



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

March 2024

Letter From the President and CEO



Each year in women's health, we are grateful to have things to celebrate. In 2021, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) hosted the "Advancing NIH Research on the Health of Women: A 2021 Conference" to explore NIH-funded research into maternal morbidity and mortality, chronic debilitating conditions, and cervical cancer. In 2022, the Biden administration released the [*White House Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis*](#), and legislation was passed establishing the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) and the Office of Autoimmune Disease Research (OADR) within ORWH.

SWHR commends every effort to close knowledge gaps and improve outcomes in women's health, but we have long advocated for an effort equivalent to the Cancer Moonshot — an initiative that would elevate our nation's efforts to improve women's health across the lifespan, and truly prioritize women's health to close the gender health gap.

In 2023, we saw such an initiative take form.

Announced in November 2023, the [*White House Initiative on Women's Health Research*](#) aims to improve how the federal government approaches and funds research into the health of women. As part of this effort, the Administration will bring together representatives from executive department and agencies; deliver concrete recommendations that would improve how women's health research is conducted; highlight where investments would be most informative; and engage members of the scientific, philanthropic, and private sectors. It is an effort that is long overdue and one we are hopeful will revolutionize our nation's approach to women's health. SWHR has reached out to the Initiative's chair, Dr. Carolyn Mazure, offering to serve as a resource and is engaging with the Administration and our peers in the public health and scientific communities to move the recommendations coming out of this effort into policy and practice.

“Over the course of the year, we saw time and again how our science and policy efforts complement one another and why evidence-based policymaking should be our nation's gold standard.”

Moving from societal “wins” to Society wins, SWHR over the past year was successful in marrying our science programs — which remain at the heart of what we do — with SWHR's policy work. Over the course of the year, we saw time and again how our science and policy efforts complement one another and why evidence-based policymaking should be our nation's gold standard.

For example, SWHR sought to change the narrative surrounding menopause. In June, SWHR [*launched a survey*](#) to better understand and improve the workplace experience for those who have entered or completed the menopause transition and this fall [*hosted a conversation*](#) with two members of the United Kingdom House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee about the Committee's 2022 report “[*Menopause and the Workplace*](#)” and what supporting menopausal individuals at work really looks like. SWHR also continues to engage with lawmakers on legislation related to menopause, including endorsing a bipartisan resolution from Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE) and Julia Letlow (R-LA) recognizing World Menopause Awareness Month in October. Together, we hope these efforts will continue to reduce the stigma associated with this natural life stage and transform how we think about and approach menopause in the workplace in the United States.

SWHR also engaged on uterine health. In July, I joined Representatives Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), and Robin Kelly (D-IL), along with representatives from the Fibroid Foundation and The White Dress Project, [*on Capitol Hill for a press conference*](#) reintroducing the *Stephanie Tubbs Jones Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2023*. In September — as part of a two-day roundtable convening in Washington, D.C. — members of SWHR's Endometriosis Education Working Group

[met with federal policymakers](#) about endometriosis and the need for increased research funding to improve health and quality of life outcomes. This fall SWHR added uterine health conditions to its [Women's Health Equity Initiative](#) to highlight disparities and opportunities in uterine health.

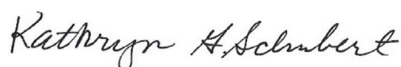
This work, while significant, only skims the surface of what we've accomplished this year. SWHR has spearheaded [educational efforts on HPV vaccines](#); produced [policy resources](#) related to autoimmune diseases and conditions; continued our [Value of Diagnostics Within Women's Health](#) webinar series; held internationally-attended [conference symposiums](#); and [convened partners](#) to discuss the current landscape in women's health — to name a few.

Beyond SWHR's programming and policy efforts, SWHR this year began developing the next iteration of our strategic plan. As part of this process, we conducted interviews with key stakeholders and held several meetings with SWHR's Board of Directors to outline the Society's strategic priorities and determine where we want to go — and where we can best

contribute — as an organization. This work, while underscoring SWHR's previous successes, has also revealed how much more we can do as an organization and how we can better partner with other organizations to make health equity and health parity a reality. Especially in light of the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research, I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish in 2024.

As always, I remain grateful for the hard work and commitment of the SWHR Board of Directors, Policy Advisory Council members, our valued partners, and the exceptional SWHR team, who make all of this work possible.

Sincerely,



Kathryn G. Schubert, MPP, CAE
President and Chief Executive Officer
Society for Women's Health Research

Letter From the Chair of the Board Of Directors



As chair of the SWHR Board of Directors, I have had the honor of leading the Society through a pivotal period — our strategic planning process for 2024-2026 — while still furthering our mission to promote research on biological sex differences in disease and improve women’s health through science, policy, and education.

