

Volunteers In Medicine Clinic

**April Showers Bring May Flowers.
At VIM, it brings new hope for budding
new relationships and support
from our community.**



**DeLeesa Meashintubby
Executive Director
Volunteers In Medicine Clinic**

The national board, staff and community of Volunteers In Medicine mourn the death of our founder, Dr. Jack McConnell, who passed away in February. Dr. McConnell was a tireless advocate for the uninsured and underserved. He was resolute in his belief that everyone deserves access to compassionate, quality health care.

Dr. McConnell recognized that bringing the community together to care for its neighbors improves not only the health of those who receive the care, but also the well-being and fulfillment of the care givers. He believed that people's talents should be harnessed as they age, not wasted.

As a result of his vision, there are now 89 Volunteers In Medicine free health care clinics in 28 states. Hundreds of thousands of people who were previously without a regular source of care have been treated. Tens of thousands of volunteers have experienced the joy of serving.

In keeping with Dr. McConnell's vision, the VIM Clinic of Lane County continues to provide primary and behavioral health care services to our medically underserved community members. Since we opened in 2001, we have had 144,670 patient visits, served more than 12,000 Lane County adults, and dispensed more than \$16 million in free medications.

We vow to honor Dr. McConnell's profound legacy by continuing our pursuit of health care access to all, and thank all of you who partner with us in this mission.

“WHAT’S NEW”

By The Numbers:

- I. More than a dozen waiting room chairs, donated by Quest Diagnostics**
- II. Four new volunteer providers**
- III. Three new grant sources**
- IV. Two part-time staff providers**
- V. One revamped, re-energized Behavioral Health program, which has seen patient visits double from last year**
- VI. And, finally, one hugely successful One Fine Day event!**

Meet Dr. Marion Diermayer and Marisol Maxwell

Dr. **Marion Diermayer** is one of our new, part-time staff providers. Marion specializes in internal medicine—comprehensive medical care for adults. She also has experience in public health, and says that working at VIM brings together both those interests.



“VIM is a great fit for me. I really love the patient mix, and the variety of health problems that we see. A lot of social issues come up. Practicing at VIM I use both my public health knowledge and my internal medicine skills.”

Dr. Diermayer is originally from the Bay Area. She came to Oregon via a fellowship through the Centers for Disease Control, and worked with the Oregon Health Division doing disease outbreak investigations and research into public health issues.

She and her husband moved to Eugene, where they raised their four children. After their third child left home, Marion decided she wanted to return to practicing medicine. She was familiar with VIM Clinic, and decided to check it out. Now, she is one of us.

“I didn’t realize how good a fit it was until I started working here. Dr. Jay is my mentor – he answers any questions that come up,” she says. Dr. Diermayer has an affinity for Latin American culture, and appreciates the clinic’s multi-culturalism.

Dr. Diermayer enjoyed doing research, but she values the one-on-one interactions she has with her VIM patients. “It’s an incredible honor to be invited into someone’s personal life and their health issues, and to be given that trust,” she says. “It’s a real privilege to help people on that level.”



Marisol Maxwell is VIM’s new Outreach/Interpretation Services Coordinator. A long-time VIM volunteer, Marisol is passionate about VIM’s commitment to treat each patient equally, and to not have language be a barrier to the care people receive at the clinic. Her priority, she says, is the safety and well-being of each patient.

Marisol moved to Eugene in 2013 and worked as a volunteer interpreter at several organizations. Previously, she completed a medical interpreter training course at Central Oregon Community College. In her new position, Marisol is helping VIM build bridges with the local Latino community. She is also training new volunteer medical interpreters.

In her two and a half years as a volunteer for VIM, the clinic became more to Marisol than just a volunteer job. Her work allowed her to make an impact on her local community and on patients’ feelings of security. Patients can be scared or uncomfortable when a language barrier is present, she says. Having medical interpreters available at the clinic reduces the risk that a medical diagnosis or a provider’s words will be misinterpreted.

Marisol relates to the feeling of being an outsider, but for her, VIM has become a family. She finds it easy to build relationships with VIM staff, volunteers and even the patients she works with. And now, as the person in charge of training medical interpreters, she gets to assure that all patients continue to feel welcome within the VIM family.

Because of Your Support ...



James Hegardt had been cared for under OHP, but his coverage ended because of his chronic health condition. Someone recommended he look into VIM Clinic. James quickly qualified. He began to receive treatment and the free medications he needed to maintain his health.

James says the exceptional care he received at VIM has made him a strong advocate for the clinic. He spreads the word of VIM's superb service as often as he can. "I've told a bajillion people - and that is a word - I have idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Everyone goes, 'Hey, who's taking care of you?' I tell them Volunteers In Medicine. Then they look at me and blink, because they have no idea who that is. I explain what the establishment is and does. They think it's just great."

