

OCSSA TODAY

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

MAY PROCLAIMED FOSTER CARE MONTH

On May 7, the Orange County Board of Supervisors declared May as Foster Care Month and highlighted the significant need for the community to get involved in order to provide loving homes for foster youth. Members of the Board presented a resolution to SSA leadership in recognition of the Agency's efforts to recruit qualified foster families, also known as resource families. The Board also honored local resource parents Melissa and Andrew Ferguson, who received the proclamation on behalf of the entire OC resource parent community. While raising their two biological children, Melissa and Andrew have cared for over 20 children (sibling sets and babies exposed to substances) and adopted three children in the last six years.



Pictured: Resource parents Melissa and Andrew Ferguson receive a proclamation in honor of Foster Care Month from the Orange County Board of Supervisors

"Brighter outcomes are achieved when children have opportunities to grow and develop in a family setting," said Fifth District Supervisor Lisa A. Bartlett, Chairwoman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. She continued, "We are committed to ensuring children are placed in family-based care whenever possible."

"The Fergusons are a wonderful example of what it means to be a

resource family. In addition to fostering, they have mentored other resource families," said Children and Family Services Division Director Anne Bloxom. She continued, "But, even more important, is their support of family reunification efforts. They understand the role they play in helping families reunify with their children and helping the children in their care prepare for the next step in their journeys. They truly go above and beyond to ensure that our Orange County children have a safe, healthy and happy home."

In Orange County, there are more than 2,000 children and youth in foster care. Foster children range in age from infancy to late teens. Their backgrounds cross all ethnic and economic lines. Resource family homes are especially needed for teenagers, sibling sets and children with special medical, educational, behavioral or emotional challenges.

Fostering a child can be a challenging yet rewarding journey for families. Orange County resource families continue to express the value they find in providing safe homes for children. For more information on becoming a resource family, or other ways you can help our foster youth, please call (888) 871-KIDS or visit www.oc4kids.com.

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SSA SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ON-CALL TEAM

The Children & Family Services division's Emergency Response On-Call System is composed of a team of Senior Social Workers (SSWs), Senior Social Services Supervisors (SSSSs), Public Health Nurses (PHNs), clerical staff and Administrative Managers IIs. In line with SSA's mission to preserve families and protect vulnerable adults and children, the team responds to Child Abuse Reports 24 hours a day, seven days a week that require an immediate, in-person response after regular business hours, on weekends, and on holidays. SSWs and SSSSs volunteer to join the On-Call Team, bringing with them diverse sets of training, expertise, skill sets and characteristics that support the team.



Pictured: The Emergency Response On-Call Team

On-Call Team members:

- Respond after regular business hours when oversight and support can be limited.
- Are very knowledgeable about available resources and how to navigate systems during off-business hours.
- Are First Responders and are usually the first point of contact with the community.
- Are visible and accessible to the public, requiring a high level of professionalism and the ability to diffuse crises especially in times of chaos.
- Interface not only with the community but collaborate closely and partner with other professionals such as law enforcement officers and hospital staff.
- Require the ability to be flexible and patient, responding at all hours to all distances, including neighboring counties.
- Are emotionally strong and have the coping skills, support system and tools to self-care, as they often respond to some of the most traumatic Child Abuse Reports while still carrying their regular workload.

The On-Call Team shares SSA's vision by contributing to a safe environment for Orange County residents. In 2018, the team immediately responded to and investigated Child Abuse Reports of 527 children after regular business hours, on weekends and on holidays.

The On-Call Team exemplifies SSA's values by creatively engaging the community with courtesy and respect, especially for the diversity of Orange County residents; investigating Child Abuse Reports with compassion and integrity; and teaming with other professionals to be thorough and efficient to come to a fair conclusion, ultimately for the safety and well-being of children and their families.

By being available around the clock, the Emergency Response On-Call Team meets a critical need for the children in our community, ensuring that protective support is always within reach and that they have the resources to remain safe.

Thank you to the On-Call Team for all that you do to support our agency's mission, vision and values and congratulations on being selected as this month's SSA Spotlight!

MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Name: Kim Ragen

Title: Deputy Division Director, Children and Family Services (CFS)

Areas covered in your position: Continuing Family Services

Years of Service with the County of Orange: 24

Divisions worked/previous experience: CFS - Integrated Continuing Services, Court Officers, Child Abuse Services Team, Policy Development Unit, Emergency Response and Orangewood Children and Family Center

Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.): I love to play pickleball! It's said to be the fastest growing sport in the U.S., it's great exercise and I enjoy being outside and socializing with friends on the court.

Professional development tips for staff: Stay curious. One of the aspects of working for SSA that I really appreciate is the opportunity to try different assignments. Whether you like to move around and experience various programs and/or divisions, or you feel you've found your niche, I think it's important to look for ways to continue to learn, stretch and be exposed to new ideas. Growth opportunities can also help us stay excited about our work and focused on making a difference for our community.

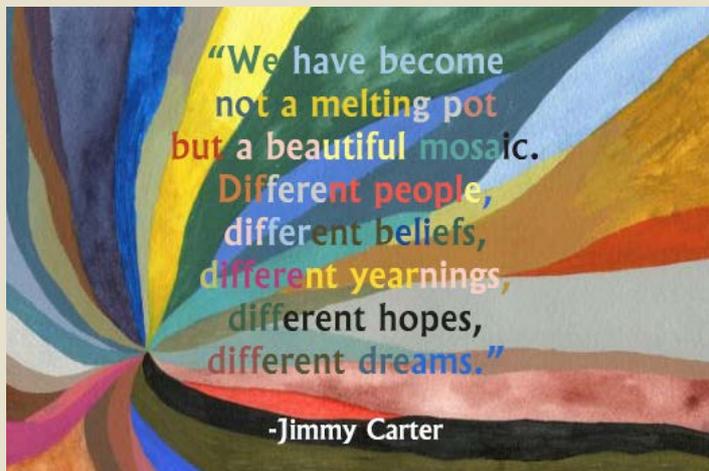


JUNE'S CORE VALUE: DIVERSITY

By Kenya Avila, Office Technician



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



Do you know what heritage will be celebrated next month? Take a guess. If you said Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage, then you are correct! Heritage is one word that can come to mind when thinking about diversity. How about someone's religion, age or gender identity? Yes, diversity is considered all of those things, but it also refers to the diverse knowledge of career and life experiences that one goes through shaping them into who they are today. SSA has over 4,300 employees who come from many walks of life. Whether staff members have transferred from a different agency within the County, are coming in from the private sector, or are very new to the workforce, everyone comes with different experiences.

Diversity also refers to the way people think. SSA seeks to create a welcoming environment where staff can feel comfortable sharing their innovative ideas with their teams which, therefore, inspires others to collaborate and learn from each other. By operating as a large diverse unit, SSA is able to accomplish the primary goal of helping our community in the best way possible. Our agency also encourages staff to celebrate their cultural diversity through the five subcommittees that are organized by the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee. Staff do not need to come from one of the five cultural backgrounds to join, which makes this a great opportunity to learn more about other cultures within our agency.

Diversity allows us to provide the best support that we can offer, not only to our co-workers but to the residents of Orange County. Overall, SSA strives to make everyone feel a part of something much greater. Being proud of our diversity is powerful and everyone should feel important because, no matter what it is, everyone is unique in their special way.

SSA SHOWS OFF SOME PINK IN MAY FOR CREATIVITY!



SSA EMPLOYEE SHARES HER FOSTERING JOURNEY

May is recognized as National Foster Care Month; a time to celebrate that we each may play a part in enhancing the lives of children and youth connected to foster care. As County employees, we have the opportunity to impact the lives of children and families through a career of dedicated public service to the most vulnerable members of our Orange County community. Many of our coworkers are also fostering connections between their public and personal service by opening their hearts and homes to children in need of family based care.



In the following interview, Maria Marmolejo, a Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI) with the Assistance Programs (AP) division's Policy & Quality Assurance (PQA) team, recounts her fostering journey, first as a relative resource parent and now as a resource parent providing respite care and long-term foster care.

How long have you worked for the County and in what capacities?

15 years total, in roles such as extra help in Human Resources, Eligibility Technician (ET) and Employment & Eligibility Specialist (EES) in Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services. I was promoted to SSSI with AP and then transferred to AP PQA.

How long have you been a resource parent and what made you decide to become a resource family?

