

# OUR KIDS



Valley  
Children's  
HEALTHCARE

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2021 | VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 1

**BEST**  
CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITALS

**U.S. News** & WORLD REPORT

RANKED IN  
7 SPECIALTIES  
2021-22



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2021

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# WISDOM FROM OUR SMALLEST PATIENTS

We are all familiar with the wisdom expressed in "Children Learn What They Live," the classic poem written by **Dorothy Law Nolte** in 1955, coincidentally just three years after we opened the doors of Valley Children's Hospital and Guidance Clinic at the corner of Millbrook and Shields Avenues.

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to be shy.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with encouragement,  
they learn confidence.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

If children live with praise, they learn to appreciate.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith  
in themselves and others.

If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is  
a nice place in which to live.



Dorothy Law Nolte was right then. And her words are perhaps even more relevant today.

But, for me, as I reflect on 2021, maybe... just maybe... it is our turn as adults to consider what we have learned from children as we have navigated the pandemic, California wildfires, the drought and more.

Children taught us that there was still joy in victories large and small, first steps and wagon rides throughout our hospital.

They taught us to persevere when the news was not what we wanted to hear, when the test came back different than we hoped, when the physicians said, "We are going to try this one more time."

They taught us that it is possible to be kind even when — especially when — things didn't go our way.

They taught us that our "bad day" was not their "bad day."

They taught us that someone's hand to hold was all we needed to dig deeper and keep going.

They taught us that faith — in each other, in our teams and in our own souls — was often the magic ingredient.

They taught us to worry a little less, even though we, as adults, worry a lot, because the more we worried, the more they worried.

And they taught us that giving up was not an option — even when we were tired, scared or worried for ourselves and our own families.

So, maybe after all, **adults learn what children live** — what children teach us, show us, model for us. And that is a gift we are all

grateful for during these times, and every day we are privileged to care for them.

Through this *State of Our Children* report, I am pleased to invite you to learn more about the impact our organization has had on the kids, families and communities in this region during the past year — with my deepest gratitude for the privilege of caring for our most precious children.

Todd A. Suntrapak

*President & CEO*

# THE STATE OF OUR CHILDREN

Valley Children's Healthcare is guided by our mission to continuously improve the health and well-being of children.

As we reflect on the state of our children in 2021, it is important to note that prior to COVID-19, children living in the Central Valley were already more likely to experience harmful environmental factors, grow up with underlying health conditions and encounter inequitable access to healthcare.

The pandemic simply revealed and exacerbated adversities and widened disparity gaps even more for children and families across our region.

In 2021, children — and, in particular, children of color — experienced greater disparities in physical health, mental development and social well-being. With increased unemployment in our communities, longer lines at food banks and interruptions in supply chains that left shelves at grocery and corner stores empty, the pandemic created greater

wealth gaps. In addition, school closures made it more difficult for children who depended on the National School Lunch Program to access low-cost or free meals, which led to increased food insecurity in many communities. In addition, many more children were at risk for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even with these challenges — and maybe especially with these challenges — Valley Children's Healthcare and the Guilds Center for Community Health continue to track and trend our annual list of the most critical issues adversely impacting child health and well-being in our region. These issues do not exist in their own silos, but rather are interconnected and often interdependent. With our community partners, we continue to understand and equitably address these issues and measure our progress.



# TOP 10 ISSUES

## 1 ACCESS TO CARE

Access to providers who can effectively prevent and/or manage illness in a community-based setting such as a primary care physician office or school plays an important role in keeping children healthy and well. While we have seen improvements in access over the years, there are still communities in the Central Valley where too many children and their families have to delay or forego needed medical care due to lack of access to healthcare providers and resources.

### A CLOSER LOOK

#### Why is Access to Care so Important?

Pediatricians play a critical role as champions for child health and well-being. They regularly interact with children and their families, so they have a unique opportunity to identify family stress, social risk and needs.

Due to COVID-19, children continued to miss routine well-child visits with their healthcare providers, which led to missed opportunities for important developmental screenings and vaccinations. Without regular contact with primary or specialty care providers, many families experienced gaps in their already fragmented support system and became at greater risk for other social needs.

In 2021, telemedicine continued to enhance access for Valley Children's patients and families, and mitigated risk of exposure to COVID-19, minimized travel and reduced missed school and work. Prior to the pandemic, telemedicine efforts were limited to a small number of patients at our regional specialty care centers. The program expanded with more specialties available to patients in our primary care practices. During the peak of the pandemic, we provided more than 4,000 telemedicine appointments per month.

## 2 ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

Childhood adversity — such as child abuse, exposure to violence, family alcohol or drug abuse and poverty — can have negative, long-term impacts on health and well-being<sup>1</sup>. Challenges children face in school, life and ultimately with their health, are often the symptoms of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress. In our region, ACEs affect almost 20% of children — increasing their risk for long-term health and behavioral issues.

### The Three Types of ACEs Include

#### Abuse



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

#### Neglect



Physical



Emotional

#### Household Dysfunction



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Mother Treated Violently



Substance Abuse



Divorce

Source: [www.rwjf.org/en/library/infographics/the-truth-about-aces.html](http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/infographics/the-truth-about-aces.html)

ACEs Aware initiative is a first-in-the nation effort to screen patients for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to help improve and save lives. In 2021, Dr. Carmela Sosa, medical director of Valley Children's Guilds Center for Community Health, led efforts in one clinic to begin screening for ACEs, providing education and, when appropriate, linking families to resources. She is also a championing provider of ACEs Aware training.

## 3 ASTHMA

Asthma is the most common chronic condition among children. It is also one of the leading causes of school absenteeism. In Kings and Tulare counties, around one-third of children have been diagnosed with asthma. Low-income populations, minorities and children living in underserved communities experience more emergency department visits, hospitalizations and deaths due to asthma than the general population.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Preventing adverse childhood experiences. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html>

<sup>2</sup> Fryar, C. D., et al. (2020). Prevalence of overweight, obesity, and severe obesity among children and adolescents aged 2-19 years: United States, 1963-1965 through 2017-2018. National Center for Health Statistics.

# 4 CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can cause serious physical injuries and even death, and can lead to lifelong physical, emotional and behavioral problems, which can impact families across generations. Children who are abused or neglected are more likely to have problems such as anxiety, depression, delinquency and difficulty in school. Kern and Stanislaus counties have the highest rates of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect in the region, much higher than the California state average. It is important to remember that child abuse and neglect are preventable.

# 5 CHILDHOOD OBESITY

In recent decades, the national childhood obesity rate has more than tripled, with persistent disparities by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.<sup>3</sup> This is a troubling trend and a reality for the Central Valley; across our region, almost half (45%) of all fifth graders are overweight or obese. Compared with children at a healthy weight, children with obesity are at higher risk for a range of health problems, including asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and Type 2 diabetes; they also are more likely to become obese as adults.<sup>4</sup>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Schools for Healthy & Thriving Students

Valley Children’s and the Guilds Center for Community Health, in partnership with the Center for Wellness and Nutrition, completed its two-year initiative, Schools for Healthy and Thriving Students, which looked at school wellness policies using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework (WSCC). The WSCC model is student-centered and emphasizes the role of the community in supporting the school, the connections between health and academic achievement and the importance of evidence-based school policies and practices.

In partnership with 18 school districts from Fresno and Madera counties — representing more than 180,000 students — school districts are in the process of updating their local school wellness policies with six school districts successfully completing the process. Phase two of the program will commence in 2022 and will welcome a new partner — national organization, No Kid Hungry.

# 6 FOOD INSECURITY

Approximately 1 in 4 Central Valley children is food insecure and lives in a household with limited or uncertain access to adequate food. Fresno, Merced and Tulare counties have some of the highest rates of food insecurity across our state — and the pandemic created additional disparities in many communities.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Kids Eat Smart

In 2021, Valley Children’s and the Guilds Center for Community Health continued its partnership with Vallarta Supermarkets and the Kids Eat Smart campaign, which promotes access to healthy foods. A cornerstone of the Kids Eat Smart program is creating opportunities for children to develop healthy eating habits and creating environments that increase access to healthy food. To date, more than 15,000 pieces of fruit have been distributed to children at Vallarta Supermarkets in Fresno, Tulare, Visalia and Porterville. In addition, the Guilds Center for Community Health secured funding from Save Mart and Rite Aid for expansion of this program into additional communities.

# 7 MATERNAL & INFANT HEALTH

Improving the well-being of mothers, infants and children is critical to the health of the next generation and impacts the overall health of communities. Unfortunately, Central Valley counties have some of the highest rates in California of babies born prematurely, babies born at low birth weight and infants who die before the age of 1. In addition, there are racial and ethnic disparities with Black children dying at much higher rates than any other ethnicity.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition

In 2021, the Guilds Center for Community Health launched the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition which now represents more than 50 members in seven counties across the Central Valley. The Coalition — currently co-chaired by Valley Children’s and First 5 Fresno — has a vision that every parent and caregiver of an infant will have access to culturally appropriate risk reduction education and resources on infant sleep, keeping all Central Valley infants safe from preventable causes of death.

<sup>3</sup> Fryar, C. D., et al. (2020). Prevalence of overweight, obesity, and severe obesity among children and adolescents aged 2-19 years: United States, 1963-1965 through 2017-2018. National Center for Health Statistics.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). Childhood obesity causes and consequences



# 8 MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is critical to overall health and well-being. Mental health in childhood means reaching developmental and emotional milestones, and learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems. Counties in the Central Valley have some of the highest rates of students experiencing depression-related feelings; more than a third of ninth graders in Kern, Merced and Stanislaus counties reported having these feelings in the previous year.

# 9 POVERTY

Across California, approximately 1 in 5 children is living in poverty – but in the Central Valley, 1 in 3 children lives in poverty. Poverty is an important social determinant of health and contributes to child health disparities. Poverty and related social determinants of health can lead to adverse health outcomes in childhood and throughout a person’s lifetime, negatively affecting physical health, socioemotional development and educational achievement.<sup>5</sup>

# 10 UNINTENTIONAL INJURIES

Most unintentional injuries are preventable. Fresno County continues to experience one of the highest rates of hospital discharges for non-fatal unintentional injuries in children ages 1 to 4. Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 1 to 4, and airway obstruction injury (suffocation) is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among infants under age 1. Injury is the leading cause of death in children and young adults in America, and is a major source of childhood emergency department and hospital admissions.



# COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Fresno	51	50	48	46
Kern	52	52	52	53
Kings	33	30	32	33
Madera	40	36	38	36
Mariposa	34	42	44	30
Merced	45	47	39	38
Sacramento	31	29	28	26
San Joaquin	46	44	34	39
San Luis Obispo	13	15	14	16
Santa Barbara	18	19	19	18
Stanislaus	38	33	37	34
Tulare	50	51	53	47

Source: Health Outcomes Rank out of 58, 2018-2021 (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute)

<sup>5</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Community Pediatrics. (2021). Poverty and child health in the United States. Pediatrics, 137(4), e20160339.

# STRONGER TOGETHER



As the world moved into year two of a global pandemic, we began to see more and more children contracting newer variants of COVID-19. Valley Children's focused on helping these young patients recover from infection — and from rare, sometimes deadly, complications of the disease. And then a game-changer arrived.

## A Dose of Hope for Our Patients, Families, Staff and Communities

Right before the new year, hope arrived to Valley Children's in a small pallet of refrigerated boxes...each holding hundreds of doses of COVID-19 vaccines. It changed everything. To have something that could prevent serious illness — and even death — from a virus that had already taken the lives of so many, the vaccine brought relief and optimism to healthcare workers who had been at the frontlines since day one.

Critical Care Nurse Laura Yamamoto, RN, was one of the first in line to receive the vaccine at Valley Children's. Months earlier, she contracted COVID-19, which ravaged her lungs. She spent two weeks on a ventilator and lost her brother and father to the virus within days of each other. "I had a very long course to recovery and just returned to work a week before this first vaccine clinic," Yamamoto said. "I didn't hesitate to sign up for this. It was so important for me to get it so I don't ever get that sick again. I've told everyone I know to please take this seriously. So many people did not have the opportunity, like my own family members, to choose vaccination."

## Stronger Together

We learned a great deal throughout the pandemic — and were reminded time and time again about the value of community partnerships in helping to elevate the health of our entire region.



In 2021, Valley Children's, like the rest of the world, shifted focus from emergency response to equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and services. Soon after the arrival of vaccine doses, Valley Children's began holding clinics — first for healthcare workers, then families of staff who were essential workers, including paramedics, firefighters, educators and food service employees. That was followed by clinics for parents and grandparents of staff.

# 2021 BY THE NUMBERS: COVID-19 VACCINES

37,410

TOTAL COVID-19  
VACCINE DOSES  
ADMINISTERED

4,389

TOTAL VACCINE  
DOSES, 5-11 YEARS  
OLD

95,492

TOTAL COVID-19  
TESTS PROCESSED



To help children get back into the classroom, Valley Children's worked closely with school districts to vaccinate hundreds of teachers. Teams of our pediatric residents set up clinics in Tulare County to reach communities, including Hispanic and economically disadvantaged families, where it is sometimes difficult to receive healthcare services.

And as soon as the FDA authorized COVID-19 vaccines for children — 12-17 years of age over the summer, then 5-11 years of age in the fall — Valley Children's teams again stepped up, holding clinics during after-school and weekend hours, hosting educational forums for parents and comforting children as they received their doses of protection.

Testing remained a critical element in our community response to managing COVID-19. In 2021, Valley Children's expanded laboratory capabilities, processing 95,492 COVID-19 tests for patients, workforce members and their families, and the community. Valley Children's lab — which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week — provided COVID-19 testing support for several partners, including Fresno State, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Fresno Surgery Center and San Joaquin Valley Rehabilitation Hospital.

Dr. Karen Dahl is the medical technical specialist for Valley Children's Hospital Incident Command System, or HICS, team — which continues to oversee all COVID-19 policies, procedures and processes throughout the network. HICS is normally activated for short periods of time to handle short-term crises, like a water main break, temporary patient surge, mass casualty incident or wildfires that lead to staff or patient evacuations or significant operational disruptions.

Never before has a Valley Children's HICS team been in operation for two full years. "Our doctors, nurses and support staff worked tirelessly throughout the second year of this pandemic to ensure the needs of the patients, families and communities we serve continued to be met during these extraordinarily challenging times," Dr. Dahl said. "Through two different patient surges, with both the Delta and Omicron variants, and other external events like wildfires and drought, we took extra measures to keep our staff safe to make sure that we could carry out our mission — uninterrupted — every single day."

# COVID-19 RESEARCH



Valley Children's expanding research capabilities led to important work that impacted our own care here as well as the COVID-19 practice, knowledge, data collection and treatment occurring across the country.

In 2021, 19 research projects were initiated or remained active, with several resulting in national publication — including articles in the *Journal of Medical Education and Curricular Development* and *Journal of Surgical Research* — and presentations at national conferences, including the 16th Annual Academic Surgical Congress. Topics included assessment risks of child abuse during quarantine, long-term outcomes after multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), effects of vaccines on rheumatology patients and the efficacy of monoclonal antibody treatments on pediatric patients.



# A COMEBACK FROM RARE COMPLICATIONS

“Let’s throw a football,” 6-year-old Bryce shouted as he ran around Bulldog Stadium, his little sister, Peyton, right behind him. “I cannot keep up with this kid,” his mom, Jennifer Moore, said, shaking her head while her husband went to look for a ball.



In January 2021, Jennifer didn’t know what would happen to her son. Two months after she and her husband tested positive for COVID-19, Bryce — who tested negative and never showed any symptoms of the virus — began to feel sick. It started with a headache and within days, he developed a high fever and rash on his back, lost his appetite and had a very stiff neck. An on-call pediatrician first suspected meningitis, so his parents rushed him to Valley Children’s Emergency Department (ED), where the team stabilized his symptoms and allowed him to go home. Bryce returned days later, his health deteriorating. That’s when the ED team learned Bryce had recently been exposed to COVID-19, and they knew exactly what was wrong. He had multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children, or MIS-C, a rare, but serious, condition associated with COVID-19 that causes different body parts to become inflamed, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain and skin.

“MIS-C is like a tornado or cascade of events that happens when a child’s immune system goes into overdrive,” explained Valley Children’s Pediatric Rheumatologist Dr. Reshma Patel, who spent much of 2021 educating pediatricians on how to diagnosis and treat MIS-C. “At one point in the pandemic, our hospital detected one out of every four cases of MIS-C in the entire state. It is not contagious and can occur two to eight weeks after a symptomatic

or asymptomatic COVID-19 infection. While some cases of MIS-C are mild, this complication can be quite serious, even deadly, if not treated in time. Fortunately, Valley Children’s Hospital has the specialists and the treatments needed to help children who develop MIS-C.”

Bryce spent four days at Valley Children’s, including one day in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Because the long-term effects of MIS-C aren’t yet known, Bryce will continue to receive follow-up care from Valley Children’s pediatric rheumatology and pediatric cardiology teams. So far, each checkup has shown no lingering problems and no signs of Bryce slowing down, which is just fine with mom. “He got to start kindergarten in the fall and in person, too,” Jennifer said. “To see him with his classmates, playing sports again and smiling... that means everything to me.”



# CARE KIDS CAN COUNT ON

“Our children deserve nothing less than the best. And that’s the promise we make to them every single day. Despite all of the challenges our teams faced not only here, but also at home, they came to work, they focused on caring for kids and we’ve been able to not only maintain our quality standards, but improve on several of them.”

Dr. David Christensen  
Valley Children’s Senior Vice President, Chief Physician  
Executive President, Valley Children’s Medical Group

Valley Children’s exceptional quality metrics held steady — and some even improved — despite the daily changes to safety protocols and regulations that occurred throughout the year, as hospitals and staff across the country continued and adapted their response to the pandemic. Through a multidisciplinary approach, our teams came together, stronger than ever, to continuously and relentlessly improve care for our young patients.

As a result of our efforts, Valley Children’s Healthcare has demonstrated:

MORE THAN  
**90% REDUCTION**

Central line-associated blood stream infections (CLABSIs) since 2012

FOR THE FIFTH  
CONSECUTIVE YEAR  
**ZERO VAPs**

Ventilator-associated pneumonias

NEARLY  
**94% REDUCTION**

Catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs), with one since 2012

MORE THAN  
**83% REDUCTION**

Surgical site infections (SSIs) since 2012

DECREASE OF  
**75% NICU | 77% PICU**

Unplanned extubations (UPEs) since 2016

AS OF SEPT. 30, 2021

**97% HAND HYGIENE  
COMPLIANCE**

These outcomes are testimony to the strength of our teams and their commitment to safety in every patient interaction.

# AWARDS & ACCOLADES



## U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

In 2021, U.S. News & World Report ranked Valley Children's as one of the best children's hospitals in the country in seven specialties: Neonatology, Pediatric Diabetes & Endocrinology, Pediatric Gastroenterology & Gastrointestinal Surgery, Pediatric Neurology & Neurosurgery, Pediatric Orthopedics,

Pediatric Pulmonology & Lung Surgery and Pediatric Urology. Rankings are based on clinical data and an annual survey of pediatric specialists, marking the sixth consecutive year Valley Children's has been recognized as one of the best places in the country for children to receive care.



## BEACON

The Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Valley Children's earned the Beacon Award for Excellence from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN), demonstrating sustained excellence in unit performance and patient outcomes.



## MOST WIRED

For the second time, the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) recognized Valley Children's Healthcare as the 2021 CHIME Digital Health Most Wired based on an annual survey conducted to assess how effectively healthcare organizations apply core and advanced technologies to their clinical and business programs to improve health and care in their communities. Valley Children's was acknowledged as a certified Level 8, achieving top scores in technology infrastructure, security and data management — all of which help contribute to our singular focus on patient safety and outcomes.

## HIMSS STAGE 7

Valley Children's achieved the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Electronic Medical Record Adoption Model (EMRAM) Stage 7 designation, another clear indication of our dedication to excellence and our commitment to improving patient safety and outcomes. The electronic medical record adoption model scores organizations on a scale from 0 to 7 on how well a hospital leverages electronic solutions for improved safety and efficacy of clinical care.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FOCUS: EARLY RECOGNITION OF SEPSIS

Sepsis is the leading cause of death for children in the United States, which is why the Children's Hospital Association's (CHA) Improving Pediatric Sepsis Outcomes (IPSO) committee invited hospitals across the country to participate in a collaborative that would focus on the timely and reliable implementation of evidence-based diagnostic and care processes. The goal was to reduce hospital acquired sepsis deaths across the country by 75% (using baseline data from 2016 and 2017). As a result, Valley Children's met and has exceeded that national goal with a 90% reduction due to the timeliness of detection and intervention, while minimizing the critical needs of a patient, thus reaffirming the kind of reliable and lifesaving care kids can count on.

