

ZACHRY EMPLOYEES VISIT BRAZOSPORT MEDICAL CENTER

Zachry at Ineos Chocolate Bayou is nestled between the Gulf of Mexico and coastal salt grass in southern Brazoria County. The 2400 acre site that takes in clear and saltwater estuaries, marshland and wildlife is located about 50 miles south of Houston. About one-third of the site is used for producing Propylene, Ethylene and Polypropylene. The 200 plus employees that make up the companies Industrial Services Division quickly adopted the company's philosophy of giving back to the community. Each year a couple of employees go and visit an organization that is funded by United Way so that they can tell the "real story" during the campaign. This year it was the Brazosport Medical Center.

The Freeport area has been considered nationally as an impoverished community. A local doctor saw a great need for affordable healthcare. His vision, the Brazosport Medical Center became a reality in 1998 offering medical, dental, prescription and optical care for low income individuals. In mid September Zachry employees Lance Smith and Gabriel Sanchez visited the site and talked with its Director Nola Copus. Copus says although they do receive some HUD funding, the remainder comes from United Way. They provide this health care to some 22 to 25 thousand individuals annually, with 8 to 9 thousand being new or different patients. They can take 19-thousand dollars and stretch it to provide more than 52-thousand dollars worth of care. The medical staff and Ms. Copus are the only one's receiving a salary, everything else is volunteer. Zachry employee contributions make a huge difference in these poverty stricken individual's lives. Just a two dollar employee contribution allows patients to pay just 35 dollars for an exam, X-ray and tooth extraction. 85 dollars buys them a new pair of prescription glasses. Larry, who just needs a break as he seeks full time employment, had an abscessed tooth and was in a lot of pain. He says the BMC is very important to him. He says it means a lot to know he has a place to go to during tough economic times. One gentleman in the Optical Office (wouldn't give his name) echoed the same. "This place is very important to me. I'm on Medicaid and I'm just a little down on my luck right now." Amanda has 3 children (7,8 &10). She sits with the youngest and visits with us in one of the doctor's waiting areas. "It's very comforting when you need to find a doctor or dentist. Plus the kids like the doctors and nurses here. That means a lot to a parent. You know, peace of mind!" Copus says the BMC also offers indigent care as wells as food stamp assistance for pregnant women and their children up to age 5. She's determined to help the needy and Zachry employees at Job# 7421 can always be counted on to do their part.



Written by Lance Smith, Zachry Industrial at Ineos Chocolate Bayou.