



# The Free Clinics™

Caring for Our  
Neighbors in Need

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY HOMECOMING

Celebrating 20 years of  
changing lives together,  
with hope and health

# OUR SERVICES

## ACUTE CARE

- Medical Clinic

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- Counseling
- Detention Clinician
- Hope Shot Clinic
- Naloxone
- Post-Overdose Response Team (PORT)
- Psychiatric Care Navigation
- Psychiatric Clinic

## CHRONIC & SPECIALTY CARE

- Community Case Management
- Endocrine Clinic
- Eye Clinic

## COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Bikes 4 Life
- Community Garden
- COVID-19 Response (Tests & Vaccines)
- Diabetes Education
- Flu Shot Clinics
- Information & Referral
- Patient Health Advocacy (Community & Detention)
- Wellness Screenings

## INNOVATIVE PRIMARY CARE

- Bridges to Health
- Diabetes Program
- The Phoenix Project

## PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPORT

- Community Pharmacy
- Medi-Find Prescription Assistance
- Medication Therapy Management

# OUR STAFF

## Judith Long, Executive Director

Helen Dowling, *Development Officer*

Sarah Friedell, *Community Relations Coordinator*

Maria Furino, *Bookkeeper*

Gretchen Koehler, *Administrative Assistant*

## COMMUNITY HEALTH

Cassie Ashworth, *Assistant Director*

Pat Sandahl, *Medi-Find Coordinator*

Emily Shock, *Patient Health Advocate*

Tina LaFoy, *Patient Health Advocate - Detention*

Sonia Vera, *Patient Health Advocate*

Phyllis Jackson, *Eligibility Specialist*

Erika Rojas, *Medical Receptionist*

## PHARMACY

Kenesha Smith, PharmD, *Pharmacy Manager*

Jackie Brogie, PharmD, *Pharmacist*

Susan Brooks, RPh, *Pharmacist*

Jim Heinz, RPh, *Pharmacist*

Chris Messino, RN, *Pharmacy Technician*

Ryan Osteen, *Pharmacy Technician*

Reeda Ward, CPhT, *Pharmacy Technician*

## CLINICAL SERVICES

Jennifer Tarleton, BSN, RN, *Clinical Services Director*

Cathy Montgomery, DNP, RN, *Person Centered Care Academy*

Lisa Royals, BSN, RN, *Behavioral Health Case Manager*

Andrés Ruiz, LCSWA, *Detention Center Clinician*

Jada Scruggs, CCMA, *Polk County Case Manager*

Jason Taylor, RN, *Access Network Case Manager*

Jen Berry, BSN, RN, *Hope Shot Case Manager*

Julie Sabin, BSN, RN, *Bridges to Health Lead*

Elizabeth Starling, BSN, RN, *Bridges to Health*

Anne Carmona, MSN, RN, *Bridges to Health*

Jim Hall, PhD, *Bridges to Health*

Cheryl Mott, OT, *Bridges to Health*

Don Rochester, LCAS, *Bridges to Health*

Ilda Perez, *Diabetes Program Medical Assistant*

Missy Stillwell, BSN, RN, *Diabetes Program Case Manager*

Deb Phillips, LCSW, *Diabetes Program*

Kelly LaRowe, CPSS, CADC, *Post-Overdose Response Team*

Free Fletcher, CPSS-M, *Post-Overdose Response Team*

Don Rollins, *Post-Overdose Response Team*



## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY HOMECOMING SUNDAY 28 AUGUST 12:30–4:00PM

### 12:30–2:00: LUNCH, MUSIC, ACTIVITIES

Performer David Reid from *DeanO & the Dreamers* sings favorites from the 50s, 60s, 70s and beyond! Lake swimming and boating are available for guests' enjoyment (weather permitting), as well as face-painting and hula hoops.

### 2:00–2:30: ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE & VIDEO

Words from TFC Executive Director Judith Long, TFC founding members Dr. Colin Thomas and Dr. Steven Crane, and the sons of late founding members Dr. Irwin Perlmutter and Dr. Russell Sacco, David Perlmutter and John Sacco.

