



**Northeast Valley Health Corporation**  
a californi<sup>h</sup>center

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# Connecting with You

Volume 2 Issue 1 SPRING 2017



**Downtown Los Angeles**  
**March 23, 2017**

# A Message from NEVHC CEO KIMBERLY WYARD



I always know it is spring when I see the beautiful cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C., where my community health center peers and I go every year to ask our Congressional representatives for continued support. This year, the cherry blossoms were just as spectacular, and the atmosphere at the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) Policy and Issues Forum in D.C. was filled with confidence that community health centers are part of the nation's healthcare solution and despite the uncertainty about our funding and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), health centers must continue to expand access and improve quality and efficiency.

During the trip, several Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC) board members and I visited our representatives - Congressman Tony Cárdenas, Congressman Steve Knight and Congressman Brad Sherman. We reminded them of the important work we do in providing critical health care to their medically vulnerable constituents. We told them about the increase in the number of insured patients we've had since the ACA. (See page 4 for graph.) We urged them to help save the ACA and support continued health center funding.

The Capitol Hill visit is only one of numerous efforts that NEVHC is making to protect the future of our community health centers and to help ensure that our medically underserved population does not lose healthcare coverage. Since January when "save the ACA" became our rallying cry, we have written letters; made phone calls to Congressional representatives; used social media to get our message out; been interviewed by news reporters; and marched with other health centers in downtown L.A.

At the L.A. march, which coincided with the ACA's 7th anniversary, I donned my "NEVHC Supports Health Care for All" T-shirt and rallied to voice our support. I carried my sign and felt the camaraderie with all who feel we must continue to fight for our community's health and not revert to the days when there were more uninsured than insured patients. It reminded me of the fact that health centers were born out of the civil rights marches in the 1960s and that advocacy will continue to be front and center on our radar screen.

On a more positive note, we have appointed Dr. Christine Park as the new Chief Medical Officer and Dr. Alicia Lwin as the new Medical Director of Adult Medicine. Their experience, talent and commitment are truly exceptional, and make them quality leaders. Also, we have signed the lease for the Newhall Health Center and opened our new Van Nuys Adult Health Center. Van Nuys Adult is an innovative health center that has two labs, procedure rooms for Women's Health and 10 exam rooms, which are split to accommodate adult primary care and specialty care for HIV and Hepatitis C patients. We will have a dedication ceremony in August during National Health Center Week. I hope to see you there!

Happy spring!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimberly Wyard".

Kimberly Wyard  
Chief Executive Officer

# Our New Leaders



Christine Park, M.D., MPH, CLE, FAAP

## Meet Our New CMO: Christine Park, M.D., MPH, CLE, FAAP

One of the first things on Dr. Christine Park's to-do list when she was named as the new Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC) was

to ask her pediatric patients to create her some artwork. She knew that her new role would take her away from her patients, so she wanted some mementos.

Dr. Park was the Medical Director of Pediatrics for 12 of her 14 years as an NEVHC pediatrician and cared for an entire generation of NEVHC's youngest patients prior to her promotion in March. The self-described "kids are my thing" physician now spends most of her time in her office and at meetings handling administrative work.

"I definitely miss seeing the children," Dr. Park said. "But I am very thankful and honored for the opportunity to serve as the CMO for one of the largest community health centers in the

nation. In a sense, I am still caring and advocating for my favorite patients, just in a bigger management role now."

Dr. Park, 42, received her Bachelor of Arts in Molecular/Cell Biology from the University of California,

Berkeley prior to attending UCLA School of Medicine. She started as a full-time NEVHC pediatrician in 2003 after completing the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Combined Pediatrics and Public Health Residency Program, and receiving her Master of Public Health degree from UCLA.



As the CMO, Dr. Park oversees all of the medical, dental, and behavioral health providers, and works closely with the CEO, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Nursing, and Director of Quality and Health Education to ensure that NEVHC provides quality, safe, and patient- and family-centered care to our patients.

