



# SSA TODAY

**MAY 2017**

**SSA's Core Values**

- Integrity
- Fairness
- Diversity
- Compassion
- Respect
- Courtesy
- Teamwork
- Initiative
- Thoroughness
- Efficiency
- Creativity

**Special Points of Interest:**

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**MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH**



*Pictured left to right: Supervisor Todd Spitzer, CFS Division Director Anne Bloxom, Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Lorees Boyd, Tramel Robinson, Vice Chair Andrew Do and Chairwoman Michelle Steel*

On May 9, 2017, the Orange County Board of Supervisors presented a resolution to SSA in recognition of May as Foster Care Month. National Foster Care Month is dedicated to honor all relative caretakers, Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs), resource families, and adoptive families for opening their hearts and homes to children in foster care and for embracing the Quality Parenting Initiative. In order to address the needs of these children, many families in our community have made a choice and a commitment to take on the responsibility of providing a loving, supportive home in order to help these children grow and

succeed in life. The Board of Supervisors commended Orange County resource families for their devotion, compassion, and commitment to helping improve the lives of Orange County children, youth, and families.

This year, Mr. Tramel Robinson was selected by Children and Family Services (CFS) to represent all of SSA's wonderful foster families in receiving this recognition. Mr. Robinson has fostered numerous teen boys that have significant behavioral challenges and has played a critical role in ensuring stability for these youth by demonstrating a positive, supportive family in order to help them overcome the trauma they have experienced. We would like to thank Mr. Robinson and all of our resource families who have opened their hearts and their homes to Orange County foster children.

**CLUB MOM AND DAD**

Club Mom and Dad is a social group for foster, adoptive, relative and resource caretakers. The group originally started as Club Mom over twenty years ago. Over time, it has evolved into Club Mom and Dad. The group meets 3-4 times per year at SSA's Eckhoff Campus in Orange. Senior Social Services Supervisor Joanna Hussey who serves as the liaison to foster, adoptive, relative, kinship and resource parents, is the coordinator of Club Mom and Dad.



*Pictured: Foster families showing off their artwork*

The night begins with an easy art project for the adults. The skills learned can then be taken home and the project can be repeated with their foster children. Refreshments are provided and prizes are given to the winners of the games. Many friendships have been developed between the caretakers that attend the event. It is a casual and fun way for foster families to meet and interact with one another. We would like to thank all of the foster families that attend these events, and thank you for opening your homes to children in need.

## SSA SPOTLIGHT: THE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER TEAM



Pictured from left to right: Dustin Lam (SSA), Colleen Danh (Clerk-Recorder), Tom Vu (SSA), Nikki Bao Nguyen (SSA), Diemchau Trinh (SSA), Sophia Huynh (SSA), Hanh Truong (OCHA), Betty Nguyen (SSA), Lisa Vo (SSA), Kimmie Tran (SSA), Beneranda Nuñez (SSA), Christine Nguyen (HCA), Lisa Nguyen (CalOptima) and Van Nguyen (SSA)

In an effort to simplify and enhance access to County services for Orange County residents, the Board of Supervisors opened the County Community Service Center (CCSC) in Westminster on October 1, 2007. The CCSC is a one-stop service center that provides services for a variety of programs from departments and organizations including SSA, Health Care Agency, Clerk-Recorder, Orange County Housing Authority, Office on Aging, Council on Aging, and CalOptima as well as referrals to other federal, state, and local agencies. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Medi-Cal and CalFresh eligibility and ongoing case maintenance
- Public health and mental health services
- Housing inquiries
- CalOptima workshops
- Services for older adults
- Medicare information
- Marriage licenses and passports

The collaboration between the various departments has proven to be so successful that partnerships have expanded over time; ultimately, they outgrew the initial 2,000 square foot facility. In September 2016, the CCSC doubled in size by expanding and opening the new CCSC “Annex” near the original facility. With the goal of making public services easily accessible to the community, the newly opened Annex operations include behavioral health and public health services, housing services, services for older adults, and a variety of CalOptima services. CalOptima services include weekly workshops that are aimed to assist and educate the community through health education seminars, CalOptima care coordination, referrals, changing of care providers and/or health networks, and assisting with customer health identification cards. SSA staff and the Clerk-Recorder comprise the team at the main CCSC location. These two facilities are the only centers that the County of Orange has of this kind, and in all aspects they strengthen and support the County’s “No Wrong Door” philosophy. In fact, the CCSC served as a model upon which No Wrong Door was developed.

