

OCSSA TODAY

AFTER 29 YEARS OF SERVICE, SSA DIRECTOR MIKE RYAN RETIRES

After 29 years of dedicated service to the residents of Orange County, SSA Director Mike Ryan will retire on June 21, 2018. As a youth growing up in the suburbs of Seattle, Washington, Mike found his passion working with children while coaching track and soccer to elementary school kids. Mike attended the University of Washington intending to major in mathematics and statistics, but quickly switched, deciding to major in Psychology. During an internship program in college, Mike had the opportunity to work at a runaway shelter for youth. This experience ultimately carved out his career path, as he then chose to pursue a master's degree in Counseling Psychology.



Mike always knew he wanted to move to California from Washington, knowing that he wanted to be in warmer weather and close to the beach. After interviewing with a few graduate schools in southern California, he decided to attend California State University, San Bernardino due to their master's in counseling program being new and only having 12 students in the program. While in the master's program, he worked full-time as a counselor at a residential home for adolescent boys since out of state tuition was expensive. Upon completion of his master's degree, he was hired by another residential program in the Inland Empire as a social worker, and subsequently became the Assistant Director of the program. At the time, Orange County social workers and probation officers placed youth in these homes and they encouraged Mike to apply with the County of Orange.

In 1989, Mike began his career with SSA as a Senior Social Worker in Children and Family Services. He was quickly promoted to a Senior Social Services Supervisor, as he was identified as self-motivated and well-organized, going the extra mile for his clients and highly admired by his peers and leadership. Mike then promoted to Program Manager, Deputy Director, and Division Director in Children and Family Services, and would go on to serve as SSA's Chief Deputy Director and Director.

Mike shared that one of his most memorable and enjoyable positions was when he served as the Program Manager of Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) from 1997 to 2000. "I loved the relationships I had with staff and being able to work with the kids again." He also shared that his time as the Chief Deputy Director, from August 2010 to January 2014, was incredibly impactful as he had oversight over all four SSA Divisions, providing him with a broader knowledge of the agency. "This experience connected me to all of SSA. It is really easy to get stuck in your silo and only focus on the program you are working in. It really enlightened me as to the importance and complexity of work that the other divisions do. I have grown to respect the work of the entire agency." Due to Mike's success as Chief Deputy Director, the Board of Supervisors appointed him as Director of SSA in January 2014. (Continued on next page)

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One of Mike's proudest accomplishments is successfully addressing the changing regulatory requirements of OCFC. During his distinguished career, he has dedicated himself to ensure that OCFC remains a critical component in our child welfare continuum of care in order to meet the needs of Orange County children and families. He is proud of the work of all SSA staff and his ability to stay connected with staff even as his career has progressed. "I truly appreciate staff, respect them, and rely on them." Mike also acknowledges the strength of the current Executive Team; how well they work together and communicate with each other to focus on what is best for the Agency and the County. He is extremely proud of the work they have done and the work they will continue to do in the future.

In order to maintain a positive work/life balance, Mike goes to the gym on average of five days per week, stating that it helps him feel energetic throughout the day. He also tries to spend quality time with family and friends as much as possible and values those relationships dearly. Mike is also a firm believer in taking time off to travel and recharge.

To those that are looking to advance their career, Mike has this advice: "Keep focused on what you enjoy. Continue to improve yourself through education, training, or by working in different assignments, because you never know what opportunities will arise." He also encourages staff to get involved in as many workgroups or associations as you can. "These groups will help you grow as an individual, build relationships and make you more marketable."

County Executive Officer, Frank Kim shared the following words as we say goodbye to Mike: "I would like to thank Mike for his 29 years of dedicated service to the Social Services Agency, the County of Orange and to the residents of Orange County. Under his leadership, the Social Services Agency has been a model of consistency in providing quality and responsive services to the community. I am confident that with the Executive Team that he has built, the Agency will continue to move forward in a positive direction. Mike, thank you for your dedication and leadership, and I wish you nothing but the best in your retirement!"