"Dr. Park is very experienced in our marketplace and truly understands the challenge of being a safety-net provider," said Kimberly Wyard, NEVHC CEO. "Her passion for community health care and her experience make her an ideal CMO to help guide NEVHC into its future."

## Alicia Lwin, M.D., Promoted to Medical Director of Adult Medicine

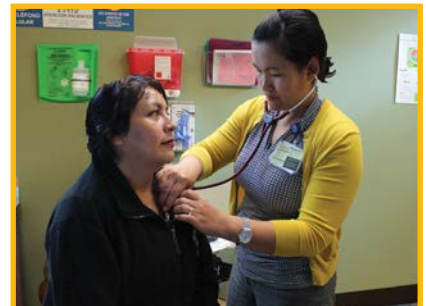
As the daughter of an anesthesiologist, the seeds to become a doctor were planted early in Dr. Alicia Lwin's life. But she didn't fully commit to medicine until she spent a post-graduate year at the National Institutes of Health and realized that being in a lab all day did not suit her. She loved interacting with people, both adults and children, so she chose to specialize in family medicine. Dr. Lwin, 36, was a full-time family medicine physician at Northeast Valley Health Corporation's Sun Valley Health Center before her recent promotion to Medical Director of Adult Medicine.

"I just grew to love caring for the medically underserved," she said. "It has its challenges, like when a patient has to figure out whether to put food on the table or pay for medicine. But it also comes with a lot of joy."

Dr. Lwin, who received her Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Pomona College, is a 2007 graduate of Keck School of Medicine at USC. She completed her residency training at the University of California, San Francisco in 2010. Prior to joining NEVHC in August 2016, she worked at two other community clinics in California and Philadelphia.



Alicia Lwin, M.D.



# FIGHTING

On March 23, Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC) joined hundreds of marchers in downtown Los Angeles to mark the 7th anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and to pressure Congress to retain the healthcare policy that has benefitted millions of Americans. To date, the ACA still stands. But the battle to save it must not lose its momentum so that the most medically vulnerable people amongst us will continue to receive the necessary care at community health centers.



NEVHC Director of Managed Care & Enrollment **Vilma Champion** (center) joins other TEAM NEVHC marchers at the “Save the ACA” rally in downtown Los Angeles on March 23, 2017.

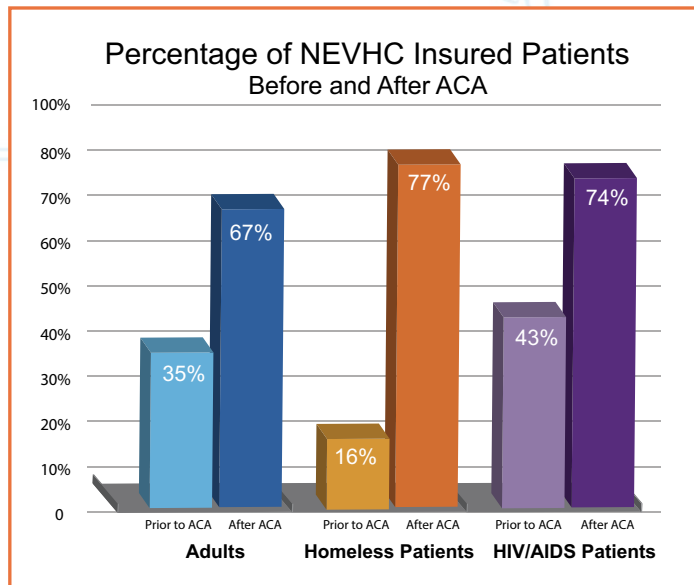
A repeal of the ACA would translate to at least 15,000 NEVHC patients, who have insurance through Medicaid expansion and Covered California, losing healthcare coverage. Nationwide, with more than 9,000 community health centers, it would negatively affect 14 million Medicaid patients. For NEVHC, where years of work under the ACA has produced double digit increases in the number of insured adults, homeless

and HIV/AIDS patients, there is no room for regression. (See graph below.)

