



SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

NEWS | Spring 2021

Nine months into the pandemic, five front line workers at Zuckerberg San Francisco General (ZSFG) joined healthcare staff across the country for the very first rounds of the COVID-19 vaccine. Having faced so much uncertainty and witnessed so much loss, this was a brief reprieve, a moment of hope.

With gratitude for the science behind these vaccines, many at ZSFG then began preparing for how best to serve their communities. Before supplies of the vaccine were even available to the general public, they reached out to those hit hardest by this virus—through webinars and presentations explaining how the vaccines work and public outreach campaigns. And many took the time to assist their patients in navigating the often-complicated vaccination appointment systems.

As one of the San Francisco Health Network hubs, ZSFG quickly outfitted underutilized areas of the hospital to create one of the city's earliest public vaccination sites. And with an eye on equity, it quickly became a drop-in site for residents 65+ living in ZIP codes near the hospital—areas with disproportionate numbers of COVID-19 cases. Removing the need for digital literacy in order to schedule an appointment, these free vaccination clinics have helped thousands of eligible patients receive their first dose.

Ensuring Equity in Our COVID-19 Response



A physician at ZSFG meets with her patient via telemedicine.

Throughout the past year, San Francisco saw a disproportionate number of COVID-19 cases within Black/African American and Latinx communities. With a deep understanding of the inequities they face, healthcare providers at ZSFG adapted models of care, designed new initiatives, and worked beyond the clinic walls to care for their patients.

Many of these innovations were made possible by the Foundation through Hearts Grants as well as the ZSFG COVID-19 Fund, which raised \$5 million to keep the hospital nimble during the pandemic.

Recovery Kits

The teams at ZSFG saw that many of the patients admitted to COVID-19 units were hospitalized for weeks on end. During that time, our staff built deep relationships with these patients and their families and better understood the inequities they would face on the other side of discharge—a long road to recovery paired with a need to get back to work to support their families, little room to isolate, and often an inability to afford medications and supplies.

Listening to these worries, the nursing staff designed a way to get their patients home with an extra helping hand in the form of Recovery Kits. At discharge, every patient admitted with COVID-19 received a care package with hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, thermometers, face masks, and gift cards to get them back on their feet.

Telemedicine

Primary care providers build long-term relationships with their patients and understand what they need most. And starting in March of last year, they needed to stay at home and stay healthy.

For patients of ZSFG's Richard H. Fine People's Clinic, that meant getting online. The clinic quickly created a telehealth network to connect patients with their providers, in whatever way they were most comfortable.

As Dr. Neda Ratanawongsa, a doctor at the clinic, relayed, one of her patients wasn't sure if she could figure out a video call. But when her doctor described how to download the app, she recognized the logo for Zoom—the same way her granddaughter connected with her teacher for remote schooling.

Creating a way for patients to continue to get care during a very isolating year encompassed so much more than simply refilling prescriptions. It was also a chance for providers to connect with their patients, make sure they had access to food, answer questions about staying safe, and today, sharing information about getting the vaccine.



A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Unprecedented is a word we've relied on heavily this year. And yet, with each new hurdle, and in the face of so much tragedy, we continue to commit ourselves to a more equitable future.

At the Foundation, we are doubling down on centering health equity in all of our work. You will see this reflected in our vision, mission, and strategic initiatives, as well as our grantmaking. The pandemic has shown so many gaps in our safety-net system, and we know we must stand behind the team at ZSFG as they tackle our city's toughest challenges with compassion and dedication.

With gratitude,

Kim Meredith

Kim Meredith, Chief Executive Officer



HEARTS IN SF 2021

This year, our annual Hearts in SF event looked a bit different. Going virtual to over 1,200 households across the country, it was an amazing opportunity to show gratitude for the front line healthcare workers who dedicated the past year to keeping us all safe. It was also a way to highlight the people and initiatives at ZSFG that ensured equity and access during a most difficult time.

Chaired by SFGH Foundation Board member Janis MacKenzie, the free and completely virtual evening was emceed by Renel Brooks-Moon, the voice of the San Francisco Giants. Along with three inspirational videos highlighting the importance of equity in healthcare, the event featured an interview with Kim Meredith, SFGH Foundation CEO, ZSFG CEO Dr. Susan Ehrlich, and Dr. Robert Rodriguez, an emergency room physician and former member of the Biden Transition Advisory Board on COVID-19.

Special musical guests Kim Nalley, Bob Weir, and Carlos Santana brought hometown pride to the evening. Many thanks to our gracious sponsor, Bank of America, for their matching gift challenge that inspired so many to give. In total, the evening raised over \$1.7 million for essential patient care at ZSFG. Thank you to all who joined and showed their support for our healthcare heroes.

View the impressive Hearts in San Francisco sculptures and learn more about the programs honored at this year's event by visiting www.heartsinsf.org.

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PO Box 410836
San Francisco, CA 94141

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A YEAR OF EXTRAORDINARY TEAMWORK

By Susan Ehrlich, MD, MPP — CEO of Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital



Dr. Antonio Gomez speaks to the press after receiving the first vaccine in San Francisco.

On March 17, 2020, Mayor London Breed issued San Francisco's first Shelter in Place order. As I search for adjectives that adequately describe the year that has unfolded since then, I'm at a loss. The range of impacts and emotions has been huge, and it's affected all of us, personally and professionally.

One thing this year has validated completely is how resilient and outstanding our team of staff and providers are. Between the pandemic, the impact of climate change with wildfires and poor air quality, and the national awakening to structural racism and the resulting disparities, the impact on all of us has been extraordinary—and through it, we have accomplished more than we could have possibly imagined.

We now move forward with heartache for all we have lost and hope for what is possible.

WE SUPPORT AND FUND EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT CARE AND INNOVATION AT ZUCKERBERG SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL AND TRAUMA CENTER (ZSFG) BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN HEALTH EQUITY, ACCESS, AND QUALITY HEALTHCARE.

SFGHF.ORG | (628) 206-4478 | INFO@SFGHF.ORG