

Headlines

Issue 90 • November 2024
ehsd.org

2024 PAWS + CLAWS Winners Bailey & Dory

Meet EHSD's
Newest Directors

Celebrating
EHSD's
Veterans

Customer Service
Champs
The ECM SSPA Team



Roslyn Gentry, New CFS Bureau Director

After a competitive recruitment, **Roslyn Gentry** has been selected as the new EHSD Children and Family Services Director. Roslyn has spent her entire social work career with Contra Costa County and has been serving as Interim CFS Director since March.

"I am excited and humbled to be offered this opportunity and hope that my trajectory instills awareness of the opportunities that are available within Contra Costa County," says Roslyn. "I intend to lead our County's Children and Family Services into full implementation of the Families First Prevention Services act, increase engagement and presence in the communities we serve in all Districts, and to work towards increasing inclusivity, retention and job satisfaction."

Roslyn began her Social Work career working in a local group home. It was from that experience she developed working relationships with Contra Costa County Social Workers. She earned her master's degree in social work at Sacramento State and was one of the first MSW Title IV-E student interns Contra Costa County hosted. Upon graduation in 1998, Roslyn was hired as a Social Casework Specialist (SW II). She worked in West Operations Continuing Services, Central Operations Voluntary Family Maintenance and

in the Countywide Adoption program. As a Social Work Supervisor, Roslyn supervised West Operations Emergency Response, Voluntary Family Maintenance, and the Social Workers assigned to the Service Integration Site in North Richmond, as well as the Countywide Screening/Hotline Units. In December 2015, Roslyn became Division Manager in the East County Operations Office. In May 2018, Roslyn became EHSD's first Deputy Director for Children and Family Services.

Roslyn is a servant leader at heart and is actively involved in various activities to support the underserved and build healthy communities. For

25 years, she was the chair and vice-chair of the Take Wings Foundation, developing relationships with youth and their families and mentoring youth in transition. She is an active member of the Bay Area Tuskegee Alumni Club in which she created a mentor program for alumni to support students attending school far from their community of origin.

Roslyn has one daughter, a recent graduate from the Historically Black College Tuskegee University. She enjoys traveling, family time, music festivals, and is a loyal Raiders fan! Roslyn's appointment begins immediately. *Please congratulate Roslyn as she steps into the CFS Director role.*



Anissa Basoco-Villarreal, New EHSD Chief Deputy Director

EHSD welcomes **Anissa Basoco-Villarreal** from Alameda to Contra Costa County. Anissa has been selected as the new EHSD Chief Deputy Director.

She brings a wealth of experience and genuine dedication to public service. Anissa's first day at EHSD is on Monday, November 4th.

"I am ecstatic to join EHSD and am eager to contribute to the great work already being done to enrich programs and services for the residents of Contra Costa County," says Anissa. "I look forward to meeting the team and partnering with you in the coming months."

Anissa joins us from Alameda County where she has served in various departments since 2002, most recently as the Assistant Agency Director for the Alameda County Social Services Agency (SSA). For more than four years, Anissa led 180 employees and managed contracts totaling \$30 million for programs encompassing childcare, workforce development, and information systems. Anissa's work in strategic planning, training and development, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) initiatives has made a significant impact, enhancing the agency's effectiveness and responsiveness. She has also played a key role in crafting the annual agency budget narratives, human impact reports,

and performance metrics, and serves as the Branch Chief for Mass Care and Shelter at the County Emergency Operations Center during declared emergencies.



Anissa's background includes roles as SSA Policy Director, District Director in the California State Assembly, Special Assistant to the Alameda County District Attorney, and Deputy Chief of Staff at the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. She also spent more than a decade as a direct service provider for victims of crime.

Anissa's dedication to service is evident in her tireless work on county-sponsored bills covering areas such as emergency food, foster care, support for older adults, and immigrant access to essential services. Raised in El Paso, Texas, Anissa is bilingual in Spanish and English. She earned a Master of Public Administration degree from San Francisco State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Anissa holds an Executive Leadership Certificate from UC Davis and an Executive Credential from the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Institute. *Please extend a warm welcome to Anissa.*

Bright Futures: Celebrating Our New CFS Social Workers

By Ariana Martinez, CFS Staff Development Specialist

On September 24th, this exceptional group of nine Child Welfare Social Workers successfully completed their training and graduated into full time work in the district offices. Children and Family Services Interim Deputy Director, Vicky Quinto, welcomed them as they were awarded graduation certificates alongside some of their supervisors and division managers during a hybrid graduation ceremony. This New Worker Training Unit (NWTU) cohort brought a fortitude and eagerness to put what they learned into practice. This class was made up of former foster youth, recent Master of Social Work graduates, and experienced professionals. Their combined experience, energy, and skills will be invaluable in the Emergency Response program.

Congratulations to our Summer 2024 Graduates:

West County – Emergency Response

- Victoria Jones
- Natalie Lopez
- Jessica Schaffer
- Tia Tonne

East County – Emergency Response

- Rosanna Fajardo
- Kiara Flores
- Nicolas Rocha
- Crystal Taper
- Danyeil Woods

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to our new Child Welfare Social Workers!



