



For Immediate Release

4,000 LA newborns to don tiny red hats for heart health

Volunteers needed to package the hats for Heart Month celebration

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 15, 2018 – More than 4,000 newborns in Los Angeles will be sporting little red caps, instead of the traditional pink or blue, as part of the American Heart Association's Little Hats, Big Hearts program aimed at bringing attention to heart disease, the number one killer of Americans, and congenital heart defects, the most common type of birth defect in the country. All babies born in the month of February at 15 participating LA County hospitals will receive a hat made by volunteers from across Southern California and as far as Lebanon. The program, sponsored locally by Union Bank, is in its second year in LA.

"We are so thrilled by the response from the knitting community and our local hospitals that we expect to more than double the number of babies and families that we reached last year," said UCLA Health cardiologist Ravi Dave, MD, immediate past president of the American Heart Association Los Angeles County Board of Directors. "With this small gift, we hope to inspire parents to cherish their health and to commit to helping their children grow healthy and strong hearts."

The American Heart Association is accepting hats until the end of January and volunteers may drop off or send them to the American Heart Association Los Angeles Division office, 816 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017. More volunteers are needed to help package the little red hats for delivery on Friday, Jan. 19, 2-5 p.m. at the AHA Los Angeles office (same address as hat drop offs). To participate, contact Taylor Tomczyszyn at Taylor.Tomczyszyn@heart.org or (213)-291-7092.

"The volunteers have provided amazing support by knitting almost twice the number of hats this year and we are so thankful for their participation and the ability to reach even more families with heart healthy messages," said Leticia Aguilar, Region President, Los Angeles and Central Coast, Union Bank. "This program is truly heart-warming. Who doesn't love babies in little red hats? Although they are small, they send a powerful message that reminds us that heart health starts at birth. Wherever you are on your life's path, it's never too early or too late to think about your heart."

Little Hats, Big hearts began in Chicago in 2014. The project has grown to include 660 hospitals in 40 states, handing out more than 100,000 hats. This year's participating Los Angeles County hospitals include:

- Antelope Valley Hospital
- Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center
- Harbor UCLA Medical Center
- Henry Mayo Medical Center
- Huntington Hospital
- Long Beach Medical Center
- Providence Holy Cross Medical Center
- Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center
- San Gabriel Valley Medical Center
- St. Francis Medical Center
- Torrance Memorial Medical Center
- UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center
- USC Verdugo Hills Hospital
- Valley Presbyterian Hospital
- White Memorial Medical Center

In addition to using red hats to raise awareness of heart disease and congenital heart defects, Little Hat, Big Hearts also drives awareness for the American Heart Association's [Support Network](#), an online forum for families affected by heart disease and stroke. For more information about Little Hats, Big Hearts, including knitting patterns, participating cities and other ways to support, visit www.heart.org/littlehatsbighearts.

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About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow Los Angeles AHA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).