

# OCSSA TODAY

## BLUE RIBBON EVENT RAISES AWARENESS OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

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As social workers, providers, and social services professionals, we work to support children and families because we deeply believe that every child should have



*Pictured: The pinwheel garden in front of Bowers Museum in Santa Ana.*

the opportunity to thrive. This year for Child Abuse Prevention Month, our Orange County community came together to raise awareness of child abuse and neglect and promote child abuse prevention efforts in Orange County.

This campaign was truly a representation of the collaborative efforts to protect Orange County's children from abuse and neglect. Learn more about child abuse prevention month and prevention efforts in Orange County from the following resources:

- [Families and Communities Together \(FaCT\) Family Resource Centers](#)
- [Embrace: The 2018 FaCT Annual Conference](#)
- [U.S Department of Health and Human Services: National Child Abuse Prevention Month 2018](#)
- [OCBlueRibbon.org](#)

The Raise Foundation's Blue Ribbon Task Force, a collaborative effort comprised of representatives from County of Orange Social Services Agency, Orange County Department of Education, Orange County Fire Authority, American Academy of Pediatrics – Orange County, and Orange County Sheriff's Department, organized a month-long, County-wide "Step Up. Stand Up. Speak Up for Kids. A Community in Unity to Prevent Child Abuse" campaign that raised awareness of child abuse prevention efforts in Orange County. The month kicked off with the formal Blue Ribbon Kick-Off Ceremony, emceed by Orange County Reporter Michele Gile of KCBS2 and KCAL9 at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. The ceremony honored the memory of the eight local children who passed away in 2017 due to abuse or neglect. Nearly 50 blue pinwheel gardens were "planted" throughout the community and a year-long roaming youth art exhibit began at Kidseum in Santa Ana. In addition, all 15 of our Family Resource Centers participated in the campaign by holding blue ribbon events and raising awareness in the communities they serve.



*Pictured: SSA Director Mike Ryan addresses community members.*

# SSA SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

## FSS & AS Policy and Quality Assurance Team



*Pictured from left to right: Peter Chen, Gerlyn Bowman, Dianne Didio, Adam Tipps, Loan English, Tiberina Ugarcovici, Sumit Sapra, Diana Cruz-Toro, Teresa Pantoja and Martha Walter. Not pictured: MaiKhanh Nguyen, Kristina Traw and Donna Jefferson.*

The Social Services Agency Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (FSS & AS) Division Program Team, now known as Policy and Quality Assurance (PQA), is implementing a top-down realignment. This reorganization, which is still in development, seeks to focus divisional resources in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible in order to provide the most beneficial customer service.

With guidance from Deputy Division Director, Abraham Gomez, the purpose of the PQA section is to interpret, analyze, and communicate legislative, programmatic and internal policy changes to guide decisions and achieve positive outcomes. The goal of PQA is to enhance the integrity of our implementation efforts; meet state, federal and county mandates, and most importantly, to enhance our service delivery as an agency. Additionally,

PQA has merged responsibilities of the FSS & AS policy teams, which were previously separate under two different divisions in order to streamline support.

Prior to restructuring, the program team focused on the programmatic compliance aspect of a policy while leaving the operational (business process) piece to be developed by the Family Self-Sufficiency Operations team. PQA consolidates the policy and operational duties of FSS & AS into one team. This new team will work directly with the regional offices to ensure the best work products for our staff. PQA is now developing policy from start to finish, by ensuring that all regional, operational and programmatic perspectives are incorporated jointly.

This methodology will increase efficiency by eliminating unnecessary steps for policy approval. It will assist in reevaluating outcomes as well as business processes, maximizing the use of resources, and strategically planning for the future by becoming a more resilient and effective team. With this reorganization, PQA staff is experiencing a transformational change in roles and responsibilities by empowering divisional staff. This change provides greater oversight and better defines decision-making authority, eliminates redundancies, and ensures that we are providing our customers – the regions – the best customer service possible so they can assist our clients on their road to self-sufficiency.

