

CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC

CARE GIVER

SPRING 2023

Health care for uninsured families

SMOKING CESSATION

CFC SMOKING CESSATION CLASS HELPS PATIENTS OVERCOME SMOKING HABITS

In February, the Clearwater Free Clinic (CFC) began a smoking cessation class to encourage our patients to quit smoking. The class, taught by Tobacco Free Florida, demonstrated new techniques and practices to help patients with controlling their urges. Over a four-week period, patients learned more about how smoking affects the human body, how emotions contribute to the desire to smoke, and how to regulate their stress levels to prevent smoking.

Upon the completion of the class, patients were provided patches to replace smoking cigarettes, useful tools and resources, and gift cards for their commitment to the program.

For many patients, this class provided them with the confidence to overcome their smoking addiction and lead a healthier life.



PATIENT STORY: TANYA

Tanya was a perfectly healthy person with no chronic issues until her lung collapsed due to her smoking habit. She found herself in the hospital without any insurance, a failing lung, and no idea how to fix her health. Tanya hadn't been to the doctor in over 25 years prior to being admitted to the hospital and felt hopeless while looking for an affordable health care home.

Through our hospital referrals program, Tanya was introduced to the Clearwater Free Clinic for her after care and follow-up. Volunteer physician, Dr.

Joella Lambert, met with Tanya to discuss her health and provided her with an in-depth diagnosis and treatment plan which included quitting smoking.

Tanya started her journey to quit smoking but struggled with discipline and resistance. She was referred to the Clinic's Smoking Cessation class taught by Tobacco Free Florida to prevent any further deterioration of her lungs. The Smoking Cessation class taught her useful techniques and practices to replace her desire for cigarettes.

"The reason I wanted to come to this class was because I was afraid my cheating moments would cause me to turn back into my smoking habit fully," Tanya said. "I went from being a non-smoker who cheats to just being a non-smoker. That was a huge hurdle for me and it's thanks to the Clinic and this class."

Tanya successfully completed the four-week Smoking Cessation program this month and feels confident in her ability to quit smoking and live a fulfilling life without her addiction.



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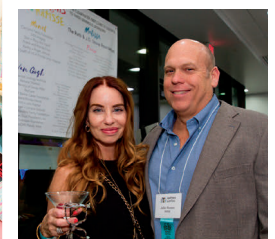
The Clearwater Free Clinic's mission is to deliver comprehensive medical care to uninsured families through volunteerism and community partnerships... Building Healthy Communities.

SPECIAL EVENTS

MARTINIS + MATISSE



HONORARY CHAIRS
CYNDI & STEVE HELLER



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CLINIC NEWS



MEET DR. DANIEL STRAUSS

NEW CFC VOLUNTEER CHIROPRACTOR

When Dr. Daniel Strauss learned about the Clearwater Free Clinic, he knew he wanted to continue his community service by helping patients with his chiropractic skills. After shadowing Dr. Marc Rogers, Dr. Strauss started volunteering at the Clinic every few weeks.

Dr. Strauss comes from a large family with 54 four foster children, 4 biological children, and 4 adopted children. Growing up in a family dedicated to helping others, Dr. Strauss wanted to continue his family values and worked with several nonprofits in Florida. He serves on the board of Hero to A Child which helps foster children gain access to resources and care and also serves as the Vice President of Vincent House which enables mental health patients to get back into the work force.

"I wanted to continue my trend of giving back to the community," Dr. Strauss said. "I think access to care is very limited for certain folks and being able to help with that is very rewarding."

Dr. Strauss has been a chiropractic physician for over 20 years and currently serves as a the Dean of the College of Professional Studies at the National University of Health Sciences.

PATIENT STORY: MICHELLE

After the 2008 recession, Michelle found herself without a job and insurance when her employer laid her off after 23 years. While volunteering at a local church, Michelle learned about the resources available for uninsured people in Pinellas County, including the Clearwater Free Clinic.

Michelle came to the Clinic with a thyroid disorder and pre-diabetes. She was promptly seen by several CFC volunteers and clinicians to manage her chronic issues. She received many resources available to pre-diabetics from our Healthy Living Coach and managed her glucose levels and hypertension before it became a major issue.

