

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

DIENTES GROUP HELPS KEEP COMMUNITY SMILING



SHMUEL THALER — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

Dentist Adriana Clark, right, works on a client's mouth at Dientes Community Dental's new clinic at 1500 Capitola Road in Live Oak as Adriana Ortiz, right, assists. Dientes, which has been serving Santa Cruz County residents for more than three decades, opened their new 11-chair clinic in December to increase its ability to provide high quality, comprehensive dental care to patients of all ages. To see more photographs, go to Sentinel staff photographer Shmuel Thaler's Weekly Photographer's Eye feature/A3.

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PHOTOGRAPHER'S EYE



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Registered Dental Hygienist Jordan Daniels performs a cleaning in the Dientes Community Dental's new Capitola Road clinic.



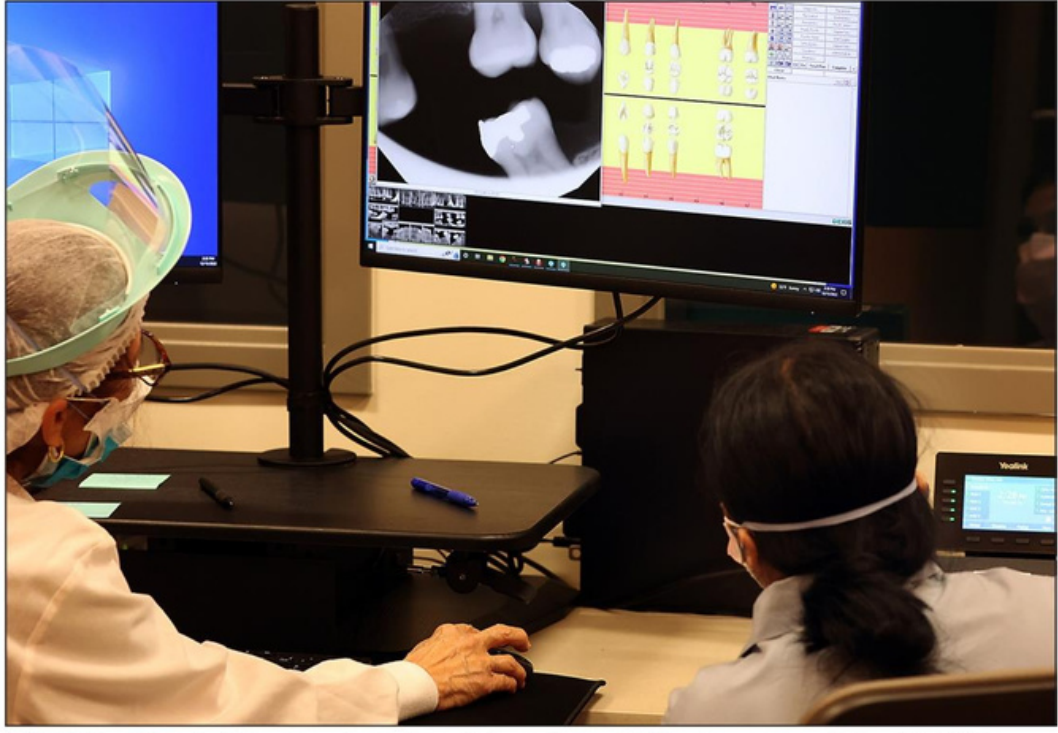
Jovina Evangelista removes instruments from the autoclave in the sterilization room at Dientes.

Creating smiles

Since 1992, Dientes Community Dental has helped to bring smiles and dental care to low-income children, adults and seniors in Santa Cruz County



Wyatt Kephart, 5, is all smiles as he gets ready for his dental appointment during a visit to Dientes Community Dental's new Live Oak clinic with his father Shane. Dental assistants Adriana Ortiz, left, and Jovina Evangelista prepare the room. The 5,500-square-foot and 11-chair clinic was the first facility to open its doors at a new health and housing campus at 1500 Capitola Road in Live Oak — a project that has been more than six years in the making. "It's been a very long time coming," according to lead dentist Dr. Ilana Vaynshteyn. "It's great to see patients walking in the door. I know that we have long waitlists for new patients at our other locations, so to be able to contribute to the community and help get more people in is really exciting." Founded in 1992, Dientes operates four full-time clinics located in Beach Flats, on Commercial Way in Live Oak, in Watsonville and now on Capitola Road. They also offer an Outreach Program that provides dental care at 26 community-based locations including schools, juvenile hall, skilled nursing facilities and Janus of Santa Cruz. The mission of Dientes is to "create lasting oral health for the low-income children, adults, and seniors of Santa Cruz County and neighboring communities so that everyone has the dignity that comes from a healthy smile." Dientes Chief Business Development Officer Sheree Storm says the organization served 11,242 patients last year and the newly opened clinic will serve an additional 6,000 patients each year. The integrated, state-of-the-art health and housing complex on Capitola Road also includes Santa Cruz Community Health's recently opened 20,000-square foot, two-story facility that provides medical and behavioral health, and specialty care with a focus on pediatrics. Additionally, MidPen Housing is building 57 affordable units on the campus that will be completed this fall.



LEFT: Eva Maria Uriostegui works with a client at Dientes new clinic. ABOVE: Dientes dentist Adriana Clark examines a patient's X-rays.

This photo page features the work of award-winning Sentinel photographer Shmuel Thaler. 'Photographer's eye' showcases Thaler's photos from around Santa Cruz County.