



# San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic

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***“The S.C.O.R. ⇄E.™ process has given us a pathway,  
leading us to where we want to be.”***  
- David Phipps, Executive Director, SACDC

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In 1986, a group of men and women realized there was a need to help those less fortunate obtain vital dental care. With one dental chair, and a small team of volunteers, the mission of [San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic](http://www.sachristiandental.org/) (SACDC) <http://www.sachristiandental.org/> was born.

Nearly 25 years later, the facility has been transformed, but thanks to a corps of volunteers – many of whom have been with the clinic for 15 years or more – the mission to serve remains the same.

“Dental care is the kind of thing people put off,” said David Phipps, Executive Director of SACDC. “And when they do, people suffer.”

Rose Maldonado, San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic Administrator, echoes the importance of SACDC’s mission. “We rehabilitate more than just their teeth, we give the patient back his self-esteem,” Maldonado said. “In many cases, simply by boosting their self-esteem, these individuals become employable and therefore productive citizens, reducing the amount of tax dollars the city uses.”

When SACDC became one of the first tenants at Haven for Hope in March 2009, Phipps realized with the change in address, there had to be a change in momentum. “There was a crosspoint where we had to decide whether to move forward or stay the same.” He contacted KMAC & Associates, and the first step in a crucial relationship-building effort was taken.

Following a Housewarming in September 2009, during which the community got its first look at SACDC’s new, expanded and updated facilities, the relationships that are so important to sustaining the organization once again emerged. “The open house brought old friends and supporters back into the fold,” said Kathy MacNaughton, owner of KMAC & Associates. “It really told the San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic’s story well.”

With the success of the Housewarming, came the understanding that it was time to move to the next step.

Phipps and Maldonado gathered up a group of volunteers, dentists and board members, and they turned to MacNaughton to begin the S.C.O.R. ⇄E.™ process. Quickly, Phipps said it was apparent they were on the right track, since the goals and opportunities they discovered were so closely linked to the

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mission and the strategic plan SACDC already had outlined for themselves. “We have the basic structure, now we’re in the execution stage,” said Phipps.

In 2009, SACDC served 6,000 patients and that number is growing as 2010 comes to a close. Even as SACDC doubled its space, the waiting time for new patients is now 90 days, due to increased visibility following the relocation to Haven For Hope. SACDC is heavily supported by foundations, but they need to cultivate more individual donors, as well as build new relationships with churches in the community that can become partners in their mission. Continuing with the S.C.O.R. ⇄ E.™ process is helping the SACDC team build that bridge of community partnership.

But there was another idea at play.

“Because we’re coming up on our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we wanted to do something,” said Phipps. “We didn’t know what, we just knew we didn’t want to do ‘just another gala.’”

Moving away from ~~special events~~ and toward “relationship-building” activities is what S.C.O.R. ⇄ E.™ is all about.

As the SACDC team envisions its anniversary celebration, S.C.O.R. ⇄ E.™ is helping them realize the evening is less about the pomp and circumstance of a ~~special event~~, and more about sharing the unique story of the San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic, and inviting people to share in the joy of being part of that story.

The model for San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic is unique; all of the dentists and dental hygienists are volunteers who donate their time. Forty-seven of the 120 dentists included in Scene in SA magazine’s “Top Dentists” issue last spring volunteer at SACDC. SACDC also has a partnership with The University of Texas Health Science Center Dental School, which allows more than fifty 4<sup>th</sup> year students to do part of their elective coursework at the clinic. The dentists, hygienists and students are complemented by an army of volunteers who help keep the clinics running efficiently, while always keeping their focus on patient care. “Their patience, desire to learn, dedication, loyalty and compassion toward our patients is tremendous,” Maldonado said. Their commitment to the community was evident when the clinic’s volunteers were named the Outstanding Service Organization for The Association of Fundraising Professionals’ National Philanthropy Day in November. “Our volunteers are the heart and soul of the clinic,” Maldonado said. “Without them, it is extremely difficult to carry out our mission.” And that need for volunteers never goes away. “Recruiting more dental professionals is one of the biggest challenges facing SACDC,” said Phipps.

The S.C.O.R. ⇄ E.™ process is teaching SACDC to build those core relationships, while being strategic in diversifying their funding and gifts to reflect a larger, stronger donor base of people who care. “We are here to serve the patients,” said Phipps. “If we don’t have resources and volunteers to do that, the number of patients we can serve is diminished.”