

## WESLEY COMMUNITY & HEALTH CENTERS

*Blaine Bandi, Chief Executive Officer*

2020 will forever be remembered as the year of Covid-19. Amidst all these challenges it was a remarkably successful year of service to our community.

- Remodeled Golden Gate kitchen to become commercially licensed (completely paid for by grant of \$180,000 from Virginia G. Piper).
- Gained Arizona Department of Health Services childcare licensing at Golden Gate.
- Became contracted with DES for childcare reimbursement meaning we now collect \$20 daily per child for a half day of after-school care rather than \$20 weekly per child. That's a difference of +\$80 weekly per DES child.
- With school cancelled there was no after-school program and with Covid-19 there was no summer program. So, Wesley shifted to accommodate online learners who were not able to attend in person school and/or could not stay at home because there was no supervision (parents had to work, no option to work from home) or the parents could not afford increased internet costs to accommodate all day Zoom meetings for children. Wesley provided this space for children to conduct their online schooling. Turned the program into an all-day program, found funding to increase internet bandwidth to accommodate 35 kids daily online at Golden Gate, provided each child with one meal and two snacks daily. We have been doing this for one whole year now.
- NOMADS painted exterior of building, gym, and replaced flooring in childcare room.
- Remained open and provided childcare to children of First Responders during the Governor's Executive Stay at Home order.
- Started a to go meal program for families who were faced with increased food costs due to children being at home and children not able to utilize free school meal program. Ninety-eight percent of children in the area around Golden Gate qualify for the free school lunch program so not being in school increased food costs and insecurity for many families. On average, Wesley provides 45 to go meals daily.
- Wesley gained status of Sponsor for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), this program provides free meals and snacks to children who are low-income. Previously Wesley was a "site" for this program and received free snacks and meals to serve for our children through St. Mary's Food Bank. As a sponsor, Wesley now gets to create its own menu and cook fresh and nutritious snacks and meals in house for our children.
- Reinvested in the community garden thanks to Fry's and their initiative of "Zero Waste, Zero Hunger." The vegetables grown in the garden are used in the meals and snacks we provide the children. The children in our program get to prepare the soil, plant the seeds, and now get to taste the food. This is the best way to change attitudes and behaviors to healthy eating. In my opinion, the garden has never looked so good.
- We have provided more than 8,606 free healthy nutritious meals to the community.
- Ninety-eight unduplicated children have benefited from the free meal program.
- We partnered with Local First and local restaurants to get 200 meals a day out to families in need at our Golden Gate site. These were professionally made meals from great local restaurants.
- We had a Turkey Roll Thru event for Thanksgiving. We received 70 donated turkeys and then fundraised for 70 more that were all given away for free.
- Provided free breast cancer screening and diagnostic services for 451 women and achieved a screening rate of 34%.
- Provided more than 2300 Covid-19 tests and administered 1216 Vaccines, fully vaccinating 404 people by year end.
- Provided health care visits to nearly 6,400 patients from 59 different zip codes.
- Nearly 75% of whom have incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

- Nearly 68% are uninsured.
- Provided over 13,000 medical visits either face to face or virtual.
- Quickly evolved within a new Covid-19 world to develop creative ways to provide health care services. These included drive-up health fairs, flu immunization, and Covid-19 testing and vaccines.

Our successful year in delivering services has not reduced our needs for donations and support. We are still challenged to cover the cost of programs and services our low-income community cannot afford such as tuition assistance for after-school and summer care. Donations support health care services for low-income uninsured patients. Wesley serves the largest percentage of uninsured patients among any Federally Qualified Health Center in Phoenix. We consistently are forced to delay repairs and heavy maintenance that include painting and replacement of flooring and refurbishing the restrooms. These repairs are decades overdue and in great need. There are no grants for these things so we must rely on donations.

Our year end message to staff, friends and supporters perhaps best summarizes 2020 and are hopes for 2021:

“We are grateful for the opportunity to make a daily difference in our community. From newborns to seniors; from meals to healthcare, to counseling, to virtual schools; from South Central Phoenix to Maryvale; from screening, to immunizations, to wellness, to family planning and managing chronic conditions, we make lives just a little better. In a world apart, we are grateful for the opportunity to be six feet together.”