

HEALTH COMMISSION RECOGNITION PROGRAM NOMINATION DPH ZSFG 2025 Awards

The Administrators on Duty (AODs) are:

- Shino Honda
- Melissa Pitts
- James Alonso
- Dave Staconis
- Jeffrey Schmidt

This small team deserves recognition for their exceptional leadership and steadfast commitment to overseeing the entire hospital's operations 24/7. This small but mighty team serves as the central point of coordination for the hospital, ensuring continuity of care, safety, and operations in even the most challenging circumstances.

AODs manage complex and high-stakes situations daily, from patient flow pressures and staffing challenges to unexpected disasters and critical incidents. They bring calm, sound judgment, and decisive action to situations that affect every unit and department across ZSFG. Their work is not limited to problem-solving in the moment; AODs also anticipate risks, support staff at all levels, and ensure resources are mobilized quickly to protect patients and providers alike.

The AOD Team exemplifies integration across divisions by bridging clinical, administrative, and support functions in real time. AODs embody the values of innovation, collaboration, and safety improvement—adapting to constantly evolving challenges while modeling resilience and professionalism. Their efforts not only safeguard hospital operations but also uphold public trust in ZSFG as the city's essential safety net hospital.

This team deserves special recognition for their unwavering presence, extraordinary ability to manage crises, and commitment to ensuring that ZSFG remains a place of healing, dignity, and excellence for San Francisco's most vulnerable communities.

Let's show our appreciation with a round of applause.

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The ZSFG Environmental Services Team has made exceptional contributions to patient care, hospital operations, and the overall experience of those the hospital serves. Their work is essential to ensuring a safe, efficient, and healing environment for patients, staff, and visitors.

The team's impact is seen across multiple dimensions:

- **Supporting Access and Flow:** By consistently turning over patient rooms and beds in a timely manner, the Team plays a direct and vital role in patient throughput, reducing delays in admissions and transfers, and supporting hospitalwide access and flow initiatives.
- **Capital Project Support:** The team partners closely with the Capital Projects team, ensuring that construction and renovation projects across campus are cleaned and readied thoroughly for safe patient care and staff use. Their efforts help accelerate project completion while maintaining the highest standards of safety and cleanliness.
- **Enhancing Patient Experience:** These staff contribute significantly to patient satisfaction and regulatory outcomes by creating a clean, welcoming, and safe environment. Their professionalism and attention to detail directly influence how patients and families experience ZSFG.
- **Strengthening Workforce Engagement:** The Team exemplifies positivity and teamwork. They approach their work with joy and pride, uplifting the culture of the hospital and setting a standard for employee engagement and morale.

Through these contributions, the Environmental Services Team demonstrates best practices, cross-departmental collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to public health. Their work often takes place behind the scenes, yet it is foundational to ZSFG's ability to deliver high-quality care. They deserve special recognition for the essential role they play in advancing our mission and supporting both patients and staff.

Let's give this team a round of applause.

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The CHC HealthySteps Program, adopted in April 2019 at the ZSFG Children's Health Center (CHC), is an evidence-based integrated behavioral health model that capitalizes on early well-child pediatric visits, promoting early childhood mental health by addressing caregiver mental health and well-being. With 80% of brain development occurring by age 3, early childhood preventive care is a high-value intervention for the overall burden of mental health in the population. In this young age, child development and wellness are particularly influenced by the caregiving context – the mental health and wellness of the caregiver has a direct impact on the health of the child. From the onset, HealthySteps implementation involved a collaborative process with caregivers, clinicians, system leaders, and community partners to ensure the model was sustainable and reflected the lived experiences of families. The program has grown to have a significant impact, becoming an integral and critical component of pediatric primary care at ZSFG and beyond. The team now consists of 12 clinicians, staff, and trainees, many of whom are bilingual and/or bicultural to serve our patient population. The success of the model has led the team to expand the work beyond CHC and train other SFHN clinics on this model of integrated pediatric behavioral health care, and it has been adopted as the model among the SFHN network. Most impressively, their impact and success, partnered with direct advocacy, have led to state-level changes in preventative services billing, resulting in the creation of brand-new dyadic services billing codes. This huge gain has directly led to long-term sustainability of the HealthySteps service through billing and revenue generation and has resulted in state-wide attention. CHC Healthy Steps is now recognized by DHCS as a statewide model of excellence for this work and continues to partner with clinics and community agencies throughout California to train, educate, and adopt this model in other community settings.

