In the shadows a coward makes their mark

On June 23, the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley (IHC) was the target of racially motivated violence in the form of vandalism. The words “White Power Forever” was scrawled across the side walk. Chief Executive Officer, Sonya Tetnowski is member of the Makah Tribe, she shared her outrage, “In the shadows, a coward defaced our facility with racist comments. They did this in the dark, afraid to be seen. Motivated by the darkness they carry, they attempt to exert their power while hiding in the shadows; but we will not accept this attack on our clinic and our community.”

The Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley is an Urban Indian Health Organization, which has been serving the greater Santa Clara County for 43 years providing quality medical, dental and behavioral health services to all. The IHC was founded by and is currently governed by the American Indian community members; in a call to the community, the organization asks that the community stand in solidarity with IHC to expose and report, those who are inflicting their hatred on the community and the thousands of others who have lived through this hatred. This statement is just one of thousands of recent
incidents that show that we as a society still have a long way to go in stamping out violence fueled by hate, ignorance, negative biases and stereotypes.

Mrs. Tetnowski further shared a message of hope, “American Indians are resilient people – we have survived generations of injustice and we will continue to rise above it, growing stronger from each experience. The Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley will continue to serve and support greater community here in Santa Clara County. We will not be detoured from our mission.”

We, the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley is built on a legacy of standing up against injustice, and making all feel welcome, made this final statement, “IHC will stand against racism, taking the risk of expressing an often unpopular or polarizing point of view, because complacency and complicity sit in the shadow of silence. Don’t be silent!”

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