

• A HISTORY OF. • SAVING LIVES •

Blood Centers of the Pacific - The Nation's First Community Blood Center



Blood Centers of the Pacific

Irwin Memorial Blood Center

The Nation's First Community Blood Center

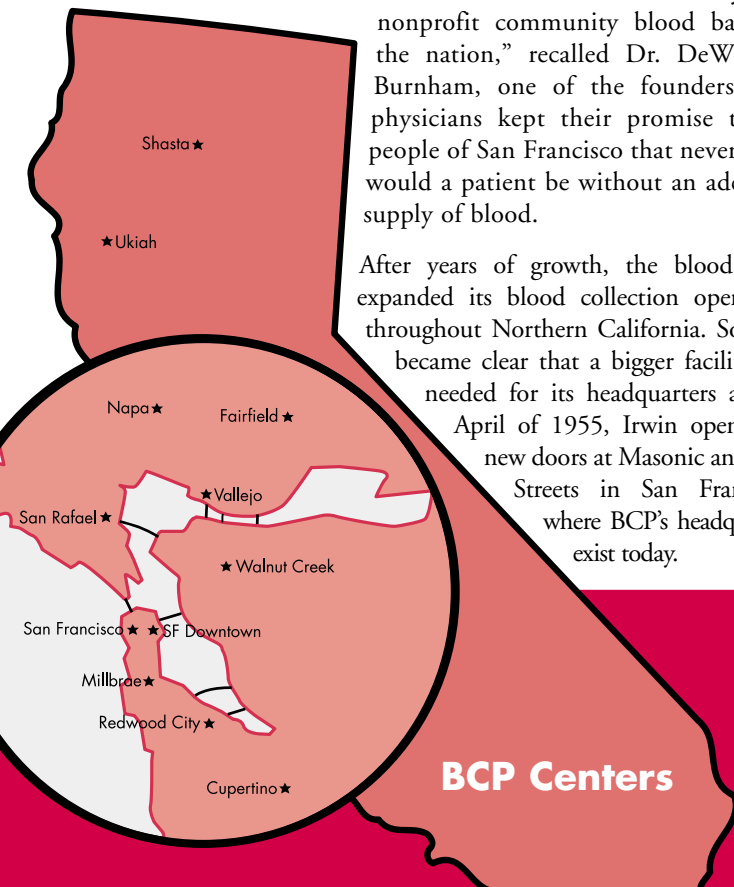


When two San Francisco physicians began exploring ways to supply blood in adequate amounts to people who needed it, the concept of a community blood bank did not exist. Although some hospitals had small drawing stations, there wasn't a sufficient method of obtaining and storing enough blood for the patient who needed an emergency transfusion. The two pioneers decided to pursue the idea of a community blood bank.

The San Francisco Medical Society (SFMS) granted the fledgling blood bank permission to operate out of the basement floor of an old San Francisco home owned by the SFMS known as the Irwin Mansion.

In June of 1941, Irwin Memorial Blood Bank opened its doors to its first volunteer blood donors. "This was the very first nonprofit community blood bank in the nation," recalled Dr. DeWitt K. Burnham, one of the founders. The physicians kept their promise to the people of San Francisco that never again would a patient be without an adequate supply of blood.

After years of growth, the blood bank expanded its blood collection operations throughout Northern California. Soon, it became clear that a bigger facility was needed for its headquarters and in April of 1955, Irwin opened its new doors at Masonic and Turk Streets in San Francisco, where BCP's headquarters exist today.



The Old Irwin Mansion in San Francisco

Peninsula Blood Bank

Just 30 miles south of San Francisco, members of the various labor organizations in San Mateo County also anticipated the need for a reserve supply of blood in their community and proposed opening a blood bank. The San Mateo Medical Society unanimously endorsed their proposal for a nonprofit blood bank.

Through generous donations and a county-wide drive to get residents to pledge to donate blood, the San Mateo County Blood Bank opened its doors in May 1942. In 1954, the blood bank moved to its new location at the entrance of the new Peninsula Hospital and changed its name to Peninsula Memorial Blood Bank.

Coming Together to Better Serve Northern Californians

By the late 1990s, the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank and Peninsula Blood Bank had become the major suppliers of blood to hospitals throughout the region. But as the cost of high technology testing increased and shared resources became the obvious answer to many nonprofits' challenges, the two organizations decided to merge to become Blood Centers of the Pacific—a name that encompasses the large region served by the now one organization.

