

Elevating Communities, Transforming Care

OUR 2023 ANNUAL REVIEW



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Letter from our CEO and Board Chair

Dear friends,

Welcome to CARESTAR’s inaugural annual review! Six years ago, with the launch of the CARESTAR Foundation, we envisioned revolutionizing emergency medical response and first responders in California—cultivating a highly trained, diverse team of providers, working in partnership with local communities for timely, tailored care. With your support, and the unwavering dedication of our innovative partners, CARESTAR is transforming this vision into reality.

Rooted in our nonprofit predecessor CALSTAR’s legacy, we started as an organization focused on improving health outcomes in the prehospital care setting. Since then, we have clarified our values, and elevated the imperative of achieving racial equity within the EMS response system. Inspired by the Freedom House paramedics of the 1960’s, we’re now 100% committed to addressing inequities and barriers to access in prehospital care. Some of how that impacts our work:

Trust-based philanthropy - working with grantees in a way that honors their strengths, amplifies their voices, and allows them to define needs and solutions. We provide multi-year, general operating support without assuming expertise.

Racial equity lens - exclusively funding initiatives that center racial equity, reduce health disparities, and/or address barriers to care.

Deliberate use of resources - ensuring alignment with our values across various aspects of our organization, including endowment investment, payout models, and the question of existing in perpetuity.

We invite you to dive into this report, engage in the conversation, and consider joining us in this movement to bring greater racial equity to emergency and prehospital care. We are excited for the journey ahead, and the growing momentum in our work!

Warm regards,

Tanir Ami, CEO
Sandra Shewry, Board Chair



Our Values in Action

At the CARESTAR Foundation, we are reimagining emergency and prehospital care that is equitable, unified, and compassionate, with a focus on elevating community voice and power, building a movement, and catalyzing systems change. Our commitment to this endeavor is fueled by core values that actively guide and inspire us.



EQUITY

Addressing systemic barriers to eliminate racial disparities in health outcomes and care

COMPASSION

Centering local communities and the lived experiences of those most impacted



UNITY

Working in collaboration and partnership to have the greatest impact

HOPE

Unwavering belief in our collective vision for equitable systems of care

EQUITY

Addressing systemic barriers to eliminate racial disparities in health outcomes and care.

From the Foundation’s inception, establishing ourselves amidst a global pandemic and civil unrest related to racial injustices, we intentionally focused our work on addressing systemic inequities. This year, some of the ways we demonstrated this commitment was by funding targeted research, championing robust data collection, and advocating for a diverse workforce mirroring California’s rich and varied demographics.

Knowledge is Power

In recognizing the critical importance of tailoring emergency and prehospital care to the unique needs of local communities, the CARESTAR Foundation supports researchers and research organizations who seek to better understand and document the breadth and depth of health inequities in this field. In 2023, we funded several critical studies that uncovered valuable information about how people, especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx and other people of color, experience emergency response and what they would like to see going forward.

88%

of California voters want major changes to the way police and other emergency services providers respond to 911 calls.

Source: 2023 statewide poll by Public Health Advocates

83%

of respondents feel it is important to see health workers from similar cultural backgrounds or life experiences.

Source: 2022 California Pan-Ethnic Health Network survey



CARESTARs multi-year support is pivotal as we work to bring greater equity to first response, recognizing the enduring and unwavering commitment required to propel this type of systemic change.

Alma Bowen
NUESTRA COMUNIDAD
 Transformations & Innovations
 Grantee

Reflecting and Representing Communities Served

This year, the Healthforce Center at UCSF, a CARESTAR grantee, examined California’s first responder demographics, revealing the critical need for increased diversity in the EMT, paramedic, and firefighter workforce. The study underscores the need for systematic data collection for those entering and leaving the field, in order to sustain a robust EMT and paramedic population. CARESTAR, having invested over \$1 million in organizations like Bay EMT, EMS Corps, and the Firefighters Youth Academy, is committed to fostering a more diverse and inclusive EMS workforce, essential for high-quality care and the future of the EMS system.

63%

of the general population in California identify as non-White vs. just 32% of California firefighters.

Source: Healthforce Center at UCSF

44%

of the general population in California speak a language other than English at home vs. just 25% of California paramedics (and 28% of EMTs).

Source: Healthforce Center at UCSF



CARESTAR exemplifies an equity-centered approach to prehospital care, founded on principles of trust, collaboration, and the mutual exploration of innovative practices to serve local/regional communities.

Jodi Nerell, LCSW
SUTTER HEALTH
 Transformations & Innovations
 Grantee



COMPASSION

Centering local communities and the lived experiences of those most impacted.

We believe that those closest to the issues are also closest to the solutions, and that ensuring communities have a voice and decision making power in defining and pursuing those solutions is essential to meaningful and sustained progress.

A Trust-Based Approach to Philanthropy

At the heart of CARESTAR’s relationship with grantees is trust and a steadfast commitment to fostering deep connections and meaningful partnerships. Beyond financial support, our approach involves actively listening to and working with communities to understand the unique needs of those most impacted by the health inequities we seek to address. Using trust-based philanthropy, we’re working to reimagine our relationship with grantees, rebalancing power dynamics, and envisioning a future where community-driven initiatives lead to transformative and sustainable impact.

81%
of grants awarded were unrestricted funding/general operating support

82%
of grants awarded were multi-year commitments

\$359k
average grant amount awarded



CARESTAR’s trusting approach gave us the time to explore policy ideas and build bridges, and to seize opportunities that arose to advance affordability and equity for Californians.

