

HELPING/MANUFACTURERS

Friant's donation will help the Center implement technology-based channels to welcome and provide information to incoming families, allowing for 24/7 access via tablet computers and kiosks.

By Rob Kirkbride

There are many worthy charity organizations in Oakland, Calif., but few do as much good as the Children's Hospital & Research Center, a world-class pediatric hospital and research institute. So when Friant & Associates was looking for a neighbor in the Bay Area to help, the Children's Hospital was a natural.

That was solidified a few years ago when several Friant employees went on a tour at Children's Hospital to see its state-of-the-art facilities and meet some of the children first-hand. The experience was very moving and inspiring for everyone on the tour and helped further the office furniture maker's commitment to helping children in the community recover.

So for the past few years, Friant has made a donation to help specific parts of the hospital. This year, the donation will go to support the hospital's Family Resource and Information Center.



CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTER OAKLAND

nurses and other clinical staff," said Mary Kelly, Child Life Manager at Children's Hospital. "It is equally important to try to take care of the needs of the families of our patients. The Family Resource & Information Center is one of the places in the hospital that offers families information, comfort and support so that they can truly be present with their child."

The Center provides such basics as coffee, toiletries, snack bags, fruit, computers, relaxation sessions, and information about medical diagnoses, the hospital, and the local area to newly admitted families. In 2011, outreach efforts through The Family Resource & Information Center reached more than 5,000 families.

This year, Friant's donation will help the Center implement technology-based channels to welcome and provide information to incoming families, allowing for 24/7 access via tablet computers and kiosks. The donation will also support the research needed for to find out what information families most need. In part, due to Friant's donation, plans for data collection are scheduled to begin immediately.

"Giving back is very important to us," said Chief Executive Officer and President Paul Friant. "Friant has donated to Children's Hospital for the past several years and we're thankful for another good year that allows us to pay it forward to Children's Hospital."

About five years ago, the company's strong growth inspired Friant to find a local nonprofit to support. Paul Friant, who grew up in Oakland, wanted to give locally in an area where it was most needed. The Children's Hospital Oakland was a perfect fit because of its proximity to Friant, its focus on children and their families, and its reputation as a world-class non-profit that serves everyone - no one is turned away.

While this year's donation will specifically support the hospital's Family Resource and Information Center, last year, Friant's donation went towards their "Adopt a Family" program, which fulfilled the wish lists of 20 pediatric oncology patients and their families. Each year, Friant supports the hospital in an area where it is most needed.

Founded in 1912, Children's Hospital just celebrated its 100th birthday. It was and is still a community institution that was founded on the premise of providing excellent pediatric care. According to the hospital's website, "The support of the community has been integral to Children's throughout its history, and the hospital is counting on the community's continued support as it moves into its second century."

In 2011, Children's Hospital Oakland cared for more than 77,000 patients with more than 300,000 visits. Children's Hospital Oakland has the Bay Area's only Level 1 pediatric trauma center exclusively for children and trauma victims and comprehensive pediatric rehabilitation center. Approximately 800 children are transported each year to Children's from all over Northern California.

Friant continues to support Children's Hospital because it is a unique institution in that never turns away a patient due to lack of funds. It provides world-class care for everyone with no barrier to entry. Similarly, Friant said he created his furniture company in order to provide quality office furniture at the lowest possible prices and has always held the belief that everyone should be able to access furniture of the highest quality - not just those who can afford brand name product. 