

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION PARTNERS GIVE PATIENTS THE GIFT OF SIGHT ON THEIR BIRTHDAY

SAN DIEGO, April 24, 2014---- Jorge Reyna and Gregoria Dominguez will both celebrate birthdays this Saturday. And they will get the best birthday gifts of their lives; the gift of sight. On Saturday, Jorge and Gregoria will be able to see for first time in many years.

Six uninsured community members will have life-changing surgeries performed pro bono thanks to a partnership between the [San Diego County Medical Society Foundation \(SDCMF\)](http://www.sdcmf.org) and [Surgery One's](#) Outpatient Surgery Center of La Jolla on Saturday, April 26, 2014.

Ophthalmologists Michelle Cho, MD, and Alison Gordon, MD of [Gordon-Weiss-Schanzlin Vision Institute](#) will provide pro bono eye surgeries to assist six adults regain their sight.

Surgeries will be performed at Surgery One's Outpatient Surgery Center of La Jolla located at 4120 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla, CA 92037.

The surgeons will perform five cataract surgeries and one pterygium removal. Sometimes called Surfer's Eye, pterygium is a common condition in individuals who spend a lot of time outdoors without sunglasses. Thirty-year-old Guillermo Callejas has suffered from pterygium for 12 years. He has worked as an avocado picker for the past eight years but recently his condition has severely affected his vision and the constant irritation to his eye has made it difficult to work. Saturday's procedure will return his sight and he will be able to return to work.

Jorge used to work in landscaping, but now he collects bottles and cans for recycling in order to earn money. Cataracts have so impaired Jorge's vision that he is unable to do much anymore. On Saturday, Jorge will not only celebrate turning 83, but he will celebrate the return of his vision thanks to Dr. Cho and her team.

Gregoria's cataracts have become so thick she can no longer walk around her own living unassisted. She is unable to recognize her husband when he walks into the room and she is unable to care for her grandchildren. On Saturday, Gregoria will not only celebrate her birthday but she will be able to see herself in the mirror for the first time in two years.

SDCMSF Project Access San Diego has worked with the area's community health centers that provide primary care services and refer patients to Project Access for specialty care needs since 2008, providing life-changing health care to nearly 2,500 San Diego residents. "Our patients are our community's most vulnerable," says SDCMSF Executive Director Barbara Mandel. "We could not help patients get back to health without the partnership of Surgery One and its Outpatient Surgery Center of La Jolla."

Scott Leggett, CEO of Surgery One said, "We've been supporting the efforts of the SDCMSF Project Access for many years and are grateful to our physicians, anesthesiologists and staff who donate their time to ensure the success of this critical community outreach program that addresses critical medical needs. With their support, we're able to transform the lives of patients in need and restore them to an active, productive life."

Cho has worked with Project Access San Diego for a little more than a year and Gordon has served for more than three years. "I wanted to be involved in the community and somehow give back," says Gordon. "Project Access provides a nice way to do that. The patients that I've met and seen here have just been the nicest, really appreciative patients who otherwise wouldn't be able to carry on with their daily activities or work because of their vision. "

About the San Diego County Medical Society Foundation

Founded by the San Diego County Medical Society (SDCMS) in 2005 as a 501c3 not-for-profit organization, the San Diego [County Medical Society Foundation](http://www.sdcmsf.org) (SDCMSF) addresses the unmet healthcare needs of low-income uninsured or underinsured San Diego County residents. The Foundation focuses on increasing healthcare access, improving health education and prevention, and supporting physicians and medical students in improving the quality of care in the community. Through its flagship program, [Project Access San Diego](http://www.sdcmsf.org), SDCMSF has assisted nearly 2,500 patients with access to specialty healthcare services. Healthcare partners, including nearly 625 specialty medical physicians, 25 hospitals and surgery centers, and numerous imaging, laboratory and ancillary providers, have provided patients with more than \$8 million in donated healthcare services. For more information about SDCMSF please visit <http://www.sdcmsf.org>.

About Surgery One

Surgery One is a medical industry leader in San Diego County with a network of outpatient surgical centers located in Carlsbad, La Jolla, Otay Lakes and mid-town (Kearny Villa Road). The surgery centers offer a wide variety of surgical service lines ranging from orthopedic sports medicine, spine, pain management, ENT, general surgery, gastroenterology, and cardiology. Call (760) 602-7872 or visit www.surgeryone.com for additional information.

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