



Community Heartbeat

ACMC: Serving the Community Locally & Internationally

ACMC is Medical Sponsor for First Oakland Running Festival



Members of the ACMC medial team for the Oakland Running Festival included (l to r) Dr. Carter Clements, Dr. Maggie Hatcher-Dewey, Dr. Christine Riguzzi, Dr. Robert Savio, Dr. Charlotte Wills, Julia Mark, RN, and Shareen Cronin, RN.

In March 2009, the Medical Center got a call from Corrigan Sports, which is known for organizing marathons around the US in mid-size cities. After meeting with City officials they were given the green light to develop an Oakland marathon for 2010 and were looking for a medical partner. Corrigan Sports is based in Baltimore, a similar size city in population size and diversity to Oakland, and had created a highly successful marathon there. They knew of Alameda County Medical Center as a major medical provider in the East Bay, with a nationally recognized trauma center and teaching program.

ACMC accepted this invitation and proudly served as the official medical sponsor for the first year of the Oakland Running Festival, held March 27-28, 2010. The Oakland Running Festival included a twilight 5k race Saturday, March 27th around Oakland's Lake Merritt. The full



Pictured with Mayor of Oakland Ron Dellums (c) are ACMC CEO Wright Lassiter (l) and COO Bill Manns; both completed the half-marathon.

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Medical Center sends Emergency Response Teams to Haitian Disaster

The Alameda County Medical Center's Department of Emergency Medicine had already been contributing to international health before the Haiti earthquake struck. The Highland Network for International Health provides opportunities for Emergency Medicine residents who want to participate in international humanitarian relief efforts. Highland developed an ongoing relationship with Hospital San Carlos in rural Chiapas, Mexico, and fourth year residents were offered the opportunity to do an international health rotation there.

When a 7.0 magnitude earth-



Members of the first ACMC Team to arrive in Haiti after the earthquake:

Takenya Spears, RN, with tiny patient (top).

Opal Taylor, MD, surveys tents erected in city plaza, Port-au-Prince, Haiti (lower left).

Naomi Marks, MD, cares for a little girl who sustained severe hand injuries in the earthquake (lower right).

quake struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, our Emergency Medicine staff was prepared to mobilize. Teams of Emergency Department attending physicians, residents and nurses organized under the banner of Highland Emergency International (HEI). The initial goal of the group has been to provide the basic medical support necessary to treat victims of the earthquake. In the long term, they plan to equip and train local Haitian staff in Emergency Medi-

cine to continue their work. In these ways, HEI is committed to providing medical, public health, and humanitarian support while the people of Haiti rebuild their country.

Our staff sought out a group that already was established in Haiti, with whom they could work. After some research, our staff selected International Medical Corps, which had an excellent track record in post-disaster settings. HEI's first team arrived in Haiti on February 15, 2010, just a month after

the earthquake devastated the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Our team set up shop in IMC's tents outside the major public hospital which had been badly damaged in the quake, l'Hôpital de l'Université d'Etat d'Haïti.

Dr. Naomi Marks, a member of the first team, described the flow of patients. "At Highland, we see 200 patients per day in a very busy emergency department. When we first arrived in Haiti, we were able to increase patients seen from 600 to 900 a day by setting up an effective triage system." Dr. Marks also explained that patients were so terrified of possible aftershocks

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Words from Wright



In the past few months, I have been so proud of the Alameda County Medical Center's physicians and nurses—as they stepped up to serve as the medical team for Oakland's first marathon in 25 years, and sent four (to date) medical teams to provide lifesaving emergency care in earthquake-ravaged Haiti. In both cases, our staff received kudos for applying the same skills and compassion they do in treating the patients who

pass through our own doors. In this issue of Community Heartbeat you will read about these experiences and view photos of our amazing staff who stepped up to volunteer for both efforts. In talking with our caregivers who participated, a common theme emerges: their experiences here at ACMC motivated them and prepared them to reach out and apply those skills in other situations where they are needed.