Through our strategic planning process, we had the opportunity to hear from key stakeholders and peers to gain insights on SWHR’s goals, activities, and initiatives. This process informed our discussions as we revisited our mission, vision, and core pillars, and created organizational goals for the next three years.

The exercise was a reminder of how collaborative, tenacious, and persistent the women’s health community is. We spoke with advocates and partners who have engaged with SWHR for years — or even decades. Together we have made huge strides in advancing women’s health and that work very much continues today, with SWHR serving as a key leader in this community.

We saw SWHR’s leadership in action in 2023 across our core pillars: Science, Policy, Education and Outreach, and Organizational Strength. I am proud that when I look at the Society’s deliverables and engagement from the past year, I see the organization excelling across each of these pillars.

Within its **Science** pillar, the Society engaged in programs spanning autoimmune diseases, gynecologic health, healthy aging, infectious diseases, sleep, and more, producing resources and tools that will benefit women and their families, health providers, and organizations looking to improve health equity for women across the lifespan. Through engagement with the scientific community, new research, and events, SWHR is advancing science and building networks of committed researchers and key stakeholders who help inform and foster progress.

As part of its **Policy** work, I was glad to see the Society expanding its reach, building relationships with federal policymakers and thought leaders to promote needs and opportunities in women’s health. From the federal budget and appropriations process, where SWHR encouraged lawmakers to provide robust funding increases for research entities like the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Office of Research on Women’s Health, to engagement with

the Administration on the White House Initiative on Women’s Health Research, the Society engaged on issues that could have an impact on women’s health outcomes.

Looking at **Education and Outreach**, SWHR made strides in reaching new audiences — from policymakers to consumers — to raise awareness of the unique impact of diseases on women. The Society grew its social media presence, and staff served as sought-after experts for a range of media outlets. Throughout the year, staff members served as panelists for events hosted by Swell, The Hill, and others, and were quoted in media outlets, including *The Fuller Project*, *the Skimm*, and *Oprah Daily*.

And finally, in terms of **Organizational Strength**, SWHR had one of its strongest years yet. Revenues are robust thanks to a highly successful Gala and continued innovation in the fundraising arena. Equally importantly, the team at SWHR is dedicated, talented, and committed; I am continually impressed with their expertise and drive. The Society is well-positioned to reach its goals in 2024 and beyond.

Whether reflecting on the past years of progress or looking ahead to coming years, I am energized by the progress and potential in advancing women’s health. I am also heartened to see the collective strength of the women’s health community in identifying and achieving our goals. As we have seen over the years, we are stronger together than we are apart.

On behalf of the SWHR Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support and engagement. It remains integral to the work that we do. We look forward to making even more strides together in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Gretta Stone

Chair, SWHR Board of Directors
Executive Vice President, Health Policy
Communications
Reservoir Communications Group

2023 Annual Awards Spotlight

SWHR hosted its [33rd Annual Awards Gala](#) on April 26, 2023, in Washington, D.C. The Gala is dedicated to honoring leaders who are advancing women's health and bringing together providers, policymakers, researchers, and other leaders across health care to celebrate the progress that has been made in women's health research and spotlight new opportunities and frontiers in the field.

Julie Louise Gerberding, MD, MPH, Chief Executive Officer at the Foundation for the NIH, was the evening's Keynote Speaker. Dr. Gerberding was the first woman to lead the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In her current role, she helps build public-private research partnerships to support the mission of the NIH.

SWHR's 2023 honorees were Kaveeta Vasisht, MD, PharmD, Horizon Therapeutics, and Pauline M. Maki, PhD.

- ▶ **Dr. Kaveeta Vasisht**, Associate Commissioner for Women's Health at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), was awarded **SWHR's Health Public Service Visionary Award** for her long-lasting commitment to public health and women's health.
- ▶ **Horizon Therapeutics** was awarded **SWHR's Health Industry Visionary Award** for its dedication to developing innovative medicines and providing compassionate support to patients.
- ▶ **Dr. Pauline M. Maki**, Senior Director of Research at the University of Illinois Chicago Center for Research on Women and Gender, was awarded **SWHR's Health Education Visionary Award** for her significant research contributions in cognition, mood, and brain function during pregnancy and menopause. Dr. Maki is Past Chair of the SWHR Interdisciplinary Network on Alzheimer's Disease.



Dr. Sudip Parikh, CEO of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (left), presents the Health Education Visionary Award to Dr. Pauline Maki (right).



Dr. Kaveeta Vasisht accepts the Public Service Visionary Award.



Dr. Julie Louise Gerberding provides SWHR 2023 Annual Awards Gala Keynote Speech.