www.bloodcenters.org

Blood Systems

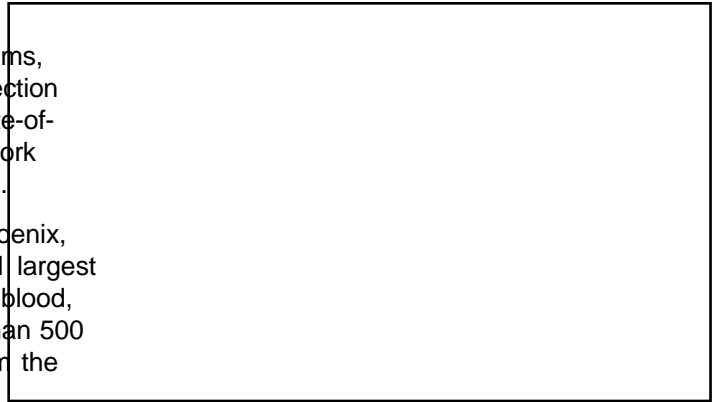
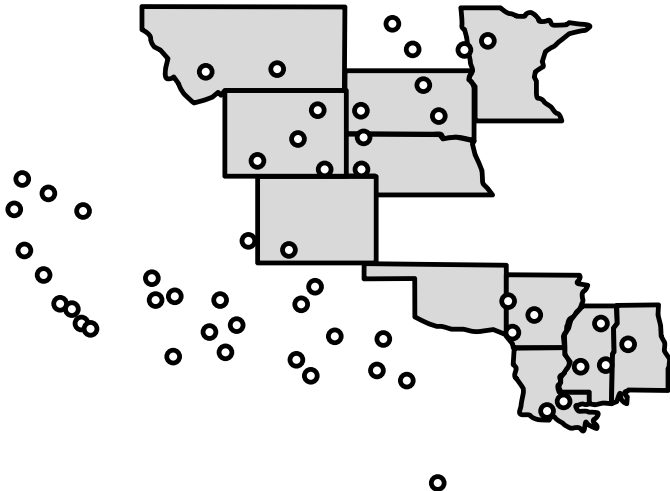
Soon after, BCP affiliated with Blood Systems, the nation's second largest blood collection organization, giving BCP access to a state-of-the-art testing facility and a multi-state network of blood centers, with which it could share blood when needed.

Founded in 1943 as the Salt River Valley Blood Bank in Phoenix, Arizona, Blood Systems is one of the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit blood service providers. Blood Systems provides blood, blood components and special services to patients in more than 500 hospitals in 18 states, from California to the Gulf Coast, from the Tip of Texas to the Canadian border.

Blood Systems comprises several divisions, all of which are integral to the mission of providing a safe and adequate blood supply to patients who need it.

United Blood Services (UBS) is a network of more than a dozen regional blood centers and some 70 donor centers. Based in rural towns, suburban neighborhoods and metropolitan areas, UBS centers, along with BCP, provide a safe and dependable supply of blood components and related services to patients, health care organizations and communities in 18 states. Overall, these centers collect more than one million units of blood each year.

Blood Systems Laboratories (BSL) operates two of the finest high-volume blood donor testing and infectious disease reference laboratories in the nation. BSL's team of highly skilled laboratory professionals serves a broad range of customers, including blood centers, hospitals and medical centers. Each year, more than 2 million blood samples from 78 blood and tissue facilities are tested at BSL's two national laboratories in Phoenix and Dallas.



BCP's Irwin Center, San Francisco

BioCARE provides a wide range of biological products referred to as plasma therapies including coagulation factors, immune globulins, albumin and fibrin sealants. BioCARE serves hospitals, infusion clinics and homecare companies.

Blood Systems Research Institute (BSRI) based at BCP, began as a research program at the blood center more than 45 years ago and is among the most respected and productive transfusion-focused programs in the world. BSRI is proud to produce some of the nation's top transfusion medicine research by experts in such fields as transfusion-transmitted infections such as HIV and emerging infectious diseases such as Chagas and West Nile virus. BSRI's staff collaborate nationally and internationally with major blood banking and transfusion medicine organizations.

Although much has changed since 1941, one thing has remained the same—the commitment of our blood donors. BCP strives to work together as a community, and with the advancements in science and technology, to continue its history of saving lives into the future.



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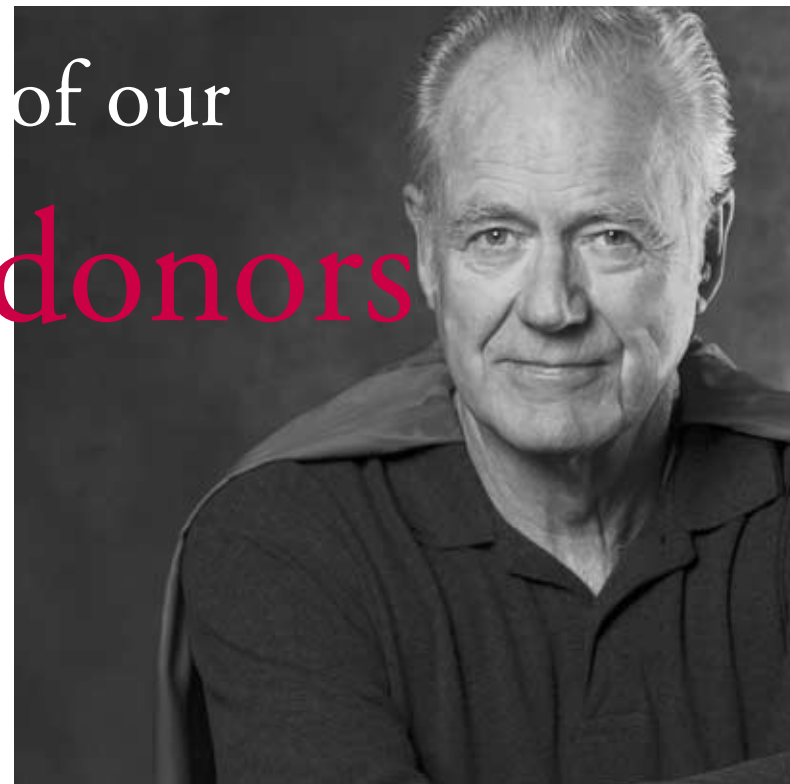


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