

# UCSD STUDENT-RUN FREE CLINIC PROJECT



THE THREAD THAT CONNECTS US ALL



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

WELCOME	1
• OUR BEST WISHES	1
• FROM DR. ELLEN BECK	2
CONGRATULATIONS	2
2020 IN REVIEW	3
• CLINIC RECAP	3
• ACCOMPLISHMENTS	3
ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT	3
CLASS OF 2023	4
• REFLECTIONS	4
WHAT'S IN STORE	4
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT	5

## WELCOME!

**Dr. Michelle Johnson & Dr. Natalie Rodriguez**

A **big congratulations** to Dr. Johnson & Dr. Rodriguez as they step into their new roles as Directors of UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic Project!



Thank you for your dedication to the community and your commitment to keeping healthcare *human*. Our patients, students, and Free Clinic members are eternally grateful for you two.

### Our Best Wishes to You!

I cannot tell you how thrilled I am to have you as our Director and Associate Director, respectively. I remember each of you as medical students at UC San Diego, where I had the pleasure of teaching you and watching you blossom into your leadership roles.

I am so very proud of you and wish you the best as you take the Student-Run Free Clinic Project to the next level of success.

- David N. Bailey, MD. Free Clinic Advisory Board Member

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Rodriguez, you have both been central forces behind my medical education thus far. You are models of the patient-centered care and advocacy that I hope to one day emulate as a physician. I am starstruck when I think of everything you've taught me in 2020, and I know you will continue to bring the Free Clinic to new heights in 2021!

- Diana Smith, Normal Heights General Manager 2020

WELCOME

# OUR BEST WISHES

Mis niñas, without a doubt, Dr. Beck chose the perfect individuals for such an important project. You both are amazing and show such compassion, patience, and love to our patients. Con mucho cariño.

- Isabel Dominguez, Promotora

We are very privileged to have such amazing role models and leaders to continue on such an amazing project. May your passion for helping others guide you to continue to serve those in most need.

- Esmeralda Martinez, BSW, Social Worker

Drs. Johnson and Rodriguez, a big congratulations to you both! I am so lucky to know you both, and the Free Clinic is lucky to have the most incredible role models leading its patients, students, and volunteers.

- Kim Nguyen-Ta, MD, Former Pre-medical student  
volunteer, Former Downtown Clinic Manager

Congratulations, Dr. Johnson and Dr. Rodriguez! The clinic is in good hands. I'm honored to work for two of the sweetest and kindest doctors I know.

- Socorro Gonzales, Promotora

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Rodriguez, my considerable admiration and respect for your determination and planning capabilities just continues to grow. In this past year of COVID, you've been creative, safety conscious, and shown strong leadership, encouraging all involved to serve those in need with compassion.

Congratulations on your new lead roles. I look forward to your continuing successes as you work with students, patients, providers, and donors. Please count on my support.

- Iris Masotti, Long-time Advisory Board  
Member & Avid Fan

## CONGRATULATIONS!

**Ellen Beck, MD**

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Recipient of the San Diego Red  
Cross Humanitarian Award



**Irvin Silverstein, DDS,  
MSEd**

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Recipient of the Geis Award  
for Achievement in  
Dental Education



## From Dr. Ellen Beck

Dr. Michelle Johnson and Dr. Natalie Rodriguez were both outstanding Free Clinic student leaders from almost the beginning of the history of the Free Clinic. They went on to become residents in Family Medicine and returned to be our Fellows in Underserved Health Care. For many years, they have been the Medical Directors of our clinic sites. They have become outstanding role models and teachers for our students and have watched over the clinic sites and our patients with care and compassion.

Over the last year, the three of us worked together to transfer the overall leadership of the Free Clinic from me to them. As of July 1, Dr. Johnson is now the Director of the Free Clinic Project, and Dr. Rodriguez is the Associate Director. I could not be happier. The clinic is being led by two individuals who grew up with it and whose hearts and dedication are intertwined with the identity of the clinic. As for me, I am still here, as Founding Director, and I will continue with the Free Clinic in my role as a faculty advisor and teacher. I will continue to teach students, and behind the scenes, I will be available to provide advice, background, history, etc. as needed.

I want each of you to know what a meaningful honor it has been all these years to collaborate with you and get to know you. You are a remarkable community of support and your commitment to our work, our patients, and our students is unsurpassed. Over the years, I know you have already given your love and respect to Dr. Johnson and Rodriguez, as have I. It is moving to me to see the love and appreciation our patients have for them. The clinic is in excellent hands.

