

## West Orange expansion nearing completion

### Site to serve 6,500 patients

Despite a pandemic, supply-chain disruptions, and many other unanticipated delays, Zufall's nearly completed West Orange site is expected to open this summer.

"It has been a long and challenging journey," noted Foundation Director Shade Cronan, "but we're making great progress with the exterior largely completed, and the focus now shifting to interior work."

The three-story, state-of-the-art building replaces the modest Northfield Avenue office, which was opened in 2014, as well as nearby leased space that jointly serve 4,400 patients annually. In the first year of operation, Zufall projects that its services will be extended to 6,500 patients in 20,000 visits -- a nearly 48-percent increase.

Originally planned as a 10,000-square-foot structure, the design was expanded to 15,000 square feet to accommodate the area's surging need for affordable

care as well as upgrades necessary to meet improved safety and health care practices. (See Director's Message on Page 3.)

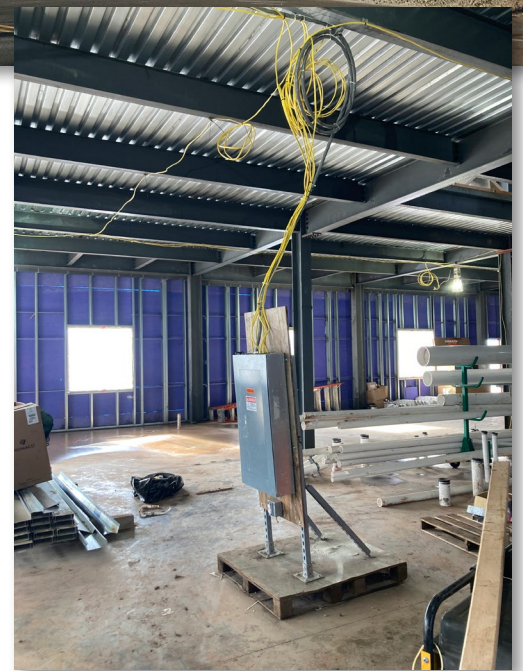
The result is a modern health care center that consolidates all West Orange activities under one roof and facilitates the efficient integration of all services. With eight medical exam rooms and six dental operatories, the site will also contain areas designated for:

- Behavioral health
- Laboratory services
- Patient support, education programs, and wellness activities
- Administrative staff
- Training
- A demonstration kitchen
- Meeting space for community programs and expanding community partnerships

Centrally located at 49 Mount Pleasant Avenue, the building is conveniently near downtown, low-income neighborhoods, senior housing, and New Jersey Transit bus stops.

Besides the pandemic, the project was beset with multiple disruptions along with roaring inflation – all of which helped push its budget to \$10.5 million.

Zufall is financing this cost with \$1.2 million in grants from



Exterior construction (top) is nearly finished while interior work (bottom) is underway for a long-anticipated summer opening.



## BUILD WITH US

*Bridging the Gap*

In this issue devoted to our new West Orange site, we are kicking off "Bridging the Gap", a short-term capital campaign to help defray unexpected construction costs. Learn more about it from Foundation Director Shade Cronan on Page 3.

the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as well as corporate and private donations. A mortgage loan will fund the balance.



# Why we're expanding in West Orange

When Zufall decided to open a satellite office in Essex County, some wondered why we chose West Orange, a town commonly perceived as an affluent suburban community.

Although the average home price approaches \$400,000, the facts show that West Orange has a significant low-income, uninsured population living in pockets of poverty. A total of 29 percent of residents either live at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level or earn more than the official poverty level, but less than the basic cost of living. There is also a sizeable underserved population living in adjacent communities.

Prior to Zufall opening our health center there in 2014, affordable care was only available at community health centers in Irvington and East Orange where just 10 percent of West Orange area

residents were being served. Because few local physicians accept uninsured patients, that left more than 7,000 low-income West Orange residents without



desperately needed access to care. Expecting to accommodate about 3,000 patients a year, the Northfield Avenue site quickly reached capacity while establishing itself as an important resource to the greater West Orange area. "We consider Zufall a great partner in working together to improve the health of the community," said Michael

Fonzino, director of the West Orange Department of Health and Welfare. "Of course, the health center was especially helpful during the pandemic by providing testing and vaccinations throughout the area, but we also frequently refer residents for a variety of services," Fonzino noted. "And when we've faced cutbacks in staff and programs, Zufall has been there to provide services we can no longer offer."

Last year, 4,510 patients were treated in 15,639 visits, a 21 percent increase compared to 2019. When Zufall moves into the new building this summer, the site will accommodate 6,500 patients.

"With the new health center conveniently located near our senior housing, we're really looking forward to all the added benefits it will bring seniors as well as the whole community," said Fonzino.

## YOUR DONATION AT WORK

### New state grant helps Zufall combat HIV epidemic

A \$650,000 grant from the New Jersey Department of Health is allowing Zufall to significantly expand its program of HIV prevention, testing, and treatment, primarily to its West Orange site. The funding, which will

also be applied to programs at Zufall's other offices, is part of a state initiative to reduce new HIV infections and end the HIV epidemic in New Jersey by 2025.