***Congratulations the FSS & AS Policy and Quality Assurance Team for all of the great work you do and for being recognized as the SSA Spotlight: Excellence in Service team for April 2018!***

# MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM



*Pictured: Carol Wiseman and Minda.*

**Beginning this month, SSA Today will be introducing a new monthly feature entitled “Meet SSA’s Leadership Development Team” (LDT), that will highlight two members of the Leadership Development Team each month. The LDT is comprised of SSA’s Division Directors and Deputy Division Directors. We hope you enjoy the opportunity to get to know our SSA Leadership a bit better.**

**Name:** Carol Wiseman

**Title:** SSA Chief Deputy Director

**Areas covered in your position:** The four Division Directors, Information Technology, and Quality Support Team report to me.

**Years of Service with the County of Orange:** 39 years in June.

**Divisions worked/previous experience:**

I joined the County Auditor-Controller’s Office in 1979. In that capacity, I spent 4 ½ years as a County internal auditor and another 4 ½ years supervising the County’s Employee Benefits Office. The experience as an internal auditor allowed me to gain broad exposure to the finances and operations of multiple County agencies and departments, as well as audit private entities that had leases or other financial agreements with the County. In Employee Benefits, I had the opportunity to experience a dual reporting relationship with two departments (Auditor-Controller

and Personnel); deal with large contracts; ensure quality customer service to County employees, retirees and their families; and work with the County’s labor organizations. In 1988, I was promoted to a Financial Services analyst position in the Social Services Agency and subsequently became the Financial Services Manager for the Agency overseeing its complex annual budget of over \$800 million. Later I was promoted to SSA’s Deputy Division Director of Financial and Administrative Services. In this position, my responsibilities included financial services, centralized operations, procurement, emergency management, facilities and real estate management, financial systems coordination, and dotted-line oversight of accounting services for the Agency. Also, as needed due to intermittent vacancies during that time, I had the opportunity to provide management oversight to most of SSA’s other administrative support functions such as strategic planning, public information officer, program integrity, contracts, and research functions. The breadth of this experience, from both a County perspective and an Agency perspective, afforded me the opportunity to be exposed to the variety of programs and services provided by SSA and the County and be actively involved in many initiatives within SSA and across County departments. These varied experiences prepared me to take on the role of Division Director of Administrative Services and my current assignment as the Agency’s Chief Deputy Director.

**Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.):** I am an active community volunteer and, as a certified therapy dog handler, enjoy sharing my dogs with others at places such as skilled nursing facilities, Ronald McDonald House, children’s reading programs at local libraries, charity walks, and other special events. I also enjoy local trail hikes with my dogs, family, and friends.

**Professional development tips for staff:** Know and live by your values. I highly value integrity and doing the right thing. I strive to live by those values personally and professionally and would encourage others to know and live by their values as they develop professionally. Be flexible. Blessed are the flexible for they shall not get bent out of shape.

# MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM



**Name:** John Hendrickson

**Title:** Division Director

**Areas covered in your position:** Assistance Programs Division

**Years of Service with the County of Orange:** 26. I began my career with the County in 1992.

**Divisions worked/previous experience:** Assistance Programs, Family Self-Sufficiency and Administrative Services.

My previous experience includes: Eligibility Technician in the Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC) program. I promoted to Eligibility Supervisor, Social Services Supervisor I and Social Services Supervisor II in CalWORKs and Welfare-to-Work. I became an Administrative Manager I and Administrative Manager II in Family Self-Sufficiency where I managed eligibility staff and regional offices, led the Operations team, and implemented new technologies and methods for client service delivery.

In 2013, I was appointed as Deputy Division Director (Administrative Manager III) over Family Self-Sufficiency and in January 2015, I rotated to the Administrative Services Division as Deputy Division Director overseeing Professional Standards and Development. In November 2017, I was promoted to Division Director for the Assistance Programs Division.

Throughout my career, I have participated in committees and workgroups such as the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, Workforce Engagement Steering Committee, Career Advisory Program, and the Mentorship Program, to name a few. My journey has provided me with an incredible opportunity to mentor and coach others, helping them to fulfill their goals – which to me, is the best reward I could ever receive.

**Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.):** I love history, antiques and antique shopping. I have restored my 1920 French Tudor style vintage home, and I love researching my family genealogy. I was able to discover that my ancestors date back to the 1600's in the USA and were instrumental in the settlement of New Jersey! By the way, I was born and raised in New Jersey.