Staffed with eight SSA employees along with multiple Agency partners, the CCSC assists over 2,000 customers on a monthly basis. SSA Eligibility Supervisor, Diemchau Trinh shared the following:

*Staff at the County Community Service Center serve the community directly, and have daily contact with different minority groups. They are empathetic, patient, and understanding to the needs of the customers. They strive to provide services effectively to all customers who come to the center seeking help. For the past three years, I have received many letters from customers expressing their gratitude and appreciation to staff for their service. The staff collaborates together, and is willing to take initiative whenever needed. Their great team-spirit creates a family oriented work environment between all departments. By the end of each day, they make sure every customer is served with dignity, care and compassion.*

Under Eligibility Supervisor Diemchau Trinh’s leadership, CCSC staff have embraced the significance and true value of interagency collaboration in order to deliver exceptional customer service. We would like to acknowledge all CCSC staff for going above and beyond each day to serve our community.

## SSA RECEIVES AWARDS FOR GREAT WORK



*Pictured from left to right: CEO of ACC-OC, Heather Stratman, SSA Employees, Jesse Guillen, Tawnya Reveles and Ted Lin; President of ACC-OC, Steve Jones*

On Friday, May 12, 2017, the Association of California Cities-Orange County (ACC-OC) presented SSA with a Golden Hub of Innovation Award at their 6th annual awards ceremony in Newport Beach. SSA received the Golden Hub Award in recognition of its Mobile Response Vehicle (MRV) Civic Center Outreach program in Santa Ana. The MRV outreach effort was launched in September 2015 as a pilot program and, in 2016, became a permanent aspect of the weekly services provided to the homeless population at The Courtyard, the County's transitional center in the Civic Center with emergency beds and enhanced services for those without permanent housing. The MRV is deployed to The Courtyard every Thursday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. SSA staff works in close collaboration with other County agencies such as the Health Care Agency and Orange County Community Resources to address the individual needs of the clients in the Civic Center area. The MRV Outreach Program also received an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo), which will be presented on July 23, 2017 at NACo's Annual Conference and Exposition.



*Pictured from left to right: Tim Blosky, Nancy Thai, Rashad Salaam, Taylor Adray, Humberto Ochoa, Rosa Martinez, Romelia Harrison, Tawnya Reveles, Kristal Mothershed, and David Alden*

Administrative Manager I, Tawnya Reveles had these kinds of words to share with the MRV Team, *"I am so very proud of the MRV team, past and present, and the contributions each and every one of you have made to the success of this very important project. It's not always easy, sometimes a little windy, or soggy, sometimes heart-breaking, but almost always inspiring. Your individual attitude and effort each week create an environment of partnership, collaboration and trust-building with the homeless community we serve. This award is for all of us; you should be very proud of yourself!"*

Since 2015, the MRV Team has:

- Taken over 2,050 applications for services;
- Issued/replaced over 1,100 Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards;
- Provided 650 Benefit Identification Cards (BIC); and,
- Assisted over 5,600 individuals.

SSA also received an Achievement Award from NACo for the *Fairness for Families* video that was published by SSA's Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality (ERDD) Advisory Group. ERDD is a workgroup that was created in order to raise awareness among service providers and community partners on the inequitable representation of children of color in the foster care system in Orange County. The [video](#), created in early 2016, highlights the importance of ERDD's efforts in addressing these issues and provides child welfare professionals with a heightened awareness for working with families of color through the foster care system. Congratulations to all SSA staff who have contributed to the success of both of these programs!



**CELEBRATING NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY**



Wednesday, April 26, 2017, was recognized as National Administrative Professionals Day, a day to recognize the work of secretaries, administrative assistants, receptionists and other administrative support professionals. Throughout the Agency there were many events and ceremonies to celebrate SSA’s amazing administrative professionals. At Children and Family Services (CFS), staff was treated to a Hawaiian feast, and employees participated in the limbo and hula hoop games where they received prizes for participation. The theme of the event was “Mahalo Luau”. We would like to thank all of our Administrative Professionals throughout the Agency for all of the hard work you do every day in serving our clients and supporting staff.