NEVHC’s two-pronged advocacy effort targets saving the ACA and protecting healthcare funding. With the pending expiration of the Community Health Center Fund in September, health centers could lose 70 percent of their program funding if Congress does not extend it. NEVHC alone would lose \$8 million a year, severely impacting the health of the communities in the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys.

Thus far, we have channeled our advocacy through organized marches, social media, TV and print interviews, letters and phone calls to elected officials, and Capitol Hill visits. We know there is power in numbers, so we want YOU to join NEVHC’s Advocacy Network. The fight to save **Health Care for All** and maintain health center funding is just beginning. Please join us. To learn more about NEVHC’s advocacy efforts and how to become a Health Center Advocate, visit our website at [nevhc.org](http://nevhc.org).

For more information, contact NEVHC Government and Community Relations Manager **Saaliha Khan** at (818) 270-9540 or [saalihakhan@nevhc.org](mailto:saalihakhan@nevhc.org).



# for the Health of Our Community



**Hernon Marin Ramirez, 60**, has been a patient at NEVHC's Pacoima Health Center for more than 10 years. He is a Medicaid patient with acute health issues, who is thankful for the quality medical care he receives and is fearful of losing his health insurance with the repeal of the ACA.

*"The (Medicaid) coverage is very important to me. It's impossible for me to go to work now. I have lupus and (other) health problems. Please, God, don't let Medicaid disappear. Because it (would be) fatal for me. It would be very, very bad for me. Northeast Valley is very important to me. Dr. (David) McIntosh is an excellent doctor. I had a heart attack 7 months ago...two or three times, he saved my life."*

**Gaudelia Munoz, 46**, is an NEVHC Licensed Vocational Nurse at the Pacoima Health Center. Along with her daughters, she is a former NEVHC patient covered by Medicaid. She knows first-hand the importance of providing healthcare services to the medically underserved population.

*"For me to come back to Northeast Valley Health Corporation as a nurse is paying it forward. It is gratitude in action. For patients not to have access to community health centers would be devastating. Eventually, these patients would end up in emergency rooms, which will be costlier to everyone, not just the government but every taxpayer. That's how I see it, so preventive health care is the key."*



# Join NEVHC's Advocacy Network to help protect the future of our health centers and support ...

## Health Care for All!

Our nation's community health centers serve over 25 million Americans who are currently facing tremendous uncertainty about the future of their health care. As the federal government wrestles with adopting a plan that would replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), many community health center patients fear that a replacement plan would strip away their healthcare coverage and leave them uninsured.

At Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC), 1 in every 4 patients has health insurance because of the ACA. We have about 900 employees working at corporate offices and 14 health centers, where 72,000 patients receive care annually. Our Board of Directors and staff have spent much of the past few months advocating on issues that impact our patients' healthcare coverage and funding for our health centers. But we need YOU to help us continue to fight to protect the future of our health centers. We need YOU to voice your support for **Health Care for All**.

Our goal is to build a culture of advocacy through engaging YOU – our community members, partners, and patients – and empowering **YOU to become an advocate for positive change**. Together, we are a stronger voice that can reach a wider audience to bring forth continued support for the medically underserved.

Today, we invite you to join NEVHC's Advocacy Network by signing up to become a healthcare advocate. By joining the network, you will receive important advocacy information, action alerts, and special invitations to advocacy-related activities and events. To sign up, please fill out the requested information on the enclosed reply card and return it in the envelope provided to NEVHC, 1172 N. Maclay Avenue, San Fernando, CA 91340. Sign up today and receive an NEVHC **Health Care for All** bumper sticker.

