

OCSSA TODAY

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

OCFC HOSTS ANNUAL CHILDREN'S WINTER TEA EVENT



On December 6, the Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) celebrated its 33rd Annual Children's Winter Tea. In spite of the unusual downpour that day, the inclement weather could not prevent the OCFC children and staff from coming together to host yet another wonderful seasonal event. The children dressed in their holiday best, greeting visitors and accompanying them on tours of

the cottages. Children and staff decorated their cottages in creative, festive themes and provided refreshments and tasty treats. Braving the storm, over 300 guests attended the Children's Winter Tea this year. OCFC manager, Kim Ragen, extended words of appreciation to the Facility Mechanics (Julio Santamaria, Brian Gallegos and Kenny Fratt), among others, who provided their support to ensure a successful event: "From putting up the holiday lights to clearing the drains during that incredible rainfall on Thursday morning, I really appreciate your dedication to keeping the facility beautiful, functional and safe throughout the year. We're fortunate to have each of you on our team."



Left to right: Julio Santamaria, Brian Gallegos and Kenny Fratt

OCFC is a valuable and critical component of the continuum of care for foster youth by serving as a ten-day temporary shelter and multiservice center with 21 distinct programs. SSA continues to work closely with the California Department of Social

Services to ensure quality care as a critical placement resource for Orange County youth. Congratulations to OCFC staff and supporters on 33 years of providing outstanding service!



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SSA SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

COLLABORATIVE COURTS PROGRAM

SSA's Children and Family Services' Collaborative Courts Program was established as a stand-alone program in July 2018. The program serves some of our most high-needs youth in Orange County who have begun, or are at risk of, engaging in dangerous behaviors. The Collaborative Courts Program encompasses the following programs and functions:

- Teen Court
- GRACE Court
- Teen Collaborative Steering Committee
- Runaway Prevention and Recovery
- Adoption Focus

Teen Court is a coordinated program of care for youth and Non-Minor Dependents (NMD) who have experienced high levels of trauma. As a result of this trauma, these youth struggle with various issues including substance abuse, gang involvement, runaway behavior, significant mental health issues, placement disruption and academic difficulties. Teen Court is a collaborative program that works closely with Presiding Judge Joanne Motoike (girls) and Judge Craig Arthur (boys), as well as attorneys and other partnering agencies such as Probation, Health Care Agency, Orange County Department of Education, Court Appointed Special Advocates and contracted agencies. Teen Court Senior Social Workers carry a reduced caseload which enable them to see their youth more frequently thereby providing increased support and individualized attention to each participant. Teen Court participants meet with their multi-disciplinary team at court as frequently as weekly or as needed. This increased support and accountability often results in significantly improved outcomes. Teen Court serves up to 90 youth (45 males and 45 females).

Similar in structure to Teen Court, GRACE (Generating Resources to Abolish Child Exploitation) Court is a coordinated program of care for youth and young adults who have been victims of commercial sexual exploitation. GRACE Court participants meet with Presiding Judge Motoike and their multi-disciplinary teams on a frequent basis, often bi-weekly, to address their unique needs. GRACE Court Senior Social Workers provide comprehensive, strength-based, innovative, culturally-sensitive and gender-responsive services that nurture relationships, increase self-sufficiency and promote healthy physical, emotional, social and educational development. GRACE Court workers in the Collaborative Courts Program serve identified males and females once they have been declared dependents of Orange County and up to the age of 18.



Left to right: Kerensa Schupmann, Quyen Do, Rosa Valencia, Elizabeth Gomez, Janet Kanno-Newton, Kim Schneider, Shannon Hickman, Melissa Pena, O'Brey Williams, Deanna Petersen, Suong Ta, Rosemary Brown, Monique Vasquez and Chris Avventino
Not Pictured: Hans Garcia

In an effort to support the youth in the Teen Court program, a Teen Collaborative Steering Committee was established. The Teen Collaborative Steering Committee is a partnership with private community members and organizations, many in the faith-based community, who strive to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and young adults. This committee sponsors monthly events for our Teen Court and GRACE Court participants that blend fun and personal growth opportunities to promote healing, build on strengths, enhance self-esteem, and inspire hope. One of the goals of this group is to assist our agency in reducing the number of children in care by recruiting foster and permanent families.

The Collaborative Courts Program also has a Runaway/AWOL (Absent Without Official Leave) Liaison and two Adoption Focus workers. The Runaway/AWOL Liaison is skilled in engaging and understanding the unique needs of today's foster youth. This Senior Social Worker focuses on reducing the number of youth who run away from placement or reducing the frequency and duration of runaway episodes thereby promoting their short- and long-term stability. The Adoption Focus Senior Social Workers strive to facilitate timely permanency for youth who have an identified case plan goal of adoption.