"I'm probably alive because of Volunteers In Medicine."

-- James Hegardt

Volunteers In Medicine relies on patients like James to spread the word among medically underserved individuals in Lane County about the clinic's services and opportunities. Staff and volunteers know their efforts directly affect the lives of countless individuals. James credits the health professionals and staff at VIM for keeping him healthy and alive. Without the quality and care the clinic offers, he says, he would not be able to afford his healthcare needs.

"Every one of them is a blessing. They've always treated me with respect and dignity. I love 'em here. I'm very, very, very grateful."

OUR PATIENT

Our Mission:

To understand and serve the health and wellness needs of the medically underserved who live or work in Lane County.

Patient Care



Our Vision:

May we have eyes to see those rendered invisible and excluded, open arms and hearts to reach out and include them, healing hands to touch their lives with love, and in the process, heal ourselves.

“They’ve been great, they’re very attentive to you. They do like, I’m a diabetic and they check my feet, check my blood sugar, blood pressure, they do a lot while I’m there. And the doctors have all been really good.”

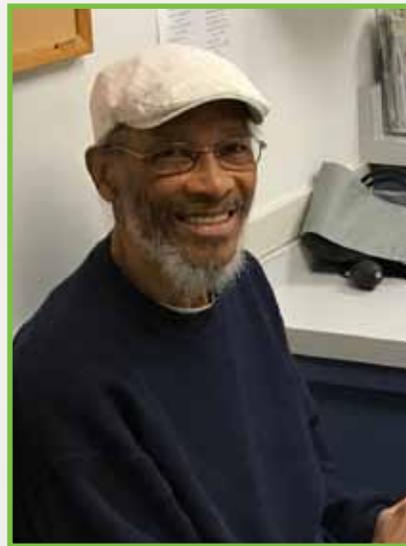
-- Calvin Losh



Maria Alvarado dePineda

“When I see people who work there, it’s God’s work, because people there work all their lives, and now they want to take care of people who can’t take care of themselves.”

-- Servilho Gomes-daSilva



“I was very depressed, and I came here, and I met with Ruth, and she helped me get through my bad state of mind.”

-- Parker Brown



“When I first was coming for diabetic education, everybody was so nice to me and I loved it.”

CONNECTION



“I’m probably alive because of Volunteers In Medicine, just knowing they are here if I need them.”

-- James Hegardt

“Without VIM I would not be able to afford healthcare and I would not be here.”

-- Bertha Zavalos-Avalos



“I came in with heart problems, without Volunteers In Medicine I would not be able to afford the medication I need to manage my condition.”

-- Ed Patterson



Rito Lopez Martinez



“I first started coming here, I am coming every other week to see a healthcare educator and it was fantastic. The educator has been super careful with my health and I love it.”

-- Verelina Karakoleva

“The doctors here are very nice and professional. I came from Brazil and the way they treat me here is amazing. Everyone that works here does so because they like to help others.”

-- Christian Gomes-daSilva



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Meeting the Needs of our Community!

Behavioral Health Revitalized

VIM's Behavioral Health Program is on a roll! Ever since we began our collaboration with Eugene-based *Strong Integrated Behavioral Health* in 2017, patient visits for behavioral health have increased significantly. For starters, we are now able to provide patients with “warm hand-offs,” or same day services. If, during an appointment, a VIM primary care provider deems that a patient should see a counselor right away, our Behavioral Health program can accommodate the patient.

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that nearly one in five people suffer from mental illness.

Our Behavioral Health lead counselor, Ruth Bichsel, is bi-lingual in Spanish, and so are several *Strong* counselors and interns, which means we can provide more Spanish-speaking patients with services. VIM is starting up a drop-in, coping skills group for Spanish speakers, which will allow family members to participate in treatment strategies. VIM and *Strong* are also creating a program to provide outreach and behavioral health services to low-income Latinos in our community—according to research surveys, Latinos as a group are reluctant to seek help for emotional issues.

Ruth is an elder with the Diné. She is working with VIM administrators to expand our behavioral health services to include tribal members in Lane County. Finally, in the near future, VIM behavioral health patients will have access to a 24-hour hotline!

We are delighted with the Behavioral Health program's progress, and its momentum.

Volunteers In Medicine Wish List

Equipment:

- Autoclave
- Eye Slit Lamp
- Microscope

General:

- Children's Books for Waiting Area (English and Spanish)
- Copy Paper
- Event Sponsorships
- #10 Plain Envelopes
- Printing Services



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