**Professional development tips for staff:** The first tip is one I learned from my Grandmother "Do the right thing even when no one is watching." The second tip is to always do your best work.

## WHAT IS NIMS?

By the Emergency Management Team



National Incident Management System

SSA was 99% in compliance of National Incident Management System (NIMS) training completion for Fiscal Year 2017/2018. In order to keep you aware of why NIMS training is important and mandatory please review [Frequently asked Questions](#). If you have any additional questions after reviewing the attachment, please feel free to reach out to Delcie Hynes at [Delcie.Hynes@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:Delcie.Hynes@ssa.ocgov.com) or Diana LaRusso at [Diana.LaRusso@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:Diana.LaRusso@ssa.ocgov.com).



# MAY IS FOSTERCARE MONTH

**Disclaimer: This story is a fictional but accurate description of what children may experience as they enter dependency in the foster care system.**

## The Long Way Home

*Today has been a stressful day and school hasn't even started. My little brother, Daniel, and I woke up late because there was a lot of loud noise last night and we hardly got any sleep. To make things worse, neither one of us had clean clothes to wear to school. Mom was supposed to do laundry last week and promised all weekend that it would be done by the time we had to go to school. Needless to say, the laundry wasn't done and we were almost 30 minutes late to school, again.*

*My teacher is very understanding when I show up late. In the past, he has helped me fill out forms that my mom forgot to do and helped me get out of morning detention. He knows that I take care of Daniel and that it isn't easy.*



*After lunch, I got called to the school counselor, Mr. Williams', office. Daniel was there and he was very sad. Mr. Williams introduced me to a social worker who asked me and Daniel some questions about things that had happened in my home and then told me that I would not be able to go back home today. She explained she was driving us to a safe place where some nice people would take care of us until things at our home were straightened out.*

*While we were sitting in the car, Daniel started crying and there was nothing I could do to make him feel better. I was scared too; I wanted to cry but I knew it would only scare him more. I didn't understand why we couldn't go home and didn't know the place where we were going.*

*When we arrived at Orangewood Children and Family Center we were taken into a room that had Daniel's favorite Disney movie playing, and he finally stopped crying. There were two really nice ladies trying to make us feel comfortable, but I couldn't stop thinking about my mom and what was happening to her.*

*I later found out that Orangewood is a safe place for kids who have been temporarily removed from their homes. Daniel and I also found out that our mom could visit us; we were so happy to be able to see her.*

*A new social worker talked to me and Daniel about our dad and other family members or friends that we might know. I tried to remember the name of our old neighbor who watched us when mom would leave, but we have moved so much, it is hard to remember anyone's phone or address.*

*Daniel and I have been at Orangewood for a week now and we like it here. We are able to eat good food three times a day, we each get our own bed, and I finally got a new pair of shoes.*

*The social worker said that we will be leaving Orangewood soon to live with a new family until mom finishes her classes.*

*The Group Counselor, Jane, who watches the kids in my cottage [at Orangewood] told me that we are getting placed with a Resource Family (formerly foster parents) and that this is a good thing. Daniel and I will be cared for by a family together until mom can take us back. We will live in a house, have our own room, and we will not have to change schools again. Daniel and I were nervous thinking that our mom wouldn't be able to find us, but the social worker told us that we would still be able to visit with our mom and that our resource family would make sure we got to see her. (Continued on page 6)*

**"While we were sitting in the car, Daniel started crying and there was nothing I could do to make him feel better. I was scared too; I wanted to cry but I knew it would only scare him more. I didn't understand why we couldn't go home and didn't know the place where we were going."**

child placement court case worker plan  
 heart **Foster care** support healing trauma  
 family happiness  
 home hope  
 loved  
 safe

*(Continued from page 5)*

*I'm scared to move again; this hasn't been easy for either one of us. Daniel has been acting out at school and his grades are quickly going down. He is not a bad kid, but he misses mom and is really scared which is causing him to do things he has never done before.*

*[Later...]*

*We have been with our resource family for four weeks now. They are all nice and really do care about us. My new foster sister plays softball and is teaching me to play. Daniel is starting to catch-up in school and is no longer getting in trouble for his behavior. I love our resource family, but I can't wait to go home. My mom visits with us all the time and everyone is telling us she is doing really well. We are visiting with her more frequently now and should get to go home with her soon!*

There are numerous children in foster care that need Resource Families who can care for them. Finding Resource Family placements can be a complex process and Senior Social Workers (SSWs) consider all the unique circumstances for each specific case. The wishes of the parent, child, and relatives; court orders; the specific needs of the child; school attendance; visitation; keeping siblings together; where a caregiver lives; how long a child will need out-of-home care; and a myriad of other aspects all vie for significance. It is SSA's goal to always find the best home; always mindful that behind each case is the well-being and life of a child.

