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## March Explodes With Dental Service Expansions

### Dental Van and SMILES Sites Now Open

New SMILES teledentistry services were rolled out at Bea Underwood Elementary School and Grand Valley Center for Family Learning in Parachute, and the Avon School-Based Health Center at Avon Elementary School. The mobile Mountain Family Health Centers Dental Van opened at the Eagle County Community Center in El Jebel. Congratulations to Dr. Garry Millard, Diana Blanco-Proveda and the entire MFHC Dental Team.



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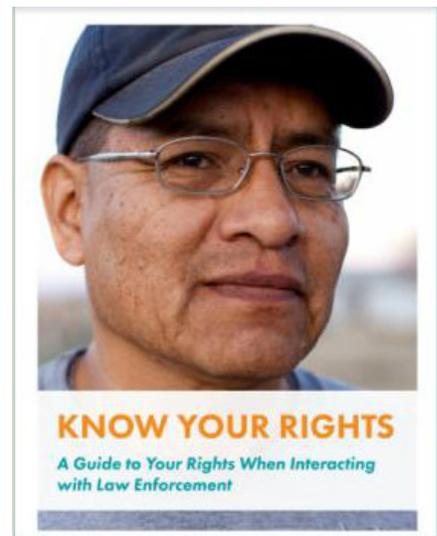
## MFHC SUPPORTS OUR COMMUNITY

### Care Provided to All - Know Your Rights

With the recent issuance of federal Executive Orders regarding immigration, and the expansion in United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions, Mountain Family is aware that our patients and communities have fear about their future in this country. The recently pulled American Health Care Act has also created uncertainty and fear about the ability to access health care.

Mountain Family Health Centers provides affordable, comprehensive, integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health services to all patients, without regard to their income, insurance status and ability to pay, or their citizenship and documentation status. Mountain Family has provided this care for more than 38 years, and will continue to do so.

There are new resources being developed daily to inform, educate and empower immigrants and others regarding their rights. Mountain Family has placed a compilation of resources on their website, which is being updated regularly as new information becomes available. Reliable sources of legal information on immigration include: The American Immigrant Council [www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org](http://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org), the National Immigration Law Center [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org), the Immigration Legal Resource Center [www.ilrc.org](http://www.ilrc.org), the American Civil Liberties Union [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org), and the American Immigration Lawyers Association [www.aiala.org](http://www.aiala.org). An excellent publication, in English and Spanish is [Know Your Rights](#) or [Conozca Sus Derechos](#).



Please visit [www.mountainfamily.org](http://www.mountainfamily.org) to learn more.

## PURSUING OUR DREAMS

### Immigrants Making America Great

By Sandra Viera, Patient Educator - Rifle

Many of our immigrant stories start with a similar beginning. We came to America to find the freedom we could not find in our country of origin. We came to America to find prosperity. We came to America to build a better future for our children and our grandchildren. We came to realize our dreams which were unfortunately not going to be fulfilled in a country's full of corruption, violence, and poverty.

As immigrants, we came to find our American dream. Many of us did not know we would build a generation of "Hispanic/Latino Americans", and make such a big impact. Yet here we are, and now our Hispanic/Latino population has grown immensely. According the United States Census Bureau as of July 1, 2015 there were 56.6 million Hispanics/Latinos in the United States. We have become such a big community that now, for many, we are seen as a threat. This was not our intention; we came to America to work for a better life. We did not come to America to divide the nation, however the stigma surrounding this is something we immigrants have to face every day. This is a stigma built upon fear, lies and anger. We as a Hispanic/Latino community have many obstacles to overcome. It will not be easy, and it will take a strong community to inform and educate others to reduce or end this stigma and these obstacles.

There are many articles that explain who and how someone can become a legal resident of the United States. Here is a link for more information: [www.usa.gov/become-us-citizen](http://www.usa.gov/become-us-citizen). Many immigrants in the United States today do not qualify under these rules, however, and they have no other options to become legal in this country. These immigrants are classified as "illegal" and "undocumented," but it is because of these rules that they cannot become citizens. Our immigration system is broken and the process is long and costly. Many think it is just filling out an application; however, there are many steps and rules involved that often hinder completing the process.

