

# OCSSA TODAY

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

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Debra Baetz



It's hard to believe we are already one month in to 2019. I hope everyone was able to find time over the holidays to relax, create memories with family and friends, and have fun. As we head further into the new year, I want to reflect back on some of our accomplishments in 2018 and highlight a few of our key initiatives this year.

In 2018:

- We successfully launched the pilot version of the Restaurant Meals Program in the cities of Anaheim and Santa Ana.
- We cleared the backlog in the Resource Family Approval program and are reducing the time it takes to approve families.
- We developed and implemented a resource and support services program for commercially sexually exploited children.
- We realized significant cost savings in our real estate portfolio through the consolidation of facilities after the closure of Sand Dollar and renegotiation of lease payments at the Cypress Regional Center and Garden Grove Regional Center.
- For the third consecutive year, we increased our work participation rate to 46%, to the tune of 15% from over the prior Federal Fiscal Year.
- We increased our homeless outreach services by providing short-term support at the Santa Ana Riverbed and the Plaza of the Flags, continued our ongoing support at the Courtyard and Bridges, and added outreach efforts at Family Assistance Ministries in San Clemente.
- We implemented the Educational Advisory Program designed to support SSA staff who are pursuing or wish to pursue higher education.

I look forward to continuing to build on our success and see key initiatives move forward in 2019, including:

- Expanding the Restaurant Meals Program countywide by engaging a variety of restaurants to participate in the program and targeting outreach efforts to eligible clients.
- Implementing CalWORKs 2.0, designed to transform the CalWORKs program to a whole-family approach in order to increase engagement and assist families in achieving self-sufficiency.
- Continuing to transition the Orangewood Children & Family Center to a 10-day temporary shelter.
- Participating in the activities focused on reinforcing and engaging with our Agency's core values through the Heart of SSA: Core Values in Action campaign.
- Through the Working to End Child Abuse and Neglect (WE CAN) Coalition, expanding the capacity for childcare resources that will benefit young children and their parents.
- Continuing our work with the State on the upcoming system transitions to CalSAWS and CWS-CARES.

While this sampling of our upcoming projects demonstrates some critical changes, we must not lose sight of what we are here to do: serve our community. We at SSA have the vital charge of protecting and providing for our most vulnerable residents; one that we take seriously and one that we work hard to achieve. I look forward to sharing an exciting year ahead with each of you and know that we will continue to make a positive impact within our community in 2019!

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# SSA SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

## ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES ASSIGNMENT TEAM

SSA's Adult Protective Services (APS) is a program within the Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Division. APS investigates reports of alleged abuse and neglect related to elders and dependent adults in Orange County. In 2018, APS received 13,522 reports, which is a 5.6% increase from 2017.

The Assignment Team is a specialized unit within APS, tasked to review and assign new elder and dependent adult abuse reports for the entire program. The team consists of seven staff including three Senior Social Workers (SSW), three Office Technicians (OT), and one Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS). Modeled after San Diego County's APS Assignment Team, this specialized unit was implemented in 2015 in an effort to efficiently address the increasing number of reports received each year.

Each Assignment Team SSW is assigned to one of three regions in the County (North, Central and South), and reviews and assigns new reports to other APS SSWs within their respective regions. New reports are assigned daily, which involves verifying criteria and jurisdiction of APS, determining how APS will respond to each report, and consulting with each other to ensure that cases are assigned equitably across all regions. Assignment Team SSWs also are assigned cases, investigate abuse reports (carrying 2/3 of the average caseload) and maintain outstations at local police departments.

APS' three OTs are integral to the Assignment Team. The OTs screen each case to determine whether the APS client receives other benefits (Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services) and cross-reports to appropriate local and state regulatory agencies. OTs also maintain staff vacation calendars, which the Assignment Team SSWs use when determining



**Left to right:** Alejandra Cruz, Joyce Kati, Kristen Hayden, John Danczak, Hanh Nguyen, Rachel Vo, Mabel Gutierrez and Tina Sakamoto

case assignments. In addition, OTs provide office support for the entire APS program, including mailing correspondence and providing APS phone coverage for the general public.

The Assignment Team is supervised by the SSSS, who acts as the liaison between APS and the APS/ CAR Registry, and tracks daily, monthly and annual statistics about APS abuse reports. The SSSS fills in to assist with assignments when necessary.

The Assignment Team has embraced SSA's values of efficiency, teamwork and thoroughness by streamlining the case assignment process for APS, allowing the program to better serve Orange County's vulnerable adult and elderly populations.

