



I CARE SAN ANTONIO

Bringing the light to those in need

Vol. 15, No. 1

Fall 2009

I Care San Antonio now partnering with Haven for Hope

It's a God thing. It's a term that has been heard and thought many times by many people involved with the Haven for Hope. Over ten years ago, God gave the leaders of I Care the idea of having a community eye care clinic dedicated to the indigent of Bexar County. As we faithfully carried out our task to establish that clinic, God had a much bigger vision: one of providing for the care and transformation of the homeless. Last year we found that I Care was a part of that much bigger plan, the Haven for Hope. It is humbling to realize that God's vision is much bigger than ours, but it is a great blessing to be a part of God's work in this world.

San Antonio's new transitional living center will accept its first members in February of 2010 and God's vision of a safe, transformative living environment for our homeless brothers and sisters will become a reality. With over 73 nonprofit organizations under one umbrella organization housed in a 100 million dollar facility in the downtown area, Haven for Hope (H4H) will be a model for the nation. Not only will it touch the lives of thousands of homeless people, but the services that are provided by these synergized agencies will reach into the surrounding communities to create a better place to live and raise a family. I Care San Antonio is totally committed to the concept of Haven for Hope that seeks to provide basic physical, social, mental, and spiritual needs to those that are trying to overcome their hardships to become fulfilled, productive members



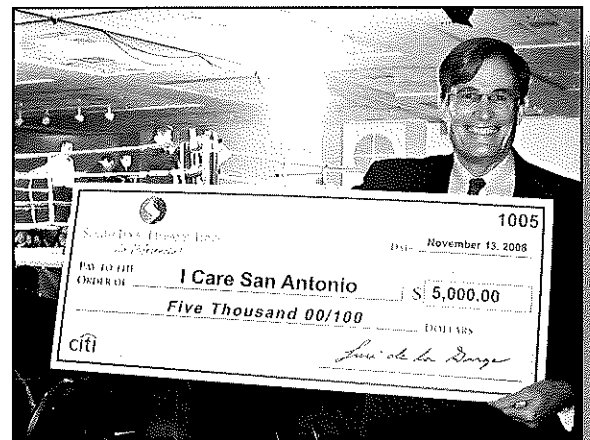
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of our community. I Care's year has been an eventful, fast moving one. In early March, we successfully moved to the Vision Center at H4H in the beautiful medical facilities donated by Methodist Healthcare Ministries, becoming one of the first organizations to occupy campus facilities. We were up and running the next weekend, holding our first clinic on 6 March. The leaders of Haven for Hope have been very generous in helping us achieve our dream.

The Vision Center will provide vision screenings and free eye care to every H4H member along with providing services to Bexar

County's indigent residents. I Care's partnership with Prevent Blindness, San Antonio, now housed in the same office, affords a unique opportunity for two non-profits to complement each other's mission and reach more indigent patients. Prevent Blindness's executive director, Libby Bentley, also serves as our part-time administrator. Prevent Blindness personnel perform community eye screening, determine financial qualifications and schedule clinic patients. This allows I Care to recruit eye care professionals to provide free eye care to our patients. Over the last two years, we have been blessed by many individuals, churches, organizations and foundations that have contributed \$440,032 in donations used to purchase state of the art equipment allowing I Care to provide the best care possible to our patients. Thanks to all our donors (see donor section), staff and

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Partnering with Haven for Hope

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volunteers who make I Care a reality. Our volunteers and staff are the hands and feet of Jesus showing God's love and care to the least of us.

Because of your generous donations, we have hired a full time patient coordinator, Casandra Garcia, who also coordinates volunteer schedules. Our other part-time employee, Esther Muñoz, RN, provides

patient education and assists the doctors in the clinic. Thank you Libby, Esther and Casandra for providing dedicated, generous, excellent service to our community. I also want to thank I Care SA's board of directors for their dedicated service to our organization. We look forward to the opening of the campus and the challenges of the coming year.

We continue to need more volunteers and donations to help us meet the growing need for our services brought about by our present economy. Our equipment campaign has \$236,194 to go to reach its current goal. Your help is always greatly appreciated.

*Bob Rice, MD,
Medical Director, I Care San Antonio*

Portrait of a volunteer –

Esther Muñoz

If you have volunteered in the past at the eye clinic on Zarzamora, at the new Haven for Hope location or have spent time on any of the Mexico mission trips with I Care San Antonio, you will probably recognize Esther Muñoz. Esther has been the clinic coordinator for the ICare San Antonio Eye Clinic for the past several years. She helped get the clinic up and running at the Zarzamora location and has been instrumental in helping us make the sometimes challenging transition to the Haven for Hope location.