# ONE BIG STEP FOR RAFAEL, ONE GIANT LEAP FOR SPINAL MUSCULAR ATROPHY



A mother and child walking hand in hand down a hospital hallway is a common sight across Valley Children's.



The sight of mom Claribel and 13-month-old Rafael walking down the hallway in the neurology clinic was something altogether different.

Soon after birth, like every baby born in California, Rafael participated in the Newborn Screening Program (NBS), a public health program that screens all babies for many serious but treatable genetic disorders. The program began in 1966 with screening for one disorder, phenylketonuria (PKU), and has now expanded to include 80 different genetic and congenital disorders.

In 2020, after several years of advocacy by parents and organizations alike — including Valley Children's, California officially added spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) to its newborn screening panel. And it is for this reason that Valley Children's physicians were able to diagnose Rafael early on with SMA.

"It is crucial for children with SMA to be diagnosed as early as possible," said Dr. Raymund David, Valley Children's pediatric neurologist and muscular dystrophy clinic lead. "An earlier diagnosis means earlier treatment — and earlier treatment can make a big difference in the quality of life for the patient because it means that fewer motor neurons will perish, which can slow the progression of the disease."

SMA is a neuromuscular disease that affects the motor nerve cells. It is caused by a deletion or mutation of the survival motor neuron gene 1 (SMN-1), a gene that produces a protein essential for nerve cells to function properly and control muscles. Without the SMN-1 protein, nerve cells become weakened and eventually die, leading to muscle weakness. This loss of muscle function does not impact cognitive ability, but

includes losing the ability to eat, swallow, breathe and move — which often leads to fatal outcomes..

"After his newborn screening results came back, we received a call from our Valley Children's nurse," shared Claribel. "She explained we needed to come in, went over everything we should expect and what we would be facing, and ensured we would have a compassionate care team there every step of the way."

There are five different types of SMA, each type based on the ages symptoms begin and the highest physical milestone anticipated. Based on research, Rafael was diagnosed with SMA type 2, which means an individual may be able to sit up without help and may need assistance getting into a seated position, but they are unable to walk and will require a wheelchair.

Today, Rafael is reaching milestones no one would've thought possible before.

"Rafael is now not only taking steps, but learning to walk on his own, when we thought he wasn't going to be able to do any of that," said Claribel. "The team at Valley Children's gave me everything I possibly needed, from support to resources, and made the entire unknown just run so smoothly. They've been so helpful and I'm just so thankful."

"In the past, kids with SMA may not have been able to walk, or even sit," explained Dr. David. "With today's treatments, kids like Rafael are hitting important childhood milestones and it's just truly amazing."



Scan here to see some of Rafael's first steps.



# SMA

SMA IS A LEADING GENETIC CAUSE OF DEATH IN CHILDREN AND OCCURS IN APPROXIMATELY 1 IN 10,000 LIVE BIRTHS.

10

IN 2020, 10 PATIENTS WERE IDENTIFIED WITH SMA THROUGH THE NEWBORN SCREENING PANEL.

6

SIX OF THESE PATIENTS WERE TREATED WITH AVAILABLE MEDICATIONS.

3

THREE PATIENTS BORN WITH SMA ARE CURRENTLY WALKING.





SMALLER INCISIONS.

BIGGER IMPACT.

After years of consistent pains that were assumed to be stomach bugs, Tito now lives life like any other 8 year old — thanks to Valley Children’s physicians and the help of surgery robots.

Since he was 2 months old, Tito went through periods where he would get such bad stomach pains it would lead to vomiting. Once Tito was old enough to communicate, he was able to identify to his family and doctors that the pain was in the left side of his lower back — where the kidneys are located. An ultrasound determined there was a lot of fluid stuck inside his kidney, prompting a referral to Dr. Lily Wang, Valley Children’s pediatric urologist. It was determined Tito suffered from hydronephrosis — meaning there was a blockage in the tubes that

typically drain urine from the kidneys, causing the kidneys to swell up. After multiple appointments, Tito underwent surgery in August of 2021.

Surgery typically means hours under anesthesia, days in the hospital and a longer recovery at home. However, thanks to robotic-assisted surgery with the da Vinci® Surgical System, Dr. Wang was able to perform complex, minimally invasive surgery with precision and accuracy.

“Robotic surgery is part of a bigger picture that helps patients get back to being kids sooner,” explained Dr. Wang. “Compared to traditional surgery, procedures using robotic technology such as the da Vinci robot result in less pain and scarring due to minimally invasive incisions.”

The da Vinci system translates a surgeon’s hand movements, bending and rotating the instruments while performing the procedure. The tiny wristed instruments move like a human hand, but with greater precision. The da Vinci vision system simultaneously delivers highly magnified, 3D views of the area, while using a device that only requires a few small incisions be made.

Thanks to experts in their field like Dr. Wang and innovative technologies like the da Vinci® Surgical System, children like Tito are able to get back to the important things in life — like being an 8 year old.

Providing children with the highest quality of care and medical interventions can happen even earlier than ever thanks to genetic advancements, which have set into motion a variety of options for tumor and cancer surveillance. These genetic advancements have also led to Valley Children's opening the Tumor-Cancer Predisposition Clinic — the only clinic of its kind in the Central Valley. This clinic brings innovative detection methods to kids without them ever having to leave the Central Valley.

In late 2020, a revolutionary screening tool was approved by the FDA to help detect cancer known as liquid biopsy. Liquid biopsies, also known as a fluid biopsy, involve sampling blood and performing a sequencing test that can identify cancer cells or pieces of tumor cells in DNA. This test is non-invasive and has been utilized to diagnose cancers earlier than traditional means, such as radiology or imaging. These liquid biopsies can screen for more diseases and reduce treatment time based on tumor detection, as well as help create customized treatments for detected diseases through genotyping.

Pediatric Hematologist and Oncologist Dr. Karen Fernandez explained, "Through a multidisciplinary approach and collaboration with the genetics team, our clinic is optimizing cancer and tumor detection by providing genetic screening in order to identify cancerous mutations, and then coordinating care with the most specialized disciplines. To be able to detect cancer earlier than ever before is remarkable and helps us continue to do what we do best — getting kids back to being kids."

"A multidisciplinary approach is fundamental to optimizing care for kids," added Valley Children's Genetic Counselor Jason Carmichael. "By working together to identify patients who are at greater risk of a cancerous genetic mutation, follow-up care and an ongoing plan for surveillance is pivotal."

This last year, three patients were tested through the Tumor-Cancer Predisposition Clinic, and to date, all three children receive continuous treatment and follow-up care with Valley Children's team members.

# LIQUID BIOPSIES

# CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S SERVICES (CCS) CERTIFICATIONS

This year, Valley Children's took another step in its commitment to providing the highest quality of care for children in the Central Valley. In fall 2021, two Valley Children's programs were certified as California Children's Services (CCS) programs: Valley Children's Cochlear Implant Center and Valley Children's Hypertonicity Clinic.

## Cochlear Implant Center

The Valley Children's Cochlear Implant Center, which is the first pediatric cochlear implant center in the region, includes a multidisciplinary team of pediatric subspecialists in a single location. This multidisciplinary team includes professionals from audiology, speech language pathology and otolaryngology.

"When a family decides with a medical specialist that a cochlear implant is the best medical decision for their child, the last thing they want is to have to make multiple trips to different facilities, taking possible days off work, impacting their family's schedule and causing additional stress on their child," explained Dr. Kyle Robinette, pediatric otolaryngologist and medical director of Valley Children's Cochlear Implant Center.

The cochlear implant team works carefully with families to determine eligibility and create a personalized strategy for best hearing outcomes. Patients who receive cochlear implants typically experience vast improvement in auditory function and speech clarity.

## Hypertonicity Clinic

Valley Children's Hypertonicity Clinic also received CCS approval in fall 2021. This clinic provides specialty care for infants, children and

adolescents with conditions such as cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, strokes and congenital conditions.

"Our Hypertonicity Clinic is a unique specialty clinic that combines a full functional assessment to patients with complex rehabilitative, orthopaedic, and neurosurgical needs," shared Dr. Jennifer Crocker, medical director of Valley Children's Rehabilitation Center and Hypertonicity Clinic. "When pediatric patients come into our clinic, they receive a complete assessment and the benefit of the specialty healthcare providers in one visit. Our team then determines the best treatment plan for each patient, which can include medications, physical therapy, tendon lengthening, bone reconstruction or complex neurosurgery, that may help improve the patient's quality of life."

Hypertonicity, or spasticity, refers to muscles that are stiff and unusually tight, interfering with a child's ability to move, walk or sometimes speak. It can occur on its own or as a result of a variety of conditions, requiring the individual treatment plans created and managed by our Hypertonicity Clinic.

These CCS programs are administered as a partnership between county health departments and the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). This CCS certification ensures that children eligible for Medi-Cal are able to access the services.

*"By becoming a CCS program, more children who qualify for cochlear implants can benefit quickly and the stress of needing to go out of the Valley for the surgery is eliminated."*

Dr. Kyle Robinette  
Medical Director, Valley Children's  
Cochlear Implant Center

# GEORGE'S IDEA LAB

For nearly 70 years, innovation has been one of Valley Children's core values. Our extraordinary physicians, nurses and employees demonstrate their innovative spirit every single day as they care for our patients and families. George's Idea Lab launched in 2019, and has since received 114 idea submissions, collaborating with Valley Children's staff and providers on their ideas to find innovative solutions to solve problems in pediatric medicine. Ideas continue to come in from across the organization, from both clinical and non-clinical staff. A few examples include: innovations for infection prevention, patient mobility and vitals tracking.

In 2021, George's Idea Lab collaborated with Medline for the first-ever pediatric innovation showcase event, which brought together 180 people representing 28 hospitals and pediatric providers from across the nation.

This last year, George's Idea Lab also started a collaboration with the President's Innovation Fund, a way for Valley Children's donors to directly support our mission by funding employee-proposed innovative projects. A total of 16 submissions were received and nine grants were funded through this application and funding process, including virtual reality (VR) education projects and epilepsy medication videos.



# THE FUTURES



## Meet Anali

At just 6 years old, Anali would ask her mom, "When will I be able to have a nose like yours?" As a little girl, Anali noticed she looked different from others. She was born with a cleft lip and palate — openings or splits in the upper lip or roof of the mouth. Though cleft lip can be as mild as a notch on the lip, Anali's was from her lip to her nose. Surgery is common for treatment and she had her first procedure at just 5 months old, with several more throughout her childhood.

