



Dignity Health™

St. Mary Medical Center

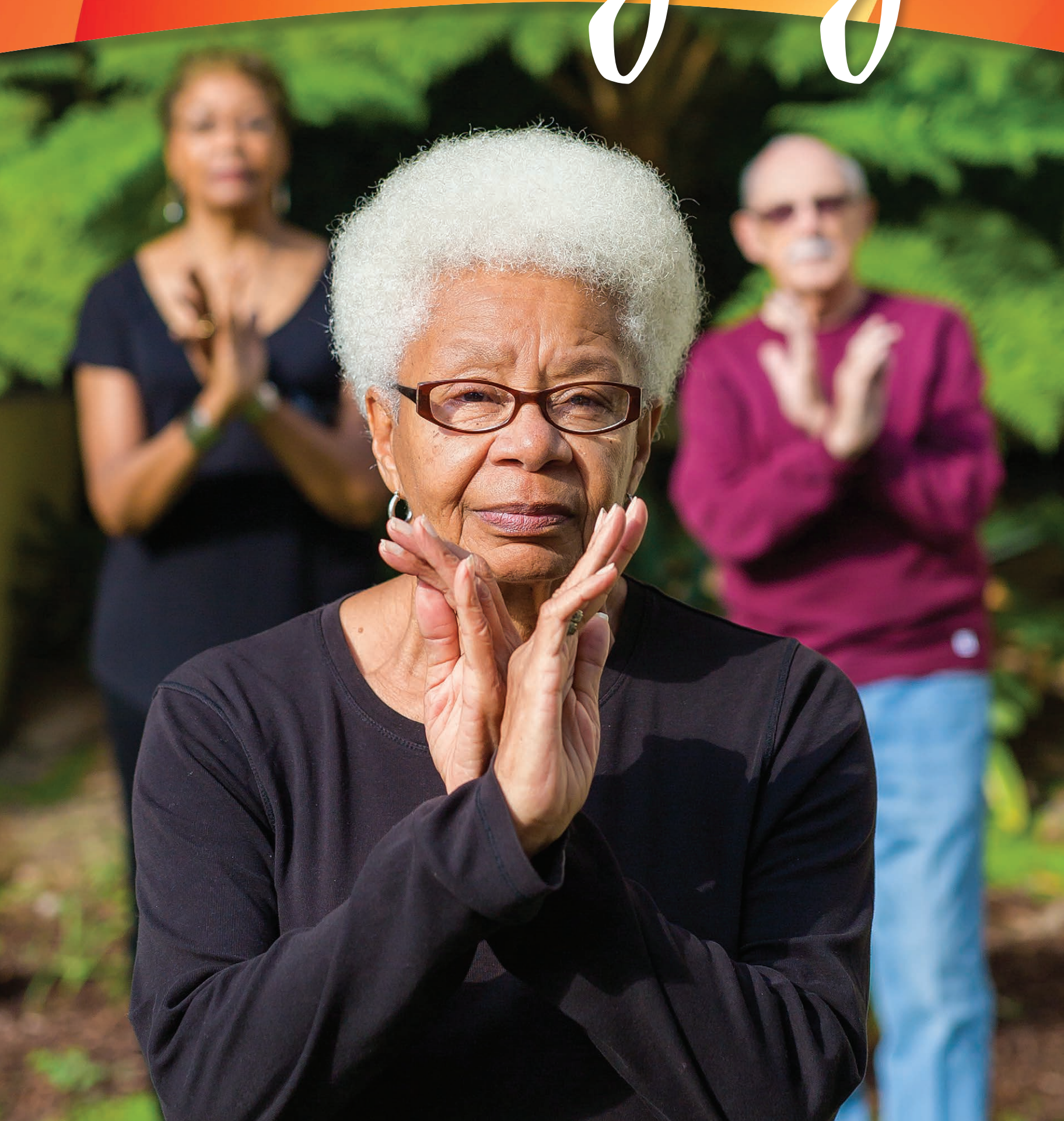
Winter 2017

Keeping Seniors
Healthy

Campus
Refresh

Low Vision Center
Promotes Independence

Engage





Drew Gagner
President
St. Mary Medical Center Foundation

Message from the President Drew Gagner

St. Mary Medical Center is at an important crossroad in time. Building on our historical strengths, we are responding to many challenges by making major investments in technology and improving many patient care areas throughout the hospital. We are committed to providing services that make a profoundly positive impact on the quality of life in the communities we serve.

Looking ahead, one area of special focus is healthcare services designed to meet the needs of seniors. Roughly 10,000 Baby Boomers will turn 65 today, and about 10,000 more will cross that threshold every day for the next 13 years. Census projections estimate that the number of older Long Beach residents will increase by 20,000 during the next 15 years. Both medical and mental health services for seniors are underfunded in our community. To help meet the special needs of older residents, St. Mary is exploring innovative and compassionate solutions.

Our success will depend largely on collaborative partnerships with other non-profits and our generous donor community. All our future growth and development will offer an opportunity for grateful patients, local leaders and friends of St. Mary to make a lasting difference, impacting the lives of everyone in our broader community through civic leadership and generous charitable giving.

