



FISCAL YEAR 2019

# ANNUAL REPORT

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A group of young women are shown from behind, hugging each other in a celebratory gesture. They are wearing casual clothing like hoodies and tank tops. The scene is outdoors, possibly at a school event or sports game. The image has a blue tint and a white border.

CELEBRATING  
ALL THAT WE  
ACCOMPLISHED  
TOGETHER

Dear Friends,

As an eating disorder therapist, Project HEAL has always been an organization that I've admired for their fierce commitment to creating equitable access to eating disorder treatment and support. I've referred countless eating disorder sufferers with inadequate insurance to Project HEAL over the years knowing that the care and advocacy they would receive are both genuine and effective.

Since officially joining Project HEAL as Treatment Access Program Director in early 2019, I have grown even more inspired by the impact that Project HEAL is making for people with eating disorders. Now, as Project HEAL's CEO, I'm honored to shepherd this amazing organization into the new decade. 2019 was in so many ways a landmark year for Project HEAL: a year of trying new things, evaluating what works, learning how to improve and expand, and ultimately, deepening our commitment to help as many people as possible get the eating disorder treatment and recovery support they need and deserve, but are too often denied. We helped more people than ever before, and that is truly something to pause and celebrate.

In this report, you'll see highlights from 2019 and stories about what you made possible. This reflection is an ode to you, our community, for the vast and innumerable ways that you've helped sustain, strengthen, and sharpen Project HEAL's ability to provide critical support to eating disorder sufferers who want — and are so worthy of — full and abundant recovery.

I hope that you join me in celebrating all of the strides that we have made WITH YOUR HELP, and join us in our excitement and hope for all that we'll be able to do together in 2020.

Thank you for everything.



Gratefully,

**Rebecca Eyre, MA, LMHC**

Project HEAL Chief Executive Officer



# MISSION & VALUES

*Project HEAL was founded in 2008 to help people with eating disorders access the treatment and support they needed to recover.*

## **EVERYONE DESERVES HEALING**

We believe that all people who struggle with food and body should be able to get the support and care that they need to heal, regardless of age, gender identity, race, ability, or financial means.

## **PATIENTS ARE EXPERTS**


We believe that the people best equipped to identify the needs in eating disorder treatment and care are those who have direct experience of these systems, and we are committed to seeking guidance from patients and families in developing our programs and strategy.

## **LISTENING TO THE LOCALS**

We believe that every community is unique, and that local communities have the power to identify and meet their own needs. We are committed to supporting local leaders in developing adaptive strategies that respond to the unique needs of their communities.

## **EVALUATION MAKES US SMARTER**

We believe that our work should be informed by the latest research, and we are committed to creating and rigorously evaluating programs, and to shifting gears when a better strategy presents itself.



“It was an amazing experience and I’ve never felt less alone in my eating disorder. It really encouraged me to be open about my struggles. It pushed me to be vulnerable in a safe environment and I feel more powerful than ever.”

- CAMP HEAL PARTICIPANT

# OUR WORK

## Treatment Access Program

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Eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of all mental illnesses, second only to opioid addiction. One in ten Americans suffer from an eating disorder, but the vast majority of these individuals never receive treatment.



**1 IN 10 AMERICANS SUFFER FROM AN EATING DISORDER**

Project HEAL's founding mission was to help people access treatment who could otherwise not afford it. Since 2008, the organization and program has evolved to respond to the pressing need of treatment access with innovative and scalable solutions.

In 2019, we began reimagining our Treatment Access Program in order to respond to the myriad of challenges that people face when trying to access treatment, including but not limited to financial, insurance, and systemic barriers.

In response, Project HEAL helps individuals across the U.S. struggling with eating disorders access treatment through treatment access grants and cash assistance grants. Each of these complementary offerings operate within a monthly application review cycle. As our team receives dozens of applications from deserving individuals every month, we assess each submission and work to support the candidate with the best offering to set them up to begin their recovery journey.

Beginning in 2020, we will be expanding our services to also include insurance navigation support and clinical assessments in order to respond to more of the treatment access barriers people are facing.



# HOW DOES PROJECT HEAL HELP PEOPLE ACCESS TREATMENT?

## Treatment Grants

Project HEAL offers our beneficiaries free treatment through our grant program. We have the largest network of facilities and providers at every level of care – including inpatient, residential, partial-hospitalization, intensive outpatient treatment centers as well as eating disorder specialized therapists and dieticians, that we call our HEALers Circle. Through these partnerships, we are the only nonprofit in the U.S. providing pro bono or discounted treatment to individuals who are uninsured or underinsured.

## Cash Assistance Grants

Many individuals with insurance cannot access their benefits due to high deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, and copays. We offer one-time cash gifts to individuals who are able to demonstrate financial need so that they can unlock their benefits and access treatment through their insurance. We also pay for travel costs and other tertiary expenses associated with going to treatment.

## About the HEALers Circle

*Project HEAL is building the largest network of treatment providers offering pro bono or sliding scale treatment to people with eating disorders. Recognizing that treatment is often prohibitively expensive, and the people who reach out to Project HEAL for help experience a myriad of financial, insurance, and systemic barriers to getting help, the HEALers Circle is a critical way in which we close the treatment access gap.*

*HEALers Circle members generously donate a set number of treatment episodes or sessions to Project HEAL grant beneficiaries each year, freeing up our direct monetary support for cash assistance grants to help pay for co-pays, deductibles, or travel to and from treatment.*



# OUR WORK

## Communities of HEALing

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In 2017, we asked our community what made the difference in their recovery, and they answered loud and clear: other people who have “been there.” They told us they needed to connect with people who offered proof that recovery is not only possible but worth the difficult fight.

