

What the Heart Wants: Combating Cardiovascular Disease Worldwide

Host: Ted Hart

Guest: Amanda Fowler – Edwards Lifesciences

Announcer: Welcome to the *CAF America Radio Network*, a production of the Charities Aid Foundation of America. As the leader in global giving, CAF America offers more than 20 years of experience and expertise to corporations, foundations, and individuals who wish to give international aid and with enhanced due diligence in the United States.

Through its industry-leading grants management programs and philanthropic advisory services, CAF America helps donors amplify their impact. This show is dedicated to these donors and the charities they support. CAF America is uniquely positioned to serve as the bridge between these important partners and transforms vision into meaningful action. Guests on the *CAF America Radio Network* are leaders in their field, who share tips for success and stories that inspire. Our host is Ted Hart, the CEO of the Charities Aid Foundation of America. This is a live call-in show, add your voice by calling 914 338 0855. After the show, you can find all of our podcasts at cafamerica.org. Don't forget to dial 914 338 0855.

Now, welcome the host of the *CAF America Radio Network*, Ted Hart.

Ted Hart: Welcome to this latest edition of the *CAF America Radio Network*. It's a pleasure to be here with you as we celebrate National Heart Month. Joining me here on the *CAF America Radio Network* today is Amanda Fowler, she is the Executive Director of Global Corporate Giving at Edwards Lifesciences Foundation. Welcome here to the *CAF America Radio Network*, *Amanda Fowler*.

Amanda Fowler: Great. Thank you so much, Ted. It's a pleasure.

Ted: Amanda, it's great to have you here, very important topic. Just to let our listeners know that we are also casting live today over on Facebook. You can find us at facebook.com/cafamerica and then in the left-hand column, you can just click on videos and you'll see that we're live over there today. Amanda, our topic today is cardiovascular disease and cardiovascular health.

Cardiovascular disease, in particular, is the number one killer globally and has no economic, social or political boundaries. This is a very important topic and one that Edwards Lifesciences is very involved with. Help us understand on a macro level, then I've got some very specific questions that I want to delve into. The work of Edward Lifesciences and why here in National Heart Month this is such an important topic.

Amanda: Sure. As you pointed out, heart disease is the number one cause of death. I think most people don't know that, and I think a lot of people probably think it's cancer, or a number of other diseases. I frankly find it shocking that heart disease takes more lives every year than

all forms of cancer combined and, on top of that, it's a growing health issue, and it is an issue in the US and all around the world.

It's largely preventable, so if we can educate people and learn what the issues are all around the world, I think we can really make a difference. Edwards as a company--

Ted: I was just going to that to say that cardiovascular disease is often known as the silent killer, it manifests itself in sudden events, such as heart attacks and strokes. I think you were going to go on to share some of the work that Edwards Lifesciences is doing to raise public awareness about this danger?

Amanda: Yes. I'd say in the US and really developing countries, I think the greatest opportunity to really help this audience is awareness, and driving- understanding of the symptoms and the signs. Also, motivating people to get their heart checked, I don't know that everybody really realizes how important that is. Education is a really big issue in the US. I think in developing countries, it's more of an issue of access and really being able to break down the barriers of financial issues.

On the commercial side, we innovate products that address heart disease, and we've been doing this for over 50 years and it's really our passion. We have 11,000 employees all around the world, every day who walks to our doors just eager to help, and knowing that what they do everyday makes a difference to save patients' lives, predominantly, in heart valves and critical care products.

That also translates to what we do on the philanthropic side. We invested in a number of public education campaigns all around, the world focused on symptom awareness. I think a lot of people just think, shortness of breath, "I must be getting old," when, in fact, they have heart valve disease or some other forms of heart disease. If we identify it and flag the issue for them, we can solve that problem. What a difference that could make for the young people.

Ted: Extend their lives.

Amanda: Yes. Exactly. Absolutely.

