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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**SOUTH ASIAN HEART CENTER RECEIVES
ASIAN AMERICAN HEROES AWARD**
Honored as an “outstanding role model in health and human services”

Mountain View, CA, November 1, 2011: The South Asian Heart Center at El Camino Hospital today was honored with an 11th annual Asian American Heroes Award from the Office of Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss at a luncheon in Cupertino.

The awards, created by Kniss in 2001 and presented annually, salute outstanding Asian role models in the categories of leadership, health and human services, the arts and education.

“By honoring organizations or individuals who have made a significant impact in the community, we are all strengthened,” said Kniss. “The outstanding contributions of the South Asian Heart Center reach far beyond Santa Clara County.”

“We’re honored to have been selected for this award,” said Ashish Mathur, Executive Director of the South Asian Heart Center. “It is a tribute to the hundreds of volunteers who have donated their time and financial support since we opened our doors in 2006. As the only nonprofit organization in the world focused on reducing heart disease among South Asians, we have made major strides in raising awareness of South Asians’ higher level of heart disease risk. But there is still so much more to do, and recognition like this is incredibly important to our cause.”

Heart disease not only disproportionately affects South Asians, but it strikes them at younger ages, without prior symptoms or warning and without presenting the same risk factors as the general population.

South Asians now comprise the second largest Asian ethnic group in the U.S., second only to ethnic Chinese. The population of Indian Americans (by far the largest subgroup) climbed 68% from 2000 to 2010 (according to U.S. Census data) and California has the largest share, with over 530,000. Six of the U.S. cities with the largest number of South Asian residents are in California, with Cupertino, Fremont, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara leading the way.

As Silicon Valley became home to more South Asians over the past decade, physicians at El Camino Hospital noticed something else: their outsized representation in the emergency department – while making up just 2 percent of the hospital’s patient base in 2005 (now considerably more), South Asians represented 6% of heart attack patients. Local physicians, nurses and other healthcare workers mobilized, with the help of the El

Camino Hospital Foundation, to develop a program that is part research into underlying causes, part education and advocacy to raise awareness among consumers and their physicians, and part preventative, to help participants in the Center's program take the steps necessary to lower their risks.

"Today's recognition shows the power of the South Asian community when it puts its support behind an important cause," said Kanwal Rekhi, technology pioneer and philanthropist, and winner of the 2010 California Institute of Integral Studies Award for Distinguished Service. "The Center has brought us closer together and proved to us that we can be a real force for good here in the Silicon Valley."

About the South Asian Heart Center

The South Asian Heart Center, the first major non-profit devoted to combating the growing epidemic of heart disease among people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, has developed a unique preventative program. Offered at a minimal, subsidized cost, the Center assesses the risk for heart disease using an advanced screening process that keys in on risk factors specific to this population, and helps participants manage and mitigate their risk through education, nutrition counseling, lifestyle recommendations, and case-managed follow-up. For more on South Asian Heart Center visit www.elcaminohospital.org/sahc, www.southasianheartcenter.org, facebook.com/SouthAsianHeartCenter, and twitter.com/sahctweets.

About El Camino Hospital

El Camino Hospital is an acute-care, 542-bed, not-for-profit and locally governed organization with campuses in Mountain View and Los Gatos, Calif. In addition to a state-of-the-art emergency department, key medical specialty focuses include cancer care, heart and vascular, neuroscience, genomic medicine, orthopedic and spine and the only Women's Hospital in Northern California. The hospital is recognized as a national leader in the use of health information technology and wireless communications, and has been awarded the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission for Primary Stroke Center as well as back-to-back ANCC Magnet Recognitions for Nursing Care. To learn more, visit our Web site at www.elcaminohospital.org, find us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/elcaminohospital), or follow us on Twitter (www.twitter.com/elcaminohosp). For videos, see www.youtube.com/elcaminohospital. For a physician referral, visit our Web site or call the El Camino Health Line at 800-216-5556.

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