

Scouting for Joy

Axis Prenatal Program benefited by local high school student



Erika Cordova, Comprehensive Perinatal Health Worker, (left photo, rear) and expectant mothers (left to right) Rita Reyes, Elia Ambrosio, Carolina Alonso and Daniela Cabrera happily await the arrival of Eagle Scout candidate Adam Mitchell (right photo) with his Bundles of Joy on April 11th.

On April 11th, Eagle Scout candidate Adam Mitchell delivered 20 Bundles of Joy to Axis' prenatal staff and moved one step further toward boy scouting's highest rank.

The Eagle Scout project must demonstrate leadership, benefit the community and represent 100 hours of volunteer effort. Adam is a senior at Amador Valley High School and a member of Boy Scout Troop 946 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) in Pleasanton. He has been working toward Eagle Scout rank for over five years and chose Bundles of Joy because he wanted a project that would have direct benefit to people in need. The Bundles of Joy program provides new diaper bags filled with baby care items and newborn clothes to families in the Tri-Valley community who participate in Axis' prenatal program. "I think people should be able to celebrate the birth of a new baby without worrying about the necessities like diapers and bottles," Adam said.

To get the word out about his project, Adam distributed flyers at church and sent out a broadcast email to family and friends. He collected items during the week of March 21st -26th.

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Bras for the Cause *Axis invites you to get out and walk!*

Help provide breast health education and screening to low-income women in the Tri-Valley by participating in the sixth annual Bras for the Cause 10-K fundraising walk on Saturday, May 7, 2011 (check in – 5:30 PM, walk – 7 PM). This incredible, high-energy walk is presented by Tri-Valley SOCKS (Stepping out for Cancer Kures). It draws hundreds of walkers, volunteers, and spectators – and even includes a bra-decorating contest. Axis Community Health staff and friends will be cheering walkers and providing a fun rest stop at our Railroad Avenue site which is along the route. Be sure to stop by!

Bras for the Cause helps support Axis' Breast Health Outreach Program (BHOP) as well as Susan G. Komen for the Cure and UCSF's Helen Diller Comprehensive Cancer Center. Last year, Axis received \$35,000 from the walk.

Register today and help raise money for Tri-Valley SOCKS and Axis by going to www.trivalleysocks.org.

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Scouting for Joy *(continued from page 1)*

"People in our area have so much and it was really cool to see how generous they were," he added. "Some weren't aware of the need in our community and were surprised that Bundles of Joy program is a local program. They really got into it and one donor even explained that she enjoyed the shopping because her children are grown and she misses shopping for baby clothes.

"Bundles of Joy wasn't a complicated project, but it involved a lot of work. It really felt good to be of service and do something that would benefit people right now," Adam concluded.

Created at Lynnewood United Methodist Church in Pleasanton in 2008, Bundles of Joy now also receives regular donations from Asbury United Methodist Church and Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Livermore, Tri-Valley Unity Church in Dublin/San Ramon, and the Latter Day Saints churches of Pleasanton and Dublin. "In addition to the churches, we have also received donations from Shepherd's Gate, Soroptimist International of San Ramon Valley, Livermore Girl Scout Troop 37133 and the Tri-Valley community," says Bundles of Joy Co-Leader Heidi Stark. "Funds are tight for everyone so we really do count on donations to meet our monthly quota of ten bundles to Axis. We're happy to accept donations at Lynnewood United Methodist Church, 4444 Black Avenue, Pleasanton, or Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Avenue, Livermore."



Sue Compton

CEO's Note

We are always grateful for volunteers like Adam Mitchell, who brought happiness to many of our prenatal patients through his work on the Bundles of Joy project. While Adam was working on his project, he commented to us that some of his Bundles of Joy donors expressed surprise that the program is local. This is a recurrent theme in the Tri-Valley. Many people are surprised that human service needs, whether they are for food, shelter or medical care, exist here in our beautiful, affluent community.

Over the past year, as the economy has spiraled downward, increasing numbers of Tri-Valley families have found their way to our door. Most of these people never imagined they would be unemployed and that they would need help. In better times, some were even donors. But now they've lost their jobs, and with that, their insurance. COBRA, though an option, is often unrealistic because of the cost – about \$1,200 per month for a family of four. For someone who has just lost a job and is struggling to pay the mortgage and buy the groceries, the insurance bill usually goes to the bottom of the stack. So, most end up living on the edge without health insurance – until something happens like an accident or an emerging chronic disease like diabetes. That's when people come to us.

The need keeps growing. Our medical clinic has seen a 25% increase in patients in the past 18 months. We see patients six days a week and we still can't meet the demand. We have applied for support from both public and private sectors, but we're in the same line as health care providers from throughout the U.S.