### APS Abuse Reports Received

The number of unduplicated reports received increased 106% from 2008 through 2018



**Thank you to the Adult Protective Services Assignment Team for your hard work and dedication, and congratulations on being recognized as the SSA Spotlight for January 2019!**

# MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM, PART 1

**Name:** Denise Churchill

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

**Areas covered in your position:** Family Assessment & Shelter Services – Orangewood Children & Family Center (OCFC) and four Resource Family Approval (RFA) programs

**Years of Service with the County of Orange:** 26+ years of service (hired in 1991; separated and returned in 1996)

**Divisions worked/previous experience:** My entire SSA career has been with CFS – I was hired as a Senior Social Worker into Voluntary Family Services, serving there from late 1991 to early 1996. At that time, I voluntarily separated from the County when my husband received a promotion. We thought I could stay home with our two young daughters for a few years. However, he received all of the responsibility and little compensation, so I returned to CFS as a re-hire in late 1996. I was assigned to Specialized Family Services (SFS) with a Special Medical caseload. In early 1998, I was promoted to Senior Social Services Supervisor in the same SFS program. In 1999, I was selected for a unique assignment with the newly formed Best Known Practices (BKP) program. I served there for three years, until I was promoted to Administrative Manager I (AMI) in 2002 to serve as the manager for the Foster Care Support & Development Program, overseeing Foster Care Licensing, Foster Care Monitoring & Development, Foster/Adoptive Recruitment & Training, Foster Care Support, and the Foster Care Liaison. In 2004, I was promoted to AMII for Wraparound and brought the new Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care program with me to that assignment. In 2008, I had the opportunity to return to SFS as their AMII, serving there for over five years. In 2013, I transferred to OCFC and contributed there until I was promoted to my current assignment as CFS Deputy Division Director for Family Assessment and Shelter Services in April 2017.



**Fun fact about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.):** Many of you know that I absolutely love the island of Kauai and that our family has been traveling there as often as we can for many years now. I also maintain contact with a group of friends from my previous neighborhood. We play Bunco each month and I have not missed more than a handful of times in the past 20 years. My favorite type of food is Mexican food, which I could eat every day. We enjoy hosting summer pool parties with family and friends. Also, I have recently discovered Netflix and am enjoying binge watching a few series that I have not yet seen.

**Professional development tips for staff:** Take care of hearts while taking care of business; be open to feedback and continuous improvement; build effective working relationships; be willing to take risks, admit mistakes and celebrate successes; be the change you wish to see; invite risks to encourage growth and learning; believe in people; be genuine and authentic; make an impact and serve others; nurture rich creative environments; create a culture of collaboration; create a positive energetic environment and be responsible for the energy you bring (to the meeting, the room, your team...); how you show up matters, so show up in a way that is helpful – you are creating the culture.

## SAVE THE DATE: FaCT ANNUAL CONFERENCE



**The 2019 FaCT (Families and Communities Together) Annual Conference**

**When:** Thursday, May 16, 2019 from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM

**Where:** Great Wolf Lodge (12681 Harbor Blvd., Garden Grove, CA)

Join us at the upcoming 2019 FaCT Conference for a robust discussion that will challenge us to "reframe" our thinking about how and why we serve. There will be breakout sessions focusing on: Trauma-informed care, homelessness, foster youth experiences, children and youth, mental health care and military families.

Registration begins February 13, 2019. Staff may attend this event on County time with supervisory approval and utilize the County's Educational and Professional Reimbursement Program (EPRP) towards registration fees. For more information about the FaCT conference, click [here](#).

# ADVANCED SIMULATION INVESTIGATION TRAINING

By Mo Sapiga, Administrative Manager II, and Vanessa Montalvo, Senior Social Services Supervisor

In part of fulfilling the Agency's mission to protect children, Children and Family Services (CFS) has partnered with Training and Career Development (TCD) to create an interactive Advanced Simulation Investigation Training to strengthen and refine the interviewing skills of Senior Social Workers (SSWs). The Advanced Simulation Workgroup met over a six-month period to discuss the dual training consisting of lecture and simulation components. From the period of July to November 2018, 116 SSWs and 21 Senior Social Services Supervisors (SSSSs) from both the Emergency Response and Differential Response programs completed the training. SSWs paralleled the simulation learning experience to the experiences of CFS clients being interviewed in relation to child abuse, within a safe and realistic environment. In doing so, SSWs increased their ability to transfer learning into actual child abuse interviewing. SSWs also increased their competence in regards to knowledge and skills to engage and interview CFS clients. They increased their confidence to cultivate self-efficacy and reduce interviewing anxiety. SSWs increased self-awareness to identify and manage personal biases which may potentially influence interviewing and engagement with the CFS clients.



