



## 2025 Summer Updates from Health Care Foundation for Ventura County

*A Note from Amy Towner, CEO...*

Dear Reader,

As we pass the halfway point of 2025, I'm pleased to share several meaningful summer updates from Health Care Foundation for Ventura County (HCFVC) that reflect the continued generosity and impact of our community.



In May, Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) completed the installation of a new MRI machine, made possible through a combined \$680,000 contribution from the Aramont Charitable Foundation and the Weinberger Trust.

We are also honored to share a moving story from Kiara Barry, daughter of Monique Nowlin, Director of the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging. Kiara reflects on her family's positive experience at VCMC, where her newborn daughter Kaia spent 91 days in VCMC's NICU.

Additional highlights include the successful conclusion of the **WeGive Golden Football Challenge**, the launch of a new interpreter training program led by Jorge Mejia, Director of Language Access and Interpreter Services, and a look ahead to National Make-A-Will Month in August.

As HCFVC continues its work to strengthen the capacity of the Ventura County Health Care Agency, please don't hesitate to [reach out](#) if you know of any local or national grantors who may align with our mission.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and for choosing HCFVC as your local healthcare nonprofit. Your generosity helps ensure that families, friends, and neighbors throughout our community can continue to rely on the public healthcare system we are proud to serve and support.

In philanthropic spirit,



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## **HCFVC Provides a New MRI Machine to VCMC, Advancing Local Diagnostic Care**

Health Care Foundation for Ventura County is pleased to support Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) with a state-of-the-art Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine. The addition of this advanced diagnostic equipment was made possible due to the generosity of the Aramont Charitable Foundation and the Weinberger Trust in memory of Laurence M. Weinberger.



This noninvasive technology produces highly detailed images of internal structures, including organs, bones, muscles, and blood vessels. With this tool, VCMC can deliver more accurate diagnoses and improve treatment outcomes for patients.

The new MRI machine marks VCMC's second unit, significantly expanding imaging capacity, reducing wait times, and improving access to critical diagnostic services for the Ventura County community.

HCFVC extends its sincere gratitude to the Aramont Charitable Foundation and the Weinberger Trust in memory of Laurence M. Weinberger, for making this vital enhancement to local diagnostic care possible.



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## **Born at Just 29 Weeks: A Grateful Family's Story at Ventura County Medical Center**

In February 2025, Kiara Barry, daughter of Monique Nowlin, Director of the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging, was expecting a healthy pregnancy. Under the care of Dr. Micah Gamble at the Academic Family Medicine Center, everything appeared to be progressing normally until her 28-week checkup.



At this visit, Dr. Gamble noticed that Kiara's blood pressure was elevated and immediately recognized the signs of preeclampsia. He explained the situation compassionately to Kiara and her husband, Sean, and referred her to Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) for monitoring. The initial hope was to safely carry the pregnancy to at least 37 weeks.

However, just three days later, in the early hours of February 13<sup>th</sup>, Kiara's condition worsened. Her preeclampsia advanced to a severe classification, and she experienced a placental abruption, a serious emergency that threatened both her life and the life of her baby. She was rushed into emergency surgery for a C-section.

That same morning, Baby Kaia was born at just 29 weeks and one day, weighing only 2 pounds and 11 ounces. She was immediately admitted to VCMC's Level III

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, where she received around-the-clock care for the next 91 days.

Kiara's recovery was also complicated. She was diagnosed with HELLP syndrome, DIC (a dangerous blood clotting disorder), and placental abruption. Thanks to the swift, expert care from the team at VCMC, both she and Kaia pulled through safely. "We were terrified," Kiara shared. "But from the beginning, the NICU staff treated Kaia like more than just a patient. They took the time to answer every single question we had, even when the unit was busy. That gave us so much peace of mind."

Throughout their stay, Kiara and Sean were invited to daily medical rounds, helping them stay informed and involved in every decision regarding their daughter's care. From nurses and doctors to occupational therapists, every member of the NICU team provided exceptional medical treatment and comforting emotional support.