*Pictured from left to right (back row): Rita Medina, Sara Shrieves, Kalea Perez, Jazmin Morales, Karen Silva, Huei-Na “Alice” Tsou, Nahomy Arriaga, Angela Gonzales, Lydia Gonzalez, Patricia “Patty” De La Torre, Sarah Allen, Rosemary Orozco, Phoebe Wu. Bottom: Juan Aguilar, Hugo Torres, Brynn Esparza and Emmanuel Valadez*

**WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

**WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**  
**FREE BREAKFAST and LUNCH!**  
 Registration / Breakfast / Vendors: 9 am – 10 am  
 Program: 10am – 1 pm  
 Lunch / Vendors: 1 - 2 p.m.  
**Saturday ~ 17 June 2017**  
**Buena Park Senior Center**  
 8150 Knott Avenue, Buena Park  
 714-446-7035  
*Hear Experts On: Technology and Cyber Abuse in OC*  
*Win Prizes and Find Useful Tips and Resources*

**Jake Margolis, CISSP**  
 Chief Information Security Officer  
 County of Orange

**James O’Leary, Special Agent**  
 IRS Criminal Investigation Div.  
 Identity Theft and Fraud Dept.

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Paul Greenwood, JD**  
 Deputy District Attorney for San Diego County  
 Director of the Elder Abuse Prosecution Unit

Special Appearance by **Buena Park Police Detectives**

**GUEST PANEL:** Stacey Lindberg, MSW / Adult Protective Services; Stephanie Pizzola, MSG / OC Family Caregiver Resource Center; Sherry Zamanigan, Special Agent / California Department of Justice



June 15, 2017 marks the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). WEAAD was originally launched by the United Nations on June 15, 2006, and serves as a call-to-action for individuals, organizations, and communities to raise awareness about elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. On June 17, 2017, multiple Orange County agencies, the North Orange County Collaborative group, the Department of Justice Medi-Cal Fraud Division, and St. Jude Medical Center will host an awareness event at the Buena Park Senior Center. This year’s theme is “Cyber Security” featuring San Diego District Attorney and elder abuse expert, Paul Greenwood. The event is from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and is free to attend.



In 2016, SSA’s Adult Protective Services (APS) program investigated over 11,000 reports of abuse and neglect to elder and dependent adults in Orange County. This year, APS continues to receive over a 1,000 reports per month. To learn more about elder abuse and how to help, visit our [website](#).

## JUNE IS NATIONAL PET PREPAREDNESS MONTH

How prepared are you? Millions of Americans across the country would agree that their pets are actually members of their family. It is just as important to prepare our pets as it is to prepare our loved ones, so remember to include them in your emergency plan. If you need to evacuate during a disaster, it is crucial to understand that animals may not be allowed in an emergency shelter, so you must plan alternatives for them. Consider prearranging an agreement with family or friends that live outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you and your pet(s). You must also assemble an animal emergency supply kit with key items. Consider the following:

- Food (your pet's regular food) for 7-14 days
- Water for 7-14 days
- Leash and collar with your current contact information
- Bowl(s)
- Photo of your pet/ID and a photo of you with your pet
- Medication(s) your pet needs
- Current immunization/vet records
- Pet carrier (for smaller animals)
- Animal first aid kit
- Contact list of pet-friendly hotels, veterinarians, American Humane Association and out-of-town friends/family



Having a pet “Go-Kit” packed and ready before an emergency can help ensure you have all that you need to care for your pets. Additional links to help keep animals safe before, during and after a disaster can be found at <https://www.ready.gov/animals>.

## WATER SAFETY

Drowning is the leading cause of death and disability in California for children under five years of age. Drowning can be fast and silent, occurring without a struggle or splash. All collections of water are dangerous for infants and toddlers including bathtubs, buckets, toilets, ponds, spas, swimming pools, and natural water sites.

According to statistics from the Orange County Fire Authority, 39 children survived but may be disabled because of a near-drowning accident in Orange County (per 2016 data). Those who survive near-drowning accidents may live with severe disabilities for the remainder of their lives.