Healthy and loving relationships are important to children because they provide stability, connection and a sense of safety. Can you be someone that offers a healthy connection to a child or youth who is in need? If you are interested in becoming a resource family, please visit [www.oc4kids.com](http://www.oc4kids.com) or call (888) 871-5437 to sign up for an orientation. You can also follow us on Facebook [@OCLetsFosterTogether](https://www.facebook.com/OCLetsFosterTogether) and Twitter [@OCLetsFoster](https://twitter.com/OCLetsFoster).



# CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES PREPARES FOR LAUNCH OF NEW DATABASE



*Pictured: CWS/CMS Data Cleanup Workgroup (Not all members are pictured).*

SSA's Children and Family Services division (CFS) is preparing for the new statewide child welfare system which will be officially named "CWS-CARES". CWS-CARES is an acronym for: Child Welfare Services - California Automated Response and Engagement System, or simply referred to as CARES. Eight digital services such as Intake, CALS (Certification, Approval, and Licensing Service), Case Management, and Eligibility, will combine user-centered design and a reliable customer experience into a web-based application. CARES is one of the first statewide projects to embrace a collaborative approach to software development and implementation.

In preparation for upcoming system releases and for the conversion from the current system CWS/CMS to CARES, state and county staff have already begun the methodical process of data quality cleanup. Within CFS, volunteers from various programs have collaborated with CFS Systems in targeted data cleanup efforts across multiple sections.

While there is much more data cleanup ahead, nearly 12,000 records encompassing Client Services, Court Management, and Resource Management have been identified, merged, cleared or corrected. Insight gathered from collaborative efforts is being used for design feedback and for revising existing system change processes.

The first product release this year will be the Child Welfare Snapshot History tool. This Google-like feature will allow staff the ability to rapidly search on individuals and their past child welfare history. In addition, staff will be able to copy combined referral and case history information into other documents.

The CARES system basic essentials are: simplicity, safety, permanency, and well-being. Learn more about the CARES project at <https://cwds.ca.gov/>.

## EBT CARD VENDOR MIGRATION

The State is planning to transition Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) services in California from the current vendor to FIS (Fidelity Information Systems, LLC) on June 23, 2018. An official go/no go decision will be made on May 1, 2018. All 58 counties in California will have the same implementation date. The good news is the transition should be seamless to our clients and will offer enhanced services:

- The client's EBT card, and PIN number will remain the same.
- The customer service line for EBT clients will remain unchanged at (877) 328-9677.
- The county eligibility system (CalWIN) will remain the primary method for card and benefit issuance.
- New equipment will be provided by FIS for all district offices – PIN machines and printers will be installed and be functional after the transition on June 24th.
- FIS enhancement services include free unlimited, in-network cash withdrawal and balance inquiries. Currently, clients have to pay \$0.85 after the first four transactions in any given month. The number of surcharge-free automated teller machine (ATM) locations available in the California EBT network will be expanded.



The immediate impact to clients and staff will be the system outage for the implementation on June 23, 2018. This outage could be up to 24 hours, during which EBT card services cannot be utilized for both CalFresh and CalWORKs transactions. The outage will start at 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 23, 2018, and end at 11:00 p.m. Sunday, June 24, 2018.

Informational notifications will be sent by the State to all active EBT cardholders of record as of April 30, 2018, and posters will be set up in the regional offices. SSA will be contacting all clients who apply on or after May 1, 2018, including outreach and communication to external stakeholders. SSA project leads are working closely with the State to ensure a smooth transition. Stay tuned for more updates in the May 2018 newsletter.