**Pictured:** SSSS Vanessa Montalvo facilitates simulation training



**Pictured:** SSWs participate in live simulation with law enforcement



**Advanced Simulation Workgroup from left to right:** Vanessa Montalvo, Isaac Apolarin, Minerva Hidrogo, Carmen McCorvey, Jennifer Charette, Nicole Kaprielian and Maria Romo  
**Not pictured:** Stephanie Gaskins, Wallace Miller, Tracey Priest, Richard Puls, Sonia Sears and April Wright

In order to create a close to realistic setting, classrooms were staged into a living room of a family's home. Collaborating agencies were used as skills builders to replicate what would happen in an out-of-the-field response. SSWs were able to call a live Public Health Nurse (PHN) to gain medical insight during the training and, on certain simulations, law enforcement joined in on the interview process to collaboratively interview a parent.

An effective and highly trained workforce of SSWs with innovative trainings such as the Advanced Simulation Investigation Training will continue to advance our County's mission of a safe, healthy, and fulfilling place to live, work, and play, today and for generations to come.

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD: TAKING INITIATIVE

By Donna Piantoni, Office Supervisor D



Back in 2012, I worked at the SSA Warner building as an Office Supervisor for Procurement. On a very warm sunny day in May that year, I went out front to the parking lot for a walk. All of a sudden, a family started panicking because they had just put their baby in her car seat and accidentally closed the door. When the driver tried to open the driver's door, he realized he had put his keys on the front seat and all the doors were locked. I rushed over to find out what the problem was, as I had worked as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) before I came to work for SSA and felt that I could lend some assistance in this situation. I told them that I would be right back because I needed my wallet and cell phone. I called my roadside assistance company and explained that

there was an emergency because a family's baby was locked in a car. One of the local roadside assistance drivers heard the call on his radio and was there in less than two minutes. Other staff members were prepared to call the police or, worst case scenario, break the window. I did not want to damage their car, but I would have done so if help did not get to us in a timely manner. The whole ordeal only took about five minutes, thanks to the roadside assistance driver who saved the day by getting the family's car open. The family was very grateful and though I do not usually work with the public, this experience allowed me to recognize the importance of taking initiative when it comes to ensuring the safety of others, regardless of whether they are employees or members of the community.



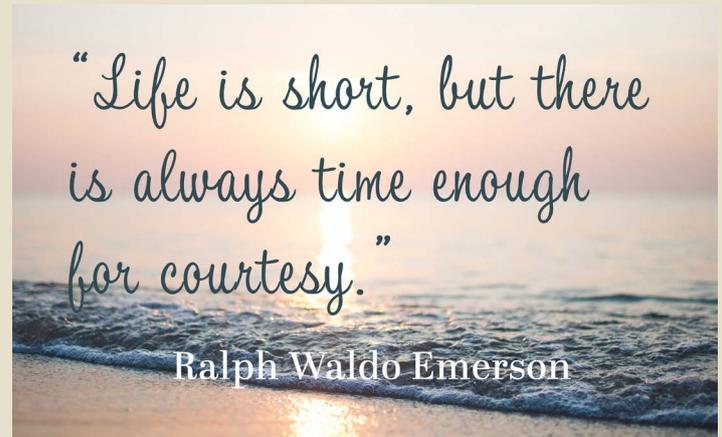
# FEBRUARY'S CORE VALUE: COURTESY

By James Czadek, Eligibility Technician



*The Heart of SSA: Core Values in Action's designated core value for the month of February is Courtesy.*

You might be thinking that courtesy is such an obvious and essential component of any organization, why write an article about it? Perhaps because when we are trying to meet our many deadlines and feeling overwhelmed, it may be easy to lose sight of the importance courtesy plays in our life, both personally and professionally. Courtesy is designated as one of SSA's core values. We extend courtesy to our customers and clients for many of the same reasons that all companies and organizations make courtesy a high priority: not only is it the right thing to do, but it also allows us to earn the faith and trust of those we provide service to. It is a vital part of our job and hopefully part of the way we regularly treat people in all areas of our life. I can tell you from my experience that when dealing with a particularly challenging customer, the more courtesy I extend usually results in a less difficult interaction. We should also keep in mind that our customers and clients are often facing very difficult times; showing courtesy can help them to know that we indeed care about their well-being.



Demonstrating professional courtesy is critically important: Saying things like "Good morning" to our coworkers, being on time, cleaning up after ourselves and being a good "cubicle neighbor"—making personal calls away from our cubicle and keeping noise to a minimum, for example. We spend a great deal of time with each other and courtesy in the workplace goes a long way towards maintaining our respect, morale and appreciation for one another.

We're all impressed by examples of very courteous employees when we have been the customer on the other line, or other side of the desk; let's be that example with the community and to those we serve.

## THE EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY PROGRAM



The purpose of the Educational Advisory Program (EdAP) is to encourage, assist and coach employees who are pursuing or planning to pursue their higher educational goals. The program supports SSA's goal of providing employees with opportunities for professional development and growth.