Here are some important safety tips to follow:

- Never leave a child alone near water, even for a few seconds
- Someone should actively supervise the pool at all times
- Keep a constant adult eye on young children
- All pool gates should be self-latching

For more drowning prevention tips, click [here](#).



### DEDICATION AND NAMING CEREMONY FOR BRIDGES AT KRAEMER PLACE



In June 2015, the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved a purchase and sale agreement for the property at 1000 Kraemer Place in Anaheim for the purpose of providing shelter for those without permanent housing. The County broke ground on renovations to the building in 2016 with a plan to phase construction at the shelter in order to expedite an emergency sleeping facility. On Thursday, May 4, 2017, the County of Orange officially had the dedication and naming ceremony for "Bridges at Kraemer Place".

Phase I is now complete and has begun to house people by providing bed space and services for up to 100 single men and women. Phase II, expected to be completed in summer 2018, will add an additional 100 beds, along with an onsite kitchen, interior restrooms and showers and a multi-service center with a health clinic.

With onsite services, meals, laundry, restrooms and showers, Bridges at Kraemer Place is designed to be a facility where clients may stay up to 180 days. During that time, onsite assessments will connect the individual to employment and housing navigation services.



*Top photo; pictured from left to right: Vice Chair Andrew Do, Supervisor Lisa Bartlett and Supervisor Todd Spitzer*

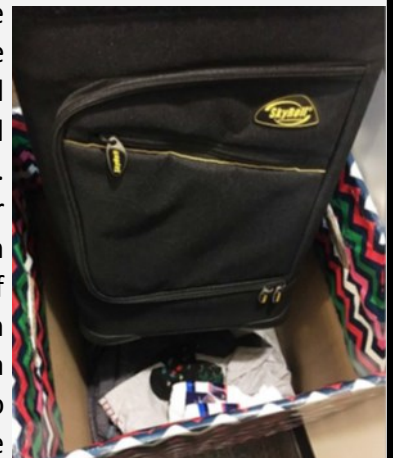
*Bottom photo: A view of Phase I of Bridges at Kraemer Place*

### 2016-2017 COLD WEATHER DRIVE IS SUCCESSFUL



*Pictured: One of the donation boxes overflowing with items*

The Central Regional Office's (CRO) 2016-17 Cold Weather Donation Drive was a success! CRO's Donation Team would like to thank all SSA staff who so generously contributed to this drive. Whether by donating clothing or other items, providing collection boxes, or volunteering to bring in donations from other regions, your efforts contributed to the success of this drive. The response from SSA staff was overwhelming – we collected a total of 1,368 items! Donations included clothing, toiletries, blankets, shoes, and personal storage (backpacks, duffle bags, suitcases) items. Each donation assisted in making the cold weather season more comfortable and tolerable for an individual without permanent housing. Recipients of the donated items expressed genuine appreciation when they were provided with a new blanket, a jacket, or a pair of shoes. SSA staff continue to demonstrate their compassion and care for Orange



*Pictured: One of the suitcases donated by staff*

County's most vulnerable residents. Your donations and contributions are appreciated! Thanks again!

## COMMISSIONER BISCHOFF MAKES AN IMPACT

By David Harper, Senior Social Services Supervisor, Children and Family Services



### *“Everything’s about the best interest of the child” — Commissioner Gary G. Bischoff*

This statement proved to be the common thread throughout a recent interview with Commissioner Bischoff, as it was the theme across his 27-year career on the Orange County Juvenile Court bench. As a Dependency Court bench officer in Courtroom L31, Commissioner Bischoff presided over the cases of child abuse and neglect affiliated with the Children and Family Services (CFS) Division. For social workers, appearing in L31 was a rite of passage; testifying was a crucible. All CFS veterans have a good “Bischoff story”. He was known to hold high expectations, but he was also deeply respected for his fairness, efficiency, knowledge, and devotion to the children his courtroom served.

With a wry smile, Bischoff acknowledged some awareness of his austere and uncompromising reputation with CFS, but clarified it wasn’t something he intentionally crafted. “Here is what I think everybody really needs to understand: We’re dealing with people’s lives. We’re dealing with life or death for some of these children...When we have that kind of responsibility we have to hold ourselves to a higher standard.”

