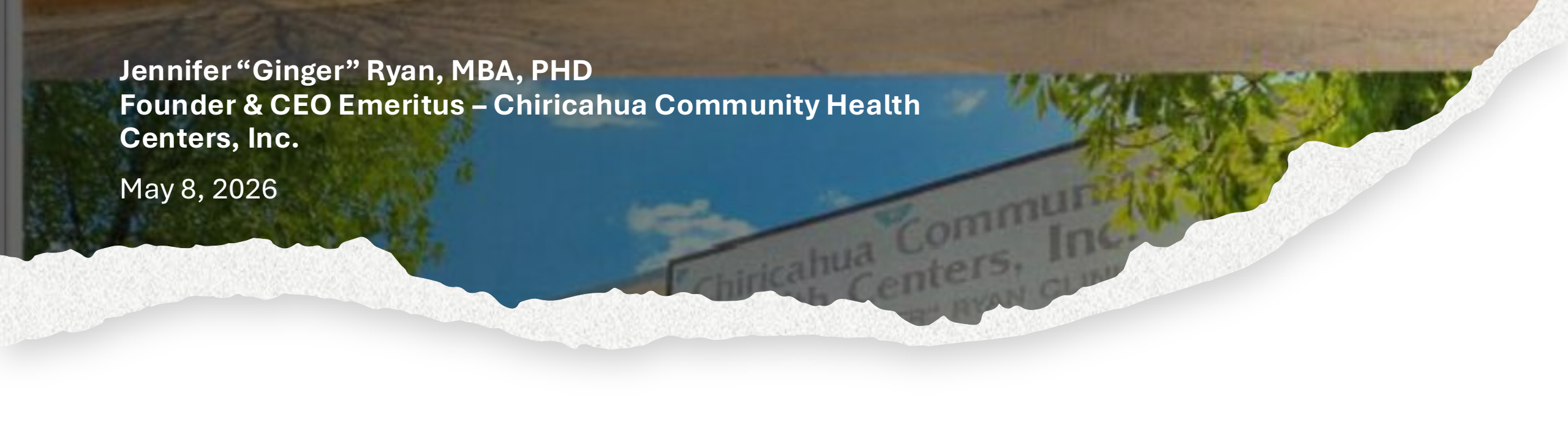




# Building a Clinic with a Heart

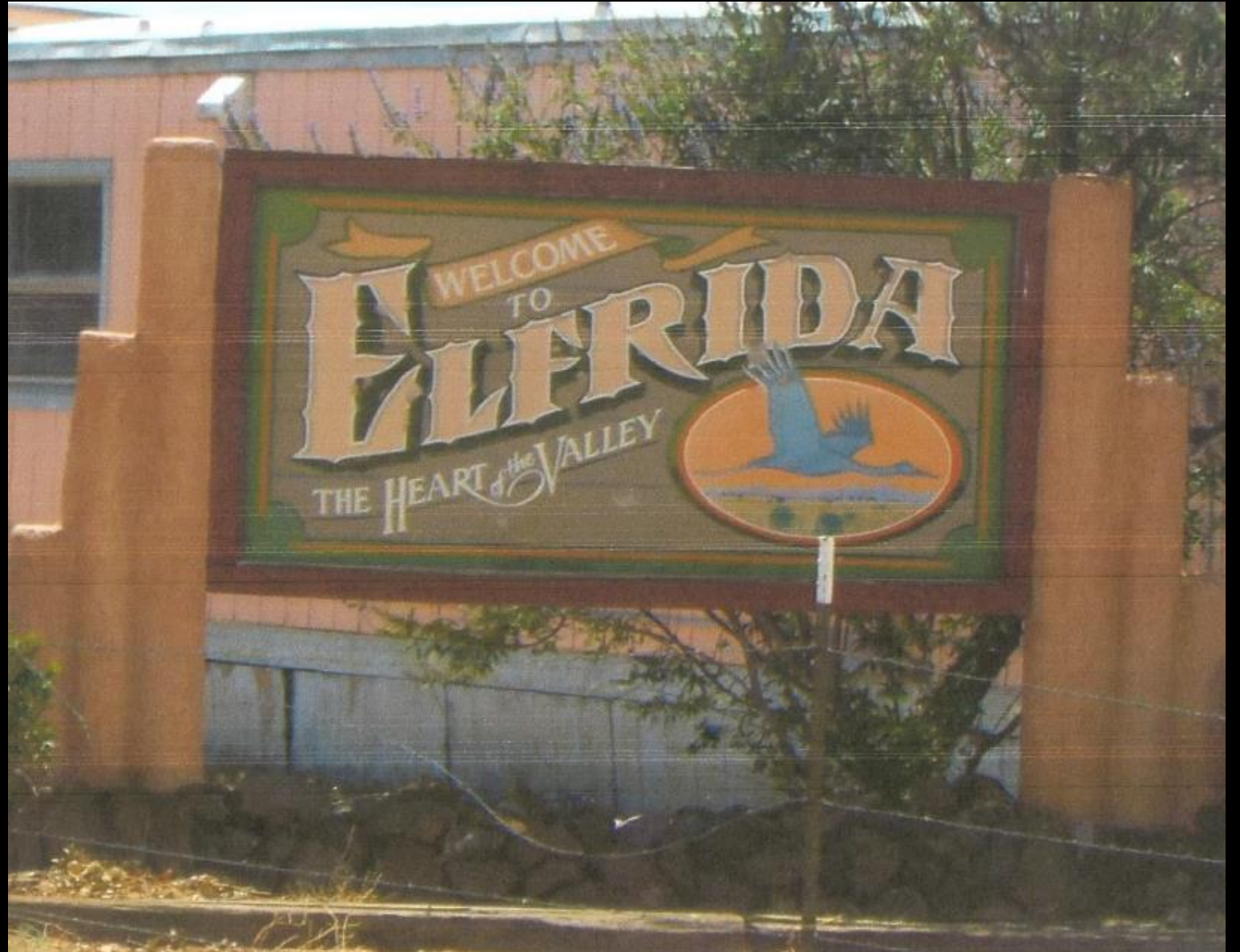
Jennifer “Ginger” Ryan, MBA, PHD  
Founder & CEO Emeritus – Chiricahua Community Health  
Centers, Inc.

May 8, 2026



Where the community  
said yes to building  
something from nothing.

**“In the  
Middle of  
Nowhere”  
— Elfrida, AZ**



# Cliff & Ginger

Cliff Whetten became an early ally and helped build trust in Elfrida.



# Elfrida Community Center – 1996

The only building that met code — a green metal shed with electricity, but no hot water.