Your ongoing giving also supports the inspiring faith of our beloved Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, whose guiding hand will forever rest gently on the shoulders of us all. We hope you will join us in advancing our mission of bringing compassionate, quality healthcare to all those who need us.

On the Cover

Florence St. Peters, (center), a volunteer with the Bazzeni Wellness Center at St. Mary, teaches T'ai Chi to students Juanita Moses and Richard Melanson.



Credits

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President
Drew Gagner

Editor
Tim Bojeczko

Contributors
Becky Barney-Villano
Megan Martinez
Linda Rahn
Cyndee Woelfle

Photos
Ryan Giron
Ambrose Martin
Chris Valle

Printing
Queen Beach Printers
Design
Dann Froehlich Design



**St. Mary Medical Center
Foundation**

A Dignity Health Member

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Celebrating 30 years of CARE



Ace Robinson, CARE Executive Director

Thirty years ago, the world became aware of HIV as the AIDS Crisis took firm hold of our Community. As HIV raged, this epidemic decimated families, communities, and cities. During the beginning of the Crisis, fear and misunderstanding were as infectious as the virus itself. As HIV continued to ravage Long Beach and surrounding cities, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word realized that caring for these most vulnerable populations would take concentrated effort and dedicated resources.

A generous grant from the Sisters in 1986 provided the necessary platform to establish the CARE Program that initially focused on providing social services. Today, CARE marks its 30th Anniversary and the program has grown to include comprehensive programmatic services, a medical clinic and a dental clinic.

The CARE Center supports People Living with HIV and others directly impacted by the virus. CARE provides medical care, behavioral health services, food and nutrition, supportive services, oral healthcare, and prevention education to reduce the impact of HIV within Long Beach and beyond. CARE's model of comprehensive services was one of the first of its kind. It serves over 1,600 people every year – regardless of their ability to pay – and has touched countless more in 30 years. Many of them can relate to Carl*, a long-time client of CARE.

In 2008, Carl was doing well working as a clerk at a department store chain. He had a new boyfriend and the couple had recently moved in together. "That winter, I developed a bad case of the flu," Carl recalls. "After a month of feeling poorly, I went to the ER because I did not have insurance or a primary care physician." The ER staff screened Carl for the flu, lupus, thyroid dysfunction, and also HIV. All screens were negative, except the one for HIV. Carl was stunned. The nurse suggested that he go to CARE.

At CARE, staff conducted additional testing and discovered that Carl's HIV was significantly progressed. They told him that he had probably contracted the virus years ago. "It was overwhelming," Carl notes. The staff at CARE offered him not only primary healthcare and

medications, but also linked him to CARE's dental program and mental health services. Today, Carl is doing much better. The medication Carl takes on a regular basis has completely suppressed the HIV, rendering him undetectable, meaning that he not only will live a much longer and healthier life, but that he also cannot transmit the virus to other people. But just to be safe, Carl's new husband Raoul – who is not HIV positive – is consulting with the CARE staff on PrEP, a drug that prevents HIV infection if exposed. The couple is grateful for the services, empathy and compassion they found at CARE.

Statistics from the California Office of AIDS reveal that there are over 16,000 people living with HIV in Los Angeles County, and 10 percent of those live in Long Beach – the highest density population by scope and scale. Many of these people are members of the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning (LGBTQ) community. "I want us to be out of business in ten years," says Ace Robinson, Executive Director. "To do that, we need to focus on pre-exposure and treatment as prevention, the goal of every AIDS program in the world. Here at CARE, we focus on making sure that our patients get the care they deserve, without stigmatization."

To support its mission, CARE is supported by private and government grants along with loyal individual donors who support the Foundation 21 Annual Giving Club. CARE also benefits from proceeds from special events including the annual Easter Walk organized by Jewels, and CARE-2-DINE hosted at local Long Beach restaurants.

*The names have been changed to protect client privacy.



Florence St. Peters leads her students, Juanita Moses and Richard Melanson in T'ai Chi Chih movements.

Bazzeni Wellness Center

Keeping Seniors Healthy and Independent

For over 20 years, the Raymond and Helen Bazzeni Wellness Center has served as the hub for health and wellness for those 50 years of age and older in greater Long Beach. Located on the St. Mary campus, the Bazzeni Wellness Center provides a broad array of programs aimed at keeping older adults healthy, active and independent.

The Center offers programming that goes far beyond health education classes, although those can be found there as well. Moderate and advanced SeniorFit exercise classes are held three times a week and include aerobics, stretching and resistance training for a well-rounded work-out. T'ai Chi Chih sessions, an ancient form of meditative exercise, help participants reduce body weight and regulate blood pressure, while improving balance, coordination, flexibility and concentration. Healing Touch is a form of energy therapy that brings the body into balance by moving blocked "chi" or energy. These programs are offered at a nominal charge and open to anyone 50 and older who wants to participate. Attendees are assessed every six months to ensure they are participating at a level that is optimal for each person.

The center also coordinates day trips for seniors and offers plenty of opportunities for socializing with one another. Monthly Lunch 'n' Learns, birthday luncheons and bingo games keep seniors engaged and having fun.

