

Sweet Success in Improving Diabetes Care

By Jessica Nicholas

Project Dulce, a Whittier Institute for Diabetes at Scripps Hospital program, has been working to bring quality diabetes education to underserved, low-income, and ethnically diverse people in San Diego since 1997.

"Project Dulce is a wonderful program that helps people from various cultures manage their diabetes," says Leticia Ocaña, the Manager of Health Education and Promotion for Project Dulce.

Diabetes is both a common and complicated disease. It is especially difficult for the patients because they have to manage their own care on a daily basis.

It is essential for someone diagnosed with Diabetes to learn about the disease so they can be able to take care of themselves and avoid the long-term complications, such as blindness, kidney problems, and nerve damage. Upon diagnosis, this can be an intimidating responsibility and this is when Project Dulce can help.

Project Dulce trains nurses, peer educators, and promoters to educate their patients in ways that the patient can understand. After the patient is diagnosed, their primary doctor can refer them to the program.

"The Project Dulce staff is an incredibly dedicated team of professionals that genuinely care about the well being of each and every person," says

Ocaña. "We strive to understand where people are coming from." This is clear through the way their program is designed.

While forming Project Dulce, staff researched what different ethnic groups needed in order to become better educated and manage their diabetes. Interviews and focus groups were conducted and Project Dulce encouraged people to share their concerns and opinions about the current state of their care. Project Dulce developed their program to address those concerns.

According to Ocaña, time is one of the most important things the program offers. While doctors may try to help their patients learn about the disease, many cannot because they simply lack the time. It is difficult to teach a patient how to care for their Diabetes in a 15-minute appointment. With Project Dulce, the first visit with a nurse lasts an hour to an hour and a half.

In addition to meeting with nurses, they offer classes taught in the patient's own language. Through the classes, they address issues that apply to a specific community. For example, they discuss traditional foods for that community and how to prepare those foods in healthier ways.

The purpose is to teach patients how to care for themselves.

Although Project Dulce is located in La Jolla, staff make the appointments convenient

for the patients. They set up in community clinics and peer educators travel to many different communities throughout San Diego County.

Because they are dedicated to their patients, they have had a lot of success in improving the health of those in the program. They have received many awards, including the "Border Model of Excellence" by the U.S. Mexico Border Health Commission and the American Diabetes Association Recognition.

While a majority of the clients they serve are Latino, they also offer services to the Filipino, African-American, and Vietnamese communities.

Their website offers a variety of free patient handouts that include information on how to check your blood sugar, prepare insulin, healthy eating, and much more. These handouts have been translated into Spanish, Arabic, Laotian, Somali, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Tagalog.

To learn more about Project Dulce, you can call (866) 791-8154 or visit www.whittierinstitute.org and select 'Project Dulce' under Patient Programs.

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LA COLUMNA VERTEBRAL

El Soporte Informativo Para
Millones de Hispanos
Por Patricia Guadalupe



Patricia Guadalupe

Votar: un pequeño paso para usted, un gran paso para nuestra comunidad

Hace poco un funcionario de inmigración dijo ante el congreso que este año ya se han procesado un altísimo número de solicitudes de ciudadanía y que muchos inmigrantes ya serán ciudadanos antes de las elecciones de noviembre.

Esto es sumamente importante, porque el atraso era tal que se decía que el gobierno se iba a tardar años en procesar todas las solicitudes. Todavía existen demoras, pero se ha visto progreso.

Esto hace más factible la oportunidad de muchos hispanos de participar en las importantes elecciones nacionales dentro de seis meses. Seguramente el gobierno está reconociendo la importancia del voto latino y el impacto que tiene, y seguramente ya sabe que la falta de participación en las urnas tiene toda una serie de resultados negativos.

¿Pero qué puede hacer usted si quiere y puede votar pero no está inscrito?

Hay varias soluciones: la más común es inscribirse en el mismo lugar donde obtuvo su

licencia de conducir y donde registró su automóvil.

Las oficinas estatales de licencias y registros – DMV por sus siglas en inglés – tienen disponibles los documentos necesarios para registrarse y hacerlo es un proceso gratuito y súper sencillo.

Usted simplemente escribe su nombre, fecha de nacimiento y dirección en el formulario, lo deposita en el buzón indicado y ya. En algunos casos debe indicar su afiliación política y usted está en libertad de completar o no ese espacio ya que no es un requerimiento oficial y sólo se usa para que los partidos particulares identifiquen a sus correligionarios.

Si se registra con algún partido, no está obligado a votar por los candidatos de ese partido. También se puede registrar para votar en cualquier oficina postal cuando vaya a enviar una carta o a recoger algún paquete, los mismos formularios que hay en el DMV están en las oficinas del correo y en las bibliotecas.