Our recent ACMC fourth Annual Meeting was also a place to reflect on new initiatives that ACMC as an organization is taking on during 2010. Looking forward, I presented these top priorities for 2010 at our Annual Meeting:

- **South County Strategy:** We have purchased Newark Health Center and will be doubling its physical size and adding specialty services;
- **Angiography Suite:** ACMC is constructing a state-of-the-art angiography and cardiac catheterization lab at Highland, greatly enhancing our trauma and cardiac care;
- **Acute Tower Replacement:** Ground-breaking will take place for the first building in the acute tower replacement project on Highland Campus.

As many of you know, in March Congress passed and the President signed The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, bringing us into a new era of health reform. On these pages, you will read about some of the innovative programs our medical staff created to effectively treat two major chronic diseases—congestive heart failure and diabetes—affecting our community, and you'll learn about our advances in palliative care for patients facing debilitating illnesses. You'll also hear about our smoke-free campus campaign and smoking cessation programs we offer patients of our health centers. Our providers are always looking for new tools to help patients manage their chronic conditions and to keep complications from further weakening their health. These efforts to offer preventive health services and manage chronic conditions will be even more important as we step forward to meet the new demands and opportunities of health reform.

Best regards,

Wright Lassiter, III,
Chief Executive Officer

ACMC in Haiti

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that they refused to come when a portion of operations were moved back inside a less damaged area of the hospital, so services were again moved to the outside tents. Our teams had to work with few of the diagnostic tools and supplies found at home; for example, there was no CT scanner; there was only one nebulizer to treat asthma attacks amongst the hundreds of patients; only the simplest lab tests were able to be performed; some critical medications were unavailable. Despite these limitations, the team was able to save thousands of lives, treating everything from severe dehydration to infected wounds. One

highly sophisticated tool the team employed was portable ultrasound, donated by Sonosite. Dr. Jahan Fahimi, who went as part of our second team to Haiti, performed ultrasound procedures on patients, even those lying outside the tents on cots. According to Dr. Fahimi, "Highland team members are expert in emergency ultrasound. A lot of the patients we saw had disease processes besides their earthquake injuries, and it helped to have ultrasound to diagnose and treat them." Dr. Fahimi added, "There were so few resources available, but those of us who were there from Highland Emergency were very re-

sourceful. We are used to handling whatever comes through the door and figuring it out."

Dr. Marks commented, "What

was most memorable of all to our team was the incredible spirit and courage of the Haitian people in the face of un-

imaginable devastation. Our medical team was absolutely honored to be welcomed into their lives."

To date, our Emergency Depart-



Honors & Events



On March 10, 2010, ACMC Board President Dan Boggan and CEO Wright Lassiter (left) participated in Speaker Nancy Pelosi's roundtable discussion and press conference on health reform with other public hospital leaders from the National Association of Public Hospitals. The event took place in Washington DC, just two weeks before final passage and signing of the landmark health reform legislation.



On March 31st, ACMC honored dedicated physicians in the atrium at Highland Hospital. The Doctors' Day celebration was sponsored by the Nursing Department as a way of saying "thank you" to those who have devoted their careers to medically underserved communities. Pictured here: Doctors Evan Seevak, Steve Sackrin, Mini Swift and Thurman Hunt.

ACMC at Oakland Running Festival

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marathon, four-person team relays and half marathon were held Sunday March 28th. This was the first marathon held in Oakland in 25 years.

Medical personnel from ACMC provided coverage for 6,400 runners at the event. As the medical partner, we recruited MDs and nurses with backgrounds in emergency medicine and urgent care, ACMC staffed the course's seven medical stops: six first aid stations and a medical tent. We partnered with American Medical Response, which contributed four ambulances plus a golf cart that was fully stocked and staffed by two EMTs. This team effort made for a safe experience for all participants.

ACMC also provided the medi-



Robert Savio, MD, Chief of Pediatrics, managed the hospital's operations on race weekend as the Physician Champion.

cal supplies for the aid stations and tent. Each first aid station had varied supplies that included bandages, IVs, thermometers, glucometers, sun-

screen, nebulizers for asthma, blankets, blood pressure cuffs and benadryl injections.