Of course, there are the more traditional offerings as well. Workshops on living with chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis or asthma help seniors and their caregivers manage health challenges. Stepping On is a seven-week course aimed at fall prevention for people with low vision problems or balance issues, both common in older adults. There are also regular health screenings for hypertension, cholesterol, vision, bone density and more.

“Our goal is to help seniors learn about managing their health, and have fun too.”

Kit Katz, Director of Community Benefits, Bazzeni Wellness Center

“We want seniors to know that we’re here to help them,” notes Kit Katz, Director of Community Benefits, who has responsibility for the Senior Wellness Center. “Our goal is to help them learn about managing their health, and have fun too.” With over 2,000 seniors who have elected to become members for the nominal \$25 annual fee, the center attracts people from all walks of life. The membership fee covers the cost of the monthly newsletter, which provides advance notice of programs and upcoming events, and a discount on the exercise classes. Becoming a member is not required to participate in any of the Bazzeni Wellness Center’s programs.

The Wellness Center is underwritten through the generosity of long-term donors Raymond and Helen Bazzeni. Helen, a centenarian and longtime friend of St. Mary, passed away in early 2016. Both Raymond and Helen understood the value of robust senior programming. “We want to be the wellness center of choice,” Kit says. “We’ll always be here for our seniors.”



Practicing What She Preaches



Florence St. Peters has been an entertainer most of her adult life. She started playing piano at the age of 8, when Henry Mancini was her first teacher. Throughout her career, Florence appeared in Summer stock plays and in movies, and sang in USO shows and at hospitals. When she semi-retired at 63 from her day job as a tax preparer, she never stopped singing.

It was while singing to raise funds for the gay community affected by AIDS that she first heard about the CARE program at St. Mary. “I had heard they could use volunteers but CARE had all the help they could use,” Florence recalls. “However, the Senior Wellness Center had a real need for volunteers.” That was in 2006 and the beginning of Florence’s long affiliation with St. Mary’s Bazzeni Wellness Center.

Her volunteer work includes answering community inquiries, maintaining the resource library, mailing letters and processing applications for Wellness Center memberships. Florence, who has been athletic all her life, also tried some of the exercise classes offered at the Center. The one that interested her the most was T’ai Chi Chih. “I sat in on one of the classes, and that did it for me,” she says. “I had taken yoga and Jiu Jitsu a long time ago and they did nothing for me. But I fell in love with T’ai Chi and started taking the class on a regular basis and practicing it at home.”

Florence’s health took a turn for the better. “When I started T’ai Chi, my cholesterol was over 300 and my blood pressure was 180/108.

T’ai Chi helped lower my blood pressure and cholesterol. I also found it improves balance and strengthens your muscles. Once you learn the 19 movements, T’ai Chi becomes a moving meditation. It calms your nerves and brings a sense of peace and well-being. You feel good about yourself, and it helps heal your body and heal your mind.” Florence had been taking T’ai Chi classes at the Wellness Center for four years before the instructor left.

“The most important thing is that our seniors feel a sense of belonging.” Florence St. Peters

Kit Katz, who supervises the Bazzeni Wellness Center, approached Florence to take over teaching the classes. That was in June 2013, and Florence has been teaching two T’ai Chi classes a week ever since. She is 83 this year. “My students come up to me and thank me for teaching the class designed for seniors,” she states. “The most important thing is that our seniors feel a sense of belonging.”

And thanks in part to Florence and her calm, welcoming spirit, the Bazzeni Wellness Center has never been more popular among seniors.



Refresh

of Hospital Campus to Benefit Patient Care

Paul Czajka, Chief Operating Officer for Dignity Health – St. Mary Medical Center, discussed the work being done throughout the hospital campus.



Q. What is the Campus Refresh Project?

A. This is an initiative that Dignity Health is funding to modernize, refresh and bring a consistent “brand” image to its hospitals. The goal of the Campus Refresh is for every consumer (patient or family member) who enters one of our hospitals, to consistently identify with the warmth and welcoming environment of a Dignity Health hospital. The refresh is another aspect of our Hello humankindness campaign – connecting with patients through care, warmth and kindness. Based on a principle similar to the notion that evidence-based medicine provides superior outcomes, architects and designers have adopted the same idea, which is called evidence-based design. The idea is simple. We should base decisions about designing patient care facilities on credible research to achieve the best possible outcomes. That’s exactly what’s happening at Dignity Health.

Some of the projects you might see under the “evidence-based” design concept are:

- **Replacement of flooring to allow the Workstations on Wheels and other equipment to move more swiftly and efficiently**
- **Artwork reflecting the scenery of the local geography so patients and visitors feel comfortable in the environment**
- **Making the Hello humankindness brand highly visible throughout the interior and exterior of the facility, making it brighter and more uplifting for patients and families as well as employees**



At St. Mary, we also have included upgrades necessary to ensure we meet California seismic requirements going forward. Changes to the outside of the Bauer Tower building will make it less susceptible to damage should an earthquake occur. And we are addressing ADA requirements to assure our facility is accessible to disabled individuals.