His plans after retirement include traveling as much as he can, with a trip to Australia and New Zealand in the near future, and working in his yard. Mike leaves us with these final words: "I am so proud of the work that SSA staff does and the commitment to the work that you do. This is not easy work and we are not always appreciated, but you have remained focused on keeping the clients' best interests at heart. Thank you for your support throughout the years. All of my successes are attributed to the hard work you do on a daily basis!" Please join us in wishing Mike a happy and fulfilling retirement!



SSA SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

CalFresh Quality Assurance Team



Pictured from left to right: Nu Kirby, Maria Rangel, Mayra Santana, Monica Vejar and Marife Obillos. Not pictured: Maricela Longoria, Ana Arevalo, Angelica Garcia and Lilia Earl.

In June 2016, the Assistance Programs (AP) division began efforts to centralize the CalFresh case review process. Administrative Manager II's Marsela Gastelum and Corina Ortega from AP Operations Special Projects, laid the foundation and the AP CalFresh Case Review Unit was officially formed in November 2016. The unit consists of one Social Services Supervisor I and eight Eligibility Supervisors, with oversight provided by the AP Operations CalFresh team. In late 2017, the AP CalFresh Case Review Unit changed its name to the CalFresh Quality Assurance (QA) Team to better align with their comprehensive goal of helping staff complete quality case work.

The CalFresh QA team hit the ground running and hasn't stopped since! Between November 2016 and May 2018, the group has completed a total of 15,777

CalFresh case reviews; created and delivered two Quality Assurance roadshows to all AP regional offices; created monthly accuracy reports; refined and improved their own internal processes and assisted in updating numerous resources for CalFresh staff.

The day-to-day activities of the CalFresh QA team consists of completing full and focused case reviews of Intake and Continuing CalFresh cases for all AP regions. The goal of every case review is to identify areas of strength as well as error trends and find ways to address those trends via training, resources, coaching, and other methods. The case reviews provide essential, usable information at a time when many California counties, Orange included, strive to keep their Quality Control (QC) error rates at an acceptable level.

The team has also experienced unique QA related learning opportunities, including attending the Food Assistance Action Committee (FAAC) meeting where the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and other counties participated in discussions regarding policy interpretation, CalFresh outreach, QC and effective corrective action activities.

On May 25, 2018, the Quality Assurance team's oversight will move to the AP CalFresh Policy team. The team will continue to focus on promoting CalFresh program accuracy for staff.

Congratulations to Assistance Program's CalFresh Quality Assurance Team for all of the great work you do and for being recognized as the SSA Spotlight: Excellence in Service team for May 2018!

MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM



Pictured: Debra Baetz.

Name: Debra Baetz

Title: Division Director

Areas covered in your position: Family Self-Sufficiency and Adult Services Division: CalWORKs, Welfare To Work (WTW), Foster Care, Refugee Assistance, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Adult Protective Services (APS)

Years of Service with the County of Orange: In total I have approximately 28 ½ years of services with the County of Orange.

Divisions worked/previous experience:

I spent approximately 18 years in Assistance Programs where I began my journey with SSA as a Medi-Cal Eligibility Technician. I eventually promoted to various leadership positions with the division, such as,

Eligibility Supervisor, Program Assistant/SSSI, Assistant Regional Manager (AMI), Regional Manager (AMII), Divisional Operations Manager (Sr. AMII) and finally, Deputy Division Director, Regional Operations. Though I spent a significant portion of my time in Assistance Programs my assignments within the division were varied from direct services in the regions to providing support behind the scenes as a member of the operations team.

My journey within SSA also included opportunities within the Administrative Services Division, where I enjoyed a variety of assignments that allowed me to grow in my understanding of SSA, as a whole.

Early in my career I spent two years with Training and Career Development, as a SSSI on the Financial Assistance training team.