Ted: I wanted to focus on something that you just brought up which I think is very important for our listeners of the CAF America Radio Network. Specifically, this alignment of philanthropy with the business model, and how you're able to help save lives by aligning those two factors. I think for a lot of our corporate donors, that's an important factor. Can you bring that story from the corporate side? Why partner with CAF America? Why be involved with philanthropy at all? How does that enhance the work that you do?

Amanda: Sure. From a business perspective, we are very focused. Medical technology company, we go after heart valves and critical care issues. We found that if we focus on what we're best at, we're able to relate, help them as people that way. We really took that same

approach when we built our philanthropic strategy. I know a few years back, we were thinking, "Gee, it's been 10 years since we've had a formal philanthropic program."

When we think forward, we'd like to say, "We've had an impact." When we thought back about 10 years, we thought, "Hmm, we've given out \$35 million to hundreds of non-profit organizations." Which is great, but we couldn't necessarily put our finger on exactly what it is that we changed. Going forward, we're going to take a really focused approach. We think about, we can bring more to the table than our wallet- which is an important piece of philanthropy, of course.

Also, where do we have the most resources? Which mind share can we bring to the table and also our technology and for us that quickly became obvious that heart valves disease is where we could have the greatest impact. It's also a niche issue enough, where we think meaningful change can come by bringing bright minds, cash grants, and engineers, and academic bodies. All of which are in our real house, naturally.

Together also with the products that we manufacture, if we can donate and bring all of these people in and inspire them to care about one issue, what a difference we can make. We launched an initiative—

Ted: When you take philanthropy and bringing all that together, you are thinking of the total assets of Edwards Lifesciences in creating-- I wonder if you could share again for our listeners, you have written on and you have spoken about this notion of community engagement initiatives. What does that mean, and how do you create sort of that 360° approach to the work that you do?

Amanda: Sure. We launched an initiative that we call Every Heartbeat Matters. It's got a really specific goal of building up a community, like you suggested. We have a goal that by 2020, our philanthropy will impact the global burden of heart valve disease by supporting a few areas, so, education, screening and treatment. We want to impact a million underserved people by 2020. I think having a goal really helps us all move towards one area that we define as success. By building this community, we can bring these partners together and everyone leverages each other's strength. One non-profit partner might have a particular strength that, me being the hub, and knowing what everybody is doing, know that that strength we can fill in the gap of another partner.

We see that's happening all around the globe and the success in China can also work in Dominican Republic. I think by keeping this community working closely together and thinking together and aware of what we're all doing, I think we can really certainly be much more impactful and mindful of what we're doing together, and frankly leveraging some of the learning, we found to be really helpful.

Ted: Interactive nature is not just bringing your expertise or just bringing money to the table, but also listening and learning and then bringing those experiences back into the solutions, that

it constantly feeding yourself and learning from itself. It's not just a matter of lecturing on the topic or sharing expertise, it's also learning from the field, in terms of what's working what's not for real.

Amanda: That is really important. I think you need to do a lot of listening and we don't ever claim to be expert in a certain area, we really rely on our nonprofit partners. Some of them are going to be US based, and a lot of them are going to be based outside the United States, but it's the local organization that has the touch point to the people where they're listening, they know what's happening.

I think it's really important to focus on what the need is that they identify and invest in programs that really give them what they need to go and solve the issues. We do a lot of that but also it's important to follow up and be a part of that and be an active investor. We go on medical missions and we see the work being done, we are in the operating room.

We see and meet the children that don't have the access to care, and we meet the parents, and we get a chance to really understand what's working and what is not working, and which partners are strong, and also which ones perhaps- is not the most effective use of our fund. I think that's a really important piece to- is being active.

Ted: I do too. And in average of life sciences a terrific example of service, this new breed of philanthropy corporations that we see here at CAF America and we see growing so tremendously here at CAF America, where you want to see your philanthropy actually on the ground, actually working with families and communities. Because another model that might be seen as a little bit more of a traditional model is, give your money to maybe your big boxcharities that are doing good work, but you can't necessarily track your dollars to a community or to lives that are being touched.

