

# 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.

**The 90's**

Remember the 90's? In 1997 GVHC celebrated its 25th anniversary. We also changed our name and became Joint Commission accredited.



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**Human Trafficking**

This month we are featuring part one of a series of articles about the crime of human trafficking that enslaves an estimated 21 million people worldwide!



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**Patient Advisors**

Read here to learn more about the patient family advisors group from Merced. They help us better understand patient needs & concerns.



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**November 6th**

Election day is fast approaching, it is next Tuesday! This election is presenting some very important issues to the voters of California and the United States.



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**Ridesharing**

Did you know that if you register to carpool with Commute Connection you have the chance to win a \$50 gift card? Our staff do carpool and use public transportation, you should too!



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## My Trip with The Flying Samaritans

By Ivan Prado, AmeriCorps Asthma/Outreach Assistant

This October, I had the opportunity to travel with the Flying Samaritans to San Felipe for the Alyssa Fantozzi Fall Clinic and help out at the Ear-Nose and Throat (ENT) clinic. The first day of the clinic consisted of screening the patients. Other volunteers and I recorded their vitals and medical history before they were seen by Dr. Yates (Dr. Alan Yates is also a GVHC provider in Modesto). The following day, Dr. Yates performed tonsillectomies to six children and three myringotomies with tubes. Apart from helping translate during screening, pre- and post-op, I got the chance to be in the Operating Room and watch as the doctor performed and explained the procedure.

In that one weekend, over 70 people were seen at the ENT Clinic by Dr. Yates and our volunteers. The Eyeglass Clinic, ran by Dr. Demshar and his team of volunteers, broke the previous record and provided eye glasses to 219 children and adults! This was my third trip with the Flying Samaritans and it continues to be an immense learning and humbling experience.

The Flying Samaritans consists of a group of people from different professional backgrounds that work together to provide free medical assistance and education to the people of Baja California, Mexico. The group's four basic missions are: primary care, specialty care, education, and emergency care. Among the members are doctors, nurses, dentists, pilots, translators, and various other volunteers. The Central Valley Chapter of the Flying Samaritans, based out of Modesto, travels to San Felipe, Baja California twice a year and holds a number of specialty clinics for the community there. The Flying Samaritans began in 1961 and has grown to become an International organization which serves 19 clinics, organized in ten chapters (two in Arizona, seven in California and one in Mexico) with over than 1500 members. For more information: <https://www.flyingsamaritans.net/Web/Sams/default.asp>.

Right: Dr. Yates examining a patient during a screening.



## Golden Valley Health Centers History: The 1990'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*



### 1990

**April**-The Patterson Medical/Dental Clinic offered free HIV (AIDS) testing and education to the community; tests were strictly confidential..

**June**-Merced Family Health Centers (Merced, West Modesto, Patterson, Los Banos, Dos Palos and Planada) received the highest ranking possible for community health centers from across the country.

### 1991

**February**-Merced Family Health Centers completed construction of two new facilities: a Women's Health Center and a Women's, Infants and Children Services Center in Merced.

### 1992

**May**-A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the newly expanded and renovated clinic in West Modesto; with increased services to dental care, pharmacy services, and six more clinic exam rooms (5,000 square feet added)

**December**-Merced Family Health Centers received the national 1992 Commitment to Excellence Award from AmbuQual Assessment and Quality Management.

### 1993

**June**-A groundbreaking ceremony was held for Merced Family Health Center's newest clinic in Patterson located on Highway 33 and C Street.



**November**-A grand opening ceremony was held for the new Healthy Start Family Resource Center at Robertson Road Elementary School.

**Total number of sites in operation: 9**

### 1994

**March**-A groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new building on the Childs Avenue Campus of Merced Family Health Centers. The new building held 3 separate suites that each housed a clinic (now known as Merced Suites A, B, and C).

**August**-Merced Family Health Centers opened a primary health clinic in a section of the Newman West Side Community Hospital (a hospital that had closed due to bankruptcy).



### 1995

**September** -The corporate name of the community health centers operating as Merced Family Health Centers, Inc. was changed to **Golden Valley Health Centers**, effective September 1<sup>st</sup>. The name change allowed for expansion into surrounding counties and easier name identification in a managed care environment.

**October**-A new Golden Valley Health Centers clinic was opened in Turlock at 777 East Hawkeye Avenue and housed in a new medical building. The clinic had six exam rooms, a mini laboratory and supplied medicine at a discount through its pharmacy in Modesto.

### 1996

**June**-Golden Valley Health Centers was selected as Business of the Year by the Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce.

### 1998

**May**-Golden Valley Health Centers announced that it would close three of its clinics (Le Grand, Turlock and Modesto Women's Clinic) due to cash flow restrictions and reduced payments to providers for Medi-Cal patients.

**August**-Golden Valley Health Centers Homeless Health Care Program opened a new clinic, operating out of the Modesto Inn. The program still continued to offer services at the Modesto Salvation Army Office two days a week.

### 1999

**February**-Golden Valley Health Centers achieved accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care organizations

## Election Day: November 6, 2012

By Christine Noguera, Interim CEO

In countries around the world people are fighting for the right to participate in a democracy. Here in the United States we live in a democracy with the right to vote in open honest elections. The coming election presents the opportunity for each of us to exercise that right; to be an actively engaged citizen by casting a vote that represents our personal views and convictions regarding who is to represent us in our governmental system.

