

Friday, February 26, 2010

## Partners in Philanthropy

# Businesses donate time and money to aid in health Effort

**SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL - BY [Anne Gonzales](#) CORRESPONDENT**

When a friend asked Jim Tilton to help out a local substance abuse and mental health treatment center, he didn't think he would be around for almost eight years shepherding [The Effort](#).

But Tilton, president of Tilton Pacific Construction in Rocklin, got hooked on The Effort's mission of helping the down and out. He's become one of many businesspeople and companies to pitch in dollars and time toward The Effort. The nonprofit's annual budget has increased from \$2.5 million to \$12 million.

"They're such a success story," Tilton said of The Effort and its 10 sites in the Sacramento region. "They're people who are in the right place at the right time and have the resources to help the underserved in our community."

The Effort provides health care, substance abuse treatment, child and family therapy, crisis intervention, child abuse and domestic violence prevention, and other health and social services. It also runs a crisis and suicide hotline and a midtown family health clinic.

"When (Sacramento County) can't afford to give these services to people, The Effort can go in where local governments lack the resources," said Tilton, who has 20 employees and estimates the company has donated about \$30,000 to The Effort over the years. "They can step in, because they have the structure and the experience to do it."

Started in 1953, The Effort attempts to keep families mentally and physically healthy as a way to deter crime. In 2005, the nonprofit merged with the Family Service Agency, effectively doubling its budget — and reach.

The Effort started offering health care services in 1970, and its clinic at 1820 J St. has become a valuable safety net in a time of dwindling county resources. The community clinic serves 5,000 Medi-Cal, uninsured or underinsured patients annually. The clinic is staffed by doctors, nurse practitioners and medical assistants. It offers free appointments or it charges on a sliding scale for Medi-Cal patients.

"I've seen people down there at the clinic, the doctors and the businesspeople," Tilton said. "They could be making lots of money elsewhere, but they're there because they want to help."

Robert Caulk, executive director of The Effort, said donations and volunteers have allowed the nonprofit to open three full-service clinics and seven other sites for services such as alcohol and drug addiction treatment, mental health services, family therapy and family planning.

The Effort also runs a respite care shelter for homeless patients discharged from hospitals, and provides mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment programs at St. John's Shelter Program for homeless women and children.

"We're trying to create a network of services for mental and health care services for adults, children and families," Caulk said. "These services reduce the demand at emergency rooms. We get great support from individuals and businesses in Sacramento."

[Kaiser Permanente](#), Sutter Health Foundation, Mercy Healthcare Services and UC Davis Health System contribute money, sometimes in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, Caulk said. Private businesses — such as Tilton Pacific, Brown Construction and Vasco Electric — volunteered their time and expertise to the \$1 million renovation of the headquarters and main clinic in 2008.

"They made in-kind donations, discounted and donated labor," Caulk said. "These guys really got involved."

Businesses also generate interest in fundraisers, such as Chip in Fore Charity, a golf event that benefits The Effort.

"We try to get people to participate in The Effort, and raise awareness about the programs," Tilton said. "We do a lot of behind-the-scenes fundraising."

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