I want to take this opportunity to extend greetings for a happy new year. I appreciate each of you for your commitment to the Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts and the Visiting Program.

Because VISITING VIGNETTES is a monthly newsletter emailed to all Mended Hearts members and Mended Little Heart members with email addresses, the January issue is an appeal to all members.

Recruiting and retaining Accredited Visitors is directly related to the strength of the chapter and chapter leadership. Strengthening one will improve the other. Membership promotion is the heart of our organization and will make a difference for Mended Hearts. Maintaining status quo is not enough. Chapters must continue to reach out to all heart patients and their families. By retaining the present membership while increasing our numbers by involving others, we can achieve our goal of doubling our membership, thus making it possible to recruit more Accredited Visitors.

As we begin another year, we are appreciative of the hard work our members and our dedicated Accredited Visitors performed to make 2018 a success. January marks a new year and a new beginning. Every beginning prompts us to consider thoughtfully past events that have accumulated to this present moment. Each of our moments stacks up, one upon the other to meet our present day, and these moments unfold into our future.

Before us and behind us are endless doorways of potential and possibilities. Take the opportunity to review your visiting report for 2018 and reflect on ways to improve your chapter's visiting program. I offer one suggestion on making changes. Look at the number of visits made to heart patients and how many of those translated into actual members. Now, how many of those new members were trained as accredited visitors.

If you want to change the numbers, here's a simple formula. Remember each member is a potential accredited visitor, thus a valuable asset to your chapter. Using the questions from the annual report, set a chapter goal that can be activity oriented.

____ number of patients visited
____ number of follow up phone calls with patients
____ number of new members added in 2018
Accept a challenge to increase your number by 10% for 2019. Annual reports which chapters submit measure several areas but most important is the number of patients we visit annually. I hope that as you begin the process of completing the year-end report, you discover that you were able to exceed your goals and expand your visiting to more heart patients and their families. If not, this is an excellent opportunity to re-visit your visiting program goals. We encourage chapters to complete their annual reports by the deadline of **February 15th**.

Thank you to those who make the commitment to be an Accredited Visitor. You are the core of the Mended Hearts and/or Mended Little Hearts program. You can be an integral part of a patient and/or a family's healing because of your experience - you have been there.

The cardiologists and surgeons can explain in great detail every aspect of a procedure, surgery and recovery, but you, as a patient, parent or caregiver, can give hope and inspiration by showing that one can lead a productive life after undergoing surgery or other heart procedures or having a child who has. You can also best relate to what the patient and family are experiencing.

For all members who are not Accredited Visitors, this is a great opportunity to continue helping our chapters grow and expand the visiting program. Please consider going online and viewing the online Accredited Visitor training. Only three hours of your time can make the difference in a heart patient receiving encouragement and support.

Committed members like you serve as positive role models for other community organizations and help us to provide hope and encouragement for heart patients and their families.

This is a brand new year and a brand new opportunity to get up every day and be grateful for all we still can do. Granted, it might not be as much as we once could, but it's so much more than what some can do. Isn't it all about an **Attitude of Gratitude?** When my feet hit the floor in the morning, I can choose to think, (and often do) how on earth am I going to get it all done today? And, woe is me...for one reason or another. Or, I can find the strength and humility to be thankful that my feet still can swing off that bed, there are so many whose feet can't.

You have the power to inspire heart patients and families every day to seek to be a stronger and heart healthier person by your example of perseverance, and gratitude, in the middle of so much adversity! May your new year be showered with everything that brings you joy!

Heartfelt Regards,

[Image]
Dr. Fredonia B. Williams  
National Visiting Chair  
Southern Assistant Regional Director

Future Questions/Topics

We want to hear from you!
Other challenging questions for this newsletter may be emailed to fredoniabw@att.net.

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