

HOUSE CALLS

JAN/FEB 2016

Caffeine
or AFib:
**DO YOU
KNOW THE
DIFFERENCE?**





4

IN THIS ISSUE

3 Lung Screening

4 Vision and Heart for Kern County's Latino Community

6 Lauren Small Children's Center Continues To Expand

8 Caffeine or AFib: Do You Know The Difference?

11 Heart Health Assessment

12 Ten Decembers - Hundreds of Smiles

14 The Great Kindness Challenge



6



8



12

We hope you enjoy this issue of *HouseCALLS*. Comments about the publication can be directed to the Marketing and Communications Department:

DIGNITY HEALTH - MERCY & MEMORIAL HOSPITALS

PO Box 119, Bakersfield, CA 93302 | 661.327.4647 Ext. 4435

HouseCALLS is published by Dignity Health - Mercy & Memorial Hospitals to provide general health information. It is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a healthcare provider.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

ROBIN MANGARIN-SCOTT - Vice President Strategic Marketing and Communications for Central California Service Area

MICHELLE WILLOW - Director of Communications Central California Service Area South

SANDY DOUCETTE - Director of Digital Marketing Central California Service Area

FELICIA COOK - Administrative Assistant

JESSICA NEELEY - Marketing Communications Specialist

CODY BRUTLAG - Content Specialist

Hello humankindness™



Here's a breath of fresh air.

A lung cancer screening could save your life, or the life of someone you love. And now, it's covered by most insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Go to: Dignityhealth.org/lung





Mercy and Memorial Hospital Employees Honored

Vision and Heart for Kern County's Latino Community

The Visión y Compromiso 2015 annual conference in Ontario, California last December held a special moment for four Dignity Health employees. With more than 1,000 health care advocates from across the nation and Latin American countries, the Kern County Promotoras Committee was honored to receive the Visión y Compromiso Corazón Award, which recognizes extraordinary achievement in advancing the work of Promotoras to improve access to quality health care, education, and social services in the Latino community.

Dignity Health Employees Honored

Edgar Aguilar, program manager (Left)
Community Health Initiative of Kern County
Promotora committee chair

Nancy De La Torre, program assistant (Right)
Community Health Initiative of Kern County
Promotora committee secretary

Beatriz Basulto, Promotora leader (Bottom right)

Maricela Sanchez, Promotora leader (Not pictured)

Edgar Aguilar, program manager of the Community Health Initiative of Kern County, serves as Promotora committee chair. "I love working with Promotoras," said Edgar. "They are community members who want to take action to improve their lives and those of others." Promotoras provide outreach and education in support of the Community Health Initiative.

Visión y Compromiso's executive director, María Lemus, honored the 18-member committee by stating, "the success of the Promotora movement is due to the diligence and commitment of persons like you."

"Dignity Health has trained 10 leaders who now lead seminars on Chronic Disease Self-Management," said Edgar. "Promotora events are attended mostly by women who use the information to improve themselves, their families, and then it expands into their communities."

"Your dedication, perseverance, and commitment "Hacia Una Vida Diga y Sana" (A Healthy and Dignified Life for All) for our community surpass all expectations."

María Lemus, executive director, Visión y Compromiso

Maricela Sanchez, a promotora leader with Dignity Health, was also recognized with an individual Corazón Award for her work with Bailoterapia groups. This cultural exercise program with certified leaders offers classes popular with Latino women.

"The women in these classes are amazing," said Edgar. "Some go to work at 3 a.m., and after a full day of activity, they come to Maricela's class. They see it as more than an exercise program, but a community support group of sisters. I am proud that someone from our staff is leading it."

Dignity Health Mercy and Memorial Hospitals congratulate our team members and recognize their exemplary achievements in advancing the work of Promotoras. ■





Gabriela Rosales and Cameron Brown in the Helen Taylor Cobbs Children's Healing Garden.

Promoting Wellbeing and Hopefulness

Lauren Small Children's Center Continues to Expand

With a heart of compassion for hospitalized children, a generous spirit of giving, and a vision to improve access to pediatric care for Kern County families, donors have played a significant role in expansion projects at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital.

While the results of philanthropy are evident throughout the hospital, contributions to the Lauren Small Children's Center directly benefit our youngest patients, who no longer have to travel far for quality pediatric care.