Mental health services are also growing in demand as people deal with the stress of job loss and its impact on their families and relationships. We don't have public funding for our mental health services, but we keep them as affordable as we can, and we are looking forward to a new Alameda County program that is coming soon, which will include mental health coverage for many more people.

95% of our patients and clients are residents of Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton. The Tri-Valley is a wonderful place to live, but we can't deny the fact that people are really struggling even though they often try very hard to hide it.

How can you help? Whenever you have an opportunity, take a page from Adam Mitchell's book and tell your friends and neighbors about Axis. Together, we can continue to meet the growing need in our community.

Community Members Now Being Served

Medical Clinic Patients – **10,000**

Behavioral Health Clients – **2,000**

WIC (Women, Infants, Children Nutrition) clients – **2,500**

Welcome Dr. Raj



Dr. Divya Raj

Divya Raj, MD decided to enter the medical profession with the express purpose of serving the population that comprises Axis' patient base – those who are uninsured or underinsured and have no other access to healthcare. Throughout her training and career, her dedication to community health has not wavered and she brings this firm commitment to Axis as our new associate medical director.

"During my time in medical school in India, I participated in rural medical camps as an intern, providing care for the indigent populations, delivering babies in minimal accommodations, holding immunization clinics and participating in eye clinics for diabetics," Dr. Raj remembers. "I also worked in contraception and STD clinics that included education about HIV. That early experience proved invaluable in my future work at community clinics."

Dr. Raj has practiced medicine at community facilities in Sonora and Los Angeles and, most recently, was a staff family physician, associate medical director and interim medical director at Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc. in Hayward, another Community Health Center Network (CHCN) facility.

"I knew about Axis from CHCN meetings and eagerly sought an interview when I learned of the opening for an associate medical director," she says. "I was especially impressed when I visited the clinic. It was very organized and was obviously running well. The atmosphere was exceptionally friendly. I was delighted when the position was offered to me."

Dr. Raj holds certification by the American Board of Family Medicine and has received several prestigious awards for her work. She oversees operations at Axis' Livermore clinic and provides medical services there.

"We are very excited to welcome Dr. Raj to our staff," said CEO Sue Compton. "She is an expert in community health care and family medicine. She is also an emerging expert in electronic health records and will provide enormous assistance to our entire medical staff as we move forward on implementing EHR (Electronic Health Records) in the next eighteen months."

Meet Dr. Narron



Dr. Matthew Narron

Though Dr. Matthew Narron's first volunteer job in his hometown of Pleasanton was at The Center (now merged with Axis Community Health), the thought of working here as Clinical Director of Behavioral Health Services never entered his mind. He was bound for U.C. Berkeley and an organic chemistry major.

"I enjoyed my social science electives far more than chemistry and graduated with a psychology

major," he remembers. "However, I was about to enter law school when a heart-to-heart conversation with a family member pointed me toward clinical psychology instead. I received my Doctor of Psychology degree from California School of Professional Psychology in Alameda in 2005.

During Dr. Narron's pre-doctoral internship at the Ann Martin Center in Piedmont, his pre-school age client, who could neither speak nor interact with others, experienced a major breakthrough. "That's when I realized I was in the right career!" he exclaims. "I'm still working with that boy, who is now 10 and attends mainstream classes at public school!"

In 2010, Dr. Narron joined the senior staff at Axis, where he supervises the licensed staff at the Owens Drive Behavioral Health facility. He is responsible for hiring and training, overseeing Mental Health Counseling and the Teen Drug and Alcohol Program, and administering behavioral health accreditation compliance. He also continues in private practice and is an adjunct professor at Cal State East Bay.

"I believe in the community health center model as a good way to serve people who need the help we are able to provide and don't have money. Axis is the only agency in the East Bay that has the breadth of services to take care of this population. I can actually refer clients to the medical clinic to make sure their symptoms are not being caused by a medical condition. That's huge. I can't say enough about the value of this organization."

thank you! thank you!

Your generous donations are gratefully appreciated!

Thelma Fones

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Donations received 2/2/11–3/30/11

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HORSING AROUND



*An Afternoon of Fun at the Races
Benefiting Axis Community Health*

*Saturday, July 9, 2011
12 Noon - 6 PM*

*Alameda County Fairgrounds
4501 Pleasanton Avenue, Pleasanton*

*Horseracing • Wagering Orientation
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Best Hat Contest • Prize Drawings
No Host Bar • Fun, Fun, Fun!*

*Tickets: \$50 per person
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*All proceeds benefit Axis Community Health,
provider of medical care and behavioral health services
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