Gretta Stone, SWHR Board Chair (left), presents the Healthy Industry Visionary Award to Ms. Keli Walbert (right), who accepted the award on behalf of Horizon Therapeutics.

Science and Policy Programming and Activities

SWHR implements two of its core functions—Science and Policy—by advancing understanding of and how sex, gender, and hormones affect health and by championing policies that promote the health and eliminate disparities for all women. To do this work, SWHR relies on the expertise of interdisciplinary stakeholders, who provide expert analyses on topics related to women’s health, help identify research gaps and unmet needs, and inform SWHR’s deliverables that address disparities in women’s health.

Convening Subject-Matter Experts to Assess Gaps and Opportunities in Women’s Health

In 2023, SWHR hosted two interdisciplinary roundtables covering areas in women’s health. During each of these roundtables, health care stakeholders across the research, clinical, patient advocacy, and policy communities discussed the state of science, clinical care, and policy impacts on various issues on women’s health, identifying strategies to address key gaps and advance the field. The scientific and policy roundtables held in 2023 included:

- ▶ [Elucidating Endometriosis: Persistent Gaps in Research and Care](#)
- ▶ [Addressing Sex Differences in Heart Health and Access to Care Barriers that Impact Outcomes for Women: A Policy and Public Health Approach](#)

Producing and Disseminating Resources that Serve Women and Their Families

SWHR’s success is built on gathering a broad and diverse set of scientists, clinicians, patients, and other experienced thought leaders to research, discuss, and publish on the implications of sex and gender differences across a variety of health-related conditions and how to best address unmet needs in women’s health. SWHR has a rich history of bringing fresh perspectives and thought leadership to the field of women’s health and communicating knowledge to diverse stakeholders. In 2023, SWHR produced an array of [resources](#) that can be used by women, health care providers, and policymakers to address persistent gaps in women’s health, especially concerning investments in research, education and awareness, and barriers to diagnosis and care for diverse populations of women.

2023 SWHR Resources by the Numbers



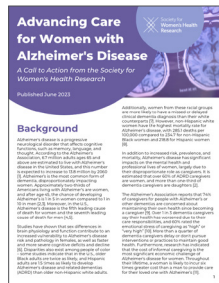
Fact Sheets

SWHR created several fact sheets to provide information on women's health issues for patients as well as health care policy decision makers. In 2023, SWHR produced the following fact sheets:

- ▶ [Closing the Gaps in Endometriosis Research & Care](#)
- ▶ [Factors Impacting Women's Cardiovascular Health Across the Lifespan](#)
- ▶ [Flu Vaccines & Pregnancy Fact Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Impact of Lupus on Women Across the United States](#)
- ▶ [Prevent Cancer with the HPV Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)
- ▶ [The Importance of Caring for Your Bones Early and Often](#)
- ▶ [Uterine Health Disparities: Prevalence and Impact Across the United States](#)
- ▶ *Value of Diagnostics within Women's Health* series fact sheets on [Alzheimer's Disease](#), [Breast Cancer](#), [Cardiovascular Disease](#), [Lung Cancer](#), and [Ovarian Cancer](#)

Calls to Action

Last year, SWHR launched a Women's Health Dashboard — a platform that highlights public health data, research investment, and policy implications for health conditions that have the highest burden of disease and mortality rates for women across the lifespan. In 2023, SWHR began the second phase of the Dashboard, with the release of a call to action titled, [Advancing Care for Women with Alzheimer's Disease](#). This document identifies priority areas and recommendations to eliminate delays in diagnosis for women, increase inclusion of women in clinical trials, address the disproportionate burden of caregiving for women, and create policy solutions that improve access and care for women living with Alzheimer's disease.



Advancing Care for Women with Alzheimer's Disease Call to Action

Video Toolkit

When faced with making health care decisions for themselves and their families, it can be overwhelming and difficult for women to identify resources and information that are reliable and accessible. With the expert guidance of our network participants, SWHR created the [#SWHRtalksHPV Video Series](#) to help parents and guardians learn about the HPV vaccine and its cancer prevention power. These 10 social media-ready video reels share concise and easy-to-understand facts and tips from immunization experts as they answer key questions relating to the HPV vaccine.

Policy Brief Series

To allow deeper dives into various topic areas, in 2023, SWHR produced a series of [four policy briefs](#) that focused on health care policies to address barriers to access and care for women with autoimmune diseases. These briefs complemented SWHR's [four-part autoimmune congressional briefing event series](#) and other blog articles published throughout the year — many of which features the stories and experiences of women in various autoimmune patient and caregiver roles across the lifespan.

Scientific and Public Engagement

SWHR continues to leverage opportunities to engage with the scientific and public health communities through a myriad of virtual and in-person platforms. In 2023, SWHR hosted symposia and presented at regional and national meetings to disseminate work from the Society's current and past programs. While some sessions were selected through an abstract submission process, others were by invitation from conference leadership.