**Communities of HEALing, an evidence-informed, nationally-accessible, and 100% free peer-support program was our response to that call.**

Over the last two years, Communities of HEALing has recruited and mobilized recovered peers to support those in early recovery through weekly support groups or 1:1 mentorship sessions.

*In 2019, we completed delivery of the Communities of HEALing mentorship intervention as part of a historic research study of peer mentorship for eating disorders. The study, which we began work on over three years ago, was a randomized controlled trial that rigorously assessed our Communities of HEALing mentorship intervention to determine whether peer support is effective in supporting eating disorder recovery. Published in March of 2020, the study found that the peer mentorship intervention showed greater reductions in body dissatisfaction, anxiety, depression, and ED behavior use than control groups. We have always known that peer support is life changing and that delivering it with high quality and open access would dramatically impact our community’s ability to fully recover. Now we know more about exactly how, and have the evidence base to back it up.*





COMMUNITIES OF HEALING  
IMPACT IN 2019

53

*1-1 mentorship pairings*

16

*new support group facilitators*

204

*people attended weekly support groups*



# AMANDA'S STORY

*" I am so grateful for this amazing organization and all who donate to give us a chance at recovery. You helped save my life and have given me a chance to truly live for the first time."*

"In March 2019, I applied for a Project HEAL grant in a very dark and desperate place. After decades of struggling, I knew that I needed more help. I lacked the type of insurance that would allow me to access treatment for my eating disorder. I was trying to heal and recover on my own. I remember thinking 'I may not survive my eating disorder if I don't get more help.'

I sent in the application knowing my chances of receiving help were slim because so many people needed help, too. I was completely in awe to be awarded a grant through Project HEAL. I cried and jumped up and down because it meant I would get a second chance at living a life I so desperately desired.

Unfortunately, I was concurrently diagnosed with Stage IV cancer and was unable to travel for residential care. Not only would I have to fight my eating disorder, but cancer, too.



Project HEAL worked with me and funded appointments with a registered dietitian in my area who specialized in eating disorders. They went above and beyond to accommodate me in such a critical time in my healing process. I have been seeing my dietitian for almost a year and can honestly say this is the first time in my life that I've made so much progress. She is amazing at what she does and helped me access a level of recovery I have never seen before.

Without the help of Project HEAL, I would have been on my own trying to fight two life-threatening illnesses. I'm not sure I'd even be alive. Thankfully, I am a couple months away from being declared cancer free and living in a new place in my eating disorder recovery. I am also in the process of pursuing a Master's degree in nutrition and dietetics so I can one day help others who struggle like I have.

I am so grateful for this amazing organization and all who donate to give us a chance at recovery. You helped save my life and have given me a chance to truly live for the first time. From the bottom of my heart, thank you!"

- **Amanda**

*Treatment Access Program Beneficiary*





# Camp HEAL

*Camp Colby, Angeles National Forest  
September 27 - 29, 2019*

In fall of 2019, 100 campers joined together in Southern California for a weekend celebrating body positivity, empowerment, and recovery.

Our all-star lineup of "camp counselors" and workshop facilitators included leaders like Carolyn Costin, Jennifer Rollin, Jen Ponton, Amanda Crew, Laura Cipullo, and Nicole Morgan in the eating disorder and body neutrality space.

We are so grateful for the supportive community that was built during Camp HEAL and the long lasting memories that each camper will take with them.

*"This was hands down the best weekend of my life."*

*- Camp HEAL participant*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Growing Project HEAL through strategic leadership

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**Craig Kramer**

Mental Health Ambassador and Chair, Global Campaign for Mental Health, at Johnson & Johnson

**Paraag Marathe**

President of 49ers Enterprises and Executive Vice President of Football Operations

**Brian Beitler**

Executive Vice President, Chief Marketing and Brand Development Officer at J.Jill

**Donna Friedman**

Founder of MUSC Friedman Center for Eating Disorders at the Medical University of South Carolina

**Amanda Crew**

Actress and eating disorder recovery advocate

**Jenna Tregarthen**

Recovery Record CEO and Co-Founder

**Kristina Saffran**

Project HEAL Co-Founder

**Liana Rosenman**

Project HEAL Co-Founder



# FINANCIALS

## FY19 Revenue and Expenses

### REVENUE

National Donations	\$480,744
Chapter Revenue	\$44,581
Event Revenue	\$166,799
Foundations	\$51,270
Corporations	\$49,987
Merchandise	\$2,367
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$795,748</b>

### EXPENSES

Mission Programs & Services	\$480,816
<i>Treatment Access Program</i>	\$186,212
<i>Communities of HEALing</i>	\$219,917
<i>Chapter Support Network</i>	\$74,687
Other Program Expenses	\$208,578
Fundraising & Marketing	\$214,634
Management & Operations	\$181,062
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,085,090</b>





Project HEAL's mission is to deliver access to HEALing for all people with eating disorders.

**Project HEAL**  
[theprojectheal.org](http://theprojectheal.org)