*Building Brighter
Futures Together*

Photo Collage featuring: Krystle Stringer, Rosanna Fajardo, Debra Bidwell, Tia Tonne, Cindy Vogl, Victoria Jones, Nicolas Rocha, Renee Resendez, Natalie Lopez, Vicky Quinto, Crystal Taper, Danyeil Woods, Jessica Schaffer, and Kiara Flores. Not pictured: LaTasha Shepherd, Tamesha Shaw

Exciting Mid-Session Event for EHSD Mentoring Program!

On Thursday, September 5, the EHSD Mentoring Program hosted an exhilarating mid-session event that brought together both mentees and mentors for a day of fun and learning. The highlight of the event was an engaging escape room activity that had everyone on the edge of their seats! This thrilling challenge not only provided a great time but also fostered camaraderie and teamwork among all participants.

Following the escape room, a lively debrief session took place. Participants shared their insights on what went well and discussed strategies for improvement, sparking great conversations and reflections.

The second part of the event featured an insightful presentation on the importance of communication, led by Steven Cozart from Brain Squared Solutions. His expertise added tremendous value to the session, leaving everyone inspired and informed.

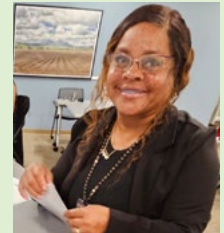
As we move forward, our mentors and mentees will continue their journey through the Mentoring Program into the end of the year, building new skills, forging strong relationships, and gaining valuable knowledge together. Stay tuned for more exciting updates!



(L-R): **Ellen Weinecke** – mentor, **Kimlien Pruner** – mentee, **Raquel Santana-Pizana** – mentee, **Evette Thomas** – mentee, **Cynthia Mallory** – mentor



(L-R): **Daniel Busch** – mentee, **Evette Thomas** – mentee, **Rita Loza** – mentee, (Front): **Sandra Orellana** – mentor



Gigi Carruth – mentee



Rovers



(L-R): **April Bolin** – mentor, **Rose Castaneda** – mentee, **Ernestine Cook** – mentor, **Ryan Madison** – mentee



(L-R): **Sandra Orellana** – mentor, **Maria R. Munoz** – mentee, **Tracey Lee** – mentor, **Mary McFarland** – mentee

WDB Receives \$5M Grant

The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County (WDBCCC) announced a \$5 million grant award from the [Biden-Harris Administration's Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program](#). This significant funding, part of the administration's broader effort to improve job quality and expand access to high-demand careers, will prepare workers for critical infrastructure jobs in civil and transportation engineering.

The WDBCCC's latest grant will support the Civil Engineering Degree Apprenticeship Pathway (CEDAP), a pioneering initiative aimed at creating a structured educational pathway for entry-level community college students to transition into civil engineering careers. This innovative program includes pre-apprenticeship activities, paid bridge programs, cohort-based learning communities, wraparound support services, and paid internships, culminating in formal apprenticeships as Engineering Aides.

"This initiative is not just ours, it's a collective effort," said **Tamia Brown**, executive director of the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County. "It aligns with our mission to achieve equity in the region and provide sustainable career pathways for our community members, and we are eager to collaborate with our esteemed partners to bring this project to fruition."

Civil engineers touch every aspect of our lives, from our roads to our resources, like water and electricity. Demand for civil engineers is high due to heavy investments in projects like building bridges, laying transit systems, upgrading aging infrastructure, and installing smart grids. Additionally, increased focus on sustainable and renewable energy development requires more civil engineers interested in working in the green economy. Finally, data management projects that

will structure and use an agency's enterprise-wide data and information for transportation assets are demanding more engineers who are skilled in data science. The [Caltrans Building Information Modeling \(BIM\) for Infrastructure](#) project is one such effort.

The CEDAP partnerships include three major civil engineering employers, two California State Universities, 11 Community Colleges—including Contra Costa Community College District, regional workforce development boards in northern and southern California, a worker's voice organization, and two workforce intermediaries, the Institute for American Apprenticeships and Growth Sector. CEDAP builds on the successful pilot launched in Los Angeles which has already transitioned low-income community college job seekers to unsubsidized employment with Caltrans as Student Assistants. CEDAP scales the pilot to include Southern California and the San Francisco Bay Area with expansion to Contra Costa County. CEDAP targets women, low-income students, and individuals from ethnicities underrepresented in Civil and Transportation Engineering. For more details about the program, contact Yelena Miakinina at ymiakinina@ehsd.cccounty.us.



Workforce
Development Board
Contra Costa County

EHSD Practices Key Role in Care and Shelter Simulation

About 100 people, including 23 EHSD staff members, recently trained and practiced for their roles in a real emergency as part of the County's Care and Shelter Operation. The Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES) conducted a Care and Shelter exercise at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium on September 18th to bring together Contra Costa County departments and partners that would be involved in providing care and shelter to residents in the wake of a real disaster. In addition to EHSD, Animal Services, Contra Costa Health, the City of Richmond, the Medical Reserve Corps, and American Red Cross were among the participants in this half-day simulation.



OES, in partnership with the Office of Communications and Media (OCM), is developing a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to help educate residents about what they can expect if they go to a shelter (food, sleeping arrangements, pet accommodations, and other services), when and why shelters are set up, and the differences between temporary evacuation points, evacuation centers, and disaster shelters. The PSA will include an interview with EHSD Director Marla Stuart and representatives from other agencies.



Thank you to all our EHSD disaster relief workers who were at the exercise as shelter trainees and observers.