*Commissioner Gary G. Bischoff served as a Referee for the Juvenile Court from 1990-2000, then as a Commissioner from 2000 until his retirement on April 1, 2017*

While attributing a high standard to others, he also internalized this edict by asserting himself daily to ensure a highly organized courtroom with a well-managed docket and unrivaled efficiency. He claimed this was borne from necessity back when his courtroom managed up to 1,500 cases and the understaffed Juvenile Defender (JD) attorneys were only available on certain days. But he “carried it forward” because timely decisions and limited court appearances are more compassionate and respectful for the families involved.

Looking back across three decades, Bischoff described the most significant change in Juvenile Court as the creation of the Dependency Drug Court (DDC) program, which introduced a collaborative, team approach to substance-abusing parents seeking to reunify with their children. DDC proved to be a problem-solving, supportive model leading to better outcomes than an adversarial system for all cases, a cultural shift Bischoff emphatically upheld even after the DDC program was discontinued.

Similarly, the Commissioner identified his most meaningful contribution as advocating for the “direct calendar” system, in which the same courtroom is assigned for the life of the case. The direct calendar system enabled relationship-building, a deeper understanding of cases, and a more collaborative team approach within the courtroom.

While Bischoff held high expectations for CFS social workers, he also held them in high esteem sharing that, “I have the highest regard for social workers... I credit the social workers I met when I was a JD attorney for really training me, for a large part of my education... I don’t know what I’d do if I were a social worker. You do an incredible amount of work.”

L31 was a classroom with Bischoff as the professor. Bischoff sought foremost to explain his decisions on the record for the Court of Appeal. But he also earnestly valued educating all participants in L31, including social workers: “It doesn’t do any good to tell somebody to do something without them understanding why they’re doing it. If you let someone understand the context, the rationale, then if nothing else they understand it’s not arbitrary and capricious- that there really is method to the madness.”

The Commissioner’s biggest advice to social workers: Communicate; with court, County Counsel, other attorneys, service providers, caregivers, and especially parents and children.

Bischoff maintained he is still invigorated by his work, but he retired to give more time for the parts of his life little known by CFS. The man who pursued stage acting out of high school and took a college class on juggling while in the army will now travel more with his wife of 43 years, Meredith, using his pilot’s license to fly them on trips she has planned. He has many ideas to keep him busy flexing “different creative muscles”.

“I have been exceedingly fortunate in my life. Most of the work I have done hasn’t felt like work.” In an article many years ago, Bischoff was quoted as saying, “I’d probably do this even if they didn’t pay me.” So it should not be surprising he is already back doing pro bono work for the Juvenile Court. Still, for many in CFS, the absence of his name placard over the door of L31 marks the end of an era defined by a bench officer who rigorously and unapologetically pursued what was best for the children and families he served.

## SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION



### Naomi Vo, Social Worker II (SW II), Adult Services and Assistance Programs

SW II, Naomi Vo received these kind words of appreciation from the parents of a client:

*"I just wanted to write and let you know we've been working with Naomi Vo for my daughter. Naomi has been fantastic and has helped us tremendously during this process. I wanted to write you and let you know that we are very happy with the help we've received and Naomi's professionalism. I wish more agencies we deal with were as supportive, helpful and professional as your office. Thank you again."*

*Thank you*

### Fabiola Lopez, Eligibility Technician (ET), Family Self-Sufficiency (Not pictured)

Sam Salgado, Supervising Social Service Practitioner from San Bernardino County said the following about ET Fabiola Lopez:

*"I recently had the pleasure of working with Eligibility Technician Fabby Lopez regarding a mutual client. Many times the information needed is difficult to obtain, as well as difficult to understand. Fabby Lopez, however, was able to assist and provide clear information and did so in a very pleasant and professional manner. It is evident that Fabby Lopez takes pride in her work and presents herself in a very professional manner with your Agency."*

### Jesse Alvarado, Eligibility Technician (ET), Adult Services and Assistance Programs

ET Jesse Alvarado received these kind words of appreciation from two clients:

*"The gentleman named Jesse Alvarado was very nice and professional to help me. I wish all workers were the same as Jesse."*

*"To whom it may concern, I never had to come to a Social Services office before. I've heard horror stories about workers and long lines. I have had an incredible experience with Jesse. He went out of his way to help me. He is very courteous and efficient. Thank you!"*



