

# UCSD FREE CLINIC NEWSLETTER

## A TIME OF TRANSITIONS



## Letters of Gratitude

*Taking a moment to say thank you to some very special members of our family.*

There is so much to say in the Free Clinic world right now, so we will be sending out two special edition newsletters and plan on sending quarterly newsletters moving forward.

In a time of uncertainty and change, we want to acknowledge some changes that are occurring within our own community. Free Clinic is going through a transition in leadership, including Dr. Johnson, Dr. Rodriguez, and others taking on new roles.

The next newsletter will be focused on congratulating and welcoming them, but we wanted to first devote this newsletter to the members of the Free Clinic family that are taking a step back from positions where they have spent so many years pouring service and love into Free Clinic and its patients.

On the following page you will find "letters of gratitude" written to and about Pastor Bob Rhodes, a pastor of the Pacific Beach United Methodist church and partner of Free Clinic and Tom "Maddog" Madsen, an incredibly valuable and long-time member of the PB clinic. These individuals, with their kindness and passion to go above and beyond to help others, have made Free Clinic what it is today, and from the whole Free Clinic family, we sincerely thank you.

Last, but certainly not least, a final change in our community involves someone we all know and truly admire. After years of devoting so much of herself, her time and her heart to Free Clinic, Dr. Ellen Beck is stepping down from her role as Director, and will remain involved in Free Clinic as a faculty advisor and teacher. Please see the lefthand panel for a couple of notes to Dr. Beck and for an opportunity to send your own. Dr. Beck has also taken the time to write a letter to all of us which you can find on the last page.

## Dear Dr. Beck,

Dr. Beck was the Founding Director of Free Clinic, but as we all know, she has been so much more than that. Dr. Beck is a source of light when hardships strike, wisdom when doubts arise, and love when those around her need it most.

Dr. Beck, your ideas and heart have shaped what Free Clinic is today, and Free Clinic has in turn, played a part in impacting the lives of countless of patients, students and volunteers. From the many people whose lives you have touched, we thank you.

"As a Free Clinic Advisory Board member, friend and former patient, I believe Dr. Ellen Beck is one of the most creative, talented, and kind people I have ever met."

-Iris Masotti

"Dr. Beck has been one of the most influential and impactful role models in my life. She has inspired me throughout my journey in medicine and has been an amazing teacher, mentor, friend and colleague for more than 20 years. I am so grateful for the countless ways she has positively influenced me personally and professionally, and I know I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for her."

- Dr. Michelle Johnson

We would like to give you all a chance to record your **own message to Dr. Beck**. You can use this [website](#) to record a short clip of you saying thank you, sharing a memory, or simply saying hello. These messages will be compiled and sent to only Dr. Beck and will serve as a way to thank her for all of the strength, love, and wisdom she has provided Free Clinic and us over the years.





## Dear Pastor Bob,

Pastor Bob is a selfless, kind, compassionate, and oh so funny person. He always offered a warm smile (it could practically be seen through his mask the last few months), and he made a strong point to ensure that everyone who entered the church doors knew they were valued and taken care of. Our entire leadership team knew we could turn to him when we had needs, and they seemed to be met before we even finished the sentence. I want to thank him for all he has done for the clinic and for me personally. You will be greatly missed, and we all wish you the best. -Haley Moss, MS2

## Dear Tom "Maddog" Madsen,

When I started at the clinic, you were one of the first people I met and you were introduced to me as Mad Dog as you were known on the street; you became so important to how the evening meal and the clinic went. You made sure everything was set up before we got there and broken down at the end of the evening and all the while also somehow managed to easily keep the peace when guests/patients would occasionally get rowdy. It seemed like you knew everybody who came in the door. I was always thankful that I could come to you with these occasional situations and you could handle them in an effective and low-key way.

It was also wonderful when we used to go once a month on Saturdays to the beach areas. You would introduce us to homeless folks, so our team of medical students, a doctor and I could give them socks, take their blood pressure and give them information on the meal, the clinic and other resources. Because they trusted you, they would talk to us. That outreach was always a special time.

You have had many challenges over the years, but I always appreciated when you brought out your sense of humor and your tender heart.

I hope you are well and able to continue making a difference in the lives of others.

Thanks for all of the memories, Charlene



## OTHER NEWS AND WHAT'S TO COME!

As mentioned before, there is a lot going on at Free Clinic right now! We wanted to highlight a couple of exciting announcements:

- We are grateful to announce that we have been awarded **\$30,000** by the **National Association of Free Clinics (NAFC)** and **CVS Health** to support our efforts with telemedicine and food distribution.
- We are honored to have received a large donation of **insulin** from **Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD)** and **The Helmsley Charitable Trust**. This donation provides life-saving and life-changing insulin for our uninsured patients with diabetes who otherwise would not be able to afford insulin.
- We are so excited to announce we are now seeing select patients in person at our new **Thursday morning clinic** at our Normal Heights location. We started August 13th and it's been such a joy to have patients, students, and volunteers all back together again.

Please keep an eye out for the **next newsletter** that will focus on welcoming members of Free Clinic into their new roles. In these trying times, we have found solace in being a part of this organization and **coming together** for our common goal of helping others. You are all a part of the Free Clinic Family--a community that is made up of people that have, are currently, and will continue to bring good into this world. Thank you all for being a source of hope for us and for each other.



# Dear wonderful Free Clinic Family,

I hope you are all well, or as well as can be expected, in these poignant times. I want to thank you for all you are doing and have done these many years for the Free Clinic Project. And thank you for being the best volunteers, staff, colleagues, supporters, and friends a person could imagine.

As you probably know, 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, including fourth year medical students, and behind the scenes, I will be available to provide advice, background, history, etc. as needed. Please feel free to stay in touch and to reach out if I can be of service. Our dedicated Free Clinic Advisory Board will also continue to be a source of support into the future. I am also involved with leadership work on the general UCSD campus, helping to transform the climate and culture at UCSD into a more humanistic environment as well as embarking on some new learning and writing directions in my personal life.

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. I have learned much from you.

When I think of our relationships over these many years, I am humbled and heartened by your dedication to the Free Clinic Project. The quality and depth of our relationships mean a great deal to me. The friendships and collegial relationships we have developed over the years will continue. You are important to me.

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 and for you.

The clinic is in excellent hands. We continue to have inspiring students who help us to create the future. Our patients continue to teach us about how to face life's challenges with grace, wisdom, and strength. Thank you to each of you for your years of support. I look forward to our continued meaningful relationships for years to come. Thank you for being members of the Free Clinic family and for being members of the Mutual Inspiration Society!

Wishing you peace, justice, healing, wisdom, wellbeing, wonder, and change in these poignant times,

Ellen Beck, MD  
Founding Director, UCSD Student-Run Free Clinic Project  
Faculty Director- Faculty Development and Leadership,  
University of California San Diego

