

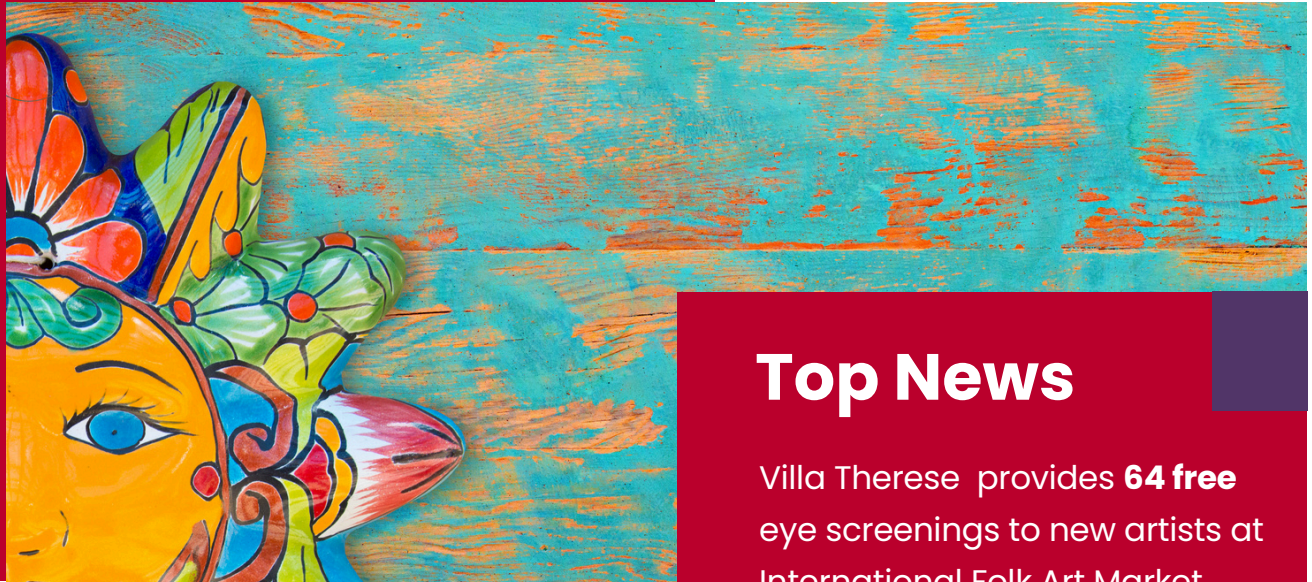
# VILLA THERESE NEWSLETTER

[WWW.VILLATHERESE.ORG](http://WWW.VILLATHERESE.ORG)



Villa Therese  
CATHOLIC CLINIC

July 2024



## Villa Therese – growing strong since 1937

As we enter the last half of the year, Villa Therese is more optimistic than ever to continue our growth and fulfill the mission of serving the underserved.

Our hardworking team continues to find new ways to reach out and serve those in the community that need healthcare the most. Creating equitable access to healthcare is our mission, and we aren't stopping now!

### Top News

Villa Therese provides **64 free** eye screenings to new artists at International Folk Art Market.

Villa Therese Catholic Clinic hires new Executive Director. Mark McDonald, 32, shares a bit about himself – page 4.



01/06

Can you give \$5/month?  
Details on page 6!



## EYE-mazing Facts

- Over 80% of our brains processing is from our vision.
- Every second, your eye changes focus over 50 times.
- There are over 1 million nerves connecting your each eye to your brain.

• REFERENCE: <https://www.optometrists.org/general-practice-optometry/guide-to-eye-health/eye-mazing-facts-about-eyes/>

### • **DID YOU KNOW?**

Villa Therese provides FREE eye care at our clinic. With two volunteer providers, VTCC runs eye clinics weekly, where we provide eye exams and prescriptions for corrective lenses when needed.

ALL AT NO COST TO OUR PATIENTS!

## EyeCare for IFAM

On July 9th, Villa Therese staff attended a conference for 60 artists who are new to the International Folk Art Market this year. These artists, from all over the world, do not have easy access to eye care at home. Villa Therese, partnering with the team from IFAM, provided free eye screenings to these artists. If these artists need prescription glasses after their eye screenings, they received a pair for free, as well!

IFAM, who is committed to creating opportunities for traditional folk artists from around the world, is a pivotal organization, helping preserve tradition and promote art. Villa Therese is beyond excited to be able to join them in helping these artists preserve and correct their vision so their art can continue to influence and inspire so many.

“The world truly is a better place because of art and artists. Being able to serve these artists is such an honor and our team is ready for this mission”, Mark McDonald, Executive Director for Villa Therese said. (See More on page 5)



www.villathere.org

# EYE Care for IFAM

SEE THEIR ART!



# Villa Therese Hires New Executive Director

On June 18th, 2024, Mark McDonald walked through the door of the Villa Therese Catholic Clinic as an employee for the first time.

“Walking into the clinic and feeling the history and the impact that this organization has had on the community was overwhelming. Being asked to be a part of it, well I don’t quite know how to really put it into words,” McDonald said.

