



THE OPEN DOOR

June 2015

We have a name!



Ezequiel donated three of his pieces of art to the Open Door Clinic

After months of indecision, we finally came to consensus and chose “The Open Door” as our newsletter’s official name! Thank you for everyone who participated in our campaign. Perry Lessing, a volunteer driver, and Susan Viguez, a volunteer interpreter, were the two volunteers who suggested “The Open Door”, and the surprise prizes were a delicate wooden rose, made by Ezequiel Juarez Juarez, an artist who happens to be one of our patients, and an Open Door Clinic baseball cap.

“Working at Open Door has by far been one of my favorite aspects of my time at Middlebury. While a few hours out of an evening feels like a lot to a college student (6-9 is prime library time!), I always leave the clinic feeling refreshed and committed to completing my medical education.”

- Emily Hoff volunteered as an EMT at the ODC for a year. She is starting Medical School at Yale this fall

Our volunteers change the world

Susan Viguez, one of our long term volunteer interpreters, is the 2015 winner of the Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award, given by WomenSafe. Nominated by the Open Door Clinic, Susan received the prize at the end of March, in a ceremony attended by many of the mothers and children that she has helped.

“Susan is an extraordinary advocate. Not only does she address the health needs of the community, but the psychosocial, financial and nutritional ones as well. What she does is amazing”, said Heidi Sulis, ODC’s director.

Susan moved to Addison County in 1972, after a BS from Columbia University and a MA in Spanish from the University of Wisconsin. Heartfelt congratulations, Susan!





Dr. Cope's inseparable leather bag

Changes at the ODC

Last fall, the Open Door Clinic said a fond farewell to Dr. Tim Cope, the clinic's Medical Director, and welcomed a new one aboard, Dr. Terry Naumann.

After volunteering for many years, Dr. Cope decided it was time to begin a different period of his life. He has taken advantage of life post-ODC and has started a new endeavor teaching students at the UVM Medical School. When Dr. Cope was at the ODC, he enjoyed the sense of community and the camaraderie he fostered. One of his favorite memories was marching in the Memorial Day Parade. Thank you for many wonderful years, Dr. Cope!

Dr. Terry Naumann is our new Medical Director. For Dr. Naumann, being a clinician and seeing patients is a very rewarding experience, but he also enjoys making decisions that both improve patient care and have a greater affect on a larger group of people. When Dr. Naumann was offered the opportunity to become our Medical Director, he felt a strong connection to Middlebury, the Open Door Clinic and Porter Hospital, and wanted to give back to the community. Dr. Naumann's goals include improving and putting in place a stronger dental care system and reaching out to more people who are not financially able to have health insurance. For him, volunteering is a very simple thing to do with a huge pay-off and reward. We are happy to have you onboard, Dr. Naumann, and look forward to many new and exciting years!

"The Memorial Day Parade was a lot of fun"

- Dr. Tim Cope, ODC's former Medical Director

"Dental health care will be one my priorities"

- Dr. Terry Naumann, ODC's new Medical Director



Dr. Cope walks on the red carpet for his last ODC night, last November



Dr. Naumann is full of ideas for ODC

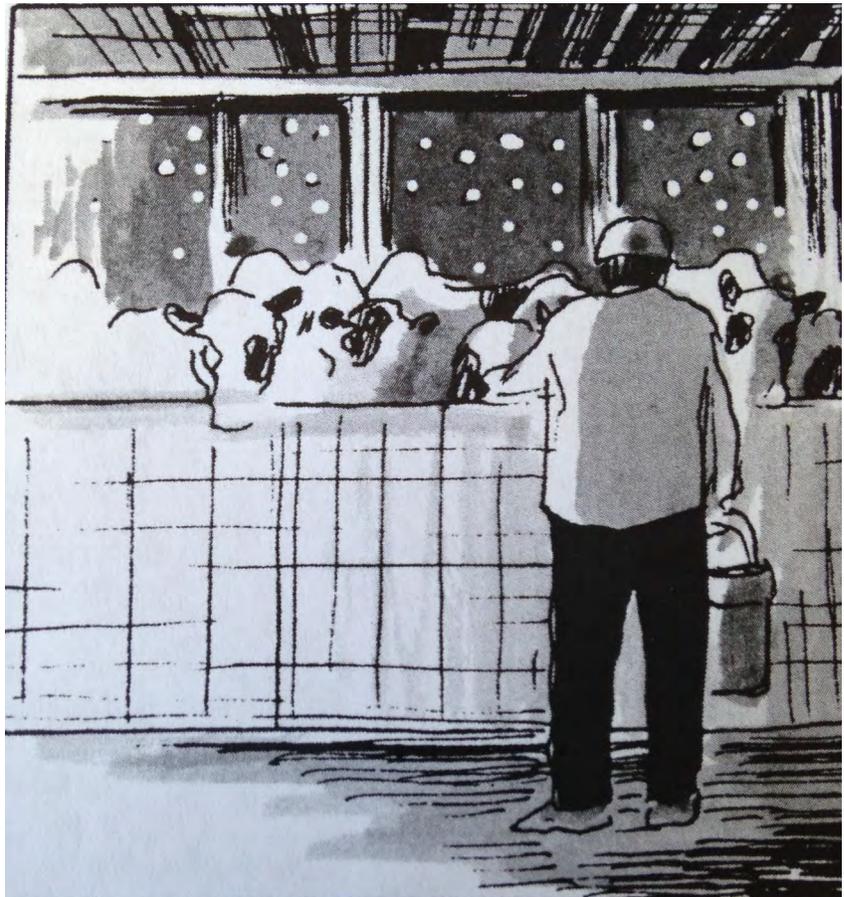
Video by Middlebury Union High School talks about migrant population and health care

When Nathaniel Cobb started to volunteer at the Open Door Clinic in August 2014, greeting Spanish-speaking patients and helping them fill out paperwork at clinic, he didn't know he would be filming some of them for a special school project.