# THE INCREDIBLE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY OF BENJAMIN BUTTON

By John Hendrickson, Division Director, Assistance Programs



A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, I was a twenty-something year old working as a staff accountant for a CPA firm, clocking in and out every day for the paycheck. While I was learning a lot, I didn't love it. In fact, I didn't even like it. I'm a people person – and I wasn't getting to be that person. So, after encouragement from a close friend who worked for LA County, I applied to be an Eligibility Technician here in Orange County in 1992.

Several years later, as a Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI) at the Laguna Hills Regional Center, my Regional Manager, Brenda Roa, encouraged me to go back to school and

finish my Bachelor's Degree. I already had some credits under my belt as, after high school, I had enrolled at CSU Northridge as an accounting major. But, after realizing I didn't love accounting and that my bank account was rapidly depleting, I stepped away from my education. The best part about Brenda's encouragement was that she walked the talk – she herself had gone back to school while working full-time to get her Bachelor's. After her gentle – and at times assertive nudging – I started to enroll in some junior college coursework in order to ease into work/school/life balance as I had a significant family commitment at the time as a caregiver. By 2004, I was able to dedicate myself to a Bachelor's program and enrolled at Chapman University's Irvine campus (now called Brandman University). And, in 2006, I graduated with my Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science.

My journey didn't end there, as I realized I loved school! I took the opportunity to utilize the tuition reimbursement program here at the County and go back for my Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership and Development at Chapman.

As you can see, this took me several years; it wasn't until I was in my 40's (thank goodness I'm Benjamin Button and am 29 again), that I completed my educational journey. And – it certainly wasn't easy. I took two to three classes during the week at night to get through my Bachelor's program. And, in hindsight, I realize my approach to my Bachelor's was wrong. If I could do it over, I would have taken it slower. For some reason, I always felt a little "less than" because I didn't have my education, so I plowed on through just to get the piece of paper. My advice to anyone looking at going back to school is to enjoy the journey – don't be so focused on the destination. Find the full value in the classes you are taking – and how they can relate back to your current position and professional growth.

When I started my Master's program, I let that altered ideology guide me and truly enjoyed the coursework. My education has been critical to my career – not necessarily because I've been able to promote, but because it's allowed me to see the bigger picture and helped me to become a stronger leader. My educational journey has given me the incredible opportunity to mentor and coach others to fulfill their goals – and to me, that is the best reward I could have gotten. You know, since I'm a people person.

So – my advice to you if you are considering your educational journey: Take the risk. Enjoy the journey. You can do it!

**To begin your educational journey, visit the Educational Advisory Program's (EdAP) [Intranet page](#). EdAP was created to support SSA staff within any classification who is pursuing higher education. The program leverages SSA's internal resources to facilitate a positive experience among staff who are working concurrently. EdAP pairs Participants with Educational Coaches (ECs) who have experienced the challenges of balancing work/life while pursuing their higher education. Please click on the link above to learn more.**



## EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY PROGRAM



# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



## **Matt Basham, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs**

ET Matt Basham recently received these kinds words of appreciation from a grateful client:

*"I came here today looking to get my CalFresh reinstated. Mr. Basham helped me with this process and was very courteous and professional during the entire interview. Mr. Basham is by far the nicest and most efficient case worker I've ever been blessed with and he deserves a raise and a corner office!"*

## **Noemy Fonceca, Intake Employment & Eligibility Specialist (IEES), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services**

IEES Noemy Fonceca recently received these kind words of gratitude from a worker in Los Angeles County who was collaborating on a case with her:

*"I just wanted you to know how helpful Noemy has been for me. We were working together to resolve a case that had MEDS issues. Noemy reached out to me and decided it was easier to talk about the issue and try to resolve it than to keep e-mailing back and forth. That way we both understood what was the best interest of the client and what action needed to be done in the case. I just wanted you to know what a great worker she is and how thankful I am for her help."*



## **Juanita Trejo-Middleton, Safety and Training Officer, Administrative Services Division/CEO Risk Management**

Safety and Training Officer Juanita Trejo-Middleton recently received these words of appreciation from two employees about her recent presentations at the New Employee Orientation and SWIT Training:

*"Thank you for taking time from your very busy schedule to share your time and expertise at the New Employee Orientation. Your approach was engaging and approachable as you could discern by the questions asked. As most of the new staff will be working in office settings, your demonstration of techniques to prevent repetitive motion injuries will be of great value to them and the agency. Thank you for all that you do to keep SSA staff safe and informed. I look forward to working with you more in the future."*