At first, Anali didn't quite understand the significance of each appointment or procedure, but she felt a difference — she began to breathe better, eat with ease and, over time, her cleft lip and palate became less noticeable.

Anali had her last procedure — surgery number seven — when she was 17. On one hand, she was excited that her need of treatment was coming to an end but, on the other, she was sad to no longer have the consistency of regular appointments with the doctors who had helped her along the way. The frequent surgeries and routine visits to Valley Children's was all she had known since she was a baby,

# WE FIGHT FOR

and no one understood the challenges she had overcome as personally and as fully as her doctors and care team.

"Even though there were times in my life when I struggled with having a cleft lip and palate, I am grateful for the inspirational people I met along the way and the perseverance I gained from my condition," said Anali.

Today, Anali is 21 years old, a full-time student at Cal State LA majoring in biology and also working as a medical firefighter.

"My treatment experience has inspired my goal to go to medical school and become a doctor, not only to help others medically, but also by sharing my story," added Anali. "I hope to be one of those doctors who are impossible to forget, just like the ones who have helped me all my life, like my pediatric plastic surgeons, Dr. Peter Witt and Dr. Mimi Chao. I will never forget them as I am thankful for their service and the impact they had on my life. Not only did my doctors help my medical condition, they shaped the path that gave me the confidence I have today to help others."



# Meet Bobby

In 1996, Valley Children's expanded neonatal care by opening level II neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) at Adventist Health in Hanford and Mercy Medical Center in Merced. For 25 years, our specialty trained experts have cared for the littlest patients born before 32 weeks gestation and older, who weigh less than 1500 grams and are in need of complex care — patients like Bobby.

Bobby's mom, a long-time Hanford resident, was 24 weeks pregnant with him when she began to experience some complications that required bed rest. With a lot of swelling and high blood pressure that couldn't be regulated, it was determined that Lori would have to deliver her baby prematurely in order to protect her own health and the health of her baby. On April 12, 1996, Lori gave birth to Bobby at just 29 weeks gestation, and he became one of the first patients at our Hanford NICU. At 1 lb. 14 oz., Bobby was quickly transported to Valley Children's to be treated by the best doctors in the region who specialized in caring for the smallest patients.


"I felt scared about delivering my son early and was heartbroken to part ways with him during a time when I felt he should be closest to my heart. But I found strength in knowing that the experts at Valley Children's could care for Bobby when I had to care for myself," said Lori. "In order to be part of his whole life, I had to part ways with him for the first few days of his life, and knowing he was in the best hands with experts I trusted made it feel okay."

Bobby was small, but mighty, for his size, and over the course of two months, he would gain weight and be cared for by many experts at Valley Children's, including someone he still calls, "Aunt Margaret." She was one of Bobby's nurses, with him every day, and got to know his entire family during their visits. "While Bobby was healthy, he was simply in the NICU to grow, and I am grateful to Margaret and to Bobby's entire care team because they weren't just there for him, they were there for all of us," added Lori.

Today, at 25 years of age, Bobby's is a sheriff's deputy for Kings County and remains in touch with his "Aunt Margaret." His older sister, Kelsey, inspired by watching the teams who cared for her little brother, became a registered nurse.

If birth comes earlier than planned, or if a complex condition requires specialized care, we are grateful to have the unparalleled expertise, compassion and devotion from some of the most experienced teams. What makes Valley Children's NICU special is the commitment from our staff who care for our patients and their families, just as it has since the beginning.





Since opening in 1996,  
Valley Children's has cared  
for more than

**3,000**

**BABIES IN MERCED AND MORE  
THAN 2,100 IN HANFORD.**

*“Our mission has always been — and continues to be — ensuring that specialty care is available to all children closer to home. Timely care is the best care and we are proud that our expert staff is able to intervene during such a critical time, saving the lives of some of the smallest patients.”*

Dr. Patrick Nwajei  
Valley Children's Chief of Newborn Medicine

*“As far back as I can remember, I've always loved babies and wanted to be a nurse. When my youngest daughter, Annie, was born with spina bifida, she was transferred to a NICU. I spent two weeks at her bedside watching the nurses in awe of their expertise and compassion. That is when I knew I wanted to be a NICU nurse.”*

Deborah Lingenfelter  
Part of the original nursing team that opened  
the NICU at Mercy Medical Center in Merced

*“What brings me the most joy about my job is knowing that the babies we care for are able to stay in their community, close to home. Before our unit opened, babies who required a higher level of care had to be transferred to Madera.”*

Rosalina Mendoza, RN  
Part of the original nursing team that opened  
the NICU at Mercy Medical Center in Merced

# CARING FOR THE WHOLE CHILD



There is little doubt that mental health emerged as one of the most important issues facing our children over the last few years. Our work to improve the health and well-being of every child has sharpened our focus on mental health awareness, education, resources, partnerships and community collaborations to better serve kids and families.



Construction on the region’s newest and highly anticipated mental health care facility by Universal Health Services (UHS) — River Vista Behavioral Health — continues to make great progress, reaching the “beam topping” construction milestone this year. When it opens in early 2023, River Vista Behavioral Health will provide a full continuum of inpatient services for children ages 5-17 and adults, including robust specialty and outpatient services. River Vista Behavioral Health represents the first significant increase in psychiatric capacity in this region in many years and will provide a 49% increase in inpatient psychiatric beds for children in the Central Valley.

As we anticipate the opening of this new facility, Valley Children’s partnered with UHS’ telepsychiatry service, HealthLink Now, to offer telepsychiatry across our primary care network. “The opportunity to provide this service to our patients and families, in partnership with their primary care provider, has made a difference in

the lives of our kids,” said Valley Children’s Medical Director of Primary Care and of the Guilds Center for Community Health Dr. Carmela Sosa. “It will continue to do so as we expand the initial pilot to more practices and specialty clinics across our system of care, as well as to our pediatric partners.”

To support our communities in their work around children’s mental health needs, Valley Children’s launched 360me, a campaign focused on the importance of treating the whole child — and the link between mental and physical health to their overall well-being. The campaign provided resources for families on how to have the conversation with their kids about mental health, mindfulness, stress-reduction activities for kids, as well as several Facebook Live events featuring our clinical psychologists, physicians and social work leaders to answer families’ questions about this critical issue.

# MOVING THE NEEDLE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

## Advocacy

### STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP ON MENTAL HEALTH

Valley Children's continues to provide leadership at the state and national level on healthcare policies, programs and services. Valley Children's Senior Vice President and Chief Community Impact Officer Lynne Ashbeck was privileged to serve as the Chair of California's Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) in 2020 and 2021.

"The role was a privilege in so many ways — from elevating the mental health needs of children to representing our organization and ensuring that California's Central Valley, often under-represented on State Boards and Commissions, had a voice in the decisions of how to invest the nearly \$2 billion in annual mental health spending of the MHSOAC."



*"I think that our partnership with UHS is one of the most important things that we have achieved at Valley Children's in the last decade. It is loud and clear from our community — and all the communities we serve from Bakersfield to Sacramento — that there is simply not enough access for kids who have behavioral or mental health challenges to get the kind of care they need."*

Todd Suntrapak  
President and CEO, Valley Children's Healthcare



## Changing the Culture of Genetic Testing in California and Michigan

For two years, Valley Children's and four other children's hospitals in California (Rady Children's Hospital, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, Children's Hospital Orange County and UC Davis Children's Hospital) collaborated on a project called Project Baby Bear, a \$2 million Medi-Cal pilot program that provided rapid whole genome sequencing (rWGS) for critically ill infants and children with undiagnosed diseases. Of 184 infants enrolled, 40% received a definitive diagnosis by rWGS in a median time of three days. Testing, rapid results and precision medicine led to quicker treatment for babies and millions of dollars in savings.

As a result of this work, California passed Assembly Bill 133 (AB133) that will provide rWGS coverage for children with Medi-Cal, younger than 1 year of age who have undiagnosed illnesses and are admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) or pediatric intensive care unit (PICU). Due to the success of the California initiative, the State of Michigan soon followed, and passed its own bill related to coverage for rWGS.

*"This project changed the culture of genetic testing, by giving clinicians a powerful diagnostic tool which has recently become more cost accessible and offered by multiple commercial labs. Genetic make-up tells us so much about a patient's condition and how we can more precisely provide care. This advancement will change medicine for decades to come."*

Jason Carmichael  
Valley Children's Lead Genetic Counselor

## Local Epilepsy Resources are Adopted Nationally

In support of our exceptional work around epilepsy, including celebrating the one-year anniversary of our Level 4 Epilepsy Center designation, Valley Children's expanded our reach into the community to better support our patients and families.

Valley Children's Epilepsy Program introduced virtual support groups and education videos, making much-needed resources accessible to families with children who experience seizures, while creating opportunities for families to connect with others across the Valley.

And, by teaming up with nearly a dozen school districts across the region, Valley Children's provided training on epilepsy and seizure response to more than 500 educators. Research indicates that potential learning and developmental delays may be avoided if a seizure is treated early, and our school partners are critical in the care of children with epilepsy.

The Epilepsy Alliance of America adopted emergency seizure medication use videos developed by Valley Children's, helping us reach even more families across the nation with our expertise and experience. To raise awareness for the 1 out of 26 people living with epilepsy, a group of "Epilepsy Caped Crusaders" participated in "26 Minutes a Day" a virtual exercise campaign. Together, more than 600 participants exercised approximately 15,600 minutes a day, collectively totaling 468,000 minutes (7,800 hours) throughout the month, across five different states.

"Valley Children's Epilepsy Program was created as an avenue for families to connect and begin friendships, as well as to educate the community about epilepsy," explained Valley Children's Epilepsy Program Manager Caitlin Bernard-Vincent. "This type of support has been long awaited, and it's exciting to provide families — locally and across the country — with resources in addition to their medical care."





## Teaming Up to Impact Generations of Valley Kids

Sharing a commitment to the health and well-being of youth and families throughout our region, Valley Children's and Fresno State enhanced their long-standing relationship with a 10-year partnership agreement. Through scholarships, collaborations for student-athletes, youth programs, opportunities to support students pursuing degrees in health and partnering with the university in their work around children's health and equity issues, these two leading organizations will elevate the health and well-being of our children for generations to come.