In addition, Michelle has benefited from many of our partners, including HEP, Baycare, and the Lions Club, receiving free dental care, MRI scans, and eye exams.

Michelle said, "They make you feel like an actual person rather than someone you have to get out of the office."



WELCOME ANNE

CERTIFIED PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

Anne Wallace is happy to be starting a new position at the Clearwater Free Clinic's pharmacy as the Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT). Anne studied at the University of South Florida to obtain her degree and then went on to pursue pharmacy technician training in Gainesville, Florida. One of the things Anne loves about working at the Clearwater Free Clinic is the quick turnaround for medications and quality health care. Anne also loves working with the dedicated volunteers who help manage the pharmacy every week and assist her with getting the medications to our patients.

"I am happy to be working at the Clearwater Free Clinic because I like being able to help the community with their medication needs that might not be financially attainable elsewhere. I am so grateful to be working with so many amazing people in this unique environment."

WELCOME SARA

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

Sara Cetta is a nurse practitioner who recently joined the Clearwater Free Clinic to assist uninsured patients in Pinellas county. She appreciates the collaborative nature of the environment and the dedication of her colleagues and volunteers. Due to the generosity of health care partners, donors and sponsors, the patients receive comprehensive care. This is both personally and professionally satisfying. She received a BA and taught secondary education but then elected to attend nursing school, obtaining her BSN and MSN at the University of South Florida. Her teaching background complements her current role as provider, ensuring patients receive adequate education regarding their health concerns and treatment plans.



"The Clearwater Free Clinic allows me to provide continuity of care for my patients who are uninsured. I appreciate the collaboration that we have within the community to support these patients. We have many wonderful volunteers who are dedicated to positive health outcomes."



WELCOME CHRISTI

DISCHARGE NURSE

Christi Votta was born and raised in Howard County, Maryland and moved down to Tampa after graduating high school in 2016. She graduated from HCC Tampa Nursing School and obtained her RN license during the peak of the pandemic in May of 2020. Christi began working as an inpatient RN on the Vascular Surgical Cardiac Telefloor at TGH. While working as an RN, she completed her BSN online at USF Tampa in May of 2021. Growing up, Christi has always enjoyed

volunteering and helping out the community in any way that she can.

"The CFC allows me to continue my passion for helping the others, while also making an impact on families who do not have many quality options for their healthcare. I also enjoy the CFC because I believe that our clinic helps to keep the hospital numbers down, as our patients can seek help with us first rather than checking into the hospital and increasing their stressors."

WELCOME DIANA

DISCHARGE NURSE

Diana Crisler is pleased to be a part of the Clearwater Free Clinic team as a discharge nurse. Diana has been a longtime friend and supporter of the Clinic and has even participated as an artist for Martinis + Matisse. What Diana loves most about the Clearwater Free Clinic is being able to work with so many amazing people who do tremendous work in the community and watch the Clinic grow into a community icon.



TRIBUTES:

THE CFC IS GRATEFUL FOR THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS:

MEMORIALS:

Norman Brown

Dr. Todd & Raegan Miller

Nancy Campbell

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Diane Morse

Noah "Noe" Everett

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Alice Nisk

Ruth and J.O. Stone

Ruth J.O. Stone Foundation

NEW VOLUNTEERS

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

PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS

Dr. Ronald Tucker
Dr. Daniel Strauss

REGISTERED NURSES

Stefanie Tibbitts, APRN
Abbey Hall, RN
Abigail Wyne, RN
Alexis Rivera, RN

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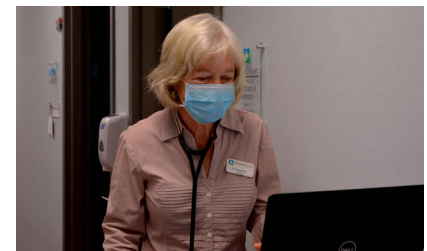
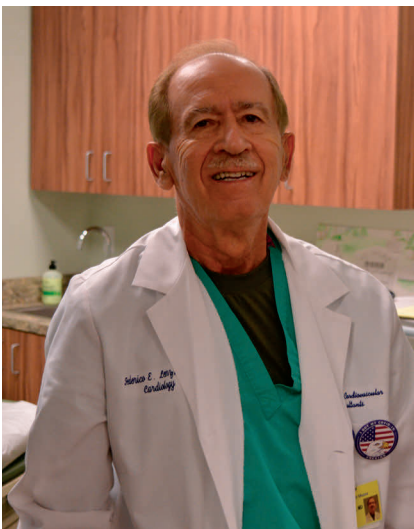


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CLINIC SPOTLIGHT

THANK YOU DOCTORS!