If you have questions or want more information about the Collaborative Courts Program, please call (714) 940-3994.

Thank you to the Collaborative Courts Program staff for your hard work and dedication to serving our youth and young adults, and congratulations on being recognized as the SSA Spotlight for December 2018!

MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM, PART 1



Name: Christine Snapper

Title: Division Director, Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

Years of Service with the County of Orange: 29 years

Divisions worked/previous experience: I began my career in Children & Family Services (CFS) as a Social Worker Assistant in the Absent Parent Search Unit, working my way through all of the Social Worker and Administrative Manager classifications, then serving as a Deputy Division Director for five years, overseeing the Continuing Courts programs that worked to reunify children and families to ensure safety, well-being and permanency. While at CFS, I spearheaded the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Project which resulted in the creation of a County

Memorandum of Understanding and County CSEC Steering Committee to address the needs of this population. I also worked for a couple of years in what was once known as the SSA Economic & Community Partnerships (ECP)/Families and Communities Together (FaCT) Program which worked with community partners to build Family Resource Centers throughout Orange County. I have been fortunate to be a part of many initiatives/projects at SSA such as: Child Abuse Services Team (CAST), Mutual Clients/Linkages Project, California's Child Welfare Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), transitioning Orange County Group Home providers to Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTP), oversight of Assembly Bill 74 which focused on stepping children down to family based care, creation of a CSEC Resource and Support Services contract to meet the needs of exploited youth, development and implementation of the Visitation Coaching program, and oversight of Senate Bill 528 which resulted in creation of a CFS policy for Reproductive Health & Parenting information for foster youth.

Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.): I love to travel and have been to many places in the U.S. and around the world. Some of my favorite locations in the US include: New York, New Orleans, Hawaii and San Francisco to name a few... Some of my international destinations have included: Bora Bora; Tahiti; Morrea; Sydney, Australia (I have been five times); Queensland, Australia (saw the second largest rainforest in the world and snorkeled in the Great Barrier Reef); Mexico; Saudi Arabia and Europe (Italy, Austria, Germany, Ireland and Brussels, Belgium).

Professional development tips for staff: Always do the right thing, lead by action, be the change you want to see and don't be afraid to ask questions. When possible, get involved and be an active team member as your voice counts!

SSA PROVIDES SUPPORT TO BUTTE COUNTY

In response to the deadly Camp Fire which swept through the Sierra foothills in November, members of SSA's FAST (Functional Assessment Service Team) were deployed to Butte County to work in several shelters including the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds housing, at times, over 1,000 residents. As highlighted in the [August 2018](#) issue of SSA Today, the goal of a FAST is to assess individuals and ensure that proper resources are requested and maintained on site in order for the whole community to remain safe, healthy and comfortable in the shelters. Connie Guevara, Social Services Supervisor I, was selected to serve as the FAST Lead, coordinating the efforts of FAST members. Connie and the other team members, Walter De Azambuja, Senior Social Worker, and Jose Fierro, Eligibility Technician, worked tirelessly to advocate for the most vulnerable shelter residents. Their expertise, compassion and dedication made a great impact on a community forced to begin anew after unbelievable loss.

Thank you to our Orange County FAST members for their continued service of excellence and for their successful deployment!



Left to right: Jose Fierro, Walter De Azambuja and Connie Guevara

FAITH IN MOTION HOSTS SNUGGLE DAY EVENT

By Mario Murillo, Social Services Supervisor I

On December 5, SSA's Faith In Motion (FIM), a collaboration between the Children and Family Services division's Resource Development and Management (RDM) unit and Resource Family Approval Recruitment and Training team, hosted the annual Snuggle Day event at Saddleback Anaheim. This event serves as a four-hour window for social worker staff to shop for the families they assist. Much of the planning was put together by Staff Specialist Ecel Navalta, whose countless hours of work were key to a great turnout by both faith-based partners and social work staff and ensured its continued success.



Through generous donations from various organizations throughout the year, FIM provided 44 new bicycles and over 250 duffel bags filled with much needed essentials for children and youth. Additionally, 15 faith-based partners also provided blankets, handmade quilts and



sweaters, stuffed animals, books, socks, beanies, baseball hats, pajamas, scarves and dozens of other items that our clients will benefit from. The event commenced with a group of 70+ social workers lined up almost an hour before shopping started and was reminiscent of a retail store on Black Friday but with the focus of giving to foster youth and their families.