Anthony Wright
HEALTH ACCESS
Policy Grantee



CARESTAR sets the standard in their grantmaking. Their commitment to relationship building is second to none, with a real emphasis on helping grantees connect and collaborate.

Lance Maples
SAN RAMON VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
Transformation & Innovations Grantee



Every conversation we have with CARESTAR feels like an authentic partnership. The validation, language, and practical tools we’ve been gifted through this collaboration have strengthened our capacity to grow in tremendous ways.

Toni McNeil
CONCRETE DEVELOPMENT INC.
Community Voices Grantee



CARESTAR is a model foundation that should be recognized for its approach to trust-based philanthropy; an approach made possible by an amazing staff that demonstrates a genuine desire to affect change.

Wellington Jackson
BAY AREA YOUTH EMT
Workforce Grantee



CARESTAR’s approach redefines philanthropy, prioritizing relationships and trust over rigid frameworks. This flexibility allows us to innovate and adapt in providing vital emergency care to diverse and underserved populations.

Michael P. Mason
SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT -
COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE DIVISION
Research Grantee



UNITY

Working in collaboration and partnership to have the greatest impact.

We believe in the power of collective action. Through our signature grants program, the Transformations & Innovations Initiative (TII), we support the collaborative efforts of organizations from across sectors, catalyzing new and better ways for Californians to engage, receive, and experience emergency response and care.

PARTNER SUMMIT

Each year, CARESTAR brings key stakeholders together for a day-long event to celebrate, inspire, and learn from one another.

The CARESTAR Foundation’s annual Partner Summit is a meeting of the minds and a gathering of peers over a shared vision of equity in EMS. This event serves as a cornerstone of the movement to bring greater racial equity to emergency and prehospital care, where stakeholders unite over intimate conversations, immersive panel discussions, and inspiring brainstorming sessions. Participants depart with a renewed sense of optimism and a fortified commitment to our collective efforts, infusing fresh ideas and energy into the path that lies ahead.

2023 Grantees

True partners on a shared journey.

- | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Anti-Police Terror Project | Concrete Development Inc. | Loma Linda University | San Francisco Fire Youth Academy |
| Bay EMT | Cristo Rey De La Salle East Bay High School | Lundquist Institute | San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District |
| California Bridge (Public Health Institute) | Days with Zahrah | NorCal EMS | San Francisco Fire Department/ San Jose State University |
| California Indian Museum & Cultural Center | Exhaling Injustice | North Valley Labor Federation | Still I Rise Films |
| California Pan Ethnic Health Network | Health Access Foundation | Nuestra Comunidad | Support for Actively Rising Youth |
| City of Eureka | Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI) | Prevention Institute | Sutter Coast Hospital |
| City EMT (Dusty’s Fishing Well) | Hope & Heal Fund | Public Health Advocates | TabiMOMs |
| College of Behavioral Health Leadership | Interface Child & Family Services: 211 Now | Public Works Alliance | UCLA Center for Prehospital Care |
| | King’s View | Raheem (Community Response Works) | Youth Alive |
| | | RYSE | Youth Recovery Connections |



HOPE

Unwavering belief in our collective vision for equitable systems of care.

At CARESTAR, our vision is for all Californians to experience emergency and prehospital care that is equitable, unified and compassionate. We're confident that by centering community voices, and through collaborative partnerships, we can build a system that ensures the best emergency and prehospital care for everyone.

What Does a Truly Equitable System Look Like?

The CARESTAR Foundation is working towards a system of emergency and prehospital care where there is deep trust and active collaboration between communities and state/local agencies; where local communities wield influence, decisions are communal, and innovative policies reflect community insights. This is the system we are committed to, and along with our partners, the system that we all believe is not only possible, but essential.



Where folks feel safe walking into a medical clinic, a health care center, a response service coming up...meeting the needs that a person has.

Ryan McClinton
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCATES
Partner since 2019



Recognition that everyone has access and awareness that they can do a job within the first responder section.

Attica Bowden
DUSTYS' FISHING WELL/
CITY EMT
Partner since 2021



The truly equitable system of emergency and prehospital care is anyplace, anytime, wherever the patient is, whatever their needs may be.

Reb Close
YOUTH RECOVERY
CONNECTIONS
Partner since 2022



There has to be an authentic belief that everyone deserves quality care.

Tasha Williamson
EXHALING INJUSTICE
Partner since 2023



Now a Moment of Self Reflection: Consider your role in shifting the landscape of racial equity within EMS.

At CARESTAR, we recognize the scale of our ambitions. We also gratefully acknowledge the strength of the partnerships and the shared sense of purpose we hold with others along on this journey with us including grantees, state and local partners, and other funders. In the spirit of collaboration and learning, we invite you to reflect on your role and consider how you can further support our shared commitment to bringing greater racial equity to emergency and prehospital care in California. Some questions to get you started:

- 1 How do my actions and decisions contribute to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment within Emergency Medical Services (EMS)?
- 2 In what ways can I challenge my own biases and assumptions to ensure fairness in the delivery of care and in the equity of outcomes?
- 3 Do I actively seek out and listen to the diverse voices and perspectives within the EMS community to better understand their unique needs?
- 4 What steps can I take to amplify underrepresented voices and experiences within EMS, ensuring they are heard and considered in decision-making processes?
- 5 How can I advocate for policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within EMS at both individual and systemic levels?

If you're interested in joining the movement to bring greater racial equity to emergency and prehospital care in California, please reach out to us at general@carestarfoundation.org.