diane Tran, system executive director of community health equity and engagement.

As the Collaborative homed in on two priorities — access to healthy food and support for managing stress, resilience and mental well-being in culturally responsive ways — the work pivoted to an eight-month co-design process. Community facilitators were hired to guide the discussions to ensure that Fairview’s perspective was not overemphasized. And the health system provided grants to partnering organizations to compensate participants for their time and insights.

That process led to two early initiatives — Food is Medicine and cultural brokers — that proved the value of listening to the community. “Neither is something we as a health system would have developed on our own,” Tran said.

Fairview’s Food is Medicine initiative, launched in 2016, has evolved over the years to become a multifaceted program that addresses both food insecurity and support for healthful eating. The health system conducts

food insecurity screening at all its clinics. At several clinics, food resource navigators connect with patients who have food insecurity to make sure they can access the resources they need.

Working with partners such as the Hmong American Farmers Association, the health system contracts with local farms to source produce for food prescription boxes during the growing season. It also provides shelf-stable food bags for households year-round and access for people to shop at the Twin Cities Mobile Market, a grocery store on a bus that visits neighborhoods in food deserts.

Moreover, Fairview supports the distribution of more than 2 million pounds of food to local food programs each

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Fairview’s Food is Medicine initiative has evolved over the years to become a multifaceted program that addresses both food insecurity and support for healthful eating.
2. Fairview’s three Health Commons sites serve multicultural local populations in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
3. Holiday food distribution event for local families from underserved communities.



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James Hereford

President and CEO, Fairview Health Services

“For us, it comes down to a simple concept: this is who we are, and therefore we must invest in advancing health equity and improving health and well-being for all to be true to our mission and identity.”

year. The food is packed by young people participating in a paid youth employment program. “We add on ServSafe food-safety certification and connect them with career development opportunities,” Tran said.

To provide culturally responsive support for distinct population groups, Fairview employs six full-time cultural brokers. Each is embedded at a neighborhood center — for example, the Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio or the American Indian Family Center — that serves a specific population.

Cultural brokers are chosen because they understand health from the perspective of their community; they know that good health requires much more than just health care; and they know how to navigate mainstream institutions. “They help community members complete school, health and job forms, find work, locate health care services, navigate school systems, get referrals to legal providers and more,” Tran said.

A 2022 survey found that 98% of participants said their interactions with a cultural broker have helped decrease their stress.

Health Commons is devoted to enhancing individual wellness and fostering strong community connections. It operates three accessible health and wellness centers serving African American, East African, and Somali populations in Minneapolis’ Harrison/North and Cedar-Riverside neighborhoods, as well as a mixed ethnicity group at the East Side neighborhood in St. Paul. With a mission rooted in respect, hospitality, collaboration, and relationship-building, Health Commons focuses on delivering culturally sensitive services that foster hope and inspire healthier living.

The centers offer walk-in consultations with nurses or doctors, massage therapy, aromatherapy, addiction counseling led by nurses or peers, and healthy living classes addressing nutrition, exercise, chronic disease management and emotional wellness. Other initiatives include providing fresh produce, distributing food boxes and cultivating community gardens.

The Fairview Community Health and Wellness Hub, opened in 2022, exemplifies Fairview’s dedication to community health. Developed with input from over 1,500 community members and patients, the hub repurposed a former hospital campus into a resource for better health. It houses a Federally Qualified Health Center, a retail pharmacy, food programs managed by partners, an adult day care program and a mental health and addiction clinic.

Taj Mustapha, M.D., chief equity strategy officer, emphasized the importance of providing community members the same sense of inclusion and welcome — whether at

food programs or at Fairview clinics and hospitals. She highlighted the holistic approach: “Centering the whole person in both our health care delivery and community partnerships is truly the vision of how we are approaching health and well-being.” ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

4. The health system’s senior executives participate in handing out food at a Food is Medicine event (James Hereford, president and CEO, center).
5. Twin Cities Mobile Market visits clinical sites to help support patients.
6. Fair Table, Fairview’s Food is Medicine program, partners with local growers to source produce for food prescription boxes during the growing season.
7. East Side Health & Well-Being Collaborative partners work together to improve health and well-being of residents.
8. Cultural brokers, like Monique Nelson at the American Indian Family Center, belong to the communities they serve and help individuals bridge cultural gaps when navigating health and other services.



Inova Health Care Services

Fairfax

Connecting

with the

Voice of the

Community

Inova Health System, a five-hospital system serving northern Virginia and the Washington, D.C., area, never stops fine-tuning its Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process with community voices to form action plans and address the identified needs. “Our expectation at Inova is that we’ll get better every day — better at expanding access, advancing clinical excellence and delivering compassionate, patient-centered care in our community,” said J. Stephen Jones, M.D., president and CEO.