According to data collected by the state, nearly 38,000 people are living with HIV or AIDS in New Jersey. Among the 21 counties, Essex had the highest prevalence with about 9,400 cases.

"This grant brings West Orange a new, comprehensive system of care that not only facilitates access and provides important services to a population in great need, but will help impact the

global HIV/AIDS crisis," said Rina Ramirez, M.D., Zufall's chief medical officer.

More specifically, the health center is utilizing a multidisciplinary team to provide a full spectrum of services including bilingual outreach; education and engagement; testing and diagnosis; prevention and risk-reduction strategies; and treatment in a culturally sensitive manner and with a trauma-informed approach. To improve access, Zufall will offer expanded office hours to include evenings and weekends as well as provide case management and other supportive services.

Currently serving 250 HIV patients across seven counties, Zufall will be able to accommodate as many as 700 patients once the program is fully implemented.



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

### We need help in 'Bridging the Gap'

The last several months have been an exciting time for us as we've watched our new West Orange building taking shape. But from site acquisition through design and construction approvals, we've faced a series of unexpected obstacles that caused significant and costly delays. Two years alone were lost just to conduct environmental and historical studies required by the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office.

And then came the pandemic.

Not only did COVID-19 impede our fundraising efforts and construction timetable, but it necessitated revising the building's design to accommodate new health practices, safety features, and the growing demand for services. Our two-story building is now a three-story, 15,000-square-foot facility and

its original cost – impacted by design changes and inflation -- has more than doubled to \$10.2 million.

When we first announced this project and our "Build With Us" capital campaign, we set a fundraising goal and planned to finance the remaining cost. However, that gap has now widened considerably.

That's why we're launching a new, abbreviated capital campaign to help us in "Bridging the Gap." The more funds we raise, the less we will burden Zufall with future debt. The more we bridge the gap, the more resources we can devote to enhancing our services to the community and growing our impact on our patients' health.

Every gift makes a difference (See giving levels on Page 4). Whether you have already contributed or are a new donor, we hope you will consider joining this effort and staying involved. We're truly grateful for your support and look



Eva Turbiner (right), Zufall's outgoing president and chief executive officer, and her successor, Fran Palm, review construction plans at the site.

forward to celebrating with you at our West Orange opening later this year.

Be Well!

*Shade Cronan*

## Why We Give

### Long-time funders commit to West Orange

Shortly after Zufall announced plans to expand its West Orange site, several long-time supporters including Partners for Health Foundation, The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, and Delta Dental of New Jersey welcomed the opportunity to be part of the project.

"We are so grateful for the early and generous commitments we received from these inaugural funders who recognized the community need and were excited to help us," said Shade Cronan, Zufall Health Foundation director.

Over the years, support from Partners for Health Foundation has significantly impacted Zufall programs, especially outreach to the homeless population.

"We've always been impressed with the health center's programs, quality of services, and respectful care and we're quite excited about the West Orange expansion," said Pam Scott, Partners for Health executive director. "As Zufall is the only federally qualified

health center within our 13-town Essex County service area, this new facility will fulfill a very important need."

Support from The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey has been instrumental



in helping launch and grow Zufall's prenatal program in West Orange. This new funding extends its commitment to improving maternal health.

"We are proud to be supporting the construction of the prenatal suite within the West Orange facility in furtherance

of that goal," said Michael Schmidt, The Healthcare Foundation's executive director and chief executive officer. "The state-of-the-art facility will help Zufall continue to provide excellent care, while expanding its reach within the community to more patients and helping prevent pre-term births, poor birth outcomes, and maternal health complications."

For many years, Zufall and Delta Dental of New Jersey have partnered to provide free or low-cost dental care to veterans, especially at our annual, jointly sponsored "Smiles For Our Heroes" event. The organization also funded the Zufall Health Delta Dental Mobile and a new dental assistant training program.

"We are thrilled to be able to participate in Zufall's endeavor to grow so it can help and better serve more people," said Ronald Deblinger, D.M.D., chairman of the board of Delta Dental of New Jersey.

"Through our years of collaboration, we couldn't have asked for a better partner. We strongly encourage others to get involved in this wonderful new project."

# Bridging the Gap

## Capital Campaign Donor Levels

\$100,000+	CORNERSTONE FOUNDERS
\$50,000 TO \$99,999	PATRONS
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	BENEFACTORS
\$10,000 TO \$24,999	SPONSORS
\$5,000 TO \$9,999	CHAMPIONS
\$1,000 TO \$4,999	SUPPORTERS
\$500 TO \$999	FRIENDS
\$1 TO \$499	DONORS

  
**BUILD WITH US**  
*Bridging the Gap*

Please consider joining our Bridging the Gap Campaign.

To make a donation, visit  
<https://zufallhealthfoundation.org/donate/>

For more information, contact  
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