



## **MESSAGE FROM ANGIE PEREZ**

***President, VCC Board of Directors***

As I look back at 2016, I am filled with gratitude for the goodwill of our friends. Your support was key to the two fall fundraisers.

The VCC Health and Hope for Our Youth Gala raised more than \$250,000 to benefit Project REACH, our e school program for middle and high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Homes Tour raised \$45,000 for the VCC Kare for Kids Fund. Your generosity allow

continue the transformation of our pediatric waiting areas and exam rooms into warm and welcoming spaces for our patient families.

In the new year, we are counting on your support more than ever. VCC and other community health centers across the country are grappling with a quickly changing healthcare landscape. The future of the Affordable Care Act is uncertain, and we face a funding cliff as a major source of federal funding to community centers is set to expire in September.

In the face of these challenges, VCC will continue its work to serve the patients who depend on us for the care they need to stay healthy. We are counting on your generosity to carry out our mission. Please make a contribution using the [Donate Now](#) button below or by contacting [Betsy Heightman](#), Chief Development Officer.

Your gift makes a tremendous impact on the health of our community.

[Donate Now](#)



## A Graduation and a Dream Come True

In the fall edition of Vital Signs, we shared with you the



## A Dad Turns His Life Around

Less than a year ago, Luis was unemployed and living in a one room rental with his partner and two children.

story of Cassandra, a student in the first incoming class of the Medical Assistant Training Program. Since she was a young girl, Cassandra dreamed of following in the footsteps of her mother Maria, a registered nurse who began her career as a medical assistant at VCC.

Fast forward to February. Cassandra and her classmates are poised to graduate from the six-month program which is tailored to meet the demand for medical assistants in local hospitals and health clinics, and provide students a pathway to upward mobility. Offered jointly by VCC and Cal State San Marcos, the Medical Assistant Training program costs about a fifth of similar offerings at private institutions.

With a combination of classroom instruction and practical training at a VCC clinic site, Cassandra has learned the many skills needed to work as a medical assistant. She knows how to administer injections, draw blood, take vital signs, record patient medical history and assist physicians.

"The instructors and coordinators in the MA program have been excellent," Cassandra says. "Their knowledge, experience and words of encouragement have provided the best foundation for my education."

As they prepare to take their finals, students are also getting ready for the next step -- finding jobs in health care. They are polishing their resumes, doing mock interviews, gathering references and crafting cover letters. They will soon have the chance to meet with potential employers at a job fair organized by VCC.

child on the way and eviction notices crowding the box. Strapped for money, unable to afford a difficult time getting to job interviews or taking the children to the doctor when they were sick. A series of unfortunate events left him with sole custody of his three children he had with a former partner.

Determined to fulfill the promises that he made to his family, Luis found the help he needed to get around at Dads' Club, a VCC program that helps fathers who are faced with multiple challenges in their lives. The program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, supports San Diego fathers who need a helping hand in their efforts to provide for their children and be present for their parents.

As he began the work of rebuilding his life, Luis met regularly with his case manager at Dads' Club. He learned how to better connect with his partner and children in workshops on relationships, communication, and parenting skills. He learned problem-solving and discipline techniques and the tools to have positive interactions with his children.

Dads' Club provided him with transportation that allowed him to get around. With the help of his case manager, he found work at a fence company. He found stable housing and enrolled his children in health insurance. Dads' Club provided back-to-school supplies to his children and birthday gifts for the holidays with gifts of toys.

Today, Luis finds fulfillment in his work and his children growing up in a stable household.

Kassandra and her classmates will receive their certificates at a graduation ceremony on February 27. We wish them the very best in their careers and look forward to welcoming students in the second cohort who begin classes on March 6.



## Helping Patients Navigate the Road to Coverage

There's nothing like a typical day for the members of the VCC enrollment team.

You will find them in their office, in a booth at a health fair, at a college campus or a community center meeting hall.

Their work settings may change, but their goal remains the same – to help community residents gain health insurance coverage and access to assistance programs.

In 2016 alone, the VCC enrollment team helped more than 13,000 community residents enroll in Medi-Cal and

he can always turn to Dads' Club if he ever overwhelmed, needs reassurance or assistance to overcome his challenges.



## Your Support Makes a Difference

We thank the many government agencies and foundations for their support of our work to provide affordable, high quality programs and services to our communities.

**SDG&E:** \$5,000 for Kare for Kids, a fund dedicated to improving pediatric facilities at VCC.

**Center for Care Innovations:** \$5,000 to support Medication Assisted Treatment services for opioid use disorder.

**Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** \$130,275 for information technology enhancements.

Covered California health plans, and programs like CalFresh, SDG&E discounts and Cash Aid.

An important part of the team's work is to answer questions about eligibility, plans, premiums and benefits, and help their clients navigate the sign up process.

“They want to know if their family qualifies for health insurance, which plan is best for them,” says Elizabeth Leal, who until recently served as enrollment services manager at VCC. “They want to know about other resources available to them and how to become a patient at VCC. Without enrollment assistance, many clients would be without insurance. They are so grateful for our help and that’s our biggest reward.”

Among the thousands who have been helped by the 13-member enrollment team is Paula. Overwhelmed and discouraged when she couldn’t find an affordable health plan for her adult son with depression, Paula turned to VCC for help. Enrollment counselors provided step-by-step guidance to find a plan that the family could afford.

“VCC truly cares about its patients,” says Paula. “The counselors were kind and always took my calls. They helped our family with finding health insurance and also with finding so many other services for my son that I didn’t know existed.”

**Delta Dental Community Care Foundation** providing dental services in Orange County  
**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** A five-year grant (in Year 1) for substance abuse and HIV prevention services for at-risk, racial/ethnic minority youth and adults.

**SAMHSA:** A 4-year STOP Act grant (\$47,000) to reduce underage drinking among teens in Orange County.

**San Diego Hunger Coalition:** \$19,678 to provide CalFresh application assistance  
**Health Center Partners of Southern California:** \$10,000 to improve integration of primary care and behavioral health.

**Blue Shield of California Foundation:** \$50,000 to support implementation of Payment Reform Program.

**Nordson Corporation Foundation:** \$3,000 for REACH youth development program.

**Northrop Grumman Employees Charity Organization:** \$3,000 for Project REACH youth development program.

**Orange County Community Foundation:** \$10,000 to provide domestic violence counseling services in Orange County.

**Sidney Stern Memorial Trust:** \$5,000 for REACH youth development program.

**Allison and Robert Price Family Foundation:** \$10,000 for clinic operations.

Connect with VCC





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