Inova’s safety net clinics — the first Inova Cares for Women clinic opened in 1960; the first Inova Cares for Children in 1993; and the first Inova Cares for Families in 2016 — show the system’s long-standing commitment to improving the health and well-being of people living in high-need areas throughout northern Virginia. Each of the 18 clinics partners with local health departments and other organizations to make and receive referrals for medical and social needs. In 2023, the clinics served more than 31,000 patients.

Behavioral health therapists, nurse case managers who support patients with complex needs, and community health workers who address patients’ social needs are on-site at each location. “Our Inova Cares clinics are very focused on wraparound care for all of our patients,” said Karen Berube, senior vice president and chief of community health and health equity. “And the outcomes speak to that.”

One example, Our Minds Matter, is a local nonprofit organization receiving support from the Inova Health System’s Community Health Fund for its upstream youth-led suicide prevention program. It facilitated student-led mental health programming in 44 schools, serving 903 unique students; 89.3% of participants stated this program had a positive impact on their mental health and 92.5% of participants were confident in supporting someone who is struggling.

Inova operates the only program in its service area that provides forensic medical evaluation services for children and adults who have experienced domestic/intimate partner violence or child abuse. Because of this, health system leaders rejected the idea that its services should be available only in its hospital emergency departments (EDs). They worked with local law enforcement, elected officials, the attorney general’s office and victims’ rights advocates to make it easier for assault victims to access their services. “It’s a critical program for all of our community members,” said Berube. “So, we took it out of the ED and moved it throughout the community.”

Inova Ewing Forensic Assessment and Consultation Team sexual assault nurse examiners staff four locations — one at Inova Fairfax Hospital and three in community-based clinics — around the clock to make it as easy as possible for individuals to receive trauma-informed care

and obtain the documented evidence they need if they choose to report a crime to the police.

Inova’s CHNA process is informed by regional committees that include many stakeholders. “They are made up of impassioned Inova team members, but also faith leaders, community health workers, health department leaders, representatives from nonprofits and others,” said Leigh Guarinello, director of community health programs. “We make sure we have a wide range of voices at those tables.” Inova’s hospitals are tailoring their three-year implementation strategies on addressing health care access, economic stability, and mental health, as identified by the most recent CHNAs. ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Inova Cares clinics are very focused on wraparound care for all patients.
2. Inova operates the only program in its service area that provides forensic medical evaluation services for children and adults.
3. J. Stephen Jones, M.D., president and CEO of Inova
4. Our Minds Matter is a local nonprofit which facilitates student-led mental health programming in 44 schools, serving 903 unique students.



LifeBridge Health Baltimore

Breaking the Cycle of Violence

By bringing together a range of services under one roof, LifeBridge Health’s Center for Hope allows community members and survivors of violence to receive help for child abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence and community gun violence in one location. The center is one of many ways that the five-hospital system lives out its tagline.

“For LifeBridge Health, Care Bravely is more than a motto or mantra — it reflects who we are and, at the same time, serves as a guiding light for who and what we want to be,” said Neil Meltzer, president and CEO. “Care Bravely means doing the right thing, even when it’s the hard thing.”

LifeBridge Health, which serves the Baltimore metropolitan area, opened the Center for Hope in 2022, building on the organization’s long-standing efforts to combat violence. The center uses many approaches to prevent violence — from on-the-street violence interrupters to community health workers. “We understand that many of these people involved with violence have social needs, they have primary care needs and other needs,” said Sharon McClarnen, vice president, population health. “We are integrating myriad wraparound services, so our violence intervention services are not just one-off services.”

Their approach is working. LifeBridge Health’s flag-

ship Sinai Hospital has seen a 52% reduction in gunshot-wound admissions since 2021. Many factors are at play, said Adam Rosenberg, LifeBridge’s vice president of violence prevention and intervention and executive director of the Center for Hope: “But given that we have multiple teams on the ground surrounding Sinai Hospital and that we have seen this dramatic reduction, we know we are contributing to that.”

He is referring to LifeBridge Health’s participation in Baltimore’s Safe Streets program. The Center for Hope administers six teams, working in six targeted neighborhoods, that seek to prevent violence by identifying those at the highest risk of being involved in a shooting or killing, mediating conflicts and preventing retaliation. Two LifeBridge Health hospitals serve as hospital responder sites, where trained professionals meet with violence victims to help them pivot away from violent activities in the future.

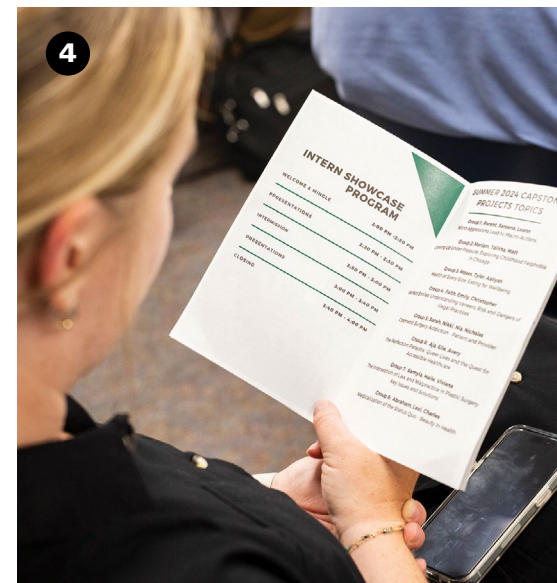
“Through the center, our community violence interruption teams are able to work with our hospital violence interrupters, who are able to work with our case managers so we can provide a comprehensive response that includes handoffs, case management and therapeutic referrals, when necessary, all with the support of the health system,” Rosenberg said.