According to Dr. Robert Savio who headed up ACMC's medical team, "ACMC was honored to be the medical sponsor of this historic rebirth of the Oakland Marathon. We are excited to have supported the event as it is well in line with our health promotion vision for our vibrant, diverse community. And, of course, we are the ideal provider of emergency care for the event."

Dr. Christine Riguzzi, Department of Emergency Medicine, added, "Within 24 hours of sending out an email for volunteers, we had 20 residents and nurses sign up. It was a perfect opportunity for residents to work in an environment without all the resources the Emergency Department provides, having to improvise and think on their feet."

ACMC's medical team treated over 150 people. Conditions treated included dehydration which can be a very serious condition; exhaustion; digestive upsets, foot injuries ranging from blisters to sprains, hamstring injuries and muscle cramps. The medical team for a marathon must prepare for the unexpected, including changes



Gordon McKinney greets visitors to the ACMC booth at Celebration Village at the race finish line, where volunteers distributed information about ACMC's programs and promotional items.



Inside the ER tent outside damaged hospital.



Melanie Watts, MD, doing an ultrasound in the tent.



First ACMC Haiti team (l to r) MD, Jeanette Amezcuita, RN, Levine, MD, Naomi Marks, MD

SPOTLIGHT ON Winton Wellness Center

Winton Wellness Center is located in the Eden Area Multi-Service Center in Hayward, which also houses social services, employment services and other community resources.

Open Monday–Friday 8:45 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Winton Wellness Center offers comprehensive primary care for all ages:

- Adult Primary Care
- Chest Clinic: TB testing and screening
- Diabetes Clinic
- Health and Nutritional Counseling
- HIV Counseling and Testing
- Immunizations
- Laboratory Services
- Pediatrics
- Podiatry
- Smoking Cessation
- Women's Services: Gynecology, Family Planning, Pregnancy Testing and Prenatal Care



Namita Singh, MD, OB/GYN, reviews information with a prenatal patient. Clinic redesign means patients have more time with their providers.

Rupa Srivastava, MD, and Claudia Arriaga, Spanish Interpreter, do a well-baby checkup in the Pediatric Clinic. Patients now get in and out of the clinic faster due to the new visit redesign.



The clinic visit experience has been redesigned at Winton Wellness Center's Women's Services and Pediatric Clinic and patients love the results.

In 2008, Winton provided 29,641 visits. In 2009, the number of visits grew to 32,383, almost a 10% increase.

Adult HIV specialty care expanded to Winton Wellness Center in November 2008 and occurs every Friday morning. There are plans to expand that service to two full days a week during 2010. Besides HIV specialty care, case managers are available to support patients with access to benefits and programs for substance abuse, mental health, food and housing.

In the past year, we have expanded Smoking Cessation services to include Winton Wellness Center. A smoking cessation counselor is available to assist patients who would like to quit smoking. She offers individual counseling and a support group for Spanish-speaking patients at Winton Wellness Center.

Patients love their clinic experience and our providers are more productive thanks to the recently completed "visit redesign."

Patients find great support at Winton's Adult Diabetes Clinic and Diabetes Education classes. Patients receive tools to manage their condition and make changes leading to a healthier lifestyle, in nutrition, weight loss, and keeping blood glucose on target. Our Health Education Unit provides individual and group classes weekly. A cooperative team of doctors, nurses, dietitians and health educators work together with each patient to come up with reasonable lifestyle changes that can make a big difference in preventing diabetes complications.

ACMC is continually working to improve our patients' experience at all our facilities. Patients love their clinic experience and our providers are more productive thanks to recently completed "visit redesign" projects at Winton for our pediatric and women's services patients. Clinic redesign means patients spend less time waiting to be seen and more time with their provider getting their needs addressed.



On February 18, 2010, CEO Wright Lassiter (center) was honored to receive the Regent's Senior Level Healthcare Executive Award, presented by the California Association of Healthcare Leaders, the Northern and Central California Chapter of American College of Healthcare Executives.