Staff who are pursuing their higher education, or are contemplating doing so, will benefit from the support provided by the EdAP program that will foster success and better prepare them for promotional opportunities or for new roles/program assignments. This program aligns with SSA's efforts for succession development and staff retention.

EdAP can assist in leveraging internal and external resources to coach, support and facilitate a positive experience among staff who are attending academic programs while working concurrently. This program pairs Participants with Educational Coaches (ECs) who have experienced the challenges of balancing work/life while pursuing their high education. The ECs will assist staff with exploring their educational options such as offering information about colleges and universities, introducing staff to school representatives, financial aid, admission processes, programs such as CalSWEC, public speaking programs such as Toastmasters, resource fairs, trainings and the Educational and Professional Reimbursement Program (EPRP).

In February 2019, EdAP will be launching its second cohort. Be on the lookout for both the Participant and Educational Coach solicitation flyers. For more information about the Educational Advisory Program, please click [here](#) or email [EdAPInbox@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:EdAPInbox@ssa.ocgov.com).

# SANTA RIDERS VISIT OCFC ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) received a special visit on Christmas Eve when 265 motorcycle riders from all over Orange County came by to greet and drop off toys for the children. As part of a longstanding annual holiday tradition known as "The Santa Ride," the riders began their day by meeting in downtown Huntington Beach, then making their way in a long caravan over to OCFC. In addition to receiving toys, the children got to see the bike riders in their festive Santa outfits along with their decorated motorcycles.

Attending the event, Deputy Division Director Denise Churchill shared, "Having the Santa Riders arrive on their motorcycles for their annual gift donation drop off, all dressed up as Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and Elves on Christmas Eve morning, is such a fun event for the children at OCFC. They can be heard from blocks away as they roll down the road between the shelter and court house, through the back gate and onto the basketball courts on campus. The children enjoyed the visiting, having candy canes and admiring the motorcycles! The Santa Riders are a fun and generous group that has grown in numbers and has been supporting the children at OCFC for many, many years."



**Pictured:** Birute Bruzas-Ranes, Cheryl Alexander and Denise Churchill take a photo with David Chase, one of the event's organizers dressed in his Santa outfit

# MEET SSA'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM, PART 2



**Name:** Dorthe Lee

**Title:** Deputy Division Director, Agency Administration/Financial & Research Services

**Areas covered in your position:** Financial Services, Financial Systems Coordination and Research

**Years of Service with the County of Orange:** Total of 10 years

**Divisions worked/previous experience:** My financial career began in Denmark in the banking industry where I worked as a Customer Service Representative/Loan Officer for five years. In 1995, I moved to California where I continued to work in the financial field as a bookkeeper and controller. In 2001, I joined the County of Orange as a Budget Staff Analyst III with the OC Sheriff-Coroner's Department, developing and managing various budgets. In 2004, my family relocated to Oregon where I joined the Klamath County Sheriff's Office. As the Office Manager, I managed the Finance & Budget and the Civil/Records divisions. In

2012, we moved back to Orange County where I rejoined the OC Sheriff-Coroner's Department as a Community Service Officer. I returned to a management position a year later as the Budget Manager for OC Dana Point Harbor. My most recent experience was with OC Public Works and OC Information Technology as the Finance & Budget Manager before having the opportunity to join SSA in July of 2018.

**Fun facts about you (hobby, favorite food, movie, sports team, etc.):** I was born and raised in Denmark and return to visit family when time allows. I love reading, paddling, camping and traveling to foreign countries. I am also the proud owner of Orange County's most photographed royal Parti-Poodle "Mr. Wolf"



**Pictured:** "Mr. Wolf"

**Professional development tips for staff:** Stay true to yourself, yet always be open to learning. Work hard, be positive and always do your best. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone and try new things. Any experience gained is valuable and will assist you in reaching your career goals.

# DID YOU KNOW?

By Mary Sanchez, Administrative Manager I



MCAC provides and develops resources for SSA staff wishing to enhance multi-cultural awareness.

MCAC has five subcommittees, welcoming all interested employees to join as members and participate in activities.

Please contact any of the group members listed below for additional information.

Supervisory approval is required to participate in MCAC events and groups.