Q. What areas of SMMC are part of this project?

A. Many areas of our facility are included in this project. They include:

- Portions of the hospital exterior
- The main lobby and Chapel
- Operating Room Lounge and Physician Lounge
- Patient Floors 4 – 7 in the Bauer tower
- Rehab Unit on 5 East
- Cafeteria
- Emergency Department, with a major expansion to follow in 2018

The refresh is another aspect of our **Hello humankindness** campaign – connecting with patients through care, warmth and kindness.

Q. What types of projects are being conducted in these areas?

A. Cosmetic improvements that includes new paint, carpet/flooring and new furniture, TVs, new headwalls in patient rooms, refurbishment of patient room bathrooms and public restrooms on the patient floors. These improvements will immediately improve the look and feel of these areas by giving them a refreshed, more up-to-date look. VIP rooms on each floor are also being refreshed to present a more healing environment. Finally, we are completing construction for installation of our new wide-bore MRI equipment and Cath Lab.

Q. How much is being spent?

A. Dignity Health is investing \$10 million on the Campus Refresh projects. Additional projects are being funded from a variety of sources including though gifts to the Foundation.

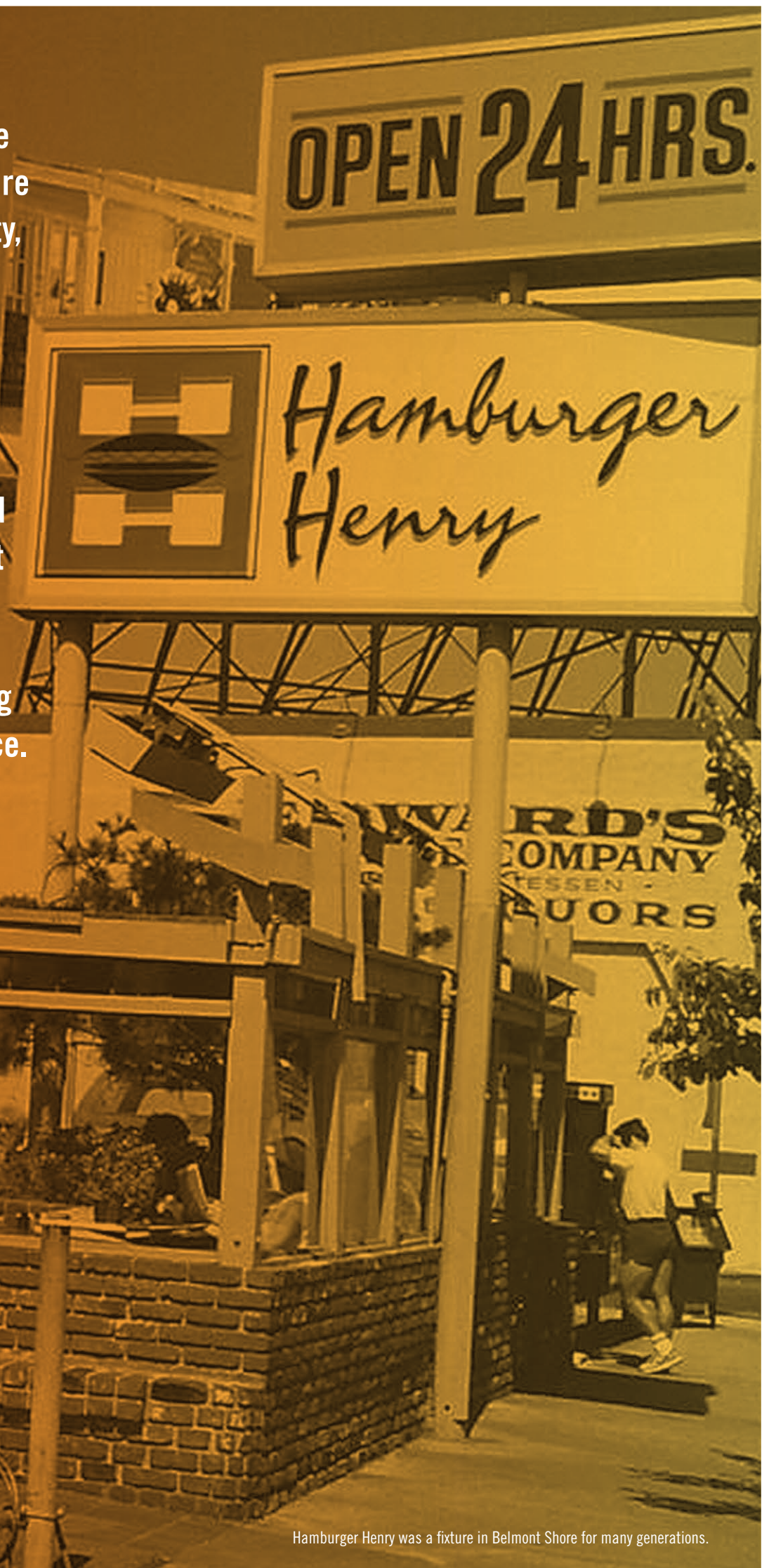
Q. What is the biggest project and why is this one so important?

A. Some of the patient floors are getting a complete facelift that will include not only refreshed patient rooms but also new nursing stations to better support the technology we use today.