The Medical Center's Cancer Navigator Program held its 16th annual holiday party on December 13, 2009. It is a festive event designed to provide lasting memories for cancer patients and their families, with many children and grandchildren in attendance. Santa Claus greets the children and everyone receives gifts. Almost 300 patients and family members participated this year.

ACMC's 4th Annual Meeting took place on January 26, 2010 at Holy Names University with over 250 in attendance. The meeting highlighted ACMC's role in graduate medical education and honored the outgoing Board of Trustees President. As J. Bennett Tate (l) steps down as Board President, he accepts award from Wright Lassiter, CEO (c) and Daniel Boggan, Jr., new Board President (r).



ACMC supplies and cots at a first aid station were ready to treat runners.



Medical team members Stephanie Woolery, RN, (l) and Tania Sadoun, MD, (r) from Highland Emergency Department.

in temperature. It's a constantly evolving event. Also, there are people who haven't adequately trained or prepared and will need urgent care.

ACMC also had a booth at the Health and Wellness Expo that was held the day before the marathon and another at Cel-

ebration Village on the day of the marathon.

ACMC is looking forward to participating again next year and basking in the glow of praise we received for our performance. According to Race Director Gene Brtalik, "We are ecstatic that the inaugu-

ral Oakland Running Festival was a huge success for the City of Oakland. We couldn't have done it without the support of the wonderful staff of the Alameda County Medical Center, who did a magnificent job of taking care of runners on the course and at the finish line."



Milton Lorig, MD, Staff Psychiatrist, smiles after completing the full marathon.



Comedian Mark Curry, President of Corrigan Sports Lee Corrigan, Mayor Ron Dellums, and ACMC External Affairs Executive Patricia VanHook.



Starr Knight, MD, and Kristi LaRock, PAC, celebrate after completing half-marathon.

ment has sent four teams to work in Haiti, each staying for a two-week interval. They have already trained Haitian medical person-

nel, especially building skills in the areas of ultrasonography, wound care, trauma, and triage tools. HEI intends to keep our

teams going to Haiti as long as they are needed.



Erica Peters, RN, Aaron Harries, Takenya Spears, RN, Shankar D. (not pictured Opal Taylor, MD).

Jeanette Amezcua, RN, checks a patient's blood pressure.

Kennedy Fleischauer, RN, (l) and Jahan Fabimi, MD, performing an EKG.

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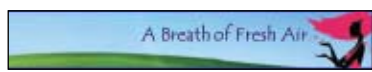
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Highland Shuttle Stop Has Moved



Due to construction, the BART shuttle stop at Highland Campus has moved. It's still in front of the hospital, but now it's on the street instead of in the parking lot. The shuttle stop can be found on the corner of East 31st St. and Stuart St. 📍

Smoke-Free ACMC



On April 16, 2010, the Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC) launched the Smoke Free, Health and Wellness Program. The campaign is known at all our sites as "A Breath of Fresh Air!" Our three hospitals and three health centers are now officially smoke-free zones. The only exception is Fairmont Skilled Nursing Facility, where patients live for extended periods.

This program is geared towards the promotion and awareness of a healthy lifestyle for all ACMC employees and patients. ACMC employees are taking advantage of on-site programs that promote a Smoke-Free Campus, including walking and fitness, Weight Watchers, purchase of "Grub Boxes" of healthy fruits and vegetables, education to assist employees to control/stop smoking.

There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure. Even brief exposure can be dangerous. It is especially harmful to patients already suffering from

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR OUTSTANDING CAREGIVERS

Healthy Hearts



Mini Swift, MD, Program Director, treats patient in Highland Hospital's Healthy Hearts Clinic.

Heart failure occurs when the heart loses its ability to pump blood effectively to the rest of the body. Six million Americans suffer from heart failure. Patients are often forced to return to the emergency room repeatedly because of exacerbations of this chronic condition. ACMC has improved quality of care while reducing costly emergency visits by implementing a multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of heart failure. The Healthy Hearts Clinic at Highland Hospital is staffed by representatives from cardiology, pharmacy, and internal medicine working in concert with volunteer health educators to improve cardiovascular health and quality of life for patients. According to Dr. Mini Swift, Program Director, "Patients are provided with the therapies and tools to actively manage and control their condition. We treat the disease and care for the whole person."