*"I wanted to thank you for presenting on Office Safety during the SWIT: Introduction to SSA Training. You conveyed a great deal of material in a short amount of time and made somewhat dry material entertaining. I especially enjoyed your video and the various images displaying "What's Wrong with these Pictures?" We all enjoyed your entertaining presentation on important safety information and I hope that we future opportunities to collaborate."*

# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



## **Pete Pavone, Senior Social Worker (SSW), Children and Family Services (Retired in March)**

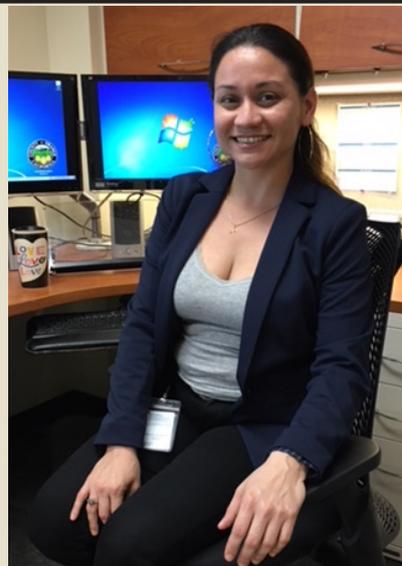
Congratulations to SSW Pete Pavone who was recently recognized as the CFS Employee of the Month for March. Here is an example of Pete's selfless work:

*"Pete has more than demonstrated for the past 27 years with CFS, his commitment and compassion for serving our clients. Pete is always about making sure to never jump to conclusions about the reports and to listen to our clients. Pete has patience and compassion for the children and families we serve. He is always a strong believer that most of our clients respond to empathy and understanding for the situations that are at hand. Pete always seeks out ways to direct our clients in the right direction. Whether it is counseling parents or children on the spot, or referring clients to our local Family Resource Center. Pete always tries to address the issues immediately."*

## **Raymond Saylor, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs**

ET Raymond Saylor recently received commendation from SSA Director Mike Ryan for his role in the American Red Cross functional exercise that was held in the City of Buena Park in March:

*"You demonstrated leadership, confidence and skill...We want to thank you for your ongoing commitment to your role not only as a Disaster Service Worker but as an exemplary volunteer. The shelter exercise was a huge success and Red Cross staff and volunteers expressed gratitude for your "can do" attitude and teamwork. Your efforts definitely support SSA in our quest for excellence. Thank you!"*



## **Alana Talamantes, Data Entry Technician (DET), Assistance Programs**

DET Alana Talamantes recently received these kind words of gratitude from a client:

*"I would like to thank Alana Talamantes for being respectful and extremely helpful as we were applying for Medi-Cal for my mother. Alana seems to be a very caring person and wants to do what's best for the people she serves."*

*Thank You!*



# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



## **Nia Jones, Continuing Employment & Eligibility Specialist (CEES), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services**

CEES Nia Jones recently received this letter of gratitude from an appreciative client:

*"Thank you so much for helping me on this journey and season of my life. You were there when I just got out of the DASU Program and were there when we were homeless. And now I am at a Cal State! We have come a long way. Thank you for treating me with respect, support and empathy. I will not forget you. Thank you."*

## **Kim-Hong Le, Social Worker II (SWII), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (Not pictured)**

SWII Kim-Hong Le recently received the following note from a grateful client:

*"Thank you so much for helping me achieve my goal of self sufficiency. Every time I had an issue or needed help understanding something, all I had to do was call you or email you and your were on it. You were there to help me every step of the way. Because of you, I now have a good job and can provide for my children and finally get off of aid. Thank you Ms. Le!!"*

## **Bernadina Valenzuela, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs**

ET Bernadina Valenzuela recently received the following compliments from a grateful client as retold by her supervisor:

"The following words were used by a customer to describe Call Agent Bernadina Valenzuela: *"knowledgeable, compassionate, friendly, and professional."* The customer also stated, *"I'm proud of the County of Orange's excellent customer service."*



## **Jennifer Johnston, Intake Employment & Eligibility Specialist (IEES), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services**

IEES Jennifer Johnston recently received these words of gratitude from a client:

*"Thank you for always seeing me with a smile, no judgment and urgency to care for my needs. Staff like you make all the difference."*

# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



## **Diana Huijsmans, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs**

ET Diana Huijsmans recently received this note of appreciation from an employee at a community based organization:

*"I just wanted to take the time to send out an acknowledgment regarding Diana. Diana is a great asset to your team. She is extremely effective in processing cases in a timely manner. She always communicates outcomes and always answers her emails when we have questions. We are very thankful for her great efforts and they do not go unnoticed. We appreciate you Diana, thank you."*

## **Saul Viramontes, Public Affairs Specialist (Staff Specialist), Agency Administration**

Public Affairs Specialist Saul Viramontes recently received these words of appreciation from Staff Specialist Chi Pham for his work with the California State University, Fullerton "Titan Takeover" job shadow program:

*"I wanted to acknowledge Saul for allowing our visiting guest/student from Cal State Fullerton to job shadow him on Monday. In addition to showing [the student] his day to day work, he also took the time to introduce her to other staff/ departments, providing her with additional exposure within SSA, as well as share additional job opportunity resources. On an evaluation form she completed at the end of her shadowing day, she shared that everyone she was introduced to made her feel welcomed and that she enjoyed the company culture as well as being able to gain firsthand experience into the work that [Saul] does. I truly appreciate Saul's time in helping to contribute a positive job shadowing experience."*



## **Irma Guillen, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs**

ET Irma Guillen recently received the following words of gratitude from a grateful client as retold by her supervisor:

*"A customer contacted a Call Center Supervisor to express his appreciation for Irma Guillen for having been kind, patient, and helpful. The customer was very grateful for Irma's customer service and continued to state, if she made a difference for me, I'm sure she is making a difference for a lot of people. Compassion in this world makes it a better place."*

# SSA TODAY QUIZ

Congratulations to Nicole Mastin who was randomly selected as the winner of December's Toys from the 80's quiz. Also, congratulations to Laurie Engen who was randomly selected as the winner of February's OC Olympians quiz. Both Nicole and Laurie won a Starbucks gift card and some SSA merchandise. Congratulations, Nicole and Laurie!

Do you know your SSA history? This month's quiz is about Orange County SSA history. Entries that have all five questions answered correctly will be entered into a random drawing and the SSA Today Newsletter Committee will randomly select one lucky winner. Good luck!

To take this month's SSA Today Quiz, [click here](#).



## SSA PROMOTIONS

Employee Name	Title	Division
CAZARES, VANESSA	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
CHAVEZ, JORGE	GROUP COUNSELOR TRAINEE I	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
CHISHOLM, SUSAN	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
CHOI, GOLDIE	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
COLLINS, SHARON	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
DE AVILA, YOLANDA	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
DE LA ROSA, CRISTINA	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
GASKINS, STEPHANIE	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
LAIRD, BRENDA	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
LOUW, ERICA	INFORMATION PROCESSING TECHNICIAN	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
LUNA, LUISA	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
MEDINA, MAURO	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
NITA, DEBBIE	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
ORTUNO, ESMERALDA	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PRIEST, TRACEY	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
PROVENCAL, BRANDON	STAFF SPECIALIST	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
RODRIGUEZ ZIKOOR, ANGELICA	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
VU, LIANNE	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

# SSA EXECUTIVE MEET & GREETINGS

The SSA Executive Team looks forward to seeing you at your office this year at their annual Meet & Greet! To submit questions in advance of the Meet & Greet, please email the Executive Team at [directorscorner@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:directorscorner@ssa.ocgov.com) and indicate which Meet & Greet you will be attending in your email. Please see the schedule below for upcoming Meet & Greet:

## May 2018



Location	Date	Time
Court Services - 301 The City Drive, Orange, 3rd Floor	5/1/18	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Cypress Regional Center/CalWORKs West/ CFS - 6100 Chip Ave., Cypress, Room 3107	5/15/18	10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

## IN MEMORIAM

SSA would like to recognize the recent passing of an SSA employee. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts during this difficult time.

**Maritza Partida - Senior Social Services Supervisor, Children and Family Services, 16 years of service**



## LOOKING TO PROMOTE?

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

[www.governmentjobs.com/careers/oc](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/oc)



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