

9.0 PARTNERS OF WHA, INC. HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

In 1951 the Board of Trustees of the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) appointed a committee of three women to study the need for a Wisconsin Hospital Auxiliary Association (WHAA). During the year questionnaires were sent to all hospitals to ascertain the number of existing auxiliaries, the various projects and programs involving volunteers and which hospitals were considering starting such organizations. There were 81 replies. Of these, 43 auxiliaries reported programs and volunteer services. There were 16 requests for assistance, either in organizing or with some particular project.

In 1953, hospital association membership for auxiliaries became a reality, with membership limited to those auxiliaries whose hospitals qualified for membership in the state group. That same year auxiliary representatives were invited to participate in WHA's annual meeting, not only for the opportunity to exchange ideas and concerns, but to receive a charge to define the auxiliary plan and its relationship to WHA. In 1954 the Board of Trustees of WHA voted to accept WHAA as a committee within the framework of the WHA, a concept that would lay the foundation for the WHA/WHAA relationship that exists today.

In 1962, a Constitution and Bylaws for WHAA were compiled and voted into existence. Local auxiliaries began to actively promote health careers and sought aid in expertise from the parent organization. In 1968, a dues structure for WHAA was set up, with the amount to be determined by the number of beds in each hospital.

1972 was marked by the development of the first leadership manual and the initiation of the Volunteer of the Year Award, since discontinued. During the years to follow, WHAA became interested in legislative issues concerning the health care industry, and urged local auxiliaries to adopt the study of these issues as an integral part of ongoing programming. WHAA encouraged local auxiliaries to establish scholarships for students pursuing a career in health care.

Over the years WHAA developed into a strong service organization and maintains an active liaison with WHA with which it shares common goals. WHAA seeks to enhance the service capabilities of member auxiliaries by offering leadership development programs, consultation and assistance on auxiliary/volunteer matters, and by sharing information on successful auxiliary projects and trends in volunteerism. This can be accomplished through the leadership manual, district meetings and the annual convention. WHAA also publishes a quarterly newsletter for the members.

In 1983, the membership of WHAA voted to become a non-profit corporation to be subsequently referred to as the Wisconsin Hospital Association Auxiliaries, Incorporated (WHAAI).

In 1985, the WHAAI developed a public relations program, which encouraged auxiliary participation in marketing community hospitals. "Selling Your Hospital" was presented in a workshop at an AHA auxiliary leadership forum and was featured in an article in "The Volunteer Leader".

In 1996, The Wisconsin Hospital Association changed its name to Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association (still WHA) and the following year WHAAI changed its name to Partners of Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association, Inc.

In September 2002 Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association dropped the “health and” from their name. This conformed to a national movement. In 2003 Partners of Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association also dropped the “health and” from its name to become Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc., also known as Partners of WHA.

In 1999, a new membership category was established for those wanting to remain active after their local groups had discontinued Partners membership. This category is Member-at-Large. A Member-at-Large is a member of the district rather than a local organization. Members at large may hold a state or district office. There is a member at large chairperson that is voting member of the board of directors. This position is appointed by the president and is equivalent to that of a district chairperson. This type of membership has since been discontinued.

In 1993, the Honor Point Award was first presented. This award was presented each year at the annual convention. Criteria for this award are timeliness with reports and payments, minimal attendance at district and annual meetings, a minimum number of newsletters to membership, district and state officers, and maintaining a scholarship program.

In 1994, The Best of the Best Award was begun. This award is presented each year to an onsite administrator, chief executive officer, president, executive director, first vice-president, or chief financial officer of a WHA member hospital who has demonstrated exemplary support of the local Partners group in their facility and volunteers in their community. A committee including either a retired administrator or a past winner selects each year’s recipient. The award is presented at the Partners of WHA annual convention.

In 2003, the WAVE Awards, Wisconsin Award for Volunteer Excellence, were presented for the first time. There are awards in four categories: community service programs, in-service hospital volunteer programs, fundraising programs and community outreach and/or collaboration. The awards were created to recognize outstanding contributions of Partners groups, creativity and leadership, and to promote visibility and goodwill toward Partners member organizations. The WAVE awards are patterned after the American Hospital Association Hospital Awards for Volunteer Excellence (HAVE).

In 2008 and 2009 WAVE Award projects were presented at the State Auxiliary Leaders (SAL) workshop held in conjunction with the AHA Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. 2007 marked the year of technology within the Partners organization. An online Resource Center was established within the WHA website (now located at <https://www.partnersofwha.org/resource-center>). Specific documents can be downloaded. Books, videos, and reference materials can be checked-out and then mailed to recipients upon request. In an effort to conserve resources WHA and Partners of WHA made a concerted effort to “Go Green”. Most correspondence and communications are completed via e-mail and conference calls. On-line convention registration was made available.

The Strategic Planning Committee in 2010 successfully completed two projects: Partners of WHA, Inc. Convention Manuals and the new Partners of WHA, Inc. Leadership-Handbook. This handbook was updated 2014.

January 3, 2011 the new Partners of WHA website was launched on-line. An appointed Partners website coordinator oversees all site content.

Partners of WHA, Inc. continues to emphasize volunteer participation in health education, public policy education, health careers and volunteer service to its hospitals.

