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### **Authors**

Edilloran, Abby, RN, BSN

Hall, Shannon, RN, BSN

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# SERVING SENIORS CCU in the Community

By: Abby Edilloran, RN, BSN, CHPN and Shannon Hall, RN, BSN



During the holiday season, UCSD's Critical Care Unit (CCU) gathered together to extend a helping hand and spend some quality time with each other and the senior citizens of Downtown San Diego at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center. At the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, meals, supportive services, health education, affordable housing, and lifelong learning opportunities are provided for seniors in San Diego County. For the past four years, CCU has partnered with the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center helping with lunch distributions and fundraising for the center.

The foundation of the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center was established in San Diego in

the 1970's. They started serving lunches five days a week to seniors for fifty cents in 1973 and in 1978 they started their home delivery program. Currently, they provide breakfast and lunch 7 days a week free to seniors ages 60 and up. They predict, they will serve over 550,000 meals this year, 220,000 of which will be delivered to home-bound seniors. The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center building was built in 2010 on the corner of 4th avenue and Beech. Their dining room can seat over 200 seniors per meal, making it one of the only senior centers serving fresh and healthy meals 365 days a year in San Diego County.

This community outreach started in 2012 when CCU's unit based quality council was interested in



## Abby Edilloran, RN, BSN, CHPN

started out on the CCU at Hillcrest as a new grad 3 years ago & has loved every minute of it. Before she started nursing, she obtained a Bachelor's degree in Biology from UC Irvine. Community outreach has always been a passion of hers and she feels fortunate to belong to a team that is dedicated to helping, not only by providing the best possible patient care, but by helping others beyond the bedside!

getting their members and staff to participate in a group community service project. The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center was selected by the quality council members and in this initial year a \$1,000 donation was raised by the group to support the center and its services. In the years that followed we have continued to volunteer at this location. Volunteer duties include serving up the lunch trays, passing out the trays to the seniors,



## Shannon Hall RN, BSN

graduated with her BSN from Mount Saint Mary's College in LA and started at UCSD in 2006 as a new grad nurse in the CCU. Over the years, Shannon says, she has been honored to work with an amazing team of nurses. In 2010 she took on the leadership role of ANII for her unit. Helping others in both the workplace and in the community is very important to Shannon, and she looks forward to participating in community outreach with her "amazing" team in the future.

and helping with the post lunch clean up. In 2013 we also provided some entertainment for the seniors. CCU nurse Sheri Villanueva's son Bradyn joined the volunteer group and he wonderfully played his guitar and sang while the seniors ate lunch. Over the years, CCU staff have really enjoyed providing helping hands and smiling faces to the seniors that rely on this community center for support and nutritional meals.

Per tradition, CCU visited the Senior Center this past holiday to spread holiday cheer and help serve lunches. Among the participants were CCU nurses, their families, and even CCU's very own friendly pharmacist. CCU served on two days, December 29 & December



## Serving The Seniors in 2012

Ardale Pamintuan RN ADN, Christina Justice RN, Dorothy Scyoc RN BSN CCRN, Hanne Schmidt RN BSN, Shannon Hall RN BSN, Sheri Reikvam RN ADN BA, Laura Lenharr RN BSN, Julie Owens RN BSN

31, 2015, where our CCU family served at two lunches each day. Among the participants were: Abby Edilloran RN, Dorothy Scyoc RN, Cherry Bigornia RN, Shannon Hall RN, Theresa Angeles RN, Julie Owens RN, Cynthia Marquez RN, Frank Chu PharmD, and also included some of our nurse's own children and family members. It was a great opportunity for the CCU family to spend quality time with each other while also giving back to the community. We were met with grateful hearts, warm smiles, and heartwarming stories from both the staff working at the Senior Center and the seniors themselves. One older gentleman approached us while we were cleaning up after lunch and noted "great service, please come again".

CCU hopes to expand its tradition from providing annual holiday lunches and fundraises to visiting and extending a helping hand on a monthly basis.

While it was our own nurses

and pharmacist doing the serving by providing meals for the seniors, it was our CCU family who was served with the greatest gift of all: gratitude, appreciation, and friendship.

## Serving The Seniors in 2015

Frank Chu Pharm.D., Shannon Hall RN BSN, Theresa Angeles RN BSN, Crystil (daughter of Cynthia), Cynthia Marquez RN BSN CCRN, Julie Owens RN BSN