Kaia was discharged on May 15<sup>th</sup>, strong, thriving, and three months old. Today, she continues to grow and reach her developmental milestones, a testament to the high-quality medical care she received at Ventura County Medical Center. Kiara and Kaia's story is a powerful reminder of the life-saving work happening every day in our county's hospitals and clinics.

Have you or a loved one received care at a Ventura County Health Care Agency hospital or clinic? We'd love to hear from you! Click the button below to share your story with HCFVC.

[Share Your Story](#)

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## **HCFVC Awarded \$2 Million RISE Grant for Mammography Services at VCMC**

Health Care Foundation for Ventura County (HCFVC) is pleased to announce it has been awarded a Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability, and Equity (RISE) grant from Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) in the amount of \$2,034,969. This transformative



**Gold Coast  
Health Plan**<sup>SM</sup>  
A Public Entity

funding will expand mammography services at Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) and significantly enhance access to comprehensive breast health care for women across Ventura County.

Launched in early 2025, the RISE Grant Program is an initiative designed to address critical gaps in physical and behavioral health care. Through strategic investments, GCHP is empowering organizations that serve GCHP members, such as hospitals, clinics, nonprofit organizations, and third-party administrators, to implement initiatives that improve access, enhance patient experience, and promote health equity.

The RISE-funded initiative will transform breast health services at VCMC by increasing mammography capacity, enhancing biopsy services, and introducing advanced imaging technologies, including AI-assisted mammography and diagnostic ultrasound to detect cancer earlier and improve outcomes. Additionally, repurposed hospital space will create a modern, patient-centered Women's Health Breast Imaging Center with expanded evening and weekend hours to serve more working families.

"Every woman deserves timely, compassionate, and state-of-the-art breast health care, regardless of her income, language, or insurance status. Thanks to Gold Coast Health Plan's RISE Grant, we can now deliver that promise to many more families" said Amy Towner HCFVC CEO.

Thank you, Gold Coast Health Plan, for this transformative investment that will expand access to lifesaving breast health services for women across Ventura County.

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## **Ventura County Employee Giving: 2025 WeGive Golden Football Challenge Winners Celebrated!**

The 2025 **WeGive Golden Football Challenge** officially concluded on April 8<sup>th</sup> during the Ventura County Board of Supervisors Meeting. During the meeting, HCFVC CEO Amy Towner delivered a presentation recognizing the generosity and philanthropic spirit of Ventura County employees.



As part of the presentation, the coveted **Golden Football award** was presented to the top-performing department or agency in each division. This year's winners were Ventura County Public Works Agency in the large division, Ventura County Library in the medium division, and Ventura County Board of Supervisors in the small division. Congratulations to these outstanding teams!



Thank you to every Ventura County employee who participated in 2025! Your support strengthens Ventura County Health Care Agency's ability to provide high-quality, compassionate care to those who need it most.

It's not too late to contribute to **WeGive** Employee in 2025! Your donation supports local healthcare and may offer year-end tax benefits. You can give via payroll deduction, annual leave, or a one-time credit card donation. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps ensure access to high-quality care for all in Ventura County.

***Join your colleagues in making a lasting  
local impact by clicking a donation link below!***

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ANNUAL LEAVE**

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**Small Division Winner**  
Board of Supervisors



**Medium Division Winner**  
Ventura County Library



**Large Division Winner**  
Public Works Agency

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**New Healthcare Interpreter Training Program Now  
Underway in Ventura County**

In the summer of 2024, Health Care Foundation for Ventura County was honored to receive a grant award from the Local Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Grant (LIIIG), an initiative by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). This funding, combined with the ongoing generosity of Driscoll's, was used to establish Language Access and Interpreter Services at Ventura County Medical Center and Santa Paula Hospital.



As this program grows, so does the desire to qualify and train local professionals in healthcare language interpretation. To meet this need, HCFVC, in partnership with Jorge Mejia, Director of Language Access and Interpreter Services, is offering a 40-hour in-person training program designed for interpreters working in medical, educational, government, and nonprofit settings. The training equips participants with the essential skills and knowledge required for accurate, culturally competent, and effective interpretation.

