HeartWorks



momentum
THAT MATTERS

2026 ACCOMPLISHMENTS + UPCOMING PRIORITIES



The world's most common birth defect still has no cure.

Every 15 minutes, a baby is born with a congenital heart defect (CHD), a structural problem in the heart that begins before birth.

For many of these children early surgery keeps them alive, but not cured. Even the most advanced treatment options fail to provide long-term solutions. Families live in a cycle of invasive procedures, uncertainty and mounting medical costs.

Watch for a snapshot of life with CHD.



The Facts

1 in 100 are born with a congenital heart defect

40,000 CHD babies are born in the United States every year

Many face **multiple** open-heart surgeries before their fifth birthday

<40% of children with critical CHD live beyond 5 years

CHD is **4X** more prevalent than childhood cancer

<0.5% of NIH and **<5%** of AHA funding is directed toward CHD

A Year of Building What's Possible

HeartWorks' 2026 Milestones



ORGANIZATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Completed HeartWorks' Transition out of Mayo Clinic

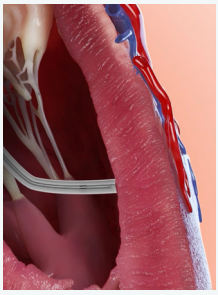
This year, we brought our research, operations, and infrastructure fully in-house. This marked a significant step toward building an independent, integrated platform capable of advancing new therapies for congenital heart disease from discovery to delivery.



PATIENT MILESTONE

100 Skin Biopsy Participants

This year, we welcomed our first 100 participants into the Skin Punch Biopsy Sample Collection Study. With these samples collected, our focus is on advancing manufacturing and preparing personalized cardiac cell therapies for future clinical use.



PRECISION DELIVERY

Advancing Minimally Invasive Cell Delivery

HeartWorks secured a minimally invasive catheter delivery platform and completed laboratory testing to evaluate how personalized cardiac cells withstand delivery. The cells maintained high viability and integrity, supporting our approach to delivering cells directly to heart muscle without open-heart surgery.

MEMBER DRIVEN

Growing The Co-op @ HeartWorks

HeartWorks continued expanding The Co-op, a patient-driven platform connecting medical histories, personal experiences, and research opportunities. By sharing their health information, patients and families can help guide research, inform clinical studies, and support personalized cardiac cell manufacturing.

CHD INNOVATION DESTINATION

The Todd and Karen Wanek Institute for Biomedical Innovation

HeartWorks established the Todd and Karen Wanek Institute for Biomedical Innovation at the former Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Designed as a collaborative hub for physicians, researchers, and innovators nationwide, the Institute will provide opportunities for hands-on training, developing new procedures, and sharing expertise.

PHILANTHROPIC MOMENTUM

Investing in What's Possible

In 2026, HeartWorks received two philanthropic gifts exceeding $1 million each, along with more than $500,000 in gifts and commitments from heart families. We are deeply grateful to the donors and families whose support is helping build a stronger foundation for new treatments and better outcomes for people living with congenital heart disease.

BEYOND BIOENGINEERED

Expanding Our Approach to CHD

This year, we established dedicated facilities and grew our specialized team in Eau Claire. This allows more testing to take place in-house to support innovations like EctoHeart, a platform for heart preservation and medical device testing, and the Wanek Procedure, a surgical approach aimed at improving pulmonary blood flow in patients with complex CHD.

COMMUNITY WITH HEART

119 Events. Countless Connections.

In 2026, HeartWorks participated in 119 events nationwide, bringing together heart families, supporters, medical professionals, and communities. From family gatherings and fundraisers to conferences and lab tours, each event strengthened relationships, shared our progress, and advanced our mission.

HeartWorks 2027 Priorities

Scan to view the live Priority Tracker.

Pathway to a Cure

Regulatory

Activate expanded access pathway for minimally invasive delivery of iPSC-derived cardiac lineage product

0 / 1 FY27 Q3

Manufacturing

High-risk CO-OP members biopsied

0 / 30 FY27 Q4

At-risk CO-OP members reprogrammed into iPSC

6 / 36 FY27 Q4

No-option CO-OP members with clinical grade product

0 / 10 FY27 Q4

Pre-Clinical

Pump (StarBP) validated as a potential for clinical trial for the Wanek circulation

0 / 1 FY27 Q4

Clinical centers of excellence trained on-site for Wanek procedure and cell delivery

0 / 12 FY27 Q4

Clinical

Activate Forward Pediatric Alliance as a clinical partner

0 / 1 FY27 Q2

Biopsy participants reconsented into the CO-OP

0 / 95 FY27 Q2

New single ventricle members recruited into the CO-OP

0 / 100 FY27 Q4

R&D

Non-human hearts randomized for prospect of benefit with iPSC-derived cardiac lineage

0 / 24 FY27 Q3

Marketing

Supported/hosted events

5 / 50 FY27 Q4

Development

Major gift proposals submitted (with 25 secured)

0 / 50 FY27 Q4

Top Goal

Treat 9 patients with the iPSC-derived cardiac lineage therapy

0 / 9 patients

Not Started

Our Why

Every story we tell, every therapy we create, and every milestone we reach begins with our Heart Families. These parents, children, and loved ones are not just supporters--they are partners in discovery, hope, and progress.

From coast to coast, families raise awareness, fund research, and open their homes, hospitals, and hearts to the mission of curing congenital heart disease. Their voices shape our direction, their courage fuels our science, and their stories remind us why our work can't wait.

Your Impact

We have never met someone who cannot help build hearts. Your voice, your curiosity, and your compassion can change the future of congenital heart disease. Here are some important ways you can join us:



Give from the Heart

HeartWorks relies entirely on private support so that 100% of every gift goes immediately to the innovation that is solely focused on curing congenital heart disease. The impact you can have is immeasurable. The hope you give to children and families waiting for a cure is priceless.



Spread the Word

Sharing about HeartWorks helps us reach more families, support more patients, and drive the research that changes lives.



Celebrate with Us

Join us and hundreds of heart families on February 25, 2027, for the 5th Annual HeartWorks Virtual Dinner!

Scan to learn about all the ways you can get involved.

HeartWorks, Inc.
3449 Sky Park Blvd
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Contact

webuildhearts.org
hello@webuildhearts.org
@webuildhearts

HeartWorks
3449 Sky Park Blvd
Eau Claire, WI 54701

EIN: 85-1282127

Thank You

We appreciate your time and interest in learning about HeartWorks and our commitment to transforming care for individuals with congenital heart disease (CHD). The challenges facing this community are significant, but so are the opportunities for innovation, impact, and lasting change. Together, through collaboration, investment, and shared vision, we can accelerate the development of life-saving therapies and technologies. Join us in redefining what's possible and helping to build a future where every individual with CHD has access to better care, better outcomes, and renewed hope.