## Advancing Literacy and Entertaining Kids... One Blue Heart at a Time



Valley Children's released "George's Counting Adventure" the sixth book in our series dedicated to improving childhood literacy featuring our beloved mascot, George. Published in both English and Spanish, the book is designed for young readers, teaching them to count using landmarks and special features found in and around Valley Children's Hospital. It is written and illustrated by local moms, author Claire Noland and illustrator Mykel Newton Suntrapak, both of whom have a personal connection to Valley Children's. Valley Children's Literacy Program distributes approximately 2,000 books each month to kids visiting our hospital, and our primary and specialty care centers from Bakersfield to Modesto.

In December 2021, George debuted in his very own video game when Valley Children's released "Castle on the Coast" — a hand-drawn, retro 3D platformer. This game was initially developed with the goal of creating a fun, age-appropriate experience for patients, with a portion of the sales

benefitting Valley Children's Hospital. "Castle on the Coast" follows George as he explores through a magic castle, facing challenges full of crystal caverns and alternate dimensions. Players guide George as he runs up walls, spins, climbs and rolls his way through the game, collecting special gems as he passes each level. The game is now available for children outside our hospital, on PC, Nintendo Switch, Xbox and PlayStation gaming consoles.

Valley Children's is the first children's hospital in the country to release a video game of this kind.

"Valley Children's is driven by preserving the joy of childhood for every patient we are privileged to care for," says Valley Children's Healthcare President & CEO Todd Suntrapak. "Whether it is a book featuring George, or a plush animal in his likeness, we are grateful for the chance to share that love and joy with our families. This video game is another way we can bring some fun into the lives of kids we see, as well as kids around the world who may also help George navigate this journey."

Valley Children's is the first children's hospital in the country to release a video game of this kind.





## Medication Collection Bin Improves Kids' Safety At Home

Valley Children's collected 208 pounds within the first year of installing the medication disposal bin designated by the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), intended to keep harmful and unused drugs out of reach of children. That is 208 pounds of prescription pills, liquids, ointments/lotions, patches, pet medications and over-the-counter drugs that will not find their way into the hands of our Valley's children — helping to keep them safe in their homes and communities.

## Grape Jellyfish Café Keeps Staff and Kids Healthy With Valley Fresh Produce

Valley Children's Chef Robert Ortiz cultivated a partnership with a local organic farmer to bring in fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables for the approximately 1,800 meals prepared every day for patients, their families and our staff. What started as a way to help a local farmer who was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic quickly became a steady flow of the freshest local herbs, fruits and veggies into our hospital's food services. Improving access to nutritious and delicious food, Chef Robert and his team also began creating family to-go meals for hospital staff to help make their own at-home meal preparation that much easier.



**GEORGE'S  
PASS**

## George's Pass Relaunch

When the award-winning regional zoo reopened after the pandemic, the Fresno Chaffee Zoo renewed its commitment to ensure that the park is accessible and inclusive for all and relaunched George's Pass. Zoo staff worked closely with Valley Children's to develop tools to help children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other sensory issues have a positive and successful visit. Guests of the Zoo can check out a George's Pass backpack (at no cost) with sensory tools, a park map showing quiet zones, fidget toys and noise-canceling headphones.

Other locations for George's Pass are underway across the region.

# VALLEY CHILDREN'S ONCOLOGIST RECOGNIZED FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE







To say that Dr. Vonda Crouse has made history in the world of pediatric oncology in the Central Valley would be an understatement. She was the first pediatric oncologist in the Central Valley, joining the organization in 1987, and established the Valley's first pediatric oncology program, which has evolved into the exceptional Valley Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center we know today.

To her patients, though, she's known more as a bright smile, a warm voice and a bright shirt that lights up any room.

In fall 2021, Dr. Crouse was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Fresno Madera Medical Society in recognition of her 35 years of service to the pediatric hematology and oncology patients at Valley Children's.

"I was so pleased and surprised to receive this award," said Dr. Crouse. "With more than four decades in pediatric oncology, it has been quite a ride that I am so proud to be part of."

"Dr. Crouse was more than deserving of this recognition," added Dr. Vinod Balasa, medical director of Valley Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center. "Her commitment to the Center, our staff and — most importantly — to the children of the Central Valley is an inspiration to healthcare professionals in this area and beyond."

When she started in the Central Valley, Dr. Crouse reflected that since there was not a pediatric oncology program, children had to be seen by adult oncologists. Now, the Valley Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center treats more than 3,000 patients a year.

Additionally, Dr. Crouse was named Valley Children's Physician of the Year in 2020, an award voted upon by Valley Children's own medical staff that recognizes extraordinary contributions to improving healthcare and customer service.

# PHYSICIANS ARE SOME OF THE BEST VOICES FOR OUR KIDS — AND VALLEY CHILDREN'S HAS TWO OF THE BEST ON OUR TEAM.

Dr. Nicole Webb



In 2021, Valley Children's pediatric hospitalist Dr. Nicole Webb assumed several American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) regional and national leadership positions. Dr. Webb was appointed to the AAP's national Committee on Hospital Care, which advises the AAP's Board of Directors on issues and policies related to pediatric healthcare in the hospital setting. She was also elected vice president of the AAP California Chapter 1. Dr. Webb will serve a six-year term with the chapter, with two years as vice president, two years as president and then two years as immediate past president.

"I'm overwhelmed and honored with the news and really excited that this will afford us more avenues to continue advocating for our kids," shared Dr. Webb.

Dr. Webb joined Valley Children's in August 2012 as a pediatric hospitalist. Board-certified in both general pediatrics and pediatric hospital medicine, Dr. Webb enjoys managing a wide variety of conditions from birth to early adulthood and working with children and families during often difficult times in their lives. She is passionate about patient and family-centered care, as well as educating the next generation of

pediatric healthcare leaders and serves as a faculty member with Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program. Her scholarly interests include curriculum development, quality improvement, health literacy and communication, and pediatric firearm injury prevention. She has been published in multiple peer-reviewed journals and has had multiple presentations accepted to national meetings on topics such as promotion of faculty scholarship, recognition and mitigation of bias in healthcare and improving care for LGBTQ+ youth.

"These appointments are a worthy recognition of Dr. Webb's dedication to the children and families she serves in her role as a pediatric hospitalist, and in recognition of her work as a leader within our organization," said Dr. David Christensen, Valley Children's senior vice president of medical affairs, chief physician executive and president of Valley Children's Medical Group. "Because of that dedication, Valley Children's will have an even stronger voice in advocating regionally and nationally about issues that affect our kids here at home."

Dr. Hailey Nelson



In September 2021, Valley Children's complex care pediatrician and pediatric residency program core faculty member Dr. Hailey Nelson was named first runner-up in the Dr. America pageant. This competition, which was held virtually in 2021, recognizes the professional achievements of American women who hold a PhD degree or higher.

Dr. Nelson currently holds the title of Dr. California America and uses the special designation and platform to champion for children's health and wellness. By her selection as first runner-up at Dr. America, Dr. Nelson has reclaimed the Dr. California title for another year. Dr. Nelson will compete for the Dr. America crown again in 2022 and, in the meantime, will continue to use her platform to educate and advocate about children's health and wellness.

"Not having previous experience with pageants, I didn't know exactly what I was getting into, but thought it was a unique opportunity and platform to elevate what Valley Children's is doing with injury prevention messaging," Dr. Nelson said. "I never expected when I entered how much personal and professional growth would come out of this."

In addition to being recognized as first runner-up, Dr. Nelson also received recognition as Educator of the Year, Best in Interview American Division, Career Achievement Award — Resume and Most Photogenic, American Division. She also received the Aetna Better Health of California Community Heart Award for her advocacy work around keeping our kids safe.

ADVOCATING TO  
CHANGE THE WORLD:  
DR. KEVIN  
NGUYEN  
RECIPIENT OF  
COMMUNITY SERVICE  
RECOGNITION AWARD



Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program graduate Dr. Kevin Nguyen was named the recipient of the 2021 Organization of Resident Representatives (ORR) Community Service Recognition Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). This prestigious, annual award is given to just one resident in the entire country in recognition of their contributions to the local communities surrounding their pediatric residency training institution, above and beyond the requirements of their program.

"The award was a complete surprise," says the El Dorado Hills (California) native, who graduated in June 2021 from Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program. "I feel very grateful and very thankful to my mentors at Valley Children's for nominating me because I feel like I grew a lot during my residency."

As a resident, Dr. Nguyen spent time advocating for children and teens identifying as LGBTQ+, non-binary or gender non-conforming, and working with community members, transgender advocacy groups and physicians to raise awareness for and address the unique challenges this population faces in healthcare and in their communities.

This outstanding dedication to advocacy impressed Dr. Nicole Webb, Valley Children's pediatric hospitalist and Dr. Nguyen's mentor, and inspired her to nominate him for the award.

"Dr. Nguyen had extensive experience working with and advocating for equitable and affirming care for transgender and non-binary youth prior to coming to Valley Children's, and he took exceptional interest in knowing and understanding that community in the Central Valley to the fullest extent possible," said Dr. Webb. "He was tireless in his dedication to providing a voice to a community that is often silenced or ignored, and to doing so in a way that enthusiastically and patiently encouraged others to learn and participate."

A lasting result of Dr. Nguyen's work was the inclusion of new fields into Valley Children's electronic medical record (EMR) patient information forms, including chosen names, pronouns and items for social worker follow-up. By having these fields directly in the EMR, anyone on the healthcare team can ensure they are filled in with the information that makes the patient and family feel respected and accepted. Because a patient's medical record in the EMR "follows" them throughout their hospital stay, any care member who accesses the record will know to use the patient's chosen name and/or pronoun, and any new documentation automatically populates with that information, so it becomes a natural part of the care team's workflow.

"In healthcare we often ask ourselves, 'How can we do better? How can we be better?'" said Dr. Nguyen. By making identity-affirming information an engrained aspect of the medical record, Dr. Nguyen believes it will create a more supportive environment for patients identifying as LGBTQ+ and their families.





## Making an Impact: Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Diversity Council

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. asked an audience in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1957.

The Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Diversity Council (RDC) has taken this approach to heart with their patient and community advocacy projects. This year, the RDC — chaired by PGY3 Dr. Rafael Gonzalez and Valley Children's Chief Resident Dr. Keenia Tappin — established The Central Valley Pipeline Doctors Academy (CVPDA) for students at Cutler-Orosi High School in Tulare County.

The RDC also hosted COVID-19 vaccine clinics at Orosi High School in Tulare County to raise community awareness about vaccine safety and increase access.

Additionally, the RDC worked to expand sharing of diversity within our own healthcare network. One of these examples includes a Dia de los Muertos altar display, which was set up in the Guilds Hall from the end of October into early November, for our staff and families.