Q. When will projects be complete?

A. We anticipate completion in September 2017. We are organizing the work so as to minimize the disruption of bed availability during the busy winter season. The administration at St. Mary is very excited to have the support of Dignity Health in bringing these projects to fruition. We are fortunate to already have private patient rooms and modernizing these areas will further support our ability to provide outstanding services to our patients.

If you were lucky enough to meet Henry Meyer during the decades when he was a fixture in the Long Beach community, you would have eventually realized how much Henry has impacted his adopted city for the better. His rags-to-riches story is not only a testimonial to hard work and determination, but a portrait of how tragic world events can motivate someone to pay it forward and leave a lasting legacy, when given the chance.



Hamburger Henry was a fixture in Belmont Shore for many generations.

In Memory of Henry Meyer

Émigré Leaves a Lasting Legacy on Long Beach Community

Born Heinz Meyer in Berlin, Germany in September 1925, Henry and his parents fled Germany when he was 13 years old, just as Adolf Hitler was rising to power and two months before the outbreak of World War II.

While 16 members of his family perished in the Holocaust, Henry, his parents and younger brother escaped to Shanghai, China, the only country accepting refugees without a visa or permit. The family arrived with little more than their toothbrushes, but the Meyers managed to carve out a living in their adopted city. In Shanghai, Henry worked as a proofreader at a German/Jewish newspaper targeted to the 18,000 refugees who had escaped from Europe. He eventually took a series of jobs at luxury hotels in Shanghai. This proved to be the beginning of Henry's training for a career in the hospitality industry.

More hardship was to come for the Meyer family. After Pearl Harbor was bombed in 1941, the Japanese occupied Shanghai and forced all "stateless" people into an area known as the Shanghai Ghetto. Living in one room without a bathroom, the family was reduced to consuming soup and rice, and their earning ability was limited. Nevertheless, they survived the war and two years after V-J Day, another political cataclysm was brewing: the rise of the Communist Party. Henry knew it was time to leave.

By then it was 1947 and Henry immigrated alone to the United States. He traveled the country and parlayed his hospitality industry experience into waiter positions at New York's Waldorf Astoria and other prestigious properties in major cities. Henry settled in San Francisco in 1948 and enrolled in the Hotel and Restaurant School of City College of San Francisco, graduating with honors. He also met a young student nurse named Margot Simon and married her in 1950. After graduation, Henry joined the staff of the Santa Barbara Biltmore Hotel and eventually became its General Manager. He and Margot also raised four children together.

In 1960, Henry made another pivotal decision: he accepted the position of General Manager of the newly-constructed Elks Lodge in Long Beach. Long Beach would eventually become his last home. Ever the entrepreneur, he found inspiration and opportunity in Southern California's restaurant scene. He decided to apply his vast experience in the hospitality industry to an enterprise all his own. And thus, the first "Hamburger Henry" restaurant opened in Costa Mesa in 1966. The concept was far ahead of its time: a restaurant offering gourmet hamburgers with unusual condiments and add-ons along with one-of-a-kind hamburger buns – thanks to a secret recipe of Henry's. The formula was a hit and other Hamburger Henry locations soon opened.

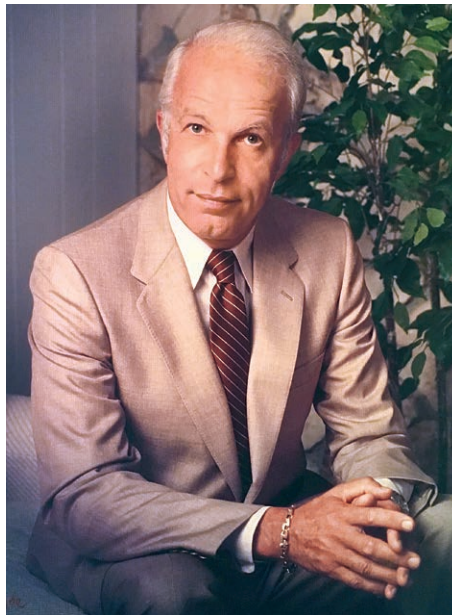
During this same time, Henry's wife Margot applied her nursing background as the head nurse of oncology at Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian. In addition to keeping a watchful eye on the quality, service and hospitality at his restaurants, Henry acquired and

managed numerous commercial and residential properties throughout his life, both locally and nationally.

It may have been Henry's loyalty to his adopted city – or his disadvantaged youth – that motivated him to take such an active part in civic and community organizations. He became a volunteer, philanthropist, teacher, ambassador, mentor and role model for so many during his years as a prominent Long Beach resident. An active member of the Jewish community, Henry also provided significant support to the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word's mission by volunteering as Co-chair of the St. Mary Medical Center Foundation 21 Society and underwriting the hospital's annual Gala each year.

Henry donated his time and leadership talents to numerous Long Beach organizations and non-profits and was named "Man of the Year" by the Long Beach Elks Lodge in the late 1990s.

Margot and Henry eventually divorced after 30 years of marriage, but remained great friends. She passed away in 2009. Henry married Jane, a native of Shanghai, in 2004. Hamburger Henry was a favorite of Long Beach locals until Henry retired from his business and closed his restaurant in 1996.



