

# Rancho's Streak of Miracles Continues

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By Greg Waskul

RANCHO LOS AMIGOS FOUNDATION

2010 was a spectacular year for Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, which enhanced its heritage as one of the world's premier rehabilitation hospitals by creating breakthroughs in both inpatient and outpatient care and expanding programs to help patients reach their potential after their hospital stay has been completed. Rancho will serve thousands of inpatients and approximately 75,000 outpatients in 2010

Some of the key milestones during the year included:

- Launching "R3", the Rancho Rehabilitation Revolution, which provides a new, more intensive patient care model that is designed to provide a better quality of both inpatient and outpatient care for Rancho's patients.

"We are very excited about the R3 program, which we believe will provide the first major breakthrough in rehabilitation care methodologies since Rancho built the current model used by clinicians throughout the world in the 1970s," said Rancho CEO Jorge Orozco

- Excelling in wheelchair sports. The Rancho Renegades Junior Wheelchair Sports team finished second in the nation out of nearly 70 teams at the National Wheelchair Basketball Association Championships April 11 in Denver. On Nov. 24, the Renegades conducted a wheelchair basketball demonstration at halftime of the USC basketball game, drawing a standing ovation at the conclusion of their game.

- Honoring five remarkable members of the Rancho family at the 24th Annual Amistad Gala on May 1, which was the most successful Amistad event ever. The legendary Dr. Jacquelin Perry, R3 Team Leader and Occupational Therapist Bobbi Jean Tanberg, renowned artist Steve Clay, beloved Patient-Centered Care and Communications Disorders Director Wendy Burton and the Assistance League's HOME (Housing of Medical Emergencies) Project were the award recipients.

- Holding the inaugural Rancho Pediatrics Conference on June 12, which featured top Rancho and community clinicians discussing the latest breakthroughs care of children with disabilities. Rancho this year also became the only hospital in Southern California accredited for Pediatric Rehabilitation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

- Holding a special reception and book signing at noon on June 25 to celebrate Rancho patient and community leader Richard Daggett's life and his innumerable contributions to the city and the hospital he loves on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

"Richard is a true inspiration to all of us," said world-renowned Rancho artist Steve Clay. "He is one of the kindest, most gentle, most loving and most talented people I have ever met."

At the packed reception, Daggett signed copies of his autobiography *Not Just Polio: My Life Story*, which has received 4.5 out of 5 stars on Amazon.com.

"I just think we're put on this earth to help one another," he said. "If I can help improve the life of even one person, then I'm enriched also...and I think that's what we're here for."

- Bringing the latest in advanced technology to the Rancho campus in the form of a shoulder robot that became operational in the summer and helped Rancho patients significantly improve shoulder flexibility and strength. Rancho is the first hospital in the Western U.S. to implement this robot in its therapy program. Rancho completed millions of dollars of research activities in 2010.

- Being named one of "America's Best Hospitals" in Rehabilitation Medicine in the prestigious U.S. News & World Report rankings for the 21st consecutive year. Rancho was the only public rehabilitation hospital, and the only rehab facility based in California or any neighboring state to be ranked in the top 20 on this year's list of the nation's top Rehabilitation hospitals, which was announced on July 15.

- Scoring a major success with the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation's 20th Annual Rancho Golf Classic, which was held Aug. 9 at the Friendly Hills Country Club. One of the most compelling stories during the tournament came from Rancho Patient Advocate Gilbert Salinas, who played 18 holes in his wheelchair.

Riding in a golf cart with the wheelchair strapped on the side, Salinas had to unfasten the chair, place it on the ground and transfer to the wheelchair each time he hit a shot. He then had to reverse the process to return to the cart and continue play.

"Having Gilbert out on the course reminded us all of how much effort Rancho patients must put forth to fully participate in activities most of us take for granted," Supervisor Don Knabe said. "It is truly inspiring to see this level of commitment and determination."

- Putting on the 12th annual Brain Injury fashion show on Aug. 19, where patients who have overcome catastrophic disabling injuries and illnesses demonstrated their skills and shared their hard-earned accomplishments in friends, family and loved ones.



"This year's show, titled "Midnight in Milan", helped build self-esteem and confidence and showcased the tremendous drive of our patients to return to independent living," said Rancho Director of Occupational and Recreation Therapy Bertha Cabral.

- Holding its first annual International Transformational Technology Summit Sept. 2-4. The summit brought together world leaders in Rehabilitation Medicine and Advanced Technologies such as virtual reality, robotics and brain/computer interfaces to promote collaboration among research, industrial and clinical leaders in finding new solutions to improve clinical care for individuals with disabilities.

"We created this first-of-its kind Summit to promote collaboration among research, industrial and clinical leaders in finding new solutions to improving clinical care for the rapidly increasing population of individuals with disabilities," said Rancho Chief Medical Officer Mindy Aisen, MD, who chaired the landmark event.

- Hosting the 4th Annual "Roll Around the Ranch" Stroke Health & Wellness Fair on Sept. 18, which included a 1K, 5K and Kids Fun walk/run, free blood pressure screenings, health education, and musical entertainment for Rancho stroke survivors.

"More Rancho patients have strokes than any other diagnosis, and our patient outcomes are tremendous" said Rancho CEO Jorge Orozco. "It is very inspiring to see so many of these patients return to Rancho and participate in this very meaningful event."

- Honoring 59 Rancho Scholars and providing them with scholarships to further their educational goals at the Third Annual Las Floristas Scholarship Dinner on Sept. 24.

The scholars are Rancho patients who range from secondary school students to college students pursuing advanced degrees.

Rancho, Las Floristas and the Norris Foundation (the sponsor of the Scholarship Dinner) work together to encourage Rancho's patients to not only stay in school but to excel in their studies. The scholars have achieved the same rate of college graduation as the general population, which is three and one-half times higher than the rate of other persons with disabilities throughout the nation.

- Conducting the annual Spinal Injury Games on Oct. 8, which included 275 disabled athletes playing a variety of wheelchair sports such as football, basketball, bowling, hockey, baseball, golf, power soccer and tennis.

"This event gives our patients an opportunity to push their athletic skills to the limit, and is an important part of the therapy process," said event chair and Rancho Recreation Therapist Adam Wilson.

- Convening its first annual Women's Health Conference on Nov. 1. The conference focused on the remarkable new programs Rancho is developing to provide comprehensive patient centered care for women with disabilities and the mind/body/spirit connections that lead to better health for women.

"Discussions ranged from stroke prevention to meditation and the benefits of dark chocolate," said Rancho Chief Medical Officer Mindy Aisen. "This highly successful conference put into sharp relief how far women have come in the world of medicine. And as always, Rancho is leading the way."

- Presenting the 15th Annual Art of Rancho Exhibition featuring the artworks of more than 40 Rancho Graduate Artists.

"The works of these tremendous artists shows us that no matter how badly our bodies are battered or broken, there is always hope that we can do something great," said Rancho's Chief of Pediatrics, Luis Montes, MD.

- Conducting the first-ever Rancho Los Amigos Foundation annual appeal. Launched in December, this outreach effort is designed to help raise critical funds that are needed to make possible the programs listed above and many other vital programs to help the patients of Rancho fulfill their potential.

To contribute, call the Foundation at (562) 401-7053 or write to Rancho Los Amigos Foundation, P.O. Box 2370, Downey, CA 90242.

"2010 has been a great year of accomplishment by our patients and our staff," CEO Orozco said. "We are gearing up for an even more successful 2011 as the Rancho family explores new and better ways to take even better care of our patients so that they can realize the power of their dreams."