Dia de los Muertos ("Day of the Dead") is a Mexican holiday where families celebrate the lives of the deceased and honor their memories. Hospital staff and patient families were encouraged to place a photo on the altar in memory of passed loved ones beginning October 25. In this first year, approximately 20 families submitted more than 75 photos of deceased family members to honor on the RDC's altar display.



## 2021: The Year of Well-being

In the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the focus on physician mental health and well-being took center stage for our medical staff.

Over the year, a variety of resources and interventions were implemented to help our Valley Children's medical staff identify areas of possible distress and how to best care for themselves — and to recognize signs in their colleagues who might need a helping hand.

During 2021, the Physician Wellness lecture series launched. These lectures included topics such as, "How exercise helps us find

happiness, hope, connection and courage in the time of COVID" and "Using mindfulness to reduce stress." These lectures provided participants with resources and strategies to help manage their well-being on a daily basis.

In addition to these lectures, the second cohort of the Physician Mentor Program kicked-off in 2021. During this cohort, 13 mentees were matched with mentors outside their subspecialties for one-on-one work that lasted for 10 months.

"The goal of the mentor program was to foster camaraderie and connection

within the medical staff, especially during a year of so many unknowns," added Dr. Kimberly Robertello, physician development specialist at Valley Children's. "The pandemic heightened the feeling of burnout among many, and with it, the feeling of isolation. This program gave our physicians someone to check in with, and turn to, when needed."

Valley Children's recognized in order to best care for patients, we must ensure we take care of ourselves — and during a time that was most unprecedented, our organization prioritized well-being, truly helping us provide the best care for kids.





## New Resident Class

Valley Children's Pediatric Residency Program, affiliated with Stanford University School of Medicine, welcomed the fifth graduating class of pediatric residents in 2021.

"We were thrilled to welcome our newest class to Valley Children's in the midst of a global pandemic," said Dr. Jolie Limon, Valley Children's vice president of academic affairs and designated institutional officer. "We look forward to many years ahead of training these young physicians to deliver safe and high-quality clinical care, while also being mindful of health equity and developing into even more exceptional advocates for kids than they are today."

The class of 2024 includes nine pediatricians from California and three Central Valley natives.



## Valley Children's Launches Physician Podcast



Scan QR code to listen.

"Podcasting," virtually unknown 20 years ago, has emerged as one of the leading ways for physicians to access timely clinical information whenever convenient in their schedule.

Due to this increase in popularity among physicians, Valley Children's released a podcast hosted by our pediatricians for pediatricians in January 2021. "Valley Children's Voice" features Valley Children's experts discussing topics that directly affect children in the Central Valley.

In its first year, "Valley Children's Voice" was downloaded in more than 35 countries and 800 cities. After utilizing a new recording space in fall 2021, listenership more than doubled, putting "Valley Children's Voice" in the top 50% of podcasts, based off the number of episode downloads in the first seven days.

"This is an exciting venture for Valley Children's and our Medical Education initiatives because it stimulates discussion with our peers to address the common topics of today — which is always a benefit

to the families we care for," shared Dr. Jolie Limon, who hosted the first three episodes of Valley Children's Voice. "This podcast is the next step in growing our organization's footprint in the digital space, allowing our physicians to elevate important messages that impact our Central Valley and the growing needs of healthcare today."

Valley Children's Voice can be found on all major podcast platforms, as well as [valleychildrens.org/podcast](https://valleychildrens.org/podcast).

# THE HEART OF PHILANTHROPY

## Kindness and Comfort for Kids

### GIVING BACK

Faced with a cancer diagnosis and treatment of his own, Mitch Riegelhuth of Coarsegold looked to others — not for help for himself, though, but for children also undergoing cancer treatments.

In May 2021, Mitch donated 86 touchscreen tablets to help occupy kids' time during hours-long chemotherapy infusions at Valley Children's. Despite feeling nauseous and fatigued from his own cancer treatments, he spent months collecting the tablets from friends, family and local businesses.

Just before Christmas, Mitch returned to Valley Children's, this time surprising several young patients with new bicycles.

"The most heartbreaking thing I would see during my own radiation treatments was the children — small, tiny, like my granddaughters — going through the same thing," Mitch said. "They're just children. They deserve to have a life. I didn't do this for me. I did it for them. As long as I'm alive, I'm supposed to keep doing."

*“Central Valley families expect and deserve the highest quality care. The generosity of tens of thousands of people this year helped us continue Valley Children's legacy of providing the best care for kids.”*

Robert Saroyan, President  
Valley Children's Healthcare Foundation





## COMFORT AND GEORGE

An adorable stuffed animal in the likeness of our beloved mascot, George, made its debut last year. In 2021, Valley Children's held its first George stuffed animal campaign, which began right after Thanksgiving and ran through the end of the year. With a donation, donors would receive a plush doll of Valley Children's mascot to either keep or gift to a child in the hospital. So many people chose to give away their dolls, bringing smiles to dozens of hospitalized children over the holidays and raising almost \$5,000 for patient programs.



## HOLIDAY WISHES

A wish come true for one Valley Children's patient turned into something even more special. For the last two years, Xavier has been undergoing cancer treatment at the hospital since his leukemia diagnosis at the age of 15. In 2021, the Make-a-Wish Foundation granted Xavier's wish for a shopping spree. Instead of spending it all on himself, though, Xavier wanted to surprise other children with presents. Through Valley Children's "Spirit of the Holidays" program, our Patient and Family Services team connected two families with Xavier, who met with them and presented them with \$500 gift cards to make their own holidays brighter.

During 2021's "Spirit of the Holidays" campaign, 45 teams of Valley Children's staff and providers collected presents and raised funds to help nearly 100 families from throughout the Valley over the holidays. "The heart and the generosity of our workforce is evident around here every single day," said Deonna Villegas-McPeters, Valley Children's director of social work and interpreter services. "I am humbled by the kindness and compassion they display not only to the children they help heal, but to their families, as well."



## SPECIAL VISIT

With her big screen smile and even bigger personality, actress Jennifer Garner visited Valley Children's... virtually. Through Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, the star of films like "13 Going on 30" and TV show "Alias" spent her first visit meeting children in the inpatient units. She returned — via Zoom again — a second time to answer questions from staff and doctors, and delivering coffee and cinnamon rolls to all Valley Children's locations, including the hospital in Madera and all outpatient centers in Bakersfield, Visalia, Fresno, Clovis, Merced and Modesto.

"You give these kids everything you have. You're comforting them, worrying about them, making every possible hope and wish come true for them," Jennifer said to staff. "Then you leave and you're going home to a pandemic, to your own families going through it. You're not unseen and you're not unappreciated. You are angels on Earth and I thank you."





# Generosity Transforming Children's Healthcare

## ANGEL FUND FOR FAMILIES



Mr. Claude C. Laval III generously donated \$1 million to Valley Children's to help patients and families cope with the burden of non-medical financial needs associated with hospitalization. This includes expenses like rent for families who take extended absences from employment to manage their child's care, or car repairs to travel to and from the hospital. To honor Mr. Laval and his late wife, Betty Lou, Valley Children's has renamed its fund to support patients and families facing hardships as the "Claude and Betty Lou Laval Angel Fund."

"Mr. Laval and his family have helped chart Valley Children's course for five decades through their leadership and generous philanthropy," says Valley Children's Healthcare President and CEO Todd Suntrapak. "Betty Lou served on the Board of Trustees during the 1970s and 1980s, and their daughter, Mendy Laval Alkotob, has served as a Trustee since 2000. Betty Lou was also a longtime member of the La Feliz Guild, which raises awareness and funds for Valley Children's. Her daughter later joined, as well. Claude and Betty Lou have made investments in endocrinology, capital projects, healing arts and now patients and their families. The Laval family has been integral to shaping children's healthcare in the Valley."

## ADVANCING CARE FOR PEDIATRIC CANCER PATIENTS



The Leon S. Peters Foundation generously donated \$1 million to Valley Children's to establish "The Endowed Chair of Oncology and Hematology, Donated by Leon S. Peters," and to create "The Leon S. Peters Oncology and Hematology Endowment."

"This gift is a resounding affirmation of the magnificent work performed here every day," said Dr. Vinod Balasa, medical director of the Cancer and Blood Disorders Center. "This gift and the creation of an endowed chair will greatly enhance our mission to provide the best care for children suffering from life-threatening cancer and other blood disorders right where they live. I am truly honored and sincerely humbled to be the first individual to hold this prestigious endowed chair position, as we continue our efforts towards ensuring that state-of-the-art care is available for these affected children and families — right here, right now."

Leon S. Peters, son of Armenian immigrants, was born in Fowler, California, in 1905. He grew up on the family farm and graduated from Fowler High School. In 1929, he went to work as a salesman for Valley Foundry and Machine Works selling irrigation equipment. In 1937, he purchased the company, turning it into a world-recognized supplier of winery equipment. Mr. Peters loved and valued his community and considered its welfare his personal responsibility. The Leon S. Peters Foundation supports numerous charitable causes in the Central Valley.

"The Leon S. Peters Foundation values the mission of Valley Children's and the very vital work of the oncology program," said Leon S. Peters Foundation Chair Kenneth K. Peters. "If we could have a small part in supporting children with cancer and provide them with resources they need to fight this awful disease, the foundation stands prepared to join the great team at Valley Children's in this fight."

## SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE



Longtime Valley businessman John Gahvejian donated \$1 million to support the Pediatric Plastic Surgery Practice and precision medicine at Valley Children's Hospital. Mr. Gahvejian's generous gift, also made in the name of his late wife, Lorrie, will support Dr. Michael Galvez's pioneering work in pediatric plastic and reconstructive surgery, as well as expand precision medicine at Valley Children's.

The Gahvejian family's gift to support both the Pediatric Plastic Surgery Practice and precision medicine at Valley Children's is the most recent chapter in a long legacy of generous investment in Valley Children's, including a \$500,000 gift in 2016 to support the construction of the Maternal Fetal Center at Valley Children's pediatric facility in Fowler.

Mr. Gahvejian founded Mid Valley Packaging in Fowler 41 years ago. The Gahvejian family continues to operate the company, which packages products grown and produced in Central California for shipment around the globe.

"It has been a privilege to support Valley Children's and other Valley institutions through philanthropy," said Mr. John Gahvejian. "Valley Children's has done so much for Central Valley families over many generations. I hope that my gift will help Valley Children's continue to provide world-class care for generations to come."

