You Made 2021 a Year of Record Impacts

Becoming the CEO of CaringBridge between pandemic surges was both challenging and rewarding. While COVID continued to complicate nearly everything, your incredible generosity kept CaringBridge up and running for everyone who needed it, during another year of tremendous need.

It was humbling for me to personally hear so many stories of that need, especially from family caregivers—now doubled in number by the pandemic, to an all-time high of 53 million across the United States. And soon after I started at CaringBridge, two good friends came to use it ... one after her husband was badly injured in a fall, and another whose father faced a cancer diagnosis.

Throughout the year, I also continued to meet donors like you. Hearing what they’ve been through and how CaringBridge helped immediately in times of crisis filled my heart with appreciation.

So did seeing how many more CaringBridge sites were started in 2021—more than 43,000—bringing the total since 1997 to nearly 1 million. Continued growth in these numbers reflects the need for CaringBridge—and your support of it.

As you review on these pages what your record-setting generosity made possible in 2021, I want to thank you for believing in CaringBridge. I look forward to updating you throughout 2022, especially as CaringBridge marks its 25th anniversary in June. (Stay tuned for details.)

All the Best,

Tia Newcomer
Chief Executive Officer, Donor

NOTE: To read, watch or listen to stories of patients and families using CaringBridge, scan with your mobile device the QR Codes throughout this report, or visit CaringBridge.org/resources.
More than 2.5 billion visits have been made to CaringBridge since 1997, when Sona Mehring launched a website to support her friends, Darrin Swanson and JoAnn Hardegger, after the premature birth of their daughter, Brighid.

A total of 1,382,614 donors like you have made more than 1.7 million gifts to CaringBridge since 2002, the year it became a nonprofit.

Nearly 90% of gifts to CaringBridge have been made by individual donors like you, who believe in the Mission and Vision of CaringBridge.

45 team members, all of whom are CaringBridge donors, ensured CaringBridge was always available for people using it in every state and 236 countries and territories.

45 million people visited CaringBridge, as patients, family caregivers, and those who wished to offer support and encouragement.

175,772 gifts to CaringBridge were made by 149,327 generous donors like you. It was notable how many donors made multiple gifts in 2021, in response to a great need.

More than 1,900 messages per hour were posted on CaringBridge sites. This lifeblood of support helps people keep going in the hardest moments.

Nearly 400,000 people per day visited CaringBridge, to give and receive love, hope and compassion.

Our Mission: Building bridges of care and communication to provide love and support on health journeys.
You’ve Made a Home for Stories of Caregiving & Healing

Over 24 years, it has always proven true that the best source of advice and inspiration for people using CaringBridge is other CaringBridge users. Who better to talk about uncertainty and living with worry than those who have walked the same path? And who better than you to make a home for the practical tips, personal perspectives and heartfelt stories shared to help others stay the course, even when that feels easier said than done?

Because of you, CaringBridge has a dedicated place for many types of content, all centered on the belief that no one should go through a health journey alone.

A video library features messages of encouragement and expert advice, and an online bookshelf is stocked with the published works of CaringBridge users turned authors. Your investment also powers an in-depth exploration of the topic of healing, and an up-close look at the challenges and gifts of family caregiving.

The Advice & Inspiration section of CaringBridge had its highest usage ever in 2021, with people across the country, and the world, weighing in on topics from long COVID and how the pandemic complicates caregiving—and everything—to finding joy and gratitude in the smallest moments. No such place exists anywhere else, and all thanks goes to you.

Advice & Inspiration: Most-Consumed Types of Content in 2021

Videos including a series of expert advice on healing inspire people to find their own paths toward wholeness, even in the absence of cure.

Bookshelf features the works of CaringBridge authors like Chris Norton, whose amazing health journey is also a documentary on Netflix.

Helping others is why CaringBridge users around the world are willing to share their thoughts on, “What to Know,” “What to Say” and “What to Do.”

Visits to the Advice & Inspiration section have increased more than 300% since its launch in 2017.
ABOVE: When Mike Hart of Alexandria, VA, was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease in 2012, his Dad, Bud, became a family caregiver. That work continues today.

You’re Helping Caregivers Feel Less Stress

With nearly 70 percent of all CaringBridge sites started by family caregivers on behalf of patients, the Caregivers Up Close series launched in 2017 to capture the stories of CaringBridge users across the country doing the hardest job no one ever applies for.