Henry passed away in June 2015 at his home, three months prior to his 90th birthday, surrounded by family. In a profile that appeared in the *Long Beach Press Telegram* in 2010, he was quoted as saying, "I have no regrets. I've had a wonderful life – at least it was wonderful after I came to the United States." Henry was able to provide his children with many of the advantages he never enjoyed growing up. His children include daughters Deborah, who works at the Jerusalem International YMCA; Denise, a Radio Master Control Operator in Las Vegas; and sons David, a Chief Scientist, VP and Fellow in Eugene, Oregon and Dan, a prominent cardiovascular surgeon in Dallas. "My dad was a people person, and he always wanted to give back," notes Deborah. "Everything was fun but he believed if you wanted something, you worked hard for it."

A generous philanthropist throughout his life, Henry's legacy included significant gifts to St. Mary Medical Center, in addition to five other charities close to his heart. A successful businessman, working with his estate planners, Henry structured the gifts to minimize tax consequences for estate beneficiaries, so that his beloved charities and beneficiaries would receive more after his passing.

From an émigré to a California business icon, philanthropist Henry Meyer always "paid it forward," to the betterment of the many lives he touched.



Rosemary shares a laugh with her son Shawn and daughter Maureen.

Rosemary Ashley | Donor Profile

Few people can claim to have a longer kinship with St. Mary Medical Center than Rosemary Ashley. The 90-year old Long Beach resident was born at St. Mary in 1926, when the hospital was just three years old. “I actually found the hospital bill my parents received after I was born,” she recounts. “For the delivery and an 11-day stay afterward, the bill came to just over \$62.”



A lot has changed at St. Mary over the years, as well as in the city of Long Beach, but after marrying her husband Don in 1946, Rosemary has resided within the same six blocks in Bixby Knolls in Long Beach. Don Ashley earned a doctorate in education and a law degree after serving in the Navy for five years during World War II. The couple met on the Red Car traveling to Long Beach from Pasadena, where Rosemary was attending boarding school.

“These two young naval officers were sitting behind me and my friend, when they asked us out to dinner. I knew my parents wouldn’t approve so I invited them to dinner at my house instead. When they arrived, my mother said, ‘Rosemary, you don’t even know them!’ I responded, ‘Well I do now!’”

That feisty, playful spirit served Rosemary well as she and Don went on to raise seven children, all born at St. Mary Medical Center. Don rose through the ranks in the Long Beach School District, starting as an elementary school teacher and eventually becoming its Assistant

Superintendent. When her children were old enough, Rosemary decided to volunteer at her beloved St. Mary Medical Center. That was in 1969 and in those days, volunteers made beds, fed patients and performed a variety of tasks that professional staff normally performs today. Through her volunteer work, Rosemary got to know the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, the sponsors of the hospital.

During her 36 years as a volunteer at St. Mary, Rosemary worked in many areas of the hospital. She volunteered in hospice, and also had a long tenure working shifts in the emergency room. She recalled that one day during the 1970’s, a race riot broke out at Long Beach Polytechnic High School where her son Shawn was a senior. “Out of the blue, I saw Shawn on a gurney in the ER with his tee shirt covered in blood. Another student had smacked him in the mouth. I looked at him and asked myself, ‘Am I going to admit to this kid!?’” Shawn received 25 stitches that day and in a twist of fate, went on to eventually become the principal at his alma mater.

Toward the end of her “career,” Rosemary volunteered at the Low Vision Center, where she tested the vision of local school children through its outreach program. Rosemary laughed and said “I worked at the Low Vision for so many years that I eventually ‘caught’ it”, referring to her Macular Degeneration diagnosis. Having compromised vision, though, doesn’t keep Rosemary standing still. As Debbie Acevedo, Director of the Low Vision Center quipped, “Don’t let Rosemary’s age fool you. She can still hopscotch around and over anyone my age and younger.” Their 15 years of friendship during Rosemary’s 25 years of volunteer service as a vision screener has deepened over time that Rosemary says “Debbie is part of the family.”

As lifelong donors to the hospital, Don and Rosemary were frequent guests at fundraisers as well as prayer groups in the Sisters’ convent. They are founding members of the Foundation 21 Society and members of the Sr. Alphonsus Tallon Circle of Philanthropy, comprised of individuals who have included St. Mary Medical Center in their bequest or estate plans. Don passed away at St. Mary in 2014. One month later, Rosemary fell and broke her hip. She received a hip replacement and rehabilitation at St. Mary, where the staff took good care of their beloved former volunteer.

Although they raised seven children, Don and Rosemary also wanted to provide for St. Mary Medical Center in their estate plan. Rosemary’s youngest daughter, Maureen, wouldn’t have it any other way.

“My mom always taught us that charity begins at home,” says Maureen. “And St. Mary’s has always been home for us. This hospital not only benefits us, but the community as well. Having a few dollars more in our inheritance is not as important as the big picture of investing in an infrastructure that could one day save our own lives if we have a stroke, a heart attack or other medical emergency.”