CWDA 2024 Every Story Matters

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

Contra Costa made its presence known at the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) 2024 Annual Conference with 32 EHSD staff members representing our various bureaus at the three-day event in San Diego. The EHSD team joined about 1,200 other human services workers, state and policy leaders, advocates, academics, foundations, and community organization from across California. All were eager to connect with each other and share human services best practices and policies at this highly regarded gathering.



More than 30 EHSD staff members attended CWDA in October.

The theme of this year's conference was "Every Story Matters," underscoring the importance of truly seeing the individuals and families we serve, and their lived experiences, as we offer support and resources to help them thrive.

In an exciting "sequel" presentation, EHSD Policy & Planning's (P&P) **Erick Untal**, Research and Evaluation Manager, and **Tamina Alon**, Director of

Administration, Information & Systems, led one of the sessions, *Contra Costa County Drives Collaboration and Engagement with Powerful Mapping and Visualizations of Social Services Data 2.0*. It was very well attended with close to 200 participants. They showed how P&P has expanded and refined [EHSD Public Information Sharing Tools](#) on ehdsd.org since first showcasing these two data products at CWDA in 2023.



After a successful EHSD presentation, presenters **Erick Untal** and **Tamina Alon** with new Chief Deputy Director **Anissa Basoco-Villarreal**



A captive audience for EHSD's presentation on public information sharing tools.

Continued on next page

CWDA 2024 – Every Story Matters

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The CWDA conference is a platform to learn about the latest in technology, service delivery, innovations in hybrid or remote work environments, equity and inclusion in leadership, staff recruitment



Lora Duncan, EW Supervisor; Patty Perez, Division Manager; Veronica Bercaives, Contracts Administrator; and Dawn Faoliu, EW Supervisor

and retention, and to further the important work of improving the well-being of children, families, aging adults, and individuals across California.



Navdeep Singh, Chief Financial Officer, and Anita Luu, Departmental Fiscal Officer

CONTRACOSTA
COUNTY

EMPLOYMENT &
HUMAN SERVICES

We Care...You Care

We Care...You Care is how we recognize our peers, emphasizing internal customer service.

We Care...You Care nominations tie directly to one or more of our six Core Values. The program gives you the opportunity to show your coworkers how much you appreciate them. If you work with someone who deserves special recognition for internal customer service, check out the We Care...You Care link to the guidelines, then fill out a nomination form and submit it to the supervisor of the person you are nominating.

We Care guidelines: [WeCareThatYouCare Guidelines_FINAL.pdf](#)

We Care nomination form: [WeCareThatYouCare Nomination Form_FINAL.pdf](#)



*Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received.
Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express
that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following
of that impulse.*

—Henry Van Dyke

Diverse Perspectives in Human Trafficking Response

By Corinna Espino, MSW & CSEC Services Program Coordinator, Children and Family Services

Strengthening collective responses to child trafficking through diverse perspectives and experiences was the focus of “INTEGRATE,” a gathering of 135 professionals from 34 California counties. The annual Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) convening took place in Sacramento on September 18-19, 2024.

PACT’s mission is to engage county child welfare agencies and their multidisciplinary partners in implementing a statewide, integrated, and adaptable model of cross-coordination. Their approach is rooted in harm reduction and guided by lived experience.

Keynote speaker Oree Freeman inspired attendees to remember their “why” and emphasized the power of unlikely relationships in combating human trafficking. The conference featured presentations on field innovations and survivor insights, addressing the specific needs of social service professionals.

A highlight was the panel on county programs with innovative CSEC services. I participated on this panel and reported on our prevention CSEC case specialist services and the Search and Recovery Program, offered in collaboration with Community Violence Solutions (CVS) and Love Never Fails Us, respectively.

Attendees praised the convening’s unique focus on social services within the human trafficking context. The event concluded with reflections from PACT consultants and a poem by Ummra Hang, reinforcing the theme of strength through diversity and collaboration.

As PACT looks forward to its 2025 convening, this year’s success underscores the vital role these gatherings have in fostering connections, knowledge sharing, and advancing the fight against child trafficking across California.



Children & Family Services’ **Corinna Espino**, CSEC Services Program Coordinator, and **Kimberly Baker**, Division Manager

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES

Building Brighter Futures Together

Contributed by Personnel Services

EHSD Personnel is Evolving!



Some of you may have noticed that we have some new faces in Personnel. We are growing! More changes coming, and in 2025 we hope to share even more new faces with EHSD. Until then, continue to check out the Personnel page on the Intranet to learn who from Personnel team is assigned to your bureau, how to use Personnel TrackIT, and EcoTime!



Employee Assistance Program



Find Help and Balance for the Important Parts of Your Life

When was the last time you checked out the free County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) website? Contra Costa County employees have this resource to provide support in various areas of life including, Social, Emotional, Physical, Community, Financial, and Career. All you have to do is sign up and sign in. There are webinars, monthly newsletters, one-on-one support, self-care tools, and more.

If you haven't signed up to use the County Employee Assistance Program yet, follow these two easy steps:

Step 1: Go to <https://member.magellanhealthcare.com/> and click on "Sign up."

Step 2: Complete the online registration form and click on "Get Started."

YOUR EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

Save on Major Brands & Everyday Essentials

Save with your Employee Discounts on LifeMart, your online members-only discount center, where you can save big on major purchases like travel, tickets, attractions, electronics, cars, vacations, or on day-to-day essentials like groceries and child care. And best of all, access is free! [Click here to access the LifeMart Discount Center in your web browser.](#)

UPCOMING WEBINAR: Managing Intense Emotions in the Moment – November 13

This webinar will:

- Define emotional regulation.
- Identify intense emotions and how to manage them in the moment.
- Discover skills to prepare for intense emotions before they arise.