Work has already begun so that next year's Snuggle Day event can continue to support social work staff in helping more families and alleviating some of their hardships. When teamwork and compassion come together, we as an agency can exceed not only our expectations but, more importantly, those of our clients.

You can learn more about Faith In Motion by reading their SSA Spotlight article in the [June 2017](#) issue of SSA Today.



Back row: Ben Macias, Maria Fe Tech, Lisa Baeza, Maria Martin and Eddy Surya
Front row: Ecel Navalta and Mario Murillo

GIVING IS POWER

By Cheryl Smyth, Administrative Manager I



Left to right: Jesse Guillen and Cheryl Smyth

On December 9, "Classick Sleigh Ride" hosted the County's Operation Santa Claus program at their car show holiday event. In collaboration with K1 Speed in Anaheim, Operation Santa Claus, and a variety of vendors and auto enthusiasts from all over Southern California, Sleigh Ride has become a Christmas tradition and staple for many in the SoCal car community. Started in 2012 by owner/president Barry Ancheta, wife Michelle and their family, Sleigh Ride is known for its heartwarming cause in making a difference in the lives of underprivileged youth during the holiday season. Along with quality car builds, a relaxed vibe, and fresh hip-hop music, this event has continued to show tremendous growth with increased donations at an exponential rate. As the years go by, the event becomes less about the cars and more about the fellowship and giving back to

the children. Their supporters rally to increase the number of toys by setting up mini drives and fundraiser events to collect toys months in advance to contribute on the day of the event. Each year, Sleigh Ride changes the theme and brings forth a message about giving. This year, they wanted it to be the most fun year yet so they picked the theme of Mario Brothers with the message of "Giving is Power." The way our community came together this year really showed how powerful giving can be!

This year, an amazing 1,050 toys were collected, beating last year's collection total of 750, and the toys are still coming in! Operation Santa Claus greatly appreciates the Classick family's commitment to working hard year after year to provide such an empowering event, bringing joy to Orange County children in need!



Left to right: Hector Vasquez and Cris Rodriguez

SSA CELEBRATES COMPASSION WITH HOLIDAY COLORS!

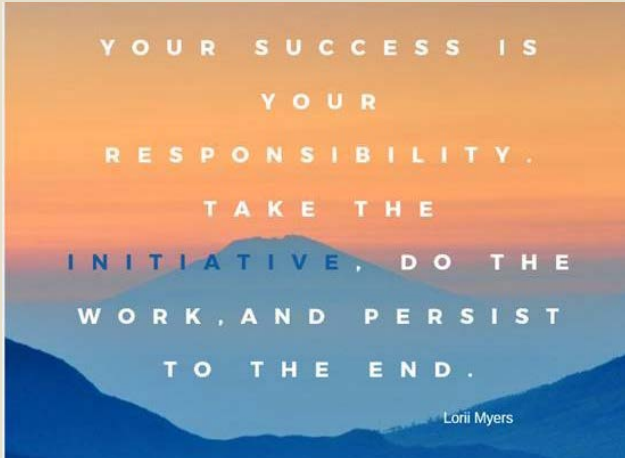


JANUARY'S CORE VALUE: INITIATIVE

By Daniel Shay, Eligibility Technician



The Heart of SSA: Core Values in Action's designated core value for the month of January is Initiative.



Traditionally, the end of a year and the beginning of a new one signals a time for reflection. Many will think about areas they want to change personally in their own lives. These areas may be financial (“I want to get out of debt or spend within my limit this year”); they may be physical in nature (“I want to get into shape or quit smoking”); or they could be educational (“This year I want to go back to school and finish my degree or start a degree program”). Many of us have had mixed experiences with these types of thoughts and ideas. Some have made the change that they desired. Others have started and stopped due to any number of circumstances (some within their control, some not).

This not only happens in our personal lives, but in our professional lives as well. We may see a process that can be improved upon or streamlined, or perhaps a way to make the customer/client experience more complete. We may also have ideas about improving communications with our co-workers, supervisors and other colleagues.

As employees of SSA, we are called to take our ideas and put them into action to improve our workplaces and the lives of those we serve. That ability to take charge, to resolve a difficulty or improve a situation, represents our Agency’s core value of Initiative. To begin the new year, the Heart of SSA’s Core Values in Action campaign has designated next month’s core value as Initiative. During the month of January, the Heart of SSA workgroup encourages you to participate in the following activities to focus on Initiative: Wear Green on January 17 and recognize your co-workers “Caught Taking Initiative” (more information to come)!