By using this approach, the approach that you've chosen to work with CAF America, where you're able to make sure you have regulatory compliance for moving your philanthropic support, but moving it on the ground where it can do direct help. Talk to me about that internal decision to move in that direction, and why is that so important to Edwards Life Sciences now that's become a big part of your philanthropy?

Amanda: Yes, it really is. We are a global company, and giving globally is really important and we try to have a good balance that- it's similar to how our company is balanced, on the philanthropic side. We're younger in the international giving, I think a lot of us are still trying to crack the code on this. We started international giving in 2010, and quickly learned it is hard to do.

It's really hard to give money internationally, but really important. Like I said, you're investing in people who are right there, in the issues, in the neighborhood that you want to be in and they know what the real problems are, and I think that's really important. I have to say, I give CAF

America a plug and I do it all the time, you guys are experts at this and make it easy to do, whereas many folks really struggle with it.

It's important to feel like you have strong reliable partners and compliance is huge. We worked over everything that we do and want to make sure-- The slightest nuance of a negative issue can change all of this beautiful global work that you're doing into- have some type of a negative slant to it. It's really important to make sure that the investments are given out safely and appropriately, and there's someone else watching over. It's why I love to spend my time doing that all day long, let's give it to who is an expert at it.

Ted: That makes for a really strong partnership, because of course you folks have the expertise in heart care and in the content area, and being able to move the money. That's why we focus here at CAF America as you know on what we call the three R's, where we guarantee regulatory compliance, we take on full risk for the grants, but also our due diligence seeks to protect reputations. I think that's what you were referring to.

The third R, where regulatory compliance is very important and, of course, the fact that CAF America guarantees that, that helps everybody sleep well at night, taking on risk, of course, is important for the company to be able to remove that risk from the factor. That still leaves reputations. You want to make sure that you have a partner who is watching out for your reputation and making sure that your dollars are going to a worthy organization that's actually going to meet the needs of the community, but also meet the desires of Edward Lifesciences to really make a difference.

Amanda: That's right. No doubt. Especially when you think- in some of the remote areas that's really important.

Ted: That's right.

Amanda: Just don't have the compliant structure in place. Yes, important.

Ted: That's right. We're going to take a very quick break. When we come back, I want to focus on the work that you're doing to reduce global burden of heart valve disease through your philanthropy and your strategic business alignment. We'll be right back.

Ted: We're here live with Amanda Fowler, Executive Director, Global Corporate Giving, Edwards Lifesciences Foundation. Our topic today, which is a good topic during national heart month is what the heart wants, combating cardiovascular disease worldwide. Before we went on break, I wanted to ask Amanda if you could share with our listeners this alignment that you're bringing to your efforts and how that is reducing the global burden of heart valve disease.

Amanda: Sure. It's a big issue. We estimate six million in the US have the issue and we know millions more around the world are really suffering from valve disease. We know that investing in the right non-profit partners is important to tackling that and we're measuring that. We have

impacted 400,000 people since launching this initiative two years ago. That's direct impact. Then, we have millions more that we're touching indirectly. It's really powerful.

We have a goal of helping a million underserved. I think the underserved people are really important. Those who have barriers to care, they're low-income socioeconomic issues. A lot of these different issues that we think deeply about. We wanted to really change the statistics that are pretty morbid for a lot of these people around the world, because it doesn't have to be that way. Investing in partners they know how to solve but it is how we're doing that.

Ted: Without your philanthropy, these communities often don't have any other options. The difference that you're making here is not only changing lives, but changing communities.

Amanda: Absolutely. I can give you an example, Belize, we invest in a program there. There is one cardiac surgeon in all of Belize. He is also- has the role of being the CEO of the one hospital there. Pretty amazing, but they have rampant rheumatic heart disease and no one to help them. We invest in fellows that are leaving Belize to go and get trained and come back and provide that care there for the people. It is a sustainable solution for them.

Ted: That goes back to your sense of building communities, is that you're training people who then come back and provide the service. It's not just a one-off philanthropic effort, but really you're trying to change the trajectory of care in these communities.