In recognition of Doctors Day on March 30, 2023, the Clearwater Free Clinic thanks our dedicated volunteer specialists and physicians for helping us provide quality care to our patients!



MEET STEFANIE TIBBITTS

NEW CFC VOLUNTEER NEPHROLOGY NURSE PRACTITIONER

The Clearwater Free Clinic is excited to welcome volunteer nephrology nurse practitioner, Stefanie Tibbitts, to our team!

Stefanie became an LPN when she was only 18 and advanced to become a registered nurse and obtain her bachelor's degree at St. Petersburg College. She later obtained her master's degree in 2015 at the University of Central Florida. Right out of school, Stefanie chose to specialize in nephrology, the subspecialty of internal medicine that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the kidney.

Stefanie was drawn to nephrology after learning how intricate and detailed the kidneys are and how vital they are for bodily functions. Prior to declaring nephrology, Stefanie thought she wanted to work in the emergency rooms after completing most of her clinical rotations in that specialty.

"It's just nerdy enough for me and I love to learn," Stefanie said. "I had completed the last part of my nursing career in dialysis and the nephrologist I knew at the time showed me there was more to nephrology than that."

Stefanie retired from practicing two years ago but felt the desire to see patients again. She remembered the Clinic because many of our patients were referred to the office of Dr. Michael Brucculeri, a private nephrology practice she previously worked at. In dire need of a nephrologist, our Volunteer Coordinator, Kiersten Finchum, gave her a tour and showed her what the Clinic has to offer.

"In seeing the patients [at Brucculeri] and being retired, I thought maybe [the Clinic] could use my help," Stefanie said. "Everyone has been so nice and supportive and welcoming. It feels like a family and I have never felt so appreciated."

PATIENT STORY: MICHAEL



Working full-time to support his wife and children, getting proper healthcare and treatment was the least of Michael's concerns. Michael came to the Clearwater Free Clinic in 2014 needing immediate medical attention. He worked at the gas station near our old location and always saw patients and physicians going in and out of the Clinic and thought we might be able to help.

After learning of the Clinic's mission to help uninsured residents in upper- and mid-

Pinellas County, Michael learned he qualified and became a patient. At the time, his wife had been diagnosed with cancer and was also six months pregnant with their child. Knowing he needed to be in good health to support his wife, the CFC worked to manage all of Michael's health issues.

Michael suffered from diabetes and high blood pressure and showed early symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Nurse practitioner, Darlene Hiatt, worked diligently with the Clinic's specialists to manage all of Michael's chronic health concerns. The medications that would have cost him over \$430 monthly were provided with just a small \$10 donation.

"If it wasn't for the Clinic, I probably wouldn't be alive now," Michael said. "The care they provided me is 5-star. They have so much care and love for their patients. They treated me like I'm their family."

Michael was also referred to the behavioral health program to help him manage his stress, depression, and anxiety while helping his wife through chemotherapy. Being a parent, sole financial provider, and caregiver for his wife placed a great deal of responsibility on Michael while trying to manage his chronic health issues. Providers, Laurie Deer and Jen Self helped Michael express his fear and emotions in a safe environment.

"I couldn't even describe what my life would be like without this place," Michael said. "There are many organizations that ask people to donate, but you can see how many people the Clinic is helping here."

VOLUNTEERS...

- MAKE a difference.
- LEARN new skills.
- MEET new people.
- GAIN valuable experience.
- HELP those in need.

TRIBUTES:

THE CFC IS GRATEFUL FOR THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS:

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CARE GIVER

Spring 2023

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Health care for all. No matter your situation.

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Volunteer Medical Directors

1218 Court Street
Clearwater, FL 33756

727-447-3041

Clinic Hours: Mon - Thurs
8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

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