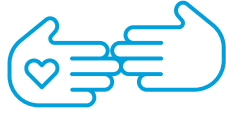
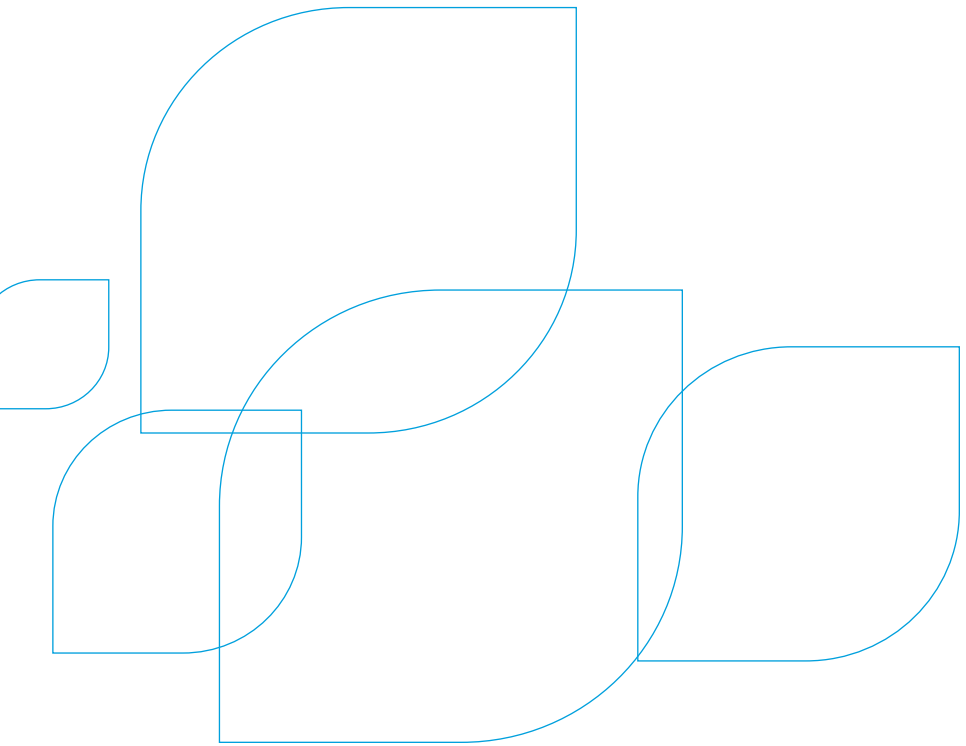
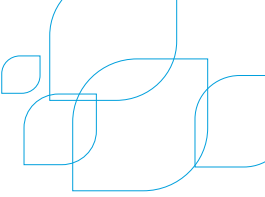


# Be **welcoming**



**PHILANTHROPY ANNUAL REPORT | 2023**





# Embrace all others as you would a cherished friend

It is no coincidence that “hospital” is in the very word hospitality. The words share the same root with hotel, hospice and host, all of which have to do with sheltering and caring for guests.

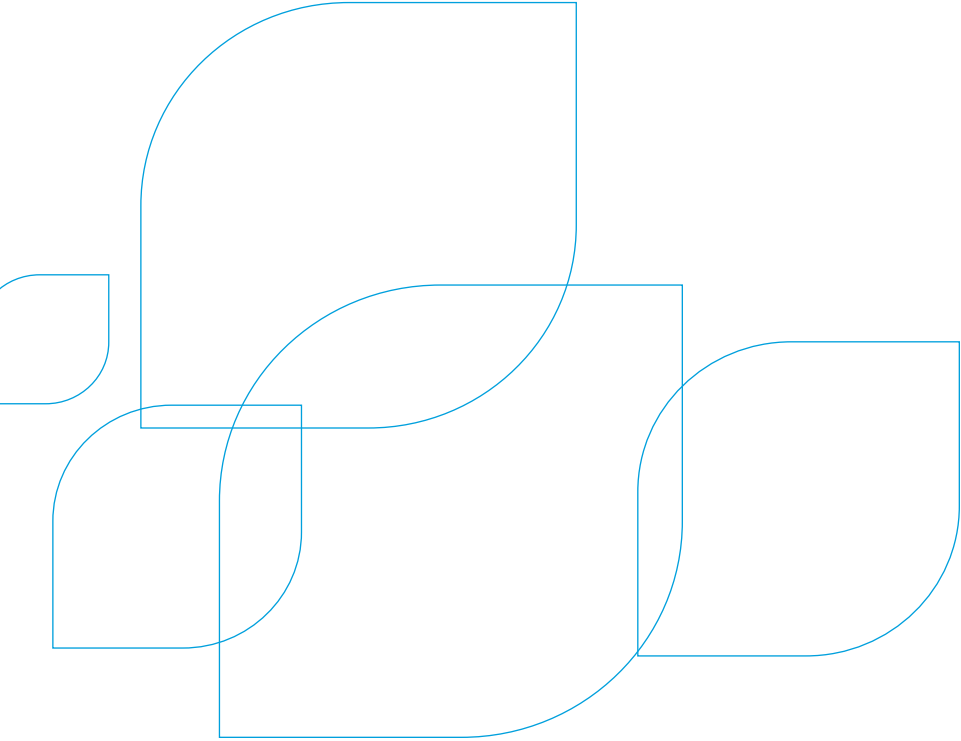
Though booking a hotel for vacation is much more exciting than the prospect of a hospital stay, hospitality is a focus of our work just the same. Because when we are welcoming, we embrace others not just as our patients but as our neighbors and our friends.