**Spanish Speaking Workers Forum**  
1st Wednesday of every month from 12:30 pm-2:00 pm  
800 N. Eckhoff - Room 4008  
Contact: Alfonso Alvarez (714) 940-5605 or Oscar Ramirez (714) 704-8010

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender League**  
2nd Thursday of every month from 12:00 pm-2:00 pm  
HQ/ 500 N. State College - Room 3109  
Contact: Jennifer Martinez (714) 741-7893

**African American Roundtable**  
3rd Wednesday of every month from 12:00 pm-2:00 pm  
744 N. Eckhoff - Room A1313  
Contact: Rose Draft (714) 746-7347 or Cheryl Alexander (714) 935-6011

**Social Services Asian Forum**  
3rd Wednesday of every month from 11:00 am-1:00 pm  
GGRC/12912 Brookhurst - Room 152  
Contact: Hanh T. Nguyen (714) 435-8826 or Angelena Gonzalez (714) 575-2678

**Middle Eastern Multicultural Association**  
3rd Wednesday of every month from 11:30 am-1:00 pm  
Various Locations  
Contact: Ahmad Sadeq (949) 389-6261, Banafsheh Panah (949) 389-8465, or Patricia Cruz (949) 206-8096

To learn more about MCAC, please visit SSA's Intranet.

The website for the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee (MCAC) has had a facelift! Now showcasing items including the various MCAC subcommittees, general information and current member lists for the group, the MCAC website is a great resource to learn how to get more involved here at SSA. Content is regularly updated, with current events and photographs posted. (Click on the image to the left to view the new flyer!)

MCAC serves as a forum for various cultural groups to address issues of diversity within the workforce at SSA, as well as acts as a resource to provide culturally sensitive services to our clientele. The goals of the group are to assist in identifying and removing barriers that impede multi-cultural awareness, employment, and/or professional growth regardless of race, color, creed, or group identity. Participation in each group is open to all interested staff.

Our Agency Director, Debra Baetz had the following words to express about the group, *"MCAC is instrumental in helping SSA promote diversity and cultural issues, ensure the delivery of culturally sensitive and competent services to the community, develop culturally relevant resources and support cultural awareness amongst employees. I highly value the contributions of MCAC and encourage your participation."*

Click [here](#) to check out the new MCAC website! If you are interested in joining, *please obtain your supervisor's approval to participate* and then contact any of the listed contacts for each respective group. You can also email inquiries directly to [MCAC@ssa.ocgov.com](mailto:MCAC@ssa.ocgov.com).

## 2018 TAX SEASON KICKOFF

By Selena Arbid, Social Services Supervisor I

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit for people who work full-time, part-time or are self-employed. Tax filers can claim EITC refunds via the state and federal EITC programs, even if they do not owe any income tax, as long as they have earned income and meet other basic requirements. According to CalEITC4me, the program has been proven to be one of the most effective tools to lift families out of poverty. Research shows children whose families receive a boost in income from EITC perform better in school and have better health, and families use the EITC to buy basic need items.



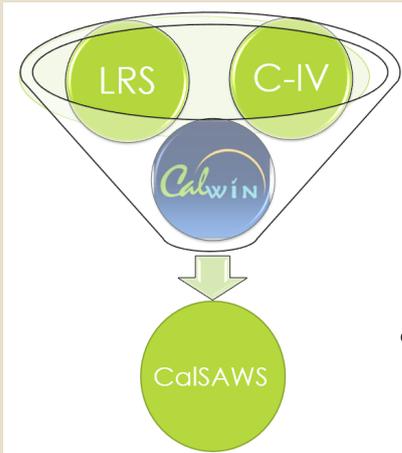
In 2017, the California EITC (CalEITC) put \$346 million directly into the hands of 1.4 million working adults, while the Federal EITC delivers over \$7 billion to low-income Californians every year. For the 2018 tax season, the maximum income limit for eligible families to qualify for the CalEITC has increased to \$24,950 (\$54,884 for the Federal EITC) and the minimum age for tax filers to qualify for the CalEITC has been lowered to 18, regardless of the number of qualifying children in the household (there is no longer a maximum age limit).

Since 2015, SSA's EITC Committee has been working hard towards creating new and innovative ways to help eligible Orange County residents gain access to the state and federal EITCs. Two years ago, in partnership with the Orange County United Way, SSA's Santa Ana Regional Center began serving as a host site for the United Way's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, offering free tax preparation for eligible Orange County residents every Saturday throughout tax season. Last year, VITA services were expanded by adding an additional day for VITA services on Fridays.

SSA looks forward to continuing these efforts in bringing awareness of the EITC and VITA services to the community again this year at the Santa Ana Regional Center! Clients in need of free tax filing assistance can be directed to call (888) 434-8248 to make an appointment for VITA services at SSA. You can learn more about how hard-working individuals and families in Orange County can benefit from CalEITC and the VITA program by visiting [CalEITC4Me.org](http://CalEITC4Me.org) or [ocfreetaxprep.com](http://ocfreetaxprep.com).