Amanda: That's absolutely right. In some areas we recognize we might not be able to completely change the outcomes. Some programs that are incredibly successful, in, say, China, aren't so relevant in, say, Belize or Dominican Republic, for example, we do a strong Heartspring program. We go into Barrios and we put up sheets in local churches and um, we've got trained fellows on how to do an echo. and look at their hearts.

We find a lot of heart disease this way. But if we were to take a program like that to Africa, for example, they have long wait lists already of patients who need cardiac surgery. They just don't have the money to pay for it, or they don't have the care. So we invest in programs like Emergency USA, where they're building up a hospital there and they're bringing experts from all over the world to do this care for these people, in a way that it absolutely is not available or possible otherwise.

Ted: That's where your philanthropy is able to be so targeted, because it's not one size-fit-fits all, it's not just one program, but it's listening and learning on the ground, and then reaching back to find those tools that can most make a difference.

Amanda: I think that is really important, yes, and the more active you are with your partners, and the more you, frankly, hold them accountable for what they say they were going to do and not just write a check but agree to goals check up with them during the year, go and see their work firsthand. The more you're there and watching over and being a partner with them, the

more people are helped. It is so clear, the difference you make when you are actively involved and pretty interesting to see actually, the difference.

Ted: In addition, as you mentioned to the dollars that you're able to direct serve with pinpoint accuracy around the world, with the assistance of CAF America, you also have served this philanthropic army of employees that are also part of this effort. Can you share with our audience how you leverage that sort of formidable army of employees that can really help make a lasting change?

Amanda: Yes, I think inspiring people to become part of whatever it is that your philanthropic mission is, if you inspire them, people have the energy that are going to make that lasting change. I think we have a really incredible opportunity by having 11,000 people that are really listening to us and really motivated and inspired to help patients. That's what we do every day, right?

We have an aspiration, and it's led from the very top all the way through, that we would like 100% of our employees to get involved in something in the community, whether it's something that we inspire as a company, or something on their own, but what a difference we can all make if we give back a little. We did an engagement survey and part of the results showed 75% of our employees around the world are giving back in a charitable way, whether it's their time, or their talent, or treasure, which is pretty awesome, considering the benchmarks are showing good results in the 30% range.

But of course, we are independent [laughs] and we want to strive for 100%, but it's pretty neat to see also how inspired employees can be, and how motivated and how much they really enjoy the work, and it's contagious, honestly. One person goes out and volunteers, they talk about it and they share that experience, and they really keep inspiring and motivating more and more people.

Frankly, we find that the more we talk about it- and we take our philanthropy now, I feel like that- in a very forward-facing way, we speak about that initiative in the underserved heart valve space. We talk about it at our global medical meetings, so we're talking with surgeons about this, and the more we talk about it, the more hands raised to join us, and how many people we hear that would love to go on a medical mission.

They'd love to serve, they want to get involved. This is what it is, it's moving beyond the checkbook, moving beyond product donation, but inspiring people, your employees, families, surgeons, nurses, tenders whoever you're around, if they just get out and do something, and join us or join whatever you want to do, we really see that having a big impact.

Ted: I would imagine that that gives them a whole different viewpoint on their own work, whether they're in manufacturing or they're in administration, they know the company is doing good work, but it may not necessarily feel all that personal until they have a philanthropic experience.

Amanda: It's so true. Making it personal is really important, Ted, you're right. Having employee touch or connect with a patient or someone in the community who needs help, that interaction is so special. It does build a bond. It does build happier, healthier people. We really try to inspire this. It's never required, but inspired. It's pretty neat to see what a big difference that makes.

It's got a pretty big engine of employees that we got to feed and keep that energy going. Frankly, it's hard for us to keep up with them sometimes. They are doing all kinds of things to get directly involved with people.

Ted: We've only got about three minutes left. I did not want to move on to the end of the show without mentioning the important work that you're doing with homeless communities, which often can be invisible, but they also have needs, and you have directed both grants and employees to help solve that issue. Can you give us a sense of how your philanthropy has helped meet that need?

