



LA MAESTRA
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
City Heights · El Cajon · National City · Lemon Grove



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2016

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Community Health Center Inspires Women to Promote Breast Cancer Screenings

La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc. and Hologic, Inc. launch Promotoras en la Ciudad, a program to improve breast cancer awareness and screenings

SAN DIEGO, CA – La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in partnership with Hologic, Inc., a healthcare and diagnostics company, is launching *Promotoras en la Ciudad* or *Promotoras in the City*. *Promotoras*, also known as volunteer, community health workers, provide culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach and health education. With funding from Hologic, Inc., La Maestra will promote breast cancer awareness and increase preventive breast cancer screenings in the underserved communities of City Heights, El Cajon and National City. These events are designed to inform underserved women ages 25 and older about the importance of early breast cancer detection where they live, work, shop and worship. At these events, *promotoras* encourage their peers to obtain screenings and share free information and resources on clinical breast exams and mammograms.

Promotoras in the City will begin March 1, 2016, with biweekly community events. Utilizing the organization's 36-foot, state-of-the-art mobile mammography coach to target underserved communities of San Diego, *promotoras* will engage individuals in the community to provide health education and outreach, and to schedule clinical breast exams and mammograms. The organization's mobile unit is equipped with full-field digital mammography equipment and 3D Tomosynthesis. This technology is less invasive and expensive than standard CT Scanning and creates a virtual environment with three-dimensional views allowing physicians to examine the area with a high degree of accuracy.

Esperanza Aguilar, a 61-year-old survivor of stage four breast cancer and former *promotora* at La Maestra said, "I do not speak any English. La Maestra gave me [an] opportunity." When asked about her time as a *promotora*, she said, "I really love[d] it. She added, "It is unbelievable the amount of people who do not receive mammograms." She explained there is a lot of bad information in the community. Cultural assimilation and the acceptance of western preventive

medicine among immigrant and refugee communities is significant barrier to obtaining needed preventive care.

Margarita Colin, another breast cancer survivor and former *promotora* said, “I never noticed anything. It was silent. No pain.” That was about four years ago and now, as a patient of La Maestra, Colin’s is cancer free and currently in remission. Colin said, “The oncologist says that I am clean.” When asked why she became a *promotora*, Colin replied, “To help many, many women.”

Zara Marselian, La Maestra Chief Executive Officer said, “People seek a sense of community; they seek a sense of belonging.” *Promotoras en la Ciudad* delivers on that exact premise. By bringing linguistically and culturally appropriate care to the community, people are reassured in their sense of belonging and are more likely to access preventive care.

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La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc., (www.lamaestra.org) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). The organization operates five primary care clinics, nine dental clinics, four school-based satellite sites, one mobile medical/dental unit, and a new state-of-the-art mobile mammography coach in central, east and south San Diego County.

The mission of La Maestra Family Clinic, Inc. is to provide quality health care and education; to improve the overall well-being of the family; bringing the underserved, ethnically diverse communities into the mainstream of society through a caring, effective, culturally and linguistically competent manner, respecting the dignity of all patients.

Hologic, Inc., (www.hologic.com) a leading global healthcare and diagnostics company, strives to make advances toward greater certainty for their customers by providing them with cutting-edge technology that makes a real difference. They move to narrow the gap between doubt and confidence and work to achieve both incremental and transformational progress to improve patients’ lives.

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