ECOTIME CUTOFF DATES

Pay Day	Pay Period	Timesheets Due
November 8, 2024	Oct 16-31	Oct 11
November 25	Nov 1-15	Nov 8
December 10	Nov 16-30	Nov 21
December 24	Dec 1-15	Dec 11
January 10, 2025	Dec 16-31	Dec 24

HONORING OUR VETERANS | VETERANS DAY 2024

County to Honor Our Veterans on November 5

In a special Veterans Day celebration, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors will pay tribute to the Port Chicago sailors, recognizing the bravery and sacrifice of the sailors who stood against unsafe working conditions after the tragic 1944 Port Chicago Naval Magazine explosion in Concord. The event will take place on Tuesday, November 5, at 11 a.m. in the Board Chambers located at 1025 Escobar Street, Martinez.

The Port Chicago explosion, which claimed the lives of more than 320 servicemen, two-thirds of whom were Black, is a significant chapter in U.S. history. Following the disaster, 50 Black sailors were charged with mutiny for refusing to return to dangerous duties. Their exoneration by U.S. Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro, 80 years later, serves as a powerful reminder of the pursuit of justice.

“Honoring the Port Chicago sailors is long overdue,” said Board Chair Federal Glover, District 5 Supervisor. “Their courage to stand up in the face of injustice paved the way for change, and we are grateful for their service and sacrifice.”

Port Chicago Alliance Executive Director Yulie Padmore will be this year’s Keynote speaker. With over 15 years experience in nonprofit leadership,

civil rights advocacy, and government affairs, Yulie Padmore has led numerous initiatives to promote racial equity and social justice. As Executive Director of Port Chicago Alliance, she is committed to honoring the legacy of the Port Chicago Sailors and played a key role in naming Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50. In 2024, she was honored with an invitation to the White House for her efforts to exonerate the Port Chicago 50.

Yulie serves as Co-Chair of Contra Costa Justice for All, Co-Founder of East Bay Black Employee Collective, and is a member of the CA/HI State NAACP Armed

Services and Veterans Affairs Committee. She also actively engages in NAACP East County and the Contra Costa County Bar Association’s Port Chicago Task Force. Yulie currently serves on the City of Oakland Cannabis Regulatory Commission.



- Contra Costa County is home to more than 45,000 veterans.
- The Board of Supervisors thanks all veterans for their service, recognizes the families who support veterans every day, and honors all Veteran Service Organizations for their continued service to the community.

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HONORING OUR VETERANS | VETERANS DAY 2024

Army Roots to County Success: A Journey of Dedication and Growth

By Cheryl Deck, Clerk Specilist, Ygnacio Valley Library



Cheryl Deck 1974 Basic Training

Upon discharging from the U.S. Army in 1978 I was eligible for the G.I. Bill which I utilized to return to college and advance further in my career goals. While in the military I was a Dental Assistant (Dental Specialist) and received excellent training at Ft. Sam Houston, TX accredited through Baylor University. Upon completing my training in the Army I had

the opportunity to work in all areas of dentistry as a Dental Assistant in the Army Dental Clinic. I was only 18 when I enlisted so the Army taught me how to juggle many responsibilities and prioritize, to push myself to achieve my goals, to master time management, to work well with all types of situations, to develop strong work ethic skills, and to understand there are few things I cannot accomplish in my life after successfully completing Basic Training. I feel I am the woman I am today because of my three and a half years in the U.S. Army, and I am proud and thankful for that experience in my life!

Yes, I worked for 10 years at EHSD starting in Welfare-to-Work first year and then promoting and moving on to Children and Family Services, all under the umbrella of EHSD. I can't believe I have worked for almost 13 years for the County. It feels like just yesterday sometimes. Time flies!

“I am the woman I am today because of my three and a half years in the U.S. Army, and I am proud and thankful for that experience in my life!”

– Cheryl Deck, Clerk Specilist, Ygnacio Valley Library



HONORING OUR VETERANS | VETERANS DAY 2024

United States Navy Veteran Benjamin Yang

By Cheryl Deck, Clerk Specilist, Ygnacio Valley Library

In partnership with the Veterans Service Office, we profiled United States Navy Veteran and Veterans Service Representative **Benjamin Yang**.

Thank you to Veterans Service Director Joshua Zebley and the entire Veterans Service office team for their service and support. Thank you, Benjamin Yang, for allowing us to tell your story.

To learn more about the upcoming Veterans Day Ceremony, visit <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6035/Veterans-Day-Ceremony> on the Contra Costa County website.



County to Honor Our Veterans on November 5

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The celebration event will also feature a color guard ceremony by the Pittsburg Police Department and a musical performance by Yesenia Roman who will be singing the Star-Spangled Banner and America the Beautiful.

Visit the County website <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6035> to learn more. You can watch the event live online at www.contracosta.ca.gov/6086 or www.contracostatv.org. The celebration will broadcast live on Contra Costa Television channels: Comcast Channel 27, AT&T U-Verse Channel 99, and Astound Channels 32 and 1027.

2024 EHSD PAWS + CLAWS



Toni's terrific duo, Bailey & Dory, seize victory in Pet Costume Contest!