In 2014, I accepted a rotation to Administrative Services to the position of Deputy Division Director, Professional Standards and Development where I had oversight of the Training and Career Development, Program Integrity, Centralized Operations and Volunteer and Outreach Coordination teams and worked closely with County of Orange, Human Resources Services (HRS) to coordinate department HRS activities.

In 2016, I accepted another rotational opportunity within Administrative Services to the position of Deputy Division Director, Operations Management and Support Services where I had oversight of the Contract and Procurement Services, Research, Child Care, Legislation and Special Projects teams.

In August of 2017, I was promoted to my current position as the Division Director, Family Self-Sufficiency and Adult Services Division.

Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.): Learning is an important component of who I am. My favorite things to do are fairly eclectic. I enjoy reading and usually can be found with my nose in a book. Murder mysteries are a favorite standby. I am an old movie fan, especially 1940's film noir. My favorites include "Laura" starring Dana Andrews, "The Seventh Veil" starring James Mason and "Stage Door" starring Katharine Hepburn and Ginger Rogers.

I also love riding motorcycles; my husband and I often enjoyed riding up the coast on his Harley. I enjoy classic car shows, muscle cars being my favorite. I love NHRA Drag Racing and I am a huge football fan. Being born and raised in Massachusetts, you will not be surprised to learn that I am a Patriot's girl through and through!

Professional development tips for staff: Keep on your learning path! Professional development involves finding opportunities to grow and learn about your individual strengths and challenges as well as the organization or field you're interested in. I have taken full advantage of those learning opportunities over the years and I am still learning each and every day.

One of my closest mentors once told me, "The train keeps moving down the tracks. Are you going to be looking back in five years wishing you had at least gotten aboard?" It's not only about reaching the destination, it's about beginning the process. I am very proud of the fact that I was able to obtain my Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration in 2016 and am now pursuing my Masters in Business Administration. Both of these accomplishments at one point seemed very daunting to me and both required many stops along the way. Looking back, I can honestly say that I am glad I got on board that train.



MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM



Pictured: Anne Bloxom

Name: Anne Bloxom

Title: Division Director

Areas covered in your position: Children and Family Services (CFS) is responsible for the Child and Adult Abuse Hotlines, Emergency and Differential Response referrals, casework and support services for Family Reunification, Family Maintenance, Adoptions, and Non Minor Dependents, as well as recruitment/training/approval of foster parents, and Orangewood Children and Family Center.

Years of Service with the County of Orange: I have been with Orange County for 30 years.

Divisions worked/previous experience: Prior to working for Orange County, I was a Child Development Director for Social Services in North Carolina and a Social Worker and Supervisor for Child Welfare Services in Virginia.

In 1988, I moved across the country to California and began working at SSA the day after I arrived. I have worked in most programs of CFS. As a Senior Social Worker, I was a case-carrying social worker in Integrated Continuing Services and Specialized Family Services as the Special Medical Intake Coordinator. I was later promoted to Senior Social Services Supervisor in the Special Medical Unit, Advance Vertical Unit, and special projects at Orangewood Children and Family Center. I promoted to Administrative Manager in 1999 to the first Placement Coordination Program and later held managerial positions in Emergency Response, Child Abuse Services Team (CAST), Family Maintenance Collaborative Services and was the Family to Family Coordinator with oversight of Policy Development and Team Decision Making. For nine years I was the Deputy Division Director over Continuing Family Services, Permanency and Planning Services and Intervention and Prevention Services Sections. I have been the Division Director of CFS since February 2017.

I feel that I have been incredibly fortunate to work for SSA and CFS and have so many fulfilling positions that I have loved. I am very proud of the staff and the work that we do.

Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.): I love movies, plays, music and visiting new places. Once a year I visit the east coast, traveling to Washington, DC, Virginia and the coast of North Carolina, often joining friends and family from Virginia and relatives visiting from outside of the country. Like others, I am becoming fascinated with researching my family ancestry.

Professional development tips for staff: I think it is important to follow your heart and do work that is meaningful to you. That helps you to get through the tough times.

