

GVHC Today

VOL. 40 No. IV

April 2012

In this edition of GVHC TODAY, we keep you connected with what is happening throughout GVHC in support of our patients and communities we serve. In 2012 Golden Valley Health Centers is celebrating our 40th Anniversary! GVHC was first established in 1972 when Merced County's Migrant Health Services project was implemented at Merced General Hospital.

Ribbon Cutting

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the grand opening ceremony for our Senior Health and Wellness Center. Read below for more details.

Farmworkers

Golden Valley Health Centers opened in 1972 offering services to farmworkers in Merced County. Read here to learn more about what farmworkers in our area face today.

Washington D.C.

In March GVHC board members and staff attended the annual NACHC Policy and Issues forum. Read here to learn more about this trip and to see some great pictures!

Clean Up S. Merced

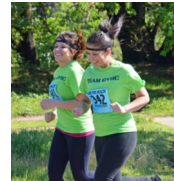
Thank you to everyone who came out to South Merced for the community clean up on Saturday April 14th. Over 70 bags of garbage were collected!

Run for Health

Congratulations to all the staff who participated in the Run/Walk for Health on April 14th!

New Employees

Welcome to all of the new employees! Did you know that we have grown from having under 10 employees in 1972 to having almost 700 employees today!



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Senior Health and Wellness Center Grand Opening

On April 5, 2012 we held the Grand Opening ceremony for the newest addition to Golden Valley Health Centers; the Senior Health and Wellness Center. This center was designed to be a health care home for seniors. It will include not only senior health care but also specialty care including podiatry, optometry, counseling, health education, nutrition, pharmacy, and lab services all under one roof.

More than 350 people attended the ceremony and took a tour of the new building. As they arrived, attendees were greeted by mariachis and invited to participate in the health fair which focused on senior health. An invocation and blessing was given by Rev. Nailah Hubbard of Mt. Pisgah AME Zion Church and Fr. Jesus Reynaga of Sacred Heart Church, both congregations are located in south Merced. Mayor Stan Thurston and Supervisor John Pedrozo presented certificates of recognition on behalf of the City of Merced and the Merced County Board of Supervisors. Congressman Jim Costa presented a certificate on behalf of himself and Dennis Cardoza and commended Golden Valley for its efforts in health care. We also received certificates of recognition from Senator Anthony Canella, Assemblymember Cathleen Galgiani,

and The United Way of Merced County. The official ribbon cutting was performed by GVHC board members. Each of these women have been an integral part of GVHC for more than 35 years. Thank you to Flora Martinez, Alicia Dicochea and Ernestine Woods, RN (pictured below).

The center was made possible by a \$9.5 million grant from the federal government. Golden Valley received the funds "in recognition of the vital role that community health centers play in providing high quality health care in a very cost-effective manner." This center was a collaboration between Golden Valley Health Centers, Kava Massih Architects, and architect Bruce Dodd.



Board members: Flora Martinez, Alicia Dicochea, and Ernestine Woods.

The GVHC Senior Health and Wellness Center



Senior Health Cont'd

A unique feature of the Senior Health and Wellness Center are 8 community garden boxes for lease to members of local community. The second floor of the facility houses the training rooms for GVHC staff and the human resources department. Also housed on the 2nd floor will be a "Childs Avenue Café" that will be open to the public as well as the staff.



GVHC Board of Directors.



Health Fair held at the Grand Opening.



The doors open after the ribbon cutting. Picture courtesy of John Miller from the Merced County Times.



CEO Mike Sullivan thanking Senator Jim Costa for attending. Picture courtesy of John Miller from the Merced County Times.

Farmworkers: Facing the Challenges

By Cesar E. Garcia



In the previous article of this series, an initial description of the severely disadvantaged living conditions of farmworkers in our country was presented. This time, additional elaboration of the health and sanitary conditions and their ramifications will be provided.

It is remarkably ironic that the workers that feed our country and produce so much economic wealth are the ones who find themselves with considerable food insecurity and no medical care. Migrant Health Centers estimates that more than 75% of the farmworkers who qualify for Food Stamps do not receive them. Also, very few of the farmworkers access services from Medicaid (12%). It is believed that those migrant farmworkers who manage to secure those benefits, lose them as soon as they cross the state's border lines in their quest for work. Thus when the farmworkers health conditions are very severe and they cannot stand the pain anymore they end up receiving care in the emergency room.