I hope that each of you take this right seriously and takes advantage of the opportunity to vote on Tuesday, November 6. Your individual vote does count. Without individual votes there would not be any votes to count.

This election is presenting some very important issues to the voters of California and the United States. We have the opportunity to cast a vote that will decide the future of our schools, health care and economy.

Please join me in being a voter on November 6. Cast your vote and have a voice in the future of our community, state and nation.

For more information here is the link to the California Elections and Voter Information website: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/>



## Human Trafficking GVHC's Patient Family Advisors

By Ronna Bright, MSW  
Central Valley Against Human Trafficking

In September our Health Promotions staff members were presented with important information explaining that the crime of Human Trafficking does exist in the Central Valley. This information is also relevant to the November 6th election as there is a measure regarding Human Trafficking on the ballot.

Did you know that Human trafficking is the modern day form of slavery enslaving an estimated 21 million people worldwide? It is also the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, profiting nearly 31.6 billion dollars. Human trafficking is defined as the use of force, fraud or coercion to recruit, harbor, transport, obtain or employ a person for the purpose of labor or services in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery; OR a commercial sex act induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person performing the act is under age 18 (regardless of force, fraud or coercion). No community in the U.S. is immune from human trafficking and its devastating effects.

Potential indicators of human trafficking include: lack of legal identification; numerous inconsistencies; someone else speaking on behalf of the potential victim; exhibits behaviors of hyper-vigilance, paranoia, fear, anger, or depression; potential victim avoids eye contact. Health indicators include: bruises; burns; cuts; unexplained wounds and injuries in various stages of healing; malnourishment; unexplained general poor health. There are many other signs of human trafficking that may be indicative of other victimization or health issues. Further awareness, assessment, and protocol will effectively identify victims of human trafficking that present in the health care field.

This article was written by staff representing Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission and the Central Valley Against Human Trafficking. Contact Ronna Bright, Project Manager, at (559) 263-1379 or [ronna.bright@fresnoeoc.org](mailto:ronna.bright@fresnoeoc.org) for more information. Polaris Project maintains the National Human Trafficking Resource Center and National 24-hour Hotline. Information can be found at [polaris-project.org](http://polaris-project.org) or by calling 888-373-7888.

By Rayna Ruiz

Last month we highlighted our Florida Suites Patient Family Advisors (PFA), and their work on providing the patient voice in healthcare. This month we would like to share highlights from the work of our PFA group at the Merced Suites. This diverse group brings a variety of experiences and ideas, which are valuable to GVHC as we work to improve our services.

One goal of PFA groups is to help GVHC better understand our patients' needs. They also give us a chance to explain more about the various services we offer and provide patients with information regarding various health topics. Since the spring of this year, guest speakers for the Merced Suites PFA group have included: Brian Capizzi (Site Administrator), Erick Mendoza (Cultural Broker Coordinator), and Araceli Martinez (Case manager/Social worker). All guests were welcomed with an array of questions, and the information they shared was appreciated by the Advisors.

The Merced Suites PFA group has done great work this year: critiquing new health education materials, completing communication surveys, and even voicing what health topics and services they want to learn about. The group shared valuable opinions regarding the communication and behavior of our staff. PFA meetings are held monthly and the Advisors have truly made the meetings their own.

An important aspect of the Merced Suites PFA group is that they are comfortable expressing their positive, as well as their negative GVHC experiences. They have shared their challenges in selecting new providers, wait times for appointments, and even their personal difficulties in maintaining their own health. These monthly discussions reflect how dedicated our Patient Family Advisors are to improving the services here at GVHC, and ultimately, improving the patient experience.



Patient Family Advisors Ana Cintron and Stacey Ward

## Ridesharing: Go Green!

By Ivan Prado



Commute Connection is a Regional Rideshare Agency and in an effort to help the San Joaquin Valley “Go Green,” it holds Rideshare Week every first week of October. Rideshare Week is an event to help promote Commute Connection’s goal to “improve air quality, public health, and roadway operations by promoting the use of sustainable travel options.” It is designed to encourage and help people make a transition from driving by themselves to ridesharing. Options include: carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, walking, or public transit. Some of the benefits to ridesharing include: letting someone else drive; reducing traffic congestion; improving our air quality; saving on cost of gas; reducing the wear and tear on your vehicle; meeting new people; and taking advantage of the designated carpool parking spots. Commute Connection is also offering a free gas card worth \$50 when you register your carpool with them. For more information, or to receive a match list, visit <http://www.commuteconnection.com/about-us.htm>.



Some of our GVHC employees already take advantage of the benefits of ridesharing. Diana Serrano and Edith Soto from W. Modesto began carpooling to and from work two weeks out of the month. “It was so fun and I really enjoyed driving and being a passenger for two weeks out of the month,” said Diana. For the past year and a half, Minerva Perez has been taking the Stanislaus Regional Transit three to four times a week from Modesto to Merced then walking the rest of the way to the Merced campus. “I like it a lot. The people on the bus are regulars, so we all know each other. It is always on time and it’s nice that we don’t have to navigate. It saves me a lot of money,” she said. Erick Mendoza, also from the Merced campus, uses Amtrak a couple days a week to get from Fresno and back, depending on what his schedule. “Whether you’re riding the train, taking the bus, or carpooling it allows you the opportunity to do things you wouldn’t be able to do if you were driving,” he said. “I would definitely recommend it or at the very least recommend people give it a try to see what it’s like if they haven’t tried it.”

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