

PIONEER PRESS

SUNDAY LIFE

Invasion of the iPod people

Page 1E



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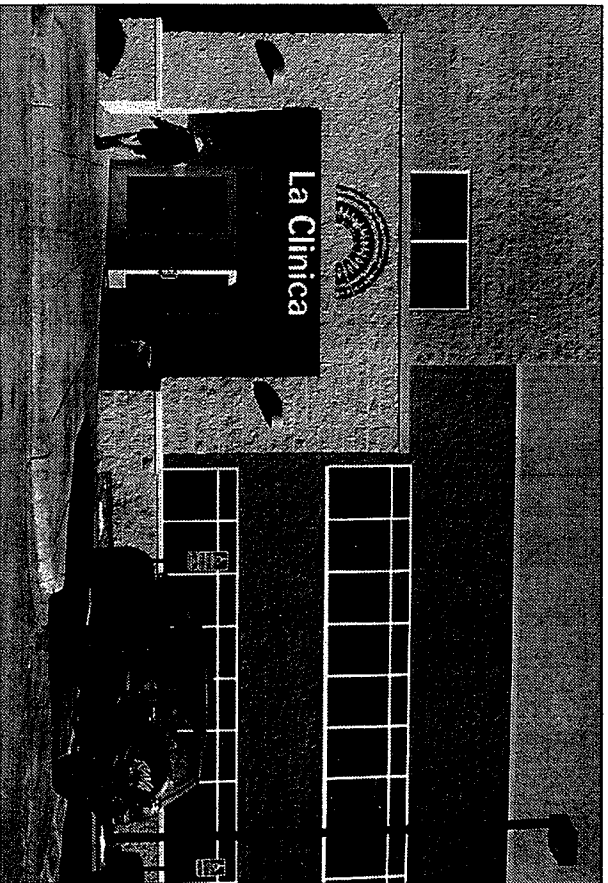
PIONEER PRESS INVESTIGATION STAR SUCCESS STORIES



PHOTOS BY CRAIG BORCK, PIONEER PRESS

West Side Community Health Services, known as La Clinica, last June moved into a new \$7 million building at 153 Cesar Chavez St. in St. Paul. The STAR program provided \$450,000 — a \$150,000 grant and a \$300,000 loan — for the \$7 million project. “We’re very grateful for the money we got because it helps organizations focus on their goals and helps enhance the community,” said executive director Mavis Brehm.

La Clinica’s new facilities replaced those that were outmoded and cramped, including the waiting area. Now, the waiting area is spacious and light-filled. The project also included a new pharmacy, expanded mental health facilities and private financial counseling rooms.



LA CLINICA, 153 CESAR CHAVEZ ST.

In recent years, West Side Community Health Services, known as La Clinica, has built a couple of additions and extended its hours into the evening to accommodate the growing number of customers seeking free or low-cost medical attention from its bilingual staff.

By last year, the 34-year-old agency was serving nearly twice the 6,000-client caseload it envisioned, resulting in long waits and a congested waiting area where others could overhear private conversations about patients’ ability to pay.

In June, the clinic moved to a new \$7 million building on Cesar Chavez Street. The new clinic has nearly twice as many exam rooms, a new

pharmacy, expanded mental health facilities and private financial counseling rooms.

STAR’s \$450,000 — a \$150,000 grant and a \$300,000 loan — make up a small part of the \$7 million project. “We’re very grateful for the money we got because it helps organizations focus on their goals and helps enhance the community,” said executive director Mavis Brehm.

STAR officials note that the project will add jobs — up to nine pharmacy, physician, nursing and administrative support staff are expected to join the facility’s 250 employees.

—Toni Coleman