Look for opportunities to learn and grow and don't limit yourself. You might be surprised at what you decide you want to try and the opportunities that may lie ahead of you. Make the most of every position that you work in.

Don't underestimate the effect that you have on the lives of others. Being able to understand where a co-worker or client is coming from goes a long way towards improving the workplace and assisting clients to make their best choices.

WHAT DO I WANT IN MY CAREER?

By Steve Sakamoto, Deputy Division Director, Administrative Services Division



Do you feel ready to move on to the next step in your career path? Are you concerned about missing out on opportunities? Have you researched professional development resources available in SSA? For the next few months, SSA Today will be offering a series of articles that will include tips, resources and strategies to help you reach your career goals at SSA.

The first question you should ask yourself is, "What is it that I want in my career?" This question should be considered in different ways. You will need to ask yourself, what are my career goals for today, the mid-term and long-term? Is there one path or multiple paths that will get me where I want to be? You may already know that you want new challenges and opportunities, but knowing the answers to

these questions will help to better guide you. SSA offers many resources that can assist you with answering these questions. The Career Advisory Program (CAP) offers non-management employees who are interested in exploring career fields and paths assistance to define goals and develop plans. The Mentorship Program pairs upper level non-management, first level and new managers with experienced leaders to cultivate leadership skills and plan development strategies. Training and Career Development (TCD) provides a multitude of tools such as trainings, literature and other resources that can provide guidance, advice and recommendations that can assist you on your career path.

Another valuable resource is your direct supervisor. Your supervisor can provide you with first-hand observations on where your abilities and skill-sets are strong and where there may be areas for future growth. Your supervisor is in the best position to give you direct feedback, have honest conversations with you and provide you with suggestions to help you attain your career goals.

Ultimately, you make the decisions on the paths you take and what opportunities you pursue. While this article has only touched on a few questions to ask yourself, we encourage you to look at the other many resources that SSA offers to assist with your professional development!

SSA'S NEW CIVIL RIGHTS COORDINATOR



Pictured: Sumit Sapra

Effective June 8, 2018, Sumit Sapra, AMII, will be rotating to Program Integrity and will be the new Civil Rights Coordinator for SSA. Carol Taylor, AMII is transferring to the role of Regional Manager of the CalWORKs South Region in the Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Division.

The Civil Rights Coordinator monitors and facilitates compliance with Division 21, which puts into effect the provisions of the following laws: to ensure that the administration of public assistance and social services programs are nondiscriminatory, and that no person shall, because of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, religion, marital status, sex, age, disability or sexual orientation be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal or state financial assistance. Another important duty is the investigation of discrimination complaints, whether the complaints are made against individual employees, the agency or any of our contracted service providers. Finally, the coordinator is responsible for providing training and guidance to all staff, to prevent civil rights violations and complaints. SSA's Civil Rights Coordinator's contact information will remain the same:

1928 S. Grand Ave.
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714) 438-8877



NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH



Pictured from left to right: Supervisor Michelle Steel, Chairman Andrew Do, Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Anne Bloxom, Paul Snider, Jennifer Snider, Sally Miller and Supervisor Todd Spitzer.

On May 8, 2018, 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, Paul and Jennifer Snider were selected to represent all of SSA's wonderful foster families in receiving this recognition. Mr. and Mrs. Snider have fostered over 70 children over the past 15 years. We would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Snider and all of our resource families who have opened their hearts and their homes to Orange County foster children. If you would like more information on how you can become a resource family, visit OC4Kids.com.

CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION



Pictured from left to right are SSWF members: Elizabeth Guenther, Teresa Nava, Patricia Quintanilla, Joanna Hussey, Oscar Ramirez, Alfonso Alvarez and Helen Hernandez.

