

MAY 2022

# UCSD STUDENT-RUN FREE CLINIC PROJECT

Healing Together: Free Clinic's 25th Anniversary

## Annual Free Clinic Gala May 24, 2022 5:30p.m. PST

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

*healing*  
together

*Celebrating 25 years of the  
Student-Run Free Clinic Project*

Tuesday, May 24, 2022  
5:30 p.m.

*Join us in person or virtually.*

Registration Required. Please RSVP by May 15th

Gala Schedule:

In-Person Reception:  
5:30p.m.-6:30p.m. PST

Program:  
6:30p.m.-7:30p.m. PST

**Click below  
to RSVP!**

[Join us in person](#)

[or virtually](#)

WHAT'S IN THIS  
ISSUE:

I. 25th  
ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION

II. ALUMNI  
SPOTLIGHT

III. GRADUATING  
STUDENT  
SPOTLIGHTS

IV. VOLUNTEER  
SPOTLIGHTS

V. THANK  
YOU FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT

Celebrating 25 years is a special milestone and we're excited to reflect on our history and look forward to our future! We hope you can join us safely in person or from the comfort of your home for an amazing night of celebration, memories, awards and performances. We're looking forward to sharing this momentous occasion with all of our Student-Run Free Clinic Family.



Vaccine Manager Team



**Robert Scholz, MD**

How have your experiences with the Free Clinic shaped your clinical practice now, journey in medicine, and career trajectory as a physician?

Working with the UCSD Free Clinic was one of my most memorable experiences of medical school. The free clinic helped shape my practice of medicine early in my medical career by allowing me the opportunity to provide comprehensive and meaningful care to those without access.

There are countless barriers to health care that often get overlooked or are easily discounted given the rapid pace of clinical medicine. Having ample time with patients and access to resources like pharmacy, dental, and other social services is truly incredible. I was fortunate to continue working with a similar patient population in Chicago during my residency training in OB/GYN at the University of Chicago, and I often thought back to the UCSD Free Clinic for inspiration and ideas. I am excited to be back in San Diego working for Southern California Permanente Medical Group and to continue my volunteer experience at the UCSD Free Clinic.

**Thank you for all that you have done for Free Clinic!**  
**We wish you well on your journey and in your future endeavors.**



**Betial Asmerom, MS4**

Working in the Free Clinic taught me about the heart and soul of medicine. I learned how to listen patiently, how to advocate and provide care that centers the needs of my patients, and that a non-hierarchical relationship based on trust is one of the most critical components of healthcare. Being part of the Free Clinic has been the most important part of my medical education, and I'll hold the values I gained from this experience close during residency and beyond.



**Grace Chen, MS4**

Chief among my many learnings from Free Clinic has been the importance of prioritizing excellent patient care, even (or especially!) within a learning environment. I am so grateful to Dr. Johnson, Dr. Rodriguez, and other Free Clinic faculty for modeling this priority and instilling it in their learners. As I look ahead to residency—where I will be learning daily—I will carry with me the Free Clinic's commitment to equitable, excellent care and learning (in that order!)



**Julie Westover, MS4**

Free Clinic celebrates compassion, empathy, interprofessional teamwork, diversity, our shared humanity, and caring for all members of our communities – these are values that I will continue to practice and teach as an emergency medicine physician and aspiring critical care doctor. At Free Clinic, I also had the privilege of caring for a patient during the last year of his life, who taught me the importance of quality of life and comfort in death, and the sometimes understated power of being an empathetic presence during a challenging time for patients and their loved ones.



**Nikita Mittal, MS4**

Working with patients at the free clinic for consecutive years taught me, among many things, the value in continuity of care. The time I was given with patients allowed us to have long conversations, share laughs, and strengthen trust, which transformed my relationships with them and deepened my delivery of care. My patients' stories and perspectives motivate me to focus on long-term care in my future medical practice - I'm confident it will likewise allow me to foster meaningful relationships with my upcoming patients.



**Eileen Ruiz, Volunteer and Pre-Med**

We asked three of our volunteers who are entering medical school: Now that you are entering medical school, what have you learned at Free Clinic that you are taking with you into your medical training?

At Free Clinic, I was able to increase my awareness and knowledge of health disparities and how they affect patients' access to care. Interpreting also allowed me to have memorable conversations with patients outside of their health. I am excited to take these experiences with me as I start medical school to learn to provide culturally sensitive care to underserved patients.



**Arturo Chavez, Volunteer and Pre-Med**

My time serving our community in our free clinic has been fundamental in cultivating my introduction to clinical skills and the empathy, cultural relativism, and bilingual clinical competencies necessary for my future development as a physician. The mission of the free clinic in establishing health equity for all our patients is alive and well, and it has been an honor to have been a part of it.



**Alejandra Campos, Volunteer and Pre-Med**

As a medical interpreter for the past few years, I have learned from the staff and medical students the importance of understanding the physical, mental, and social needs of our patients. I hope to care for my future patients with the same amount of empathy that the free clinic team shows every day.

# Thank you for your support!