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San Francisco General Hospital Foundation Announces Heroes & Hearts Award Recipients

Local Heroes Honored at 10th Annual Luncheon on the field of AT&T Park

SAN FRANCISCO (January 12, 2015) – **San Francisco General Hospital Foundation** announced today the recipients of the **2015 Heroes & Heart Award** – an award that recognizes those who have demonstrated exceptional service and leadership within the community. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the luncheon, and in anticipation of The General’s new facility opening in December 2015, this year’s honorees were selected because of their impact on the community through their work at The General. The 2015 heroes are **Dr. Diane Havlir**, a world-renowned researcher in HIV treatment and a local and global leader in the HIV response; **Dr. Edgar Pierluissi**, who strives to meet the needs of the growing older population in San Francisco and beyond through the Acute Care for the Elderly Unit model; and **Maya Vasquez, RN**, who’s dedication to lactation education has led to The General’s certification as the only Baby Friendly Hospital in San Francisco. The individuals will be honored at the Foundation’s 10th annual **Heroes & Hearts Luncheon on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at AT&T Park**. Tickets for the luncheon are available now online at <https://sfghf.org/events/heroes-hearts/tickets/>.

“As we look forward to the new hospital opening in December 2015, The Foundation celebrates three individuals who have made immense contributions in their fields and whose dedication to excellence extends well beyond the care they provide at The General,” says **Amanda Heier**, San Francisco General Hospital Foundation Chief Executive Officer. “From helping to make The General the only Baby-Friendly hospital in San Francisco, to working towards ‘Getting to zero’ with HIV, to caring for a growing vulnerable population in our community, they have proven that The General is pioneering research and continuing to provide our city with a world-class hospital.”

THE 2015 HEROES – *extended bios below*

When the AIDS epidemic emerged in the 1980s, **Dr. Diane Havlir** was a physician in training in San Francisco and has cared for HIV-infected patients ever since. Now the Chief of the HIV/AIDS Division and Positive Health Program (HIV clinic Ward 86) at The General, and with over 25 years of clinical research in HIV and co-infections, Dr. Havlir has co-founded the “Getting to zero” consortium in San Francisco, aimed at harnessing collective impact to prevent and treat all HIV in the city.

Through his passion for caring for vulnerable populations and commitment to healthcare and quality improvement, **Dr. Edgar Pierluissi** became the founding Medical Director of the Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit at The General in 2007. The ACE Unit has grown to care for more than 1,200 people each year. Dr. Pierluissi is constantly working to improve and expand this model and other hospital settings where adults receive care. Additionally, he continues to teach his peers about the ACE care model, which has now been replicated in hospitals throughout the country.

As a board-certified lactation consultant and the project manager for The General's Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, **Registered Nurse Maya Vasquez's** dedication helped The General achieve Baby-Friendly certification in 2007. Vasquez remains dedicated to promoting breast-feeding, ensuring all people have an equal chance at a healthy life, starting from their earliest days, regardless of their socioeconomic status. She regularly trains physicians, nurses, medical residents and students in lactation support practices. Vasquez is a driving force behind The General's ranking as a high performing hospital for delivery and new-born care and for the hospital being hailed as "the safest place in California to have a baby" ([New York Times](#)).

ABOUT HEROES & HEARTS - The Heroes & Hearts Luncheon is an outgrowth of 2004's *Hearts in San Francisco* project – a city-wide art installation and fundraiser. In addition to celebrating exceptional community heroes at the February 12 luncheon, 25 new heart artworks will be displayed including five "table-top" and 11 mini-mosaic hearts that will be auctioned, with all proceeds benefiting San Francisco General Hospital Foundation and its efforts to support initiatives and programs at The General. *Hearts in San Francisco* artworks, combined with proceeds from Heroes & Hearts and Hearts After Dark (2006 – 2014) have raised more than \$11.5 million for the Foundation.

The 2015 **Heroes & Hearts Luncheon** takes place on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at AT&T Park. Tickets for the event range in price from \$300 for single seats to \$5,000 for event sponsorship. Tickets for the luncheon are available now online at <http://sfghf.org/events/heroes-hearts/> or by calling 415-206-4478.

Event sponsors include Kaiser Permanente, Webcor Builders, Wells Fargo, McKesson Foundation, PG&E, The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation, UnitedHealth Group, VISA, Macy's, The Mary Wohlford Foundation, Jeanne and Sanford Robertson, Union Bank, Walgreens and Workday. Media sponsors include 7x7, JC Decaux, KCBS All News 740 AM and 106.9 FM, NBC Bay Area, *San Francisco Business Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle* |SFGate.com and *Where* magazine.