Part of my desire came from collaborating with SSA's Tustin Family Campus when I was an EES in the CalWORKs program. Also, in 2006, I volunteered to work overtime at the Orangewood Children & Family Center and I loved it. I always left there wanting to bring the kids home with me. Then in June 2016, I got a text from a social worker that they had a child that needed placement. The child happened to be a relative of mine, a nine-month old little girl. The social worker, at the time, didn't realize that I was an SSA employee; they only knew that I was the only relative contact. They placed her right away with me and asked me if I would be willing to serve as a temporary placement for her while her parents were working through the court process. Knowing how important it was to provide this little girl with stability and a loving home, I said yes. That's how the whole process of becoming a resource parent started.

How many children have you cared for?

Four. Right now, I am caring for one child. I've also provided respite services for three other children.

What resources have you found most helpful in your role as a resource parent?

At the beginning, you depend on the social worker to let you know what resources are available. They offer you classes to understand the system. I also talked to experienced foster parents, learned

what resources and classes they liked or didn't like, and discussed the hardest parts (about fostering).

Did you have any pre-conceived ideas about the process to become a resource family, or what it means to be a resource parent?

I think more of it was based on what people tell you or what you hear on the media, even though in the back of your mind, you know it can't be that bad. (The role of resource parents is) to protect. (When people) hear social services or social worker, (they) think, "Oh they're going to take your kids away" instead of "They're here to help you out and to provide resources."

How has that perception changed?

While my perception changed as I took on different roles with the county, becoming a foster parent totally changed my perspective. I think it's knowing more about what the program itself is intended to do, the regulations, the policies, and (seeing how) some workers go above and beyond to try to help.

What have you learned since becoming a resource family?

When it comes to dealing with the children, not getting attached is out of the question. How can you not get attached to a child? Take it one day at a time. At the beginning it was very stressful, but the thing I learned as a foster parent is not to be discouraged and to remember that at the end of the day, my focus is to help the child through an incredibly traumatic time as best as I can.

What benefits have you seen come out of your connections with the foster youth and their birth parents?

For me, the biggest benefit has been the relationship that I have built with these kids; you would think those children would forget about it, but they don't. It's also really important to build rapport with the biological parents; it's in the best interest of the child and you have the opportunity to help these parents learn how to better support their children.

What or who has helped you work through any challenges you might have experienced?

A lot of emotional support has come from my church community, family members and friends.

How do you balance working for the county with your responsibilities as a resource parent?

It definitely is an adjustment. When I knew how my schedule was going to change, I talked to my supervisor. I've been blessed that all of my supervisors have been flexible.

What advice would you give someone who might be interested in becoming a resource parent?

If you really have the heart to make an impact on a child's life, don't let anyone discourage you. If it's on your mind, then go for it. It's a win-win-win situation: The children win, the parents win and you win.

If you want to learn more about fostering, fostering-to-adopt or the many ways to support children and families in Orange County, visit www.oc4kids.com or call (888) 871-5437.

FOCUSING ON FAMILY

By Brandon Reed, Families and Communities Together (FaCT)



In recognition of Blue Ribbon/Child Abuse Prevention Month, FaCT's 15 Family Resource Centers (FRCs) hosted family-focused events that spanned the month of April throughout Orange County. Centered on bonding, parenting and raising awareness of the effects of child abuse and how to prevent it, these events were an opportunity for FRCs to educate families in their community about available resources and services.

The Minnie Street FRC hosted a Blue Ribbon Family night featuring bingo and other games. In the midst of the fun and laughter, community leaders spoke about the important role all community members have in creating a safe environment for children to grow up in. They educated attendees on the warning signs of abuse and what to do if you suspect child abuse.

The Stanton and La Habra FRCs both paired their events with larger city-wide Easter events that attracted large numbers of community members. Community leaders in Stanton asked families to take a pledge to stand against child abuse. Each family that pledged planted a pinwheel that culminated into a garden at Stanton Central Park. La Habra FRC staff asked children attending to decorate "thank you" cards that the FRC will send to clients after they complete service. The La Habra FRC staff took advantage of this time to talk to parents about the services offered and child abuse prevention month.