- ▶ [Addressing Disparities through Patient, Provider, and Policymaker Collaborations: Women's Health and Autoimmune Disease Case Study](#), *MichBIO Michigan Life Sciences Showcase*
- ▶ [Addressing the Intersection of Maternal Health and Narcolepsy Care](#), *Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine (SBSM) Annual Scientific Conference*
- ▶ [Emerging Topics in Women's Health: A Focus on Uterine Health](#), *Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Health of Women Conference*
- ▶ [From Cells to Society: Research and Advocacy to Advance Mature Women's Health](#), *Organization for the Study of Sex Differences (OSSD) Annual Meeting*
- ▶ [The Roles of Sex and Gender in Women's Eye Health Disparities in the United States](#), *Organization for the Study of Sex Differences (OSSD) Annual Meeting*

SWHR also participated in several events and spoke on panels to address broader topics in women's health — including health equity, patient advocacy in the health care system, and health care and workplace policy. Additionally, SWHR exhibited at several conferences, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) Annual Clinical and Scientific Meeting, the annual Nurse Practitioner's in Women's Health (NPWH) Conference, and the Organization for the Study of Sex Differences (OSSD) Annual Meeting. At these events, SWHR highlighted resources and materials from various programs, including the Alzheimer's Disease, Autoimmune Diseases, Menopause, Uterine Health, and Vaccines programs.

Celebrating Milestones in Women's Health Research

Throughout the year, in addition to releasing materials and resources, SWHR also works to elevate the current women's health landscape, reflecting on how far we've come, where we are, and where we can drive advancements moving forward. This year, SWHR hosted several events to examine areas relevant to women's health research progress and future opportunities. In the webinar, "[A Conversation on the Elevation of Sex and Gender in Publishing Academic Research](#)," co-hosted with OSSD, representatives from academic journals came together for a conversation about what they are doing to elevate the importance of sex differences research and to discuss how the journals are approaching policies related to reporting on sex and gender in research studies. Then in "[Reflecting on 30 Years of the Revitalization Act: A Conversation with SWHR's Founder](#)," SWHR President and CEO Kathryn Schubert, MPP, CAE, sat down with SWHR Founder and Board Member Florence Haseltine, PhD, MD, to discuss SWHR's history and what opportunities lie ahead for inclusive, diverse, and equitable women's health research.

Facilitating Continued Collaboration Among SWHR's Network Members

SWHR is committed to sustaining engagement across our program areas and continuing to facilitate connections with and between our stakeholders throughout our interdisciplinary networks. After a working group has been released, SWHR hosts Network Update Meetings to highlight special interest topics and discussions among former working group participants and members of the overarching network, identifying future areas of engagement and collaboration. In 2023, the [Maternal Health Network](#) met to discuss novel approaches for education about prenatal genetic screening. SWHR's new *All About* topic-specific emails, which launched this year, also promote continued information-sharing among Network members, highlighting published papers, resources, and special events from our Networks participants.

SWHR 2023 Science and Policy Programs

SWHR's programs bring together expert researchers, health care providers, patients and patient advocates, policy professionals, and other health care leaders to identify knowledge gaps and address unmet needs in diseases and conditions that disproportionately, differently, or exclusively affect women. SWHR programs in 2023 focused on the following topics:

Alzheimer's Disease

This program builds on the foundational scientific, policy, and educational work that SWHR has conducted over the last decade, discussing policy needs and opportunities as they relate to improving health and quality of life outcomes in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias for women—both as patients and as caregivers.



Autoimmune Diseases

This program addresses health care policies that create barriers to access and affordable care for women across the lifespan who are living with autoimmune and immune-mediated diseases and conditions.



Bone Health

This program builds on previous work that examines bone health and its impact on women's health conditions across the lifespan, with a special emphasis on strategies for fracture prevention in at-risk women.



Endometriosis

This program raises awareness of the gaps in research, diagnosis, treatment, and care for endometriosis and supports education for women, health care providers, and policymakers about the impacts of this chronic gynecologic disease.



Heart Health

This program explores public health and policy strategies to eliminate barriers to access and coverage for the health care of women with or at risk for heart disease.



Lupus

This program addressed disparities in lupus diagnosis, treatment, and access to care among subpopulations of women, with a goal to provide recommendations for improving equity and the health care burden for women living with lupus.



Menopause

This program continues to raise awareness of knowledge gaps and unmet needs related to the menopausal transition across areas of education, clinical care, research, and policy, and promotes healthy living and wellness strategies for women throughout this life stage.