Bailey and Dory, disguised as "Toni's Tigers," snatched the top spot in EHSD's annual Paws + Claws Costumed Pet Extravaganza with 54% of the votes! The epic showdown took place on Thursday, October 31st, live from Contra Costa TV (CCTV) in Martinez. Their human is **Toni Thomas**, WFS Social Services Program Assistant in Welfare to Work at Delta Fair.

A whopping 28 pets, all owned by EHSD employees, within 24 entries, vied for the title. Bailey, the 5-year-old Yellow Lab, and Dory, the 7-year-old short-haired chihuahua, are a dynamic duo. According to Toni, "These two pups are inseparable. Bailey is all about endless licks and a heart of gold, while Dory is the boss and faithful sidekick in their partnership."

Their Tony the Tiger-inspired getup, a nod to the famous Kellogg's Corn Flakes cereal mascot, was Toni's inspiration during a stroll down the breakfast aisle at the grocery store. In a speedy 30-minute operation, Toni used the power of bologna to keep the dogs in check. With precision and flair, she hand painted them and



Bailey and Dory, as "Toni's Tigers," 2024 Halloween Pet Parade Winners - **Toni Thomas**, Social Service Program Assistant, WFS

decked them out in red bandanas, resulting in a striking likeness to the legendary Tony the Tiger.

In the original Tony's words, "They're Grrrrrrreat!"

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Paws + Claws

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EHSD employees cast their votes using the Zoom polling tool. The runners-up were also selected, with second place going to Wednesday, the Spooky Pug dressed as The Gnome, owned by CFS Social Work Supervisor, **Renee Resendez**. Taz, the Red Mini Pinscher dressed as The Lion King, claimed third place and was entered by Internal Ops Soc Svc Dev Specialist, **Leilani Lunch**.

Thank you to our EHSD staff members who participated and shared their pets with the rest of us for some Halloween fun!



Wednesday as "The Gnome" / 2nd place runner up / **Renee Resendez**, Social Work Supervisor, CFS



Taz as "The Lion King" / 3rd place runner up / **Pamela Gernan**, Senior Clerk, AAS



Click the play button to see the pet parade on the 2024 Paws + Claws Pet Costume Extravaganza



"Dr. Kallik" and "Nurse Kallu"
Beverly De Annunzio, WFS Clerk Specialist



Elphie as "Stitch"
Julia Kittle-White, CSB Administrative Services Assistant



Baloo as "The Dark Bunny"
Brittany Moniz, CSB immediate Clerk

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Paws + Claws

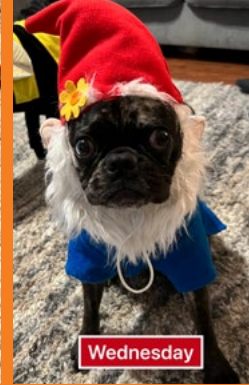
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Louie



Scarlett



Wednesday

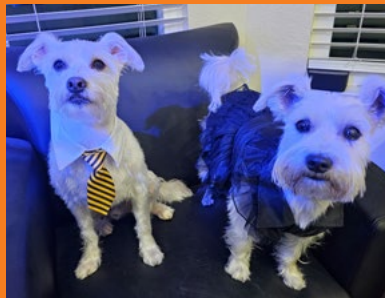
Louie as "The Bee", Scarlett as "The Pumpkin", Wednesday as "The Gnome" **Renee Resendez**, CFS Social Work Supervisor



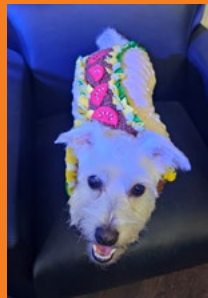
Echo as "Jack Skellington" and Ares as "Zero" **Kimberly Voss**, CFS Social Worker



Quesito as "The Escaped Patient" **Cindy Baires-Alvarez**, WFS Clerk Specialist



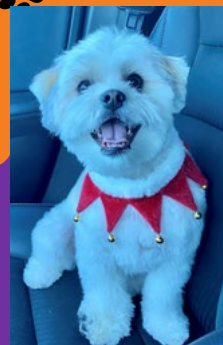
Peanut and Pepper in "Formal Wear" and Peanut as "Taco Tuesday!" **Malu Palma**, WFS, Social Services Program Assistant



Luna, Suki and Padme as "Dragon Dogs" **Ariana Martinez**, CFS Soc Svc Dev Specialist



Indiana Jones as "Toni's Tiger Cat", Bailey and Dory as "Toni's Tiger Dogs" **Toni Thomas**, WFS Soc Svc Program Assistant



Koda as "Santa's Little Helper" **Karen Labaniego**, Internal Ops Soc Svc Staff Dev Specialist



King as "Willie Mays" **Leilani Lunch**, Internal Ops Soc Svc Dev Specialist

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Paws + Claws

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Casper as "The Friendly Ghost"
Sandy Chittavong,
CSB Temp Admin



Taz as "The Lion King"
Pamela Gernan, AAS
Senior Clerk



Choco as "Pumpkin Pie"
Roseetha Albert,
Information & Systems
Analyst



Luna as a "Peacock"
Veronica Heath, Contracts &
Grants Senior Clerk



Vida as a "Mermaid"
Larena Baldazo, Information
& Systems Web Producer



Hazel as "49ers Fan" and "Santa"
Mark Kim, AAS Soc Svc Program
Assistant



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Paws + Claws

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Lola as "Heartwarming Bunny"
Rose Castaneda,
Administrative Support
Services Accountant



Bagel as "The Great Pumpkin"
Kathya Lipson, WFS Social
Services Program Assistant



Paws & Claws Crew

The spook-tacular crew that put together the Paws & Claws Pet Costume Extravaganza includes EHSD's Community Relations/ Media and IT Teams, and Contra Costa Television (CCTV) staff.