On May 3, 2018, the Spanish Speaking Workers Forum (SSWF), which is part of SSA's Multicultural Advisory Committee (MCAC), held their annual Cinco de Mayo Celebration for staff at the Eckhoff campus. The Orange County Employees Association's (OCEA) Hot Dog Wagon provided lunch for those in attendance. OCEA also donated movie tickets and attendees were entered into a free raffle where four lucky winners were selected. In addition to the food and prizes, there was also live music by the band Mantra. All in all, a wonderful time was had by everyone!

For more information on how you can become a member of the SSWF or any other MCAC group, please visit the [MCAC SharePoint page](#).



Pictured: Oscar Ramirez playing with Mantra.



Pictured: Staff enjoying the celebration.



Pictured: OCEA providing lunch to staff.

SSA WINS AWARDS

SSA's Be The One (BT1) campaign was awarded both the National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award in the category of Civic Education and Public Information and the Association of California Cities - Orange County (ACC-OC) Golden Hub of Innovation award in the category of Community Outreach. The Orange County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children's (CSEC) Committee, in partnership with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), relaunched the BT1 campaign to raise awareness and educate the community in order to eliminate child sex trafficking in Orange County.

Nora Yeretzian from OCTA stated, *"Congratulations on being recognized for your hard work on the Be the One campaign. OCTA is honored to be part of an effort that helps bring awareness of human trafficking to the people of Orange County."* Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court of Orange County Joanne Motoike stated, *"Congratulations on the awards!! This is so well-deserved and comes after so much collaboration and effort by all!!"* Thank you to all our partners who have contributed to this successful campaign. To find out more about the Be The One campaign visit BeTheOneOC.com.

SSA also won a NACo award in the Human Services category for our Restaurant Meals Program (RMP). RMP allows the elderly, disabled and homeless CalFresh recipients and their spouse to use their Golden State Advantage (EBT) card to purchase prepared meals from participating restaurants. To find out more about RMP, please click [here](#).

Congratulations to both of these great programs!



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, there were 22 total drowning incidents in 2017. Of these 22 incidents, 12 of those were fatal. Most of the incidents that occurred in Orange County involved adults over the age of 19. There were six incidents that involved victims age 0-19 years old.

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](#).

SSA GOES BLUE FOR OC KIDS

THANK YOU ALL FOR GOING BLUE FOR OC KIDS!



CELEBRATING SSA'S PRICELESS RESOURCES

By Jesse Guillen, Staff Specialist, Administrative Services Division



Pictured: Ofelia Velarde-Garcia and Jeri Gable.



Pictured: Chris Avventino, Kris Burns and Dee Azevedo.



Pictured: Rudaina Elalami, Nicole Ricafrente and Stephanie Bun.

Priceless is the perfect word to use when describing the tens of thousands of service hours put in by the selfless community champions who graciously give their time to SSA's programs.

On May 15, 2018, Centralized Operations, Volunteer & Outreach Services welcomed distinguished guests and SSA program supervisors to honor individuals in several programs including: Operation Santa Claus, CFS Teen Court and CFS Social Work Intern Program.

Members of SSA's Executive Team were on hand to support SSA's volunteer programs and to recognize select volunteers. Loan Depot was recognized as a business donor for their generosity and partnership with Operation Santa Claus. Finally, Ofelia Velarde-Garcia from Chairman Andrew Do's office, presented the Excellence in Volunteerism Awards to long-time volunteers Jeri Gable and Kris Burns. Congratulations to all volunteers on a job well done and thank you for your generosity!



Pictured: Pastor Dianne Wilson, Erica Flores, Nellie Hernandez, Rosemary Brown, Pat Casarez and Ernie Casarez.



Pictured: Kaylie Norris (Loan Depot) and Chris Avventino.

TEEN VOLUNTEER WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

It's that time of year again! Soon, SSA will welcome new, eager and energetic teens for the annual Teen Volunteer Work Experience Program. This year's program will run from July 5th through August 10th. The program offers teens between the ages of 16 - 19 years an opportunity to help their community by providing service to the public while gaining hands-on experience within an office environment. Under close supervision, volunteers in the Teen Volunteer Work Experience program work alongside SSA staff to complete tasks such as: opening, sorting and processing mail; filing; data entry/word processing; photocopying; reception backup; lobby assistance; preparing mailers; faxing; preparing training packages; training room preparation and maintenance; escorting trainees to classrooms; boxing legal folders for storage; setting appointments; answering phones; working in store and forms rooms and providing other tasks as needed.