"We had a sick child at UCLA for three weeks," said Jana Campbell of Bakersfield, who with her husband, Joe Campbell, made a gift to establish the Helen Taylor Cobbs Children's Healing Garden, which enhances the healing environment at Memorial Hospital by helping to reduce stress and promote a sense of wellbeing and hopefulness. "It's important that

children in our community can now receive wonderful care at Memorial Hospital, because when you have a sick child, you want to be able to stay close to home."

Named in loving memory of Jana's mother, the Helen Taylor Cobbs Children's Healing Garden features serene landscaping and playful animal topiaries, including a family of giraffes and an elephant that squirts water from its trunk. "She loved to garden, and I feel this is a beautiful tribute to her," said Jana of her mother. "The community has given so much support to the Lauren Small Children's Center, and we are happy to be part of it."

"Philanthropy is profoundly important to Memorial Hospital," said Susan Benham, vice president and chief philanthropy officer at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital. "The generosity and vision of our donors have enabled us to do great things. The word 'philanthropy' comes from Greek and means love of humanity, which our donors generously express through their giving."

Kevin and Tuesdy Small stepped forward in 2011 with a \$2 million gift to establish the Lauren Small Children's Center, which now encompasses the hospital's 31-bed neonatal intensive care unit, 8-bed pediatric intensive care unit, and the pediatric acute care unit. "It's the only medical-surgical unit in our service area dedicated exclusively to pediatrics," said Georgina Bicknell, MS, RN, CNS, director pediatric services at Bakersfield Memorial Hospital.

"The majority of our nurses have had training to ensure competence with pediatric patients," said Georgina. "We also have a pediatric nurse educator in-house so staff stays current with evidenced-based practice."

Children hospitalized at Memorial Hospital will soon stay in a newly designed and expanded acute care, 35-bed unit equipped to meet the unique needs of pediatric patients. Located on the first floor just beyond the healing garden, the Bolthouse Family Pediatrics Department will officially open in the coming weeks.

"It's designed from the ground up for children," said Georgina. "It has a larger playroom and is very family friendly. We even have a parent room where parents can retreat from their child's hospital room for some time to themselves."

Providing family-centered care

The Bolthouse Family pediatrics department was named in honor of the Bolthouse Family, who stepped forward in 2007 with the lead donation. The state-of-the-art unit is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by in-house pediatricians and nurses specially trained to care for children.

Each room features a window wall that offers children garden views of whimsical courtyards. "We are water conscious, so we designed the courtyards with feeders to attract hummingbirds, but also



Blaine Morehead has his vitals checked by Elizabeth R., RN.

conserve water," said Georgina. The Hummingbird Courtyards were made possible by a lead gift from Marj Nixon, in honor of Bill Nixon, and donors for individual rooms helped finish the funding. Inside the unit, Kern River wildlife murals add natural, healing colors to the walls. Donated by Bill Wright Toyota and North Bakersfield Toyota, the murals were painted by Southern California artist, Carolee Merrill.

"There has been tremendous growth over the years; the number of patients we see is relative to the growth in our community," said Georgina. "This expansion shows the organization's commitment to pediatric services."

Continued growth calls for continued expansion. The Robert A. Grimm Children's Pavilion for Emergency Care is under construction and is expected to open in 2017. Like all Dignity Health's projects, it will be designed to make patients feel like welcomed guests. ■