Narcolepsy

Building on the foundational work from previous sleep programs, this program addresses knowledge gaps, burden of disease, diagnosis delays and other challenges women encounter as they navigate living with and/or providing caregiving support for narcolepsy.



Uterine Health

This program educated and provided solutions to challenges and health disparities that women living with endometriosis, uterine fibroids, and other uterine health issues encounter.



Vaccines

This program addresses gaps in clinical practice and patient education and promotes community outreach efforts to educate women from diverse communities on the importance of the vaccines in the preventing infectious diseases among women and their families.



Women's Health Diagnostics

This program highlighted the importance and value of innovative diagnostics to improve health outcomes for women across the life span and across disease states and conditions, with special emphasis on cancer and healthy aging.



Government Affairs and Advocacy

SWHR advocates for policies to promote the health of all women across the lifespan and to advance equity in health outcomes throughout the year. The organization does this by translating the scientific evidence base into policies and practices that reduce disparities and improve the health of women; serving as a neutral source of guidance to policymakers; and supporting and advocating for diverse representation of women across all levels of science.

SWHR Advocacy Pays Off in Elevating Women's Health at the Federal Level

On November 13, the Biden administration announced the [White House Initiative on Women's Health Research](#), led by First Lady Jill Biden and the White House Gender Policy Council. The goal of the Initiative is to "spur innovation, unleash transformative investment to close research gaps, and improve women's health." Since its inception, SWHR has called for equity and parity in research into women's health, so the Society was thrilled to see the administration take this important step to remedy decades of lost research and transform our nation's outlook on women's health. Read SWHR's statement on the Initiative announcement [here](#).

Raising Awareness of Women's Health Research Needs on Capitol Hill

SWHR proactively engages with Capitol Hill by meeting with legislators on various policy topics as well as hosting educational events that raise awareness of the myriad issues that exclusively, differently, or disproportionately affect women and identify policy gaps and areas of opportunity. In 2023, SWHR engaged federal policymakers in the following ways:

- ▶ Submitted [outside witness testimony](#) to the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee with its funding requests for fiscal year 2024 appropriations legislation.
- ▶ Hosted a series of [four congressional briefings](#) on policy issues related to autoimmune diseases and conditions and released an accompanying set of [policy briefs](#).
- ▶ [Sent a letter](#) thanking the co-chairs and vice-chairs of the Bipartisan Women's Caucus for sending a letter urging U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Becerra to prioritize women's heart health.
- ▶ [Responded to a request for information](#) from Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Ranking Member Bill Cassidy, MD, regarding reforming the National Institutes of Health, focusing on the ongoing needs in women's health research.
- ▶ Spearheaded a [sign-on letter with the American Heart Association](#) thanking Representatives Cherfilus-McCormick and Cammack for introducing the congressional resolution designating September 2023 as National Cholesterol Education Month and September 30 as LDL-C Awareness Day.



SWHR's Gabriella Watson (middle) and Endometriosis Education Working Group members Lauren Kornegay (left) and James Segers, MD, (right) participate in SWHR Hill Day



SWHR Endometriosis Education Working Group members and SWHR's Irene Aninye, PhD, join congressional staff for a photo during Hill Day

- ▶ Endorsed women's health legislation, including the *Advancing Safe Medications for Moms and Babies Act of 2023*, the *Safe Step Act*, the *Stephanie Tubbs Jones Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act of 2023*, the *Women and Lung Cancer Research and Preventive Services Act of 2023*, and more.

Facilitating Connections Between Advocates and Elected Officials

On Monday, September 11, SWHR hosted a Hill Day with Working Group members since the COVID-19 pandemic. The Hill Day was part of the SWHR [Endometriosis Education Working Group two-day roundtable](#) in Washington, D.C. Participants' meetings centered on educating policymakers about endometriosis and asking them to prioritize endometriosis research funding. SWHR also partnered with HPV Cancers Alliance, Moffitt Cancer Center, and others for an [HPV Day of Advocacy](#) to educate Congressmen about the importance of the HPV vaccine and the PREVENT HPV Cancers Act. Participants also met with the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy to discuss elevating HPV vaccination and cancers in the President Biden's National Cancer Moon Shot Initiative.

Promoting Needs and Opportunities in Women's Health

SWHR's [2023-2024 Federal Legislative Agenda](#) outlines how SWHR plans to prioritize its federal policy efforts over the two-year period. The agenda highlights the Society's core leadership activities as well as other areas of active policy engagement.