# CALSAWS: NEW DYNAMIC TECHNOLOGY TO REPLACE CALWIN

By the CalSAWS Leadership Team



Currently, the state of California utilizes three separate Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS) to administer public benefit programs: LEADER Replacement System (LRS, used in Los Angeles County), Consortium-IV (C-IV, used in 39 counties) and California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Information Network (CalWIN, used in 18 counties including Orange County). For the state to continue receiving federal funding and remain in compliance with state and federal mandates and regulations, California is required to implement a single statewide system that will focus on the clients' experience and service the following programs:

- CalWORKs/Welfare-to-Work
- CalFresh
- Refugee Cash Assistance
- Medi-Cal
- Foster Care
- General Assistance/General Relief

In preparation for CalSAWS in Orange County, SSA has formed the CalSAWS Leadership Team. Under the leadership of Deputy Division Director Lorraine Daniel, Deputy Division Director Mike Edmundson and Administrative Manager II Brian Clark, the CalSAWS Leads will provide oversight of the following critical areas:

- Andrea Lewis, Technical/Data Lead, will provide oversight of the transfer of critical system data from the CalWIN and OnBase systems to CalSAWS
- Jill Mills, Business Analysis/Process Lead, is responsible for providing oversight of mapping existing business processes and identifying changes needed before, during, and after migration
- Alicia Olvera-Martinez, Communication and Training Lead, will provide oversight of internal/external communications and training needs for all phases of the project



**Back row:** Mike Edmundson, Lorraine Daniel, Brian Clark  
**Front row:** Andrea Lewis, Jill Mills, Alicia Olvera-Martinez

The CalSAWS Leadership Team will ensure the Agency complies with federal and state mandates, and that Orange County has a seamless transition while maintaining great customer experience. Brian Clark shared, *"This is a very exciting project for all of us. CalSAWS is one of the largest projects of this type in the U.S.; it will serve as a national model for excellence in automation and technology advancement in the human services industry."*

## OFFICE ON AGING SURVEY

The Office on Aging (OoA) is working together with the Orange County Aging Services Collaborative (OCASC) to conduct a needs assessment of older adults residing in Orange County. The focus of this assessment is to evaluate issues and perceived needs of older adults. According to the 2017 needs assessment, respondent's top three concerns were:

1. Socialization (54%)
2. Financial Assistance (43%)
3. Transportation (40%)



OoA is requesting your assistance in completing this 10-minute needs assessment survey to identify new and current needs within our community. You do not need to be a senior to complete the survey; anyone who knows or cares for a senior can complete the survey. With your help, OoA will continue to employ collaborative partnerships and innovative programming to maximize limited resources and improve the older adult service delivery system in Orange County.

To complete the survey, click [here](#).

# CALWORKS 2.0: JEOPARDY

By Claudia Badillo and Diana Romero, Eligibility & Employment Specialists

The CalWORKs 2.0 (CW 2.0) Marketing Committee wrapped up their months-long roadshow presentations to Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) staff with an exciting and interactive "JeoPARODY" game show. Both teams and individual contestants tested their knowledge of CW 2.0 by selecting amongst various categories, including: "CalWORKs 2.0 Roadshows," "CalWORKs 2.0 Tools," "CalWORKs 1.0 vs. CalWORKs 2.0," "Science Behind CalWORKs 2.0," "True or False" and "CalWORKs 2.0 Committees." Also presented to staff during the game show were the final four CW 2.0 tools consisting of "Quality of Life," "Backward Mapping," "My Road Map" and "Reminder Card." A short audio was presented explaining the tools during the game. Staff walked away with not just a terrific giveaway but a broader understanding of this "New Approach to Empowerment".

Learn more about CalWORKs 2.0 by clicking [here](#).



**Left to right:** Phillipe Moreno, Chantel Chavez, Michelle Soohoo and Samuel Ibarra



**Left to right:** Rosie Duque, Beatriz De La Riva, Ana Martinez and Kien Phung



**Left to right:** Matt O'Campo kicks off the "JeoParody" game show at Santa Ana Regional Center

## EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS IN SSA

Currently, I have a graduate degree in social work from California State University (CSU) Long Beach, a bachelor's degree from CSU Fullerton and an associate's degree from Santa Ana College. My next goal is to obtain a Pupil Personnel Services certification (PPS) so that I will be able to do school counseling and help at-risk children focus on school before confronting the many other difficult challenges that impede their life success. My educational journey would not have been possible without the tremendous support of SSA and, of course, my husband. Financially, SSA reimbursed me for a portion of my education through the Educational and Professional Reimbursement Program (EPRP) and the CALSWEC (California Social Work Education Center) program made getting a master's degree a reality.



Maintain a tight calendar - let friends and family know that you will be missing social events because you are serious about school.