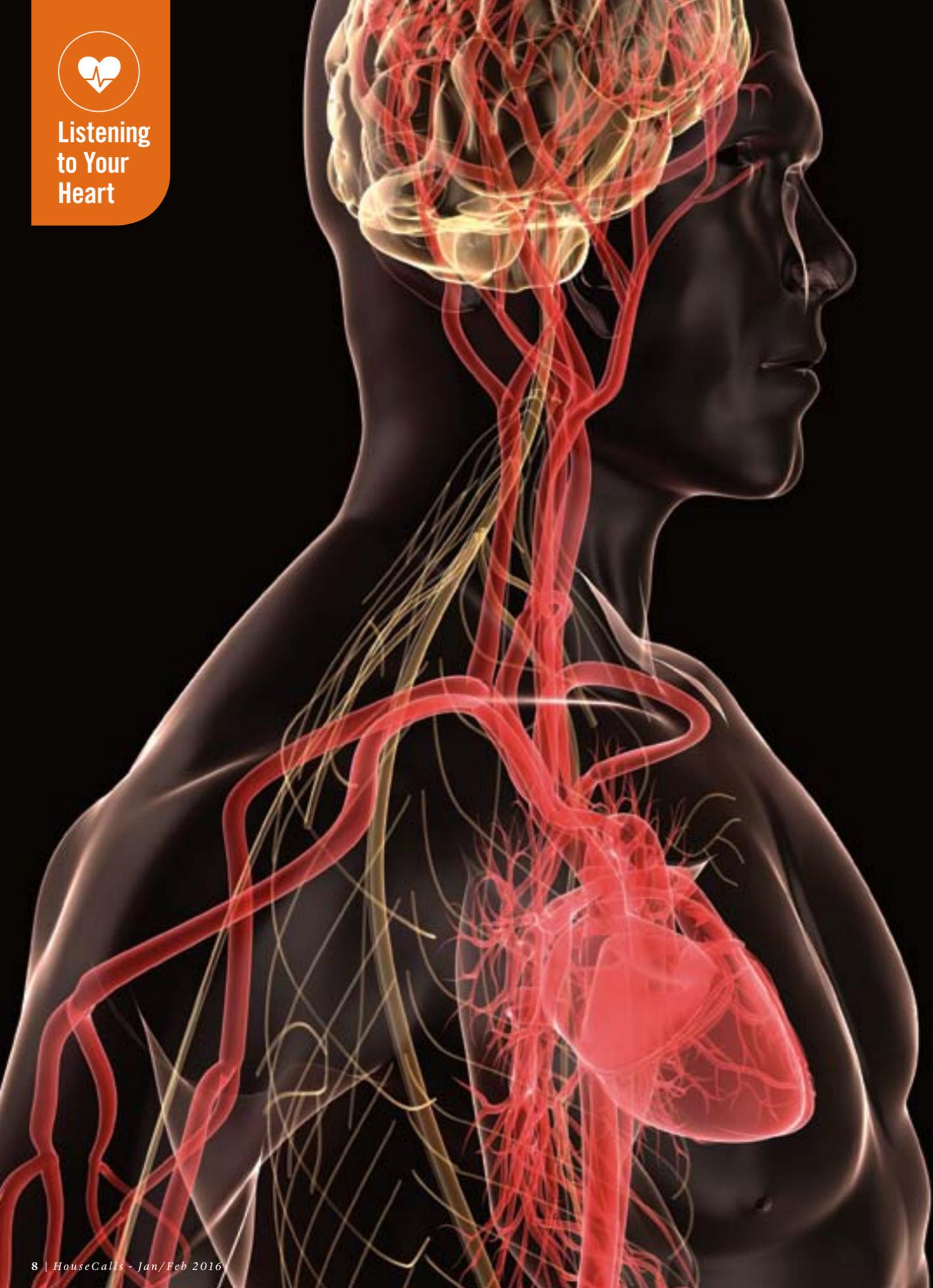
Major Donors Who Support Pediatrics

Kevin & Tuesdy Small
Kari Anderson
Bolthouse Family
Joe & Jana Campbell
Stan & Bonnie Ellis
S.C. Anderson
Dan & Sally Panero
Ken & Susie Small
Rotary Club of Bakersfield

Aera Energy, LLC
Pankey Family
Nickel Family
Bill Wright Toyota & North
Bakersfield Toyota
Marj Nixon
Cynthia Lake
Children's Miracle Network



Listening
to Your
Heart



Caffeine or AFib: Do You Know the Difference?



Your heart races, then skips a beat. It knocks against your chest with an unnatural flip-flop. You shrug it off and scold yourself for drinking a second double espresso. Later, you feel your heart pound erratically before presenting a report. You blame it on butterflies. When you notice the same irregular heartbeat on your day off, you figure you need a vacation, and tell yourself it can't be a heart problem. After all, didn't you feel the same palpitations when you were young and in love?



American Heart Association
ACCREDITATION
Meets standards for
Heart Attack Receiving Center



“Having an irregular heartbeat shouldn't be minimized or ignored,” said Michele Shain, director of neuroscience and cardiovascular services at Dignity Health Memorial Hospital. “If you are experiencing any of these symptoms on a regular basis, it could be a sign of atrial fibrillation.”

Sometimes referred to as a quivering heart, atrial fibrillation (AFib) is an arrhythmia that can lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure, and other heart-related complications. According to the National Stroke Association, an estimated 2.7 million Americans are living with AFib, which escalates dangers associated with having a stroke.

Solving your arrhythmia

“People with AFib generally just don't feel well, especially if their heart rate is fast,” said Michele. “Sometimes we treat people in our emergency department who come in with shortness of breath, dizziness, or chest pain, and they don't even know they have AFib. With AFib, your heart isn't pumping effectively, and that's why it beats in an irregular fashion. This can cause blood flow to pool, which leads to the formation of clots.”