In addition to releasing its Federal Legislative Agenda, SWHR also monitored federal agencies' Requests for Information (RFI) and other relevant comment opportunities. In 2023, SWHR provided comments on the following:

- ▶ [Institute for Clinical and Economic Review \(ICER\) Proposed 2024 Value Assessment Framework](#)
- ▶ [ICER Draft Evidence Report on Treatments for Alzheimer's Disease](#)
- ▶ [White House Office of Science and Technology Policy RFI on Clinical Research Infrastructure and Emergency Clinical Trials](#)

Coalition Spotlight: Coalition to Advance Maternal Therapeutics Bolsters Advocacy Efforts

SWHR assumed the role of administrative home of the [Coalition to Advance Maternal Therapeutics \(CAMT\)](#) in 2022. Since that time, the CAMT has grown its membership and has increased its activities and policy efforts. Of note, in 2023, the Coalition:



- ▶ Held several meetings with congressional offices and Administration staff to champion the provisions of the *Advancing Safe Medications for Moms and Babies Act of 2023*
- ▶ Hosted two in a series of three congressional briefings highlighting issues surrounding the inclusion of pregnant and lactating populations in research, "[Pregnant and Lactating Populations in Research: How Leaving These Populations Out Leaves Them Behind](#)" and "[PRGLAC Then and Now: Where We Are and Where We're Going](#)"
- ▶ Released resources, including the fact sheet "[Q&A: The Role of Clinical Trials in Keeping Mothers and Babies Safe](#)" and the flyer "[Advancing Safe Medications for Moms and Babies Act of 2023](#)"

Coalition Spotlight: Friends of ORWH Elevates the Office and It's Mission Among Policymakers

The Friends of the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH), launched by SWHR in 2021, supports the work of the National Institutes of Health ORWH. The goal of the coalition is to advocate for federal support of ORWH's mission as well as raise awareness of ORWH's ongoing programs and successes. In spring 2023, the Friends of ORWH [sent a letter](#) to House and Senate appropriators outlining the Coalition's funding requests for fiscal year 2024 and, in the fall, the Friends [sent a letter](#) urging swift passage of fiscal year 2024 spending legislation.

On January 25, in celebration of Women's Health Research Day, which commemorates the implementation of the NIH Policy on Sex as a Biological Variable, the Friends hosted a congressional reception. The event also spotlighted the work of ORWH and recognized ORWH Director Janine Clayton, MD, FARVO, for her myriad contributions to women's health.



SWHR President and CEO Kathryn Schubert, MPP, CAE (right) presents award to ORWH Director Janine Clayton, MD, FARVO, for her contributions to women's health during Friends of ORWH congressional reception

Education and Awareness

SWHR remains committed to elevating the national conversation on women's health and sex differences research to raise awareness and drive change across policy, clinical care, training, and research. SWHR honors this commitment by serving as a trusted and neutral source of information on women's health and sex differences research; raising awareness of disparities and unmet needs in women's health; and creating engaging, science-based content for diverse audiences.

Sharing Women's Personal Health Perspectives

SWHR recognizes that advancing women's health must center the experiences and individual health journeys of women. This year, SWHR continued to invite women to share their personal health journeys through an online submission form. There are now more than 16 women's health stories posted on the website page, "[A Woman's Health Perspective.](#)" [Ashley's story](#) about narcolepsy and maternal health was featured during a symposium held by SWHR at the Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine's Annual Scientific Conference.



- ▶ [A Focus on Mental Health and Infertility in Women](#)
- ▶ [Exploring the State of Environmental Health and its Intersection with Women's Health](#)
- ▶ [Getting Serious About Heart Health](#)
- ▶ [Improving Heart Outcomes for Women through Policy and Public Health Avenues](#)
- ▶ [Maternal Health Network Meeting Addresses Novel Approaches for Education About Prenatal Genetic Screening](#)
- ▶ [Rewriting Endometriosis Education for Providers and Policymakers](#)
- ▶ [SWHR Talks "From Cells to Society" at Sex Differences Conference](#)
- ▶ [The Role of Diversity in Science and NIH's Recent Efforts to Create a Culture of Inclusion](#)
- ▶ [Voicing Concern for the Rise in HPV-Associated Oral Cancers](#)

Amplifying Conversations on Women's Health Through SWHR Channels

SWHR's social media channels, blog, and emails are outlets through which the organization connects with partners and peers working throughout research, industry, and public health as well as with members of the public. Over the past year, SWHR made particular effort to meet people where they are on social media and engaged with more than 19,500 followers across Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. SWHR participated in several live "Twitter Chats" with partner organizations and hosted four Instagram Live events, which can be viewed on SWHR's Instagram profile ([@swhr_official](#)).



SWHR published more than 50 blogs sharing information relevant for women and their families. Blog post highlights in 2023 included:

SWHR also had the privilege of working with patient advocates and experts to publish several guest blogs in 2023, ranging from blogs about one woman's menopause journey to a filmmaker's perspective on Alzheimer's caregiving and a woman's dedication to healthy bone health practices.

