

# MEMORANDUM

## MENDING Poverty

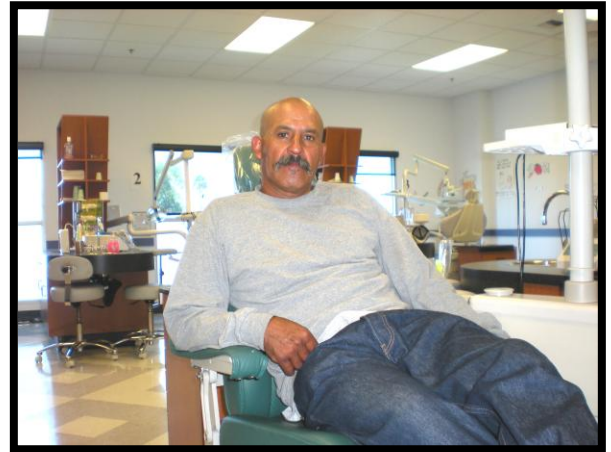
### MEND DENTAL CLINIC

The Dental Clinic at MEND is dedicated to providing on-going and expanded services that close the disparities in access to oral health care for those that have no insurance and cannot afford to pay for these services. From community events to job training, the clinic is an essential component in shaping healthy families.



#### **Making a Dent on Dental Needs: A Patient Story**

Jesus Torres first visited the MEND Dental Clinic in September 2008 in need of a full dental exam including a set of x-rays and several follow up appointments. A hard working individual employed by a local construction site that does not provide dental insurance, Jesus represents a common situation for many of our clients. To complete his dental procedures, the clinic staff made Saturday appointments to accommodate his work schedule. In addition to the initial exam, he has received 9 fillings and root canal treatment on three molars -- all at no cost. Jesus acknowledged the Dental volunteers and staff: "I am very thankful for the services MEND has provided me. To find services of this quality nowadays is impossible." Jesus continues to receive treatment at the clinic to this date.



*Jesus Torres is proud to acknowledge MEND Dental volunteers for their great work on his teeth!*



#### **Community Event: Teeth to Toes**

*Teeth to Toes* is an annual event in which 200 third graders visit MEND to learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including oral hygiene. On August 26th, MEND hosted students from Vaughn Street Elementary School and arranged a variety of fun activities throughout the day. MEND's Dental Clinic Volunteers provided the children with fluoride applications and visual screenings of their teeth and gums. Students received instructions on proper brushing and flossing and were given goodie bags containing a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, and informational materials. The screening results and recommendations were then passed along to their teachers and parents. For those children needing further dental work, the parents were given the option to seek follow up care at MEND.



#### **Oral Communication: Job Training and Education**

MEND's Dental Clinic offers on-the-job training to our clients and volunteers interested in pursuing a career in Dental Assisting. Future assistants are trained in procedure set ups and have the opportunity to assist MEND volunteer dentists while they are working on patients. Steps in obtaining a radiograph certificate as well as information on furthering their education are also provided. To date, eight dental assistants trained in MEND's Dental Clinic have been hired by private dental offices. Dental assistants play a vital role in client education; the clinic has expanded its services to provide oral hygiene instruction in proper brushing and flossing to MEND food and clothing clients. Sessions take place in the first floor waiting area, where four clients are served at a time. Dental assistants educated over 90 clients in one week alone!

In speaking about the success of the clinic, **volunteer Randall Gordon, DDS.** explained, "I really enjoy how appreciative the patients are at MEND. I like working with the other volunteer dentists as well." Dr. Gordon has been in practice for 24 years and has been volunteering at MEND since 1997.

*Thanks to volunteer writer Young-Ji Lee and Dental Clinic Manager Denise Benitez for preparing this update!*

**Meet Each Need with Dignity is a non-profit 501© organization. Tax ID #23-7306337  
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