Volunteers work in safe, well-supervised office environments and always perform age-appropriate duties. As some volunteers may have contact with clients and/or confidential information, they will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Parents/guardians are also required to sign the agreement if the volunteer is under the age of 18.

An email from Centralized Operations, Volunteer & Outreach Services team, containing application details will be sent in the coming weeks.

BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

On Thursday, April 26, 2018, SSA celebrated National Take Your Child to Work Day, which occurs on the fourth Thursday in April every year. Recent data indicates that approximately 38 million Americans at over 3.5 million workplaces participate in this national event annually. This year's turnout for SSA was at its highest compared to recent years. Below are some photos from this year's event.



CELEBRATING ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY



Pictured from left to right: Claudia Kavetsky, Anne Price, Jocelyn Litiatco, Maureen Lomeli and Alma Hernandez.



Pictured from left to right: Jose Robles, Ashley Becerra, Annette Alcantara, Marc Matus, Oneal Howard and Francesca Surrall.

Wednesday, April 25, 2018, 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), the supervisors wanted to show their appreciation of the work carried out by clerical staff. Staff were treated to hamburgers, hot dogs, chili, and nachos. They also participated in several games such as, Corn Hole Toss and Cupid Shuffle, where they received prizes. The event was a circus theme titled "Main Event of the Year". 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.

WINDOWS 10 ROLLOUT

Windows 10 software is coming to a PC near you! Thanks to coordinated staff efforts, lots of testing, monitoring, training and troubleshooting, our agency will soon transition all PCs to Windows 10. The goal is to perform a successful phased roll out to all SSA locations with minimal impacts to our day to day business.



In fact, Windows 10 will provide an assortment of enhancements which will benefit user experience.

- Speed: Operating speed is much faster compared to Windows 7
- Usability: Functionality and operating processes have been streamlined and simplified
- Security: Safety features have been upgraded and improved

The CFS division rollout is now 100% complete and the rest of SSA will be quickly following.

Please review the following links for helpful tools and training information:

<https://www.groovypost.com/howto/tutorial-windows-10-for-the-windows-7-user/>

[Basics: Using Start and Taskbar in Windows 10](#)

[Basics: End your Windows Session - shutting down your PC](#)

[Basics: Using Settings to customize Windows](#)

[Basics: Managing Files and Folders using File Explorer in Windows 10](#)

[Basics: Using Apps in Window 10](#)

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Office-Training-Center-b8f02f81-ec85-4493-a39b-4c48e6bc4bfb>

More information will be coming soon; Stay tuned!

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



“Stories From the Field” highlights significant and impactful examples of employee interactions with the communities we serve. These stories will display the ways staff make a meaningful difference by illustrating what it means to be a public servant. If you have a story you would like to share, please email us at SSAToday@ssa.ocgov.com.

Senior Social Worker Phillip De la O and Senior Social Services Supervisor Debbi Romero-Holman went beyond the call of duty to ensure the safety of an elderly Orange County resident. County staff who were involved with the gentleman reached out to Assistant Emergency Manager Diana LaRusso for assistance. She called Adult Protective Services to report some concerns and Phillip received the case and quickly got to work. With a high level of professionalism and compassion he called Diana, asking all the right questions to be sure he gathered as many facts as possible to assess and provide support to the person in need.

Shortly thereafter, Debbi followed up with Diana to be certain she assigned the correct response level to the case. Diana stated, "They both gave me comfort and confidence that this man was going to be properly cared for and provided services to ensure his safety and health. Because our star employees at SSA had the situation under control, it made me even more proud of our agency. Thank you!"

