

The Pulse

of The Neighborhood Christian Clinic

RESTORING HEALTH & RESTORING LIVES • MAY 2015

Notable Volunteers

by Paul Lorentsen, Medical Director

*If you are generous with the hungry
and start giving yourselves to the down-and-out,
Your lives will begin to glow in the darkness,
your shadowed lives will be bathed in sunlight.*

Isaiah 58:10 MSG

The number jumped off the screen when I read it. One thousand two hundred and thirty nine hours. And hundreds, maybe a thousand more, before we started using our automated system to count volunteer hours. This volunteer had spent nearly the equivalent of one year of full time work volunteering at our clinic. I was in awe.

There have been others. I recall the handyman who showed up daily to our McDowell Road site for six months, upgrading the old apartment building for its new role as a medical clinic. His smile and laughter lit up the building. Around the same time, two old friends would come down together to do electrical improvements to the building. They always took time to share a lunch together, and we enjoyed their friendship. Later, at our new facility, a young woman felt led to spend six months with us as an unpaid "intern." We weren't looking for an intern, but she created the position, and then poured herself into serving at the clinic and encouraging us spiritually.

There were seasons where medical professionals invested countless hours into patient care. One doctor spent every

Tuesday with us for years, up until the day his wife became disabled. His maturity as a Christian and skills as a physician were a tremendous blessing to the entire clinic community. An ongoing blessing is the nurse serving in the Gambia, who comes to Phoenix on furlough every five years. During that time, she joins us nearly every day to assist the nurses. Her passion for the Gospel is infectious.

Nearly two thousand hours as a volunteer. When I think of God's call in Isaiah for us to "spend ourselves" on behalf of needy, I think of these wonderful friends of the Clinic, who poured themselves into the service of the Kingdom. They have stored up for themselves "treasures in heaven," and their service demonstrates that the desire of their hearts is to serve the Father. Unsure if this is true? I'll close with our volunteer's comment as she "retired" after 10 years with us. She stated "It was an absolute pleasure to be there, and I left with more than I gave."



"Do You Remember Me?"

by Paul Liu, Board Member

At the end of April, my wife and I attended the Christian Clinic Health Fellowship (CCHF) conference in Atlanta with the Clinic's Gary Plooster, Dr. Paul Lorentsen and Dr. David Tellez, who presented a well-attended workshop on integrating spiritual care into their practice of medicine. CCHF is an association of 300 Christian Clinics around the nation. Their annual conference is a great time to connect with other likeminded people and to hear and learn from each other.

As I was sitting in a session listening to Dr. Kristen Martel, my mind wandered back to think about Ben Martel who was a medical student 10 years ago who volunteered at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic. The presenter's husband was in the session as well and excitedly approached me. "Do You Remember Me?" It turned out to be Dr. Ben Martel!! After medical school and his time at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic, he completed a residency in Tennessee where he met his physician wife. Together they now have three children and are active in serving the poor at Siloam Health Center in Nashville and teaching others to do the same! He was grateful and appreciative of the time he spent at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic and being mentored by Christian physicians in Arizona.

It may seem obvious, but for many volunteers, providers, and donors the focus at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic is on the patients. Many volunteer providers and full time staff chose the medical field in order to help others. At TNCC they are able to provide 'whole person care' – physical, mental, emotional, and also spiritual. The spiritual component and atmosphere is why many volunteer there. At the end of the day, there is much satisfaction in serving the needs of our population and seeing lives changed.

Another equally important focus is intentionally incorporated into the mission of the Neighborhood Christian Clinic: to equip and disciple medical personnel to provide whole person care to their patients, while growing in their personal relationship with God. Most of our volunteer providers are Christ-followers, including a number of medical students who rotate through the clinic to learn how to incorporate their faith into their practice of medicine and be mentored by those who do.

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Current Clinic Stats

	Patient Visits	Volunteers	Hours	Turn Aways
February	780	90	593.8	27
March	762	93	766.1	52
April	728	86	645.7	53

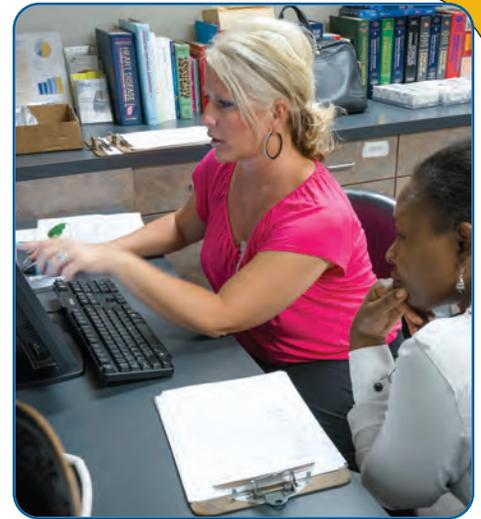
Meet Jennie Dalcour, Counselor.

I am a counseling intern with Christian Family Care and on Mondays over the past eight months, I have been blessed to provide counseling services at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic. I counseled mostly women, many who experienced anxiety, depression and trauma reactions as well as other mental health concerns. I completed assessments and created an individualized treatment plan for each patient.

Some only required one or two sessions to develop coping skills; others needed more extensive trauma therapy. Many came in with tears in their eyes and stories of intense pain; others timidly struggled to speak words they have never whispered aloud before. All showed great courage and bravery while pursuing wellness and peace. Each of them had a common trait, i.e. they all had “hope.”

I found when counseling at TNCC that there were many factors which inhibited forging therapeutic relationships, e.g. most sessions were facilitated with the assistance of an interpreter; many of the patients had cultural hurdles to overcome while seeking mental health treatment and some had worries about immigration status which affected many conversations. Often, they faced relatives and friends who did not support their decision to seek help. Their hope for wellness drove them to show up week after week.

Over the past eight months, God has blessed many of these women with beautiful healing and renewal. Each woman entered the Clinic with an openness to change, a desire for healing as they opened their hearts and shared their stories. All were transformed because of our time together – including me. My heart as a Christian therapist has been forever impacted by the courage and beauty I saw each week. I am honored to personally stand as witness to Christ’s redemptive healing at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic. It’s an incredible work that God is doing in the intercity through TNCC.



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At CCHF, we heard from Executive Director Steve Noblett who has completed surveys of all the Christian Clinics in the country and found that of providers serving the poor in a Christian Clinic setting, 70% have two defining experiences in common:

- 1) They have attended at least 1 CCHF annual conference (or a similar Global Health Missions Conference) as a medical student or resident;
- 2) they have completed a rotation at a Christian Clinic where they were mentored by a Christian Medical Professional for at least three weeks.

These two experiences proved life changing and put feet to the vision of providing whole person care to an underserved population in Christian Clinics.

It is often tempting to focus only on the immediate gratification of helping patients and serving them. I am thankful that The Neighborhood Christian Clinic also focuses down the road on the future and on how to disciple, equip, and encourage medical providers to “go and do likewise.”



Thinking About Estate Planning?

Allow your legacy to make a difference!! Did you know that the Clinic can be named as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy or for an annuity? Help secure the Clinic’s ministry impact of *Restoring Health & Restoring Lives* for the uninsured, working poor. Interested?! Please contact the Clinic or the Arizona Community Foundation at 602.381.1400 or 800.222.8221.

Used Cars: Have a used car? Want to donate it to the Clinic? Give us a call at 602 254-0445 or e-mail gplooster@tnccclinic.org. We will arrange for pick up and handle all the paper work. It’s a great way to support the Clinic and receive a tax deduction.



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