

# Firmly ROOTED

MERCY MEDICAL CENTER MERCED FOUNDATION

Spring 2015



▲ The Macha Family is grateful for the care they received at Mercy's Family Birth Center.

## All in the Family *Family Birth Center is an ideal place for bringing new life into the world*

In Merced, we are so fortunate to have a beautiful, well-equipped space that is staffed by caring professionals at Mercy's Family Birth Center.

When Eddie and Christina Macha were blessed in 2010 with news of a newborn joining them, they were thrilled. Macha and his family were also excited to choose the Family Birth Center for their families' delivery destination. Both were eager

to have Dr. Paul Tsai as their obstetrician, not only because he is a wonderful doctor, but also because he was the doctor who delivered Christina!

Christina's pregnancy was "perfectly normal." However, during labor, Eddie sensed that something wasn't quite right. The Macha's baby was over ten pounds and became stuck during delivery-- an emergency situation known as shoulder dysplasia.

While Macha never sensed panic in the room, a 'Code D' was announced throughout the unit, and teams appeared instantly. "It was like they appeared through the walls," recounts Macha. "They were working fast and laser-focused."

When the baby was born, she was not breathing and didn't have a heartbeat. Immediately, the infant was moved to the mobile Valley Children's Unit set-up in the room, and successfully resuscitated.

"Without that staff, their expert training, and the in-house proximity of the Valley Children's Hospital Level II Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, we would have had a very different outcome," Macha shared with obvious emotion in his voice.

It was parents Eddie and Christina who would hold their breath for the next few days, searching for indications of further signs of distress from their newborn daughter, Ashlan.

The family did not have to be transported to another facility to receive the care they needed, but instead were able to take advantage of a hotel stay program at Mercy. "Hotel stays" are available for families in distress if there is availability at the facility. This program enabled Christina to recover

from her traumatic birthing experience, to nurse their baby daughter, and to remain in close contact with the staff that was caring so lovingly for their daughter.

Sweet Ashlan is now four years old and thriving.

"Dr. Tsai and Ashlan's pediatrician, Dr. Tan, knew our situation well and visited us often during our stay," says Christina Macha. "It was a blessing to have Ashlan at Mercy."

"Our lives were touched in a powerful way," says Macha. "We will always support the mission of the dedicated staff throughout Mercy Medical Center." Eddie Macha is now a Board Member for the Mercy Foundation, and the Macha family will welcome their second child at the Family Birth Center this summer.

At the Family Birth Center, the staff acknowledges what a privilege it is to be part of a family's birth experience, and they revel in the joys and challenges of each unique experience.

"Every single birth is a miracle," according to Clinical Educator Dawn Butler, RN.

Butler has been delivering babies in Merced for 33 years, and says she sings 'Happy Birthday' to each newborn. She says that each birth has its own challenges, but singing to them seems to bring everyone in the room back to the joy of the moment. Her passion for maternal and infant care is shared by the close-knit staff.

"We have a fabulous team of doctors and nurses who are close and deliver excellent care," says Rebecca Cates, RN, Director of the Family Birth Center. "You get a great environment when you have good communication among the staff and good support from the administration."

When the new Mercy Medical Center facility was built in Merced, what is commonly referred to as a 'maternity ward' was purposefully named the FAMILY Birth Center. The focus was to be on family-centered care -- not just about the babies or just about the moms. In name and in spirit, growing strong families from the start is their ultimate goal.

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# Classes and Services Available through Mercy's Family Birth Center

## Family Birth Center Tour

You will be shown where you need to go to register, as well as each room you will be in during the different stages of your stay in the Family Birth Center.

Second Tuesday of every month  
6:00pm Tours in English and Spanish  
Mercy Medical Pavilion, Third Floor,  
Classrooms C & D

## Labor of Love

A 4 week program that prepares the expectant parents for the end stages of pregnancy, the childbirth process, and breathing and relaxation techniques. The class will also cover post-partum and newborn care.