In pairing with larger events, both FRCs were able to raise awareness on how to prevent child abuse and about the family-strengthening services at the FRC. Dianna

Valtierra, FRC Coordinator with the Stanton FRC, shared, "We look forward to this event every year! We connect with families on child abuse prevention, but it is more about spreading awareness of our center and its services. Even if the families we interact with never come into the center, it is important to know that we are here if they need it. They can also share this information with their families or friends that may need help but don't know where to start."

APS LEADS COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONALISM

By Jacquelyne Garza, Senior Social Services Supervisor

Congratulations to our Adult Protective Services (APS) program for leading the way with participation in the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) certificate program. Since 2018, a total of 22 APS social workers have achieved the NAPSA certificate, which is the highest number among surrounding southern California counties. NAPSA started the program in an effort to support and strengthen APS programs throughout the nation by providing education and training in the field of adult protective services. The certification program consists of completing 23 core competency trainings along with other employment criteria. These social workers have worked diligently to complete the trainings within specified timeframes while managing their caseloads and serving residents of Orange County. Kudos to the APS social workers on their achievement and commitment to continuous education and professional development!



Back Row: Steven Jones, Reath Melendez, Andrea Simon, Michelle Nguyen, Mabel Gutierrez, Kim Holland, Tina Sakamoto, Danielle Monarrez, Christa Tipton, Colleen Dwyer

Front Row: Monica Kim, Elizabeth Davis, Jessica Cho, Mariluz Duran, Thuong Dang, Catherine Becerine, Jacquelyne Garza

BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

On April 25, staff throughout SSA celebrated Bring Your Child to Work Day, which occurs on the fourth Thursday of April every year. Many of the staff's children got to experience a day in the work life of their hardworking parents. Enjoy some photos from this year's turnout!



SSA WINS FRESHY AWARD!



The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) recently recognized SSA for outstanding expedited delivery of CalFresh benefits to Orange County residents, presenting SSA with the “Freshy” Award for “Best 3-Day Timeliness” in 2018. SSA’s timeliness rate for CalFresh 3-Day Expedited Services was 99.48%. This exceptional percentage is a testament to the amazing effort and commitment of our hardworking Eligibility Technicians, clerical staff and supervisors across Assistance Programs (AP) and Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (FSS & AS) divisions, as well as support staff in Accounting, Financial Systems Coordination, Information Technology, Training and Career Development, Program Integrity and AP/FSS & AS Operations and Policy & Quality Assurance, who meet the needs of our community by ensuring that our customers have access to their benefits when they most need it.

As we celebrate CalFresh Awareness Month in May, thank you for demonstrating SSA core values each day and for your outstanding delivery of CalFresh benefits to Orange County residents. Job well done!

EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS IN SSA

I joined SSA in May 2014. I applied for and readily accepted the position of Eligibility Technician while pursuing a bachelor's degree in Human Development at California State University, Long Beach. One of the challenges I faced, while working full-time and attending school full-time, was finding classes that fit cohesively around my work hours. After thoroughly researching all available classes, I was able to find a mix of online and evening classes that coincided with my work schedule.

TIP

Stay organized by utilizing prioritization, calendars and planners in order to maintain a cohesive schedule which allows sufficient time to balance studying, homework, your employment and social life.

Despite the sacrifices and challenges I faced, my educational experience was invaluable to my personal and professional growth. My educational experience gave me a better understanding of different cultures, human behavior, physical and mental development, as well as the ability to communicate effectively. At work, I find myself consistently using something I learned in school, whether it be an organizational model or presentation techniques. Since graduating and becoming the first in my family to finish college, I have become a more effective worker by applying the skills I developed in school directly to my everyday life. I'm thankful for the resources and support that were provided to me, from family to the educational reimbursement program offered through SSA.

As of March 2019, I accepted a promotion to Social Worker I with the Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services division's In-Home Supportive Services program.

Omar Parashev

Social Worker I
Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services
In-Home Supportive Services



OCFC UNVEILS NEW GAME ROOM

On April 16, 2019, the Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) held a ceremony to commemorate the grand opening of its newly refurbished Game Room. The ceremony began with opening remarks from Children and Family Services Division Director Anne Bloxom, followed by a presentation of certificates of appreciation to the generous donors who made the refurbishment of the game room possible. OCFC's kitchen staff prepared delicious food and refreshments for all attendees and the event concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and opening of the new game room to be enjoyed by the children at OCFC.



