



Press Release

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1500 Capitola Road -- Dental and Primary Care Clinics Celebrate Ribbon Cutting *Dientes and Santa Cruz Community Health (SCCH) open new locations by December 6th*

Santa Cruz, CA. (November 19, 2022)—After six years of hard work, \$18M in generous support raised, and with nearly 400 people cheering them on, Dientes CEO Laura Marcus and SCCH CEO Leslie Conner cut the ribbon in celebration of the completion of construction for Phase One of 1500 Capitola Road, which includes a new 11-chair dental clinic to serve 6,000 low-income patients a year; a 20,000 sq. ft. primary care health center to serve 10,000 patients a year; a family-friendly public plaza; and native garden and public art installation. By the end of 2023, Phase Two will include 57 affordable housing residential units thanks to MidPen Housing.

In a community where nearly 15 percent of Live Oak Elementary School students are homeless, 15,000 people do not have a doctor, and 78 percent of adults on Medi-Cal do not have a dentist, the need for integrated services is great. Leslie Conner comments, "Too many of our community's most vulnerable are facing risks and adversities that pose lifelong threats to health, school success, and overall well-being. This project creates access to care that can change the trajectory for thousands. We are honored that the community would band together to help address this need."

"We are proud to support Dientes and Santa Cruz Community Health on the opening of their dental clinic and health center at 1500 Capitola Road, which will serve our Medi-Cal members," said Stephanie Sonnenshine, CEO of Central California Alliance for Health (the Alliance). "Through the Alliance's Medi-Cal Capacity Grant Program, our Board awarded \$2.65M dollars to each organization towards facility construction. These investments support our vision of 'Healthy People, Healthy Communities.' By providing our members access to this integrated and innovative campus, Dientes and Santa Cruz Community Health are helping our members achieve and maintain positive health outcomes for those living in and around the Live Oak community in Santa Cruz."

Joining the Alliance in making this project possible are other lead donors Carol Fuller, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, Dignity Health Dominican Hospital, Kaiser Permanente, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Sutter Health /



Palo Alto Medical Foundation, and federal funding secured by Representative Jimmy Panetta through the Health Resources & Services Administration. In addition, there were over 300 individual donors and funders (anonymous and known) who stepped forward to make this project a reality.

“We are incredibly grateful for those who have generously given so that others can have access to the health and dental care they need. We are so proud of what we have built together. This has been a very long and complex project, impeded by the COVID pandemic, and the professionalism and dedication of our development, design, and construction partners, MidPen Housing, WRD Architects, Blue Water Construction, and Bogard Construction, have made this phenomenal project a success,” states Laura Marcus.

Included in the project and part of Phase One is a native garden and public art installation that honors the Awaswas-speaking peoples who first lived on the land. The recognition was developed in conjunction with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Guillermo Aranda, Martin Rizzo-Martinez, Joni L. Janeki & Associates, and many more. Also, included are historic plaques that recognize Robert Merriman, a justice fighter who lived on the site and was the inspiration for Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Dientes clinic will open on December 5th, Santa Cruz Community Health’s clinic will open December 6th, and MidPen Housing will start welcoming residents by the end of 2023.

To learn more, visit: <http://1500CapitolaRoad.org>

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About Dientes Community Dental Care

Dientes Community Dental Care’s mission is to create lasting oral health for the under-served children and adults in Santa Cruz County and neighboring communities. Dientes currently serves 11,000 patients annually and with this new clinic will serve 18,000 patients a year, 97% of whom live at or below the poverty level. Dientes accepts Medi-Cal and offers sliding scale fees for uninsured patients. Learn more at dientes.org.

About Santa Cruz Community Health

Santa Cruz Community Health’s (SCCH) mission is to improve the health of our patients and the community and advocate the feminist goals of social, political, and economic equality. Driven by a 49-year commitment to health care as a human right, Santa Cruz Community Health is a leading nonprofit provider of high-quality, affordable, and comprehensive health



services in English and Spanish to all ages, gender identities, ethnicities, abilities, and sexual orientations, regardless of their ability to pay. SCCH (a Federally Qualified Health Center) operates three health centers (downtown, Santa Cruz, Live Oak, and Ben Lomond) serving over 13,000 low-income patients including over 2,000 individuals experiencing homelessness. SCCH's clinics offer primary care, pediatrics, prenatal care and education, mental health and substance use treatment, chronic disease management, health insurance enrollment, food distribution, and more. Learn more at shealthcenters.org, facebook.com/shealthcenters or on Instagram @shealthcenters

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