In my opinion, one of the greatest attributes of the Hispanic/Latino community is our willingness to mix, and by doing this, we have created new human relationships, lifestyles, cultural norms and values. This experience has taught us to help find solutions to barriers, prejudices and stereotypes. I believe it is time to SPEAK UP and let everyone know our legal status or where we were born does not define who we are. We are a country that is diverse and different, and this is what makes America unique. This is what makes America great.

## APRIL IS MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

### Bridging Health Equity Across Communities

From the Office of Minority Health, US Department of Health and Human Services

April is National Minority Health Month—a time to raise awareness on issues impacting health disparities and health equity in America. The theme for 2017, "Bridging Health Equity Across Communities", emphasizes the collaborative, community-level work being done across the nation to help achieve health equity.

The conditions in the places where people are born, grow, live, work, play, learn and age have significant impact on the health outcomes of individuals, families and their communities.

Health disparities—the differences in health and well-being—have a significant impact on our nation and among racial and ethnic populations in particular. Minorities are less likely to get the preventive care needed to stay healthy, less likely to receive quality care and more likely to face poorer health outcomes.



The deaths that result from these health disparities cost the United States \$1.24 trillion. Healthier communities mean lower health care costs, which translate into a stronger economy and a more productive, competitive America.

All of us are touched by health. Whether you are a banker providing small business loans to bring grocery stores to local neighborhoods or a school administrator looking to bring a health center to your school, community-based partnerships are helping us move closer to being a nation where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential for health.

Watch the Office of Minority Health's social media over the coming month to [learn more](#).

## ALCOHOLISM: A FAMILY AFFAIR

### Help Available at MFHC and in the Community

By Oyen Hoffman, MA, LMFT, LAC, MAC, MFHC Behavioral Health Provider

*"Alcoholism is like a fire that raged through my family for generations. We've all been burned; we all bear the scars." (Unknown)*

Rarely have I met a person who has not been directly or indirectly affected by the devastating effects of alcohol use disorders. No one chooses to become an alcoholic. No one chooses to be a slave to this diabolical disease. No one wishes to be sick and tired of their miserable life each and every day. No one really wants to lose or ruin every good relationship they have, or their job, or their freedom, or their health, due to something that is very treatable. The disease of alcoholism only wants to accomplish two things. First, alcoholism wants to ruin all of the healthy relationships that its host-body has. Second, alcoholism wants to then kill its host (the alcoholic). If you are reading this, if you have experienced alcoholism as a family member, friend or loved one, or if you have battled this disease yourself then you can relate.



There is good news. There is help for you and for the alcoholic-and there is no reason to give up on an alcoholic...ever. There are counseling and treatment programs available at little to no cost. There are community groups supporting alcoholics and their family members right here on the Western Slope. There are people with answers, and all you need to do is look or reach out. From Alcoholics Anonymous (for the alcoholic) to Al-Anon (for those impacted by the disease) to P.A.L. (Parents of Addicted Loved ones) to Celebrate Recovery and more, recovery is possible. If you are a family member or loved one, then get some assistance for yourself too. If you can get the help, coaching, and education you need, then you will become equipped to go to battle against the disease. There are also medications that can greatly assist with craving control, however without the proper support it will be increasingly difficult for you, and especially for the alcoholic.

No alcoholic can get sober alone; if they could have they would have already. Asking for help is the most important factor in a successful campaign against this disease. Education and counseling are powerful. There are experts in the field of addiction and I am one of them. If you are ready to ask for help, please ask an expert. Experts are Licensed or Certified Addiction Counselors. The organization [A Way Out](http://www.awayout.org) can also help [www.awayout.org](http://www.awayout.org).

While I can't, we can...one day at a time.

## ORAL CANCER AND YOU

### Easy to Prevent-Hard to Treat

By Garry Millard, DDS, MFHC Dental Director

Oral Cancer continues to be one of the most deadly forms of cancer. About 50,000 persons will be diagnosed with oral cancer in the United States this year. Unfortunately, only about half of those diagnosed will survive beyond five years. In other words, about one American per hour dies from oral cancer.

