

# CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC

# CARE GIVER

SPRING 2024

## SMOKE-FREE FUTURE

Health care for uninsured families

The Clearwater Free Clinic offers many services to our patients, in addition to clinical and behavioral health care. One of these services is smoking cessation classes. In February, the CFC began another 4-week smoking cessation class taught by Tobacco Free Florida. Patients were able to come for an hour once a week and discuss methods and strategies to quit smoking. To encourage patients to come each week, Tobacco Free Florida provided patients with smoking patches, resources, and fifty dollar Wal-Mart gift cards each week.



*"I quit for 8 years, and now I've been smoking again for 4 years. I know that I need to quit smoking to live a longer and healthier life. I am around a lot of people who smoke which makes it harder to quit, but I'm going to keep trying for myself, my kids, and grandkids."*

*-Bonnie, CFC Patient*

Many of the patients who attend the smoking cessation class have chronic health conditions that have worsened due to their smoking habits. Over the 4-week period, patients learned about the impact of smoking on the body, especially the lungs, practices and strategies to resist the urge to smoke, and how other patients cope with their smoking habits. The patients appreciated being able to have open discussion with others and set goals for themselves with accountability partners.



**PAR-Tee** at  
**TOPGOLF**  
FOR A GREAT CAUSE!  
SUNDAY | MAY 19, 2024 | 1 PM - 4 PM  
**SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE**

Visit [www.clearwaterfreeclinic.org/meekgolf](http://www.clearwaterfreeclinic.org/meekgolf) for more information.

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The Clearwater Free Clinic's mission is to deliver comprehensive medical care to uninsured families through volunteerism and community partnerships... Building Healthy Communities.



# MARTINIS + MATISSE



# MARTINIS + MATISSE

## MARTINIS + MATISSE

BENEFITING THE CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC

The Clearwater Free Clinic is Grateful for these Generous Sponsors!

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## Thank You!

TO THE FOLLOWING RESTAURANTS AND VENDORS





# A LEGACY OF CARE

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP OF JEANNIE SHAPIRO

1998



**JEANNIE JOINS AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Jeannie Shapiro joined the Clearwater Free Clinic in 1998 as the Executive Director. Her relationships within the community made her a vital resource for the Clinic's expansion and growth over the years. Her familiarity with physicians and doctors in Pinellas County allowed her to recruit more volunteers and double the Clinic's services.

2011

EXPANSION OF CLINIC HEALTH SERVICES

The purchase of the bait shop next door allowed expansion to house more programs and meeting rooms called the Valerie Nisk Annex.



2017



**THE CLINIC MOVES TO 1218 COURT STREET**  
In February 2018, the Clearwater Free Clinic moved to its new facility leaving behind their home of 30 years on Fort Harrison Avenue. Growing from 6,200 square feet to 11,000 square, this new facility has greater visibility, efficiency, patient access and increased impact to those who either have no access to health insurance or are unable to afford medical care.

MEET OUR NEW CEO  
Stay tuned for our newsletter next quarter to learn more about Anthony Degna!



2004

FIRST MARTINIS + MATISSE FUNDRAISER

Jeannie's idea, implementation, vision & creation has made this Tampa Bay's Go to Premier Fundraising event yearly. During its first year, Martinis + Matisse raised \$38,000 to support the Clinic's services. Today, Martinis + Matisse accounts for 20 percent of the Clinic's operating budget and welcomes over 800 guests each year!



2012



**THE CFC IS NAMED SMALL NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR**  
The Clearwater Chamber names the Clearwater Free Clinic Non-Profit of the Year. Thanks to Jeannie's outstanding leadership, the Clinic was receiving more visibility within the community and gained immense support.

2024



**JEANNIE RETIRES AS CFC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
After 26 years of dedicated leadership, Jeannie retired as CFC Executive Director. She leaves behind a legacy of strong leadership and guidance. One of her most recent achievements is the purchase of 1212 Court Street that will house more preventative care services for our patients.



SCAN TO VIEW ENTIRE TIMELINE

## WELCOME CHARLIE

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING



Charlie, a fifth-generation Floridian from Clearwater, is continuing his family's legacy as the third generation involved with Clearwater Free Clinic. His commitment to CFC is fueled by a rich history of service, including his grandfather's pivotal role - funding the first nurse practitioner in 2000. He is eager to work alongside the clinic's generous donors, dedicated staff and volunteers. After a period of personal and professional growth away from home, he returned to Belleair, embracing the opportunity to contribute to an organization with a meaningful mission. Charlie is especially excited about spearheading the Ruth and JO Stone Wellness Annex, aiming to significantly advance the clinic's impact in the community.

*"With the Ruth and JO Stone Wellness Annex, we're not just building on decades of trust - we're transforming our community impact... it's an exciting opportunity to move into holistic health care."*



## WELCOME SEAN

MSW INTERN

Shawn was born and raised in Pinellas County and worked as a deputy with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for nearly 20 years. During this time, he finished his BS degree at the University of South Florida and then followed up with an MS in Psychology at Nova Southeastern University. In 2019, he decided to make a career change and started working as an adjunct professor teaching psychology to undergraduate college students. He currently teaches at State College of Florida, Hillsborough Community College, and University of

South Florida (Saint Petersburg Campus). He is now in the process of finishing his MSW degree and hopes to work as an LCSW in an integrated care setting like the Clearwater Free Clinic someday. Shawn recently got married in 2022 and lives in Largo with his wife, Ashley, and their 5 dogs and 5 cats--Ashley is a veterinarian that likes to bring her work home with her. What Shawn likes most about doing his field internship with the Clearwater Free Clinic is the supportive and interactive team environment.