Esther Muñoz

Esther was born in Oilton, TX, the eldest of 10 children. She had dreams of becoming a nurse and obtained her nursing degree at the Seton School of Nursing in Austin. She is still involved with the Alumni Association, which provides nursing scholarships to Seton employees with nursing aspirations. She began her nursing career at the Nix Hospital, where all 6 of her children (5 girls and one boy) were born. She became involved with mission work through her church and participated in border mission trips. Her involvement with providing health care for the poor and uninsured began in 1971 when she became the Clinic Director of the Good Samaritan Center (a mission of the Episcopal Church), a volunteer clinic that provided medical, dental, dermatology and diabetes care for the needy of San

Antonio. The faithfulness of the doctors and other volunteers that gave so freely of their time further inspired Esther to become even more involved with mission work in Mexico and that is what led to her connection with I Care San Antonio. On her first mission trip, she spent 2 weeks in Guanajuato, Mexico, as part of the Ophthalmology Cataract Brigade with Mission Mexico where her experience as a Clinic Director at the Good Samaritan Center was invaluable. When the time came to look for a Clinic Director at the Zarzamora location for the I Care SA Eye Clinic, Esther was a perfect fit.

With the expansion of the eye clinic at Haven for Hope, Esther will be able to utilize her nursing background as we begin to add more patient care services. She will be providing patient education

concerning ocular diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration. We have DVDs in English and Spanish that patients can watch and she is available to speak with patients about any further instructions the doctor may have concerning drop instillation, medications, etc. This will become even more important as we add services such as minor surgery and laser procedures, where patient understanding and compliance to the doctor's instructions is critical. The challenge at Haven for Hope will be with our homeless patients where follow-up care can be difficult. We are all excited about Esther's new role as the patient educator and look forward to being able to provide better care to our patients.

Esther has a heart for the chronic homeless – those that may reject all attempts at rehabilitation. It is her hope that we will be able to reach out to those people at the Haven for Hope Vision Center. She still remembers the mission statement of the Good Samaritan Center – "To show the love of Christ through action." The Haven for Hope Vision Center is the perfect place to show the love of Christ to the people that Christ loved the most – those that society rejects and scorns. Once again, Esther is a perfect fit!

*Sandra Fox, OD,
Clinic Director,
Vision Center at Haven for Hope*

I Care San Antonio *Contributors*

2009

- Foundations:** SA Area Foundation
 South Texas Hispanic Fund
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 Methodist Healthcare Ministries
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 St. Luke's Lutheran Health Ministries
 Zachry Foundation
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 Minuteman Press - printing services

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 Luxottica and One Sight Foundation
 Paragon Optical

Contributors of services:
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 I Care Volunteers
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2008

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 St. Luke's Lutheran Health Ministries
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Alcon Pharmaceuticals - Surgical Supplies
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 Allergan-surgical supplies

Luxottica and Give the Gift of Sight Foundation
 Paragon Optical

Betsey Rice-editing newsletter
 Angelica Vigil-mailing newsletter
 I Care Volunteers
 I Care Board Members
 Volunteer Doctors

The Gift of *Sight*

A few Halloweens ago, I asked my son, who was five years old, what he wanted to be for Halloween. He knew exactly what costume he wanted to get. He didn't want to be Superman, a ghost, or some scary monster. Surprisingly, he wanted to be Santa Claus. I thought to myself, how clever. He wants to be the person most admired by all his friends. Santa has the best job in the world. He has an incredible team from craftsmen to engineers, all helping him make thousands of toys. Santa's factory is a true team effort and then he gets the best part, delivering these wonderful gifts to boys and girls and seeing their smiling faces.

Thanks to this amazing partnership between ICSA and Prevent Blindness I get to play Santa Claus too. There is nothing more inspirational than watching a person put on a new pair of glasses for the very first time. Our dedicated volunteer team, made



of individuals like you, gives the staff of Prevent Blindness the opportunity to deliver gifts to children and adults. And what better present than the gift of sight? Without the gift of sight, most other gifts don't really matter. In San Antonio this year, our goal is to assist 15,000 individuals with a free vision screening, and help at least 500 people receive the follow-up care they need with free eye exams and glasses.

Perhaps we're a little old to believe in Santa Claus. But through your generosity and support, you show that you believe in us. And what's even better, Christmas comes everyday at the Vision Center at Haven for Hope.

*Libby Bentley,
Executive Director,
Prevent Blindness
San Antonio Branch*



ICSA Needs Your Time & Skills

Please do not forget that we still have some opportunities for you to consider this year and next.

Thanks to all of you who have been our supporters and volunteers over the last year.

Please call 210-220-2370 for more information

Yes, I would like to help I Care San Antonio!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

Office number _____

E-mail _____

I am interested in

- volunteering some of my time
- donating glasses or equipment
- making a donation: \$ ____
- having someone contact me with more information