Traditionally, AFib patients have been treated with antiarrhythmic drugs to regulate the heart rhythm and blood thinners to help keep blood clots from forming. However, an interventional procedure offered in the cardiac catheterization laboratory at Memorial Hospital gives patients an alternative to drug therapy. Jared M. Salvo, DO, MS, FACC, a Bakersfield cardiologist who specializes in clinical cardiac electrophysiology, has perfected this technique. Known as cardiac ablation, the procedure has helped many of his patients discontinue use of their medications.

Michele likened the minimally invasive procedure to the work of an electrician, while open-heart surgery is more like performing cardiac plumbing repairs. “An electrophysiologist deals with the wiring in the heart,” said Michele. “Dr. Salvo uses a radio frequency to interrupt the electrical activities of the heart and correct the arrhythmia. He severs the electrical track the heart is taking so it has to take a different pathway. The new path helps regulate the heartbeat and its pumping action.”

“AFib is the most commonly sustained arrhythmia to affect humans,” said Dr. Salvo. “The staff and the equipment in the cardiac cath lab at Memorial are the best in Kern County, and they allow me to perform these very important procedures.” ▶

Building your awareness

The American Heart Association warns that many AFib patients remain unaware that their condition can lead to serious consequences if left untreated. About 15 to 20 percent of people who have strokes have AFib. While the consequences of a stroke can be serious for any patient, stroke victims with AFib run a greater risk of suffering brain damage, disability, and death.

“AFib can cause blood clots released from the heart to travel to the brain and cause an ischemic stroke,” said Michele. “Imagine the damage that can be caused to a brain that’s been struck by multiple clots and is swelling. The lack of oxygen makes brain tissue very fragile, and the window of time for treatment is narrow.”

The Sarvanand Heart and Stroke Center at Memorial Hospital has the area’s only Bi-Plane Interventional Suite. “We’ve been certified as a primary stroke center since 2008,” said Michele. “We have

comprehensive services with a neurointerventionalist who can treat the clot site inside the brain. We can inject a drug that attacks the clots and breaks them up to restore blood flow, or we can remove the clot causing the blockage.” These lifesaving procedures push the narrow window for effective treatment from within 4½ hours to as many as 24 hours after a stroke has occurred.

Recognizing risks and identifying symptoms can help prevent strokes and ensure timely treatment. “People don’t really talk about AFib, and there’s not a lot of education available,” said Michele. “We’re told to watch our blood pressure and cholesterol levels to help prevent stroke, but not much is said about the risks associated with AFib.”

Michele recommends that people with an irregular heartbeat make an appointment with their primary care physician for an evaluation, or visit their nearest emergency department if they are experiencing severe symptoms of arrhythmia. Rather than shrugging off the warning signs of AFib, listen to your heart. It could save your life. ■



What is Atrial Fibrillation?

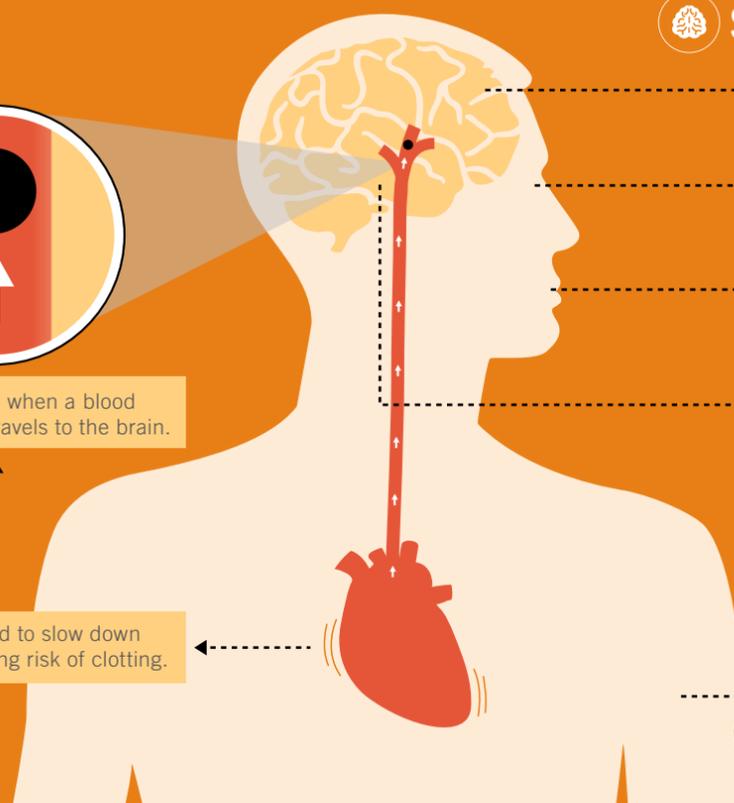
Normally, your heart contracts and relaxes to a regular beat. In AFib, the upper chambers of the heart (the atria) beat irregularly (quiver) instead of beating effectively to move blood into the ventricles. **Because AFib allows blood to slow down or pool, it increases the risk of clotting, and therefore increases your risk of stroke.**