Maureen and her six siblings feel so supportive of St. Mary that they started a tradition that honors their mother in a unique and thoroughly modern way. “My Mom is so well known in this community that whenever I post about her on Facebook, I get double the hits than when I say something about me,” she laughs. That gave her an idea. “For Mom’s 89th birthday, I committed to sending a dollar to St. Mary for every ‘like’ posted to my page about her birthday. My siblings posted the same challenge to their Facebook pages for Mom’s 90th birthday. We collectively ended up sending a check this year to St. Mary for over \$1,000 dollars!”

With a 90-year history with St. Mary Medical Center, Rosemary is perhaps the hospital’s oldest friend. And that is a legacy that will endure for decades to come, thanks to their philanthropic gifts and the generous nature of their seven children.

Have you considered remembering St. Mary Medical Center in your will, living trust or estate plans?

Like Rosemary Ashley and Henry Meyer, have you remembered St. Mary Medical Center in your will, living trust or estate plans?

Making a bequest is as simple as inserting a few sentences into your will or living trust, and it may even reduce the taxes on your estate. You can designate a specific amount or a specific percentage of your estate after others have received their share.

You can also name our organization as a beneficiary of your Life Insurance policy, annuity, Individual Retirement Account (IRA), or bank account simply by listing St. Mary Medical Center Foundation under ‘Payable on Death’ or “P.O.D.”

Regardless of the amount or how you elect to leave a legacy gift to the medical center, your gift to St. Mary Medical Center Foundation will continue to have a lasting impact on the countless patients and their families who come to St. Mary Medical Center for care, and your legacy will be remembered long after you are gone.

By including us in your estate plans, you can remain anonymous or choose to let us know of your intentions. By letting us know, we can include you as a member of our Sister Alphonsus Tallon Circle of Philanthropy which recognizes and honors those individuals who have provided for St. Mary Medical Center in their estate plans, which may include wills, trusts, insurance policies, annuities, real estate, charitable trusts or gift annuities. Naming opportunities to honor or memorialize members and/or loved ones are also available.

You don’t have to be rich to leave an impressive legacy!

Think you have to be a millionaire to leave a legacy gift to St. Mary? Think again! The average size of charitable bequests received in the United States is between \$35,000 and \$70,000. Regardless of the amount, whether it’s \$10,000 or \$100,000, consider that every dollar contributed from your estate after your passing will have an exponential return on investment relative to the continuation of significant programs and services offered at St. Mary Medical Center for years to come, thanks to your generosity.

Why smart investors bequeath their IRA to charity!

If you have an IRA account, consider leaving all or a portion of your IRA to St. Mary Medical Center Foundation. Like Henry Meyer, to avoid having his heirs pay hefty income taxes on his IRA, he bequeathed his IRA to St. Mary and other charities, which are tax-exempt and paid no taxes upon receiving the funds, while leaving his heirs ‘other’ assets without tax implications.

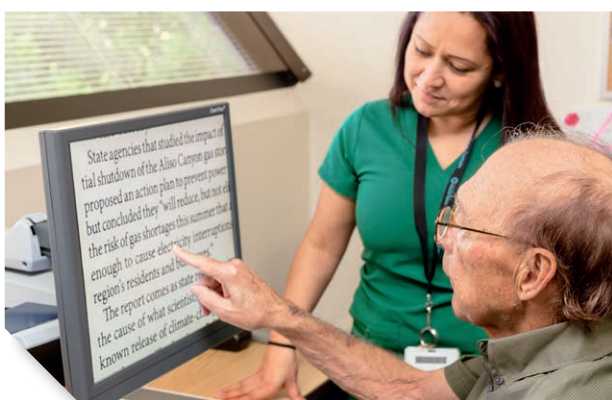
Low Vision Center

Promoting Learning and Independence

It has been said the eyes are the window to the soul, but many people would agree that they are also the windows of opportunity. For children, they provide an important way to learn about the exciting world around them. For adults, the eyes keep them connected to the ones they love and keep them safe. And for people in their Golden Years, the eyes are an important means of helping them live independently, in their own home, with dignity.



Debbie Acevedo, Director of the Low Vision Center, (above) and Monica Solarzano, Optical Aids Counselor, (below) help a patient test specialized low vision equipment.



For people of all ages, the Low Vision Center (LVC) at St. Mary Medical Center is an important resource for helping them maintain the best vision they can using assistive devices. And to advance that mission, the LVC conducts robust outreach programs to find children and adults with low vision out in the community.

“We bring our Free School Vision Screening Program to private and parochial schools in Long Beach to identify and treat vision problems in elementary, middle and high school students,” says Debbie Acevedo, Program Director. One to two days a week, Debbie and her team of 14 volunteers screen children in grades two through twelve. Many of these dedicated volunteers are retired teachers, nurses or business people who understand the importance of finding eye problems early in young children. Those kids who do not pass their vision exam and are uninsured, underinsured or disadvantaged, will each receive an exam and glasses free of charge.

The Free School Vision Screening Program is funded by grants from the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation, the Josephine S. Gumbiner Foundation and the Earl B. and Loraine H. Miller Foundation. For the fiscal year that ended in June 2016, the Free School Vision Screening Program conducted 2,556 vision exams at 27 schools in the Greater Long Beach area as well as extracurricular programs such as the Summer Science Camp for homeless youth held at California State University Long Beach. Of these, 309 children –12 percent – were referred to optometrists in Long Beach and subsequently received a free full examination and pair of eye glasses.