- Ellen Beck, MD, Founding Director UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic Project,  
Faculty Director- Faculty Development and Leadership

- Read Dr. Beck's complete letter in UCSD SRFCP's October Newsletter -





## CLINIC RECAP

## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Kim Nguyen-Ta, MD

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Former pre-medical volunteer,  
former Downtown clinic manager,  
UCSD SOM Alumna, General  
surgery intern at UCSD



**How do you think your time with free clinic affects your practice now?**

First, I must say that my Free Clinic experience during my pre-medical years greatly influenced my decision to go into medicine, and my commitment to serve underserved populations in my career as a physician.

I learned some of the most important medical and life philosophies during my time at the Free Clinic, and I will never forget the 4 tenants we reminded ourselves during every clinic: humanistic, empowerment, transdisciplinary, and community as teacher. These are all incredibly important, but the two I find myself using quite often every day are humanistic and empowerment.

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**In these times of COVID, how have you and your patients found ways to persist?**

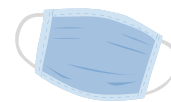
The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly been tough for everyone I know, but especially for our patients. We have found creative ways to continue seeing one another without trying to increase potential exposure to COVID. Our video and telephone visits have increased significantly, though we run into technical difficulties from

In 2020, there were **3,411** patient encounters!

With the transition to online visits due to COVID-19, 2020 was the year that challenged the Free Clinic team to meet the needs, current and new, of our patients. With quality of care at the forefront of our efforts, we're happy to report these clinic outcomes.

*Pharmacy Drive-Thru Flu Shot Clinic*

- **Vaccinated 160 of our patients** thanks to our pharmacy team!

*Telemedicine Visits*

- **100%** of patients rated their telemedicine experience as **"good"**
- **98%** of patients were **overall satisfied** with their telemedicine visit
- **85%** of patients met **CDC criteria** for **"high risk"**
- **34-44%** of encounters were **video visits**

*Food and Medicine Deliveries*

- Delivered an average of **35 food and med deliveries/week**
- Distributed a total of **8,500 lbs of food/month**
- **No cases of COVID-19 transmission** at the clinic or as a result of deliveries

Total # of encounters, vaccinations, deliveries and telemedicine ratings collected from our medical students' Free Clinic Summer research.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*New Clinic Day*

Despite virtual limitations, we were still able to open and **welcome a new clinic day at our Normal Heights site location!**

*Research Publications*

Thanks to our amazing medical students, physicians, and providers, their work over the summer resulted in **three publications**.

- *A Survey of Telemedicine Patient Satisfaction During the COVID-19 Pandemic at a Student-Run Free Clinic*
- *Expanding Possibilities: Flexibility and Solidarity with Under-resourced Immigrant Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic*
- *Responding to the Needs of Patients in the COVID-19 Era: A Student-Run Free Clinic's Transition to Telehealth*

*Curriculum Development*

**Haley Moss**, a second year medical student, created a **compassion curriculum** for our Free Clinic elective, FPM 272. Its implementation focused on strengthening not only **students' empathy for patients but also their self-compassion for themselves**. In doing so, a framework is established to help students sustainably strive to become the best physicians possible.

**Erin Buckner**, a second year medical student, developed and incorporated group projects, discussions, and lessons, focused on **actively being anti-racist** in the **Free Clinic setting** and in **our future practices**. This was a huge addition to Free Clinic's impact on student education and our mission to become better health and social advocates for our patients.

# CLASS OF 2023 REFLECTIONS

## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Kim Nguyen-Ta, MD

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time to time, it has allowed us to continue serving our patients in a safe manner.

One of the more memorable patient experiences as an intern in the hospital this year was taking care of a patient who had COVID-19 and then developed complications necessitating amputations of both his arms and legs. He was surprisingly optimistic every day and truly grateful to be alive. His positivity was refreshing and gave me great perspective during this time.

The recent distribution of vaccines has given me extra hope that there may finally be a possible end to this pandemic. Science is just amazing and I am grateful to all the scientists who work tirelessly to make these vaccines possible.

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### Anything you would tell your medical school self if you could?

I would say to my medical school self that things will be okay, always take extra time to get to know the patients you care for (you will feel rushed now but it is nothing compared to residency), and to truly savor every experience because there will never be a time in your life like medical school again.