It’s stressful work—a 2021 survey by the national movement ARCHANGELS™ found that 44 percent of caregivers using CaringBridge had intensity scores in the “red zone,” i.e., super-stressed. (The average U.S. Caregiver Intensity Index score is 26 percent, according to ARCHANGELS, which is reframing how caregivers are seen, honored and supported.)

But the data also confirm a theme in the family stories: Knowing someone is in your corner can lower caregiver anxiety by 30 percent. So thank you for showing caregivers they’re not alone.

Thanks to You: Healing Power of Stories

There’s a story of hope and healing in likely every CaringBridge site. And while we can only wish to tell them all, the How We Heal series continues to offer a safe space for people across the country to reflect on how they’ve endured the toughest things anyone could ever imagine.

There is strength in this collective wisdom—50 stories and counting. But the work you supported in 2021 was more focused on scientific analysis of healing, to show its value in a health journey. As the project continues, so will measurement of how CaringBridge can help healing happen. Thank you for investing in the healing power of storytelling, which is so powerfully felt through CaringBridge.

CaringBridge has always been a sacred place, away from the fray of other less private social networks. Founder Sona Mehring valued privacy from the start, and thanks to your support, with whom you share your story remains in your control. But for CaringBridge to help even more people, and to learn from those using it how it can be better, work began in 2021 to look more deeply at data to guide what might come next. Thank you for powering future-focused efforts like this to show where we are now, and where it’s possible for CaringBridge to go.

Through Data & Research, You’re Making CaringBridge More Helpful

Academic Research Summary

By participating in academic research with a University of Minnesota collaborative, patients and family caregivers continue to help scientists show how using CaringBridge may improve health outcomes. Topics of 2021 studies:

- Measuring value to CaringBridge users of being connected to others going through similar health journeys
- Assessing intensity of support through CaringBridge user reactions including iconic heart and prayer hands
- Evaluating whether suggested writing prompts may increase the therapeutic value of journaling for CaringBridge users

Knowing this was how often patients and caregivers activated their communities of support in 2021, work will continue to help even more people during every minute of every day.

This data point helps set the course for CaringBridge to work on becoming as visible to people across the country as it is in its home state of Minnesota.

Of all the measures that show how much your support matters, this number directly reflects the impact of the gifts you make to CaringBridge.

Pandemic travel restrictions interrupted the Ndewga Family’s relocation from Africa to the United States, and when Jen was diagnosed with breast cancer in Texas, her husband, Nic, was 8,700 miles away in Kenya. The power of prayer felt through CaringBridge was a source of strength until everyone could be together at the table again.

A site was created every 12 minutes

1 in 8 people in U.S. used CaringBridge

It costs $30 per month to keep one site going

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Thank You for Powering a Reimagined Platform for the Future

Neither smartphones nor tablets existed when CaringBridge started in 1997, when laptops were briefcase-sized and Facebook’s founder was 13 years old. But with her first lines of code in those early internet days, our founder Sona Mehring—a software engineer—put CaringBridge at the forefront of technology.

Some aspects of Sona’s original platform still exist, 24 years and 2.5 billion visits to CaringBridge later. But for CaringBridge to help even more people, today’s work, thanks to you, is in reimagining a modern platform.

In 2021, your donations were focused on ensuring CaringBridge supports the rapidly changing developments taking place in technology.

**Speed**
Tremendous effort went into making pages across CaringBridge load at record speed in 2021. Thank you for recognizing—and investing in—the hard work required to make technology easy.

**Consistency**
Many talented technology people have helped build the CaringBridge platform between 1997 and 2021. All the work is exceptional, as is the challenge to properly integrate old and new.

**Accessibility**
While 7 in 10 people used CaringBridge mainly on phones and tablets in 2021, multiple systems were involved in ensuring an equally accessible experience for desktop users, too.

In 2021, CaringBridge pages loaded 42% faster than ever before.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Brenda DeAnda of Sioux City, IA, checks CaringBridge on her phone; Sally Lynick of Burnsville, MN, uses her laptop at the kitchen table; Estelle Smith of Boulder, CO, reads a Journal update at work.

Courtney Lamb of Marlborough, MA, with her sons Jayden, Myles and Jacoby, used CaringBridge through breast cancer and COVID. She wrote, “I will never have the same life again, but I am very grateful that I still have my life to live.”
The No. 1 request of those who give to CaringBridge is for more people to know how it works and how it helps. Your support powered huge progress in 2021, across technology platforms, media channels, U.S. Mail and also through networking, both online and in-person—as much as the pandemic permitted.

Through a first-ever Virtual Media Tour during National Family Caregiver Month in November, 24 interviews with CEO Tia Newcomer on TV, radio and social media were seen and heard by 33 million people in 92 cities.