Pictured: Miguel Gutierrez is one of several staff representing OCFC in expressing gratitude to the donors of the newly refurbished Game Room



TCD'S POP UP LABS

By Brian Nelson, Social Services Supervisor I

SSA is modernizing the way trainings and meetings are delivered by leveraging technology. As an example of this transition, Training and Career Development (TCD), in collaboration with the Information Technology and Facilities and Emergency Management Services teams, completed a project in February 2019 to convert TCD training room AB107 into a “pop up lab.” The PCs have been removed and replaced with 60 Wi-Fi capable laptops that connect to the County Intranet. These laptops can be checked out to be used for short surveys or full trainings. Since the tables no longer have locked down PCs, the tables can be easily converted into groups of tables to encourage interactivity and collaboration during trainings or can be arranged into a more traditional classroom setup.



There have already been several successful Social Worker Induction Training (SWIT) classes and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) trainings facilitated by TCD's Children and Family Services training staff. There have also been several successful trainings conducted by visiting training partners from San Diego State University's Child Welfare Development Services and UC Davis.

Our goal is to leverage technology to reflect our Agency's business and cultural values, such as encouraging creativity and increasing efficiency in the delivery of training. SSA is in the process of continuing to convert several

other training rooms into these “pop up labs.” By having more engaging trainings, staff will be energized to meet our Agency's mission and goals and provide the best level of customer service to our clients, both externally and internally.

IHSS SOCIAL WORKER INDUCTION TRAINING

By Isela Rodriguez, Social Services Supervisor I

On May 6, the newest cohort of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) social workers concluded their seven-week induction training provided by the collaboration of Training and Career Development, Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Policy & Quality Assurance (PQA) team and IHSS. This was the largest group of trainees since January 2017. The new social workers received training on IHSS policies and the statewide Case Management, Information and Payrolling System (CMIPS) database. During this intensive training, IHSS social worker mentors coached new social workers, who also received additional training through job shadowing in the community. Having multiple training components available to our new social workers provides a robust learning experience and facilitates quality service to the community. Congratulations to the newest members of the IHSS program and may you achieve plenty of success in your new career!



Back Row: Sylvia Iglesias (AMI), Judy Francisco (SSSI), Jacquelyne Garza (SSSS), Susana Aceves-Enriquez, Tristy Nguyen, Jeanette Mora, Chi Quang “Q” Nguyen, Ashley Perez, David Soto, Isabel Franco, Jorge Anthony “Tony” Gutierrez, Omar Parushev, Dina Bagues (AMI), Isela Rodriguez (SSSI), Kristine Ngo (SSSI)

Front Row: Tu Nguyen, Carwina Dasse, Vivian Vu, Judy Sim, Celeste Payan, Zoe Boorn and Heather Calkin

RAMADAN 2019

By Banafsheh Panah and Ahmad Sadeq, Eligibility Technicians



On May 6, many SSA staff began observing Ramadan. Ramadan, or Ramazan, is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which approximately 1.8 billion Muslims in more than 33 countries around the world fast from food and drink between dawn and sunset every day for a full lunar month. Ramadan concludes after 29-30 days with the holiday, Eid el Fitr, which falls on the first day of next lunar month (June 4), during which time celebrants give to charity as well as feast with family and friends.

You can learn more about Ramadan by joining the Middle Eastern Multi-cultural Association (MEMA), part of SSA's Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee (MCAC). For more information on how to join, please contact Banafsheh Panah (Banafsheh.Panah@ssa.ocgov.com) or Ahmad Sadeq (Ahmad.Sadeq@ssa.ocgov.com).

TOGETHER WE ARE GREAT

By the CFS Ragnar Relay Team

"Together we are great." That is what is written on the official T-shirt for the 2019 Ragnar Relay running event, which starts in Huntington Beach and ends 200 miles later in San Diego. Between April 12-13, ten participants from SSA's Children & Family Services (CFS) division alternated running all day, through the night and into the next day, crossing the finish line after 33 hours of non-stop effort. Below, they share their thoughts on their experience in this event:

"Throughout the two days, I was in awe; everyone gave everything they had with a smile on their face." -Francisco "Paco" Perez, Senior Social Services Supervisor

"Anytime I was tired, hungry, or injured, someone was right there to give me a boost of energy, something to eat or something to help relieve my pain. It just shows that our team practices social work on and off the clock." -Megan Moore, Senior Social Worker