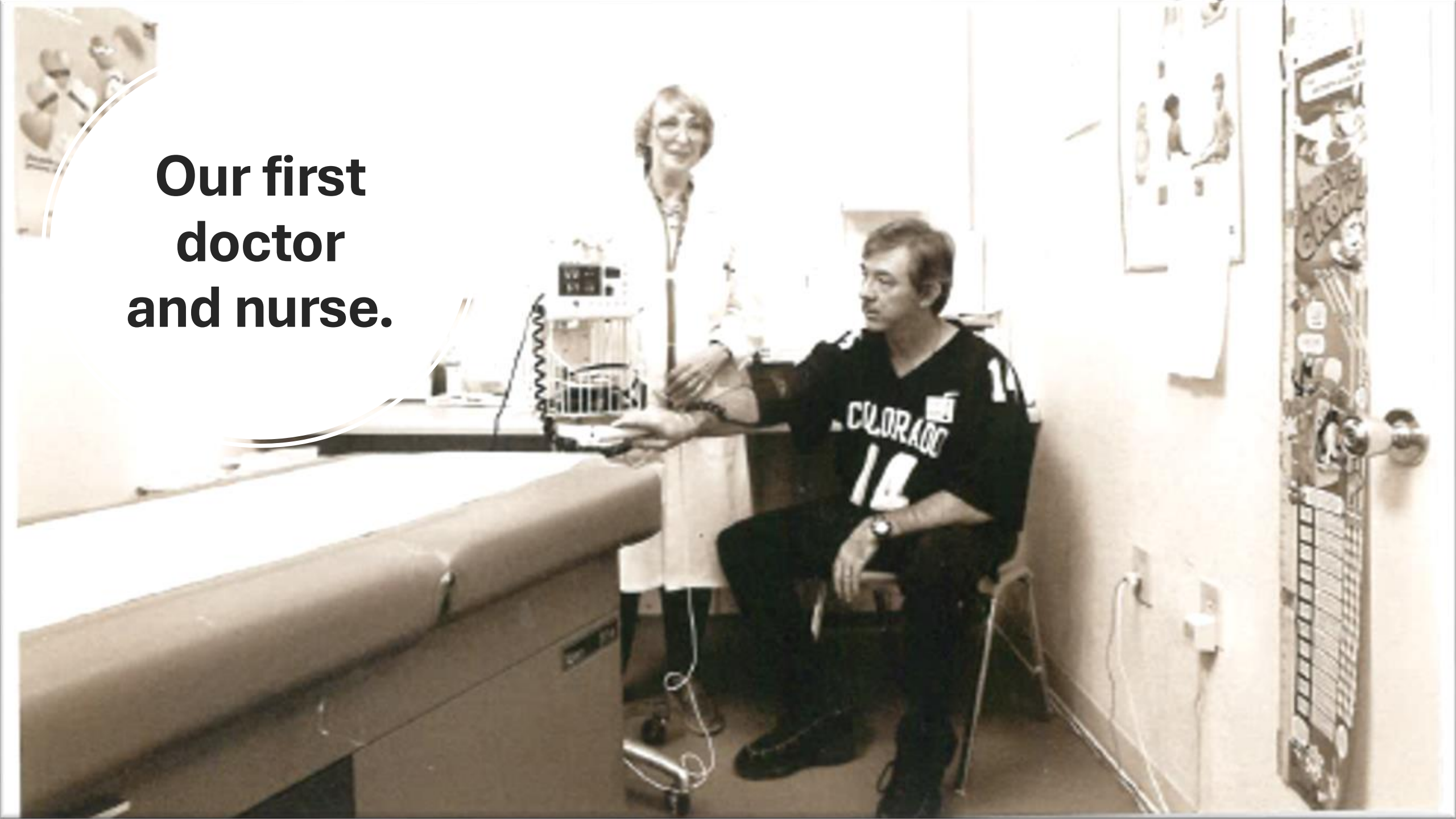
## **Bare Bones:**

A supply room, two exam rooms, and an office — built by volunteers from the community. 1996



