**Backgrounder**

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**The American Heart Association**

The American Heart Association is the largest voluntary health organization fighting heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases, which kill more than 870,000 Americans each year.

 The AHA’s headquarters are in Dallas, and the organization’s mission is to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular disease and stroke. The AHA supports three primary causes and campaigns, Go Red for Women, Power to End Stroke, and Start! They also operate a Spanish campaign, Go Red Por Tu Corazón, in an effort to reach and educate a larger audience.

 The AHA was founded in 1924 by six cardiologists, who recognized the need for a national organization to share research findings and promote further study of heart disease. The AHA reorganized and went public as a voluntary health agency in 1948, with the addition of volunteers with non-medical skills in business management, public education and fundraising.

 The AHA’s goal is, by 2020, to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent and reduce deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent.

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