Got your attention yet? What causes oral cancers? The biggest causes are chewing tobacco, and smoking. Other factors include diet, obesity and lack of regular exercise. At Mountain Family, our Wellness Program rewards employees for making healthy lifestyle choices, so if you are an employee take advantage of them. Eating at least five servings of fruits and veggies per day, reduces your risk for oral cancer. If you walk 30 minutes per day, five days per week, you will reduce your risk even more. Maintaining a healthy body weight makes your risk even lower. For alcohol, females should limit their intake to one drink per day and males should limit their consumption to two drinks per day to reduce risk.

Men are more likely to use chewing tobacco, so they are twice as likely to get oral cancer. Mountain Family does an oral Cancer screening with every dental visit, and I have discovered some cases of oral

cancer right here in our Rifle Clinic. Unfortunately, oral cancer is painless, and so is normally very advanced when it is discovered.

Be healthy, eat healthy and visit your dentist regularly, so you can avoid this killer. It is more fun to eat unhealthy foods, but is it worth the risk?



## **JUNE CREEK STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS MOUNTAIN FAMILY AS "IMPORTANT PLACE"**

### **MFHC makes Third-Grader Honorary Architect**

By Elise Thatcher

This winter, third-graders at June Creek Elementary School in Edwards recreated Eagle County as part of a class project. Students chose what they consider to be an "important place" in the Vail to Gypsum area, then built a miniature version of that location at home.

Miriam Ruiz is a student in Johnna Williams' third grade class, and she chose to build a well-constructed, two-story Mountain Family Health Centers clinic out of cardboard.

With a clearly lettered sign and what was a stroke of foresight, Miriam placed the building near where Mountain Family plans to establish a new Edwards clinic: on the roundabout near the Edwards exit for I-70. She made sure to include June Creek Elementary School and a few other establishments as well.



After learning about Miriam's appreciation for Mountain Family, Development Director Garry Schalla visited her class and made her honorary architect for the proposed new Edwards clinic. He also invited her classmates to act as honorary design consultants on the project. Garry hopes to keep the class updated as the new Mountain Family Edwards clinic moves forward.

Currently, Mountain Family and Eagle County are working out the details and design for the new Edwards clinic, which has a targeted opening date of spring 2019.

## **DR. MATT PERCY: EMERGING LEADER**

**NACHC Award Presented at Policy & Issues Forum**

For the second time this year, Dr. Matt Percy, MFHC Rifle Site Medical Director and Physician, has been recognized by a community health center association with an Emerging Leader award. The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy honors young Emerging Leaders in community health, "who exemplify the mission and vision of Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers for community health and human rights." Dr. Percy's Emerging Leader award was announced at the National Association of Community Health Centers Policy & Issues Forum on March 31.

Dr. Percy was nominated for the award by MFHC Chief Medical Officer Amy Ryn, who wrote in her nomination letter, "Under Matt's leadership, the Rifle clinic is fully-staffed, highly collaborative and is providing high quality, comprehensive, integrated patient-centered medical, dental and behavioral health care to more than 3,000 patients each year. Matt is an amazing provider and leader. It is a great privilege to work with and co-lead the Site Advisory Team alongside him, and to have his input and leadership...Matt leads by example and that speaks volumes. He leads with enthusiasm and is not past asking questions himself. Matt's medical knowledge and willingness to share that knowledge make him a highly important asset to the team and the organization as a whole."

A funder of The Geiger Gibson Program has this to say about the award, "The Emerging Leaders selected each year represent the future of health centers. The policy and program advocates, clinicians, health educators, and clinic administrators recognized each year truly will become the next generation of senior leaders." Congratulations Dr. Percy, from all of us at Mountain Family Health Centers.



## **MFHC HUMANITARIANS GARRY MILLARD, DDS AND DIANA BLANCO-POVEDA**

### **Garfield County Human Services Commission Humanitarian Awards**

Dr. Garry Millard, MFHC Dental Director, and Diana Blanco-Poveda, MFHC Dental Supervisor, were nominated by Ross Brooks, MFHC CEO, for a 2017 Garfield County Human Services Commission Humanitarian Award. At the awards dinner on April 3, Dr. Millard and Diana were recognized for their hard work to increase access to comprehensive, affordable, integrated dental health care, particularly for the underserved.



When MFHC opened its first integrated dental and medical clinic in Rifle in 2011, Dr. Millard and Diana were among the first employees on the Dental Team, and they quickly got to work providing high quality dental care to residents of Rifle and surrounding communities.