Stroke Warning Signs



Stroke is caused when a blood clot forms and travels to the brain.

AFib allows blood to slow down or pool, increasing risk of clotting.



Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.

Healthy Hearts Live Longer

The more you can learn about your heart health, the better. Knowledge is truly powerful medicine that helps you understand your risks and take action to lessen your potential for problems. It can lead to early detection, and most important, to early treatment and better outcomes.

Our **Heart Health Assessment** is designed to help you assess and identify your potential risk for heart disease.

Go to: DignityHealth.org/heart



The Jingle Bell Club marks 10th Anniversary



Dr. Patel at the annual Jingle Bell Club event.



Ten Decembers - Hundreds of Smiles

For Dr. Sudhir Patel, a Bakersfield neonatologist, the vision to bring the magic of Christmas to underserved children in our community grew out of what he remembers most growing up.

“My father was an autoworker and my mother was a cleaner,” said Dr. Patel. “Their idea of Christmas was to give my brother some money and say, ‘Hey, why don’t you buy some things for your little brother and sister?’ So we never actually got any Christmas presents.”

Back then, Dr. Patel lived in Luton, listed as one of the top 10 worst places to live in England. “It was not the wealthiest place in England, but I was not unhappy.” Delightful childhood memories of Christmas parties and presents made possible by volunteers warm his heart to this day, which motivates him to create magical moments for children growing up in similar conditions.

Today, Dr. Patel has been blessed with the resources and the heart to spread the same cheer he once received at Christmas parties given by compassionate volunteers in Luton. “Every child I know expects something at Christmas,” said Dr. Patel. “They have this built-in expectation, and we knew we could fill it by having a party like this. So we decided to have a party.”

In December 2006, a small group of volunteers brought the first party to a group of excited first-graders at College Heights Elementary School in East Bakersfield. Since then, the annual event has grown to include volunteers from several area hospitals and parties at two additional schools: Standard Elementary in Oildale and Di Giorgio Elementary

in Arvin. Last December, The Jingle Bell Club served 270 children, providing each first-grader with a snack, activities, and gifts.

Children experience the magic of Christmas

Dr. Patel’s goal is simple. “I’d like to create a magical, happy memory,” he said. “Kids that age still believe. I want them to experience the magic and be happy, and have those memories, like I did and still do.”

Christina Rudie, a registered nurse in the NICU at Memorial Hospital, learned about The Jingle Bell Club working with Dr. Patel. She has played a key role in developing its fundraising arm.

“The fundraiser is fairly small,” said Christina, of the annual banquet called Partini Fore the Kids, a golf-themed event at Dr. Patel’s home. “We sell sponsorships to the tables and have live and silent auctions. Our local news anchor, Mike Hart, comes and does a fantastic job of getting the group involved. It’s a lot of fun.”

“Christina transformed us into a completely different organization,” said Dr. Patel, grateful for her insights. After seven years of self-funding the project, Dr. Patel formed a nonprofit foundation, and welcomes contributions of expertise, time, and money in support of The Jingle Bell Club.

Ten years of creating Christmas magic has added to Dr. Patel’s trove of holiday memories. “The first time we did the party, a group of four boys were talking amongst themselves, and they kept talking about the reindeer and the sleigh,” he said. “They were told not to leave the hall while the party was going on, but they actually snuck out and were looking at the roof because they were convinced reindeer were on the roof.”