### 2:30: CAKE CUTTING

### 3:00–3:30: RAFFLE DRAWINGS & THE PLUNGE!

### 3:30–4:00: ACTIVITIES, MUSIC & GOODBYE



*We sincerely thank you for your generous support of The Free Clinics.  
Thanks to you, our community continues to come together to care for our neighbors  
in need with innovative, high-quality, person-centered programs.*

*Please help us thank our sponsors, who made this event possible:*

### ***PIONEERS***

**Joan Blessing, in memory  
of Buck Blessing  
Pamela Sacco**

### ***CHAMPIONS***

**Ken Adams  
George & Mihoko Knudsen  
Linda & Harold Showalter**

### ***VISIONARIES***

**Gayden & Janell Gauthier**

### ***PATRONS***

**Anonymous  
Ruth Birge  
Four Seasons Financial Services  
Lee & Janice Mager**

### ***LEADERS***

**Colin & Janet Thomas**





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-22

## OFFICERS

**Jim Hall, PhD**, President

*Clinical psychologist*

**Tanya Blackford, LCSW, MPA**

VICE President

*Clinical psychologist*

**Anne Duffy**, Secretary

*Retired Chief Sonographer,*

*UCSF Medical Center*

**Fred Baisden**, Treasurer

*Former Mayor of Saluda, NC*

**Bob Davidson**, Past President

*Retired executive*

**Steven Crane, MD**

Volunteer Medical Director

**Matt Aldrich**

*Financial Advisor, Edward Jones*

**Daniel Benavides**

*Blue Ridge Comm. Health Services*

**Becky Elston, RN** *Retired nurse*

**Amber Henson, MD**

*Physician, Blue Ridge Health*

**Josh Kennedy**

*Director, Polk County Consolidated Human Services*

**Rev. Alfredo Oviedo**

*Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church*

**Ryan Owens, PharmD, BCPS**

*Asst. Professor of Pharmacy, Wingate University*

**Roxanna Pepper**

*Children & Family Resource Center*

**Ruth Ramirez** *Smart Start Partnership for Children*



As we mark this milestone, I am deeply grateful to our volunteers, donors, partners, and staff for gracing my life and journey with the most amazing blessings!

-Judy

# A Timeline of The Free Clinics

**1999** Drs. Russell Sacco and Irwin Perlmutter gather community leaders into steering committee to create a free clinic in Henderson County.

**2001** First walk-in Medical Clinic is held on December 13th; volunteers for the clinic include: Steven Crane, MD; Pat Sells, RN; and Mary Collins.

**2002** First Diabetic Life Management Clinic is held on July 1st. First Dental Extraction Clinic is held on September 1st in collaboration with Blue Ridge Community Health Services; volunteers for the clinic include Pete Richards, DDS.

**2003** First Orthopedic Clinic is held on December 17th.

**2004** First Eye Clinic is held on April 5th.

**2005** In September, Community Case Management Program (now known as Access Network) begins offering community access to specialty care for eligible patients of primary care physicians throughout Henderson County.

**2006** First Psychiatric Clinic is held on December 12th, in direct response to sudden closure of Mountain Laurel and disintegration of mental health system.

**2007** First Pulmonary Clinic is held on September 4th; as needs evolve, referrals are later available off-site through Access Network.

**2008** Relocation to new Russell J. Sacco Building in October. Adoption of Community Pharmacy from Partnership for Health in July and the Medi-Find Prescription Assistance Program from Interfaith Assistance Ministry in November.

**2009** TFC is accepted into AstraZeneca Bulk Shipment program, greatly expanding access to medications for patients in our community. TFC begins a new collaborative to initiate the Pardee Flat Rock Family Health Center.

**2010** First Endocrinology Clinic is held on February 5th. In partnership with Pardee Hospital, MAHEC, and Community Care of WNC, the Bridges to Health Project begins in June. First Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Clinic is held on September 22nd.

**2011** TFC expands access to Specialty and Chronic Care Clinics to residents of Polk County in July. First Smoking Cessation Class is held on August 9th.

**2012** TFC expands its prevention and wellness offerings, initiating community-wide flu shot clinics and wellness screening events. TFC begins providing psychotropic medications to inmates at the Henderson County Detention Center.

**2014** With receipt of a federal HRSA grant, TFC greatly expands care for Polk County with a dedicated case manager and medication delivery locally in partnership with St. Luke's Hospital. TFC also deepens partnership with Wingate School of Pharmacy. TFC expands Bridges to Health program, tripling patients served and adding new partners, staff and services.

**2015** In partnership with Hope Coalition, TFC begins offering live-saving medication Naloxone through our community pharmacy. TFC launches Patient Health Advocacy program to address barriers to health and nurture patient engagement in their own health.

**2016** TFC launches Community Garden with patient volunteers to address food insecurity, promote healthy foods, and encourage patient engagement. TFC also initiates Bikes 4 Life bicycle donation/refurbishment program to address patients' transportation needs. Bridges to Health is named a national finalist for the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust Innovations in Rural Health Award.

**2017** TFC introduces HealthWays "viral health" program to engage community members in supporting healthy choices and lifestyles. The Bridges to Health group care model is brought to patients in the Henderson County Detention Center.

**2018** In partnership with AdventHealth and Safelight, launch of the Phoenix Project: an integrated, trauma-informed care program for very vulnerable clients, including survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and those with significant mental health and/or substance misuse concerns.