The first cohort has concluded, but those interested in future opportunities are encouraged to contact Amy Towner, HCFVC CEO: [amy.towner@ventura.org](mailto:amy.towner@ventura.org) or Jorge Mejia, Director of Language Access and Interpreter Services: [jorge.mejia@ventura.org](mailto:jorge.mejia@ventura.org) to join the waitlist for upcoming 2025 training sessions.

This five-day course includes 40 hours of instruction and costs \$600, which covers all materials. Each participant receives three professional textbooks to use during training and keep for future reference.

**To help support and sustain Language Access and Interpreter Services at VCMC and SPH, please consider making a donation by clicking below.**

**DONATE**



## August is National Make-A-Will Month: Protect Your Future Now!

As National Make-A-Will Month approaches, it's a meaningful reminder to ensure your loved ones are protected and your future is secure.

As a thank you to our Ventura County community, Health Care Foundation for Ventura County (HCFVC) is proud to maintain a longstanding partnership with Giving Docs, providing you with free, legally binding estate planning tools valid in all 50 states. Through Giving Docs, you can create or update a will or living trust, add a codicil to an existing will, manage beneficiary designations, include a charitable bequest to HCFVC and much more!

Whether you're starting your estate plan or revisiting one you've already made, now is the perfect time to take that step. You're also welcome to share these free will and trust resources with friends, relatives, or adult children, helping them protect their future, too. Just click the Giving Docs button below to create your account and begin crafting a will that reflects your wishes and values!

In addition to including a charitable bequest to HCFVC in your will, you can also support HCFVC through other tax-smart giving options such as stock donations, cryptocurrency donations, and Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs). These methods may offer valuable tax advantages while allowing you to make a meaningful and immediate impact on healthcare access in Ventura County. Make your gift in just minutes by clicking the link below to start creating impact and enjoy valuable tax benefits.



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## 3 Unique Ways You Can Support HCFVC Today



**GET YOUR HEALING  
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Make a **\$500 donation** to secure your engraved brick in the VCMC Healing Garden.

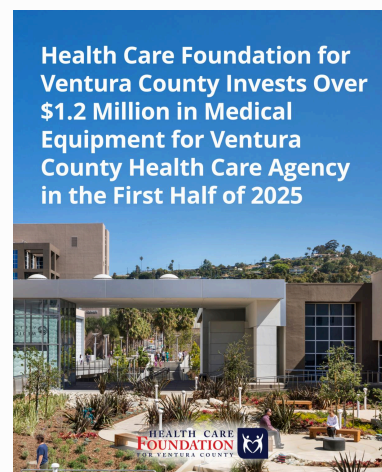
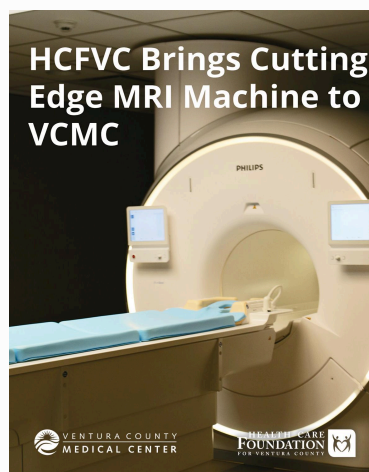
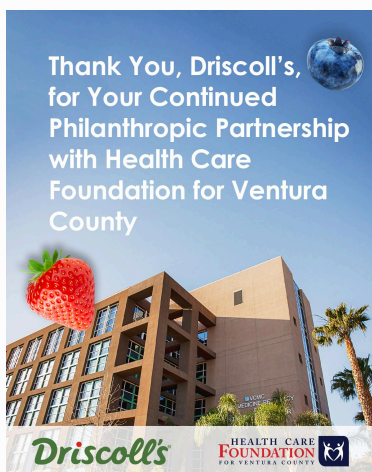
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TODAY!**

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**Contact Us**  
**[amy.towner@venturacounty.gov](mailto:amy.towner@venturacounty.gov)**



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