"A little over 2 years ago I was diagnosed with cutaneous t-cell lymphoma. Since then, I have completed many 5 and 10Ks, 4 half-marathons, and now-my crowning achievement-a Ragnar. I never thought I was capable of doing any of this. But then I decided, I'm not going to run away from my challenges; I'm going to run over them." -Roylyn Burton, Community Program Specialist

"The coordination, the motivation, the laughter, the comraderie; it helps me appreciate even more the great team we have at Children and Family Services." -Mark Boyce, Senior Social Services Supervisor

"The week of Ragnar, I hurt my back and I considered not participating. But I thought about my teammates and I just didn't have it in me to notify them that they had to pick up an additional 13 miles. The team was really supportive. Sometimes we have to endure discomfort when others are counting on us." -Claudia Montelongo, Senior Social Worker

"On the Ragnar Relay course, we motivated the runner that was out running their section. We followed them at times, checked up



Pictured: Francisco "Paco" Perez; Megan Moore; Norma Avila; Claudia Montelongo; Birute Bruzas-Ranes; Roylyn Burton, Christena and David Harper, Mark Boyce, Maria "Xochitl" Major.
Not pictured: Karyn Sebbo (team volunteer)

on them, and cheered and encouraged them along the way. Our focus was the welfare of the one running their course, something we do every day but on this day for a race and one of our peers." -Norma Avila, Senior Social Worker

"Knowing others were counting on me helped to motivate me. I enjoyed being part of the team, all of us working together towards the same goal." -Birute Bruzas-Ranes, Senior Social Services Supervisor

"Our teamwork allowed us to change our perspective of what is achievable, enjoy newfound friendships, and experience unforgettable memories together." -Maria "Xochitl" Major, Senior Social Worker

Ragnar condensed a myriad of emotions into a blur of shared memories. The experience assures that the challenge of a lofty goal can stir a unified determination, whether running a race or helping families. Together we are great.

CALFRESH EXPANDS TO SSI/SSP RECIPIENTS



As we celebrate CalFresh Awareness Month, a major change is coming to the State's CalFresh food assistance program!

Beginning June 1, 2019, people who are currently receiving Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) benefits through the Social Security Administration may be eligible to receive CalFresh benefits. Staff across the Assistance Programs, Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services and Agency Administration divisions have been working diligently over the last several months to ensure that all staff and members of the community are informed and prepared for this upcoming change, training staff on new policies and procedures related to the expansion, communicating news of the expansion to staff and the community as well as testing new functionality requirements in CalWIN, the system utilized by eligibility staff. This change is expected to impact up to 29,000 new SSI/SSP recipient households in Orange County.

To learn more about the CalFresh expansion to SSI/SSP recipients, click [here](#).

T.E.A.M. SHOUTOUT AT LAGUNA HILLS REGIONAL CENTER

By Rodney Ferguson, Office Technician and Jessica Rodriguez, Social Worker II

Employee recognition is an important part of a healthy work environment. Laguna Hills Regional Center's (LHRC's) Employee Recognition Committee was founded to encourage peer-to-peer recognition. The purpose was for LHRC staff to recognize peers who go above and beyond. A written explanation of why we appreciate someone has a lasting impression on the individual!

T.E.A.M. stands for "Together Everyone Achieves More." It was chosen to express our individual work style and ethics. T.E.A.M. is an example of how we work together every day to better serve our community.

Nominations are posted by LHRC staff to acknowledge accomplishments of their fellow peers. Each nominee is presented with a certificate and placed in a random drawing. A winner is selected and awarded a "Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) Dollar" that can be used for any SAC item. These are tokens of appreciation for being a team player and going above and beyond to help their peers! This has created a positive impact on LHRC staff and is something they look forward to every month. LHRC – it truly is worth the drive!



THANK YOU ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS!

April 25 was recognized as National Administrative Professionals Day, a day to recognize the work of secretaries, administrative assistants, receptionists and other administrative support professionals. Thank you to 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!