More Halloween Fun



Halloween at 1275 Hall Ave (L-R): Rosa Silva, Tammy Hill, Marie Mosley, Hayley Augustine, Margaret Crabtree, Tonika Gillard, Ellen Wienecke, Virginia Paraizo

Hall Ave CFS workers celebrated Halloween with trick-or-treat stations at individual cubicles or offices. Anyone that had candy to share marked their space with helium balloons for easy navigation through the building.



Gian Gutierrez, Fiscal Unit Secretary-Journey Level, dressed as coworker Derek Koh



CW Ongoing CNQ Unit at Delta Fair dressed as witches and warlocks. (L-R): Evette Thomas, Gay Montgomery, Sonia Martinez, and Olaolu Fakayode.



Halloween celebrating at EHSD's Admin Building at 40 Douglas, Martinez. Along with the witches, Wonder Woman, Star Trek, and other characters, there were a couple of "imposter" costumes with staff dressing as their coworkers! Can you identify the Fiscal "character" in the orange shirt?



From the Contracts Unit, Vickie Kaplan, Nancy Hager, and Bobby Stange



Halloween Wedding "Scaremonies" – Couples were not spooked about tying the knot on Halloween and celebrated their unions in "scaremonies" at the Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder's Office in Martinez.

EHSD Community Outreach Roundup

Each month, our dedicated team of “4 Our Families”

Navigators

attend numerous

community events across Contra Costa County to engage with and educate our residents about the many valuable services and programs EHSD offers. We are incredibly grateful for the time and effort these individuals invest each month in service of broadening our reach. Below is a recap of the events our Navigators participated in last month and the communities they served.



TUE, OCT 1: “Fall Fest” at San Ramon College

Navigators **Natalie Aguilar** and **Sandra Figueroa** attended this event to share information about our community programs and services.

SAT, OCT 5: 38th Annual “GRIP Harmony Walk” at Nichols Park in Richmond

Navigators **Al Gibson** and **Susan Padan** participated in supporting attendees at this event. Channel-7 News Anchor, Julian Glover, emceed and elected officials, including County Supervisor John Gioia, attended to support the mission of combating hunger and homelessness in West County.



SAT, OCT 12: “Breast Cancer Walk” at Pinole Employment & Human Services

Navigators **Sandra Figueroa** and **Casey Costa** attended this event to offer resources and help individuals navigate resources and access services.



Navigators **Sandra Figueroa** and **Casey Costa**

SAT, OCT 12: 1st Annual “Antioch Can Vote2” at Somerville Town Center

Navigators **Natalie Aguilar** and **Joanna Thieme** participated in this event to provide information about available benefits and community resources to assist individuals and families in crisis.

Speakers included County Supervisor Glover. Activities included voter registration, re-entry services, union apprenticeship trade school enrollment opportunities, free haircuts as well as live entertainment and lunch.



Navigators **Natalie Aguilar** and **Joanna Thieme**

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EHSD Community Outreach Roundup

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THU, OCT 17: East Bay Veteran Community Partnership EBVCP

Navigators **Susan Padan** and **Casey Costa** attended this event to support veteran attendees seeking healthcare, housing or other services. The event included opportunities to connect with experts and resources to help veterans improve their quality of life.



Navigators **Casey Costa** and **Susan Padan**

THU, OCT 17: BACS Contra Costa Community Connect “Prevention and Resource Fair” at the Ambrose Recreation Center in Bay Point

Navigators **Al Gibson** and **Maria R. Munoz** participated in this event to facilitate access to services and support for individuals and families in need.

Al and Maria provided information about public benefits programs, resources for managing past-due utility bills as well as outreach to help individuals who are at risk of or are currently experiencing homelessness.



Navigators **Al Gibson** and **Maria R. Munoz** with Supervisor **Ken Carlson**.

SAT, OCT 19: 1st Annual “Pittsburg Can Vote2”

Navigators **Joanna Thieme** and **Susan Padan** attended this event hosted by Back on Track Community Services to provide information on accessing community-based resources and county services.



Navigators **Susan Padan** and **Joanna Thieme**

SAT, OCT 19: “Resource Fair & Individual Consultation Clinics” at the George Miller Center in Richmond

Navigators **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** and **Sandra Figueroa** participated to provide support and information about programs and services.

TUE, OCT 22: The “College Transfer & Opportunity Fair” at Los Medanos College, Pittsburg Campus

This regular event for students focuses on career interests and degree-major exploration. Over 50 colleges, universities and employers attended to support students in exploring transfer, major and career options. Students interested in advancing their goals learned about programs, transfer



Navigators **Casey Costa** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez**

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EHSD Community Outreach Roundup

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requirements, financial options and more.

Navigators **Casey Costa** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** were in attendance to provide brochures and information to attendees and answer their questions regarding the county benefits application process. In addition, they networked with several community partner agencies, universities and employers including Chevron Refinery, Sutter Health, Tri Delta Transit, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, EBMUD (East Bay Municipal Utility District), UC Davis, San Francisco State University, and Sacramento State.

