AmazonSmile is an easy way to give back to FHCSD! Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price of eligible items to our organization with all proceeds going towards funding our residency program. Simply follow these easy steps:

- Log into your Amazon account.
- Choose “Family Health Centers of San Diego” as the charitable organization to receive donations from your eligible purchases.
- Start shopping! Millions of Amazon products are marked “Eligible for Amazon Smile.”
- Spread the word to family and friends about this easy way to give back to FHCSD.

**Double Your Impact!**

Every dollar you give to FHCSD may be matched by your employer! Check with your human resources department to see if your employer has a qualified matching donation program.
Spreading Cheer & Gratitude This Holiday Season

Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCSD) believes listening to our patients’ stories is another way we can connect with the communities we serve. FHCSD staff carries out this belief by not only engaging with our patients throughout the year, but encouraging patients to complete patient satisfaction surveys, and provide candid testimonials on the quality of the care they received. Their stories remind us that every day, and especially during the holiday season, speaking a kind word, carrying out a thoughtful act and providing compassionate medical care can make the difference in a person’s life.

After reading these remarkable stories, it is clear that FHCSD staff consistently goes above and beyond to meet our patients’ expectations. Thus, we dedicate this special, end-of-the-year edition of Adelante to our patients.

A Friendly Face and Warm Welcome

Not only do FHCSD’s 23 service sites located throughout San Diego County provide essential services, such as wellness visits, childhood immunizations, cancer screenings, diabetes check-ups, mental health care and more, to the communities they serve, each clinic prides itself on becoming the “neighborhood clinic” that is always ready with a friendly smile and warm welcome. This past year, in part thanks to our donors’ generous contributions, we opened two new clinics in communities that had previously faced significant obstacles regarding access to care.

One of those new clinics was El Cajon Family Health Center. Now one of our largest primary care clinics, it immediately began providing much-needed medical services and care to the growing refugee population in East County. Through dedicated community outreach and culturally-sensitive medical providers, many refugees now call El Cajon Family Health Center their medical home and their overall wellbeing and health has improved. For example, one patient remarked she receives the best possible care from compassionate and helpful doctors at every visit: “They take care of me and get me in and out fast. I couldn’t be more pleased.”

FHCSD also prides itself on having clinics in neighborhoods for decades, serving as a fundamental part of the neighborhood’s fabric. Sherman Heights Family Health Center is one of those clinics, with a faithful patient base that returns to the providers year after year. Ronald H., a patient at this clinic, shares with us, “I couldn’t do without my primary doctor, Matya Strickland. She’s been my lead doctor for many years. I wouldn’t trade her for anything. She’s also referred me to a lot of good doctors, but I’d put her above them all. She explains everything to me and, after prescribing a new medication, she sees me right away to make sure it’s working out for me.”

Answering the Call

Communities across San Diego County have called for more accessible and comprehensive mental health services and FHCSD has listened. This past year, we opened three new behavioral health facilities and helped launch a counseling program for
It is no secret we Americans live in a throwaway society.

Over 40% of the food produced and purchased in this country goes to waste. In fact, food makes up 25% of the country’s total garbage. Each family throws out about $600 of meat, vegetables, fruit and grain products each year. Americans buy cars every 3-5 years and our car manufacturers now enjoy record profits due to consumers buying cars with features such as internet connectivity and automatic braking. We donate clothes to charity with price tags still on the garments. The average credit card debt is $16K to $24K per person and in our lifetime, each of us will generate 64 tons of waste (4-6 pounds of garbage per person each day).

And now in the ultimate display of waste, our new government is moving toward repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Affordable Care Act has brought needed health care to over 20 million Americans. But before we throw out the proverbial baby with the bath water, consider whether this is really a good idea or another flagrant display of waste at the expense of all Americans.

Before ACA, insurance companies could kick out subscribers, people who paid premiums for years, because they became too expensive to maintain. Before ACA, people were denied health care coverage because of pre-existing conditions. Now, each Plan under ACA must offer Essential Health Benefits that include substance abuse counseling and treatment, prescription drug coverage and mental health care. Now, there are no annual caps if you become sick, you won’t run out of benefit coverage; and those with older children, who have yet to obtain jobs and benefits, can stay under their parent’s health plan to age 26. Under ACA, insurers are now prohibited from denying health care services to subscribers who became sick or made a mistake on their application. The ACA also requires 80-85% of customers’ premiums to actually go toward the cost of health care services and most importantly, before the implementation of ACA, 26,000 to 45,000 people died for lack of health care coverage in 2010.

