The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians gifted Loma Linda University Children's Hospital $25 million last month at the 26th annual Children's Hospital Foundation Gala to move the community forward in health and wellness through specialized maternity care.

Tribal Secretary Ken Ramirez, who presented the gift on behalf of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, said this donation is the largest donation San Manuel has ever made — will forge an even stronger partnership with Loma Linda University Health, which is constructing an addition to the Children's Hospital.

"San Manuel is grateful for the compassion shown to our elders by Loma Linda University Health many decades ago," Ramirez said. "We are excited about the new opportunities and lifesaving care that the new Children's Hospital will offer to our shared community and loved ones."

Scott Perryman, MBA, senior vice president and administrator of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, expressed his gratitude for the tribe's monumental gift.

"We enthusiastically join San Manuel in a commitment to improve healthcare in our community and beyond," Perryman said. "Their generosity will help us transform maternity care to the benefit of each mother and baby that Loma Linda University Children's Hospital cares for." The fifth floor of the new Loma Linda University Children's Hospital facility will be named the San Manuel Maternity Pavilion in honor of this landmark gift — the second largest gift ever given to Loma Linda University Health. This pavilion will allow the hospital to continue as the leader in high-risk birth care in the region, with approximately 50 percent of births at the hospital being high risk.

"It was my honor and pleasure to announce the new San Manuel Maternity Pavilion," said Ken Heinrich, JD, CEO of Loma Linda University Medical Center. "We are overwhelmed by this incredible gift they've given us."

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians were also presented with the Discover Lifetime Achievement Award for their outstanding dedication and tireless service to others.

"The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and Loma Linda University Health have shared a mission to enhance the health of children in our region informed by more than a century of friendship," said Rachelle Rosell, MA, CFRE, senior vice president for advancement at Loma Linda University Health. "This most recent amazing gift reaffirms the confidence the San Manuel Tribe has in the vital work we do together to change lives." The relationship between the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and Loma Linda University Health stretches for more than 100 years and is one of inspired service and mutual care for each other and the regional community.

When the tribe had little means in the early 1900s, an obstetrician from what was then called the Loma Linda Sanitarium and Hospital, Lyra George, traveled on horseback to the Serrano reservation — now the San Manuel reservation — in the canyons of San Bernardino Valley to deliver the tribe's babies. The friendship — started by Dr. George's kindness — flourished under continued care by Loma Linda University Health physicians and nurses for tribal members when few others would help.

As this relationship has developed, so have the opportunities to learn from each other and to work side by side, extending a helping hand to those in need. That relationship has come full circle with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians now giving back to help babies in the Inland Empire through the San Manuel Maternity Pavilion at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians have invested significantly in Loma Linda University Health in recent years. This funding has touched the lives of children and youth both directly and indirectly by training the next generation of healthcare workers through the San Manuel Gateway College, empowering those who are differently abled, creating new discoveries in cancer prevention and treatment, and providing essential resources to treat our sickest and most vulnerable children.

Their funding has enhanced nearly every aspect of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital including the intensive care units, neonatology, cardiology, oncology and trauma services. Specifics include:

- Specialized ventilators for the neonatal intensive care units, neurology, cardiology, oncology and skin care.
- Sleeper chairs, equipment and furniture necessary to enhance comfort and care for family members while they support their child.

The coming years will bring monumental changes to Loma Linda University Health, both in the physical landscape and in the practice of healthcare," Hart said. "San Manuel's support will have a profound impact on the tiniest, most vulnerable of our communities. Loma Linda University Health is inspired by this trust."

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, the facility that will benefit from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians' generosity, is a comprehensive, state-of-the-art facility entirely designed with kids in mind. The hospital offers the most advanced medical care available — all in a non-threatening, cheerful environment. It's new addition will feature nine floors with approximately 50 beds, expansion capacity for our region's growing needs.

The hospital has one of the largest neonatal intensive care units in the world and has been recognized for its excellence in the care of premature infants. Loma Linda University Children's Hospital's maternity services offer parents of newborns caring special care a chance to stay at the hospital with their infant and learn how to properly care for the child in a healing, comforting, state-of-the-art environment that incorporates a home-like atmosphere.

The infant heart transplantation program continues to save the lives of infants who would otherwise die during or soon after birth because of major heart conditions. Loma Linda University Children's Hospital was the first to perform an infant heart transplant, and hundreds of infants have received heart transplants here since the program began in 1989. Many more have received life-saving surgery to repair their heart.

No matter where a child is on their health journey, Loma Linda University Children's Hospital pediatricians, pediatric surgeons and subspecialists work closely with children from broken bones to disabilities and life-threatening diseases, giving parents the comfort and assurance that their child is receiving the highest level of medical care. For the most severe cases, the physicians, the hospital has more than 1,200 nurses, child life specialists, and other staff who are dedicated to keeping children healing, healthy and happy. Learn more at fdlh.org.

Funds will go toward construction of new pediatric hospital in service of children in the Inland Empire and beyond

- Acquisition of an AdvEM electromagnetic neuronavigation system that is essential to performing intricate brain surgeries with children.
- San Manuel Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena said giving is embedded in their culture. "Iaya" is a word in our native Serrano language that means "to act on one's beliefs," Valbuena said. "Giving is one means we use to express our belief that it is important to work with and help others."

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