

# Headlines



## Defending the Big Apple Trophy

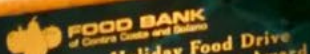
*Trina Huerta Stays in the Food Fight*

Contra Costa County  
2015  
Contra Costa County  
2016  
Solano County  
2017  
Solano County  
2018  
Solano County  
2019  
Contra Costa County

**WDB's Donna Van Wert Says Good Bye**

**State Award for EHSD's Innovative Use of Technology During Pandemic**

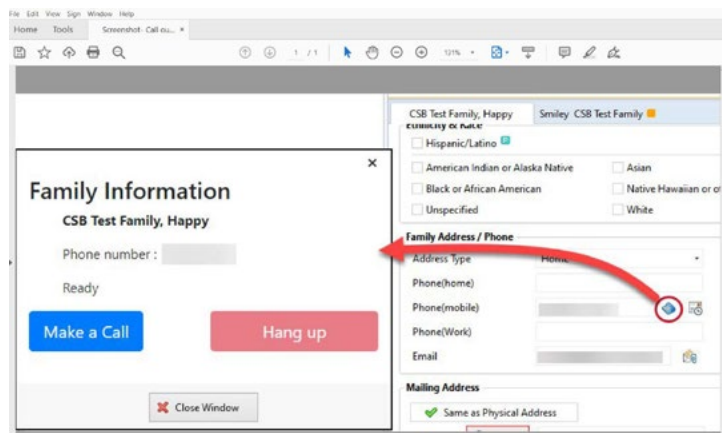
**Building Oakland's Tiny House Village for Transitional Youth**



# Statewide Award for CSB's Tech Innovations

By Sung Kim, CSB Senior Business Systems Analyst

The California Association of Counties (CSAC) honored EHSD's Community Services Bureau (CSB) with a Merit Award during this year's CSAC Challenge Awards. EHSD was the only Contra Costa County department that CSAC recognized for its development of an innovative and safe communications system to connect with families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

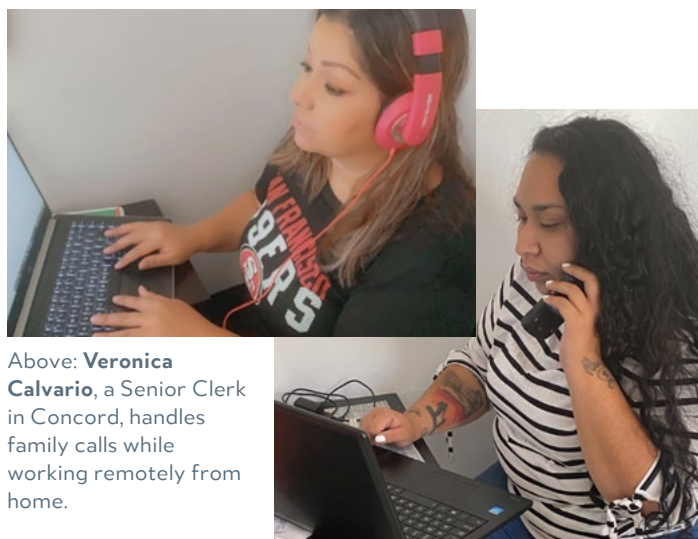


This screenshot shows the call-out features that are available to CSB through CLOUDS.

CSB, a Head Start agency and the largest childcare provider in the County, enhanced its existing CLOUDS all-in-one data management system by devising an efficient way to send and receive communications with families and staff during COVID-19. It developed an automated Interactive Voice Messaging system within CLOUDS, allowing clients to call a dedicated line and request essential items (diapers, masks, cleaning supplies, books, etc.). The system records all incoming phone calls, and identifies phone numbers of currently enrolled families or those on a waitlist, automating simple steps to speed the process. The system offers interface in English or Spanish,

recording messages with a specific request and converting them from voice to text, then logging into a family's profile. Staff can respond to messages in real time, contact clients to provide necessary support, enter notes, and forward the message to other units.

CSB also created a way to send important information to families through a group messaging system, including daily updates, emergency notices, distance-learning activities, and letters to families and staff via SMS (text message), recorded voice messages, and email. The feature also allows staff to select specific centers, classrooms or individuals



Above: **Veronica Calvario**, a Senior Clerk in Concord, handles family calls while working remotely from home.

**Kimberly Vega**, an Intermediate Clerk in Richmond, uses the CLOUDS data management system to stay connected with families during the pandemic.

with a simple click of the mouse.

CSB developed another CLOUDS feature specifically to assist staff working from home so they could contact



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## Kathy's Corner

By Kathy Gallagher, EHSD Director



## Now, More Than Ever

The annual Holiday Food Fight is here, and in 2020 the need has never been more starkly obvious. The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties is overwhelmed by the thousands of struggling families in our communities that have been devastated by the COVID pandemic, and by the ravages of the wildfires. Many, many people have lost their jobs, lost their small business, lost their homes as well as their jobs in the wildfires. Unemployment insurance and emergency funds replace only a small percentage of lost income, and these resources will be expiring soon. So many of our families are months behind in rent payments and deeply in debt. The Food Bank is the resource they rely on in order to meet the nutritional needs of their children. It's especially difficult for

those children who no longer receive school meals.