**2019** Revamped Diabetes program to follow the Bridges to Health group model. Dr. Crane is invited to deliver several national presentations about TFC's person-centered model of care.

**2020** Embedded two staff members at the Henderson County Detention Center; this initiative won an Excellence in Innovation award after just 9 months. Launch of PORT (Post-Overdose Response Team) in Henderson County. TFC also opens first dedicated office in Polk County.

**2021** TFC begins providing COVID-19 vaccinations to the Henderson County Detention Center and local residents. Polk office provides COVID testing per county referrals. HopeShot medication-assisted treatment program for those with substance use disorder begins. TFC adds bilingual Outreach staff member to engage Latinx population.

**2022** Launch of Polk Bridges to Health group, Spanish Bridges to Health, and Project Sotiria - a job-training program for those with history of substance misuse and justice involvement.



## A REFLECTIVE MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

It has now been 20 remarkable years since the opening dedication of The Free Clinic in Hendersonville. Speaking as one of three of Russell Sacco's sons, we remain honored and humbled by the legacy he left behind and the continued selfless medical and social assistance that the Clinics provide to all the people who remain in the economic shadows of society.



Altruism can be defined as the principle or practice of unselfish concern for or the devotion to the welfare of others. The foundational concept of The Free Clinics is clearly based upon this human value. Our father always had a keen sense of who needed extra care and assistance; of who was in danger of “falling through the cracks”. As such, his idea of fostering a safe harbor for the underprivileged to obtain much needed medical care developed years prior. And to be able to witness his dream actually materialize into this vibrant gem in the community prior to his death was a defining moment in his life.

So, my brothers and I want to again thank and honor The Free Clinics and all the incredibly dedicated staff that has and continues to support all those in need, and in doing so, please know that you are all raising the level of consciousness locally, regionally, and globally.

*John F Sacco, MD*

### DR. RUSSELL SACCO'S LEGACY:

Free Health Care for Henderson County low-income and uninsured residents.

Dr. Sacco said:

***“This is about bridging the gap in the healthcare needs of our community”.***

Dr. Sacco also quoted John F. Kennedy:

***“To those whom much is given, much is expected.”***



## MILESTONES IN CREATING THE FREE CLINICS

- 1998 –** Dr. Sacco began advocating for a Free Clinic.
- April 1999 –** Invited Healthcare Leaders to the first “Exploratory Committee to Establish a Free Medical Clinic for Henderson County”.
- September 1999 –** Began an inclusive process with the Henderson Co Partnership for Health. Their BOD approved adding a member of our Exploratory Committee to serve on their BOD. Dr. Sacco said, *“No one organization alone can solve the problem of health care access. It takes a whole community working together.”*
- September 1999 –** Invited Dr. Irwin Perlmutter & Dr. Colin Thomas to join in these efforts.
- October 1999 –** The Exploratory Committee officially became the “Steering Committee for a Henderson County Free Medical Clinic” and appointed its first Board of Directors with Jim Howard as President.
- May 2000 –** The Steering Committee formally established itself as the “Henderson County Free Medical Clinics”.
- May 2000 –** NC House Bill 1153 advocated by Dr. Sacco and submitted by N.C. Rep Larry Justus, the “Retired Physician License Act”, gave physicians immunity from liability.
- Sept 2000 –** The HCFMC voted to accept their first “Plan of Operation” and “Mission” statement.
- October 2000 –** The first Website Domain was established: “freemedclinic.org”.
- December 2000 –** “Henderson County Free Medical Clinic, Inc” was incorporated with the help of Ken Youngblood, Atty, and the first By-Laws were adopted.
- December 2000 –** Dr. Sacco donated the funds to hire the first Executive Director, Jim Robbins, who was employed part time
- May 2001 –** HCFMC became a 501-© (3) tax exempt organization with the assistance of Jim Barrett, Executive Director of Pisgah Legal Services.
- August 2001 –** The BOD changed the name to “Volunteer Medical Resource Center”, and Dr. Stephen Crane was appointed to the position of Volunteer Medical Director.
- October 2001 –** Dr. Sacco funded the start-up expenses and provided his office rent free for the Free Clinics.
- December 2001 –** With the support of 4 major medical organizations and a volunteer BOD, the VMRC opened its doors on December 13, 2001, and served SEVEN patients at 506 Park Hill Court.

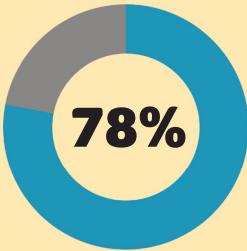
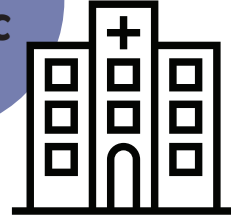


# 2021 NC Hospital Utilization Statistics



**2,685**  
Unique  
Patients  
at TFC

**293**  
TFC patients  
used a NC  
hospital



NC hospitals recognize a  
**78% reduction in *inappropriate***  
hospital utilization, just by  
becoming a patient at TFC.

