






# GVHC Today

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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.

<p><b>The 80's</b> Remember the 80's? Ronald Regan was president and bands like WHAM! were popular. In 1982 GVHC celebrated its 10th anniversary, entering into a 2nd decade of service.</p>  <p>Page 2</p>	<p><b>Patient Advisors</b> This month we are featuring the team at our Florida Suites site and how they work with staff to make sure our patient's voices are heard.</p>  <p>Page 3</p>	<p><b>Cell Phone Project</b> The team at our West Modesto site on 6th street are working with diabetic patients who have Health Net insurance in Stanislaus County. These patients will be able to receive free cell phones to improve their care.</p>  <p>Page 3</p>	<p><b>Thank you!</b> A wonderful provider Dr. Lopez-Ayala retired in August. We would like to thank here for all her years of service at GVHC.</p>  <p>Page 4</p>	<p><b>GVHC Employees Save the Date!</b> Mark your calendars for Saturday December 1st! GVHC will be hosting its annual employee appreciation dinner in Modesto and celebrating our 40th Anniversary.</p> 
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## Health Care Reform Hits Merced!

By Mary-Michal Rawling

Business leaders and community members of Merced attended two forums hosted by GVHC last month during National Health Centers Week to learn how health care reform is going to affect them and their businesses.

More than 30 owners and managers of local businesses listened to Jason Andrew speak at the Branding Iron about aspects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) pertaining to employers. Mr. Andrew is the CEO of Stone Meadow benefits, a company he founded, and works in cooperation with the non-profit Small Business Majority to inform the business community on how to best be prepared for Health Care Reform, whether they are a large or small employer.

During the evening forum at the GVHC Senior Health and Wellness Center, more than 60 residents primarily from the South Merced community heard a panel of experts on the ACA speak about how the law applies to them and their families. Information on the Insurance Exchange, who the law applies to, services to be covered by all insurance companies,

and benefits already provided through the law were all discussed at length. The audience was able to ask a host of questions about the types of services they could expect to receive in the future, how they would sign up if they didn't have insurance, and even how politics affected the roll out of the ACA!

These forums are supported through a grant from The California Endowment and will continue to be provided in 2013. Stay tuned!



Above: The ACA Forum at the Senior Health & Wellness Center in Merced.



## Golden Valley Health Centers History: The 1980's

*Golden Valley Health Centers is celebrating it's 40th Anniversary this year. Journey back with us as we remember some of the events that brought us here! -Amanda Day*



### 1980

**March**-The Family Health Nueva Esperanza Center in Los Banos operated by the Merced-Stanislaus Family Health Centers, Inc. opens. The new building had 5,000 square feet to house medical and dental exam rooms along with nutrition counseling. It was also the first construction load for Merced Family Health Centers and was very challenging to all involved.

### 1981

**January**-Grand Opening held for the West Modesto Family Health Center on J Street in Modesto. The center provided comprehensive medical and nutritional services. This center was a result of efforts initiated in 1978 when a federal grant application was submitted. The center moved to a new location on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in 1987.

### 1982

**October**-Merced Family Health Centers, Inc. celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by hosting a health fair, an open house with free health services and cultural dancers at its Merced location. The health fair featured free screenings and information with 24 of Merced County's health care agencies/organizations participating in what was the largest gathering of health care providers in county history.



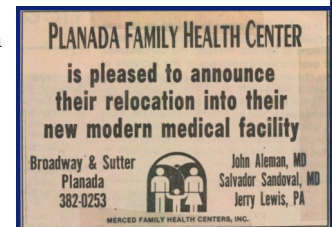
### 1983

**November**-Federally funded primary medical care was granted to the unemployed in the form of a one-time grant in Merced County that was split between Merced Family Health Centers, Merced Community Medical Center and Mariposa Family Medicine Association. Health care would be available to those who had lost their jobs in the last year (and their immediate family members) who did not have health insurance.

### 1985

**January**-Merced Family Health Centers ranked among the top 250 out of 1,000 community and migrant health centers in the nation. Of the 36 centers in California, only eight received top quartile ranking.

**May**-A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new 3,000 square foot clinic in Planada (replacing the trailer that had been used since 1981). The clinic had examination rooms, waiting rooms and a patient education area. A \$280,000 loan was awarded from the Farmers Home Construction Association to pay for construction.



**October**-Merced Family Health Centers, Inc. took over management of two clinics that faced closure in Patterson and Modesto that were formerly managed by Stanislaus Family Health Centers, Inc. The two organizations had been one organization but split up in 1978.

**Total Sites in operation by 1985: 5**

### 1986

**February**-A grand opening event was held for the new Planada Family Health Center located on Sutter and Broadway with refreshments, music and tours provided.

**April**-An express care wing was opened in a section of the Childs Avenue Clinic in Merced to treat sudden illness and minor injuries 12 hours a day and Saturday mornings.

### 1987

**January**- Merced Family Health Centers announced the opening of its sixth medical facility in Dos Palos. The small mobile clinic was located on the corner of Blossom and General Avenues.



