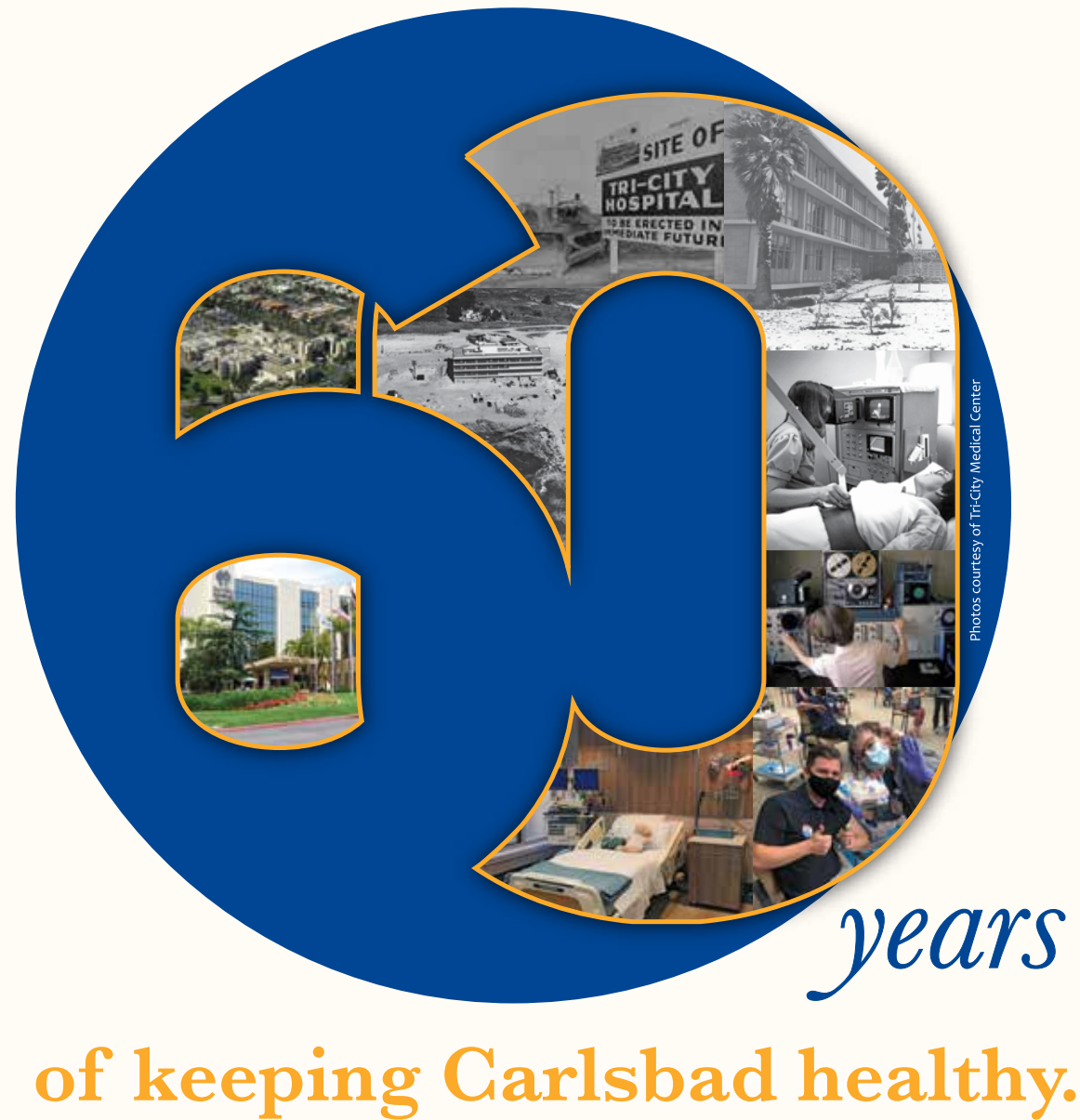


Committed to Wellness

Tri-City Medical Center celebrates



WRITTEN BY MATTHEW GOSE



For 60 years, Tri-City Medical Center has been a beacon of public health for Carlsbad, Oceanside and Vista. During this diamond anniversary year, Tri-City celebrates the major milestones it's achieved—including carrying North County through the trenches of the COVID-19 pandemic—while looking forward to another six decades of providing world-class health care to the community.

EMPLOYING THE BEST PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY

During the 1950s and early '60s, North County evolved from a small, rural community into a blossoming suburban and economic center. This growth prompted civic leaders in Carlsbad, Oceanside and Vista to recognize the need for a more advanced health care facility in the region.

On July 16, 1961, Tri-City Hospital, as it was called then, opened its doors with 87 beds and 42 physicians. From those humble roots, Tri-City Medical Center has grown into a county health care leader

with more than 500 physicians practicing in 60-plus specialties. During those years, Tri-City has become an integral part of residents' lives.