Left to right: Marlowe Santos, Gloria Ibarra, Thanh Tuyen Nguyen, April Cunningham, and Guillermina Trevino



Pictured: Kimberly Flores

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

Esther Tung, Social Worker II (SWII)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

SWII Esther Tung of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program recently received the following words of gratitude from Senior Social Worker Sayaka Hur of the Children and Family Services division:



"I just wanted to acknowledge and thank Esther for her assistance on April 23, 2019. The father (of the children on one of my cases) traveled from China to have a monitored visit with the children and Esther made herself available to translate during the entire visit. It lasted longer than expected (2.5 hours) as the father had many questions to ask, but she kept her smile on her face. Esther was very professional, yet kind and personable. The father and the children's caregiver were very happy to have a translator in-person so that they could communicate directly. Esther continues to help me by translating emails between the father and me promptly. I understand this is completely out of her job responsibilities but I am so happy to know that we have someone like Esther in the agency to step up and help. Her kindness and willingness to help is truly appreciated!!"



Michael Sullivan, Social Worker II (SWII)/Children and Family Services

SWII Michael Sullivan of CFS' Visitation Supportive Services program recently received the following phone message from a client:

"I just want to call to say thank you very much for supervising our visits. You made the visits very enjoyable. I do appreciate everything that you did. I just want to call to say thank you. Have a great day!"

Michael offered some additional words of appreciation in response to the client's message:

"These words are spoken by a mother who just officially had her parental rights terminated by the court. Workers in my department do not often receive officially written or verbalized thankfulness by parents who are attempting to reunify with their children. As such, I would like to accept this mom's gratitude on behalf of all of the social workers, supervisors and manager within Visitation Supportive Services, who all work each day in ways that merit much thankfulness, yet who do not often receive such official praise."

Paul Vu, Social Worker II (SWII)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

SWII Paul Vu of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program was presented with Adult Services' "You Rock Award" for the month of May 2019. The following words of recognition were shared about Paul by his peers:



"Over the last year and a half, Paul has been a vital member of the I-CMS (IHSS Case Management System) development team. He has been working closely with IT, IHSS leads and Policy & Quality Assurance team to test and provide feedback for the tool. In addition, he developed the I-CMS training material and trained all IHSS staff including social workers, supervisors and managers. Paul was also part of the team who presented the new I-CMS application to SSA's management and IT staff, and also provided assistance in putting together the test plan for the State of California. He utilizes his expertise to support staff by monitoring the I-CMS inbox and provide solutions when issues are reported. He also takes time out of his busy schedule to provide one-on-one I-CMS training and consultations to his colleagues when requested. Paul's continuous efforts to support the I-CMS project is valuable as it helps streamline business processes and the department in meeting the Agency's core values."

You can learn more about the I-CMS project in the [April 2019](#) issue of SSA Today.

BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

Heather Loriso, Senior Social Worker (SSW)/Children and Family Services

SSW Heather Loriso was recognized as CFS' Employee of the Month for April 2019. The following words of recognition were shared about Heather:

"Heather is always respectful in working with her families and goes above and beyond for them-taking those extra steps to provide meaningful community linkages and resources. Heather appreciates the importance that a supported family is a strong family and swiftly engages important supports such as Wraparound, In-Home Coaching, Counseling and Faith In Motion. Heather is always willing to train new social workers-instilling in them the standards of excellence she expresses in her daily work. When a coworker needs assistance, she's there with them to lend her support. At a recent Celebrating Families event, a family she walked alongside as their social worker shared how life changing she was for them."



Maria Taman, Social Worker II (SWII)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (not pictured)

SWII Maria Taman recently received the following words of gratitude from a client:

"I want you to know how nice it was to work with you. I tell everyone at my school about how great you are. I know my life can be very hectic and that I may be difficult to get a hold of, but you found a way to always make it work so that my family wouldn't suffer. You should know that I recognize the extra effort and attention you've given my case and I am so grateful! I think you are one of the kindest, most understanding people I've gotten to know in this system. I truly appreciate your time and attention to detail."

With your help, I am graduating from Orange Coast College next week with my associate's degree. I'll be transferring to California State University, Long Beach this fall. These are things I never thought possible three years ago. I feel very blessed. You've helped me get here. Thank you again for always having my back. I truly have felt supported by you."