**June**-The Merced Family Health Centers primary clinics in W. Modesto, Patterson, Los Banos and Merced were approved to administer physical examinations to undocumented immigrants applying for amnesty by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

### 1988

**April**-Merced Family Health Centers received a state funded grant to offer AIDS education to 1,650 women of child bearing age by providing language and literacy appropriate information to those women participating in the perinatal and family planning programs. This program was only one of five funded by the state through the Office of AIDS through the Federal Centers for Disease Control.

## Patient Family Advisors

By Rayna Ruiz

The article in last month's newsletter highlighted how GVHC Patient Family Advisors are a key element to being more patient centered at Golden Valley Health Centers. Advisors come from various backgrounds with different experiences and needs; providing us with important perspectives to patient care.

Last month the Patient Family Advisor Group from North Merced was featured. This month we would like to highlight the Florida Suites Advisor group. There are currently three active advisors, all current patients at our Florida Suites site. These advisors have met every month since March 2012. In the meetings advisors are able to share their personal experiences about our health center. They let GVHC staff know what they feel are positive aspects of their experiences at GVHC and the opportunities we have for improvement.

The meetings are also learning experiences for our advisors. So far this year, guest speakers have included: Juan Villa (GVHC homeless coordinator), Saida Hurst (GVHC front office supervisor), Saida Sanchez (GVHC health educator), and Florida Suites health educator Teresa Quezada. The guests were warmly welcomed and met with an array of questions by the advisors.

The best part about the Florida Suites Patient Advisor group is the fact that each advisor feels that their voice is heard, their ideas are appreciated, and their suggestions are acknowledged. They understand that even though they represent one of our health centers, participating as advisors influences all of Golden Valley Health Centers, and ultimately, the quality of services for all GVHC patients.



Above: The Florida Suites Patient Advisor group.

## Modesto Patient Cell Phone Project

By Dr. Lisa Gil



Starting this month, the GVHC West Modesto PITeam will be leading a county-wide project which will offer cell phones to diabetic patients with Health Net insurance. The team has already conducted a year long pilot project from the West Modesto Center with the goal of improving patient's diabetic control by providing free cell phones in which patients receive text messages from GVHC.

The team reports that partnering with Health Net has been very important, as they have provided the free cell phones and the technology to send and receive text messages remotely via an automated computer system.

### Who Qualifies?

- All diabetic patients with Health Net insurance.

### Which Health Centers?

- All Stanislaus County centers who are using NextGen EHR.

### What does the phone do?

- Asks patients to record their home glucose levels.
- Receives patient's home glucose levels.
- Sends reminders for: vaccines, eye/foot/DM/annual exams.
- Sends health tips for diet, exercise and healthy living.
- Allows patients to purchase minutes for non-GVHC calls/texts to best utilize the free phone.

### How is the information relayed?

- If a patient is experiencing high or low home blood sugar values, the patient's back office team will receive a message via NextGen Communications. *\*(patients with critical levels are sent to the ER instead of awaiting the team's response).*
- GVHC providers will receive a graph showing the patient's home glucose levels every 1-2 months.

### How Many Patients Will Participate?

- 199 patients across Stanislaus County will be invited, however, during the first pilot project in 2011, only 33 of the patients agreed to participate in the program!

### How Can GVHC Care Teams Help?

The relationship between a patient and their health care team is the greatest indicator of whether a patient will adhere to their medical regimen! We are asking GVHC staff to:

- Please encourage your Health Net diabetic patients to participate!
- Please nominate your Health Net diabetic patients by emailing [modestopit@gvhc.org](mailto:modestopit@gvhc.org).

GVHC's West Modesto PITeam has always been passionate about improving the care of GVHC's patients and they are very excited to provide this project to patients county-wide and interact and collaborate with staff from the various Stanislaus county GVHC centers.



## Thank you Dr. Jeanette Lopez-Ayala

By Amanda Day & Dr. John Aleman

Dr. Jeannette Lopez-Ayala was born and raised in Merced and dreamed of becoming a doctor since she was a child. She had always wanted to become a doctor so that she could return to her community to serve the migrant population. Dr. Lopez-Ayala attended UC Berkeley as an undergraduate, then went to the University of Minnesota medical school with a residency at San Bernardino County Medical Center. "Being at the top of her class she could have gone anywhere but chose to come back to her community because that is where her heart was." (*Merced Sun Star 9-18-2006*). "Jeanette has always been a tireless worker and advocate for her patients. Her medical care has always been characterized by a comprehensive holistic approach. She has an exceptional awareness of community resources and goes the extra mile to make sure her patients receive available services"-Dr. John Aleman, fellow San Bernardino County Medical Center resident and GVHC physician.

In 1997 she was one of six primary care physicians who received a Length of Service award from the National Health Services Corps (the federal arm of the Department of Health and Human Services), which are presented to physicians whose dedication and commitment has contributed to the improvement of health care to underserved populations.

In 2006 she was the Merced County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's 'Woman of the Year'. When she was honored with this award Dr. Lopez Ayala said that "I hope that other young people will consider getting their education and remaining or returning to Merced to serve a community that needs it".



After 23 years at Golden Valley Health Centers, Dr. Lopez-Ayala is retiring. We wanted to congratulate and honor this amazing woman, she will be missed. Dr. David Simenson said of Dr. Lopez-Ayala "I have worked with Dr. Lopez-Ayala since her first day here. She is kind and compassionate; and a dear friend."

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