SWHR's emails in 2023 shared information on women's health events, new resources, and notable health awareness dates. In addition to the Society's monthly Women's Health News newsletters, SWHR began an All About email series. The All About emails are topic-specific digest emails that spotlight relevant news, SWHR resources, and partner organizations within that health area. In August, [All About: Immunizations](#) highlighted SWHR's HPV and Vaccines programs, and September's [All About: Healthy Aging](#) highlighted Alzheimer's disease, bone health, and menopause.



Raising the Visibility of SWHR and its Work

SWHR leadership and resources were featured across many media outlets this year. Media highlights from the year include:

- ▶ Be Health Connected Podcast: [Empowering Women at Work: Navigating Menopause with SWHR's CEO](#)
- ▶ FemTech World Podcast: [The Gender Research Gap](#)
- ▶ GSK: Behind The Science Magazine: [‘We’re not a world of men – it’s as simple as that’: how gender diversity in clinical trials improves health outcomes for women](#)
- ▶ Nature: [How menopause reshapes the brain](#)
- ▶ Oprah Daily: [Menopause, from A to Z](#)
- ▶ Prevention: [5 Myths About Pregnancy We All Need to Stop Believing](#)
- ▶ The Fuller Project: [The only cancer that won’t get covered for women of 9/11](#)

Leaders from the Society were also invited to participate in many public events and closed-door discussions about the current state and the future of women’s health research. Media and event opportunities are imperative to SWHR’s mission of making women’s health mainstream. Event highlights from the year include:

- ▶ Speaking at The Hill’s U.S. Healthcare Annual Checkup Event
- ▶ Attending a National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Consensus Study on Chronic Debilitating Conditions in Women meeting
- ▶ Speaking at multiple National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions events
- ▶ Attending the National HPV Vaccine Roundtable and the National Roundtable on Cervical Cancer, hosted by the American Cancer Society
- ▶ Attending the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Catalyze: A Race and Health Equity Summit



SWHR President and CEO Katie Schubert (far right) spoke at The Swell New Pause Symposium in October.

- ▶ Speaking at The Swell New Pause Symposium (pictured)
- ▶ Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly Science Summit, hosted by ECHAlliance Global Health Connector
- ▶ Speaking at the Women’s Healthy Aging Innovations Summit

The Power of Partnerships

SWHR continued to form new partnerships and reinvest in existing partnerships across the scientific, women’s health, public health, and larger Washington DC communities. These partnerships play a crucial role in SWHR’s work to promote women’s health research and help SWHR’s materials reach new audiences. Some notable 2023 partnerships included:

“SWHR continued to form new partnerships and reinvest in existing partnerships across the scientific, women’s health, public health, and larger Washington DC communities.”

Women’s Alzheimer’s Movement

In April, the Women’s Alzheimer’s Movement led by Maria Shriver and the Cleveland Clinic joined forces with SWHR



Women’s
Alzheimer’s
Movement

to host “The Power of Research: Bridging the Gap” Luncheon to bring awareness to women’s risk of developing and dying from Alzheimer’s disease, to discuss the state of Alzheimer’s research, and to share the work of researchers who are seeking to combat this disease.



SWHR Staff with Maria Shriver at “The Power of Research: Bridging the Gap Luncheon” in April 2023.

Washington Nationals

SWHR joined Washington D.C.'s Major League Baseball team the Washington Nationals as a ticket partner for their Ladies Night game this year. As a partner, SWHR was able to elevate the Society's role and its efforts in women's health among game attendees. SWHR staff even joined the team on the field at the start of the game!



SWHR Development Coordinator Emma Bixler joined the Washington Nationals mascot Screech on the field during the Ladies Night game in August.

