



RISING

to the **CHALLENGE**

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2020

 **Unity Care NW**
Health Care for Everyone



Join us for our 2020 **Virtual Gala** on Friday, August 21st!



Unity Care NW is partnering with Sustainable Connections and Ciao Thyme to celebrate Eat Local Month - *at home!*

This year we are taking our Gala virtual but with a twist. Get a Ciao Thyme meal to-go, attend the virtual event online, and be part of supporting health care access during this challenging time of COVID-19. We invite you to join us during Sustainable Connection's Market Week, get a taste of what's fresh, and enjoy a special cooking demo from Mataio Gills of Ciao Thyme fame.

10:00 am - 3:00 pm Meal Pick-up at Ciao Thyme
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Virtual Event Online

\$75 for 1 meal (4 servings) - choose from 3 options

\$100 for 1 meal (4 servings) - choose from 3 options, **plus wine** - choose red or white

Purchase online at [UnityCareNW.org/Gala](https://www.unitycarenw.org/gala) or call (360) 788-2628

Questions? Email us at development@ucnw.org

Final date for purchasing is August 10th!

Thank you to our generous event sponsors whose support makes this evening possible:



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In-Kind Support from Ciao Thyme and K'ul Chocolate

Ciao Thyme

Owners Jessica and Mataio Gillis truly embody the spirit of supporting and eating local. For nearly two decades, they have been partnering with a variety of local farmers, vendors, and crafters to create their delicious dishes. Honoring a true farm-to-table concept, Ciao Thyme celebrates the best that Whatcom County has to offer. As members of Sustainable Connections, they proudly support local, sustainable agriculture by purchasing directly from Whatcom County and Skagit County farmers. Their alliances with independently-owned and -operated businesses, from florists to bakeries and farms to coffee roasters, ensure they have the best local products available.

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, they have been working diligently to offer weekly to-go meals through their "Slow the Spread and Keep you Fed" movement. As part of that effort, they also provided food for essential workers, allowing people to purchase quarts of soup that would then be given away to local essential workers. Last year, Mataio took on a new adventure with the Bellingham School District to support operations of the new Central Kitchen to bring unique healthy foods to the schools.

→ Try some of their food to-go through our Eat Local VIRTUAL Gala and check out their website for more opportunities: [CiaoThyme.com](https://www.CiaoThyme.com)



K'UL Chocolate

Located in Bellingham, K'UL Chocolate has made it their mission to operate as a social enterprise to elevate those that work so hard to bring something as cherished as chocolate to our tables. The word K'UL is Mayan for "the energy and interconnectivity between all living things," and owners Paul Newman and Ari Lee-Newman truly embody this concept. They carry on their mission to change the world through chocolate by elevating women, protecting children, and fighting slave labor. They have an unwavering commitment to producing ethically-sourced, direct-trade, hand-crafted, small-batch bean to bar chocolate that uses only organic and Non-GMO ingredients. They have traveled to the farms where their beans come from, developed incredible relationships with these women-run businesses, and come back to Bellingham where they make their delicious chocolates by incorporating local ingredients.

This year, they are partnering with Unity Care NW to provide a special treat for our Eat Local VIRTUAL Gala. They wanted to make a chocolate bar to say "thank you" and to honor all essential workers around the country. Their Berry Grateful bar is a delicious collaboration bar that starts with organic, direct-trade Peruvian chocolate and is blended with Mutiny Bay Blues dried organic blueberries.

→ Get a taste of their delicious chocolate through our Eat Local VIRTUAL Gala and check out their website for more info: [KulChocolate.com](https://www.KulChocolate.com)





RISING *to the* CHALLENGE

They say necessity is the mother of invention. Never has that been truer.

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, our staff have risen to the challenge. In a couple remarkable weeks in March, we set up screening processes for patients and staff entering our health centers to identify those with COVID-19 symptoms. We first used tents and then shipping containers, thereby preserving scarce masks within the health centers and putting everyone more at ease. We have implemented curbside pharmacy pick-ups and deliveries and telemedicine within our behavioral health and medical departments. Our dental assistants, displaced by the temporary closure of our dental practice, helped screen patients in parking lots. We witnessed the generosity of community members who

reached out to us to help sew masks. In a move reminiscent of MacGyver, our Facilities Manager fashioned face shields out of the plastic liners from poster frames in our health centers and exhaust hoods over dental chairs to increase patient and staff safety during some dental procedures. We think we may be the first provider on the West Coast to have installed such devices.

The coming months will be filled with uncertainty, but we are grateful to have community supporters who are standing with us through this crisis. Thanks to the foundations and individual donors whose contributions have helped us to weather the storm.

➔ **To support our community, consider a gift today!**
Go to UnityCareNW.org/donate to support health care for everyone.

Celebrating YEAR ONE!

North Whatcom Health Center
Celebrates Its First Anniversary

In July of last year, we celebrated the opening of our new North Whatcom Health Center. Now, a year later, it's clear what a difference the new facility is making for our patients and for Whatcom County residents. We've already expanded primary medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services to nearly 1,000 new patients and now serve over 5,000 patients in Ferndale. We look forward to continuing to provide a medical home to many more north Whatcom County residents.

In recognizing the occasion, we were pleased to celebrate with Milt Schayes whose birthday coincides with the anniversary of North Whatcom Health Center! Milt was formerly a physician at Unity Care NW (back when it was still Interfaith Community Health Center), served on our board of directors, and is the inspiration behind the Schayes Community Room at our 220 Unity Street facility. Milt has been a long time generous supporter and we appreciate his commitment to providing health care for everyone.

Happy birthday Milt and NWHC!



➔ **Stay up-to-date on the latest news**
at UnityCareNW.org



DIETICIAN KITCHEN



New video series designed to help patients prepare delicious, nutrient-dense meals

Antrim Caskey, Unity Care NW's Registered Dietician Nutritionist, recently launched "Dietician Kitchen," a video series that will be available to patients - and community members - on our website and YouTube. Dietician Kitchen is designed to help patients build the skills needed to prepare delicious, nutrient-dense meals for themselves and their families to enjoy, at home and on a budget. We plan to release a new

video every month on various topics related to nutrition and meal preparation. We are building an online library of videos that patients can watch at their convenience. Check out our first Dietician Kitchen episode on Knife Skills, the first skill needed on the road to healthy eating, at bit.ly/3eI3CBX. Our next episode, "Beans, Green, and Grains," will be available on our YouTube channel in August.



LIGHTING THE WAY



National Health Center Week August 9-15, 2020

This year's National Health Center Week theme is "Community Health Centers: Lighting the Way for Healthier Communities Today and in the Future!" This is a difficult time for the country's community health centers. We have been called upon to serve as the "shock absorbers" for hospital systems during the COVID-19 pandemic, and yet we have been doing so without full funding from Congress. As a result of the increased demands on community health centers over the past few months, declining revenues from routine care being upended, and insufficient federal funding, many community health centers across the country are at risk of closing. Despite those challenges, community health centers continue to care for those in need and work to see their communities through to the other side of the crisis.

In the coming months, Washington State will grapple with the economic fallout from COVID-19. State forecasters predict that we will face a \$8.8 billion revenue shortfall over the next three years, with dire consequences for services across the state. We expect, in particular, that we will need to advocate strongly for the retention of non-emergency dental services for Medicaid patients.



→ We invite you to join with us in advocating with our state legislators during the development of the 2021-2023 budget and with Congress for full, sustained funding for community health centers. Visit hcadvocacy.org/takeaction to learn more.



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