

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

PRESIDENT COMMEMORATIVE INAUGURATION EDITION OBAMA

Vista: Honest about challenges

Inside a small waiting room at the Vista Community Clinic, a handful of administrators took time from their work to watch the inauguration ceremony.

Several of them said they found Obama's speech inspiring and the new president's work ahead daunting. "I appreciate that he is being honest that there are challenges," said Rajni Lopez, an HIV/AIDS program coordinator at the clinic.

The Vista Community Clinic sees about 50,000 patients each year at its five sites in Vista and Oceanside.

Many of those patients don't have health insurance, and more people are seeking its services these days, administrators say.

"Our economy is in crisis, our health care is in crisis and it all relates," said Sara Krisman, a manager at the women's center. "Forty-seven million people in the U.S. are uninsured and that is unacceptable. I think we're hopeful that he's going to come through on the promises that he's made."

One patient said she did not watch the inauguration because it was too lavish at a time when the country is in such dire straits.

"The country is in deep financial crisis, and my opinion is that this is not necessary," said Angela Nimkovic, a Vista resident who immigrated to the U.S. from her native Yugoslavia 20 years ago. "Why did Obama allow this glamorous, very expensive celebration? For what?"

—Edward Sifuentes