

# 2023 ANNUAL BENEFIT

EVER  
THRIVE  
ILLINOIS  
CHAMPIONS FOR HEALTH EQUITY

THURSDAY, MAY 18TH

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE  
CONTRACEPTIVE JUSTICE  
HEALTH EQUITY ACCESS  
HEALTHY FAMILIES RESOURCES  
STRONG COMMUNITIES

**BE  
BOLD,  
MAKE  
CHANGE**

A photograph of two women, likely healthcare workers, smiling and embracing each other. They are wearing white lab coats. The woman on the left has her arm around the woman on the right, and they both appear to be in a professional setting.

# BE BOLD, MAKE CHANGE



## Welcome to EverThrive IL's 2023 Annual Benefit!

This evening is special because it is an opportunity to come together and celebrate our collective achievements and renew our commitment to being Champions for Health Equity. We are working together toward an equitable and affirming health care ecosystem where Illinoisans, especially those in Black, Brown, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA communities, can build and care for their families on their terms.

Now more than ever EverThrive Illinois' work is vital to creating healthy communities in Illinois. Birthing people living in under resourced communities are experiencing additional stressors like food, housing, and health care insecurity. Black communities, regardless of class, continue to be disproportionately impacted by health injustice. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released their latest report on U.S. Maternal Mortality Rates, showing a sharp increase in Black maternal deaths in 2021—a rate that remains twice as high as white women. Our health care systems continue to fail our most vulnerable populations, and it is unacceptable.

EverThrive Illinois believes all birthing people and infants in our state should have positive health outcomes that are not determined or impacted by their race, ethnicity, class, identity, or immigration status. We create community-centered solutions to support positive health outcomes for communities most impacted by health injustice. We will also continue working with our community partners to ensure individuals and families have the access, resources, and health care necessary to sustain healthy families on their own terms.

This work would not be possible without strong partnerships. I want to thank our sponsors, board members, host committee, associate board, and donors for their support today and throughout the year.

Chi Chi Okwu, MPH  
Executive Director

# EVERTHRIVE IL

## 2023 ANNUAL BENEFIT

THURSDAY, MAY 18TH | 6PM | CITY WINERY | CHICAGO

### WELCOME REMARKS

Araceli Gomez-Aldana, *Mistress of Ceremonies, WBEZ Weekend Anchor*

### EVERTHRIVE IL VIDEO

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REMARKS

Chi Chi Okwu, MPH

### EQUITY IN ACTION

Participant: Amanda Henley, *MCH Family Council*

### BOARD MEMBER REMARKS

Dr. Mia E. Layne and Victoria Kim

### DINNER

### RENEE FRIEDMAN-DRUZINSKY HEALTH EQUITY CHAMPION AWARD

Accepted by: Robert Druzinsky

### BOARD CHAIRPERSON CLOSING REMARKS

Barbara Staples King

# THIS YEAR'S HONOREE



## 2023 HEALTH EQUITY CHAMPION AWARD RECIPIENT

### **Renee Friedman-Druzinsky**

This year, we will remember and honor Renee Friedman-Druzinsky, a former board member who made a lasting impact on the EverThrive Illinois community through her tireless advocacy for health equity. Renee was a social justice advocate who enjoyed working with organizations focused on women and children. Her leadership, wisdom, and friendship have left an indelible impression on the EverThrive IL community.

# HOST COMMITTEE



Danata Andrews, *InQuest*



Victoria Kim, *Ernst & Young*



Loretta Lattyak, RN, MEd, *Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago*



Becca Metrick, *EverThrive IL Associate Board*



Jason Metrick, *EverThrive IL Associate Board*

# ABOUT **EVERTHRIVE ILLINOIS**

The choice to have and raise a healthy family is a human right. Sadly, not all families have the same access to resources and opportunities to thrive. For more than 30 years, EverThrive Illinois has been advancing the health and safety of Illinoisans by supporting access to quality health care and providing resources to achieve health equity. During this time, our focus has broadened from coverage for pregnant people to addressing the wide range of factors that can impact the health of parents, children, and communities.

Today, we strive to affirm and center the experiences and voices of communities most impacted by injustice to achieve reproductive justice for all people and families—especially those in Black,



Brown, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA communities. We ensure they have the access, resources, and health care necessary to create and sustain healthy families on their own terms.

EverThrive Illinois is committed to working in solidarity with—and being accountable to—people on the ground through community-driven partnerships, policy action, and systems-change projects. This collective effort advances our shared priorities of eliminating racial and gender disparities in care and creating a health care system that is deserving of trust from those most affected by injustices.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## ACHIEVE BIRTH EQUITY

We will ensure that pregnant and postpartum people in Black and Brown communities receive the high-quality care and services they need to have safe and healthy births.

## INCREASE VACCINE CONFIDENCE

We will provide community-centered education to address the root causes of vaccine reluctance, including systemic racism in the health care system that breeds mistrust.