Are there flaws in the ACA—absolutely! Ask any health care professional who is on-the-ground and we will tell anyone who cares to listen what can be improved with the ACA. But throw it out? Repeal the ACA? Start all over after the almost 20 million health care workers in our country have labored for six long years to make health care more meaningful and accessible—I think not. The tens of millions of dollars required to create another health care program would be the ultimate in waste with no guarantee that this new health care program would be as good as what we threw out the window.

The ACA is not a pawn in a political game or a disposable, throwaway program. The ACA is a lifeline for millions of Americans.

Students at the largest public school in San Diego County, San Diego High School. Patients are already positively responding to this increased access to care as Deborah D. notes, “I’ve been seeing a therapist at City College and she has helped me a lot. Before, I was really worried but now my life is getting better because I know what’s going on with me.”

Health Clinics on Wheels
This past year, our Mobile Medical Units (MMU), fully licensed health clinics “on wheels,” traveled thousands of miles visiting local elementary schools, community centers, battered women’s shelters, social service agencies and other locations providing vital health care services to San Diego’s most vulnerable populations. MMUs help overcome transportation and access obstacles, two key reasons why many patients are unable to receive care in clinics. MMU patient “Alex” remarks, “The staff is really friendly, understanding and open-minded. They treated me with the utmost respect and provided the best care.” There are still spaces left to place your name, family name or loved one’s name on the rear window of our MMUs through our Individual Naming Program. Additionally, FHCSD friend and former SDG&E Chairman & CEO Tom Page will match every donation made to this program! Please visit our website www.fhcsd.org/mmu-donations for more information.

The Future of Medicine Is Here
FHCSD’s Family Medicine Residency Training Program recruits and trains medical residents from diverse backgrounds who are interested in providing quality care to underserved communities. Now in its 3rd year, the program currently has 18 medical residents who not only create a pipeline of culturally-competent providers to our organization but are providing exceptional care to our patients on a daily basis. For example, “Raj,” a patient at City Heights Family Health Center, the home base for FHCSD’s Residency Training Program, remarked, “My doctor was kind, informative and listened to my bad jokes.” We hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as we did and take a moment to help support the exceptional care patients receive by making a donation to one of the programs or services highlighted in this issue. Tax-deductible donations can be made by visiting our website, https://donation.fhcsd.org, or contacting Chris Larkin, Director of Development, at christopherl@fhcsd.org. From all of us at Family Health Centers of San Diego, we wish you a happy holiday season and wonderful New Year!
Thank You For A Successful Year!

Referred to as “The Best Use of a Lunch Hour,” by San Diego Magazine, our special year-long Spirit of the Barrio 30th Anniversary Celebration came to a close on November 18th with a fun-filled presentation by executive members of the San Diego Bowl Games and local comedian, Jesse Egan.

This past year, we were honored to present conversations about millennials and social media, the San Diego Chargers, the San Diego State Aztecs as well as experts to discuss the upcoming doctor shortages. The generous support resulting from this community celebration again will allow us to continue to provide caring, affordable, high-quality health care and supportive services to all of our patients, regardless of their ability to pay. We are very grateful to each and every sponsor, donor, friend and associate who supported us this year.

We hope you will join us in 2017 as a guest or sponsor. For more information about sponsoring or our 2017 lineup, please contact Katie Gomez, Development and Event Manager at (619) 515-2306 or katieg@fhcsd.org.

The Impact of Self-Giving

We’ve heard it over and over again: “To give is better than to receive.” But maybe these reminders are needed in order to enhance our understanding of giving. Giving at this time of year doesn’t require material wealth or buying out the mall and running up huge balances on credit cards. We all possess a multitude of personal giving opportunities. We only need to pause a moment to see them. As you look within yourself to discover what you can share with others, we wish to offer you a few ways that self-giving this holiday season can make a difference.

Pay It Forward - FHCSD offers two ways to donate gently-used items to children and families in need. One is through our Baby Boutique program, which always needs new or gently used baby items. Consider hosting a drive through your church, friends or work to collect sleepers, booties, bibs, diapers, baby wipes, etc. Anyone who has had a baby knows the needs are endless!

Share Your Wisdom - Our dedicated pediatricians, led by Dr. Marsha Spitzer, want their young patients to learn to read, but they need books. New or gently used books, even in this electronic age, still have the power to light up a child’s face. This holiday season, select books your children have outgrown or no longer read, purchase new books or host a drive asking friends, church members or family to donate to this cause. Knowledge is power! Let’s help share the wisdom with the next generation.

To volunteer for a SOTB or an upcoming health fair, please contact Katie Gomez, Development and Event Manager at (619) 515-2306 or katieg@fhcsd.org. For information on how to get involved with our Baby Boutique or Book Drive efforts, please contact Chris Larkin, Director of Fundraising, at (619) 515-2315 or christopherl@fhcsd.org.