The greatest challenge of returning to school as a working adult is staying committed, which takes a lot of self-discipline. What helped me persevere was being able to relate my course studies to the jobs I was actually doing. I believe that the opportunities presented to me in my career at SSA have coincided with my educational journey. As a senior in high school, I wrote that my career goal was to be a social worker working with abused children and I feel blessed today to be doing just that.

**Lourdes Chavez**  
Senior Social Services Supervisor  
Children and Family Services Division  
Transitional Planning Services Program



# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

## **Julie Frank, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services**

Clients recently contacted Intake EES Julie Frank's supervisor to express the following words of gratitude for the compassion and customer service Julie provided:

*"I just wanted you to know how helpful Julie Frank has been for me. Julie assisted me with replacing my EBT card. She was gracious, helpful and should be recognized for the excellent work she did with my case. I just wanted you to know what a great worker she is and how thankful I am for her help. I thank you for taking the time out to work on my case. You are such a blessing and I appreciate everything you have done to help me and my daughter."*



## **CalWORKs 2.0 Training Team/Agency Administration**

Training and Career Development's CalWORKs 2.0 training team, consisting of Social Services Supervisor Is (SSSIs) Susette Cordova-Jerro, Juan Contreras, Esther Gallardo, Alma Guerra-Colunga and William Vincent, along with SSSII Martha Fruichantie, Administrative Manager I (AMI) Laura Gonzalez and AMII Brenda Wilson Codispoti, recently received the following words of recognition from Deputy Division Director Lorraine Daniel:

*"I wanted to share with you that your trainers are doing an excellent job. FSS had provided a huge wish list and they are hitting it out of the park. I am so impressed that they were able to squeeze everything into the 2.5 days of training. They are owning the material and really connecting everyone with the intended message of CalWORKs 2.0. Their flexibility is being well received and their enthusiasm is beyond contagious. Thank you for selecting these trainers to participate in the facilitation of this training."*

## **Thomas Ngu, Social Worker II (SWII)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (not pictured)**

A client recently contacted SWII Thomas Ngu's supervisor to express the following words of gratitude for Thomas:

*"Thank you for all of your help trying to help my daughters and my situation. Thank you for responding to my calls and questions, helping me to get to therapy and helping us get some assistance we needed. We appreciate all of your hard work."*



## **Albert Mendibles, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services**

EES Albert Mendibles recently received the following message from the SSA Accounting unit at the Santa Ana Regional Center (SARC):

*"I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Albert Mendibles for his endless support towards SARC's SSA Accounting unit. He is always available to provide assistance and support. He is very helpful, and always patient and friendly. His knowledge of SSA programs and our accounting activities combined allows us to always be able to provide great service to our clients."*

# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

## **Kathleen Bridges, Senior Social Worker (SSW)/Children and Family Services**

SSW Kathleen Bridges was recognized as the CFS Employee of the Month for December 2018. The following words were shared about Kathleen from fellow staff

*"Kathleen has been a Child & Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse Hotline social worker for more than 18 years. She is experienced, reliable and knowledgeable, and lends her support by training incoming social workers; collaborating with social workers and supervisors on difficult and complex referrals; serving as a team leader in the development of the AGED TOOL (for the Child & Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse Hotline); participating on the Safety Organized Practice (SOP) Leadership Committee; and serving as an Acting Consult Supervisor when the hotline supervisors are attending meetings. She has done an outstanding job in teaming with the CAR (Child Abuse Registry) SOP Core group in the development and re-development of CAR SOP Narratives, Desk Guide and Assessment Questions. Kathleen is a mainstay for Child & Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse Hotline and is an important member of the program."*



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

Intake EES Bobby Guillen recently received the following words of recognition regarding his service:

*"A client submitted a note expressing how 'pleasant and helpful' Bobby was. She had a great experience at the office because of him and she truly appreciated it."*

## **Connie Gonzalez, Administrative Manager I (AMI) and Heather Doan, AMI/ Assistance Programs (not pictured)**

Supervisor Andrew Do's office requested SSA to provide a Spanish and Vietnamese translator for the TRUTH Act hearing on Tuesday, December 4, 2018. In very short matter of time, AMIs Connie Gonzalez and Heather Doan graciously volunteered to attend the hearing and provide translation assistance as needed. Supervisor Do's office had the following kind words to share about Heather and Connie:



*"Connie and Heather are so nice and very professional. A heartfelt thank you for helping us out on Tuesday!"*



## **Brian Nelson, Social Services Supervisor I (SSSI)/Agency Administration**

Training and Career Development (TCD) recently presented SSSI Brian Nelson with their Total Customer Dedication Award and notable title of "Employee of the Quarter" for demonstrating his exceptional talents and resourcefulness at TCD in supporting his administrative team, training teams and agency collaborations. Here are some comments shared by his peers:

*"Brian goes above and beyond his duties. He is always anticipating future needs and acts ahead of the game preventing or minimizing future workload. For example, he has taken a proactive approach with the new eBook project at TCD. He is detailed and strives for excellence. He is always willing to help, no questions asked, with a smile and going the extra mile. Thank you, Brian!"*

# BEYOND THE CALL: EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE IN ACTION

## Jose Mendez, Senior Social Worker (SSW)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

SSW Jose Mendez from the Adult Protective Services (APS) program was presented with Adult Services' "You Rock Award" for the month of January 2019. The following words of recognition were shared about Jose by Administrative Manager II Stacey Lindberg:

*"This Adult Services "You Rock" award is not for just one incident or occasion, but for a constant and sustained attitude. The award goes to someone who has been described by the Senior Social Services Supervisors (SSSSs) as: Having a positive attitude, willing to help out peers, going above and beyond, being respectful to clients and peers, having an extremely high work ethic, always being willing to accept cases, no matter where or when, being responsive, helping peers with good resources, always thinking of others and being a pleasure to interact with."*



*This award goes to Jose Mendez, whom I personally have known for over 10 years and have witnessed these attributes during his time working at Orangewood Children and Family Center and in CFS Emergency Response. The APS SSSSs made the above comments and most included that he did all of this while enduring medical issues and pain. I love that APS and our clients get to benefit from these attributes and have never doubted Jose coming to APS. Jose has made great advances to our outstation position with Santa Ana Police Department too. Jose, 'You Rock!'"*



## Joni Wright, Employment and Eligibility Specialist (EES)/Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services

A CalWORKs client recently contact EES Joni Wright's supervisor to provide the following words of acknowledgment for Joni:

*"She is so kind, caring, honest, and takes the time to explain the process of things. She takes the time to answer and meet with me. I have worked in customer service for nine years and I wanted to take the time to acknowledge her work."*

## Horacio Guerrero, Eligibility Supervisor (ES)/Assistance Programs (not pictured)

ES Horacio Guerrero recently received the following words of recognition from Lilian Carmona, Senior Social Worker in the Children and Family Services (CFS) division:

*"I wanted to take the opportunity to acknowledge what a wonderful job Horacio did yesterday in assisting with one of the families I was investigating. I'm a Senior Social Worker in the Emergency Response program and was assigned a child abuse case, which consisted of a diabetic child in need of medical care. The child's Medi-Cal was not active in Orange County and we needed the mother to apply for Medi-Cal benefits to ensure the child received timely medical care. This was an extremely complex case, which prompted us to get creative in engaging the mother to apply for aid. I reached out to Horacio and explained the situation I was faced with and he provided me with a mail-in application to provide to the mother to complete. Upon going out on the field and meeting with the family, the mother filled out the application. Once I returned to the office, Horacio took over and ensured the application was processed in a timely manner. Horacio provided me with the children's temporary Medi-Cal cards, which enabled the children to get medically cleared. Horacio's initiative in expediting the application helped my investigation and I was able to ensure the safety of the children, based on their medical needs. Horacio is a true example of our agency's motto, "One agency: Moving forward together, serving our community. Thank you, Horacio!"*



# SSA PROMOTIONS

EMPLOYEE NAME	CLASSIFICATION	DIVISION
AGUILAR, IGNACIO	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
ARANDA, PEDRO PAOLO	OFFICE SPECIALIST	AGENCY ADMINISTRATION
AREVALO, ANA M	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
BARNETT, KRISTY ANNE	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
BUTCHER, CYNTHIA LOUISE	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
COTTRELL, SANDRA J	STAFF SPECIALIST	AGENCY ADMINISTRATION
DAGIO, NOEMI U	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
FRIAS, ENRIQUE	SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR I	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
HORN, NORMA ALICIA	SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
LEHR, MONICA J	SECRETARY I	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
MEDINA, MARITZA NOEMI	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
MENDOZA, DAVID	OFFICE SUPERVISOR B	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
RODRIGUEZ, OSCAR ALBERTO	ELIGIBILITY SUPERVISOR	ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
RUCKER, CORINA	SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
SAPRA, SUMIT	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER III	FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY & ADULT SERVICES
TORRES, HUGO CESAR	OFFICE SUPERVISOR C	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 openings at SSA:

Job Title	Deadline to Apply
Eligibility Technician	Continuous
Eligibility Technician (Farsi)	Continuous
Laundry Worker	Continuous
Office Assistant (Bilingual English/Farsi)	Continuous
Senior Social Worker	Continuous
Senior Social Services Supervisor	Continuous
Senior Staff Development Specialist	Continuous

To learn more about these positions, sign up for job alerts and/or apply, click [here](#). For Frequently Asked Questions about the County job application process including links to practice online assessments, click [here](#).

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