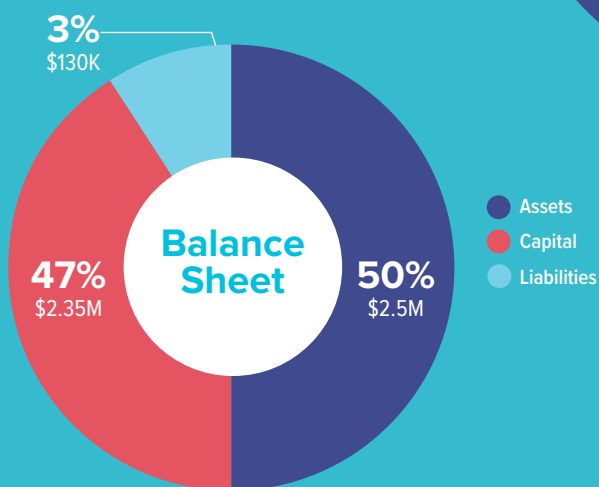
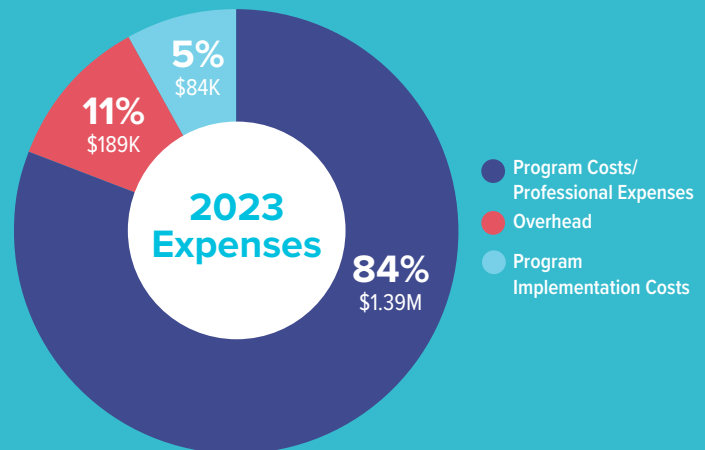
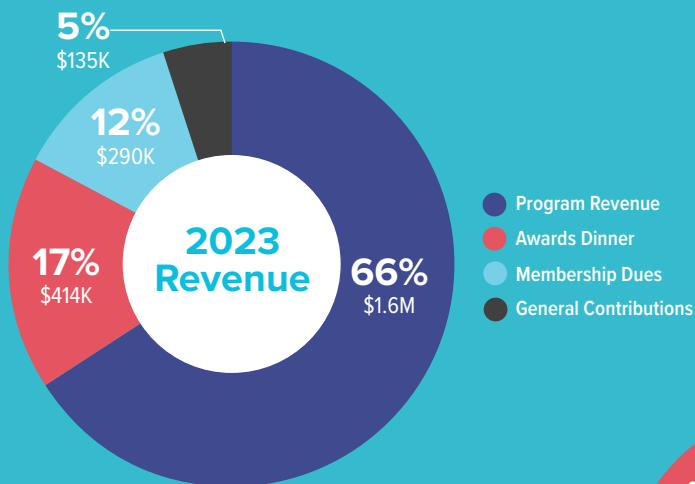
Bill & Melinda Gates Innovation Equity Forum

SWHR was pleased to have two staff members participate in the Innovation Equity Forum by the Bill & Melina Gates Foundation and National Institutes of Health, with support from Camber Collective. Stakeholders joined together to inform the report, "[Women's Health Innovation Opportunity Map 2023: 50 High-Return Opportunities to Advance Global Women's Health R&D.](#)"

Coalitions

SWHR is pleased to participate several coalitions that help us drive advancements in women's health research. SWHR is a member of coalitions, including the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research; the American Cancer Society National Roundtable on Cervical Cancer; the CDC Coalition; the Friends of AHRQ, NCHS, and NIEHS; the National Health Council; the National HPV Vaccine Roundtable; and more.

2023 Operational Highlights:



SWHR Leadership

Executive Committee



Kathryn G. Schubert, MPP, CAE
SWHR President and CEO | Ex Officio



Gretta Stone
SWHR Board Chair



Jenelle Krishnamoorthy, PhD
Secretary-Treasurer



Shontelle Dodson, PharmD
Immediate Past Chair



Patti Compton, MS
Executive Committee Member



Erika Miller, JD
Executive Committee Member

Board Members



Jim Carey



Anne B. Cropp, PharmD



Linda G. Griffith, PhD



Florence P. Haseltine, PhD, MD



Judette Louis, MPH, MD



Michael Ybarra, MD

SWHR Staff

Senior Team

Kathryn G. Schubert, MPP, CAE
President and CEO

Irene O. Aninye, PhD
Chief Science Officer

Yonas G. Fsayaye
Chief Financial Officer

Julie Miller
Development Director

Lindsey Miltenberger, MA
Chief Advocacy Officer

—

Emma Bixler
Development Coordinator

Sarah Chew, MPH
Science Programs Manager

Syreen Goulmamine, MPH
Science Programs Manager

Monica Lefton
Communications Manager

Carolyn McPhee, MPH
Science Programs Manager

Gabriella Watson, MS
Science Programs Coordinator

2023 Fellows

Katherine Palmer
Science Policy Fellow

Anju Priyadarshini, MD
Science Policy Fellow

2023 Interns

Taiwo Abraham, MBA
Science Policy Fellow

Ruby Baxley
Communications and Policy Intern

Rachel Troy
Communications and Graphic Design Intern

1025 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 1104
Washington, DC 20036
202 223 8224
info@swhr.org
<https://swhr.org/>