This is the best site ever. I used it every day when my husband suffered a stroke. It saved me endless phone calls to family and friends all over the Eastern Seaboard...it kept them informed and allowed me lots of precious time to spend with him.

No one is better at recommending CaringBridge than its users, and words like these shared across social media inspired comments, site-starts and donations.

CaringBridge by the eBook: A High Point of Success in 2021

A series of eBooks based on the experience of CaringBridge users was extremely well-received throughout 2021, with a very high rate of email interest, many thousands of downloads and the ultimate measure of success—the start of more CaringBridge sites.

Every dollar you donate connects four people. So for the world to be connected, your support is greatly needed.

143 new partnerships were created across the country in 2021 to refer people to CaringBridge through hospitals, cancer centers, residential facilities, caregiver organizations and the VA.

And yes, indeed, the value of using CaringBridge was also communicated on TikTok in 2021.

Treatment for osteosarcoma had the unintended consequence of damaging the heart of Megan Wagner of Maple Grove, MN, right, with her twin sister Maddie. As her stable health makes a heart transplant more possible, Megan’s parents continue to update her very large CaringBridge community—Megan’s site has had nearly 300,000 visits since 2018.
Financial Information for the Year Ended December 31, 2021

A Yearly Accounting of your Investment in CaringBridge

### Revenue and Other Support

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donated services</td>
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<td>Investment income</td>
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<td>Other income</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Expenses

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<td>Program expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,420,470</strong></td>
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### Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,570</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets at the End of 2021</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,551,390</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A mini-documentary showing a day in the lives of the Erickson Family of Elk River, MN, was featured during the Giving Tuesday online event on Nov. 30, marking the global generosity movement. Donations to CaringBridge were doubled that day, thanks to a matching gift of $100,000 by the board of directors.

Independent auditors: Baker Tilly VirchowKrause, LLP.
To review the complete audited CaringBridge financial statement, visit CaringBridge.org/about-us/financials-ratings.
June 7, 2022, will mark the 25th birthday of Brighid Mae Swanson, and also the start of CaringBridge. Born prematurely, with many complications, Brighid lived only 9 short days. But the love and support her parents felt through that first CaringBridge site is Brighid’s legacy, which has since been experienced by people in every state and country in the world. Only because of you has it been possible for a tiny baby to have such global impact. And for that power to extend for another 25 years, here’s where your continued support is needed most.

Within 5 years, CaringBridge hopes to help 10x more people to ensure the Vision of a world where no one goes through a health journey alone.

**Will You Support CaringBridge Over the Next 25 Years, Too?**

**Sharing even more family stories** on caregiving and healing through CaringBridge will help more people know they’re not alone.

**Spreading the word about CaringBridge** will help more people access the power of community during their health journeys.

**Funding research** to study how CaringBridge may improve health outcomes will make CaringBridge even more useful to those who need it.

**New technology** will make CaringBridge even more easily accessible to even more people everywhere.

As long COVID continues to disrupt the life of Kelly Keeney of Beachwood, NJ, she feels she might need her CaringBridge community forever. In addition to sharing her story in 2021, Kelly also helped the CaringBridge team create a Long COVID Support Center.

**Your Legacy**

As CaringBridge marks 25 years of helping people through the hardest times of life, might its future support become part of your life’s legacy?
Senior Leadership Team

Tia Newcomer, Chief Executive Officer
Tom Booth, Chief Product Officer
Amanda Mark, Chief Development Officer
Elizabeth Olson, Chief Financial Officer
Mark Price, Chief Data Officer
Kristel Scheer, Director of Human Resources

Board of Directors (as of December 1, 2021)

Thank you to a board of talented and generous volunteers who believe in CaringBridge as a place of help, hope and healing.

Dr. Sharon Berry   Don Liu
Pauvbi Bhatt       Kevin O’Leary
Jim Cuene          John Orner
Dr. Archelle Georgiou   Cris Ross
Jodi Hubler, Chair

Molly Jungbauer
Pete Segar
Adrian Slobin
Bruce Smith
Pete Sommerness
J. Scott Spiker
Andy Thieman
Solome Tibebe
John Wernz

As always, thank you to CaringBridge founder Sona Mehring, and JoAnn Hardegger and Darrin Swanson, parents of Baby Brighid, for whom CaringBridge is named.

Standing together—at a safe distance of 6 feet apart—the CaringBridge team in Eagan, MN, is grateful for all you do to keep patients and family caregivers connected in a time of great need.