From opening and growing the MFHC Rifle Dental Clinic, to the four new dental sites opened in the last couple of months, Dr. Millard and Diana, along with their Dental Team, have worked tirelessly over the past five years to expand access to affordable dental care and improve the oral health of the community. Today, the MFHC Rifle Dental Clinic serves more than 2,500 patients and provides more than 11,000 dental service visits each year, with a dental team staff of nineteen. The new mobile MFHC Dental Van and four SMILES teledentistry programs will increase access to dental care for more than 1000 residents of the region. With Dr. Millard and Diana's perseverance, MFHC will be able to provide dental care to more than 8,500 persons by the end of 2019, when the Basalt and Edwards clinic expansions are completed.

One might think Garry and Diana should be tired. Instead, they approach work and service each day with a generous smile, healthy laughter (not from the laughing gas), and continually asking how they can be of service to others to pursue their deep, mission-driven commitment to changing the trajectory of people's lives through education and access to oral health.

We are blessed to have Dr. Millard, Diana, and the entire MFHC Dental Team serving our diverse communities with excellence, dedication and compassion. Racheal Smith, a Mountain Family dental patient, whose video testimonial can be found on [www.mountainfamily.org](http://www.mountainfamily.org), stated emotionally, "Mountain Family Dental gave me the chance to thrive, not just survive."

## LEADING THE WAY TO QUALITY DATA

### Health Information Team Honored during Health Information Professionals Week

By Elaena Price, MFHC Patient Services Manager/HIPAA Compliance Officer

"Leading the Way to Quality Data" was the theme for this year's Health Information Professionals Week, as recognized by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). Without a doubt, Mountain Family Health Centers is equipped with a highly qualified Health Information (HI) Team. This year, the MFHC HI Team, in collaboration with other Mountain Family colleagues, turned a new corner in the technology of health information and becoming leaders in the industry. Through these efforts, MFHC has increased our use of electronic tools to process and file health information from 30% of information a year ago to approximately 70% today. Now, the HI Team accesses four databases to obtain the health information our team of providers needs to prepare ahead of time for and bestow quality healthcare to our patients. The use of these databases is an invaluable tool in assisting us in following up with the referrals that the HI Team processes.



Over the last year, the HI Team also increased the usage of encrypted email and the secure portal, ShareFile, by 80% to exchange health information with Vail Valley Medical Center, Eagle County, Castle Valley Children's Clinic, Mountain Valley Development Services and multiple MFHC patients. Today, MFHC clinics utilize the Social Security Exchange to upload records for disability determination, as a result of the efforts of an HI Team member. E-faxing via the Electronic Health Record (EHR) began early last year, and it has been a valuable tool to save time in sending records and process referrals. Finally, last month, the HI Team started to route and manage documents by attaching them directly to the patients' medical charts. This is a giant step, and is a far more advanced process than those used by many larger clinics and hospitals.

While the HI Team was sharing a well-deserved lunch in celebration at the end of March, their commitment to continue to push the technology envelope was evident. HI Team goals include expanding the routing of documents to the patients' charts, and placing the critical information they need at the providers' fingertips.



The HI Team will be working with Fred Frederick, MFHC IT Director, to move referrals to the next level with NextGen Share, which will allow for electronic exchanging and receiving of referral information. The reality of registering our new patients, and having their previous medical history ready for providers during their first visit will happen this year. These enhancements, as well as additional projects, are on the horizon and I look forward to another successful year. Congratulations to the HI Team: Tonya, Katy, Amber, Janet, Lori, Sherry, Gaby and Alejandra.

## GIVING IS A LIFESTYLE

### Join the Heartbeat Society

By Garry Schalla, MFHC Development Director

Giving is not just reserved for the end of the year, giving is a lifestyle. I am asking MFHC supporters to join me in becoming a MFHC "Heartbeat Member," and make a monthly commitment. For as little as \$10.00 per month, far less than that mocha latte you bought this morning, you can make a difference at Mountain Family. As a Heartbeat Member, you will receive "insider" quarterly updates from CEO Ross Brooks, and you will be honored at the annual Heartbeat Society Dinner on Saturday May 6th, 2017. [Click HERE](#) to [make a donation](#) or to [become a Heartbeat Member](#) today. I hope you will consider this one of your lifestyle changes and commitments for 2017.



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