Adults and Seniors A Focus As Well

Seniors and adults are also key populations for outreach by the LVC staff, who conducts evaluations at local senior centers and anyone who enters the LVC. They also periodically visit the St. Mary Elm Avenue Professional Building and set booths up in the lobbies of surrounding medical offices to catch anyone who feels they need a vision evaluation. The Adult Glasses Program is funded solely through donations made to the LVC by its clients and the Senior Glasses Program is funded by the St. Mary's

are some of the practical topics offered at the center. One LVC client, Harriet, learned firsthand about the importance of this information. While she had a meal cooking in her oven, Harriet accidentally clicked the "Self Clean" button and her appliance locked up and heated to 500 degrees. She couldn't turn it off because she couldn't see the correct button. The mistake caused a fire and damaged her home. Harriet has made staying safe a priority and is now working with Debbie on using specialized optical equipment to perform activities of daily living. "For many of our clients, seeing is critical to staying independent," Debbie notes.

"For many of our patients, seeing is critical to staying independent."

Debbie Acevedo, Low Vision Center Program Director

Foundation (independent from the SMMC Foundation), a private charity established by local humanitarian Dr. Nabil El Sayad. The program funds the examination and glasses to seniors without insurance or who cannot afford to buy them.

"We also provide information on how to maximize their MediCal benefits, if they have coverage," Debbie states. "We will evaluate them before they make an optometrist appointment to ensure they really do need a clinical exam, which they can only have every two years."

In addition to offsite outreach, Debbie conducts classes in the LVC's Community Education Center. Information on eye diseases, fall prevention, training on using optical equipment, and tips for cooking and cleaning if someone has low vision

Over the last year, the LVC has touched the lives of nearly 5,000 children, adults and seniors. Most of these clients are low income or disadvantaged. But the gratitude they exhibit is palpable when they receive low or no cost classes, magnifiers, large face clocks or calculators, or any of the other items the LVC stocks.

"We have some people who come back just to make a donation," Debbie recounts. "They may only be able to leave us with a few dollars, but they do so in great gratitude. It isn't the amount that counts. I feel great when someone comes back to thank us for helping them maintain their dignity and quality of life."

St. Mary Donors Celebrate Giving



Foundation 21 Society Co-Chairs Bill and Kathryn Edwards enjoy the fall reception for annual donors at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach.



Celebrating another successful Employee Giving Campaign are (left to right) Pam Fair, RN, Senior Director of ICU & Emergency Department; Ron Yolo, MSN, MBA, RN Assistant Chief Nursing Officer; Lani Garcia, Director Acute Rehab Unit; Kimberly Barachina, Foundation; Cristina Canaria, RN, Medical Surgical Director; Ardel Avelino, Senior Director of Operations, FCP Administration; Merly Munoz, Director, Critical Care Services; and Ellen Fontanares-Jaramillo, Risk Quality, Hospital Administrator Assistant.



Mike and Arline Walter, long-time supporters of St. Mary Medical Center, at the Foundation 21 Society Donor Reception. Dr. Walter is a St. Mary Foundation Trustee.



Foundation Board Chair Paul Carter and Dan Munzer, Foundation Trustee, enjoy the fellowship of 200 golfers and guests at the St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Charity Golf Tournament, held at Virginia Country Club.



Long-time friends David Shlemmer and Luciann Maulhardt, both members of the Foundation Board of Trustees, at the 2016 St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Charity Golf Tournament.



Douglas McFarland, M.D., Chief of Staff at St. Mary, and his wife Carol looking glamorous at the 2016 St. Mary Medical Center Auction and Dinner at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Long Beach.



Robert and Barbara Graham, distinguished members of the Sister Alphonus Tallon Circle of Philanthropy, enjoy the festive annual luncheon for legacy donors at the Old Ranch Country Club.



George Murchison, long-time St. Mary supporter and Foundation Trustee, with Bishop Oscar Azarcon Solis at the 2016 St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Auction and Dinner.



Noemi Lorico (2nd from the right), a long-serving employee of St. Mary, is honored as the newest member of the Sister Alphonus Tallon Circle of Philanthropy by (left to right) Sister Celeste Trahan, CCVI, Gene Lentzner, Foundation Trustee and Chair of the Sister Alphonus Circle of Philanthropy, and Linda Rahn, Director of Gift Planning.



Hospital supporters (left to right) Rocky and Julie Suares with Joseph F. Prevratil, J.D., President and CEO of the Archstone Foundation. Rocky serves as the Chair of the Hospital's Community Board of Directors.



Legacy donors (left to right) Ghislaine Iliff and Nancy Higginson share a warm moment at the annual membership luncheon for the Sister Alphonus Tallon Circle of Philanthropy.



Long-time supporters Bob and Jan Waestman at the St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Auction and Dinner at the Hyatt Regency in Long Beach. Bob is a Foundation Trustee and member of the Community Board of Directors.

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Words of comfort, skillfully
administered, are the oldest
therapy known to man.

Louis Nizer



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