WED, OCT 23: Library Town Hall Zoom Presentation

A presentation for EHSD community partners to highlight our programs was held via Zoom. Navigators **Maria R Munoz** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** were in attendance to provide support.

THU, OCT 24: Central Contra Costa “Career & Resources Fair” at the Loma Vista Adult Center

Navigators **Natalie Aguilar** and **Al Gibson** participated in this event, hosted by Mt. Diablo Adult Education. The event drew a significant number of job seekers looking to connect with potential employers and explore opportunities. Attendees included Contra Costa County District 4 Supervisor, Ken Carlson, who expressed pride in the event’s impactful role in supporting employment opportunities in the community.



Navigators **Al Gibson** and **Natalie Aguilar** provided resources and guidance to help job seekers overcome barriers while navigating the job market.

THU, OCT 24: “Fall Carnival” at TreVista Senior Living

This festive event in Antioch, open to residents, staff and family members, was filled with fun activities including a costume contest and pumpkin painting. Navigators **Casey Costa** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** were in attendance to support and provide information.

SAT, OCT 26: WCCUSD 16th Annual “Resource Fair”

Immediately following the Annual Parents as Partners & Leaders Conference (PAPL) conference, Navigators **Sandra Figueroa** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** attended this event to share information about EHSD programs and services.

SAT, OCT 26: 2nd “District-wide Community Resource Fair” at Pittsburg High School

Navigators, **Al Gibson** and **Natalie Aguilar** attended this event to provide support and information about EHSD community resources.

SUN, OCT 27: “Domestic Violence Awareness Walk” at San Ramon Central Park

Navigator **Natalie Aguilar** attended this outdoor event to connect attendees with essential resources and support services for individuals affected by domestic violence. Supervisor Candace Andersen delivered a keynote address noting the upcoming opening of a new Family Justice Center in Danville, emphasizing the importance of accessible support for survivors.



Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Andersen and 4 Our Families Navigator, **Natalie Aguila**



New Firefighting Helicopter Serving Contra Costa County

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (cccfd.org) and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) are pleased to announce an addition to the Fire District's firefighting capabilities. PG&E and Contra Costa Fire have entered a partnership to staff a seasonal aerial firefighting helicopter that will serve Contra Costa County. The helicopter will increase the Fire District's ability to quickly contain and suppress vegetation fires across the county.

Speakers included Supervisor Diane Burgis, Fire Chief Lewis Broschard and representatives from PG&E. The Contra Costa Fire wildland hand crew and dedicated

helicopter crew were also in attendance. The Byron Wildland Fire Center (BWFC) will serve as base for the helicopter and crew.





Join our Angel Tree Program
and bring joy and smiles to a child in need this Holiday Season!



It is estimated that more than 600 children are in the foster care system in Contra Costa County. The holidays can be particularly rough on children displaced from their homes and their families. For 35 years, VESTIA's Angel Tree program has provided gifts to children in out-of-home placement thanks to our wonderful donors and community partners!

Be an Angel and make a difference in a child's life!

We are collecting the following for our 2024 program:

- NEW pajama sets
- NEW fleece blankets
- NEW socks
- \$25 and \$50 gift cards for Target or Walmart

3 WAYS TO DONATE:

- Drop off - please call (925) 655-1208 to coordinate delivery
- Mail - donations can be mailed directly to:
VESTIA 400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
- Online - Go to <https://vestiainc.org/angel-tree-program/>

Angel Tree is a program of VESTIA, a 501c3 non-profit organization managed through Contra Costa County EHSD, Volunteer & Emergency Services



CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

To help you spot and report malicious emails, the 2024 Cyber Security and Internet Safety Training is an interactive online training that includes simulated phishing attacks. It is now available in SMART.

To comply with the annual requirement, you must complete the training by November 24th, 2024. It will take approximately 60 minutes. You can close out the training at any point and, when you re-launch, it will resume where you left off. You will need headphones to listen to the course.

You are automatically enrolled in this training via the SMART system.

To manually access the training:

- > Go to your EHSD intranet: <http://ehsdhome/Pages/default.aspx> • Click on “SMART” located on the left column, under “MyLinks”
- > Under “Mandatory Trainings in SMART” you will see “2024 - Cyber Security and Internet Safety Training”
- > Click the “Start” button to start the training
Contact Staff Development at (925) 608-4570 or smarthelp@ehsd.cccounty.us with any questions

Customer Service Champions

These individuals are being recognized for going the extra mile by delivering excellent service to our customers. They went above and beyond in their willingness to help and demonstrate EHSD's emphasis on providing exemplary customer service. Congratulations on a job well done!