One day, these children, who like Dr. Patel did not come from the wealthiest neighborhoods, will look back with happy memories. “If even two or three grow up and remember and spread the magic their own way, we will have been successful,” said Dr. Patel. ■

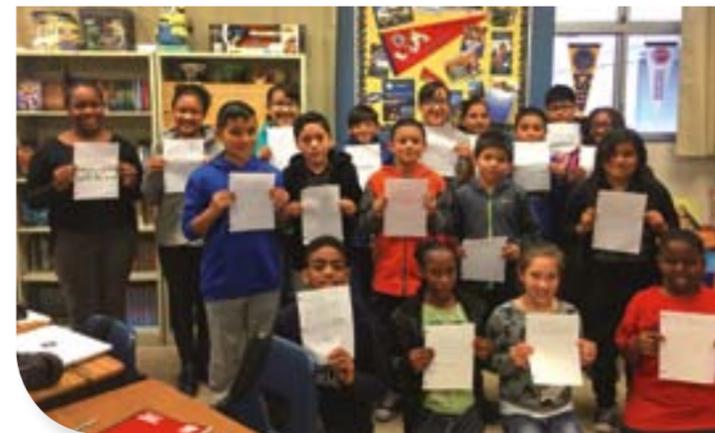


Here locally, 30 schools registered 23,517 students for the Great Kindness Challenge. Mercy and Memorial Hospitals partnered with Leo B. Hart Elementary, Stella Hills Elementary, and McKinley Elementary. To kick off the week, Leo B. Hart school staff coordinated a “Kindness Tunnel,” consisting of local firefighters, school board members, and teachers, lining the tunnel for students and holding encouraging signs about kindness. Throughout the week, students designed thoughtful posters, made valentines for the homeless, and even sent thank-you letters to community members who participated in the Great Kindness Challenge at their school.

At Stella Hills Elementary, students tapped into their creativity to design kindness tiles, blank triangular sheets of paper they decorated with get-well messages to encourage patients in hospitals to feel better. The Dignity Health corporate office arranged for the tiles to be sent to a design company to be compiled into a large “Shape of Kindness” mosaic that will be installed in all three Dignity Health Bakersfield hospitals.

McKinley Elementary students wrote letters and made colorful drawings for soldiers overseas thanking them for their service. The letters were then delivered to soldiers in other countries by Operation Gratitude, a nonprofit organization that ships care packages to troops. Students at McKinley Elementary received a surprise visit from local soldiers at the end of the Great Kindness Challenge week.

Since Dignity Health coined the term *humankindness* and strives to exemplify it in each of its hospitals every day, it was only fitting that employees of Mercy and Memorial Hospitals took part in the Great



The Great Kindness Challenge

Mercy and Memorial Hospitals teamed up with Bakersfield schools to celebrate the Great Kindness Challenge, a week-long event in January in which students across the country are encouraged to perform kind deeds for others. The movement started in 2012 as a method to prevent bullying and promote healthy relationships in schools, with just 1,614 student participants from three schools. The enrollment has multiplied exponentially over the past couple of years and in 2016, more than five million students from 50 states and 61 countries participated.

Kindness Challenge with events including *Be Kind to Yourselfie* promotion and *#HashtagLunchbag* movement.

During the weeklong *Be Kind to Yourselfie* event, the marketing team compiled selfie kits equipped with selfie sticks, props, and instructions. Employees were encouraged to use the props to take photos, and post them to the Mercy and Memorial Hospitals Facebook page.

The *#HashtagLunchbag* program, organized by volunteer programs, had employees making sandwiches for the homeless in the community. Employees were encouraged to donate food items, and through their generous donations, more than 40 junior volunteers teamed up on a Saturday to make 300 sack lunches. The lunches were delivered to the Bakersfield Homeless Center and distributed to those in need.



The nursing department at each of the hospitals also collected new and gently used scrubs to donate to Dress for Success Bakersfield. This organization promotes the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support, and career development tools to help them thrive in work and life.

It has been said that being kind to others will make the world a better place. If we all have kindness to give, why wouldn't we give as much as possible to others? This is the very premise of the Great Kindness Challenge. We encourage you to celebrate kindness and share it with others every single day. ■





Dignity Health™

PO Box 119
Bakersfield, CA 93302

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Bakersfield, CA
Permit No. 294

Heart Disease & Stroke 101

Learn how to identify and prevent heart disease and stroke.

Free classes for women ages 20 and older help participants learn how to identify and prevent heart disease and stroke.

To learn more about comprehensive heart and stroke services at Mercy and Memorial Hospitals, visit DignityHealth.org/Bakersfield

To register, call 661-323-3719 or email rosario.hernandezortiz@dignityhealth.org



Dignity Health™
Mercy & Memorial Hospitals

**ALL CLASSES
12 PM - 1 PM**

February 12
March 9
April 13
May 11
June 8
July 13
August 10
September 14
October 12
November 9



Community Wellness Center
2634 G Street, Bakersfield
For more information,
call 661-323-3719.