Además, conforme se acer-

quen las elecciones, veremos a grupos de voluntarios registrando votantes enfrente de los supermercados, las iglesias, las escuelas, o cualquier otro lugar de reunión de la comunidad.

Una vez inscrito, en pocas semanas, le llega una tarjetita oficializando que usted es un votante.

Guarde ese carné que además le debe indicar cuál es el centro de votación donde usted debe ir en noviembre.

El ejercer su derecho al voto comienza con unos pasos muy sencillos, no deje de darlos.

Votar es un acto cívico que tendrá consecuencias positivas para usted y para su comunidad.

Amigo lector de La Columna Vertebral, si necesita información a servicios en su comunidad llame a la Línea de Ayuda de la Fundación SelfRelance al 1-800-473-3003.

Journey for Better Jobs

Monday March 31
9:30 A.M. to 2 P.M.
San Diego Convention
Center to San Diego County
Administration Center

In Honor of 'Cesar Chavez Day' and the ongoing fight to protect San Diego's working class, the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council will lead a line of hundreds of the region's Union members through Downtown to demand that all businesses treat their employees with dignity and respect.

Stops on the route will include (times approximate)

9:30 A.M. — San Diego Convention Center

10:45 A.M. — Wells Fargo Building, 5th Ave. and B St.

11:30 A.M. — Civic Center Plaza

12:30 P.M. — State of California Building, 1400 Front St.

1:15 P.M. — Lane Field, Pacific Highway & W. Broadway

1:45 P.M. — San Diego Country Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway

In an effort to honor the

legacy of Cesar Chavez, more than 700 members from dozens of local unions will spend Cesar Chavez Day by marching through the sidewalks of Downtown San Diego to demand that employers treat them with dignity and respect on the job.

The "Journey for Better Jobs" will highlight the contract plights of workers at five different locations over the course of the day.

The line of people, all dressed in red t-shirts, will leave from the San Diego Convention Center at 9:30 a.m. Participants will honor the Convention Center as a model for treating employees with respect.

Other stops on the Journey will include the Wells Fargo Building, San Diego City Hall, the State of California Building, the site of Lane Field and the County Administration Center.

Each stop will highlight a different battle San Diego's working families are currently facing. Janitors fighting for

self-sustaining wages at Downtown office buildings will be at the Wells Fargo Building at 5th Avenue and B Street. City sanitation workers will voice their concerns with the outsourcing of city jobs at City Hall. School employees and state workers will shine light on the effects of proposed budget cuts. Hotel workers will stand united with workers in the construction trades at the site of the proposed hotel project at Lane Field. County and domestic workers will demand competitive wages at the County Administration Center.



California Border Healthy Start Project

Project Concern International &
Scripps Mercy Hospital Chula Vista
present

Educational Quality Circles for Health Professionals and Para-Professionals

Tuesday, April 1st, 2008
8:00-9:00 a.m.

Tubman Chavez Multicultural Center
415 N Euclid Ave
San Diego, CA 92114

Continental breakfast will be available

Training is offered as a free, educational course therefore does not require a fee to attend. This course is offered to primary healthcare professionals and Para-Professionals. Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number 12576 for 1.0 contact hours as provided through Scripps Mercy Hospital. Partial credit will not be given.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Project Concern International
California Border Healthy Start
121 E. 31st Street
National City, CA 91950
Ph: (619) 791-2610 ext. 305



Scripps Mercy Hospital
Chula Vista

"Por La Salud De San Diego" Health Fair to Address Health Care Issues In Barrio Logan

More than 1,000 participants are expected to attend "Por La Salud de San Diego" Health Fair in Chicano Park on Saturday March 29th, 2008. The fair, sponsored by the Association of Professionals and Students, seeks to address health care issues in lower income families by offering a number of free health services to the community at no cost whatsoever.

Studies have shown that Hispanics bear a disproportionate burden of disease, injury, death, and disability as compared to other non-Hispanics. As the largest ethnic population in the United States, Hispanics court a higher risk of illness with little to no health care to offset the illnesses that affect them and their families.

With 25.4 percent of the population cited as Hispanic in the latest US population census, and about 10.6% of families or 14.6% of the population below the national poverty line,

the community of San Diego typifies the hardships that a rising cost of health care can incur on lower income communities.

The event coordinator, is expecting the participation of various medical and health oriented enterprises, including the San Diego County Health Dept., along with 24 Hr. Fitness, Family Health Centers of San Diego, Better Life Chiropractor and Community Health Groups among others that will provide such services as body mass index screening (BMI) and blood pressure screenings. These services will help further encourage community members maintain a healthy lifestyle by alerting them of the dangers of high cholesterol food consumption and its effect on the human body.