ECM SSPA Team: Top Row (L-R): **Pedro Ramos**, **Romena Calonsag**, **Julie Evans**, **Veronica Alvidrez**, **John Gavieres**. Bottom Row (L-R): **Magdalena Perez**, **Debra Stokes**, **Martha Hankins**, **Kelli Quilici**

ECM SSPA Team

By Leilah Ahranjani, EHS Division Manager, AAS

On behalf of EHSD and Contra Costa Health (CCH), I want to acknowledge an amazing team that supports the CalAIM Enhanced Care Management (ECM) collaboration and other program collaborations between EHSD and CCH, which supports MediCal and CalFresh eligibility and retention for high needs customers. This team consists of Supervisor **John Gavieres**, Senior Level Clerk **Kelli Quilici**, and SSPAs **Martha Hankins**, **Veronica Alvidrez**, **Romena Calonsag**, **Debra Stokes**, **Julie Evans**, **Pedro Ramos**, and **Magdalena Perez**. This team works collaboratively with Case Managers, Financial Counselors, Medical Social Workers, and Promotoras throughout several programs within CCH so customers can receive public benefits and maintain insurance so that all

medical and social needs can be met for our vulnerable community members. Each team member exhibits outstanding character with such positivity, is extremely flexible, provides excellence customer service, and approaches all their work with the focus of helping the customer. Most recently, the team was asked to help with a special project. Although the project did not come to fruition, the team came together, pivoted, gathered materials to support each other and the work that needed to be done, and was more than willing to provide the help the Departments and the customers needed. I cannot thank nor acknowledge this team enough. *Team: you are a vital asset to EHSD, CCH, this County, and its members. Thank you!*

SERVICE AWARDS | NEW EMPLOYEES | RETIREES

SERVICE AWARDS

25 YEARS

Marie-Julie de la Fuente, Social Work Supervisor II, CFS
Shawn DeLaTorre, Clerk-Specialist Level, Admin
Jon Ebeling, Info Systems Supervisor, Information & Systems
Yolonda Grandberry-Kelly, Social Worker, WFS
Sheila Walker, Eligibility Work Supervisor, WFS

20 YEARS

Ana Araujo, Comprehensive Svcs Man-Prj, CSB
Phimpha Darassaeng, Associate Teacher-Project, CSB
Luz Raygoza-Gonzalez, Administrative Svcs Asst III, Information
& System

15 YEARS

Drema Santes, Infant Toddler Teacher-Project, CSB

10 YEARS

Yesenia Acosta, Clerk-Senior Level, WFS
Charles Brown III, Business Svcs Representative, WDB
Kellie Case, Social Work Supervisor II, CFS
Aiesha N Green, Social Worker, AAS
Ashley Longmire, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS
Stella Truong, Social Worker II, CFS

NEW EMPLOYEES

Patrese Cox, Social Worker II, CFS
Jean Emmanuel, Social Worker II, CFS
Sandra Gil, Student Intern II, CSB
Lyneth Hernandez, Intermediate Clerk, CSB
Joshua Jackson, Site Supervisor II, CSB

Mirna Kelly, Social Worker II, CFS
Darline Masinas, Secretary Journey Level, WFS
Lakisha Oziegbe, Social Worker II, CFS
Imari Pollard, Social Worker II, CFS
Sheila Walsh, ASA II, CSB

RETIREES

Michelle Ceelen, Soc Svc Proqram Assistant, WFS
Sheila Daniel, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS
Angela Shakesnider, Social Services Program Assistant
(we apologize for the misspelling of Angela Shakesnider's name in last month's issue)

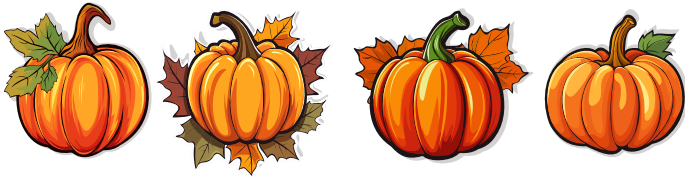
*Building Brighter
Futures Together*

Are you planning a retirement celebration for a staff member and would like to present them with a retirement certificate? **If so, please contact Deb Johnson at djohnson@ehsd.cccounty.us or (925) 608-4904.**

SPREAD THE WORD

November 2024

- ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH
- CHILD SAFETY & PROTECTION MONTH
- HOME CARE & HOSPICE MONTH
- NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH
- NATIONAL HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS MONTH
- NOVEMBER 3 – Daylight Savings Time ends
- NOVEMBER 5 – Election Day
- NOVEMBER 11 – Veterans Day
- NOVEMBER 20 – Universal Children's Day
- NOVEMBER 28 – Thanksgiving Day (holiday)
- NOVEMBER 29 – Day after Thanksgiving (holiday)



December 2024

- DECEMBER 7 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance
- DECEMBER 25 – Hanukkah Begins
- DECEMBER 25 – Christmas Day
- DECEMBER 26 – Kwanzaa Begins
- DECEMBER 31 – New Year's Eve

We Care... You Care

CLICK here to learn more about nominating a coworker and see page 9

Want to know what else we're doing at EHSD?

Facebook and X @ContraCostaEHSD

Instagram @HumanaCosta

Like us on Facebook



Is there room in your home for one more?

Make a change in a child's life and become a Resource Parent/Family for a foster child. Contra Costa County needs your support to provide care for children 0–18 years of age. Please join us for a virtual orientation and learn more about becoming a caregiver.



FREE VIRTUAL ORIENTATIONS

November 7 or 21 • 4 to 6 p.m.

December 5 or 19 • 4 to 6 p.m.

January 2 or 16 • 4 to 6 p.m.



For more information about becoming a Resource Parent visit us at www.ehsd.org. If you belong to an organization or community group interested in learning more about Resource Family Approval/foster parenting, we can schedule an individual session for your group, in English or Spanish.

To register for a class, please call (925) 655-4230 or email ResourceFamilies@ehsd.cccounty.us



The next Issue of *Headlines* will publish in early December. Email EHSD *Headlines* at Headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us, by **Tuesday, November 12th** if you have an upcoming event, article, or idea you would like to submit.