Additional information is also available on NEVHC's Advocacy Network web page at [nevhc.org](http://nevhc.org). Or you may contact Saaliha Khan, Government and Community Relations Manager, at (818) 270-9540 or at [saalihakhan@nevhc.org](mailto:saalihakhan@nevhc.org).



### **Donate Today!**

We need your support to continue to advocate for important issues that impact the health of our community. Please take a moment to make your contribution today!

**With your gift of \$25 or more, you will receive a free NEVHC Health Care for All T-shirt.**

Please include your donation in the enclosed return envelope.

If you prefer to make your gift online, please visit our website at [nevhc.org](http://nevhc.org). Thank you for your generosity and support!

# NEVHC COMMUNITY

# EVENTS



NEVHC CEO Kimberly Wyard met with U.S. Congressman Steve Knight during the National Association of Community Health Centers Policy & Issues Forum in Washington, D.C.



U.S. Congressman Tony Cárdenas welcomed NEVHC WIC Director Joy Ahrens (center) & Associate Director Christine Goulet during the National WIC Association's Washington Leadership Conference.



NEVHC Board member Mark Stokes, CEO Kimberly Wyard, Board members Maria Angie Pacheco & Kurt Cabrera-Miller (l-r) thanked U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman (center) for his continued support.



NEVHC Board members Shannon Lund & Kurt Cabrera-Miller, District Rep Cristina Coria, State Assemblyman Raul Bocanegra & Associate Clinic Administrator Howard Maldonado (l-r) posed in front of the San Fernando Health Center after a tour.



State Assemblyman Dante Acosta (left) visited Valencia Health Center. Also pictured (l-r) are NEVHC COO Missy Nitescu, CICALAC's Joanne Preece, Clinic Administrator Hector Godoy and Cerenia Bolosan, RN.



NEVHC staffers Saaliha Khan, Michael Suorsa, Eddie Sanders, Shannon Gilland and Tanya Gonzalez (l-r) volunteered at the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

# WHAT'S NEW

COMING SOON!

## Newhall Health Center

Old Orchard Shopping Center  
23417 Lyons Avenue, Santa Clarita

## Van Nuys Adult Health Center



**New Location**  
14624 Sherman Way, 6th Floor  
Van Nuys

The Van Nuys Adult Health Center has relocated to a new state-of-the-art facility that features separate spaces for adult primary care and specialty care for HIV and Hepatitis C patients. The new 9,000-square-foot site has 10 exam rooms and is on the sixth floor of a medical building. The health center will be officially dedicated during National Health Center Week, August 13-19, 2017. Look for your invitation in the mail. We hope you can join us!

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## New Website!

# NEVHC.ORG

- Join Our Advocacy Network
- Make Donations
- Sign up for Patient Portal
- Get Medical Insurance
- Find a Health Center
- Receive eNewsletters
- Make Appointments
- Refill Prescriptions



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### Executive Team Officers

**Kimberly Wyard**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Patricia Moraga**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Christine Park, M.D., MPH, CLE, FAAP**  
Chief Medical Officer

**Theresa (Missy) Nitescu, MS, RDN, CHSP**  
Chief Operations Officer

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EDITOR/WRITER  
**Judy Shay, Marketing & Communications Manager**

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR  
**Susan L. Jones, CFRE, Director of Development & External Affairs**

DESIGN EDITOR  
**Shannon Gilland, Graphic Designer**

CONTRIBUTING DESIGNER  
**Michael Suorsa, Webmaster & Sr. Designer**

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
**Nancy Gomez, Development Manager**  
**Saaliha Khan, Government & Community Relations Manager**

### Mission Statement

The mission of Northeast Valley Health Corporation is to provide quality, safe and comprehensive health care to the medically underserved residents of Los Angeles County, particularly in the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys, in a manner that is sensitive to the economic, social, cultural and linguistic needs of the community.

### Northeast Valley Health Corporation

Corporate Office  
1172 N. Maclay Avenue  
San Fernando, California 91340  
(818) 898-1388  
www.nevhc.org



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