

# Why so Blue?

## Riverside City Hall Lights Up for National Diabetes Month

What do the Taj Mahal in India, the Nobel Peace Center in Norway, the Nelson Mandela Bridge in South Africa, and Riverside City Hall have in common? All of these landmarks were lit in blue this past week as part of the World Diabetes Day Monument Challenge issued by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF). Each year the IDF, an organization dedicated to the interest of people with diabetes and those at risk of developing diabetes, encourages organizations to light buildings and monuments in blue to raise awareness about World Diabetes Day on November 14. According to IDF's website, 614 structures have been lit in blue around the world so far this November. Four other buildings in California are listed on IDF's website: the State Capital building in Sacramento, the Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center in Marin County, Union Square in San Francisco, and Amylin Corporate Headquarters in San Diego.

The Riverside Community Diabetes Collaborative (RCDC) partnered with the City of Riverside to have the Grier Pavilion at Riverside City Hall lit in blue from November 13 to 20. RCDC hopes the change of color in downtown Riverside's night skyline will draw attention to the growing diabetes epidemic in the United States. The Center for Disease Control's 2011 "National Diabetes Fact Sheet" places the number of people living with diabetes in the United States at 25.8 million, and states that nearly one-third of those people have no idea they have it. An estimated 115,600 are living with diabetes in Riverside County,

according to a 2009 report released by the California Diabetes Program.

While the statistics surrounding diabetes in the United States may seem overwhelmingly negative, the Riverside Community Diabetes Collaborative aims to provide hope, support, and education to those living with diabetes in Riverside. Through its free diabetes education classes, the organization tries to create safe, judgment-free spaces for people to come together and talk about diabetes. "I felt like I was with family," said a participant of a recent RCDC diabetes education class.

RCDC was formed in 2007 out of the Riverside Community Health Foundation's Diabetes Initiative. "Riverside Community Health Foundation decided to create a Diabetes Initiative in response to the increasing rates of obesity and diabetes among the communities we serve," said Ninfa Delgado, Vice President of the Riverside Community Health Foundation (RCHF) and chair of the Riverside Community Diabetes Collaborative. "Diabetes is very complex. We felt that we needed to come together to address diabetes in order to have any impact. No one agency can do this alone. It was important to gather

the various strengths, expertise, and resources of partners to work together on diabetes in our community," Delgado continued.

In many ways, RCDC serves as a hub for information on diabetes-related concerns and programs in the community. RCDC has ties to the San Bernardino Diabetes Collaborative,



Inland Quality Collaborative, and the Desert Sierra Health Network, and partners with the Riverside Community Health Foundation to provide free diabetes education classes and seminars in the community.

Registration has been extended for the organization's free "Staying Positive: Living a Happy, Healthy Life with Diabetes" seminar, which takes place on November 29, in English, and November 30, in Spanish. For more details or to register call 951.788.3471. For more information about RCDC, visit [rchf.org/rcdc](http://rchf.org/rcdc).