



WHA Advocacy Day 2021: Virtual Format, Real Results



WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding at WHA's virtual 2021 Advocacy Day

Nearly 1,000 hospital and health system leaders, providers, volunteers, clinical and non-clinical staff and trustees attended the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) Advocacy Day virtual event on April 14, followed by three days' worth of meetings between hospital representatives and state elected leaders to discuss key priorities for hospitals as lawmakers deliberate the 2021-2023 state budget.

In a recorded opening [address](#) to attendees, WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding reflected on the

year that has passed since the 2020 WHA Advocacy Day event was cancelled because of COVID-19.

Not only did conference attendees show their commitment to communities, they stood as strong advocates for their hospitals, their health systems, their patients and their colleagues, Borgerding noted, adding, "WHA is immensely proud to be your partner."

990 Attendees

132 Legislators Engaged

1 Unified Voice

Award Winners

2021 Advocacy All-Star Award SSM Health Wisconsin



WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding presents SSM Health Regional President Diamond Boatwright with WHA's 2021 Advocacy All-Star Award for SSM Health's dedication to grassroots advocacy.

2021 Health Care Advocate of the Year Award Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc)



WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding presents State Rep. Tony Kurtz (R-Wonewoc) with WHA's Health Care Advocate of the Year Award in the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Featured Speakers



Governor Tony Evers

“There are a heck of a lot of Wisconsinites who’ve made it home and who are reunited with their families because of the good work of our health care providers and frontline workers.”



Frank Sesno

Anchor and Washington Bureau Chief, CNN (1984-2009)
The George Washington University's School of Media & Public Affairs

“Good storytelling is compelling characters overcoming obstacles to achieve worthy outcomes... we gain trust by telling our personal stories.”

The WHA Advocacy Day 2021 Legislative Panel



Clockwise from left: WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding, Sen. Dale Kooyenga, Rep. Evan Goyke, Sen. Jon Erpenbach, Rep. Mark Born.

‘I know our hospitals did everything they could...to make sure people knew they could still get their care.’

- Rep. Mark Born

“A lot of sectors stopped. A lot of our lives were put on hold. But not hospitals. Not doctors. Not nurses. Because they couldn’t.”

- Sen. Jon Erpenbach



Kyle O'Brien

SVP, Government Relations, Wisconsin Hospital Association

“Use your time during these meetings to tell your story. Remind legislators how important your hospital is to the community and how your hospital stepped up this past year during the pandemic. It is these stories, coming from you, that legislators will remember.”

WHA Senior Vice President of Government Relations Kyle O'Brien gave viewers an issues update before their meetings with state lawmakers.

Legislative Visits

In 33 virtual legislative visits over three days, Wisconsin hospital and health representatives shared their stories with their elected leaders and stressed the importance of funding needed to help hospitals continue to provide the care their patients deserve.



Health care representatives with Sen. Andre Jacque (Staff), Rep. Joel Kitchens, Rep. Ron Tusler



Health care representatives with Sen. Rob Stafsholt, Rep. Gae Magnafici, Rep. Clint Moses, Rep. Shannon Zimmerman



Health care representatives with Sen. Jeff Smith, Rep. Warren Petryk, Rep. Jodi Emerson (Staff)



Health care representatives with Sen. Jon Erpenbach, Rep. Diane Hesselbein, Rep. Sandy Pope, Rep. Dave Considine

Stay Informed



WHA's Hospitals Education and Advocacy Team (HEAT) is a statewide network designed to facilitate grassroots involvement in health care policy. The HEAT program provides members with information, strategy and assistance to share their perspectives on legislative issues that impact hospitals and the communities they serve.

Sign up to receive HEAT alerts at www.wha.org/actioncenter.

