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## Natividad Medical Foundation funds surgery for uninsured women

*By Mike Hornick*

SALINAS, CALIF. - About 12 uninsured, low-income women in Monterey County will receive needed gynecologic surgery after the Natividad Medical Foundation raised \$30,000 in 30 days to fund the operations, the foundation said today.

The announcement is part of the launch of the Onyx Fund for Women, named in honor of a Natividad Medical Center patient, Onix, who inspired the philanthropic effort.

“We see so many women in pain who are living with a prolapsed uterus or fibroid tumors and bleeding and incontinence - [they’re] living this way because they’re uninsured and

can’t afford the down payment for the elective surgery to correct it,” said Dr. Peter Chandler, obstetrics and gynecology service director at Natividad Medical Center. Obstetricians and gynecologists had approached the foundation for help.

Today’s announcement follows an April award of a \$50,000 grant by the Community Foundation for Monterey County to the foundation for the Onyx Fund for Women. It was set up as a two-to-one challenge grant to spur contributions to the fund.

Onix works full-time as a housekeeper in Carmel, a job she’s held for nine years. When her

daughter, now age 4, was born at Natividad by Caesarean section, her doctor found fibroid tumors requiring surgery. But facing a \$3,000 down payment, Onix avoided the surgery, the foundation said.

Four years later, the foundation said, she returned to her doctor with a mass of tumors that made her look nine months pregnant. It took her another six months to earn and borrow the \$3,000, the foundation said.

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