If you have not had success in the past with your ideas, it can be discouraging and you may feel like not even trying again. But, now is the time to be encouraged. Do not let this stop you from pursuing changes and moving forward. To quote Thomas Edison, “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” Remember, initiative without action is only an idea.

TUSTIN FAMILY CAMPUS HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

By Brandon Reed, Marketing and Administrative Coordinator/FaCT

SSA's Tustin Family Campus (TFC) held its second annual Holiday Open House on December 5. Attending guests enjoyed festive decorations and holiday treats while touring the various cottages and learning about the different programs on campus for children and families including:

- Olive Crest, which operates two cottages with the goal of keeping siblings in foster care together in the same placement
- Rite of Passage, which operates two cottages, one for boys and one for girls, with special attention to children who have complex behavioral or mental health needs
- New Alternatives, which offers a transitional living program for young adults who are former foster youth to learn independent living skills while living in a safe, affordable and supportive environment
- Prototypes, a mother and child residential program that offers substance abuse treatment and transitional housing for women who would otherwise have their children placed in foster care
- Mexican-American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF), which offers licensed child care onsite for children in TFC programs as well as children in the community



Left to right: Diana Nguyen-Vo, Rossy Gaitán, Brandon Reed, Ericka Danczak, Rachel Levin, Jennifer Kuo and Brian Satterfield

Thank you to TFC staff for hosting this special holiday event! To learn more about the Tustin Family Campus, click [here](#).

EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS IN SSA

Madeline Hernandez

Administrative Manager I (AMI)
Administrative Services Division
Facilities and Emergency
Management



My educational journey follows the pattern of many in the County. I wanted to go back to school to pursue my Master's degree, but "life" kept getting in the way. The time commitment seemed unreasonable with all the demands of working full-time and taking care of a family. Watching others around me with similar circumstances pursue their education motivated me to move forward. I went back to school to pursue a Master's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Organizational Leadership. I have enjoyed the overall experience of the knowledge gained. The most challenging part has been balancing work and family life. While it is not easy, it is attainable. The experience of applying the concepts to my work life has been the most valuable to me. Pursuing my Master's degree has made me a stronger person and has positively impacted my personal and professional life. I have learned to turn obstacles and stumbling blocks into stepping stones. It was a long, challenging, but very rewarding road and my goal is to be an example to others that it is possible to reach your educational goals regardless of all the "life" obstacles that may stand in the way.

(Employee Educational Journeys in SSA is a recurring feature in SSA Today based on the creative posters put on display at the Educational Resource Fair, highlighting the

journeys of various SSA staff in overcoming the challenges of work-life balance while achieving their educational goals. To begin your educational journey, please visit the Educational Advisory Program (EdAP) resource page on the SSA Intranet by clicking [here](#).)

THE 2.0 SHOW

By Luz Plambeck, Eligibility Technician

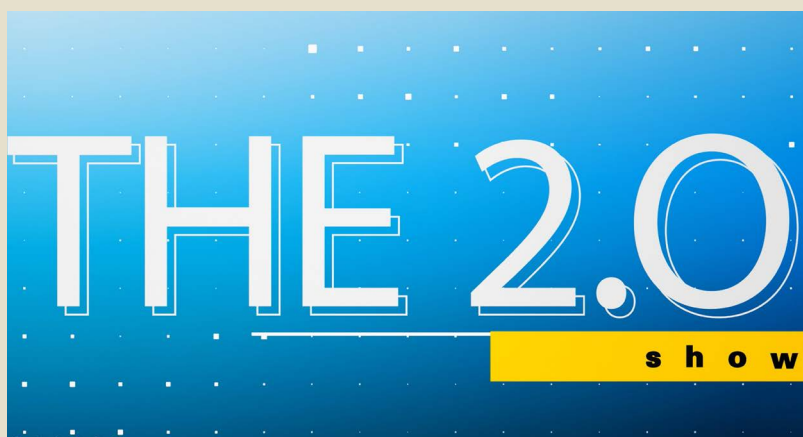
This past October, staff at all of the CalWORKs regional offices had the chance to attend "The 2.0 Show." This live talk-show introduced two CalWORKs 2.0 tools in a fun and interactive way, by representing them as talking guests on the show. The guests, "Goal Storming" and "My Goal Plan," had the opportunity to share with the audience who they are and what they do.

Goal Storming provides clients the freedom to explore an alternative, hopeful view of their lives and begin collaborating with their worker to generate ideas for realizing that long-term vision. The mantra of Goal Storming is "Where do I want to be? How will I get there? What resources do I need to get there?"

