

Health Care Foundation for Ventura County Receives \$2 Million Grant from Gold Coast Health Plan

This grant goes towards expanding mammography services at VCMC

VENTURA, CA, UNITED STATES, October 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Health Care Foundation for Ventura County (HCFVC) has been awarded a \$2,034,969 Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability, and Equity (RISE) grant from Gold Coast Health Plan. This transformative funding will significantly expand mammography services at Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC), the County's flagship public hospital and safety-net provider.

The RISE-funded initiative will increase VCMC's mammography capacity, enhance biopsy services, and introduce advanced imaging technologies, including AI-assisted mammography and diagnostic ultrasound, to detect breast cancer earlier and improve patient outcomes. Additionally, repurposed hospital space will be converted into a modern, patient-focused Breast Health Center, offering extended evening and weekend hours to better serve working families.

"This transformative investment helps us break down long-standing barriers to care for thousands of women in Ventura County, particularly in Hispanic and Indigenous communities," said Amy Towner, CEO of HCFVC and project lead. "Every woman deserves timely, compassionate, and state-of-the-art breast health care, regardless of her income, language, or insurance status. Thanks to Gold Coast Health Plan's RISE Grant, we can now deliver on that promise for many more families."

The project is expected to:

- increase mammography screening capacity
- reduce mammography wait times
- enable earlier diagnoses that can significantly improve survival rates

This initiative directly addresses Priority 3 of the 2025 Ventura County Community Health Priority Areas: Disparities in Women's Health, Breast Cancer Incidence Rate, and Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Breast Cancer.

"Breast cancer is one of the most treatable cancers when detected early. Far too many of our patients face delays," said Dr. John Fankhauser, CEO of VCMC and Santa Paula Hospital. "This grant brings hope and equity to the forefront of women's health. By expanding our imaging

capabilities and creating a more welcoming, accessible environment, we're making a life-saving impact in the community we serve."

More than 80% of VCMC's patients are enrolled in Medi-Cal or Medicare, with many residing in under-resourced communities such as South Oxnard, Santa Paula, and Fillmore. This grant ensures that those most at risk will have access to comprehensive, timely breast health services right in their own community.

"This grant represents a monumental step forward in closing the health equity gap for women in Ventura County," said Dr. Stuart Siegel, Board Chair of HCFVC and nationally recognized leader in pediatric oncology. "By bringing advanced technology and greater access to underserved populations, we are giving every woman the chance for early detection, better outcomes, and renewed hope. This is exactly the kind of progress our Foundation was created to achieve."

For more information about this project or to support women's health services at Ventura County Medical Center, please visit www.hcfvc.org.

To schedule a mammogram at Ventura County Medical Center, call 805-652-6080 and press 1 for Mammography Scheduling.

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About Health Care Foundation for Ventura County (HCFVC):

HCFVC is a nonprofit organization committed to enhancing the public health care safety-net system by supporting Ventura County Health Care Agency programs. Through philanthropy, advocacy, and community partnerships, HCFVC helps ensure equitable access to care for all, including the most vulnerable populations.

About Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC):

VCMC is a fully accredited acute care hospital with a Level II Trauma Center and the County's only Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. As a public hospital, it plays a vital role in delivering health care to underserved and low-income residents throughout Ventura County.

About Gold Coast Health Plan:

Gold Coast Health Plan administers Medi-Cal benefits to over 250,000 beneficiaries in Ventura County, with a mission to improve the health of the community by ensuring access to quality health care services. The RISE grant program was launched to support projects that increase resilience, innovation, sustainability, and equity in the local health care system.

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