

PRESS RELEASE

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Palomares Academy, WesternU Launch Dental Clinic

Oral health center to offer low-cost services to PUSD students

POMONA – The Palomares Academy of Health Sciences held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 9 to celebrate the opening of a new school-based oral health center operated in partnership with Western University of Health Sciences' (WesternU) College of Dental Medicine.

This is the fourth school-based comprehensive dental clinic sponsored by WesternU within the Pomona Unified School District. It officially opened to the school community on Jan. 13.

"Thanks to the visionary thinking taking place between our District and the university, we have seen this partnership expand from year to year, and I'm glad that the students of our community are able to benefit from these much-needed services and educational experiences," Board of Education President Andrew Wong said.

During the ribbon cutting, Palomares Academy students clad in white lab coats led guests on campus tours, showcasing the variety of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs available at the school. The tours concluded with a visit to the dental clinic, which will be open every Tuesday.

"This new oral health center will provide students and their families with access to oral health care, keeping them healthy and helping them to do their best in school," Principal Camille Ramos-Beal said.

Since fall 2013, WesternU has worked in partnership with PUSD to offer free and low-cost oral health services, including dental exams, cleanings, fluoride treatments and sealants. The program is made possible by an \$8.5 million grant awarded to WesternU by First 5 LA to provide dental care to uninsured and underserved children ages 17 and younger, through school-based oral health centers.

While meeting the needs of these children, the program also serves as a teaching laboratory for third- and fourth-year dental students, who perform all preventative and comprehensive dental treatments under the supervision of licensed dentists.

"By providing ongoing services at these centers, students will have improved access to dental care to prevent tooth infection incidences, better overall physical health, and enhanced quality of life," said Steven Friedrichsen, DDS, dean of WesternU's College of Dental Medicine.

Other dental clinics within PUSD are located at the Mendoza Center, The Village @ Indian Hill and Alcott Elementary School.

“I want to thank our partners for their support and work to bring a dental program to Palomares, and helping us further our goal of promoting public health and increasing access to affordable oral health care for children,” said PUSD Superintendent Richard Martinez. “It’s exciting for these talented youth who are studying STEM to see theory be put into practice by WesternU students, who are preparing them to be great role models and leaders in the world of science.”

The Palomares Academy of Health Sciences is located at 2211 N. Orange Grove Ave., Pomona. More information on WesternU’s school-based oral health programs is available at: www.wucdcp.org.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

DENTALCLINIC1: Pomona Unified Superintendent Richard Martinez visits the new school-based oral health center at the Palomares Academy of Health Sciences on Jan. 9, 2014.

DENTALCLINIC2: Palomares Academy students visit the school-based oral health center, which is operated in partnership with the Western University of Health Sciences and will offer free services to the school community.

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