

## ■ CEO's Letter



*Dear Dientes Family,*

With spring comes new beginnings! We've welcomed new staff and worked with new partners in lifting up the voices of our patients. This year, due to adding days of care, we're serving even more patients, including many who are new.

### **We're focused on expanding access to care.**

From advocating for health care in our nation's capital to planning for a new clinic, we continue to put the needs of our community and our patients first. But we couldn't do this without you.

### **Your support provides life-changing impacts for our patients.**

From treating decayed and aching teeth to providing new dentures, because of you, thousands of patients leave Dientes being able to eat properly, smile with confidence, and live well.

### **Our patients are smiling thanks to you!**

It warms my heart to see the difference we make together for thousands of patients, day in and day out, through vital dental care. Your partnership makes it possible for us to continue to serve up smiles to our neighbors in need, and for that, I am so grateful.

**Thank you!**

**Laura Marcus**, Chief Executive Officer

## Dientes Welcomes New Main Clinic Manager, **Paul Acosta**

### **Paul comes to Dientes from the Native American Health Center**

where he was a Registered Dental Assistant and Clinic Manager for nearly 10 years. We are excited to have his leadership in our main Commercial Way clinic! Paul says, *"I look at my clinic manager role as a team leader and I find it tremendously rewarding to help patients find their smiles. I do this through supporting and leading our incredible staff. Quality dental care that is affordable is hard to come by and extremely important. I'm inspired to work for an organization that cares about both."*



## **Dientes' Patients** at the MAH



Social isolation affects 1 in 3 seniors. Oral health, including the ability to smile and eat with confidence, plays a role in this isolation. To bring this issue to light, Dientes teamed up with the Museum of Art and History (MAH), seniors, and advocates. Together, we created an exhibit that highlights the experiences of local seniors. The show features audio stories, stunning photography, and amazing art of local seniors, including Dientes' patients!

### **We're Still Here: Stories of Seniors and Social Isolation**

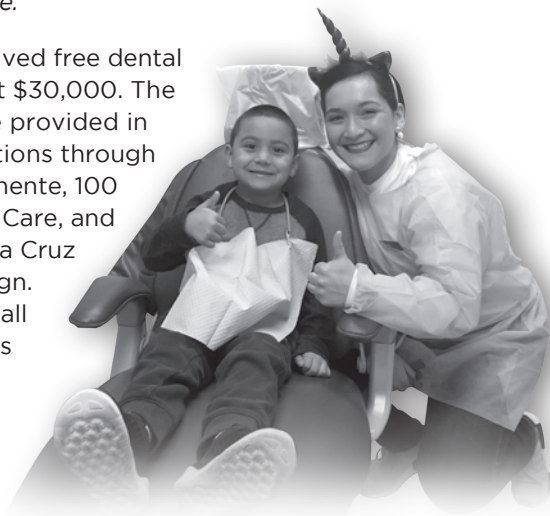
**On view now – September 22, 2019**  
Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History

# 15 Years of Free Care for Kids!

**One of our favorite days of the year**, Dientes was proud to celebrate our 15th annual Give Kids A Smile Day! This free-care event for uninsured low-income children, brings together volunteers from the Monterey Bay Dental Hygienists' Association, community support, and Dientes staff. This year, we provided crucial dental care to 48 uninsured kids—the most ever!

Nadine brought her 5-year-old son, Miguel, to Dientes during Give Kids A Smile Day and he received two fillings. Nadine later told us, *"Miguel was very nervous, but the staff here really helped him get over his nerves. We don't have insurance and going to the dentist is so expensive. If it wasn't for Dientes we wouldn't be able to get this care."*

Children received free dental care valued at \$30,000. The services were provided in part by donations through Kaiser Permanente, 100 Women Who Care, and the 2018 Santa Cruz Gives campaign. Thank you to all who made this annual event possible!



**Miguel & RDA Eva Maria Anaya are all smiles at Give Kids A Smile Day**

# Celebrating 3 Years of Care at the Homeless Services Center

**In 2016** we opened our part-time dental clinic at the Homeless Services Center (HSC) with the vision of providing dental care integrated with medical care on a campus with other needed services. Three years, 700 patients, and 2,000 visits later, we celebrate this partnership!