Likewise, LifeBridge Health uses a broad range of

strategies to help people with diabetes avoid ED visits and inpatient stays. Its diabetes medical home-extender program provides intensive care coordination, social work services and home visits to support people with poorly managed diabetes. “We address not just their medical needs, but all of the social drivers of health that surround them in their communities,” McClarnen said. The program has proven it can reduce ED and inpatient visits for program participants by more than 40% after six months of receiving the services. ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Neil Meltzer, president and CEO of LifeBridge Health
2. LifeBridge Health’s diabetes medical home-extender program aims to avoid ED visits through intensive care coordination, social work services and home visits to support people with poorly managed diabetes.
3. LifeBridge’s Center for Hope builds on the organization’s long-standing efforts to combat violence.
4. LifeBridge Health uses many approaches to prevent violence — from on-the-street violence interrupters to community health workers.



Rush University System for Health Chicago

Powering Economic Vitality and Health

Since adopting an anchor mission eight years ago, Rush University Medical Center, the largest employer on Chicago’s West Side, has targeted its hiring, purchasing, investing and volunteering efforts in 21 neighborhoods near its campus. Rush, a three-hospital academic medical center, seeks to address the root causes of poor health that have fueled a 14-year life expectancy gap between the city’s underserved neighborhoods and the more affluent communities just a few miles away.

“We believe everyone should have the chance to be healthy,” said Omar Lateef, D.O., president and CEO of Rush. “That means you must demonstrate your commitment to putting in the work.”

By focusing its efforts, Rush now hires, on average, 16% of its annual new employees from its anchor mission communities and purchases more than \$30 million in goods and services from West Side businesses each year. In 2024, in conjunction with partners, Rush helped establish a high-capacity linen/laundry facility in a previously vacant warehouse, adding 100 jobs to the community and underscoring Rush’s commitment.

“Now we are looking at additional opportunities in other areas of business to bring more jobs to these neighborhoods,” said Rukiya Curvey Johnson, vice president of community health equity.

Rush volunteers strategically respond to requests from the neighborhoods they serve. “That has really helped to cement the relationships because the community knows that we are listening to them and addressing their needs,” said Wrenetha A. Julion, R.N., associate dean for equity and inclusion.

Through its Nursing Faculty Practice program, Rush College of Nursing faculty and students work with more than 20 partner organizations to provide nurse-led care to people experiencing homelessness, suffering from mental illness, victimized by domestic violence and more. This work has led to improved health outcomes, including better-controlled hypertension and diabetes, for patients served.

Believing it is never too early to inspire someone to choose a health care career, Rush Education and Career Hub (REACH) provides programming for ages 4 to 24. “We go to West Side schools starting at pre-K to support teachers and spark interest and excitement in children for these careers,” said Curvey Johnson, REACH executive director.

As students get older, REACH offers mini-internships to middle-school students, followed by paid internships, apprenticeships, mentoring and opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials for students in high school and college. Recognizing that students need family support to

succeed in their educational goals, REACH provides an assessment to identify potential barriers and links students and their families to resources to overcome them.

REACH uses career-connected learning strategies to show students how math, science and soft skills like being a good team member equip them for the jobs they want. Internships come with performance reviews to prepare students for the real world of work.

“We want to not only expose them to the jobs, but we want to get them on the track to a good early door-opening job that gets them working in a space they might be interested in and be able to earn a family-sustaining wage,” Curvey Johnson said. ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Rush established a high-capacity linen/laundry facility in a previously vacant local warehouse, adding 100 jobs to the community.
2. The Nurse Faculty Practice program brings needed care to the community.
3. Omar Lateef, D.O., president and CEO of Rush
4. REACH offers mini-internships to middle-school students, followed by paid internships and apprenticeships for students in high school and college.



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Making a lasting impact on health care and the health of communities

The Baxter Foundation and the American Hospital Association founded the Foster G. McGaw Prize on the belief that the relationship between a hospital and its community is unique. We celebrate the winners and finalists of this award because they show us how people working together in hospitals and communities can enrich the environment in which they live.

In the decades to come, the bond between the community and its health care providers will become stronger and more interdependent. And we shall continue to honor those individuals and organizations that distinguish themselves through excellence in community service.

We congratulate Fairview Health Services on the impact it has had on advancing care and well-being in its communities, along with all of this year's Foster G. McGaw Prize finalists who are inspiring new ways to deliver health care and adapting to meet evolving local needs.

— **The Baxter Foundation**

Fairview

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