

The Good Samaritan Center



"A HEALING PLACE"

Providing a safe, Christ-centered environment that gives our patients quality, coordinated, and affordable health care.

Spring 2018

A Message with a Meaning

By John Willome

Not to put too much pressure on her, but I cannot wait until May 8 when I get to hear Sara Allerkamp's keynote address at our annual fundraising dinner. I hope you will join us.

I was in New Orleans with a friend of mine in October when I ran across a guy selling his book in the French Market. The book is called *Hood Struggle*. He wrote and self-published it back in 2013. It's a portrait of his childhood in East Baton Rouge. It was a hard life. I decided to buy a book and then I looked it up on Amazon and read some of the reviews. Many people had met him in the French Market, just like me, and bought the book on the spot. I think this is how he makes his living—selling copies of his book every day.

I had already been thinking about our annual dinner and how I wanted to give our guests the opportunity to feel inspired by someone with a story to tell. I thought, how cool would it be to bring this guy in to talk? But that wasn't feasible, and, frankly, I couldn't be sure what his message would be. Then it occurred to me. I know someone who can share an inspiring story, and I don't have to worry about vetting her content—our founder, Sara Allerkamp.

I still speak with Sara regularly, and I often tell people that I cannot spend five minutes with her without wanting to run through a wall for her. Her character and desire for God's glory, helping others, and encouraging people to join her work are awe-inspiring. And it wasn't always easy. She overcame economic disadvantages growing up and several trials in her life, but she still manages to be a community leader that people love and respect.

Please consider joining us on May 8. You can order tickets from the reply card on page 7 or on our website. I am confident you won't be disappointed.

Spring Fundraising Dinner Set for May 8



Emily Jumes, renowned local harpist, will provide entertainment at our annual fundraising dinner on May 8 at St. Mary's Parish Holy Family Center. Our founding director, Sara Allerkamp, will be our keynote speaker. See page 2 for more information.

A Samaritan's Story

A young 26-year-old mother of two came to the Center over two years ago with a history of rheumatoid arthritis, a painful disease usually seen in much older people. The disease affected her knees, ankles and back, making it hard for her to walk and almost impossible to bend or lift. Caring for her young children was difficult and sometimes agonizing.

She had tried several inexpensive generic medications, but nothing helped. Through our cooperative partnerships with a wide range of medical services and specialists, we were able to refer her to a rheumatologist in San Antonio. He prescribed a series of Humira injections every other week. The problem: Humira injections are nearly \$5,000 per month. Thankfully, we were able to help her through our Medication Assistance Program (MAP), and she qualified for the company to send the medication at no cost. Even when Humira stopped working, we were able to switch her to Simponi, also nearly \$5,000 per month, and she is now doing much better!

We have over 670 patients with similar stories. Maybe the medications are only \$300 or even \$100 per month, but for many of our patients that \$100 might as well be \$5,000. And our average patient is on 3-4 medications each. By the end of 2017, we had arranged for our patients to receive over \$1.6 million worth of medications to address their chronic diseases.

And that's just the beginning of the story. When our patients are on their medications they are healthy, not in the hospital, at work, and living productive lives. There's no way to put a dollar value on that. Thank you for being part of this and every other story that comes into our clinic.

CHW honored at Chamber Dinner

Audelia "Delia" DeLa Cruz (pictured below) received the Chamber of Commerce's 2018 "Woman of the Year" award for her contributions to our community, both through her work as our Community Health Worker (CHW), and in her private life.

Delia began volunteering for us in 2011 as part of her Medical Assistant certification program. We hired her in 2012 to be a medical assistant and promoted her a couple of times to where she became our first CHW in 2014. As CHW, she takes health/wellness info and medical screenings into the community and partners with other agencies to bring care to people outside the Center's doors.

We are proud of Delia's work and grateful her efforts were honored by the Chamber. Congratulations, Delia!



Our Wish List:

- \$1,100, **labor** for stripping, waxing & buffing GSC floors.
- \$600, **supplies** for stripping & waxing GSC floors.
- \$475/ea., two dental assistant chairs

Please call the Center to verify whether someone has already donated your item.

Thank you!