Wednesdays from 6:00pm – 9:00pm in English  
First Saturday 9:00am – 3:00pm in Spanish  
Mercy Medical Pavilion, 3rd Floor,  
Classroom C  
Pre-registration is required - \$10.00 fee

## Lactating with Love

This program will cover the basics on breastfeeding. In addition, the class offers mothers the support they need with this new experience.

Call the Education Department at  
209.564.4384 for information on  
dates and times.  
Mercy Medical Pavilion, 3rd Floor,  
Classroom C  
Pre-registration is required but there is no fee.

For more information or to sign up for any of these classes, please call Mercy Education Center 209.564.4384

## Other services available:

- Deliveries by Obstetricians & Family Practitioners
- Labor and pain management with excellent anesthesiologists
- Same floor operating rooms dedicated to Cesarean Births
- Lactation Educators
- On site WIC representative
- Level II (NICU) Neonatal Intensive Care Unit located on the same floor, operated by Valley Children's Hospital

For more information on our Maternity Services, please call 209.564.5200

# All in the Family

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▲ Patient, Tomasa Andrade-Garcia, watches as Family Birth Center nurses adjust her daughter, Alexis, on the Bili Blanket.

The beautiful and spacious patient rooms have large windows, private bathrooms with showers, gliders, and loungers to accommodate sleeping visitors. Soothing decor is complemented by the most advanced technology. Bili Blankets and the award-winning Panda Warmers are specialized equipment that enable babies to receive extra postpartum care bedside, in proximity to their parents.

Everyone who works at the Family Birth Center is invested in providing the most rewarding birthing experience. Many have worked together ten years or more. Doctors and nurses communicate well and often in the 33 bed floor, according to Butler.

"The first thing I want to discover about a potential new employee is whether moms and babies are their passion," says Cates in an emphatic tone. "It's important for our team that this is where their heart is."

The Family Birth Center puts a premium on education, both for its staff and for the families it serves.

New parents are encouraged to take advantage of comprehensive childbirth preparation classes, called Labor of Love, to help them become familiar with what they might experience during labor, postpartum, and with newborn care.

Education for parents about breastfeeding begins before the babies come too. Carol Madruga, RN, teaches the childbirth classes at Mercy Medical Center and has been a certified childbirth educator for 25 of her 29 years working at Mercy.

"We know that 'breast is best' when it comes to growing healthy babies, and that the education component is so important for confidence and a successful result," says Madruga.

Staff are constantly learning more about best practices themselves as care providers.

Donations to the Mercy Foundation's Heritage Club enabled the staff to purchase the "gold standard" of continuing education modules: the Perinatal Orientation and Education Program (PEOP).

Training and continuity of care can be somewhat intangible to the community outside of the medical center -- until a patient finds themselves in a crisis situation.

Last year, two couples in the Merced Community were expecting triplets. Triplet births are very rare and put the expectant moms in the high-risk category. According to Butler, fourteen staff members drilled for weeks to prepare for all of the possible contingencies involved with a triplet birth.

SIM Mom and SIM NewB, the life-like manikins purchased by the Foundation for the Family Birth Center in 2014, create realistic simulations for the most effective training opportunity.

"When we have an emergency, we respond smoothly as a team," says Butler. "With consistent standards you get the same action, no matter what shift or combination of staff members are present."

There are times of intense activity, and then there are times when no amount of training can prevent parents from leaving the hospital with empty arms.

Cates credits the kindness of the community of caregivers in Merced for the incredible evolution of perinatal services that they are now able to provide. Hinds Hospice coordinates their Angel Babies program, which helps ease the pain and transition for a grieving family.

The Family Birth Center's perinatal services have been recognized by a hospital accrediting association as a best practices program. "I've gotten calls from as far as Texas from hospitals wanting to use our center as a model for caring for families who have lost little ones," says Director Cates.

The Family Birth Center staff are all highly-trained to be sensitive, skilled, and synchronized caregivers. Each of the professionals who contributed to this article independently shared the same sentiment, "We are blessed to do this work."

Every birth has a beautiful story. The Mercy Foundation is proud to support such a wonderful place to have your baby; with well-trained professionals and a facility designed to the needs of families. Let your story unfold at the Family Birth Center, where you can benefit from services you'd expect at a large hospital in an intimate family-focused environment.