

## EXECUTIVE PROFILES OF KERN COUNTY

**TRACY LEACH****Title:** President/CEO**Company:** Providence Strategic Consulting Inc.

**About the company:** Providence Strategic Consulting Inc. is a certified Women Business Enterprise public affairs firm in Bakersfield. Providence specializes in developing strategic communications plans with extensive expertise in public affairs campaigns designed to produce successful project permitting.

Our firm holds a perfect track record over numerous statewide ballot initiative campaigns and 100 percent success rate in project permitting for housing, oil refining, mining, solar, and oil and gas development. We assist our clients with public and media relations, websites, advertising campaigns and are experts in social media marketing and management.

**What I do:** As president of the company, I get to manage an ace team of public affairs professionals as we work to advance our clients' objectives. We embrace a strong work ethic while keeping it fun and are the most contented when our clients achieve their goals.

**Where I grew up:** In the high desert of Ridgecrest in eastern Kern County.

**How I landed in Kern County:** Born and raised in Kern, I followed my high school sweetheart to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where he was stationed on a fast-attack nuclear submarine for the United States Navy. After his tour, we made our way back to Bakersfield for his career in the power generation industry.

**Education:** A proud graduate of Cal State Bakersfield, majoring in political science, minor in communications.

**Family:** My husband, David, and I raised two girls in Bakersfield and are extremely lucky to have them both married and still living here with three sweet grandsons ... and counting.

**Hobbies:** My favorite extracurricular is yoga. I like to read but find the time for it a challenge. And playing with grandsons — preferably at the beach.

**What was your very first job and what did you learn from it?** My very first job as a kid and working for my dad at Ridgecrest Automotive,

cleaning the mechanic's restroom, washing windows and sweeping the floor. Although we were paid in candy bars and soda, this was possibly the single greatest motivator to go to college and get a degree!

**Who or what has been the biggest influence on your career?** My dad. If you knew my dad, you would understand. Hardest working human I've ever known, the most stubborn and the greatest sense of humor. I miss him terribly but am proud I got to be his daughter.

**What was the best piece of advice you ever received?** My father advised me to work for myself and was positive I would succeed at it.

**What is the most challenging part of your job?** The speed, though I thrive on it, generally. Our clients tend to have crises at all hours with the regulatory, political and media world we work in. We have to be ready to answer the call and provide intelligent, measured, sound advice and then help them execute their plans.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?** Being an advocate — a defender — for thousands of people, usually in business, struggling to be productive in the face of out-of-control regulators and politicians. And witnessing thousands of people support an issue or industry that our team has successfully ignited into action.

**What is the most memorable accomplishment of your career?** That's a tough one. Supporting the permitting of a resurrected gold and silver mine in Mojave. Collaboration with public affairs firms throughout the state on a multitude of issues in California. But probably coalescing the aforementioned thousands of citizens to stand up and visibly support our county's oil and gas industry, an industry that many of us had taken for granted, thinking it will always be here. State and federal politicians, regulators and too many anti-energy activists to count are working tirelessly to rip this vital industry right out from underneath us. We were able to build up the case for a "Kern Citizens for Energy" coalition and our county's citizens ran with it and continue to voice fervent in-person and online support for domestic petroleum production.

**TAVR***Continued from page 8*

surgery at Memorial Hospital and practicing cardiac surgeon. "We're very excited to be able to offer the most cutting-edge, advanced technology offered anywhere to our patients."

Collaboration is the hallmark of the TAVR program's success.

"When the cardiac specialists partner together for each individual patient, we'll see better outcomes," said Dr. Jeet Singh, interventional cardiologist who was trained in a busy TAVR center at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles.

The benefits of TAVR are life-saving for patients too ill to receive heart valves by conventional open-heart surgery.

"It is important to provide TAVR to our local patients," said Dr. Nirav DeSai, medical director of the echo cardiology lab at Memorial and interventional cardiologist who was trained in TAVR procedures at the University Southern California. "TAVR requires many tests and physician visits, making it hard on patients in such a fragile condition, and their family members, to transport them back and forth to Los Angeles."

Normally limited to large medical centers in metropolitan areas, Memorial Hospital's Sarvanand Heart and Brain Center will join an elite group of health care facilities, fewer than 500 hospitals nationwide, to provide this procedure for patients. Medtronic, a well-respected medical device company and manufacturer of heart valves, recognized the need for this technology in Kern County and chose Memorial Hospital to be one of the selective providers of TAVR. Their selection was based on Memorial Hospital's demonstrated results in the current valve program and the continuing commitment of the talented and dedicated physicians, surgeons and medical staff.

Michele Shain, director of cardiac and neurology services at Memorial Hospital, says the improvement in the quality of life for these patients is amazing. "With the minimally invasive TAVR procedure, patients are out of the hospital after three to five days," she said. "With traditional valve replacement surgery, patients are on oxygen, are wheelchair bound and may be so winded they can barely speak in full sentences. With TAVR they can quickly walk, breathe and

enjoy their lives again. That's the real payoff for us, delivering on our vision of improving the quality of life for our patients."

A generous donation from the Lapjut Munger family was received in 2012, creating the recently named Sarvanand Heart and Brain Center. The largest donation in hospital history has helped establish a new Hybrid Endovascular Catheterization Lab under construction at Memorial Hospital. The hybrid lab integrates the functions of a cath lab and operating room, combining the benefits of each in one flexible space. When opened next year, the hybrid lab will accommodate TAVR and other procedures.

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Combined with the needs of the community and better patient outcomes, Memorial Hospital has the latest cardiac diagnostic imaging services: the catheterization labs, bi-plane suite and operating rooms have been designed with the most sophisticated imaging and technology available.

During a press conference on Aug. 22, where the TAVR procedure was announced to the public, the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association awarded Dignity Health Memorial Hospital the Mission Lifeline Receiving Center designation. Memorial Hospital is the first in Kern County to receive this recognition for its success in implementing a higher standard of heart attack care by insuring heart attack patients receive treatment based on nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

— *Cody Brutlag is a content specialist for Dignity Health Mercy and Memorial Hospitals.*