CHC HealthySteps (HS) has driven measurable effectiveness across multiple domains, including:

- **Greater screening rates:** Through HealthySteps, CHC has improved the integration of screening into routine care. From 2020 to 2025, screening rates increased for food insecurity (from 0% to 96%), developmental delays (71% to 85%), autism (from 58% to 87%), and postpartum caregiver mental health (from 57% to 86%). This led to the recent expansion of services to include annual social-emotional screening.
- **Increased access to timely behavioral health supports:** As of FY 2025, over 9,000 dyadic behavioral health visits have been provided to more than 3,000 children under age 6, compared to no such visits prior to 2019. CHC has achieved a behavioral health penetration rate exceeding 30% for patients ages 0–5 empaneled to CHC, compared to approximately 6% in SFHN clinics with no HS program and just 2% statewide.
- **Enhanced Care Coordination:** HS dedicated a role for care navigation and enhanced case management (ECM) for families with a child experiencing developmental delays. Since 2021, CHC has made 860 referrals to the Early Start program through the federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). HS provides care coordination and support to over 60% of these families, compared to none prior to the program.
- **Practice transformation for providers at the CHC:** HS promoted meaningful shifts in clinic culture and provider experience. A 2021 provider survey showed 100% of respondents agreed HS improves the care they provide and benefits the clinic overall. Providers note more capacity to meet families' complex needs and less stress during high-acuity visits.

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We are so pleased to honor the Emergency Department Triage Taskforce

Emergency Department (ED) crowding and high rates of patients leaving without being seen jeopardize patient safety and our mission to “provide healthcare and trauma services with compassion and respect.” Coming out of the pandemic at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital (ZSFG), the only level-1 trauma center and safety-net hospital in San Francisco, our LWBS rate reached over 10% in December 2022, well above national benchmarks and effecting our most vulnerable patients.

In 2023, the team planned and launched an Emergency Department triage redesign initiative grounded in improvement science, psychological safety, and staff/patient voice. A multidisciplinary Triage Improvement Task Force that included nurses, physicians, advanced practice providers, KPO quality improvement specialists, and executive sponsors convened to map the triage process, analyze electronic health record throughput data, and review over 4,000 patient experience surveys. We paired data analysis with empathy-driven exercises, staff surveys across all shifts, and role simulations to generate solutions that show lasting impact.

Interventions included new roles (e.g. a nursing Triage Team Lead, a Patient Experience Specialist for ED visitor management), standard work for triage functions, refined staffing models, and capital improvements such as interpreter phones and ergonomic upgrades. Communication relied on daily huddles, weekly updates, and iterative Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles (PDSA) fully integrated into our lean management system.

The leave without being seen rate dropped from 7.4% to 5.4% within three months and has remained under 2% for consecutive months in 2025. Inequity gaps narrowed significantly, with a 63% reduction in LWBS disparities for Black/African American patients. Patient experience scores improved, daily discharges from triage increased, and staff satisfaction rose. This initiative demonstrates how persistence and frontline engagement can drive lasting redesign in the post-pandemic era.

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Core Lab Team – ZSFG

The ZSFG Core Lab Team exhibits exceptional dedication, professionalism, and impact on patient care. As a 24/7 operation, the Core Lab is a cornerstone of ZSFG's ability to deliver timely, accurate diagnostic results that guide critical clinical decisions every day. Their work embodies excellence, collaboration, and a deep commitment to our mission. This year, the Core Lab Team has taken on several major initiatives that demonstrate innovation, resilience, and best practices in healthcare delivery:

- **Epic Beaker Transition:** The team is leading the transition to Epic Beaker, going live on October 21, 2025. This represents a transformative upgrade to the laboratory information system, improving integration with clinical workflows and ensuring faster, more reliable communication of results. The team's preparation, training, and validation work have been exemplary, setting a strong foundation for success.
- **Capital Project and Equipment Upgrades:** Alongside this major IT transition, the Core Lab has undergone a full capital improvement project — including construction upgrades and the installation of new state-of-the-art analyzers. The team has maintained full operations while managing construction disruptions and continuous testing validations, demonstrating extraordinary adaptability and professionalism.
- **Commitment to Quality and Safety:** Operating around the clock, the Core Lab ensures that every test result meets the highest standards of accuracy and reliability. Their continuous validation efforts and focus on quality control safeguard patient safety and clinical trust in every result produced.
- **Excellence in Teamwork and Service:** The Core Lab Team takes their work very seriously, understanding the critical role they play in patient outcomes. They work with precision, pride, and purpose which is often behind the scenes but always at the heart of patient care.

Through their technical expertise, innovation, and unwavering commitment to excellence, the Core Lab Team exemplifies the best of ZSFG and DPH. Their efforts not only improve patient outcomes but also strengthen the infrastructure and reliability of our healthcare system for years to come.

Let's give this exceptional team a round of applause.