Amanda: Sure. I'd say a lot of the work that we do internationally, and a lot of that is done with you all, in rural China, or maybe in the Brazilian Amazon, Vietnam, they're not necessarily homeless per se, but the life that they live are so different. Where a bed might be a luxury, or sharing a home or a room with 10 people. Really different issues. That's a lot of what we are trying to support internationally.

Here in the United States, and I guess also globally, we really work with partners that know what they're doing. We invest a lot in the United Way to a giving campaign and program together with our employees, and we're trying to take this one global, using the United Way and their affiliates. They've got a really strong focus on homelessness as an important piece of bringing a community to a stronger position. That's one thing that we're looking, like I said, to take more global and look to CAF America to help us out a little bit with that.

Ted: Well, we're here for you. We've got just two minutes left. Please share your best advice for corporate philanthropy and how they can really make a difference in partnership with CAF America.

Amanda: I think the most important thing that corporate philanthropy or philanthropic people need to just be mindful of is, do what you're best at. Have it be authentic and a natural part of your company, and lead with that. Bring others along in the journey. Share the stories of your success, so that the young girl who's inspired or the young boy who got that life-saving cardiac surgery, who we fought for and you fought for.

I think making a personal-- Sharing those personal stories with your employees, with people that you're in contact with, I think that's what really can drive the impact and be an important piece of frankly, bringing your company's mission to life. I think philanthropy has a really important role in mission and culture development.

Ted: Well, you've done a wonderful job in that. We want to thank you for your partnership with CAF America. Amanda Fawler, Executive Director of Global Corporate Giving at Edwards It's got a pretty big engine of employees that we got to feed and keep that energy going. Frankly, it's hard for us to keep up with them sometimes. They are doing all kinds of things to get directly involved with people.

Ted: We've only got about three minutes left. I did not want to move on to the end of the show without mentioning the important work that you're doing with homeless communities, which often can be invisible, but they also have needs, and you have directed both grants and employees to help solve that issue. Can you give us a sense of how your philanthropy has helped meet that need?

Amanda: Sure. I'd say a lot of the work that we do internationally, and a lot of that is done with you all, in rural China, or maybe in the Brazilian Amazon, Vietnam, they're not necessarily homeless per se, but the life that they live are so different. Where a bed might be a luxury, or sharing a home or a room with 10 people. Really different issues. That's a lot of what we are trying to support internationally.

Here in the United States, and I guess also globally, we really work with partners that know what they're doing. We invest a lot in the United Way to a giving campaign and program together with our employees, and we're trying to take this one global, using the United Way and their affiliates. They've got a really strong focus on homelessness as an important piece of bringing a community to a stronger position. That's one thing that we're looking, like I said, to take more global and look to CAF America to help us out a little bit with that.

Ted: Well, we're here for you. We've got just two minutes left. Please share your best advice for corporate philanthropy and how they can really make a difference in partnership with CAF America.

Amanda: I think the most important thing that corporate philanthropy or philanthropic people need to just be mindful of is, do what you're best at. Have it be authentic and a natural part of your company, and lead with that. Bring others along in the journey. Share the stories of your success, so that the young girl who's inspired or the young boy who got that life-saving cardiac surgery, who we fought for and you fought for.

I think making a personal-- Sharing those personal stories with your employees, with people that you're in contact with, I think that's what really can drive the impact and be an important piece of frankly, bringing your company's mission to life. I think philanthropy has a really important role in mission and culture development.

Ted: Well, you've done a wonderful job in that. We want to thank you for your partnership with CAF America. Amanda Fawler, Executive Director of Global Corporate Giving at EdwardsLifesciences Foundation, thank you for being my guest today here on the *CAF America Radio Network*.

Amanda: Thank you, Ted. It was a pleasure.

Announcer: You've been listening to the *CAF America Radio Network*. Tell all your friends and colleagues to check out our production schedule. Sign up for our free newsletter and download our iPad and iPod friendly podcast at cafamerica.org. Thanks for listening to the *CAF America Radio Network*.