



**COMMUNITY
HEALTH TRUST**
of Pajaro Valley

Pulse of the Trust



A quarterly newsletter for supporters of the Community Health Trust

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The Breakfast Group's Moving Tribute to Dennis Ortiz



The Community Health Trust of Pajaro Valley (CHT) recently received a heartfelt donation in memory of Dennis Ortiz. This generous contribution has a touching narrative that beautifully illustrates resilience and community.

The Monday Morning Breakfast Group is an enduring community group that has thrived for over a decade. What initially began as a gathering of a few members from Holy Eucharist Catholic Community in Corralitos for breakfast on a weekly basis, gradually evolved into a cherished

tradition. As many of the members transitioned into retirement, the gatherings grew more steadfast. These meetings take place most Mondays at the Donut Basket in Freedom where the shop's staff members also support the group.

Dennis Ortiz, a dedicated surfer, coach, and person living with diabetes, faced the formidable challenge of losing both his legs to the disease in his later years. Despite the adversities, Dennis remained a devoted member of the Monday Morning Breakfast Group, with fellow members often lending a helping hand to ensure he could attend. Tragically, Dennis passed away while still an active member, leaving the group with a profound desire to commemorate his memory.

The Breakfast Group's donation to the [Diabetes Health Center](#) is a testament to Dennis Ortiz's enduring legacy and his memory will continue to make a positive impact.

WHAT'S NEW?



Three New Community Gardens in Watsonville

CHT was awarded a \$341,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production competitive grants program. Over the next two years, we will use this funding to establish three new community gardens in Watsonville.

In collaboration with the City of Watsonville and the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners, we aim to enhance access to fresh produce for Watsonville residents by expanding our [Community Gardens program](#). These new community gardens will be located on City-owned land in areas with high rates of poverty and food insecurity. This expansion will not only increase access to fresh, healthy foods but also reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with food transportation.

Our Watsonville Community Gardens project will provide communal gardening spaces, especially benefiting Watsonville residents facing food insecurity. This initiative will empower them to grow their own produce, thus improving their access to fresh food.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Dalia, El Mercado Volunteer

Dalia, a student from Pajaro Valley High School, volunteered at this season's [El Mercado Farmers' Market](#) and has been a valuable team member. Her commitment and initiative shine as she assists [VeggieRx](#) participants redeem their vouchers for free produce.

Dalia has dedicated over 60 hours, managing her time and honing her customer service skills, while also displaying unwavering passion for her community.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Eli Garnica at 831-726-4263 or egarnica@pvhealthtrust.org.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Kaiser Permanente

Since 2017, Kaiser Permanente has contributed more than \$226,000 to CHT. They have sponsored the [health-centric farmers market](#), provided grants for nutrition therapy services at the [Diabetes Health Center](#), and contributed general support for our health-focused mission. Kaiser Permanente is committed to improving health and reducing racial, ethnic, and other health disparities in the communities they serve. Since their expansion into Santa Cruz and Northern Monterey County area, supporting community-wide health has been a guiding tenet and funding priority from the start.

Most of their charitable contributions are aimed at addressing community health needs identified by residents through a Community Health Needs Assessment process conducted in each of their regions every three years. This process helps them identify and measure the needs and assets of the communities they serve so that they can provide support where needs and opportunity for impact are greatest.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Amanda Maroudas, Registered Dietitian



Amanda Maroudas, one of four registered dietitians in our [Diabetes Health Center](#), is committed to making a positive impact on her community and has a long-standing history of volunteering that has inspired her career choice. She has been actively involved with food banks and food pantries since she was 13. This community service has shaped her passion for nutrition and its pivotal role in promoting overall health and well-being.

Amanda earned her degree in Nutritional Science from San Jose State University in 2018, specializing in Dietetics. Amanda completed a comprehensive internship program at Santa Clara Valley Medical this year, where she gained hands-on experience in the field of dietetics and nutritional science. She has her sights set on obtaining a master's degree in public health, a decision that reflects her aspiration to expand her knowledge and expertise in the realm of public health and nutrition.

Her goal is to contribute meaningfully to public health initiatives, with a particular focus on nutrition education.

**Please don't forget
CHT in your
year-end giving.**

*More than 90 cents of every
dollar donated directly
benefits our programs and
services.*

UPCOMING EVENTS

El Mercado Farmers' Market

Tuesdays 2-6pm, April through October

Ramsay Park

El Mercado is a weekly farmers' market at Ramsay Park aiming to decrease food insecurity and improve access to health-promoting resources for Pajaro Valley families. Don't miss the final markets of the season!



October 24 – Free Flu Shot Clinic

Come and get your flu shot, courtesy of Kaiser Permanente.

GRANITE

October 31 – Halloween Party

Celebrate Halloween with fun activities, trick-or-treating with vendors, and a costume contest.



El Mercado is supported in part by [California Giant Berry Farms](#), [Granite Construction](#), [Kaiser Permanente](#), [Lookout Santa Cruz](#), [Santa Cruz County Bank](#), and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#).



Wine & Roses – 40th Anniversary

November 4, 2023 4-7pm / After-party 7-9pm

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Don't miss the 40th anniversary of Wine & Roses. This popular event includes wine, beer, and food tastings from local businesses and a silent auction with double magnums, trips to international locations, and other unique items – including a Labrador puppy.

Forty wineries, breweries, and restaurants have signed up to provide tastings this year. We are also hosting an after-party with The Joint Chiefs to celebrate our anniversary. So, bring your dancing shoes!

If you cannot attend, consider bidding on our silent auction online, purchasing raffle tickets, or donating. All proceeds support CHT's programs and services.

Learn more and purchase tickets at <https://pvhealthtrust.org/wine-roses-2023/>.