Many farmworkers also live in extremely poor housing conditions which include inadequate sanitation, no working appliances, overcrowded housing, severe structural defects, and housing adjacent to pesticide-treated fields (NCFH). Imagine working a long day in the field under the scorching sun, many times sacrificing bathroom breaks in order to produce more and have work under the same conditions the next day. Then coming home and being unable to get a good night rest without access to running water to take a shower, a stove to prepare a hot meal, or enough space on the floor to sleep with group of people that up until a few days were perfect strangers. Sadly, studies estimate that almost one of every three farmworkers spends more than 30 percent of their income for housing. According to the NCFH, we are just as good in replicating these living conditions as any third-world country.

It is necessary to address the basic needs of the farmworker population and respect their human rights. We must see it as a wise investment since the healthier they are, the safer our food supply will be. It is very unfair to pay attention to their unsanitary conditions only whenever there is a contamination of food that ends up costing the lives of people.

This information for this series is a courtesy of the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) and the National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH).

GVHC Goes to Washington

By Mike Sullivan

Golden Valley Health Centers was well represented at the recent National Association of Community Health Centers Policy and Issues forum in Washington, D.C. It is a great gathering of health centers from across the nation. I'm struck by how many health centers there are (7,900); you can locate one in most big cities as well as in the small towns in every state.



The purpose of the forum is to speak to our representatives as one united voice! This year, GVHC had a great visit with Dennis Cardoza, our representative who is retiring from Congress this year. Dennis has always been supportive of Golden Valley and we expressly thanked him with a Golden Valley plaque.

It was also an honor to celebrate our 2011 Employee of the Year, Maria Moreno from the Florida Suites, by having her join other employees and board members in our nation's Capitol. Maria brought her mother to share in the tourist sites and attend forum activities. We had fantastically warm weather which made our trip that much more enjoyable. I know Maria's camera needs a rest; she could not resist pressing the shutter!



We were all thrilled to see a mother's pride as her daughter received a special commendation from her Congressman.



South Merced Residents Mobilized into Action

By Minerva Perez & Mary-Michal Rawling

South Merced residents are working hard to bring a grocery store to the neighborhood and, as of recently, the area is also a little bit cleaner thanks to those who participated in GVHC's semi-annual Community Clean Up on April 14th!

For more than three years, GVHC staff of the Healthy South Merced program have been working with residents to realize their goal of locating a full-service grocery store just a couple of blocks from our South Merced campus on Childs Ave and Canal Street. In the last two months, more than 15 neighbors collected 1,300 letters to support the City's economic development staff in their quest to lure a grocer to the area. We hope that a strong show of community support will lead to increased access of fresh fruits and vegetables in this part of town soon!

South Merced residents have also been busy in their continuing goal of keeping their neighborhood clean! In a strong showing of community pride, they joined with 60 other volunteers including GVHC employees, UC Merced and high school students and the Sacred Heart Catholic Church youth group who together, collected more than 75 bags of trash, 14 shopping carts, five tires, two inflatable pools, one rug, one grill, three sofas, one springboard, and two mattresses off local streets.

GVHC's Green Team and the Healthy South Merced program sponsors this event in the spring and fall every year and encourages all GVHC employees to give back to the South Merced neighborhood we have been a part of for 40 years. The Green Team is a committee of GVHC employees working to provide healthier indoor and outdoor environments for the well-being of our employees and patients and implementation of sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices. For more information about how to join the Green Team or the Healthy South Merced project or how to start a clean up at your own clinic site, call: (209) 385-5490.



Welcome to the New GVHC Employees in March 2011:

Melissa Barrientos, Referral Clerk
 Andrea Armenta Jimenez, Patient Access Representative
 Gina Beatriz Lima, Behavioral Health Consultant
 Maria Berenice Lopez-Gonzalez, Culture Broker
 Claudia Yadira Martinez, Patient Service Representative
 Alma Mejia, Patient Service Representative
 Adriana Elena Navarro, Medical Assistant
 Iliana Navarro, Medical Assistant
 Rocio Plascencia, Medical Assistant
 Sonia Rivas Barbosa, Medical Assistant
 Raymundo Soto, Medical Assistant

WELCOME

Go Team GVHC!

On Saturday April 14, 2012 Team GVHC participated in the Modesto Run for Health; a 10k Run, 5k & 1 Mile Run/Walk. The proceeds to Benefit the Stanislaus Health Foundation .



Team GVHC: Jorge Gamino, Mercedes Baeza, Susy Loya (won 2nd place in the 1 mile category), Francisco Chacon, Ruth Villeda (running pregnant!), Mariana Villeda, Joanne Rodriguez (1st place 1 mile), Elaine Soriano (1st place 5k), Maria Barajas and her son, Lisa Gil and her husband Matt Hucek, Noemi and Yessica (both from 6th Street), Alma Vasquez (3rd place 1 mile), Maria Navarro (1st place 5k), Mellisa Barrientos (2nd place 1 mile), Valerie Diaz .

GVHC TODAY Staff

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