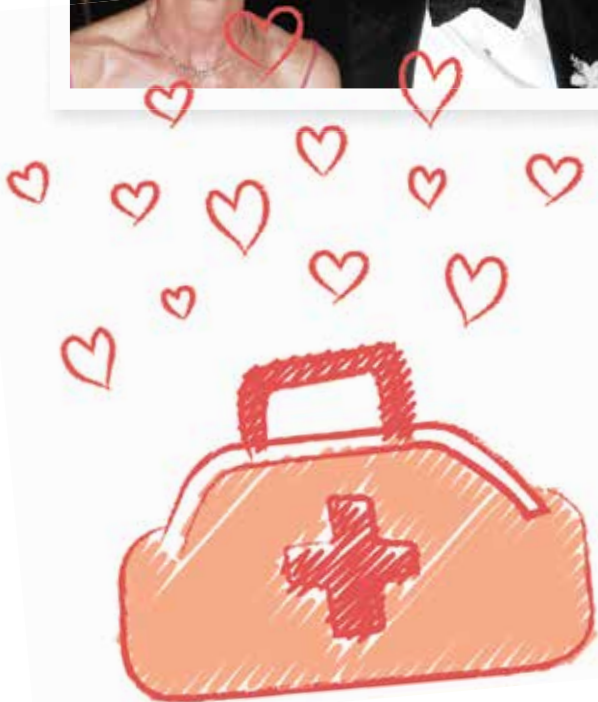
## SEEING CLEARLY THE POWER OF GENEROSITY



Longtime Fresno ophthalmologist Dr. Frederick Richburg and his surviving spouse, Linda, will be remembered at Valley Children's Hospital for generations to come. The alcove between the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and Endeavor inpatient wing was named in celebration of Dr. Frederick and Mrs. Linda Richburg. Mrs. Richburg made a generous gift of \$500,000 to support the ophthalmology department, which directly relates to Dr. Richburg's life's work.

Dr. Richburg was a pioneer in the early stages of cataract surgery, enabling people to see and lead normal lives through surgical intraocular lens implants. He was the first in the San Joaquin Valley and one of the first in the United States to build and operate in his own ambulatory surgical center inside the office. This significantly brought down the cost of cataract surgery and allowed patients to avoid overnight hospital stays for the procedure.

Linda Richburg worked alongside her husband for many years as a registered nurse assisting in surgery. Together, they began Mission Cataract, providing free surgery for blind patients without insurance in the local area who could not otherwise afford the procedure. Mission Cataract has since grown to be a national event. She is proud to continue purposeful philanthropy by supporting the pediatric ophthalmology department at Valley Children's Hospital in memory of Dr. Richburg.



# UNWAVERING COMPASSION

From the beginning, the Guilds of Valley Children's have served as a reminder of all that is good in our community. The strength of their generosity and support to improve the health and well-being of kids in the Central Valley has been tested over time — but they remain undaunted. Our Guilds, starting with just a few in 1949 and now totaling 13, demonstrate the compassion for kids that began with five founding mothers and that has grown over the last 73 years. Our newest Guild, El Rio Reyes, representing Dinuba, Reedley and Kingsburg, was formed in 2021.

True to their purpose of raising funds and advocating for Valley Children's, the Guilds found ways to adapt to the safety measures demanded by COVID-19 and slowly returned to hosting their annual fundraisers once again in 2021. The Guilds Coordinating Council gathered to celebrate the ceremonial signing of the steel beam that will rest atop Founders Plaza — named to honor our five founding mothers — that will house the Guild Office, Guilds Center for Community Health and several other departments, and will include a conference room and courtyard dedicated to Guild activities.

For the Guilds' relentless commitment to the kids, families and staff of Valley Children's, we are grateful.

*“People are  
endlessly good.”*

Carolyn Peck  
*Valley Children's Founding Mother*





## TOYOTA TUNDRA GIVEAWAY FUNDRAISER GOES VIRTUAL

When the International Agri-Center World Ag Expo® changed to an online event for the first time ever, the Guilds rallied to maintain the seven-year tradition of the All Guilds Toyota Tundra Giveaway Fundraiser by going virtual and creating safe ways to sell drawing tickets. Together, they raised \$68,400, which brings net total funds raised for Valley Children's through this giveaway to \$470,970 since in 2015.



## SLEEP SACKS FOR SAFE SLEEP

Through the Guilds Center for Community Health, Valley Children's Guild members launched an initiative to raise funds and awareness for the Central Valley Safe Sleep Coalition, a regional effort that began as part of the Center's work to reduce safe sleep deaths for children under the age of one. With the Center's goal of reaching zero deaths related to unsafe sleep, the Guilds raised enough funds to ensure that every baby between the ages of 0-12 months will be discharged from Valley Children's with a safe sleep sack/swaddle.

## GUILD ENDOWMENTS

9/30/21 Market Value: **\$14,441,052**

The Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Endowment: **\$6,473,786**

The Guilds Child Life Endowment: **\$1,632,558**

The Guilds Heart Center Endowment: **\$3,172,040**

The Guilds Spiritual Care Endowment: **\$1,547,475**

The Guilds Center for Community Health: **\$1,615,193**

## GUILDS OF VALLEY CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE

- Alegria Guild, 1950
- El Rio Reyes Guild, 2021
- Holiday Guild, 1953
- Kings Guild, 1950
- La Comida Guild, 1953
- La Feliz Guild, 1949
- Las Madras Guild, 1950
- La Sierra Guild, 1999
- La Tienda Guild, 1952
- La Visionaria Guild, 2007
- Los Rancheros Guild, 1949
- Padrinos Guild, 2015
- Tenaya Guild, 1950

Proceeds raised by the Guilds, 1949-2021: **\$33,500,000**

# DONORS

Valley Children's gratefully recognizes new gifts, multiyear pledges and payments on past year's pledges during the 2021 calendar year. Life-to-Date giving is recognized on the donor wall at Valley Children's Hospital.

## \$1,000,000 & Above

Children's Miracle Network  
Hospitals Partners & Programs\*  
Mr. John & Mrs. Lorrie Gahvejian  
Leon S. Peters Foundation

## \$500,000 to \$999,999

Claude & Betty Lou Laval  
Mrs. Linda Richburg

## \$250,000 to \$499,999

Marvin & Janell Boldt  
Guilds of Valley  
Children's Hospital\*\*  
Mrs. Jeanne F. Hoey  
Valley Wide Beverage  
Company, Inc.  
The Wonderful Company &  
the Resnick Family Foundation

## \$100,000 to \$249,999

ABC30  
The Bruce G. Allbright Family  
DC4KIDS  
E. & J. Gallo Winery  
California Office of  
Emergency Services  
The Fresno Bee  
Mr. Don B. Huntley  
Isnardi Foundation  
The Mitchell Family Foundation

## \$50,000 to \$99,999

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Ms. Lisa Franco  
Crinklaw Farm Services, LP  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Dalich  
Fresno Truck Center  
Ms. Carrie Gahvejian  
Happy Hearts  
Kohl's Cares  
Legacy Specialties, Inc.  
Major League Baseball Players  
Association  
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Mouw  
Lance & Jamie Mouw  
Ms. Kimiko Sasaki Schock  
The Bill & Linda Smittcamp Family  
Spirit Halloween Superstores, LLC  
Taco Bell Restaurants  
Tarlton and Son, Inc.

Terra Family Foundation  
Trichell Family Foundation  
Valley Healthcare Education  
Foundation  
Valley Pulls for a Cause  
Dr. Carol & Mr. Edward Wong

## \$25,000 to \$49,999

Antonio Brasil Dairy LP  
Mr. & Mrs. Don Baker  
Mr. Thomas Bell  
Barrie & Una Boyett  
Burford Family Farming  
Company, LP  
Central Valley Petroleum  
Golf Invitational  
Clovis Rodeo Association  
Derrel's Mini Storage, Inc.  
Fagundes, Fagundes, Fagundes  
Ms. Joanne Hoefler  
Journey of Hopes & Dreams  
Foundation  
Ms. Lupe Medina  
The Otis Booth Foundation  
PG&E Corporation Campaign  
for the Community  
Producers Dairy Foods, Inc.  
Save Mart Supermarkets  
Mr. Roger Serrano  
Setton Pistachio of Terra Bella, Inc.  
In Memory of Robert M Shapazian  
St. Baldrick's Foundation  
St. John's Festa, Inc.  
The Swager Family Trust  
Tesoro Viejo Sip & Support  
Toy Foundation  
Turlock Pentecost Association's  
Festa For the Kids Golf  
Tournament

## \$10,000 to \$24,999

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Laci's Clubs Against Cancer  
Dr. & Mrs. Ronaldo A. Ballecer  
Mr. & Mrs. Brent Barton  
Bee Sweet Citrus  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene S. Berberia  
Mrs. Erin Berberian-Gleason  
Blue Diamond Growers  
Bonadelle Neighborhoods, Inc.  
Mrs. Evelyn Boosalis  
Mrs. Jeanette Bosma

David & Marilyn Britz  
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Brown  
Central California Alliance  
for Health  
Charitable Adult Rides &  
Services, Inc.  
Ms. Jill Clark  
CoBank - Rural America  
Corporate Bank  
Combined Benefits Administrators  
Corona Carts  
Corporate America Lending  
Blair & Ninette Cunnings  
Dalena Farms, Inc.  
Dan Freitas Electric, Inc.  
Mr. Robert Daughrity  
Dyer Family Foundation  
Emmett's Excavation, Inc.  
Epic Systems Corporation  
EYE-Q Vision Care  
Fidalgo Farms LLC  
Floyd & Billie Louise Fike  
Ray & Kaye Fisher  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray T. Fisher, Jr.  
Max & Marty Flaming  
George's Pass Virtual Fun Run  
G.L. Bruno Family Foundation  
The Gilbert Family  
Hanchett Family  
Mr. Floyd L. Harlan  
Harry and Ethel West Foundation  
Mr. Robert Pugh & Mrs. Beverly  
Hayden-Pugh  
Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc.  
Horstmann Financial and  
Insurance Services  
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J.L. Marquez Properties, LLC.  
J.R. Simplot Company  
Johnston Contracting, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Keiser  
Kern Valley State Prison  
Ms. Diane L. Kirk  
Mendy Laval & Khaled Alkotob  
Mr. Jeff Lion  
Love Your Melon, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold McClarty  
Mendiburu Magic Foundation  
Mercedes Benz of Fresno  
Mid Valley Packaging & Supply  
Cecil & Ella Pace  
Debbie & David Phippen  
Mr. Larry Ritchie  
Rock'n JK Farms  
Mrs. & Mr. Connie Ruddell