*Volunteering at TFC has  
blessed me with interesting  
opportunities to share my  
time and talents with our  
neighbors in need and given  
me many new friendships!  
Congratulations and  
Thank You!*

*-Linda Showalter*

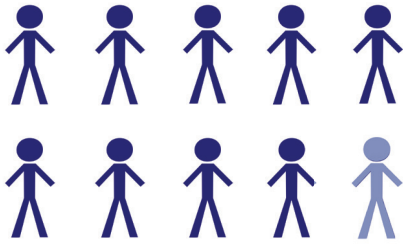
***HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TFC!  
HERE'S TO THE NEXT 20 YEARS!  
-GEORGE & MIHOKO KNUDSEN***





## PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

## Financial Status



**89%** of TFC patients  
**live below**  
the federal poverty level

7% at 101-150% FPL; 4% at 151-200% FPL; <1% at 200+% FPL

## Age

A group of three stylized human figures of varying heights, representing different age groups.

**98%** of clients are  
**19-64 years old**

2% are 65 or older  
<1% are under 18 years old

## Ethnicity

TFC patients are

**12%**  
**Latino/a/x**

**88%**  
**Non-Latino/a/x**



## Gender

TFC clients are

**50%**  
**male**

**50%**  
**female**



<1% are transgender

## Race

**86%** of patients are  
**White**



**7% unreported**  
**5% Black/AA**  
**1% Multi-racial**  
**<1% other\***

\*Native Amer./Alaska Native; Asian;  
Native Hawaiian; Pacific Islander



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to Henderson and Polk Counties.



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Congratulations to the staff and volunteers of  
The Free Clinics as you celebrate this milestone.  
-Joan Blessing



# **Congratulations!**

**Thanks to The Free Clinics  
for 20 years of serving Henderson County**  
from



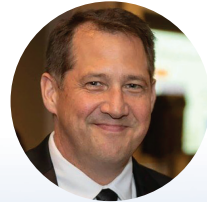
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home in three days and helped me find  
my forever home!"*

- Sara





**Thank you to all of our volunteers over the years!**  
**You are the ones who make these clinics work!**  
**Thank you to all of our staff over the years!**  
**You are the glue that hold everything together!**  
**-Colin & Janet Thomas**

**20 years of Service**

***The Free Clinics***

**56 years of Marriage**

***Colin and Janet***

**80 years of Life**

***Colin Thomas***

**Congratulations!**

**-Your Thomas Crew**

David and Lynne, Chris and Meredith,  
Alex and Kalene, Robbie; Christie and  
Mark, Jack and Madison, Joe, Ben, Sarah,  
Colin; Jennie and Don, Sandy and Donny,  
Nevaeh, Lexie, Christopher, Brandon and  
Hope, Nikki and Brandon, Kiara, Tessa;  
Laura and Jeff, Ethan, Graham, Colin;  
Nikki and Alan, Charlotte, Emmie

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**Joining with our friends and neighbors to celebrate**

The Free Clinics 20th Anniversary Homecoming - changing lives together with health and hope!

**For more information, contact your Edward Jones Financial Advisor.**

Edward Jones cannot accept gift cards, cash or checks as donations.



**Ken D Adams**  
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20 years of service!*



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Happy 20th Anniversary  
to The Free Clinics. We feel  
honored to be part of the  
many people supporting your  
efforts. Thank you to all the  
employees and volunteers  
who work tirelessly to help  
our neighbors in need.  
God bless you.

-Gayden & Janell  
Gauthier





## ***Warm Wishes to The Free Clinics***

Congratulations on 20 years of service and here's to the next 20!

**-Ruth Birge**

Congratulations! Thank you for all you do!

**-Crescent Health Solutions**

Congratulations on TFC's 20th anniversary!

**-Helen Dowling**

Congrats on this milestone! **-Four Seasons Financial Services, Inc**

Congrats on 20 years!

**-Hot Dog World**

Thanks for your years of continuous health service to the community.

**-Lee & Janice Mager**

God bless all the people who make The Free Clinics happen!

**-Ann Nolan**

Happy 20th Birthday TFC. Thank you for all you do for our community.

**-Pat Sells**



# TWENTY YEARS OF



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**value of  
care**



**32,000<sup>+</sup>**

unique

**patients  
served**



**\$43.1M<sup>+</sup>**

worth of

**prescription  
medications**

provided to  
local residents



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**referrals**

to specialty care &

**980<sup>+</sup>  
surgeries**



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tests**



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