“We have very strong partnerships with the city leaders and with the chambers of commerce, but also with many, many other organizations,” says Aaron Byzak, chief external affairs officer for Tri-City Medical Center. “Our mission is to advance the health and wellness of the community we serve—and we live that mission every day.”

Tri-City fulfills that mission by adapting to ever-changing health care needs in the community through purposeful investments in both technology and people.

The hospital was among the first in the region to capitalize on robotic technology used in various procedures. For instance, the Mazor Robotics Renaissance system has revolutionized spinal surgeries, helping to restore the lives of countless patients.



“THE COMMUNITY REALLY IS INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE HOSPITAL,” BYZAK SAYS. “WE WANT THE COMMUNITY TO KNOW THAT WE STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING WE DO.”



Tri-City has also built a national reputation in the area of stroke treatment. The medical center was an early adopter of Tissue Plasminogen Activator, also known as tPA, a revolutionary clot-busting medication, as well as other groundbreaking treatments that can reduce and, in some cases, even reverse the effects of strokes. Innovations like these have earned Tri-City numerous accolades—the New England Journal of Medicine named it among the top three hospitals in America for stroke treatment.

In fact, all of these technological innovations stem directly from Tri-City’s deep involvement with the North County community. The medical center gains a clear picture of the health needs in the region through data collected from the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties (HASDIC) and its Community Health Needs Assessment.

This dedication to the larger population of the area has culminated in an initiative called the Community Outreach and Support through Active Leadership (COASTAL) Commitment. This program, which includes more

than 60 partner organizations throughout North County, helps Tri-City address priority needs in the community and then align resources to achieve those objectives. In recognition of these efforts, the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce recently gave Tri-City the Community Impact Award for its continued commitment to the people the medical center serves so passionately.

“The long-term commitment, over different boards of directors, over different CEOs and administrations, has been elevating the quality of care in this community and making sure that people who live here don’t have to go elsewhere to get that high quality of care,” Byzak says.

As Byzak elaborates, “investment in technology is only part of the equation. It’s the investment Tri-City makes in its own people that truly makes the difference. Tri-City strives to recruit and train the best of the best in order to provide world-class health care.”

This investment has paid off. More than 40% of the medical center staff has been at Tri-

City for 10 years or longer. The goal, Byzak says, is to create not just a high-functioning work environment, but to foster a family feeling.

“Every single person at this organization plays an impact role, from the workers who clean the rooms, to the physicians and the nurses... all the way up to the executive leadership.”

STANDING STRONG IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

The skill and character of Tri-City’s staff was put to the test during COVID-19. While the medical center had no way of knowing the scope that the pandemic would eventually reach, the values and principles practiced there over the last 60 years in many ways prepared the team to rise to the occasion.

“We’re very proud of everyone at the hospital and how quickly people trained up, so to speak, and got ready and innovated,” Byzak says.

The medical center’s commitment to its

community, both internally and externally at every level, came to the forefront during the pandemic. As doctors and nurses stood on the front lines, caring for more than 800 patients infected with the disease, executives also took on extra hours, with some high-level leaders working more than 15 hours a day, seven days a week.

In return, the community stepped up when protective supplies such as masks and gloves dwindled, especially early in the pandemic. Construction workers donated masks, while local businesses contributed disinfectants and other supplies. As a result, the medical center was able to achieve low COVID-related mortality rates compared to other local hospitals, according to Byzak.

Outside the walls of the hospital, mobilized clinics deployed throughout the region,

administering more than 30,000 vaccine doses. Nurses and other volunteers partnered every day with Cal State San Marcos to help staff the vaccination super-site on campus.

HERE’S TO 60 MORE YEARS

Now, as the medical center celebrates 60 years of excellent service, Tri-City continues to look to the future for ways to maintain its status as a health care leader.

Plans underway include redeveloping infrastructure—after all, some of the facilities are 60 years old. The current Tri-City pavilions will be renamed to better reflect the cities from which the center was born. The emergency department will soon begin a remodel and a new psychiatric health facility is in the works. Long-term plans also include the construction of a new campus

that can continue to serve as a hospital for today, but also one that can provide care for another 60 years.

In another example of forward thinking, the medical center is establishing partnerships with business leaders and higher education institutions such as Cal State San Marcos and MiraCosta College to help educate and train a new generation of health care workers.

Whatever the future holds, Tri-City remains committed to serving and caring for the people of Carlsbad, Vista, Oceanside and beyond.

“The community really is integral to the success of the hospital,” Byzak says. “We want the community to know that we strive for excellence in everything we do.”



Photos courtesy of Tri-City Medical Center