### Steven Hwang, Eligibility Technician (ET), Adult Services and Assistance Programs

ET Steven Hwang received the following words on a thank you card from an appreciative client:

*"With warm appreciation for all you've given, of your time, your energy and yourself. I heartily thank you for your help in time of hardship."*





## SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION



### Deanna Petersen, Senior Social Worker (SSW), Children and Family Services

Congratulations to SSW, Deanna Petersen who was recognized as the CFS Employee of the Month for April. Here is an example of Deanna's selfless work:

*"Deanna is a fantastic social worker that exemplifies the County core values of excellence and compassion! I am one of the Court Officers responsible for Girl's Court. I have watched her do incredible social work over the past few years with these girls. She is loving and compassionate to each of the girls on her caseload. She is tender and nurturing to them and also not afraid to be firm and honest. She is a beautiful maternal presence that they so often need. Her deep connection to them is what allows her to have an incredible role and influence in their young lives. She is compassionate but also isn't*

*afraid to speak truth to them when needed. She provides thorough and comprehensive case management for each child on her caseload which exemplifies the county core value of excellence. She has so many challenging cases and she goes so far above and beyond for many of these kids. She is a tribute to our profession and a true joy to work with. I simply cannot say enough about her. She is exemplary!"*

### Jessica Herrera, Eligibility Technician (ET), Adult Services and Assistance Programs

A representative from the Office of Assemblyman Travis Allen, 72nd District, recently sent an email to SSA's Public Information Officer, Elizabeth DenBleyker about the service a client received from ET, Jessica Herrera:

*"Mrs. Herrera in your office was very professional despite extraordinary push-back from [the client]. I appreciate your office's help and professionalism on this issue."*



### Erica Barrales, Senior Social Worker (SSW), Children and Family Services

SSW Erica Barrales received the following inspirational note from a former client:

*"I hope you remember me. I just wanted to let you know I am graduating with my bachelors this May. Additionally, I just got the notice that I will be attending grad school for my MSW at USC school of social work in the fall. I hope you know that you're my inspiration and I wrote about you in my personal statement for USC. You're amazing and I prayed to someday make a difference in someone's life just as you've made in mine."*



## SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

### **Tassiana Mervilus, Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS), Administrative Services Division (Not Pictured)**

The following is an excellent example of the collaboration that exists between SSA, Orange County Board of Supervisors Fourth District Office, Homeless Continuum of Care Office and OC 211, and how their combined efforts helped a permanently disabled homeless person find resources. SSSS Tassiana Mervilus was instrumental in helping this individual find shelter and medical care. Her manager, Administrative Manager II Tricia Smith and Policy Advisor for Fourth District Steve Spernak, said the following:

*"This is a great example of the excellent customer services Tassiana provides. She is an asset to our QST (Quality Support Team)."*

*"Excellent. This may be just a test case of how Bridges (at Kraemer Place) pulls it all together for [the client] and other constituents. Happy to see this magic coming together."*



### **Cathy Wong, Research Analyst IV, Administrative Services Division**

Research Analyst IV Cathy Wong received the following words of appreciation from Administrative Manager II Jaime Muñoz and from her manager, Administrative Manager I Thu Phan:

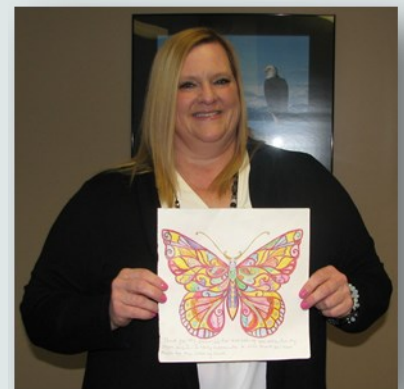
*"I appreciate Cathy's embrace of research to realize practical, immediate benefits to our practice, to the families we serve. I appreciate her rooted perspective in data humanism—to keep ever-present that our data is about people whose life trajectories are within our immediate reach to influence for the better. I appreciate Cathy's skill at presenting data analyses in accessible and meaningful manners to diverse audiences. I also appreciate Cathy's gift of collaborating, and her initiative and attention to detail to ensure excellence. I am grateful for all the good Cathy creates."*

