



Diana and her parents, Hector and Alma Huerta

Grateful for
**AMVETS LADIES
NATIONAL AUXILIARY
and AMVETS SUPPORT
OF JOHN TRACY CLINIC'S
FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS**

Meet the HUERTA FAMILY

When Diana didn't pass her hearing screening at birth, her mother Alma was told not to be concerned but to return for another screening.

After repeated hearing screening failures, the doctor suggested a procedure to drain fluid from Diana's ears. The family was living in Fort Hood, Texas, at the time because Diana's father, Hector, is in the Army. When Hector was called up for duty in Iraq, Alma moved to California to be closer to her family and get help for Diana.

Diana's hearing loss did not change after the procedure, and Alma began to worry. The results of a comprehensive hearing exam documented that Diana had bilateral, severe hearing loss. She was able to hear only very loud sounds.

Alma had no idea what to do about the diagnosis. Like most families of babies with hearing loss, everyone in Diana's family is hearing. At a hearing aid center, Alma was given a brochure on John Tracy Clinic (JTC). She im-

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mediately enrolled in the Parent/Infant Program at JTC's Long Beach Center. Further testing done by JTC audiologists indicated that Diana had profound loss in her right ear, and they recommended a Cochlear Implant so that Diana could have access to the sounds of speech.

When Hector returned from Iraq, the Huertas moved back to Texas, where Diana underwent an operation to receive the implant. The family then relocated to a base in Virginia. Hector, an E-4, has now been sent to Iraq for the third time and Alma is back in California working with the teachers at John Tracy Clinic to gain full advantage of Diana's new implant. They are building Diana's ability to listen to speech and environmental sounds so she can begin using spoken language. Diana, who is now three and half years old, shows an eagerness to learn and participate in every activity, and her JTC preschool teachers and audiologists expect that she'll soon be talking up a storm. Alma is delighted with each new word and happily keeps Hector informed of Diana's progress.

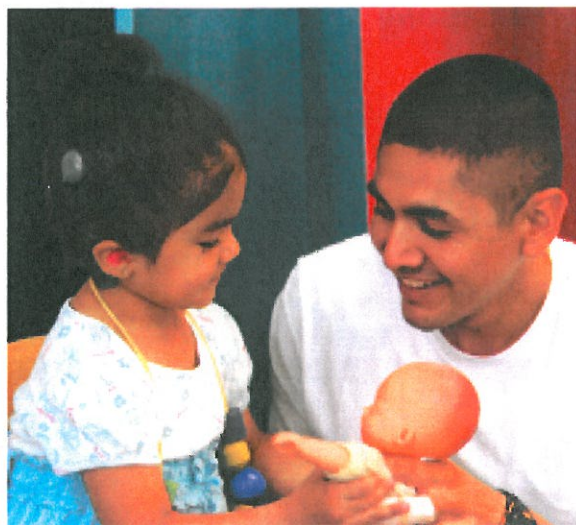
"No other place has helped me like John Tracy Clinic," Alma says. "I learn so much every time I go to class or work with the teachers. In Texas and Virginia, I felt so alone. At John Tracy Clinic, I feel strong enough to overcome any obstacle. I am so lucky to be part of it, and I want to thank all the people that make JTC happen."

The Huerta family's next move will be back to Virginia again, where Alma has decided she will continue Diana's speech and language training through JTC's online Parent Distance Education, a program that has been directly supported by AMVETS and AMVETS' NATIONAL LADIES AUXILIARY for over 30 years.



JTC is a private, non-profit, diagnostic education center. Some of the services the Huertas received at no cost include: Parent/Infant Program Demonstration Home, Audiological Testing, Consultation Support, Preschool Program and the Parent Distance Education Program.

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to parents of young children with hearing loss

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