My Goal Plan describes itself as the tool with a Plan! Once it collaborates with Goal Storming, it can fulfill the user's needs and give results; it even has built-in accountability. My Goal Plan helps clients identify one meaningful short-term goal and has three main parts:

1. **GOAL:** What is it that I want to accomplish?
2. **PLAN:** How will I do it?
3. **DO:** What first step will I take?

To learn more about these two new CalWORKs 2.0 tools, please send an email to CalWORKs2.0@ssa.ocgov.com or visit the CalWORKs 2.0 site by clicking [here](#).



DID YOU KNOW?

By Ruena Wood, Administrative Manager I



Since 2016, the WE CAN (Working to End Child Abuse and Neglect) Coalition, led by Dr. Anne Light, SSA’s Medical Director, and its partner organizations have worked to strengthen the health and well-being of children, families and communities with a special focus on child abuse and neglect. The Coalition’s more than 50 partner organizations include various government, educational, healthcare and non-profit organizations, as well as law enforcement, and child and family advocates. These groups operate across a matrix of Task Forces with multi-disciplinary subject matter experts focusing on one of nine areas. The Task Forces’ initiatives and programs work to prevent, diagnose and treat child abuse and neglect at the child, family and community levels. Subject matter experts for each Task Force meet monthly and members attend on a quarterly basis.

The matrix below illustrates the structure of the WE CAN Coalition being divided into the three demographic levels (Child, Family, and Community), each combined with one of the Task Force focus areas (Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment):

	PREVENTION	DIAGNOSIS	TREATMENT
Child	Focus Area: Early behavioral problems with a focus on early childhood education expulsions	Focus Area: Training for law enforcement, medical, and social services personnel	Focus Area: Improving coordination of care and treatment for abused and neglected children.
Family	Focus Area: Faith community as a key partner in family-based prevention	Focus Area: Coordination of services for law enforcement, medical, and social services personnel	Focus Area: System involved families with substance use issue
Community	Focus Area: Identifying risk factors for abuse in local communities	Focus Area: Resources, education and support for the Orange County Department of Education and local school districts	Focus Area: Substance abuse and available treatment throughout Orange County as it links to child maltreatment

Some of the completed projects and resources include:

- Resource materials for early childhood care, [Childcare Toolkit](#) and the [Roadmap to Child Safety and Family Stability](#)
- Training classes/workshops for the Santa Ana Police Department, Orange County Department of Education, and SSA; and the first-ever Orange County Child Maltreatment Conference at the Children’s Hospital of Orange County
- Comprehensive case reviews by a county-wide Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team with members of the Tustin Police Department, SSA, Health Care Agency, District Attorney’s Office, Children’s Hospital of Orange County, Kaiser Permanente and University of California, Irvine, School of Medicine
- Research studies and data analyses such as quantification of substance use as the greatest barrier to permanency, with an accompanying [story map](#) that overlays substance use and child maltreatment within Orange County; assessment of the connection to and efficacy of mental health services for children in care; a novel pilot of trauma-informed birth parent training; and a combined USC/UCI research study to identify the root causes of maltreatment in Orange County

The We CAN Coalition continues to collaborate with partner organizations and engage various groups to address the many challenges facing our County’s child welfare system. For more information, you may visit the WE CAN Coalition webpage by clicking [here](#). If you would like to volunteer or join any of the Task Forces’ initiatives or programs, please send an email to wecan@ssa.ocgov.com.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD: FIFTEEN YEARS LATER

"Stories From the Field" highlights significant and impactful examples of employee interactions with the communities we serve. These stories aim to 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.



Fifteen years later, she still calls me every few months. She tells me how the boys are doing, how she is navigating her mental illness, her struggles and successes. The boys are grown adults now.

I last saw them, years after their case closed, at the high school graduation which embodied their story...the boy with autism holding a diploma standing beside the mother who, in spite of all challenges, would not give up. She tells me I saved her family; that I believed in her when nobody else would. He tells me, graduation cap in hand, I can be part of their family anytime.

I really don't know what small portion of their success should be assigned to me; what fraction of their positive outcome is a result of my efforts. But I do know that their faith in me still spurs me on 15 years later.

(It's often mysterious what leads one family to succeed while another family stumbles and success can be hard to define. But be assured you absolutely do make a difference.)

MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM, PART 2

Name: Greg White

Title: Deputy Division Director, Administrative Services/Accounting

Areas covered in your position: I'm responsible for managing the accounting operation for SSA, which includes Collections and Accounts Receivable, Reimbursement Claims, District & Benefit Control Services, General Accounting and Payroll.

Years of Service with the County of Orange: I have been with the County for 27+ years.

Divisions worked/previous experience: I started my County career in 1991 and have spent the entire 27 years working at the Auditor-Controller's (A/C) office. In addition to SSA Accounting, I have worked in various units such as Cost Studies & Analysis, Employee Benefits, General Services Administration (GSA) Accounting, A/C IT, Public Works Accounting, County-wide Accounting and Personnel System (CAPS) Program Management Office, Health Care Agency (HCA) Accounting and Orange County Community Resources (OCCR) Accounting. I've been incredibly fortunate and grateful for the opportunity to have worked in so many positions with such great people.

Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.): I'm originally from Alabama (Roll Tide) and have always loved the outdoors and of course good bar-b-que. Ever since I was a young, I've had a passion for college football, hunting, fishing and hiking with my family.

Professional development tips for staff: Don't let the fast pace of work prevent you from stopping and smelling the roses. Take pride in your work and always look for opportunities to make a difference. Ensure that you recognize and celebrate your personal and professional accomplishments. And always remember that our employees are the most valuable, intangible asset we have and they are the face of Orange County.



RESOURCE TAILGATE

On October 17, SSA's Families and Communities Together (FaCT), Resource and Development Management (RDM), and Faith in Motion partnered in organizing a Resource Tailgate. In addition to free hot dogs and nachos, over 100 SSA staff and social workers enjoyed engaging with 26 agencies and faith groups that work with SSA to provide valuable resources and services to families.

The Resource Tailgate offered attendees the opportunity to connect and network with community providers and faith partners in person. Attendees also received birthday boxes, Halloween costumes and school supplies for clients that were provided by RDM. Ericka Danczak, Program Manager for FaCT and RDM, shared "Our contracted agencies, faith partners, and Family Resource Centers are integral in our work serving Orange County's families. I am so happy so many SSA staff were able to come out and enjoy themselves while taking away valuable resources and information."



Back row: Clara Martiniuc, Lisa Baeza, Ericka Danczak, Maria Martin
Front row: Araceli Sandoval, Phung Tran, Mario Murillo



Left to right: Jennifer Kuo, Brandon Reed, Jill Bright, Fitsum Alemayehu and Diana Nguyen-Vo

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

UCI University of California, Irvine
 College of Medicine
 Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science
 Greg Manning
 Contract Administrator
 County of Orange, Social Services Agency
 949 N. State College Blvd., Suite 100, Orange, CA, 92668

Ulla Carey, Psy.D., LMFT
 Director, CFS/MS/AS

Children and Family Services (CFS) staff

Administrative Manager I Gregory Manning recently offered the following words of recognition for CFS staff:

"One of the great opportunities that I have in my position is to learn about the amazing work that is performed by our SSA CFS staff in partnership with our community providers. Please see the attached letter sent to me this week by the director of the UCI FOCUS Sexual Abuse Counseling program. Our staff truly epitomize the SSA Core Value for December of Compassion!"

To view the full letter, click on the image to the left.

Dear Dr. Manning,
 On behalf of all the staff at UCI FOCUS, please accept my appreciation for the excellent collaboration we have received this year to coordinate social workers, supervisors and support staff. We would like to acknowledge the dedication we have experienced firsthand to our mutual clients and to our program. It is through committed workers such as Berna Avila, Yolanda Phillips, Renee Aguilar, Claudia Hernandez, Renee Schneider, Jessica Calles, Irma Valencia, Miquel Vazquez, Brenda Dominguez, Rosa Valencia, Claudia Mendez, Diana Quintana, Yvonne Wheeler, Claudia Trigo, Leigh Laramie and Ligan. We hope that we can successfully meet the client's needs from a mental health, social service and psycho-social approach. Each of these social workers has in their own way given their full dedication and case management to secure the best needs of their clients and work with us to provide a tailored solution to their needs.
 We would also like to thank the SSA support team and their leadership in particular: Lorena Gonzalez, Adlene Adams, Rosemary Brown-McCain, and Victor Medina. Their leadership and partnership with our program allows for great communication regarding the needs of the client, those of their workers and the services we provide.
 Finally the resource support team allows for continuity of care. Bettina Salazar and Maria Fe are accessible to our questions. Gill is accessible. Maria and work diligently to do so between for our cases.
 You and your employees should take great pride in this accomplishment as each person above has made a significant contribution to the success of our collaboration. Please pass along our gratitude and we look forward to continuing our work together.
 Sincerely,
 Ulla Carey
 Ulla Carey
 Director, CFS/MS/AS
 Department of Psychiatry & Human Behavior
 UCI 1285 University Avenue, Suite 100
 Orange, CA 92668
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 (714) 949-7414
 hml@uci.edu

Trang Do, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (not pictured)

Continuing EES Trang Do recently received the following words of gratitude from a client:

"I started working last month, we are going to transition to Oregon. Thank you so much for being my worker and helping me out, I really appreciate it and the work that you do for low income families."

