

We're CaringBridge and we're working towards a world where no one goes through a health journey alone.

**We're a nonprofit on a mission to build bridges of care and communication providing love and support on a health journey.**



With the help of more than a million generous supporters, we've funded nearly 900,000 personal websites that have received 2.5 billion visits filled with love, hope and strength.

We're just getting started.

### **What is CaringBridge?**

CaringBridge is a global, nonprofit social network dedicated to helping family and friends communicate with and support loved ones during a health journey. Thanks to our compassionate donors, we offer free, personal, protected websites for people to easily share updates and receive strength and encouragement from their community during an illness or injury.

Founded on June 7, 1997, CaringBridge is the first and most widely used social network created for communicating during a health journey. Today, every 12 minutes a new CaringBridge website is created.

### **How Does it Work?**

You can start a free personal website to share important information quickly during any type of health crisis. We do not sell your personal information to marketers, and allow you to have complete control over the privacy settings, so your website is as private or public as you want it to be. Family and friends can stay informed without overwhelming you with endless phone calls, emails and text messages. Plus they can post messages, photos and videos of support straight to your website. The Ways To Help section of your website helps your people know how best to support you, whether financially through personal fundraising or coordinating support and scheduling Zoom calls through the Planner.

**[Learn More About How It Works](#) or [Start a Personal CaringBridge Website](#)**

## How Many Do We Help?

CaringBridge is for a health journey of any kind—illness, injury, pregnancy complications ... chronic medical or behavioral conditions. Whether you're facing surgery, a hospitalization or transplant, cancer treatment or any other health crisis. CaringBridge is here for you.

Each day, 300,000 people trust CaringBridge to provide strength, hope and healing during a loved one's health journey. Every hour, 1,900 messages are posted to a loved one's website.

Here are some key facts from 2020:

- 42,000 personal websites were created
- 43.5 million people from around the world visited someone's website
- CaringBridge has 4.6 million monthly unique visitors



## What Makes Us Unique?

We are driven by mission, not profit. Ninety percent of all funding comes from those who have experienced the power of CaringBridge firsthand. As families and friends increasingly live in far-flung places, and with our increased reliance on technology to connect us, CaringBridge is a revolutionary leader in filling a need through the power of community. What sets us apart is our commitment to be cost- and advertisement-free, placing our trust in families and donors for support.

### [Learn More About CaringBridge Financials](#)

## How Did We Get Started?

Twenty years ago, Sona Mehring started the first CaringBridge website when her close friends, JoAnn and Darrin, had a premature baby named Brigid. As a computer programmer and website developer, Sona was inspired to create a website to quickly share the devastating news with their family and friends. The same night their baby Brigid was born, on June 7, 1997, CaringBridge was born.

Headquartered in Eagan, Minn., CaringBridge has more than 40 employees, a governing board of 20 members.

### [Review Historical Timeline of CaringBridge](#)

## Powered by Outreach

Outreach partnerships with hospitals, healthcare organizations, nonprofits and for-profit companies, extends to all 50 states, and furthers the CaringBridge mission by referring the use of CaringBridge to their patients, caregivers, members and employees on a health journey.

### [Learn More About How to Get Involved](#) or [Download CaringBridge Logos](#)

## About Liwanag Ojala, CEO

As CEO, Liwanag leads management and ensures that all CaringBridge operations contribute toward its vision – a world where no one goes through a health journey alone.

Liwanag's background has given her a strong foundation of business skills and knowledge that she uses to continue pushing CaringBridge forward into its next era. Before joining CaringBridge as chief operating officer at the end of 2014, she was vice president of ecommerce at Meijer. She developed digital grocery strategy for the grocer and oversaw Meijer.com. Liwanag began her career as an attorney with Briggs & Morgan, PA.



Liwanag has been continuously recognized for her business prowess and achievements. In 2020 Liwanag was named a "Top 500 Executives" by Minnesota Monthly, as well as included in the new CARE 100, a list of the American doing the most to re-imagine and re-humanize our care system. In 2019, Liwanag was named as one of Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal's "Most Admired CEOs" and selected by Twin Cities Business Magazine as one of their "Top 100 People to Know if 2020." She's a member of the Minnesota State Bar, a trustee emeritus of the Blandin Foundation and serves on the Board of Trustees for MPR News.

Liwanag studied at Northwestern University before receiving her law degree from the University of Minnesota Law School. The opportunity to lead an impactful organization at the intersection of health-care, nonprofit and technology all while utilizing her many years in ecommerce has made CaringBridge a rewarding and fulfilling chapter in her professional career.

## [Learn More About Our Leadership Team](#)

### About Sona Mehring, Founder

Sona Mehring founded CaringBridge in 1997 when the Internet was just becoming a household name, making her one of the first to recognize that the Internet could create a powerful connection for people to receive emotional and physical support during a health journey.

After retiring from CaringBridge in 2017, Sona continues to fuel her passion for connecting people in a positive and supportive way, especially online. She will remain a voice for women in leadership and technology, and plans to continue supporting entrepreneurial initiatives.



Sona is frequently recognized for her passion and visionary leadership. In 2015 Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal named her one of Minnesota's "Titans of Technology." She was named one of 2011's "Most Influential Women in Technology" by Fast Company.

### Need More?

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