Please mail this card to: Dr. Robert Rice

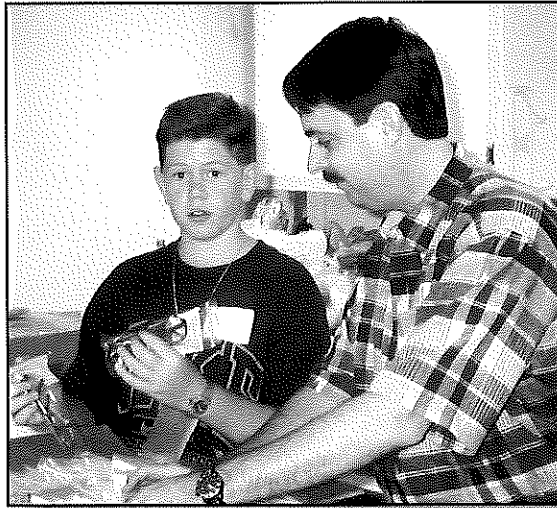
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San Antonio, Texas 78207

from the

President's Desk

It just keeps getting better and better! With all the negativity these days, it's good to know that some things are getting better. So far this year, ICSA has seen over 710 patients and dispensed over \$158,000 worth of eye care, along with moving into our new clinic early in the year. Our partnership with Libby Bentley and Prevent Blindness has enabled us to focus on the working poor, which has been a passion of mine since we started ICSA in 1992. Prevent Blindness does all the financial screening of patients for us. To qualify, a potential patient must earn below 150% of the published poverty level in the US. For example, a family of 4 with 2 adults and 2 children can earn \$33,000 and still qualify for our services. With the cost of eye exams and glasses these days, many working families just can't afford them; therefore, problems go undetected for years until they become so severe they can't be ignored. The damage, in many cases, is permanent at that point.

Reaching these patients is a huge blessing for us; it's what we've wanted to do for many years. However, solving one problem has created another one for



us; we need more trained volunteers! We need ophthalmic technicians, opticians and eye doctors! I visited with one of our volunteers the other day. Her name is Mari and she is an ophthalmic technician who spends her Saturday mornings at the clinic. She said a man came in a couple of Saturdays ago and while she was giving him his eye exam, he shared his story with her of how he became homeless. Mari said the picture of him on his ID showed a man in a suit, very professional and successful looking, much different than the person she saw in front of her. He had been in an accident that resulted in him being in a coma for several months. When he

came out of the coma, he found that he had lost one of his arms and his wife had left him, taking their kids with her out of state. He had also lost his job. He was trying to get back on his feet but had been unable to find any work. With Mari's assistance, ICSA gave him an eye exam, new glasses, a Bible and a sympathetic caring volunteer who listened to his troubles.

Mari also told me about a young woman who emigrated from Honduras and was a nanny. She came in looking for help because her eyesight was so bad she literally couldn't see well enough to navigate walking across a room and was suffering from severe ocular migraine headaches. She was so grateful to receive her new glasses that she tearfully handed out hugs and thank you's to all the volunteers.

Mari shared with me that her parents also emigrated to the United States and volunteering at the clinic gave her the opportunity to give back where she has been so wonderfully blessed.

If you too would like to be a blessing to others, you can get more information about volunteering by calling Casandra at 210-220-2370.

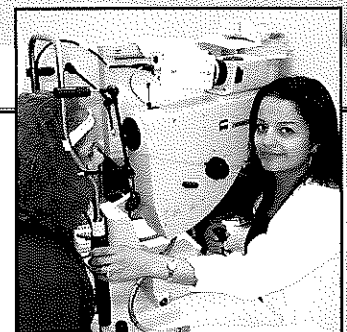
*God bless
Doug Radcliffe, president,
I Care San Antonio*

from one of

our clients

I went in this Sat for my eye exam. Thank you. Yes, for the exam but mostly for the respect. I have never been in need of charity before these last 18 months.

I have lost my home, my car, and my business. But I am extremely grateful to God for people as yourself. I am an artist and a writer so one can only imagine how important my eyes are to me.



Mari

WANTED!

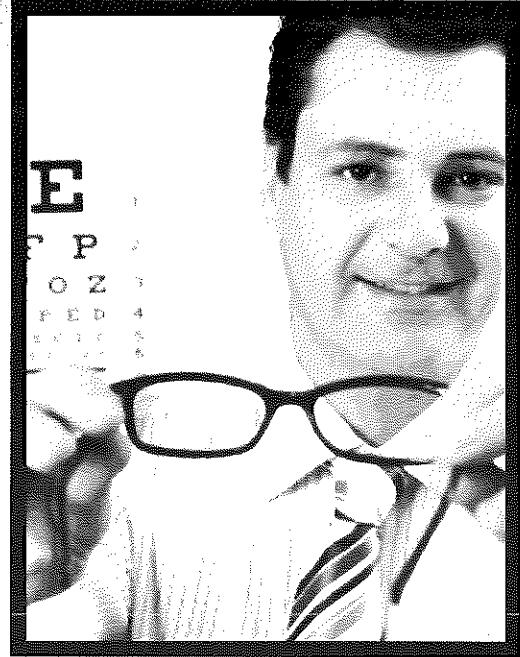
**Ophthalmologists,
Optometrists,
Technicians and Opticians**

To serve at the
Vision Center at Haven for Hope

It's not the Wild West but it sure is a
REWARDING experience!

For more information contact:

Casandra Garcia 220-2370



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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I Haven for Hope Way, Bldg 1, Suite 200

