



February 2021

Giving Through Facebook

Did you know that you can help the Foundation through Facebook fundraisers?

To begin a fundraiser, simply click “Create Post” and under the “Add to Your Post” section, select “Raise Money”. From here, type in “Rancho Los Amigos Foundation” and you’re all set!

You can do this for any special occasion, a specific program or just to raise general funds for the patient programs at Rancho. Make sure to add a personalized message to the fundraiser so that your family and friends know to support Rancho!

If you haven’t already, please like and follow us on Facebook to stay up to date with the latest Rancho news!

Rolling With Rancho... Rancho Los Amigos Foundation Newsletter

Adopt-a-Family Annual Giving: *Hope During the Pandemic*

Though the holidays may have looked different in 2020, there was still plenty of holiday cheer and smiles as Rancho’s Volunteer Services partnered with Bank of America, Veritiv, Global Paratransit, Pushrim, Rancho staff, and the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation for the annual holiday Adopt-A-Family program.



More than 55 families were adopted and participated in Rancho’s first socially distanced drive through Adopt-A-Family event on December 17, 2020. After being identified by Social Work, each selected patient and their family was instructed to drive through to pick up their holiday gifts, as well as a full box of non-perishable foods.

In addition to receiving gift cards from Target, Walmart or Amazon for



their holiday shopping, the families each received a special surprise gift card to one of their favorite local restaurants!

The 26th annual Adopt-A-Family program brought hope for the holidays to families in need at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center. This year, more than ever, support for these families was extremely critical given the challenges of the global pandemic. We remain ever so grateful to Bank of America, Veritiv, Global Paratransit, Pushrim, Rancho staff and Volunteer Services for their generosity and for making this happen!

Music In Therapy: *Partnering with LA Opera Connects*

As a leader in rehabilitation, Rancho understands that therapy and the healing process isn’t just physical. All too often depression, hopelessness and mental fatigue can be a hindrance to a successful recovery. On January 13, 2021, Rancho launched their new Music In Therapy program with its partner LA Opera Connects, to bring the joy and hope of music to improve our inpatient’s wellbeing.

Spearheaded by Rancho’s Speech Therapy Department, the therapists identify three patients every two weeks to work with the LA Opera team. As music transcends generations and social backgrounds, any

and all patients, regardless of their degree of injury, are eligible to participate in the program. Wendy Burton, Chief of Communication Disorders, said, “It’s great to see all the patients faces light up and how appreciative they are. Patients feel like this is an escape from the pain of their injury or illness and the loneliness of being at the hospital. Through this interaction, they are transported to a time filled with happy memories.”



*Pictured: Nandani Sinha
LA Opera Connects*

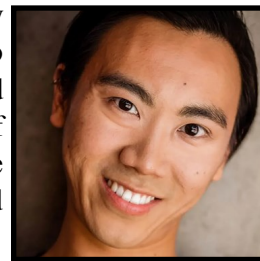
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****Music In Therapy Continued:***

Patients are given a list of songs and asked to share their favorite ones with their speech therapist prior to the session, so that they can receive a one of a kind and personalized experience. Through Zoom, the LA Opera Connects team then performs for the patient while encouraging conversation and a sing along to assist in the patient's speech therapy.

LA Opera Connects has provided the talented Nandani Sinha, a mezzo-soprano opera singer and Charlie Kim, vocalist, pianist, and conductor to work with Rancho's patients. Wendy shared that "Nandani and Charlie are both so exuberant and kind. They choose songs and stories that are inspirational and uplifting for the patients."

Wendy summarized the benefits of the program best, "These patients are going through a trauma that has turned their world upside down, on top of the COVID-19 pandemic that has left them isolated and alone. The importance of music and its ability to touch you emotionally and to heal you is so powerful and beautiful. In fact, the majority of the patients involved so far have been moved to tears, in a good way."



*Pictured: Charlie Kim
LA Opera Connects*

A Pathway to Independence: Rancho's Driving Program



Meet Katie... a 17 year old wheelchair basketball star, grade 'A' high school senior, and now, a licensed driver! Thanks to a scholarship through Las

Floristas, she is just one of the pediatric patients now learning how to drive through Rancho's adaptive driving program.

The adaptive driving program started in 1957 and has been a way for Rancho patients to learn or relearn how to drive, as well as anyone in the community who has a disability. This program is especially unique in that the instructors of the program are all Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist. With this credential and training, the instructors are better equipped to work with clients with disabilities, the specialty driving equipment, and a patient's unique medical conditions.

Rancho's Driving Program staff, Stephanie Hayes Jackson and Lachicha

Phillips work tirelessly to help those with disabilities restore their independence by getting out onto the road. "It's really nice to see kids that didn't think they would ever drive, learn that they can safely and successfully." said Stephanie. She continued, "In California, driving is such a vital part of our society, and driving can often be the first independent thing that these kids can do without mom, dad, or a caregiver with them."

The driving simulator that Rancho utilizes makes for an easy first step to build the confidence and coordination required to start driving on the road. Once ready to graduate from the simulator, driving students are taken out onto the road in one of two, specially adapted vehicles with hand controls.

Katie is just one of the newest adaptive drivers in the incredible history of Rancho's program. Lachicha shared that, "she had been a star student who excelled through the program. She was very motivated and has great family support to push her towards being independent." Just like many other 17 year olds, Katie will now be able to experience that first taste of freedom, independence, and self-reliance through driving.



Help Give Patients the Programs They Need!

By donating \$100 today at: www.RanchoFoundation.org

You could help one of Rancho's 4,000 annual inpatients learn how to reintegrate into life's day to day activities after experiencing a life altering injury or illness.

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