



Burns & McDonnell leader named 2023 Greater Atlanta Hard Hats with Heart chairman

Hard Hats with Heart increases heart and brain health in construction industry

ATLANTA, May 4, 2023 — The [American Heart Association](#), the world's leading nonprofit organization devoted to a world of longer, healthier lives for all, has named [Justin Kanitz](#), project director, [Burns & McDonnell](#) as the 2023 Greater Atlanta [Hard Hats with Heart](#) chairman. The year-round initiative builds a path to reduce heart disease and stroke and increases wellness among those in the construction trades.

[According to the CDC](#), it's estimated that 25% of construction workers are obese, 25% use tobacco, almost half don't get enough exercise and one in four have high blood pressure. These risk factors point to the importance of creating healthy workplaces for industrial workers.

"As the 2023 Greater Atlanta Hard Hats with Heart chairman, it is my goal to engage construction workers within our community and promote positive behaviors so they can live longer, healthier lives," says Kanitz. "I fully support the American Heart Association because of the important messages the organization provides to our construction workforce and how their resources promote heart health awareness in simple ways that everyone can follow."

Through Hard Hats with Heart, industrial workers are invited to attend networking sessions with medical experts that offer preventative care measures such as blood pressure screenings and Hands-Only CPR demonstrations. In addition, each participating company receives a Toolbox Talks kit that includes digital and printable resources on how to live a heart-healthy lifestyle.

With more than 15 years of experience within the engineering, construction and consulting industry, Kanitz is known for his leadership and commitment to the health and well-being of the metro Atlanta community. Recently, *ENR Southeast*, an engineering news publication, recognized him among its 2023 class of [Top Young Professionals](#).

"Industrial careers are both physically and mentally demanding and because of this, individuals who work in the construction industry typically have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease," says Carla Smith, region senior vice president and executive director of the American Heart Association in Metro Atlanta. "Justin's passion for our mission and drive for results is going to make a huge impact on the health and wellness of our local construction industry. We are honored to have him leading us as we work to build healthier hearts."

Under Justin's leadership, Hard Hats with Heart will integrate the American Heart Association's health, wellness, and prevention programs into the culture of the industry and bring together professionals from across the construction and healthcare industries for the final networking event in the fall. This year's annual [Greater Atlanta Hard Hats with Heart](#) event, which is supported by presenting sponsors Burns & McDonnell and Comcast Business, will take place on Thursday, Nov. 9, from 4-7 p.m. at Pour

Taproom. Attendees can expect to hear from industry leaders and healthcare professionals and learn about company wellness initiatives through the American Heart Association.

For more information or to get involved with the Greater Atlanta Hard Hats with Heart, visit www.heart.org/atlantahhwh.

About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of more than 13,500 engineers, construction and craft professionals, architects, planners, technologists, and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities. Founded in 1898 and working from 70 offices globally, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are designed to build.

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public's health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for nearly a century. Connect with us on heart.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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