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

Kristen Timmins, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI), and Thientho Galatis, Administrative Manager I (AMI)/Assistance Programs

Estela Anaya, Administrative Manager I, shared the following words of recognition for SSSI Kristen Timmins and AMI Thientho Galatis:

"I would like to acknowledge Thientho and Kristen for their excellent collaboration with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Covered California for the development and the presentation of a Medi-Cal Overview at the annual Covered California's Open Enrollment Kick-Off event in Fountain Valley. Thientho and Kristen also participated in similar Covered CA's kick-off events this year in the cities of Rancho Cucamonga and El Cajon.



Covered CA had approximately 200 attendees this year, including Covered CA Agents, Enrollers, Navigators, Brokers, and various community partners. SSA was also invited to have an exhibitors' table at this event to provide information about the various services we provide to our community. This event is held annually and is a huge undertaking which requires extensive collaboration with various entities. Thientho and Kristen represented our Agency with excellence. Their dynamic presentation was well-received by Covered California agents and the effectiveness of their presentation met the needs of our community partners. Thank you Thientho and Kristen! Your knowledge and expertise are certainly a great asset to our Agency and we appreciate your continued support to our community and business partners."

Tatiana Muresan, Social Services Supervisor II (SSSII)/Assistance Programs (not pictured)

SSSII Tatiana Muresan recently received commendation from Brian Clark, Administrative Manager II overseeing the CalWIN/CalSAWS Migration project:

"I wanted to send a brief note to let you know that Tatiana was instrumental in successfully capturing the needs of the General Relief (GR) program during our recent CalSAWS Migration planning trip to Sacramento. She has extensive knowledge of GR and a very firm grasp on what it takes to meet not only the GR requirements but also the individual needs of clients served here in Orange County. She was so diligent and resourceful which truly helped us ensure the best possible outcomes for recipients in Orange County. We were fortunate to have her on our team and could not have done it without her."



Rosa Valencia, Senior Social Worker (SSW)/Children and Family Services

SSW Rosa Valencia was recognized as the CFS Employee of the Month for November 2018. The following words were shared about Rosa from fellow staff:

"Rosa inspires us to strive for excellence in our own ways with her ability to ignite and unify those around her. Whether it be inspiring others to rise to a challenge in dealing with a difficult youth as she does so well with the girls on her caseload in the Collaborative Courts, Girls Court Program or when making the best of a given situation, Rosa is always willing to provide guidance on the nuances of the social work job to those requesting it. Rosa makes herself available to new workers as a mentor and is looked up to and respected in many ways in this regard for the time she gives. It is an honor to work alongside a co-worker who expects excellence from themselves in their work ethic and then strives to ignite and share this very quality in others. Rosa embodies respect/excellence wholeheartedly in the work she does and no doubt has impacted the youth on her caseload as much as she has her co-workers for holding this standard to always strive to make things better."

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

Kiet Nguyen, Administrative Manager I (AMI)/Agency Administration

AMI Kiet Nguyen received the following words of gratitude from AMII Raquel Vargas for his support during a recent power outage at the Santa Ana Regional Center (SARC):

"Thank you to Facilities for all your support both yesterday and today with the power outage. I also want to give a special thanks and recognition to Kiet for his onsite support. He was there all day yesterday doing his best to help us with whatever was needed, both inside the outside the building. He was actively involved in ensuring our customers and clients safety was considered. In my opinion, he went way above and beyond and for that we are very grateful."



Thanh Timmins, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES), and Tiffany Huynh, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

EES Thanh Timmins (pictured right) and SSSI Tiffany Huynh (pictured left) recently received a thank you note from a client at Laguna Hills Regional Center for the assistance they provided her. The following words were shared regarding the client's note:

"The client stated that Thanh and Tiffany 'went over and beyond your job to help my family and I.' The client appreciated that she was not judged and was encouraged to 'keep pressing through.' She was deeply appreciative of the patience they showed with her and her six kids; due to the help she received, she was able to make it through her journey."