Under the direction of Tim O'Leary, Nathan - a senior at MUHS - and three friends, including Luke Bens, also a ODC volunteer, completed a 15-minute video in which they interview six people involved with our local migrant population.

"Helping Hands" is available on YouTube. Just search for "Helping hands: Vermont's migrant labor population" and click on the video with Julia Alvarez' image.

"It's great to see the Open Door Clinic's mission being represented by our local high school students", says Heidi Sulis, ODC's director.



Art by Tilly Walden, from the Center for Cartoon's Studies

A New Type of Work

Collaborative storytelling project serves as a tool to mitigate loneliness, isolation and despair among Vermont Migrant dairy farm workers

As of 2015, approximately 1200-1500 migrant workers from Latin America help to sustain Vermont's dairy industry. Many of these workers, the majority of whom leave behind families in Mexico and Guatemala, suffer in silence due to the mental health impacts of separation from home, personal and cultural isolation, work related stresses and other challenges of living in a rural area. Having the opportunity to share one's story can be an important form of therapy and healing.

A cooperative mental health outreach effort by the ODC, UVM Extension, UVM Department of Anthropology, the Vermont Folklife Center, and Marek Bennett's Comics Workshop, this comics project aims to provide to Spanish-speaking migrant dairy workers a set of resources they can use to find help. We partner with individuals who want to share their stories, have the experiences drawn by cartoonists and distribute the final printed products— each highlighting different aspects of the migrant experience— in Spanish.

An abbreviated English edition is being made available as a way to call attention to the mental health challenges faced by this population in our state.

If you would like to learn more about this project, write an email to Julia Doucet, our outreach nurse, at jdoucet@opendoormidd.org.

Successful Story to Share

It is never easy having twins. It is even harder when your boyfriend works 12-hour days, has serious health issues of his own, you can't drive, and your trailer is in rural Vermont, far from any stores or support. But *Talia* was excited nonetheless.

In order to facilitate consistent prenatal care, ODC was lucky to find an interpreter who was willing to commit to all *Talia's* OB appointments. Her pregnancy progressed uneventfully, with a couple of volunteer drivers also committed to assist. Another clinic volunteer accompanied *Talia* to the WIC office and got her enrolled.

Parents-to-be were ignorant about pregnancy, birthing process, baby care. As our Executive Director, Heidi Sulis, was teaching a prenatal class, they were able to join other couples and attend it, learning about what to expect during the next months. *Claudia* and *Carla* were born full term via C-section at Porter Hospital. ODC staff helped *Talia* file for social security numbers for the girls, started the process for health insurance and explained the follow-up care needed.

And then the babies were home. The new parents were not getting any sleep. Three weeks later, exhausted and worn down, *Talia* was rushed to the ER with severe abdominal pain. She didn't understand what was wrong; gallstones, gallbladder and pancreatitis were not in her limited English vocabulary. ODC was able to provide a volunteer interpreter for the rest of the visit and discharge, including helping her make a follow-up appointment for a surgical consult in a couple of days.

Following the gallbladder surgery, she needed help. She was recovering from both the C-section and the laparoscopic gallbladder procedure, had two infants and a boyfriend who had many hours of work to make up. The interpreter who had accompanied her through her pregnancy decided to invite *Talia* and the babies to stay with her for a long weekend.

This weekend was pivotal for the young mom. *Talia* was able to recuperate while the interpreter and her husband were up with the babies. Now, months later, she attends GED and English classes. It takes a whole village.



United Way recognizes MUHS senior



Photo: Courtesy of United Way

Nathaniel Cobb started to volunteer at the Open Door Clinic in August 2014. Since then, he has dedicated almost 100 hours to our clinic in Middlebury. "Nathan has been one of our youngest and most faithful volunteers, being at almost all of our Tuesday evening clinics. At our front desk, he is the friendly face our patients first see. As a Spanish speaker, Nathan has been able to assist our Latino farm workers, helping to complete paperwork, accompanying patients to the lab or radiology, or child sitting while a parent

sees a provider. We were so pleased he won the United Way's Youth Community Service Award!", says Jody Brakeley, ODC's clinic manager.

For Nathan, "Working with the enthusiastic staff and meeting grateful patients at the ODC is an award within itself."

The award night took place on May 28th, at Mary's Restaurant, in Bristol. Nathan and other three high school seniors were celebrated by United Way and community.

Contact Us

Feedback? Please, share it with us!

Call or email us to learn more about what we do and how you can get involved

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