Outreach Program Manager Nicole Mello states, *"Being co-located with HSC and the Homeless Person's Health Project is the best way to remove transportation as a barrier to care. And by partnering, we are able to provide high-quality dental care that is connected to medical care, as well as other services, to help people out of homelessness."*



**Dr. Kuo and Dental Assistant Perla Gonzalez helping Steven at the Homeless Services Center**



**Board Members Alexandra Navarro, Masina Hunnicutt, and Camille Smith-Ballon represented Dientes at the National Association of Community Health Centers' Policy and Issues Forum in Washington D.C. They joined representatives from Salud Para La Gente to sit down with Congressman Jimmy Panetta to advocate for increased access to healthcare for those in our community!**

# THANK YOU

# You're Helping Patients Find Dignity through Dentistry

**Gwynne has lived in Santa Cruz County for 50 years and was a licensed nurse.** Years ago, a severe car accident left her with a disability. Now she lives on social security. Gwynne says that social security payments are not enough to cover her rent—let alone food, transportation, medical bills, and dental care.

*"I never planned on going out like this—but none of us do. No one plans on being poor...but we all have surprises along the way."*

Though life has had its difficulties for Gwynne, she says that her dental care has been one thing she

hasn't had to worry about as a Dientes patient. Before Dientes she struggled finding dental care.

*"Other dentists wouldn't accept Medi-Cal. I was made to feel poor and ashamed," she commented. "With Dientes, I've never had to worry about my coverage, feeling ashamed, or feeling like I wasn't getting quality care."*

Gwynne continued, *"I wouldn't have any teeth or the ability to eat if it weren't for Dientes. That, and their kindness and respect, made a dramatic difference in my life and in my ability to keep my health. I'm so grateful."*



*"The most wonderful thing happened when I found out about Dientes: I was treated with dignity and respect."*

**- Gwynne, 75-year old patient who has been coming to Dientes for 20 years.**

**WHAT** people  
are **SAYING.**

*"You are doing extraordinary and important work for those who need it most and can least afford it. This is the noblest, highest possible calling. Thank you."*

**- Gary, donor**

*"Great place to get incredible, specialized dental care staffed by the most enthusiastic, dedicated, compassionate, and experienced individuals who all put patients first."*

**- Dr. Tordilla, DDS**

*"Thank you for being a light in this community to all of us families who need quality dental care. It means a lot and is appreciated more than you know!."*

**- Wendy, patient**



## Your Help Gave Kimberly Dental Care

**Thanks to your incredible support,** Kimberly, a new mother and patient at Dientes, is almost done completing her extensive treatment plan at our Beach Flats Clinic. She states, *"Over this last year, Dientes has been extremely accommodating and fitting me into the schedule, sometimes twice a week, to help finish my treatment before I no longer have insurance. Dientes has been with me every step, always putting my care first. Now I have a smile I'm proud of, just in time to make life long memories with my son. For that, I cannot thank them enough."*

**Kimberly and her newborn son at the Beach Flats Clinic**



## Leave a Legacy of Healthy Smiles

An easy way to contribute to the lasting oral health of future generations in our community is to include Dientes in your estate planning. How so? Simply make Dientes a beneficiary on your life insurance policy, retirement account, living trust, or will. Ask your agents or advisors for a change of beneficiary form. Please identify Dientes on the form as follows:

### **Dientes Community Dental Care**

1830 Commercial Way  
Santa Cruz, CA 95065

**Tax ID: 77-0311752**

### **Find out more:**

**dientes.org/donate** or email:  
**development@dientes.org**



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**MISSION :** *Creating lasting oral health for the underserved children and adults of Santa Cruz County and neighboring communities.*

## Health & Home: Building Wellness in the Heart of Live Oak

Three community leaders—Dientes, Santa Cruz Community Health Centers, and MidPen Housing—are collaborating on an integrated health and housing campus.

### **For more information, email:**

**[development@dientes.org](mailto:development@dientes.org)**



**Dientes is a proud partner of United Way.**



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