

thank you.

Natividad Medical Foundation Announces *Indigenous Interpreting+* Community and Medical Interpreting Business

Driscoll's and J. Miles Reiter, Driscoll's Chairman and CEO, founding members of The Agricultural Leadership Council (TALC), donate \$75,000 to launch new business

Salinas, March 6, 2014 – Natividad Medical Foundation today announced the launch of **Indigenous Interpreting+**, a community and medical interpreting business specializing in indigenous languages from Mexico and Central and South America.

Mixteco, Zapotec, Triqui and Chatino are languages spoken in the Mexican states of Oaxaca, Guerrero and Puebla. All four of these indigenous languages are among the top-ten most common languages spoken by patients at Natividad Medical Center, the safety net hospital that serves Monterey County. California's Central Coast is home to more than 27,000 indigenous immigrants and their families, many working in the Salinas Valley fields of "America's Salad Bowl."

"Several years ago we recognized the need to train qualified indigenous interpreters in order to provide quality care for everyone," said Linda Ford, President & CEO of Natividad Medical Foundation. "As word of the program spread, we began to receive calls from local and national organizations, and we realized this is an important service we can offer to communities around the country."

According to the 2010 U.S. census, the most recent year from which statistics are available, 685,000 people identified themselves as Latinos of indigenous origin - a 68 percent increase since 2000. In addition to California, there are large indigenous Mexican populations in Texas, New York, Arizona, Colorado and Illinois.

Natividad's medical interpreting and training program has been primarily philanthropically funded with a variety of grants from donors including The Agricultural Leadership Council (TALC), The Women's Fund of Monterey County (a field-of-interest fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County) and other foundations and community donors.

At the Foundation's annual meeting on March 6, Driscoll's and J. Miles Reiter, Driscoll's Chairman and CEO, founding members of TALC, will be honored with Natividad Medical Foundation's Hero Award in recognition of Driscoll's \$107,700 in donations to support cross-cultural initiatives, including a \$75,000 donation to launch the new **Indigenous Interpreting+** business. TALC's donations to Natividad Medical Foundation total \$1,172,550 since TALC was founded in 2010.

"From the beginning when John D'Arrigo rallied the Salinas Valley farm families and agricultural community to form TALC, our intent has been to help Natividad get the tools it needs to improve the quality of health care for farm workers and their families," said Miles Reiter. "The new **Indigenous Interpreting+** business will help ensure health care is accessible and useful for farm workers."

Indigenous Interpreting+ is directed by Victor Sosa, Natividad's Medical Interpreter Coordinator, who was honored as a 2013 Language Access Champion by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care. Katharine Allen, Co-President of InterpretAmerica, is the senior advisor for the business.

To date, Natividad's interpreting program has trained 68 indigenous speakers from California, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Texas and Minnesota who speak indigenous languages from Mexico and Central and South America. Each of these language groups has different language variants typically classified by the geographical region from which they originated and often designated as alto (high), medio (medium) and bajo (low).

"When I first came to Natividad, I was amazed that many of my patients didn't understand when I asked them questions in Spanish," said Dr. Minerva Perez-Lopez, a Natividad physician who grew up in the Salinas Valley in a farm worker family. "The hospital's medical staff relies on **Indigenous Interpreting+** every day to communicate with patients and their families in the midst of life-threatening and very scary situations."

For more information about Natividad Medical Foundation's **Indigenous Interpreting+** business, visit www.interpretnmf.com or call toll-free 1-855-662-5300.

About Natividad Medical Foundation

Natividad Medical Foundation philanthropically supports Natividad Medical Center in its mission to continually improve the health status of our community through access to high quality health care services, regardless of ability to pay. Natividad Medical Foundation is passionate about raising funds to support access to healthcare for babies, children and families in our community. Established in 1988, Natividad Medical Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. For more information, visit www.natividadfoundation.org.

About Driscoll's

Driscoll's is a leading purveyor of fresh strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries. Family owned for over 100 years, Driscoll's is a trusted, recognized brand for consumers, leading chefs and culinary institutions around the world. Driscoll's uses only natural breeding methods to create plant varieties to produce ONLY THE FINEST BERRIES™. Berries are grown by independent farmers around the globe and are available year round. For more information visit www.driscolls.com.

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