## EXPAND ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE

We will secure high-quality health insurance for all people and the holistic health care they need to thrive. We will also partner with health care and social service professionals to close the gaps.

## LIVE OUR VALUES

We will increase our staff capacity, resource development, and board effectiveness, centering our values in our organizational practices to achieve greater impact and strengthen our leadership statewide.



# WHY INVEST IN EVERTHRIVE IL?

## CREATING EQUITABLE HEALTH OUTCOMES REQUIRES COLLECTIVE ACTION AND ATTENTION.

Creating a health care ecosystem that uplifts the experiences and care of people most impacted by health injustices requires statewide action and participation. Everyone, from parents to policymakers and organizational partners, has a role in making reproductive justice a reality. Your donation helps us continue educating, organizing, and developing equitable health solutions.

### **Our efforts have achieved real results that impact the lives of Illinoisans every day. For example:**

- Last year, EverThrive IL reached 6,289 individuals through our community outreach, provider trainings, and coalition work.
- Trained 91 social service providers on the maternal mortality crisis and identified opportunities for community-based organizations to support pregnant and postpartum people in communities.
- Developed and launched our COVID-19 digital campaign that reached 234,302 people and focused on debunking myths and encouraging families, pregnant people, and caregivers to get vaccinated.
- Consulted with ten birthing hospitals in Illinois on patient and community engagement strategies.
- Produced a community-centered campaign called “The Gathering” to help pregnant and postpartum people in areas with high maternal mortality and morbidity rates understand postpartum warning signs and better advocate for themselves with health care providers. This campaign responded to findings from 330 surveys.
- Hosted four successful Maternal and Child Health Virtual Town Halls with over 760 attendees. The town halls focused on the impact that housing insecurity, substance abuse, treatment, not getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and Medicaid health plans have on pregnant and postpartum people.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

## PLATINUM

# Katten

## GOLD



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## SILVER

# LATTYAK FAMILY

## BRONZE



Loving Colleagues of Renee Friedman



# INVEST IN **EQUITABLE** **HEALTH CARE FOR** **ALL ILLINOISANS**

## **THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TONIGHT!**

Everyone has a role to play in making reproductive justice a reality. We count on your support and passion to build a society where everyone has the care and resources they need to thrive. You've made it possible for us to do this work, and it is an honor to partner with you to serve those in our state who need it the most. This year's Annual Benefit has already raised over \$87,000. We need to raise an additional **\$15,000** tonight to meet our goal! A one-time or monthly gift of any size will help pave the way for Illinoisians to thrive. Donate today and invest in an equitable health care ecosystem.

**MAKE A DONATION TODAY!**



**BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois**



**We are proud to support  
EverThrive Illinois  
for their work in the  
community, especially to  
create and sustain healthy  
families on their own terms.**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, a Division of  
Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company,  
an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



Katten is proud to support  
**EverThrive Illinois**  
and the  
**Renee Friedman-Druzinsky  
Health Equity Champion Award**,  
honoring our longtime friend  
and colleague whose passion for  
health equity and justice will continue  
on and further EverThrive's mission  
to ensure people from communities  
most impacted by injustice have the  
access, resources, health care and  
choice to create and sustain healthy  
families on their own terms.

## Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP

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HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION  
IS A PROUD PARTNER OF  
**EVERTHRIVE ILLINOIS**



We recognize EverThrive Illinois for its role in advancing health equity policies that save lives and improve the health of communities.

Thank you for all you do to drive accessible health solutions for families in our service region.

Learn more about the Foundation at [www.hcfdn.org](http://www.hcfdn.org).



Congratulations to EverThrive on another successful year of championing and supporting Illinois' families!

We are delighted to celebrate all of your accomplishments this evening!



IRVING HARRIS  
FOUNDATION

The background features a decorative pattern of teal and orange squares. Some squares contain white line-art illustrations of flowers and leaves.



## ***Congratulations EverThrive Illinois!***

It is an honor to partner with you in your efforts to ensure that people from communities most impacted by injustice have the access, resources, health care, and choice to create and sustain healthy families on their own terms.

Lattyak Family

**MAKING  
OUR WORLD  
A MORE JUST,  
COMPASSIONATE  
PLACE**

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[womenunitechicago.org](http://womenunitechicago.org)

*We are deeply moved to support the crucial mission of EverThrive Illinois and its tribute to the memory of our beloved friend and colleague, **Renee Friedman-Druzinsky**, through its Health Equity Champion Award conferred in honor of her decades of selfless devotion to health equity for people from communities most impacted by injustice.*

LOVING COLLEAGUES OF RENEE FRIEDMAN

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- Former MCH Trainee

**UIC PUBLIC HEALTH**

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Maternal and Child Health

For more information  
visit our website:

[coeinmch.uic.edu](http://coeinmch.uic.edu)



# Congratulations

**EverThrive Illinois on Over 30 Years of  
Championing Health Equity for Illinoisans**



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