

GVHC Today

VOL. 40 No. XII

December 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.

Happy Holidays

GVHC staff love spreading the Holiday cheer. Below is a story of how GVHC Modesto staff helped out those in need. GVHC staff are also participating in the Merced and Modesto homeless memorials this week and held a canned food drive (for the local Food Bank).

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Christmas Cards

This month one of the GVHC staff members started a project to collect more than 100 Christmas cards to send overseas to our troops! Great job Sheena!



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Patient Advisors

Read here to learn more about GVHC Patient Family Advisors in Los Banos and how they share their personal stories to help improve patient care at GVHC.



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GVHC History

We are closing in on the end of 2012 and the celebration of GVHC's 40th anniversary. Read here to learn about the most recent accomplishments!



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Employee Recognition

Congratulations to the Employees of the Quarter and the 2012 Employee of the Year. These employees exhibit exceptional qualities and are recognized by their supervisors or fellow staff members.



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A Modesto Christmas Story

By Juan Villa

On Wednesday morning at about 10 a.m. our staff noticed that a man and a young girl, about four years old, were standing at the street corner near the West Modesto/Corner of Hope clinic in the cold weather and rain with a sign asking for money. Seeing this, the staff stepped outside to ask the gentlemen why he was out in the rain asking for money with his little daughter. The gentleman, named Kenneth, said that he was trying to raise enough money to take a bus to Salinas because there was no shelter in Modesto that would take a single male and his daughter without separating them. After hearing his story the staff were determined to assist him. They made some calls to local agencies to get the father and daughter a warm place to stay, but he refused and stated that he could not stay in town (Modesto). The staff asked if his daughter, Cynthia, could wait in our clinic lobby, it was too difficult for the staff to see her out in the rain. Kenneth refused but asked if he could place his backpacks inside the clinic to prevent the clothes from getting wet.

As he was placing his belongings inside the lobby a staff member, Irinda, said to Kenneth "You know yesterday I was given a lottery ticket and it was a winner. I want you to take it to buy the bus tickets. I just don't want to see the little girl outside in the cold." Kenneth agreed to accept the ticket. While I took Kenneth to purchase the bus tickets, the clinic supervisors Alma and Crystal watched his daughter. When Kenneth asked his daughter to go inside with the staff members she seemed shy at first but eventually agreed to stay with them.

On the way to the bus station to purchase the tickets Kenneth shared how he was a victim of domestic violence and the courts had given him custody of his child. After purchasing the bus tickets he returned to the clinic, where his daughter was eating and happy. Kenneth allowed his daughter to finish eating while he waited outside. During this time Gina, a GVHC behavioral health clinician, was able to meet with Kenneth and Cynthia to make sure they were both doing alright. When it was time for her to leave with her father the girl did not want to leave immediately because she was enjoying her visit. After the staff and her father spoke with her, she left with a bag of snacks and another bag with books and goodies. As she left the clinic she would not let go of those bags. A staff member gave Kenneth an umbrella to help keep his daughter out of the rain. Kenneth agreed to promise to keep his daughter safe and to keep her out of the streets and cold weather.

Well done to the West Modesto/Corner of Hope team and all of the staff for all of the wonderful things that are done at GVHC. Happy Holidays!

Right: Our Modesto Corner Of Hope clinic staff with the local Boy Scout Troop 440 accepting donations for our Homeless Memorial Event.



Holiday Greetings to Our Troops



By Amanda Day

Everyone deserves a holiday card, especially our Troops who are stationed all around the world. There may be a chance that a few of our troops may not be able to receive a warm holiday greeting card, but you can change that. Give 5-10 minutes of your day and take part in our "HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO OUR HEROES" project and help us send out as many heart-warming messages as we can.

This was the message that Sheena Truong, an AmeriCorps member at GVHC, sent out to the GVHC staff members. Sheena collected a total of 136 Christmas cards contributed by both GVHC staff and their families. The printed cards were actually drawn by Sheena Truong and other holiday cards were donated by GVHC staff.

Sheena has been a participant of this project for the past three years with the American Red Cross. She said that she really wanted to start doing this every year because she felt that the troops deserve something back for doing all that they do for us and if doing something as little as making a Christmas card for them it makes a big difference. Sheena said of the project: "I thought it would be a good idea to get more people involved and that it would be a nice project to have for the staff and community members to get into a little bit of the Christmas spirit; and from the soldiers' point of view, it would probably be nice to receive a Christmas card from someone in the community who acknowledges the time and effort they put in to serve, help and protect. I personally know a few people, but a lot of the people I volunteered and work with have family and friends that are either veterans or are currently serving."

"The cards and personal messages, sent by tens of thousands of Americans, provide a welcome "touch of home" for our troops during the holiday season. Each year the cards are collected between October and early December and then distributed at military installations, veterans hospitals, and other locations." Here is a YouTube link for a series of Holiday Card projects in the past:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XR-ORMvv7o&list=PL564CADB267C75421&index=16

Thank you to Sheena and all the staff who participated in this heart warming project!

Los Banos Patient Advisors

By Rayna Ruiz & Felicia Batts

Throughout Golden Valley, all of the Patient Family Advisors are valuable because they help address what is important to patients and their health. Advisors are great resources for Golden Valley, always more than willing to give their input and suggestions on how to improve GVHC materials, projects, and services. By taking the time to collaborate with Advisors GVHC staff let them know that their input and opinions are appreciated by employees - and ultimately - by their fellow patients.

Many of the GVHC Advisors have shared their personal stories, including physical and behavioral health issues, disabilities, and other personal struggles. They demonstrate that there is so much more to being a patient other than what is seen at the health centers; that **each patient is a person first**. And many times, there is so much more to that person than just their health status.

