



LA MAESTRA
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
City Heights · El Cajon · National City · Lemon Grove

La Maestra ~ Heart
of the Community Campaign



WELL-BEING *Update*

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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2009



Zara's Message

Dear Friends,

We celebrated a milestone recently, I am happy to share with you that we have completed the steel construction of our new 34,660 sq. ft. gold LEED certified health care center. We were all smiles at the "topping out" party. It was wonderful to watch the last piece of steel put into place. There are photos of this celebrated event here in this issue.

Our women's microcredit program is featured as well. I am so proud of our success. Please read how this program is helping so many women in the City Heights community.

Congressman Duncan Hunter (CA-52) visited our health center in El Cajon this month. He spent time with community residents and our staff to learn how we deliver services and what the community needs. We look forward to a great working relationship with him and his team.

Thank you to those who supported La Maestra's Annual Golf Tournament. Look for photos of this event next month here in the newsletter.

A special thanks to those who continue to support our La Maestra Heart of the Community Capital Campaign, your generosity will help us reach our goal and in turn will benefit our patients and clients. On behalf of our team at La Maestra, many thanks for your continued support.

Healthy Regards,
Zara Marselian
CEO
La Maestra Community Health Centers

La Maestra's Microcredit Program for Women

It's around 5 o'clock on Monday, women trickle into a meeting room. A woman named Martha shows up with a big rolling cart, announcing that she has brought chicken mole and rice. Soon follows Rosa, with a giant bowl of chilled chopped fruit and a pitcher of refreshing agua de jamaica. Judging by the lively conversations and enticing smells of homemade food, a passerby might think these women are here for some kind of party.



Elena Cruz, Program Director, reviews a borrower's handmade purses while volunteer Esco collects and records payments.

This gathering is one of the weekly meetings of La Maestra's Microcredit Program for women. La Maestra is among the first organizations in San Diego, and the United States, to establish a microcredit program for women. Through this program, low income women in City Heights, Chula Vista, National City, Logan Heights and El Cajon receive loans of \$250, \$500, \$1000. The program provides impoverished women, who would otherwise depend on government assistance, with the opportunity to be independent and empowered to better their own lives and eventually operate sustainable businesses employing others.

Potential new borrowers must be recommended by a program participant

who has been successful in repaying a \$1000 loan and been in the program for at least 18 months. In order to receive the initial \$250 loan, the new borrower cannot own property. Before receiving a loan, the borrower must complete financial literacy training and develop a business plan, attend three meetings, and be approved by the other borrowers in the group. Through this program, each woman finds that she has the power to obtain and pay back a loan, the discipline to attend weekly meetings and save money for future investments, and the skills to operate a business and generate an income. The group holds each individual borrower responsible. This group consensus system, combined with the fact that women meet, support and grow with each other on a weekly basis, creates a strong sense of responsibility, ultimately resulting in the highly successful repayment rate.

Since March 2008, the number of participants in the microcredit program has increased from 30 to more than 230, with a 98% repayment rate. More than 300 women are waiting to participate in the program.

For more information about the program, contact Director **Elena Cruz** at **619-501-5706**.

This is part one of a two part feature. The next issue will highlight a member business and story.



A purse made from soda can tops woven together, a borrower's unique accessory item made from recycled materials.

La Maestra Hosts Community Discussion with Congressman Duncan D. Hunter



La Maestra's team, community residents and Congressman Hunter.

Congressman Duncan Hunter visits with local residents, military veterans and the medical and executive staff of La Maestra at the La Maestra Community Health Center in El Cajon. After the closure of an East County hospital lead to a reduction in available health care services, La Maestra opened the satellite medical center in 2004 and followed with a dental center the same year.



Congressman Hunter visits with local residents, executive staff of La Maestra, Steve O'Kane, CEO and Gary Rotto of the Council of Community Clinics to discuss the health care needs of the community.



LA MAESTRA GOLF TOURNAMENT

Riverwalk Golf Club in Fashion Valley

Thank you to everyone who participated and sponsored this fun event. Your support is essential to the health and well-being of San Diego's under-served residents. We hope this was a great opportunity for you to get to know our community partners better.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

Allscripts
Clark's Greenfield Pharmacy
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Fish + Lewis Consulting
GE Healthcare
HealthNet
Interior Architecture SD
LMA Consulting Group
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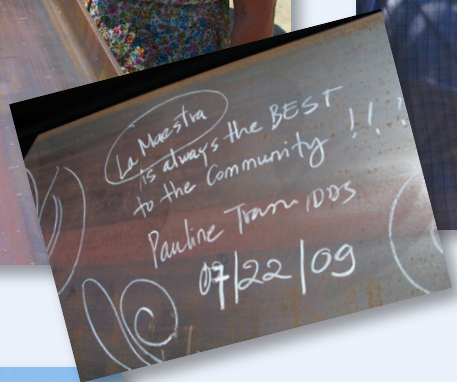
MOLINA HEALTHCARE
donated \$2,500
to the
La Maestra
Heart of the Community
Capital Campaign

Thank you!

La Maestra Builds Green ~ Construction Update

"Topping Out" Party

Last piece of steel is set in place



In celebration of the final steel beam installation at the new 34,660 square ft. Gold LEED Certified La Maestra Community Health Care Center, project leaders Consolidated Contracting Services, Hope Engineering, Walsh Engineers, Tanner Engineering and Richard Yen & Associates share smiles with La Maestra's board members and staff at the "Topping Out" party.

Please Give to the La Maestra Heart of the Community Campaign

How can you **make a difference** in the lives of families and the community?

Donors like you are making a difference by contributing to the construction of our new green Gold LEED health-care center, purchase of new medical equipment and to new programs.

We invite you to make your donation today at any level to help us complete this exciting milestone campaign for City Heights and our region. Your support touches the lives of so many families and helps us to build a healthier community.

Please make your contribution by contacting Lindy Webb, campaign assistant at 619.584.1612 Ext. 3032 or at lindy@lamaestra.org



We would like to acknowledge our La Maestra Heart of the Community Capital Campaign Green Vendors

**CMS Mechanical • Newmatic Engineering • Powersmiths
San Diego Gas & Electric - Sustainable Communities**