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



Iris Swindell, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs

ET Iris Swindell recently received these kinds words of appreciation from a grateful client as retold by her supervisor:

"A customer was eager to express her thanks for the great customer service she received from Iris Swindell. The customer stated Iris was gracious, professional and informative while helping her with her case. She appreciated that Iris followed up promptly and went the extra mile. The customer stated Iris is a great employee and SSA is lucky to have her."

Valerie Gribschaw, Eligibility Technician (ET), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

ET Valerie Gribschaw recently received these kind words of gratitude from an appreciative client:

"In 2016, I came to the office and met with Eligibility Technician, Valerie Gribschaw who educated and encouraged me to apply for SSI/SSP for my children as they may have autism. One of my children was approved for SSI/SSP and continues to receive benefits. In addition, I have started the process to legalize my immigration status due to an outside resource referral that was given to me by Ms. Gribschaw. I'd like to express my gratitude for the outside information and referrals that were given to me by Ms. Gribschaw. This would not have happened if she didn't take the time to show me. Thank you."



Keshia Islam, Eligibility Supervisor (ES), Assistance Programs

ES Keshia Islam recently received these words of appreciation from a fellow employee about her leadership:

"Keshia, I just wanted to take the time to say a BIG Thank you. I was so nervous and uncomfortable about presenting in the ABD refresher training. With your encouragement and support, I was able to get through it. I was really impressed with ALL your hard work and your strong display of leadership. I truly believe the success of the training was greatly because of YOU. I am sure our workgroup would agree. Thank you, Keshia."

Natalie Hay, Senior Social Worker (SSW), Children and Family Services

SSW Natalie Hay recently received these words of appreciation from Social Work Intern Juanita Valencia about her leadership :

"I want to acknowledge and thank my field instructor, Natalie Hay for all of her support and guidance throughout my internship experience. Natalie helped me in developing new skills for speaking with the young adults and was a consistent source of support whenever I needed to process a difficult situation. Natalie provided me with useful feedback when constructing court reports and contact notes and was always prompt to answer any questions I had. It is thanks to her motivation and trust in me that I began to feel more confident in my social work abilities.

Most importantly, I wanted to thank Natalie for awakening my newfound passion for working with the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) population. Natalie always encouraged me to attend trainings, workshops, and events that educated and engaged me in working with CSEC youth and I admire her for her work with this population as well. It makes me proud to say I am an intern for this team!"



BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



Chuck Ott, Systems Technician II, Agency Administration/ Information Technology

Congratulations to Systems Technician II Chuck Ott who was recently recognized as the CFS Employee of the Month for April. Here is an example of Chuck's selfless work:

"I know that I am not alone when recognizing Chuck's positive attitude toward work responsibilities and co-workers, serving as a role model for others, and his commitment to quality in carrying out job responsibilities above and beyond the call of duty. Chuck expresses high integrity, and is an asset to the County of Orange, Children and Family Services. In a field with increasing dependence on technology to perform our responsibilities to advance positive outcomes for children, youth and families, it is reassuring to have the support and understanding Chuck gives us every day."

Michelle Bui, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI), Administrative Services Division

SSSI Michelle Bui was recently recognized by her colleagues at Training Career & Development (TCD) and was presented the impressive title of "Employee of the Quarter". She also received TCD's Total Customer Dedication award for her consistent top notch work both inside and outside of the classroom. Michelle demonstrates unique talents and resourcefulness in working with her peers, students and the community.