As a donor to Adventist Health Sonora, you are a fundamental part of the work we do to ensure all who need it have access to high-quality, compassionate care. Thank you for your generous contributions and the health, wholeness and hope you inspire. It’s our privilege to partner with you and care for our community.

Blessings,



Michelle Fuentes, President  
Adventist Health Sonora





Total dollars raised in 2023:

**\$736,533\***

BREAKDOWN OF DOLLARS RAISED

**\$139,712**  
Patient and Employee Assistance

**\$123,460**  
Digestive Health Center

**\$45,305**  
Greatest Need

**\$13,517**  
Cardiology, Cancer Center and Other Services

**\$4,755**  
Wellness and Clinical Health Education

Grants

**\$225,000**  
Family Medicine Residency Program

**\$50,000**  
Behavioral Health Navigator Program

**\$134,784**  
CITED PATH Round 2 Initiative to break barriers to care for Medi-Cal patients

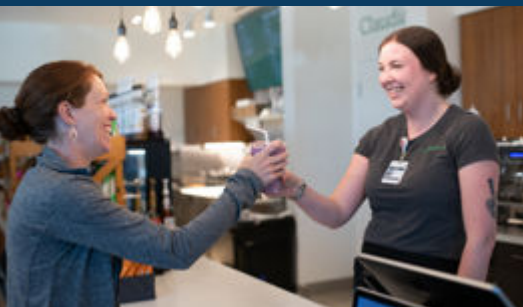
\*Includes pledges, cash and recurring gifts made in calendar year 2023.

 Total number of **gifts:** **2,119**

 Number of **grants awarded:** **3**

  
**377**  
Total number of **donors**

**1,607** gas and grocery cards distributed to community members in need, totaling **\$58,508**



**\$5,631.23** was raised for the Cancer Patient Support Fund through tips at **Claudia's Café**. Thank you to our Claudia's Café customers for your generosity!



**“So many times I prayed, and that prayer was answered by people who gave.”**

**Shelley Ferraro**  
Patient Access Representative

At Sonora Cardiovascular, Shelley Ferraro is the voice patients hear when they call to schedule an appointment and the face they see when they check in at the front desk.

“I schedule routine pacemaker checks, so I have become really close with our patients over the last 12 years,” she says. “Harold, for example, is always going to bring us candy at Christmas. When I call patients, I really know who I am talking to.”

The care and attention Shelley devotes to her work with patients stems from her love of helping others. This also inspires her to give back a portion of every paycheck to Adventist Health Sonora’s Greatest Need Fund, an unrestricted fund that benefits everything from hospital equipment upgrades to direct patient financial support.

While it’s a small portion of her pay, Shelley says, it could be all the difference.

“I know what it’s like to have financial struggles. As a young mom, I needed help from churches and community groups,” she explains. “Whenever I received, it brought joy into my life and allowed me to provide for my kids better. It was the hope I needed to carry on.”



Recurring gifts enable Adventist Health Sonora to provide sustainable support for patients in need and essential healthcare services. **Scan QR code to find a fund close to your heart and establish monthly gifts, or call 209-536-5017.**



**“My family and I feel very fortunate, and we want to support those in our community who may not be as fortunate.”**

**Rob Irwin** RN, CEN,  
Clinical Nurse Educator

Rob Irwin, RN, has been a fixture at Adventist Health Sonora for fifteen years, starting as a phlebotomist, then working as a nurse in the Emergency Department and ICU. In the last year, he transitioned to the Education Department, where he serves as the primary coordinator for American Heart Association trainings including advanced cardiac life support, an essential certification most nursing staff are required to renew routinely throughout their careers.

“After 14 years at the bedside,” Rob says, “this is just a different way to care for people.”

In each of his biweekly paychecks, Rob makes a standing donation to Adventist Health Sonora’s Food for Families Fund, which raises money for ATCAA Food Bank.

“Many of us face financial challenges, but anyone who gets a regular paycheck can probably give something,” he explains. “Even \$5 per paycheck adds up and can make a real difference for someone who doesn’t get a paycheck or their paycheck isn’t enough.”

