Don’t Forget!

Have you made a New Year’s resolution to be more charitable? A donation to FHCSD is the perfect way to start the year.

Visit our secure website at https://donation.fhcsd.org. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Double Your Impact

Did you know over 15,000 local and national companies will match your donations to a qualified nonprofit, such as FHCSD? Visit https://donation.fhcsd.org to make a donation and find your employer. If it’s not listed, check with your Human Resources department to see if your employer has a qualified matching donation program and we’ll add you to our list!
In the three decades I have led this organization, I have given hundreds of tours to potential employees, aspiring doctors and possible donors. I have toured medical students and heads of Fortune 500 companies, philanthropists, groups and concerned citizens. In those tours, one of the more commonly asked questions is "Did you know Laura?" The simple answer is, "Yes, I knew Laura." But if you knew Laura, you would know that question serves a larger-than-life response. Not only was she the early founder of Family Health Centers of San Diego, but she was also my friend, a partner and my best supporter. I never would have stayed 30 years in this amazing organization without her at my side in the early years. She gave me an unconditional support, always there with a ready laugh, watched over the clinic, schooled me in Barrio politics and, most importantly, taught me to love something that had been entrusted to her.

In today's world, Laura might be characterized as low-income, disadvantage and even under-educated. But the Laura I knew was compassionate, a defender of those in need, a champion of her community, a savvy judge of character, and she had a willingness to do anything to preserve her clinic for future generations. The future of Family Health Centers of San Diego depends on preserving the memory of Laura Rodriguez. Laura was a founder in us the concept that those with the least give the most; it was Laura who taught us to open the doors wide to all, to the neediest; and it was Laura who devoted her life to something that was bigger than herself. She was a role model for us all.

To move forward toward our future, we need only look back at our past. To preserve our roots and mission, we need to look no further than the humble person who has lifted herself to the front door of a community building in October 1970 and demanded the City resources for some of its poorest and most vulnerable residents. Laura knew then the children of Barrio Logan needed health care and their families needed a sanctuary of hope and service. From that moment forward, she was certain her life's work would go on. The Clinic.

Fueled by a series of stories in her later years and bedridden in the tiny 900-square-foot home where she raised her four children, Laura spent the last few months of her life looking across Newton Street at the clinic she helped build. Can we go forward by going backward? Yes. To do it any other way would fail to honor the life's work and memory of this remarkable Barrio grandmother who did so much to change the lives of so many San Diegans.

The future of Family Health Centers of San Diego (THC) program (like FHCSD's program) is 10 times more likely to choose to work at nonprofit community health centers than their counterparts who complete traditional residencies. Moreover, there's also a high likelihood these THC graduates will stay with the centers where the training occurred. Thus, FHCSD's program is essential in helping us maintain a consistent pipeline of high-quality health care providers to serve the community. Unfortunetly, FHCSD's program has been drastically cut. We are looking to our generous donors to help fill the funding gap and ensure culturally competent and experienced providers reach communities that need care the most.

To learn more or make a donation, please visit: www.fhcsd.org/fund-a-resident.

Tutor Your Donation to What You Care About Most

For the last 40 years, FHCSD has expanded its reach, compassion and access to affordable, comprehensive health care to communities across San Diego. This year, we are inviting you to join us in making a positive difference in the lives of others. From a simple in-kind donation for our Baby Boutique to renaming our new HITEC Center, there are philanthropic opportunities as varied as they are unique. To learn more about the support opportunities mentioned above, or to create your own giving strategy, please contact me or my colleague Caroline Harrington.

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Individual Naming Programs

FHCSD is also excited to announce our first individual donor match campaign: the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) Individual Naming Program. MMUs are fully licensed "health clinics on wheels" that visit elementary schools, community centers, social service agencies and other locations to provide health care to vulnerable populations. In order to keep these three units up and running, FHCSD friend and former SDG&E Chairman & CEO Tom Page will match every donation made to this program, thus instantly doubling the impact of each dollar. In appreciation of their support, donor's names (or the names of loved ones) will be listed prominently on the rear window of an MMU.

More information is available at: www.fhcsd.org/mmus-donations.

Additionally, FHCSD has opened the door for individuals interested in a legacy program to leave an indelible imprint on the property of our roots and mission, we need to look no further than the humble person who has lifted herself to the front door of a community building in October 1970 and demanded the City resources for some of its poorest and most vulnerable residents. Laura knew then the children of Barrio Logan needed health care and their families needed a sanctuary of hope and service. From that moment forward, she was certain her life's work would go on. The Clinic.

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In 1970, Laura Rodriguez, matrarch and founder of Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCSD), channeled herself to what is now Logan Heights Family Health Center in an effort to bring much-needed medical services to Barrio Logan. After eight days of negotiation, Laura and her fellow community members succeeded in negotiations with the City of San Diego. The building was gifted to the community and became the Chicano Freedom House, a place where locals could access affordable, high-quality health care. In order to raise money for the new clinic, Laura began selling tamales in 1986 at what would become the very first Spirit of the Barrio fundraising luncheon.

Thirty years, 22 primary care clinics, six dental offices and four behavioral health centers later, FHCSD continues to rely on Laura's vision of making quality health care accessible to everyone.

"I dedicated my life to Barrio Logan," Laura once said. "Improving the health of my neighbors in this community has been my primary concern. I've never had much of a formal education, but I've always had a desire to see the people in my community given good medical care. Making tamales while talking about the health center’s needs put me in contact with hundreds of folks who helped build our center. I'm 82 years old now, but I'll keep making tamales and will keep asking for help until our clinic is completely built.

Laura's commitment to FHCSD is inextricably linked to the life’s work and memory of this remarkable Barrio grandmother who did so much to change the lives of so many San Diegans. In appreciation of their support, donors' names (or the names of loved ones) will be listed prominently on the rear window of an MMU.