Laura Escalera, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs

ET Laura Escalera's supervisor recently received a phone call from an appreciative client about the service provided to her:

"Laura was wonderful and patiently answered all of my questions. She remained compassionate with me and was very knowledgeable. I want to ensure that she is recognized for the great customer service that she provided to me"

Laura's supervisor Ariadne Perez added: *"Laura, thank you for the excellent customer service you continuously deliver to our clients."*

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



Maria Castillo, Continuing Employment & Eligibility Specialist (CEES), Maria Taman, Social Worker II (SWII), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services and Sally Monsoor, Senior Social Worker (SSW), Children and Family Services

CEES Maria Taman, SWII Maria Taman and SSW Sally Monsoor recently received these kind words of gratitude from a Welfare-to-Work participant that was honored at the ResCARE Champions Celebration:

"I could not have done it without you and the other Maria and Sally. You three didn't look at me as a case number, you looked at me as a person. Just so you know, you are in my thank you speech. Really, I was in so much pain during that time and every meeting with you was just a breath of fresh air and reassurance that I could move forward. Even though there is so much more for me to grow, you three are a part of my foundation to a better life."

Veronica Rios-Flores, Eligibility Technician (ET), Assistance Programs

ET Veronica Rios-Flores recently received these words of appreciation from a client:

"I wanted to say thank you to Veronica for her compassion and patience when listening to me, and for providing me with my options to submit verifications. Veronica gives me hope in the public assistance segment. Thank you, Veronica, for your great customer assistance."



Denise Nguyen, Social Worker II (SWII), Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (Not pictured)

SWII Denise Nguyen recently received these words of appreciation from SWII Samantha Liao for her assistance in helping a mutual client:

"I received a phone call from my client sharing how wonderfully kind and helpful you were to her when she called this morning to apply for IHSS on behalf of her son. I have the client's father's IHSS case, and had the honor of getting to know this family and am aware of the challenges they face on a daily basis. She was relieved to the point that she started to cry when telling me how much you have placed her at ease (she was anxious about applying for services for her son due to feeling embarrassed) and was "grateful for the angels at IHSS" as she nicely expressed. She stated that you were "patient, detailed in explaining everything and listened to her."

"Denise, you have always been great to our clients. SSA is very fortunate to have a caring, considerate and professional Social Worker like you on the team. Thank you for being fantastic and for all that you do! The client's family and I truly appreciate you."

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION



Raymond Fajardo, Social Services Supervisor II (SSSII), Assistance Programs

Congratulations to Raymond Fajardo, SSSII in the Assistance Programs CalFresh Operations team, who created the winning motto for the CalFresh Quality Control (QC) accuracy awareness campaign. *"When it Doubt, Check it Out"* is a mindset that will be encouraged with staff as we all strive to produce work that is thorough and well thought out, focusing heavily on improving quality and accuracy rates.

SSA PROMOTIONS

Employee Name	Title	Division
CENDEJAS, JOSE	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
DE LA ROSA, CRISTINA	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
DIAZ, BENJAMIN	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
GODINEZ, RAMIRO	OFFICE SUPERVISOR B	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
GOMEZ, JOSEPHINE	DATA ENTRY TECHNICIAN	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
GONZALEZ, IRMA	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
HILL, ELVIA	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
KURTOVIC, EDJA	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
MARTIN, SIOBHAN	SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
MORALES, ANTON	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
MUÑOZ, MICHAEL	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
NELSON, BRIAN	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
PERDOMO, OSWALDO	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
REVELES, TAWNYA	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER II	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
REYES, SAMUEL	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
RODRIGUEZ, KENNY	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
TRAN, MONALISA	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
VEGA, AMANDA	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
VILLANUEVA, ALFONSO "TOM"	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR II	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

SSA EXECUTIVE MEET & GREETs

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 and indicate which Meet & Greet you will be attending in your email. Please see the schedule below for upcoming Meet & Greet:

June 2018



Location	Date	Time
Garden Grove Regional Center - 12912 Brookhurst St., Garden Grove, Room 200A	6/7/18	1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
Warner- 1505 E. Warner Ave., Santa Ana, Room C109/110	6/19/18	9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

LOOKING TO PROMOTE?

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

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SSA Today is distributed monthly by SSA's Strategic Communications, Legislation, and Policy Team (SCLPT) and is published by the SSA Today Newsletter Committee. To contact the committee, please email:

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SSAToday@ssa.ocgov.com

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