2015 Hero Extended Bios

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Dr. Diane Havlir is the Chief of the HIV/AIDS Division and Positive Health Program (HIV clinic Ward 86) at The General and Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). She is a practicing physician at The General, a world-renowned researcher in HIV treatment and a local and global leader in the HIV response. She was a physician in training in San Francisco when the AIDS epidemic emerged in the 1980s and has cared for HIV-infected patients in the clinic and hospital ever since. She has conducted clinical research in

HIV and co-infections for over 25 years, with over 200 publications. She conducted the first pivotal study showing the protective effect of azithromycin against *M. avium* infections for persons with AIDS, numerous studies on antiretroviral therapy and drug resistance, and a recent international study demonstrating the beneficial effect of starting antiretroviral therapy early in persons with HIV and tuberculosis. She is currently leading a community randomized study in East Africa of 320,000 persons (SEARCH, searchendaids.com) measuring the health, economic and education effects of testing and treating all HIV infected persons.

Dr. Havlir has played an active role on the global stage as an author of the first WHO Global HIV Treatment Guidelines. In concert, she helped establish a Global HIV Drug Resistance surveillance program. She served on the Board of the STOP TB partnership and chaired the WHO HIV and TB Working Group for 8 years. She has also served on the Governing Council for the International AIDS Society and is an advisor to the Infectious Disease Center for Global Health Policy. When HIV therapy became a reality for persons in resource-limited settings around the world, she established an international program, ASPIRE, at The General which hosted international health providers and deployed San Francisco providers to share expertise on HIV care.

She has won numerous academic awards, and was featured as a “Pioneering Leader in the Fight Against” in *Vanity Fair*. Dr. Havlir was the United States Co-chair of the International AIDS Conference in Washington DC in July 2012, the largest ever gathering of the AIDS community, focusing on defining what is needed to end the AIDS epidemic. She is a co-founder of the “Getting to zero” consortium in San Francisco, aimed at harnessing collective impact to prevent and treat all HIV in the city.



Dr. Edgar Pierluissi has cared for vulnerable populations his entire career and is committed to healthcare and quality improvement. He was able to merge these interests at San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center as the founding Medical Director of the Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit. The General adopted this model of care in order to meet the needs of the growing older population in San Francisco. Since opening in February 2007, the ACE Unit has grown to care for more than 1,200 people each year.

Under Dr. Pierluissi’s direction, the ACE Unit provides the best inpatient care for hospitalized older adults with a focus on maintaining and improving physical and cognitive function. The 22-bed ward was designed specifically to create a healthier environment for older patients, resulting in shorting hospital stays and better mental and physical health when they leave. The General’s ACE Unit has improved patient mobility and function as well as reduced inappropriate prescribing, bladder catheter use, restraint use and improved nursing engagement. In addition, Dr. Pierluissi has hosted more than 50 doctors and hospital staff from across the USA in order to teach

them about the ACE care model. Many of those visitors have now replicated The General's ACE units in hospitals throughout the country.

In looking ahead, Pierluissi and his team continue to improve upon the care that they provide to older adults in the existing ACE Unit and look forward to expanding the ACE care model beyond The General to other hospital settings where older adults receive care. Pierluissi is eager to expand the model on the 7th floor of the new hospital. The new space will have a larger community room where he hopes to develop more exercise activities to prevent functional decline while in the hospital. Pierluissi also is advocating for the possibility of creating dedicated ACE units in other hospital locations such as the Emergency Department.



Registered Nurse Maya Vasquez works daily to give all people an equal chance at a healthy life, starting from their earliest days, regardless of their socioeconomic status. At San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, she focuses on health-care systems and the support needed to promote breastfeeding; a behavior that has far-reaching health implications for new mothers and their infants. A former labor and delivery nurse, Vasquez is now a board-certified lactation consultant and the project manager for The General's Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. Her work is an example of examining health care from a systems perspective, because it requires the collaboration of interdisciplinary teams to address structural changes on several different levels.

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, launched in 1991, is an effort by UNICEF and the World Health Organization to ensure maternity facilities, whether free standing or in a hospital, become centers of breastfeeding support. San Francisco General Hospital is the only Baby-Friendly certified hospital in San Francisco and one of only 150 Baby-Friendly certified facilities in the nation.

Vasquez helped San Francisco General Hospital achieve Baby-Friendly certification in 2007. Hospital employees launched the rigorous certification process a decade earlier, but Vasquez took the helm and saw the process through to completion. As a Baby-Friendly hospital, the perinatal clinical staff at the hospital receives extensive training that enables them to prepare expectant mothers to breastfeed and help new mothers to breastfeed successfully. In her role as project manager, Vasquez trains physicians, nurses, medical residents and students in lactation support practices. She is also responsible for policy related to the program.

About San Francisco General Hospital Foundation

San Francisco General Hospital Foundation (the Foundation) is an independent not-for-profit corporation 501(c)(3) that provides fundraising support to San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (The General). The Foundation is dedicated to promoting excellence in research, education and care for all at The General. Funds raised by the Foundation

allow The General to continue its long history of providing quality health care to San Francisco and northern San Mateo County. Some of the programs funded wholly or in part by the Foundation include the Avon Comprehensive Breast Care Center, the Children's Health Center, the Acute Care for Elders (ACE Unit, Cancer Awareness Resources Education (C.A.R.E.), the Bay Area Perinatal AIDS Center (BAPAC) and the Orthopedic Trauma Institute. For more information, please visit www.sghf.org.

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