Effective Diabetes Management

An estimated 3.7 million Californians are living with diabetes. Patients with poorly controlled diabetes are at risk for many complications of the disease, damaging the heart, eyes, blood vessels, kidneys and nerves. Keeping blood glucose on target can delay or prevent complications. Since 2001 the Highland Diabetes Clinic has provided a multidisciplinary team to help patients improve self-management and clinical outcomes. The team includes physicians, Clinical Diabetes Educators, RNs, medical assistants, dietitians, pharmacists, digital retinal screening staff from the UC Berkeley School of Optometry, and Podiatry students. Weekly self-management classes are taught in English and Spanish. According to Dr. Berry, "Our team works closely to understand patients' real barriers to care. It has been exciting to see our patients take control of their diabetes."



Lyn Berry, MD (standing), Program Director, with Maria Rojas, MD, provides care in Highland Hospital's Diabetes Clinic.

Compassionate Palliative Care



Linda Bulman, PA, Palliative Care Liaison on the Rapid Response Team and Sheira Freedman, MD, Director, Palliative Services.

ACMC's Palliative Care program has been underway for 10 years and is expanding rapidly. Palliative Care is a branch of medicine that focuses on the quality of life for patients facing debilitating illness whatever the stage or prognosis. It involves managing distressing symptoms, enhancing communication between patients, families and medical teams, eliciting preferences for care and giving attention to emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of serious illness. This year a grant from the California Health-Care Foundation supports a Physician Assistant as a mentor to our Rapid Response Team to bring palliative care to the bedside of all of our patients who need it. Dr. Sheira Freedman, Program Director, explains, "This innovative project is unique in the United States and it was created through collaboration of ACMC nurse and physician leaders who know our facility and our patients best."

heart disease, cancer, COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other chronic illnesses. For these reasons many hospitals are adopting completely smoke-free campuses.

To join this healthy trend, the Medical Center is striving to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the staff and patients. Signage will be going up soon

at all ACMC locations advising that our sites are smoke-free. We now sell nicotine gum and nicotine lozenges in our gift shop.

In the past year, ACMC has expanded our smoking cessation programs for patients from Eastmont Wellness Center to now include both South County clinics, Winton Wellness Cen-

ter and Newark Health Center. Dalys Wright, Smoking Cessation Counselor, provides patients with many types of support. Each patient begins the intake process with a thorough health assessment. By joining the smoking cessation program, patients qualify for nicotine patches and gum coverage by Medi-Cal. The vast majority of patients prefer to use medications to help them quit smoking. Patients receive coaching in how to use medications and attend individual health education sessions as often as needed, typically weekly or biweekly.

Support groups now meet at Winton for Spanish-speaking patients and at Eastmont for African American women. Ms. Wright explains, "The program is really personalized for each patient based on their needs. We help them develop a strategy and if it isn't working, we can adjust it. Patients who follow the program tend to do well." 📍



Dalys Wright, Smoking Cessation Educator (standing) points out the hidden chemicals in cigarettes during a counseling session.

ACMC Locations



Eastmont Wellness Center

Eastmont Mall, Suite 200
6955 Foothill Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94605
(510) 567-5700



Fairmont Hospital

15400 Foothill Blvd.
San Leandro, CA 94578
(510) 895-4200



Highland Hospital & Clinics

1411 East 31st Street
Oakland, CA 94602
(510) 437-4800



John George Psychiatric Pavilion

2060 Fairmont Drive
San Leandro, CA 94578
(510) 346-1300



Newark Health Center

6066 Civic Terrace Avenue
Newark, CA 94560
(510) 505-1600



Winton Wellness Center

24100 Amador Street, Ste. 250
Hayward, CA 94544
(510) 266-1700