## WHAT'S IN STORE

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Save the date for our **Annual Gala and Fundraiser on June 8, 2021!**

If you would like to learn more or donate to UCSD's Student-Run Free Clinic

Project, please email [ucsdsrc@health.ucsd.edu](mailto:ucsdsrc@health.ucsd.edu) or connect with us on **Instagram, @ucsdsrc!**



Thank you Class of 2023 for your hard work and commitment to Free Clinic! We deeply appreciate your creativity and initiative in braving the transition from in person to online. Best of luck in your respective journeys and know you'll always have a home with us!

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## Free Clinic Lessons & Memories

"Free Clinic has shown me the **community of hope** that is achievable when **selfless giving** is fueled by a **culture of gratitude** and a joint, **daily commitment** to the **pursuit of positive change**.

I had the joy of interviewing Isabel and Socorro (our two wonderful promotoras) to prepare our Annual Free Clinic Gala video. In between and throughout the filming, they impressed on me that even more than the medical care, what Free Clinic has done is that it has **created a network of individuals** that understand the **sanctity of health and life and seek to nurture it and protect it**. It all starts with our **daily posture, what we value, and our words** - the constant exchanges of **mutual encouragement and compassion** between our patients and us."

- **Andrew Chang**, Downtown General Manager

"Free Clinic has given me a much deeper appreciation for **what it means to connect with patients where they are** - whether that be in their native language, with their desired level of involvement in their healthcare, or at their level of understanding of their conditions."

- **Sophie Goemans**, Pacific Beach Lab Manager

"It is hard to move on from Free Clinic after a year with my continuity patient. Over that year, **we've shared laughs, tears, and frustrations**. I've met family members and pets. I feel honored to have been able to care for this patient's health. The good part is, **I know he is in good hands**."

- **Claire Conklin**, Pacific Beach Lab Manager, Continuity Student, Summer Student

"She had been homeless off and on for a decade; in that time, she experienced multiple encounters with medical professionals that made her incredibly apprehensive towards the healthcare system, which **I realized I was now a part of**, at least in her eyes. Through tears, she detailed hospital encounters where she was made to feel like "less than a person," dismissed by doctors because of her background. **I promised to keep her story with me** as I progressed through my medical training and **vowed to never make a patient feel like they are "less than"** regardless of their story."

- **Daniel Lowet**, Lemon Grove General Manager

"During my time at Free Clinic, I have learned practical things like how Epic is not as scary as I once thought it was, but what I hope to keep with me as I move forward in my medical career is **what I have learned from the people**. The patients have taught me the **essence of resilience**, the interpreters have taught me a **sense of humility**, the social workers and Promotoras have taught me the **strength in community**, and the physicians and my classmates have taught me the **monumental difference compassion can make**."

- **Kiley Rucker**, Downtown General Manager

"I've had the great privilege to work with the Free Clinic for a few years, from my undergrad days at UCSD to now as a second year medical student. Each year, it only **deepens my passion for working with the underserved and disadvantaged community!** Being able to care for patients in Free Clinic's unique and intimate setting has, without a doubt, made me a more **compassionate, empathetic, and confident provider**."

- **Stephen Calderon**, Downtown Rheumatology Manager, Continuity Student





# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We could not provide our patient care and services without your help. This grant and donor roll list is inclusive from January 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021. We are fortunate to have so many of you that we do not have enough space to list everyone individually. Student-Run Free Clinic Project donors from \$1-\$999 are the engine that collectively empowers us every day. We give our heartfelt thanks for being our foundation.

Every \$1 is powerful and makes a huge impact.

## **\$1,000,000+**

- Denny T. Sanford

## **\$150,000 - \$50,000**

- Alliance Healthcare Foundation
- Hispanic Center of Excellence Grant (CARES Act)
- Carol and George Lattimer

## **\$49,999 - \$20,000**

- Dr. Armin Kessler Memorial
- National Association of Free Clinics and CVS Health
- National Association of Free Clinics and Direct Relief
- San Diego County Dental Health Foundation

## **\$19,999 - \$10,000**

- Alpha Omega Foundation
- Dr. Kevin M. Kenny Foundation \*
- Mrs. Joan Jacobs and Dr. Irwin Jacobs
- The Looker Foundation

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- Dr. Michael Berthelot and Mrs. Monica Berthelot

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- Dr. Donna Silverstein \* and Dr. Irvin Silverstein \*
- Dr. Lera Smith and Mr. Steven Smith
- Dr. Monish Ullal †
- UC San Diego School of Medicine Class of 2020
- WebMD Health Foundation

### **Notations**

\* UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic Volunteers  
† UC San Diego Alumni

We apologize for any omissions or misrepresentations of name, title, or notation. Please let us know to appropriately recognize your support in our next newsletter.