The Los Banos Patient Family Advisor Group meets on the first Tuesday of every month. One Los Banos advisor is not only a GVHC patient but has also worked in healthcare. She has been able to provide a unique patient perspective in that she has a stronger understanding of the healthcare industry and how difficult it can be for some patients to navigate the healthcare system.

She has been very actively involved in committee meetings and open to sharing her healthcare experiences both inside and outside of Golden Valley. As a Patient Advisor she constantly speaks about the importance of providing health care services in Los Banos, including behavioral health and the need to bring even more health services to this community. This advisor has provided GVHC with suggestions and feedback on the development and use of patient blood pressure logs and a new Community Resource Guide. Remarkably, she participated in two staff site meetings in August and gave kudos directly to staff for the great work she has observed as a patient.

To read more about our patient family advisors the link below is an article that was featured in the Merced Sun Star on December 9th: <http://www.mercedsunstar.com/2012/12/09/2697112/health-group-is-listening-to-patients.html>



Above: Our Los Banos patient family advisors speaking to GVHC Cultural Brokers Maira and Maria.

Golden Valley Health Centers History: 2010-2012 & welcoming 2013

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



2010

January-Golden Valley Health Centers opens its Call Center, with 10 staff members. Patients could call the 1-866-682-4842 number to make or cancel appointments.

In honor of its first year the GVHC Healthy South Merced Walks program held a walking celebration encouraging everyone to get active and use the walking routes designated with permanent signs around South Merced.

March-A landmark federal health care law is signed by President Barack Obama comprised of two pieces of legislation: the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

November-Golden Valley Health Centers held a ground breaking ceremony on Childs Avenue for its Senior Health and Wellness Center.

2011

March-Golden Valley Health Centers broke ground for its expansion of the Patterson health center.

May-On Cinco de Mayo GVHC held a grand opening ceremony for its newest clinic in Riverbank, it was the first high school-based health center in the area.

October- Golden Valley Health Centers expanded its fluoride varnish program to include all clinics in both Merced and Stanislaus County with the collaboration of First 5.



November-A grand opening ceremony is held for Golden Valley Health Centers' newest women's clinic in Modesto, next to its clinic on Florida Avenue.

CEO Mike Sullivan announced his retirement after almost 40 year of service: "I think the health center will remain a viable component of our health care delivery system and I think that's the foundation that we have today, and that foundation will only thrive and get stronger years ahead when I'm gone."



2012

February-An open house and ribbon cutting was held for the newly expanded GVHC Patterson health center. The first grand opening of this clinic location occurred 18 years ago in February 1994.

March-A group of employees at the Golden Valley Health Centers in Merced was featured in a short film called "Get a Mammogram Today," that was a new tool that will be used to raise awareness about breast cancer risks and prevention. It was made possible as part of a \$600,000 project from the California Breast Cancer Research Program.

April-A Grand Opening ceremony was held for the newest addition to Golden Valley Health Centers the Senior Health and Wellness Center. It includes not only senior health care but also specialty care including podiatry, optometry, counseling, health education, nutrition, pharmacy, and lab services all under one roof. Three board members performed the ribbon cutting ceremony, each of these women have been an integral part of GVHC for more than 30 years. Thank you to Flora Martinez, Alicia Dicochea and Ernestine Woods, RN.



May-Golden Valley Health Centers invited over 500 students from local schools and the public to participate in its 5th Annual Earth Day event which taught children about conserving water, gardening, conserving energy and more.

June-CEO Michael Sullivan retires after 40 years of service. Golden Valley Health Centers' staff cares for patients, educates the community, finds new ways to serve the public and stays dedicated to its mission.

November-The implementation of Next Gen Electronic Medical Records was carried out throughout 2012; the last few GVHC sites to do so complete their implementation in November.

- Golden Valley Health Centers celebrates its 40th Anniversary!
- Total Clinics now in operation by Golden Valley Health Centers: 26
- GVHC serves more than 100,000 patients a year, in Merced and Stanislaus counties.

GVHC Employees of the Quarter

Congratulations to these exceptional employees:

- **Anabel Vera**, Medical Assistant. Site: West Turlock
- **Edwina Gradillas**, Front Office Supervisor III. Site: West Turlock
- **Elizabeth Gonzalez**, Back Office Supervisor II. Site: West Turlock
- **Ernestina Infante**, Front Office Supervisor I. Site: Riverbank
- **Eugenia Amberson**, Reach Out and Read Assistant. Site: Merced
- **Karina Garcia**, Patient Services Representative. Site: Planada
- **Miriam Elizabeth Martinez**, Nurse Practitioner-CDE. Site: Modesto Women's Health Center
- **Olivia Manzo**, Medical Assistant. Site: Turlock
- **Ruth De Anda**, Patient Services Representative. Site: Senior Health and Wellness Center

GVHC Employee of the Year

GVHC Employee of the Year is **Eugenia Amberson**. Eugenia is the Reach Out and Read Program Assistant under the Health Promotions Department and has been at GVHC for 3 years. Eugenia is a very polite and helpful person who is always willing to help. She has helped with our annual August fundraising events and even helps staff having equipment problems. Eugenia strongly believes in following GVHC's mission, and as employees she believes it's our responsibility to provide outstanding service to our patients. Eugenia is a great advocate for patients and she often goes out of her way to help any of them in need. Eugenia is a very reliable person who maintains the ROR program inventories with remarkable accuracy. She is also instrumental in completing many of the program activities such as filling book orders, generating reports and databases, and conducting outreach in the community. Congratulations!



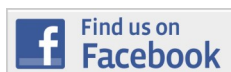
Above: Eugenia Amberson accepting her award from the GVHC Board of Directors.

GVHC TODAY Staff

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