Sal Gonzalez, Eligibility Technician (ET)/Assistance Programs (not pictured)

ET Sal Gonzalez recently received the following words of recognition from a client which was shared through Sal's supervisor, Armando Guerrero:

"A customer called to compliment you on the experience she had speaking with you today. She said you were a wonderful, informative, patient and courteous Call Agent. She relayed that you went above the call of duty to help her with all she needed and then some. The caller labeled it as one of the best experiences she's ever had with customer service. Thank you, Sal!"

Alma Cervantes, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

Continuing EES Alma Cervantes recently received the following words of gratitude from a client:

"Alma truly makes the whole 'having to resort to Social Services' experience helpful. Even though she is my worker, she is a beacon of hope and encouragement. She exudes genuine joy when she hears of the strides I am making toward regaining self-sufficiency. I am all the more encouraged in seeing the light beyond the tunnel realized because of her support and words of encouragement. Thank you for such a positive experience."



BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

Lan Phuong Le, Social Worker II (SWII)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) SWII Lan Phuong Le (second from left; also pictured from left to right are Stacy Lee, Peggy Vivirito and Sylvia Iglesias) was presented with Adult Services' "You Rock Award" for the month of December 2018. Nikki Nguyen, Social Services Supervisor II, had this to say about Lan:



"Lan Phuong has created the Accompaniment to Medical Appointment and Wait Time (AMA/WT) tool for all IHSS social workers to use effective September 15, 2018. The purpose of the tool is to enable IHSS social workers to uniformly and accurately assess the IHSS recipients' need and time for medical accompaniments. Lan Phuong has demonstrated her diligence, prudence and technical skills throughout the process. She took the time to read all the All County Letters to better understand the rules and regulations pertaining to AMA/WT, consulted with the Policy and Quality Assurance (PQA) team to ensure regulatory compliance, and designed and created the AMA/WT tool based on the requirements. The use of the tool will cut down the processing time and increase the accuracy rate and productivity for social workers. Lan Phuong should be recognized for her individual contribution to the success of the IHSS program. I am grateful for having the opportunity to work with her."

Roxanne Barcelos, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI)/Assistance Programs (not pictured)

SSSI Roxanne Barcelos recently received the following words of recognition from Laura Todd, Senior Social Services Supervisor with the Quality Support Team (QST):

"Yesterday I was the Officer of the Day at QST. Roxanne assisted me in reaching out to a supervisor at one of the Regional offices. A client complained and had questions regarding her Cal Fresh benefits, and Roxanne's assistance allowed this concern to be resolved quickly and to the client's satisfaction. I appreciate Roxanne's responsiveness to our clients and to QST's requests for updates. Roxanne is always professional, polite and willing to drop any other projects to resolve client complaints and inquiries quickly and effectively."



Araceli Guillen, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

A client recently contacted Intake EES Araceli Guillen's supervisor to express the following words of gratitude for Araceli's compassion and professional customer service:

"I would like to thank Ms. Guillen for being patient, kind, and respectful. I had a complicated situation and was confused about my case. Ms. Guillen is a great person because at our first meeting, she asked me many questions and was suspicious, but analyzed all the problems by digging deeply inside the case and reading all of the comments to understand the problem. Although she was suspicious, she was very respectful and patient, explaining and answering all of my questions. I did not feel mistreated or offended by any question she was asking. Respectfully, she asked to provide some documents to prove my income. Ms. Guillen changed my opinion and made me feel and understand that the social worker is a person who cares and wants to provide help for people who really deserve getting the benefits."

SSA PROMOTIONS

EMPLOYEE NAME	CLASSIFICATION	DIVISION
HERNANDEZ, MIGUEL ANGEL	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
ORTIZ, JESSICA MARIE	OFFICE SUPERVISOR B	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
SNAPPER, CHRISTINE	EXECUTIVE MANAGER	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
ZACARIAS, CHRISTIAN MARIO	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES

SSA TODAY QUIZ

Congratulations to Leo Rodriguez, winner of October's SSA Today Quiz! Leo was randomly selected among 18 respondents who answered all questions correctly and received some County souvenirs for his participation.



This month's quiz consists of seven questions focused on holiday movies! Entries that have all seven questions answered correctly will be entered into a 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 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 and indicate which Meet & Greet you will be attending in your email. Please see the schedule below for upcoming Meet & Greet:

JANUARY 2019



Location	Date	Time
Laguna Hills Regional Center (LHRC) 23330 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Hills Room 213	1/16/19	1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

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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