Steve & Barbara Schaad  
Selma Auto Mall  
Sensiba San Filippo, LLP  
Cliff Henes & Debbie  
Smades-Henes  
Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Souza  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard F. Spencer  
Stevinson Pentecost Association  
The Stockbridge Family  
Legacy Fund  
Matt & Sarah Strickland  
End of Summer Super Bash  
Sun-Maid Growers of California  
Mr. & Mrs. Jay te Velde  
Teichert Foundation  
United Way California  
Capital Region  
Dr. & Mrs. Nadarasa Visveshwara  
Mr. & Mrs. Nickolas Wagner  
Ted & Michele Waldron  
Wild Electric, Inc.  
Jane H. Willson and  
Malcolm MacDonald, M.D.  
Susan C. Winter, MD  
Mrs. Clarice Wood  
The O. James Woodward III Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Neil Zwart

## \$5,000 to \$9,999

Anonymous (1)  
Allen Matkins  
Arthur J Gallagher & Co Insurance  
Brokers of California Inc.  
Automated Office Systems  
Ms. Jennifer Bange  
Bank of America  
Bank of the Sierra  
BBVA  
Bright Family Foundation  
Butler Family Foundation Inc.  
Camarena Health  
Cardoza Family Foundation  
Central Valley Community Bank  
Central Valley C-Stores Inc.  
Ciara Chiesa's Circle of  
Hope Foundation  
Children's Cancer Cause  
Greg & Jessica Coleman  
CREW Installations Inc.  
Mrs. Gretchen Delacruz  
Ms. Susan Doherty  
Eaton and Gibson Family Fund  
Economy Movers / United  
Ms. Kathryn Elliott

\*Children's Miracle Network Hospitals are listed on page 48.

\*\*The Guilds of Valley Children's Healthcare are listed on page 44.

Ellis Enterprises  
Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Fidalgo  
FLR & Adelaide Burks Trust  
Fresno Equipment Co.  
Ms. Ursula Gallichotte  
The Bertha and John Garabedian  
Charitable Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. Garry D. Gilders  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael W. Goldring  
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Mr. & Mrs. Randall Grimmus  
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Mr. & Mrs. Robert N. Hines  
Mr. Greg Hostetler  
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In-N-Out Burger Foundation  
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Foundation  
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La Tapatia Tortilleria, Inc  
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The Michael & Darlene Martin  
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The Ron & Deborah Monis Family  
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Muscular Dystrophy Association  
Mr. & Mrs. David Nalchajian  
NexGen Container, LLC  
NFL Players Inc.  
Oak Valley Community Bank  
Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Orlopp  
Pacific Service Credit Union  
Pacific Western Bank - Bakersfield  
PPS Packaging Company  
Morris & Donna Proctor  
R&R Truck and Trailer Repair  
Mr. Brandon Rebiero  
Mr. Pasquale "Pat" Ricchiuti, Sr.  
Miss Marcia Ross  
Saveco No 13 (Visalia)  
The Sence Foundation  
Shave Dave Challenge  
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David & Patti Simonian and Family  
The Surta Singh Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Brenden M. Smith  
Dan & Joyce Souza  
Ray & Mary Lou Steele  
The Stewart Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sweeney  
Tachi Palace Hotel & Casino  
Tangram Interiors  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony H. Taylor  
Travaille & Phippen Inc.

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Brandon & Stephanie Vance  
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Services, Inc.  
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West Hills Oil, Inc.  
Whitney, Thompson and  
Jeffcoach, LLP

**\$2,500 to \$4,999**

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Virgil & Merly Arboleda  
Dr. Laurel & Mr. Jeff Ashlock  
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Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Borcich  
Ms. Iva Brasil  
Mr. Lloyd R. Breeding  
Dr. Joel Brownell & Dr. Jolie Limon  
CJ & Gladys Bush  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Caetano  
E. Pusey Cain & Dorothy M. Cain  
California Cancer Associates  
For Research and Excellence Inc  
California Health Sciences  
University  
Catalyst Marketing Company  
Central California Blood Center  
Central Valley / Sierra CFC  
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Christopher & Kelly Conner  
Ms. Sylvia Coyle  
Robert & Klytia Cozzi  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel N. Cunningham  
D & G Chopping  
David Te Velde Dairy  
DERCO FOODS  
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy J. DeRuyter  
EISAI, Inc.  
Epilepsy Alliance of America  
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Ms. Clara Facciani  
Mr. Lloyd Fagundes  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Fontes  
Mr. & Mrs. Caton Frates  
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KLSD  
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Lam  
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Ms. Shirley Lewis  
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Mr. & Mrs. Scott Predmore  
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Saveco No 15 (Hanford)  
Scarlett Parks Foundation  
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Ms. Kristen Sobaje  
Sons of Italy, Enrico Caruso  
Lodge No 1463  
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Mr. & Mrs. Steven Spencer  
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Mounted Posse  
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Stone  
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Teledata  
TETER, LLP  
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Turlock Pentecost Association  
TYED'N Knots  
US Acute Care Solutions  
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Mr. & Mrs. Paul Armendariz  
Armev Family Foundation  
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Ms. Leigh-Anne Aschenbrenner  
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AutoMate RV Club  
Mr. Anthony Avila  
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Azores Veterinary Practice  
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Mr. & Mrs. Thomas B. Balch  
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Mr. & Mrs. Joe Barroso  
Mr. & Mrs. George Barslund  
Mr. Eric Beard  
Mr. Kenneth Beasley  
Ahmad Reza Beheshti  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Berekoff  
Dr. & Mrs. David M. Bergdahl  
Dr. Scott Berkman  
Ms. Linda Bernadic & Mr. Marc Isaak  
Ms. Lisa Blackburn  
Mr. Edward E. Blake  
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Company, Inc.  
The Bone Store  
BPOE Visalia Elks Lodge No 1298  
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Bueno Beverage Company  
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Company  
Mr. Stuart Chamberlin  
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Children's National Medical Center  
Child's Play Charity  
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Fresno  
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Mr. Roger Dutra  
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Contributions Campaign  
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Mr. & Mrs. John Engvall  
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Ms. Debra Erickson  
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Ms. Robyn Farnsworth  
Dr. Crystal Farrell  
Lydia F. Favor, MD  
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Mr. Robert Flores  
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GSF Properties Inc.  
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ABC30 "Futures Worth  
Fighting For" Telethon  
Ace Hardware  
Chevron USA, Inc.  
CO-OP Financial Services  
Costco Wholesale  
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We value our donors and wish to recognize each one. While we make every effort to be as accurate as possible, we apologize if we overlooked any individual, company or organization or made any errors in reporting. If you find an error, please let us know by calling Valley Children's Healthcare Foundation at **559-353-7100**.

# A WORLD OF WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Every year, thousands of patients gain a brighter future because of the care they receive at Valley Children's. With your support, we can continue providing the services, programs, equipment and operations that are funded in part through your generous giving.

#### Donate online

Our safe, secure online giving portal provides a quick, convenient way to contribute. Visit [valleychildrens.org/donate](http://valleychildrens.org/donate) today.

#### Mail a check

If you prefer to write a check, please make it payable to Valley Children's Healthcare Foundation, and mail it to:

**Valley Children's Healthcare Foundation**  
**9300 Valley Children's Place M/S PC17**  
**Madera, CA 93636-8762**

If you don't wish to receive further fundraising communications from Valley Children's, contact the Foundation at **559-353-7100**, email [foundation@valleychildrens.org](mailto:foundation@valleychildrens.org) or send a letter to the address above to make your request.

#### Join or support a Guild

The Guilds of Valley Children's have been a vital source of fundraising since 1949, raising more than \$32.5 million to provide Central Valley children with excellent medical care. By joining or supporting a guild, you can be part of this rich tradition. Contact the Guilds Office at **559-353-7145** or [guilds@valleychildrens.org](mailto:guilds@valleychildrens.org), or visit [valleychildrens.org/guilds](http://valleychildrens.org/guilds).

#### Volunteer

Valley Children's volunteers range in age from 14 to 90+ and give their time on either an ongoing or short-term basis. Most volunteers interact directly with patients by playing games, reading books and assisting with arts and crafts. Volunteers also deliver crafts and movies to patients, assist in the gift shop and provide support for our various practices, offices and information desks. Each year, approximately 500 volunteers help care for our patients and you could be one of them. Contact the volunteer office at **559-353-5222** or visit [valleychildrens.org/volunteers](http://valleychildrens.org/volunteers).





# BOARD LEADERSHIP

## MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Valley Children’s Healthcare is governed by four aligned Boards of Trustees who serve at the organizational, Hospital, Medical Foundation and philanthropic Foundation levels. They are comprised of dedicated and diverse leaders from communities and sectors across the state.

The commitment demonstrated by our Board members toward the mission of our organization is truly extraordinary. For each member, their dedication is rooted in the deeply held belief that it is a privilege to ensure that the 70-year legacy of Valley Children’s continues, grows and advances — and in their selfless contributions to fight for the future of every child we see.

For some Board members, their involvement is personal, with Valley Children’s having provided life-saving care for themselves or their own children. For others, their commitment is driven by what they have seen Valley Children’s provide for their neighbors’ children, their employees’ children and children in their own communities.

Our Trustees guide Valley Children’s with their strategic insights, wisdom and compassion — and we are grateful for their service.

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# 2021 STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

## NICUs

4

- 1 Regional Level IV
- 1 Community Level III
- 2 Intermediate Level II

## EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS

73,945

\*6,483 admits

## STAFF

670+ Physicians

3,500+ Employees

400+ Volunteers

## BEDS

358

330  
Main Hospital

## INPATIENT DISCHARGES

10,221

## REFERRING HEALTH PROVIDERS

3,000+

## FACILITIES

7 Specialty Care Centers

8 Primary Care Locations

1 Women's Health Practice

## SPECIALTY CARE VISITS

203,477



ACTIVE RESEARCH STUDIES

228

CARED FOR KIDS FROM

42 STATES

PRIMARY CARE VISITS

61,603

CLINICAL TRAINING & EDUCATION

301 Residents and medical students

993 Nurses and allied health professionals

PATIENT ENCOUNTERS

355,964

OB/GYN VISITS

6,718



*Futures Worth Fighting For.*

9300 Valley Children's Place  
Madera, CA 93636-8762  
**(559) 353-3000**

[valleychildrens.org](http://valleychildrens.org)

