



Xavier Guillen

A few years ago **Xavier Guillen** thought it would be a good idea to lose weight. But unlike many entering middle age, it wasn't a sideways glance into a mirror that motivated him. "My glucose level was off the charts," says the 47-year-old mechanic from Pacoima, who first went to MEND's Medical Clinic in 2006. "The lab work came back and the results showed my diabetes was out of control."

Xavier, unemployed during the economic downturn and without insurance, had been taking insulin for five years before going to MEND. The first step doctors took was to prescribe additional medication. However, he says, the medical staff did more than dispense drugs. They gave him the kind of encouragement he needed to embrace a healthier lifestyle. "They kind of picked on me," he says good-naturedly. "Every time I saw the doctors they told me to lose weight. Eventually I listened."

Just as important were the services the clinic offered, particularly a nutrition class that played a significant part in Xavier losing eighty pounds in three years. "I had a terrible diet," he says. "Pizza, donuts, frozen burritos. I wanted to change and the course helped me a great deal."

The dramatic weight loss paid off. Xavier no longer needs insulin and recently began taking less powerful medication to control his diabetes. Although the decision to lead a healthier life was ultimately his, Xavier says MEND deserves much of the credit. "I wanted to take control of my life," he says. "It was time. But I couldn't have done it without MEND."



Feliciano Moses Lerma

Feliciano Moses Lerma is a few weeks away from his 80th birthday. He has a full-time job, feels "fantastic", and his energy is contagious. There was a time, however, when Feliciano had nothing.

After serving 20 years in prison, he came out with no home, no money and no teeth. In prison they pulled his bad teeth.

Feliciano had no option but to live on skid row. He had no food, no shelter and his health was poor.

A parole officer finally helped place him in a shared room just a few blocks from MEND. "I thank God because he is the one that directs my life," says Feliciano, "and he directed me to MEND. "When you come out of prison you look for a new path, a new future. This was given to me by MEND. I was given a chance at life."

Feliciano received food and clothes from MEND. He was also given new teeth. MEND's free Dental Clinic is staffed by volunteer dentists and dental professionals that provide essential dental care for those in our community who are uninsured and cannot afford to pay for healthcare.

Feliciano says that, after receiving dentures, his health improved dramatically because he could eat again. He was also getting nutritious food. "The teeth, clothing, nutrition made me feel human again. I could finally smile," he says.

Feliciano felt confident enough to go on job interviews and today has a full-time job he loves. He manages 52 apartments and has his own apartment and car.

Recently, he returned to MEND to personally thank the Dental Clinic staff and volunteers for their help. "MEND didn't just give me teeth, they gave me life," says Feliciano.



Fernando Garcia

MEND's Eye Care Clinic was founded in 2001. The only free eye clinic in the San Fernando Valley, it provides eye exams, glaucoma testing and prescription glasses for the community's neediest residents. Many of them have difficulty paying for basic necessities and simply don't have the funds for something as necessary as eyeglasses.

One such family is the Garcia family in Sylmar. They are struggling in today's economy where jobs are difficult to come by, but their three boys are strong and dedicated students. Their eldest is in college, their 14-year-old is a straight A student, and their youngest, 12-year-old Fernando, says he gets "Mostly A's".

Last year Fernando began to notice his vision was bad. He could not see the board in school and had to borrow notes from his classmates after class. He also began to get headaches.

His mother, Olivia, says the family has been receiving food and clothing from MEND and she was aware of the Eye Care Clinic. A quick exam showed that Fernando needed glasses.

Olivia says had there been no help from MEND, Fernando would just have to get by with poor eyesight until the family had the resources to pay for eyeglasses. She went on to share that "It's the worst feeling in the world when you can't help your children; you are so frustrated and feel like a bad mother".

"We are so thankful for the help MEND gives us. It's provided in the most kind, sensitive way," she adds. Meanwhile, Fernando loves his new glasses and says he sees everything so much clearer.

The Eye Care Clinic is a collaboration between MEND, the Lions Club and the San Fernando Valley Optometric Society.

LEADERSHIP LETTER

MEND's Health Clinic has grown dramatically in recent years, both in the numbers of uninsured, low-income patients treated, as well as in the quality and scope of our Clinic services. This is largely due to collaborations with universities, hospitals, and health organizations that have partnered with our staff and core clinic volunteers. With MEND's holistic approach, patients can receive medical, vision and dental services, counseling, and health education, all under one roof.

But beyond helping our patients feel better, MEND workers understand that good health fits into our agency's mission to "provide pathways to self-reliance." For example, a child living in poverty with poor vision will do much better in school if he can obtain free glasses. An unemployed adult can go to interviews with confidence and has a better chance at employment if missing and broken teeth are replaced. Someone with diabetes or other medical issues will miss less work and has a better chance of keeping a job if health conditions are managed with medication, exercise and good diet.