*"As her manager, I echo Jaime's appreciation. Cathy demonstrates a 'can do' attitude."*

### **Dawn Boersman, Social Worker II (SW II), Family Self-Sufficiency**

SW II Dawn Boersman received the following note from a child participant:

*"Thank you Mrs. Dawn for everything you did for my mom and I. I really appreciate, also thank you so much for the coloring book."*



## SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

### ***Goodbye and Good Luck to our SSA Today Editor!***

After over 17 years with the Social Services Agency, our esteemed SSA Today Editor, Elizabeth DenBleyker, is leaving the County of Orange and moving to the Empire State of the South, Georgia. Elizabeth spent 14 years in Children and Family Services as a Senior Social Worker and Senior Social Services Supervisor. She was promoted in 2014 to the role of SSA's Public Information Officer where she has tirelessly worked to support SSA by crafting and delivering key positive messages to advance our mission and by augmenting SSA's communications with the public through the development of social media channels and regular promotion of SSA programs and services. Elizabeth was instrumental in enhancing the SSA Today newsletter and ensuring that staff receive timely information and recognition of the great work being done here at SSA. Please join us in wishing Elizabeth the best of luck in all her future endeavors – she will be truly missed!



***The following heartfelt story was provided by a Senior Social Services Supervisor with Children and Family Services (CFS), and is a powerful reminder of the inspirational service our staff provides in the face of heartbreaking reality.***

When a dependent child passes away, it is always a tragedy. In the Special Medical Unit of CFS, these tragic events are an unavoidable reality. During these tragedies, we can be encouraged by the exceptional goodness of the dedicated individuals who give the best of themselves in these pivotal moments.

A young boy, just one week beyond his second birthday, unexpectedly passed away during a routine overnight hospital stay. His distraught foster mother reached out to Administrative Manager I, Pam Young, in the predawn hours, as Pam had previously been a Medical Placement Social Worker. Even though it had been several years since Pam had worked with the foster mother, Pam responded immediately to the hospital to be with the foster mother as she mourned the loss of her child.

Medical Intake Senior Social Worker (SSW) Mary Ewart then responded directly to the hospital to support the foster mother and assist as needed. As the Agency's liaison to the medical facility, Mary rapidly used her contacts to ensure that the child remained at the hospital until his biological mother arrived.

Meanwhile, the assigned SSW to the case, Lila Khalili, made the heartbreaking call to the child's biological mother while already en route to the mother's home. Lila picked up the mother and drove her to the hospital. Lila comforted her as she sat with the child while the priest gave Last Rights, and a locket of hair and footprint were taken as keepsakes for the mother.

In the evening, the current Medical Placement SSW, Karen Werno, and Foster Parent Liaison, Joanna Hussey, drove together to the home of the foster mother who was still reeling with emotion, in order to provide empathy and compassion. After most workdays had ended, these dedicated and caring individuals sat with a grieving foster mother to process the trauma of losing a foster child.

The professionalism and humanity of this team leaves me stunned and humbled. I feel as though I often see the worst of what this world can be and, at the same time, I see the best.

## SSA PROMOTIONS

### DIVISION KEY

ASD	Administrative Services Division
ASAP	Adult Services & Assistance Programs
CFS	Children & Family Services
FSS	Family Self-Sufficiency

Employee Name	Title	Division
BURDICK, SCOTT	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER III	CFS
SNODGRASS, CHARLES	GROUP COUNSELOR I	CFS
CHURCHILL, DENISE	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER III	CFS
DOAN, CAROLYN	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASD
MANNING, GREGORY	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASD

### LOOKING TO PROMOTE?

Please click on the link below to see the list of current job openings within the County of Orange.

<http://agency.governmentjobs.com/oc/default.cfm>



### CONNECT WITH US!



Twitter:

[www.twitter/OrangeCountySSA](http://www.twitter/OrangeCountySSA)



Facebook:

[www.facebook/OCSSA1](http://www.facebook/OCSSA1)

**SSA Today** is distributed monthly by the SSA Strategic Communications Team and is published by the SSA Today Newsletter Committee. To contact the Committee:

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**Do you have questions or comments for the SSA Executive Team? Email your questions, comments or suggestions to:** [directorscorner@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:directorscorner@ssa.ocgov.com)