## WELCOME LAUREN

ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONER



Lauren is excited to be a part of the Clearwater Free Clinic as an addition to the Nurse Practitioner team! Born and raised in the greater Indianapolis, Indiana area, she received her first Bachelor degree from Indiana University (IU) in Spanish Language and Literature with a minor in Psychology, and her second Bachelor degree of Science in Nursing. Prior to becoming a Nurse Practitioner, she worked for nearly 10 years as an RN in various Emergency Departments and in the community health sector. She has worked from Adult Level 1 Trauma Centers to Pediatric Mobile Medical Units serving uninsured and underinsured families. She is coming to us from working as a Nurse Practitioner at TGH Urgent Care after graduating last year with her Master of Science in Nursing from University of South Florida with honors and receiving the Clinical Excellence Award. She has a special interest in the non-profit health care sector, and regularly volunteers both in the U.S. and abroad. In becoming a part of the Clearwater Free Clinic team, Lauren most looks forward to being able to provide actual health care for people, and create a ripple-effect to bridge the gaps among healthcare disparities in the community.

## TRIBUTES:

THE CFC IS GRATEFUL FOR THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS:

### MEMORIALS:

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Daria & David Verelley
- Frederick Kuzemiko**  
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Alice Slayton



# CLINIC SPOTLIGHT

## PATIENT STORY: ZIGGY



In 2016 Ziggy Sekula, a former professional Polish soccer player, got in his car and drove to Florida for what he hoped would be a fresh start. After the housing market flipped, Ziggy lost almost all his investments in Chicago and settled in Clearwater without a job or insurance. After discovering he had diabetes, Ziggy could not afford any clinical visits and his health was deteriorating.

A close friend and patient of the Clearwater Free Clinic informed Ziggy of our services and he immediately registered to become a patient. Ziggy came to the CFC with an A1C of 12.0 percent, deteriorating vision, high cholesterol, and low iron. As a former professional soccer player, he relied on the team physician for injuries and minor illnesses but had not seen a doctor in over 35 years. The CFC physicians informed Ziggy his blood sugar had increased because he was no longer as physically active as in prior years as a professional athlete.

Ziggy received monthly medications to lower his cholesterol and increase the iron in his hemoglobin. He was also referred to Blue Ocean Research to receive treatment prevent further deterioration of his eyesight. Determined to take advantage of the care and support from the CFC, Ziggy took control of his health. Ziggy maintained a healthy diet, got back into the gym, regularly visited the CFC physicians, and lowered his A1C to 5.9 percent.

*"I believe if I didn't find out about the Clearwater Free Clinic, I would have never gone to the doctor and seen how bad I was," Ziggy said. "They saved my vision and they saved my life."*

Ziggy continues to see our volunteer ophthalmologist for check-ins but he now has his diabetes under control and has a positive outlook on his future.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JYOTI



Jyoti learned about the Clearwater Free Clinic 15 years ago from a friend who was a volunteer at the time. Having worked in critical care as a nurse for 40 years, Jyoti believed the Clinic provided the perfect opportunity for her to give back.

She faithfully volunteers every Wednesday in intake, supporting our staff by collecting relevant patient information, entering data into our electronic medical records system, and triaging patients. Working in intake allows her to have direct contact with patients and set the atmosphere for a positive patient visit.

*"I just want to make sure that the patients feel comfortable at their appointments and answer all the questions that I can for them," Jyoti said.*



When Jyoti was a child growing up in India, her dream was to work for Mother Theresa. She has since found ways to live out her dream by supporting local nonprofits and caring for those less fortunate than she. Not only does Jyoti volunteer her services at the Clearwater Free Clinic, but she also helps other local nonprofits in the community, including Big Brother, Big Sister, the Homeless Empowerment Program (HEP), BayCare Alliance, and hospice care facilities.

*"Without this free clinic so many people in the community would be in trouble. This place is perfect for meeting the needs of people without insurance," Jyoti said.*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Visit [www.clearwaterfreeclinic.org/meekgolf](http://www.clearwaterfreeclinic.org/meekgolf) for more information.

## NEW VOLUNTEERS

WE ARE GLAD TO WELCOME THESE NEW VOLUNTEERS TO OUR FAMILY!

### RESIDENTS

Dr. Brad Bindas  
Dr. Yushi Yeap

### SCRIBES

Morgan Chakov  
Chris Pietkewicz

### CLERKS

Sonia Beljic  
Maryam Muayyad  
Lisa Henkel  
Alexandra Xilas

### INTAKE

Riley Negron

### NURSES

Connie Eck, RN


## CFC SNAPSHOT: JANUARY 1 - MARCH 31

62   
NEW PATIENTS!

436  
BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH VISITS

43   
NEW BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH PATIENTS!

3,573   
PATIENT ENCOUNTERS

10,400   
COURSES OF MEDICATION

## VOLUNTEERS...

**MAKE** a difference.

**LEARN** new skills.

**MEET** new people.

**GAIN** valuable experience.

**HELP** those in need.

# CARE GIVER

SPRING 2024

WE INVITE YOU TO

*hole out*  
FOR HEALTH



## LEADERSHIP STAFF

**Anthony Degina**

Chief Executive Officer

**Mary Lovera**

Director of Clinical Services

**Diane Morse**

Director of Operations

**Victor Riccardo**

Director of Medication Services

**Charlie Hart**

Director of Development

**Corey Shapiro, APRN, FNP-C**

Lead Nurse Practitioner

**Dr. Todd Miller & Dr. Paul Steele**

Volunteer Medical Directors

1218 Court Street

Clearwater, FL 33756

727-447-3041

Clinic Hours: Mon - Thurs

8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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