In June, the Board of Directors approved McDonald as the new Executive Director of the organization, after a several month period of not having a leader at the helm. “During that time, the board really stepped up and provided a lot of leadership to the organization. I am so excited to join such a great team of doers, and ready to get to work to expand our mission,” said McDonald.

McDonald joins Villa Therese with a broad background, “all of which has been aimed at preserving and expanding equitable access to quality healthcare”. First as a paramedic/critical care paramedic, McDonald has served New Mexico as a licensed provider for the last 13 years. He brings experience in corporate healthcare business management, as well as project management for international medical work and Director level leadership for non-profit organizations.

“Villa Therese Catholic Clinic has such a rich and impactful history in the community. Being the only free clinic in the entire state adds a lot of pressure to their mission, but time and time again they have risen to the challenge to serve. Now, as we prepare for new challenges in an evolving world, I am so very ready and confident that this team will rise to the occasion again, to serve.

Villa Therese Catholic Clinic has been in Santa Fe since 1937, and offers medical, dental, and vision care to those who are most underserved, under/uninsured.

To schedule and appointment, please call 505.983.8561



## What is an Executive Director?

An executive director is the senior operating officer or manager of an organization or corporation, usually at a nonprofit. Similar in many ways to the CEO role in a for-profit corporation, executive directors are responsible for steering the organization and managing its operations.



Meet Jabulile and her niece Phumeile. Jabulile is an artist from South Africa who is NOT a new artist to IFAM, but is accompanying her niece Phumeile who is a first time IFAM artist. Jabulile told Villa Therese staff that in her village in South Africa, she runs a women's group of artists, including her niece. "Many of the artists in my village can not see close up when they work on their art," Jabulile said. "Having my own glasses now that helps me see, helps me continue my art with my niece."



A similar encounter by Villa Therese staff, artist Mir, seen here wearing a cloth that he hand embroidered, said "sometimes I can't see to do my art." After visiting and being screened by Villa Therese staff, Mir said "I can't wait to do more art with better vision. Thank you so much for being here."



"Sometimes when I am trying to see upclose when I stitch, I can't see what I am doing and I get frustrated," said Phumeile. After her screening it was found that she needed a pair of prescription glasses. "I have never had glasses before. This will help me with my art," said Phumeile, who teared up as she saw clearer after her script was matched with a pair of free glasses.

"The excitement that the artists feel when they get the glasses and they can see better. Many of them come from poor communities and don't have access to this. So the joy of seeing them get what they need is awesome. It's so great that the clinic is also able to take their blood pressures and provide basic oral hygiene guidelines, as well. It's just a wonderful experience of the world that many people don't get," Marty Braniff, board member of IFAM said.



An artist from Guatemala poses for a picture after receiving an eye screening and a new pair of prescription glasses



Artists from around the world line up for their free eye screenings

# A Letter from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hi all!

Mark McDonald here. As the new Executive Director of Villa Therese Catholic Clinic I wanted to share a little bit about myself and WHY my first e-Mails have been about.....monthly donations!

Having grown up in northern New Mexico, I know the value of a hard earned dollar. I come from a modest family, and to say that a dollar is “just a dollar” is silly to me - and that is true now more than ever. My grandfather was a rancher who raised horses and when it came to the feed bill for his horses, every dollar mattered. He used to tell me that every single penny makes a difference in the ability of our horses to eat. He taught me the value of every red cent and instilled in me a sense of the power of each penny.

Having worked abroad, it never ceased to amaze me how incredibly powerful a dollar continued to be - especially when it comes to the impact of health on lives. For example, when I was in Sierra Leone, a dollar could purchase a full day’s dressings for our patient’s burn wounds. When I was running clinics in Mexico, \$5 could purchase a full course of antibiotics for our patients.

Now, as part of the team at Villa Therese, I want to share with you just how IMPORTANT every single cent is. While it is true that providing quality healthcare is more expensive here in the United States than in other places I have led teams of healthcare providers, location does not change the impact of every single penny - and while \$5 here may not cover as “much”, materialistically, let me share with you what a monthly commitment to donating \$5 can do:

**Project sustainability:** With a recurring donation, our team is able to count on the continued support from our donors and we are able to keep our mission going - this means we are able to expand our donor base, as well, which allows us to expand our mission.

**Increased Donor Engagement/Experience:** You may not think of it as such, but your donation creates a unique partnership with our organization. By committing to donate even \$5/month, you are increasing your visibility with the organization, and on average, contributing more annually than you would if you gave a one-time donation per year. Which also leads to.....

**Sustained Impact:** As the most important part of our work, our patients continue to benefit from every single penny that comes to the organization. Helping people is the goal, and your commitment to supporting us monthly really helps us get there.

(Below you can find a link to sign up to donate monthly!)

I typically don’t write long e-Mails, but over the next few months, I hope to share a journey with you as I get to know you, and vice versa, which may mean a few more long(er) e-Mails so that I can share with you WHY I am so passionate about the work we are doing here at Villa Therese Catholic Clinic.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns and again, thank you for your warm welcome to the VTCC family.

In Health,

Mark McDonald

To donate monthly, visit  
[www.villatherese.org](http://www.villatherese.org)