In fact, much of our work in 2013 was spent in giving focus to what it means for MEND to "provide pathways to self-reliance". During the first six months, our Boards, subject matter experts, and staff worked diligently on the development of a new 2013-2016 strategic plan. Two signature program initiatives came out of this planning process, both of which were started in the fall. The first is "(M)ENDING Poverty: 1000 Clients Job Ready", which is an effort to expand and strengthen MEND's job training programs and other services that support employment readiness. The second is the launch of a comprehensive database called "Efforts to Outcomes" that will allow us to track clients' progress toward self-sufficiency.

Looking back on 2013, there was strong evidence that when individuals and organizations from all sectors of our community come together, we can truly move people out of poverty and on to self-reliance. MEND is grateful to our thousands of volunteers, partnering organizations, and our financial and in-kind donors for making the MEND mission a reality.

2013 MEND PROGRAM STATISTICS

Total of all volunteers (unduplicated)	5,225
Total of new volunteers	4,023
Total volunteer hours	172,609
Emergency Food Department	
Total encounters (MEND + Outreach)	234,227
Total volunteer hours	40,771
Home Garden Training	
Total families	72
Total volunteer hours	2,034
Clothing Center	
Total encounters (MEND + Outreach)	168,196
Total volunteer hours	31,207
Christmas Program	
Total individuals	5,329
Total volunteer hours	11,122
Medical and Vision Clinics	
Total medical encounters	6,080
Total vision encounters	1,429
Total volunteer hours	15,413
Dental Clinic	
Total encounters	5,314
Total volunteer hours	16,313
Home Visiting	
Total encounters	1,578
Total volunteer hours	703
Education & Training Center	
Adult Language Students	
Total students	607
Total volunteer hours	9,824
Computer Lab	
Total students	287
Total volunteer hours	3,052
Youth Services	
Total students	100
Total volunteer hours	4,264
Sewing	
Total students	54
Total volunteer hours	1,270
Homeless Showers	
Total encounters	1,411
Total volunteer hours	527
Job Skills Training Program	
Total participants	1,081
Office (Recipient/Administration/Volunteer Services)	
Total volunteer hours	31,134
Board of Directors/Committee	
Total volunteer hours	4,975

WITH THANKS TO OUR 2013 PARTNERS IN MENDING POVERTY

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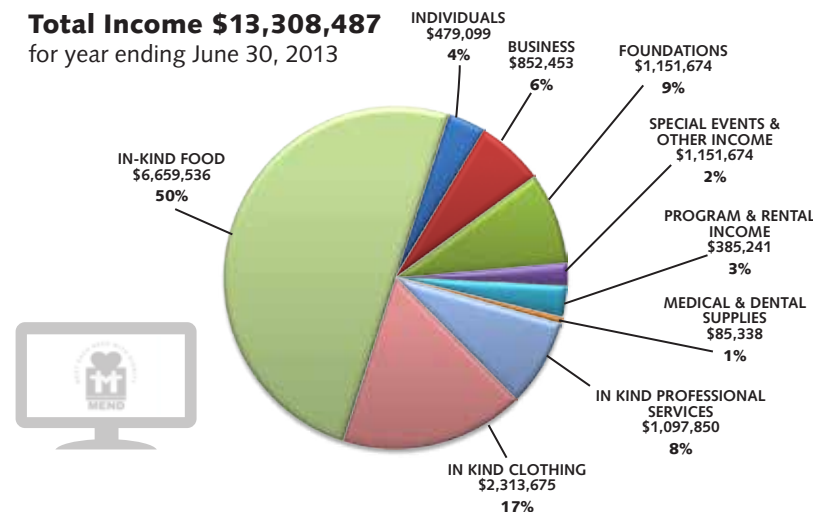
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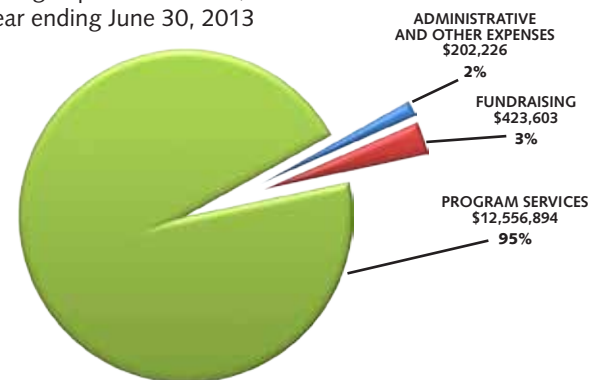
ENABLING GIFTS \$5000-\$24,999

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VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL
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WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC.
THE HONORABLE ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

Total Income \$13,308,487 for year ending June 30, 2013



Total Expenses \$13,182,721 (including depreciation \$353,954) for year ending June 30, 2013



Pictured from left:

Jenny Gutierrez, MPH,
Chief Operating Officer

Marianne Haver Hill, MS
President and CEO

Maritza Recinos, MPA
Chair, MEND Program Board

Susan Blumenfield, DSW
Chair, MEND Governing Board