**It became a functional clinic.**

**Our first  
doctor  
and nurse.**





# The chair that “caused pregnancy.”

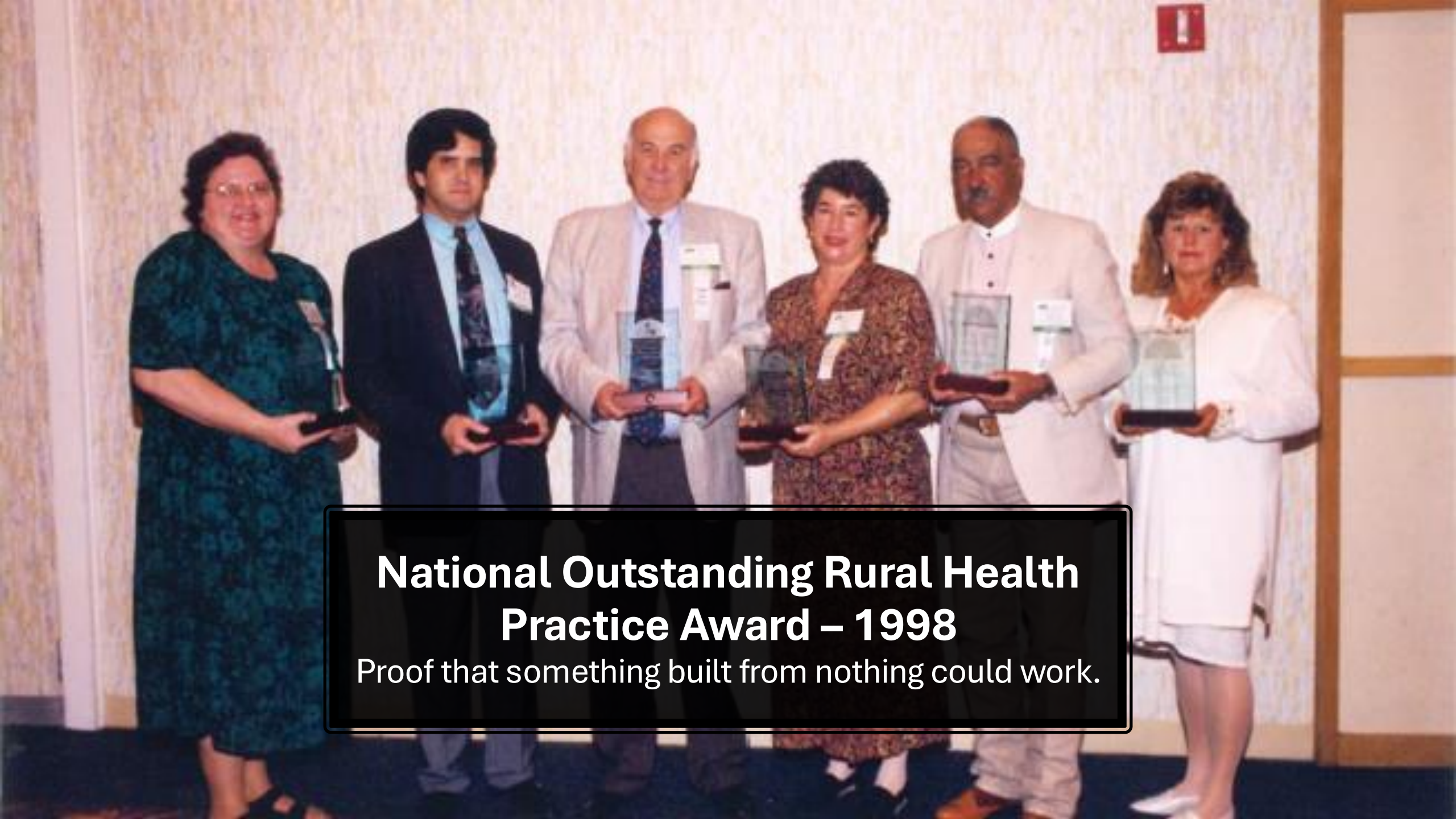
Four receptionists all became pregnant  
sitting here. We moved the chair...and  
the problem went away.



Gleeson Jail

Gleeson, AZ - "Ghost Town"

When things got hard, I'd drive here to think, reset, and keep going.



**National Outstanding Rural Health  
Practice Award – 1998**

Proof that something built from nothing could work.

# Planning for a Permanent Clinic

It became clear we needed  
something built to last — 1999



# Construction for “Clinic with a Heart” begins (1999).

A literal and figurative  
foundation — built by  
community, for community.





## **Our First Clinic**

Our first real home — a turning point for the organization.

# Organic Method Gardening



Funded by USDA Community Food Grant # ARZR-2008-0+7  
Chiricahua Community Health Center, Inc., Douglas, Arizona



## Garden Towers (2000)

120 garden towers built in backyards — teaching families to grow their own food.



# “High Tea”

A monthly tradition that became the social heartbeat of the community.



## **A hole in the garden fence...**

When food was scarce, people came at night — so we taught them how to build their own ovens.

## **First Clinic**

now  
administrative  
offices



Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc.  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES





# Jennifer "Ginger" Ryan Clinic

The rest is history...



**Thank you**  
for allowing me to share  
this journey with you.