Lourdes Chavez, Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS)/Children and Family Services

SSSS Lourdes Chavez was recently presented with a plaque by the Eddie Nash Foundation, a longtime community partner supporting foster youth's successful transition to adulthood, with the following words of recognition:

"With Grateful Appreciation and Recognition for Your Ongoing Efforts to Improve the Outcomes for Foster Youth in Orange County. We Value Our Continued Partnership."

Greg Zamarripa, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI)/Agency Administration

Training and Career Development (TCD) recently presented SSSI Greg Zamarripa with their Total Customer Dedication Award and notable title of "Employee of the Quarter." The following comments were shared by his peers:

"Greg is an exceptional person, team member, supervisor and a true leader. He is always available to assist others even when he training full time, has various projects and commitments. He will be there for you no matter what. He is passionate about his trainees and his fellow co-workers success. His teamwork spirit is second to none. Thank you Greg!"



SSA PROMOTIONS

| EMPLOYEE NAME | CLASSIFICATION | DIVISION |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| BAHENA, MIGUEL ANJEL | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| BANFIELD, KIMBERLY | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I | FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES |
| COMAN, MIRIAM | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| GALVAN ROSALES, JORGE ADAN | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES |
| GANIRON, ALEXANDRA | SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| GARRY, STEPHANIE ANN | DATA ENTRY TECHNICIAN | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| GARZA, JACQUELYNE DANIELLE | SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| GURBACH, ANDREA CHRISTINE | OFFICE SUPERVISOR C | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| GUZMAN, VICTOR | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I | FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES |
| HUYNH, SHANNON NGOC HAU | DATA ENTRY TECHNICIAN | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| MARQUINA, STEPHANIE ANN | ELIGIBILITY TECHNICIAN | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| MITCHELL, LORI A | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| NGUYEN, EILEEN VUONG | STAFF SPECIALIST | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| OBILLOS, ARES F | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| OLEA GUILLEN, KATHERINE | ELIGIBILITY TECHNICIAN | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| OWUAMA, CHIKA A | INFORMATION PROCESSING TECHNICIAN | CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES |
| PARR, JOHN EDWARD | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| PLASCENCIA, JUAN R | SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| QUIROZ, CECILIA | INFORMATION PROCESSING TECHNICIAN | CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES |
| RAGEN, KIM | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER III | CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES |
| RAMIREZ, ERIC W | STAFF SPECIALIST | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| RICO, ROSA A | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER II | FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES |
| RIEKEN, NOAH JAMES | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| RODRIGUEZ, DEBANHI Y | INFORMATION PROCESSING TECHNICIAN | CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES |
| SANCHEZ, JACKELYNE GRISELL | STAFF SPECIALIST | AGENCY ADMINISTRATION |
| TOSCANO ALVARADO, DIEGO XAVIER | ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| VELASQUEZ, BEATRIZ M | ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER I | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |
| VO, RACHEL A | SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR | ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS |

LOOKING TO PROMOTE?

Be sure to stay up-to-date on current job opportunities here at SSA and throughout the County! Here are the current recruitments at SSA:

| Job Title | Deadline to Apply |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Eligibility Technician | Continuous |
| Eligibility Technician (Farsi) | Continuous |
| Laundry Worker | Continuous |
| Senior Social Services Supervisor | Continuous |
| Senior Social Worker | Continuous |
| Senior Staff Development Specialist | Continuous |

To learn more about these positions, sign up for job alerts and/or apply, click [here](#).

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.



Dionne Salcido, Eligibility Technician/Assistance Programs

JOIN THE MCAC!

Multi-Cultural
Advisory Committee



The mission of the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee (MCAC) is to provide a means to address diversity and multi-cultural issues within SSA and to ensure the delivery of multi-culturally sensitive and competent services to the community. The MCAC consists of a cross-section of management and non-management employees representative of the diversity of the Agency and community and serves as a forum for various cultural groups to address issues of diversity within the workforce of SSA, as well as acting as a resource to provide culturally sensitive services to our clientele. Presently, there are five subcommittees of the MCAC, welcoming all interested employees to join them and participate in their activities.

To learn more about the MCAC and its subcommittees, 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:



JUNE 2019

| Location | Date | Time |
|--|--------|--------------|
| Central Regional Office (CRO) 2020 West Walnut Street, Santa Ana Conference Room 177 | 6/6/19 | 1:30-2:30 PM |

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Chi Pham - SSA Today Coordinator
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