Between recurring donations from employees like Rob and funds employees raised through the Food for Families Drive during the 2023 holiday season, Adventist Health Sonora donated \$4,380 to ATCAA Food Bank and over 1,000 pounds of food to other food pantries throughout the Mother Lode.





Carol and George Burkhardt will be the first to tell you, with a laugh, “We’ve been through some things.”

Married nearly 57 years, the couple met as teenagers working summer jobs in the Catskills, Carol waiting tables and George working as a part-time bartender.

Though they hit it off that summer, George was soon off to serve in the United States Army Security Agency and stationed in Eritrea, while Carol returned to her undergraduate studies at Rutgers University. They wrote each other often to stay in touch.

“His letters were so uninspiring,” Carol jokes. “Just talking about the baboons he saw.”

By the time George came home, Carol had graduated and was dating someone else. But George was undeterred. Six months later, Carol and George were engaged to be married.

The Burkhardts’ life together has been full ever since, rich with job changes, cross-country moves and the arrival of two sons. They even relocated briefly to rural Green River, Wyoming, as a young family. “Two babies, no phone,” Carol remembers. “That was something.”

After long careers and raising their family in Newark, California, the Burkhardts retired to their summer home in Copperopolis. Just a few years later, in 2018, Carol was diagnosed with breast cancer for the first time. Though Carol underwent a successful lumpectomy in the Bay Area, another tumor was discovered in 2021. This time, more aggressive treatment was needed, and staying close to home was more important.

“We wanted to stay up here because of all the travel time for radiation,” George explains. “And my career actually involved working for a leading radiation technology company, so I was familiar and impressed with the equipment available at the cancer center.”

Pericles Ioannides, MD, and Shane Tipton, PA-C, at the Diana J. White Cancer Institute coordinated Carol’s care, which included several rounds of chemotherapy and daily radiation treatment.

“We loved Shane’s level of involvement and his positive demeanor, and Dr. Ioannides was so warm and welcoming,” Carol says.

“At the end of our first appointment, he asked, ‘Would you like to end with a prayer?’ I’ve never had a doctor do that. It made me feel so accepted.”

Carol and George navigated the uncertainty and difficulty of cancer treatment with their characteristic resilience and a healthy dose of humor.

“It was hard for us, right?” Carol asks, turning to George.

“Did I learn to cook? The answer is no,” he laughs.

“But you did a lot to encourage me and give me a boost when I was feeling down,” Carol reminds him.

Now in remission, Carol has chosen to donate her wigs and headscarves to other patients at the cancer center, glad to pay it forward. She and George are enjoying getting involved with their community again, active in the Lions Club and traveling often to see children and grandchildren.

The one thing they’ve stopped traveling for is healthcare. Though they’d seen the same doctors in the Bay Area for decades, the care they received at Adventist Health Sonora during Carol’s cancer journey convinced them to make the switch for their other care, too.

“We’re both in our 70s, so we’ve been lots of places and seen lots of doctors,” George explains. “Here, we never felt rushed. Everyone was so calm, so reassuring. It’s a counterintuitive thing to say about cancer treatment, but they made the experience genuinely pleasant and positive.”



This year’s Gala will support investments in our PET/CT imaging technology, which is essential for diagnosing and treating every cancer patient Adventist Health Sonora serves. **Scan QR code to learn more and support this year’s Gala.**

## Welcoming your support in 2024

Thank you for your generous support of life-saving, loving care in our community.

Because of your generosity in 2023, the new Digestive Health Center at Adventist Health Sonora is set to begin construction later this year, paving the way to provide timely access to colonoscopies and other critical digestive health screenings and treatments close to home. More immediately, you helped direct financial support to hundreds of local patients and families in need so they could focus on their treatment, health and healing.

We have another fun year ahead, full of opportunities to support health and well-being in our community. I am especially excited for this year's Gala, which will be raising funds for essential imaging technology used to diagnose and treat every cancer patient we care for. The Gala promises to be a dazzling evening inspired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art Gala — more to come!

We couldn't do our work without your support and partnership. Thank you, and I look forward to a wonderful year ahead!

Warmly,



Andee Keller, Philanthropy Director  
Adventist Health Sonora

## Save the date to support compassionate care

Cars, Cops and Coffee, benefitting the Cancer Patient Support Fund  
Sunday, May 19

Gala 2024: A Night at the Met, benefitting the Diana J. White Cancer Institute  
Sunday, September 29

Ladies Night Out for Breast Cancer Awareness  
Thursday, October 17

Turkey Trot for Diabetes Awareness  
Thursday, November 28

Tree of Lights, benefitting the Hospice Patient Support Fund  
Early December



Rich and Monica Manuel won Officers' Choice at last year's Cars, Cops and Coffee fundraiser.



Scan QR code to register your vehicle and learn more about opportunities to support this year's Cars, Cops and Coffee car show!