We at EHSD are fortunate because we have avoided furloughs and layoffs. As this holiday season approaches, I am asking our EHSD family to dig deep and share your compassion with those who have been so seriously impacted in this extraordinary year. Any donation matters and contributes to putting good, nutritious food on many tables this holiday season.



You can visit the [EHSD Donation page](#) to make your contribution. You can also direct others outside of EHSD to contribute to the Food Bank at the same link. If you need help, the Food Bank created a [tutorial video](#) to walk you through the online donation process.

*My best to all of our EHSD family*

Kathy Gallagher, EHSD Director

# WDB Helps Small Businesses Prevent Layoffs and Closures

The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County is now accepting applications for layoff aversion grants through its Small-Business Grant Program, providing up to \$5,000 in assistance for micro-businesses within Contra Costa County.

Priority will be given to these types of veteran-, woman- and minority-owned micro-businesses: retail, restaurants, hair salons, barber shops, nail salons, day spas and fitness studios. Also, priority will be given to businesses that have not received any COVID-19 related grants, such as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) or city grants.



The Workforce Development Board sent out a press release and attracted the attention of Univision 14 Noticias which featured EHSD and Wence's Restaurant in Pleasant Hill. CLICK on the play button to watch the story.



Univision 14 Noticias Reporter, Julio Poletti, interviewed WDB's One Stop Career Center Manager, **Veronica Ramos** about the Emergency Relief Grant for small businesses that have suffered in the pandemic.

“Small businesses across our county, especially micro-businesses that typically have very little in the way of reserves to withstand an on-going crisis, are

struggling to overcome the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said WDBCCC Executive Director **Donna Van Wert**. “These grants are intended to support local businesses’ overall efforts to retain their employees and keep their doors open.”

Grants will be awarded as a reimbursement on approved purchases only. To be eligible for the grant, a business must meet the following requirements:

- Have a physical location within Contra Costa County.
- Have a current business license.
- Be currently open or have the intention of re-opening.
- Be current on their unemployment taxes and in good standing with the State of California.
- Demonstrate a need for support due to the impact of COVID-19 on their business.
- Have not received a micro-grant from another local government agency.

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# WDB's Donna Van Wert Says Good Bye

By Maureen Nelson, Administrator,  
America's Job Center of California

After 10 years of distinguished service, **Donna Van Wert**, Executive Director of the Workforce Development Board, is retiring at the end of the year. Donna began with WDB in 2010 as a Case Manager and quickly rose through the ranks to Workforce Services Specialist, Administrator and finally Executive Director in 2016.

Long-time Board member **Mike McGill** credits Donna's leadership and direction with guiding the bureau through efforts such as the transition to contracted service delivery, strategic planning, and most recently, the continuation of services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the pandemic, Donna directed the setup of a call center to serve jobseekers and businesses while the WDB doors were closed. She ensured services were still delivered remotely, saw that the WDB was awarded multiple special grants to assist the COVID-impacted population and supported staff who needed to work from home.

**Yolanda Vega**, WDB Board President, notes that Donna "embraces people." One way she did that was by writing treasured inspirational emails every Monday to uplift and encourage staff.

The staff agrees. Workforce Services Specialist **Patience Ofodu** credits Donna's mentoring: "I am grateful for her contribution to my career and the energy she brought to the team." Workforce Services Specialist **George Carter** praises the inclusive workplace culture Donna has created saying, "All staff were treated with consideration and respect. Although small, our staff reflects the diversity of the community we serve."

Donna moved to Chico, in October, to be closer to her children and grandchildren. She has been leading the team remotely since then. She looks forward to spending more time with family and plans on being involved with higher education and workforce development in the Chico area.



## Why I Help Fight for People Facing Hunger

By Trina Huerta, WFS Senior Level Clerk

I started being the one who put on events for the Holiday Food Fight in 2014 and I didn't know the first thing about how to do this. The first year I raised \$300. The next year, I started earlier. I sent out flyers to local businesses to ask for donations because I was still too shy to ask for it in person. From there it just took off. In 2017, I helped raise a record high \$1,600. I realized people want to be involved. They don't want to just hand over their hard earned money. They wanted to be involved and say, "Look what I did to help." I had to find ways to include three buildings in my food fights (4545 Delta Fair, 151 Sand Creek, and Bay Point), so I arranged scavenger hunts, penny wars, food sales, bake sales, raffles, trivia contests.

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See how you can help with the 2020 Counties Care Holiday Food Fight on page 8.

## Why I Help Fight for People Facing Hunger

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CLICK on the play button above to watch Trina Huerta's Holiday Food Fight, Testimonial

When someone is genuinely excited, you can't help but be excited too. It rubs off on other people and soon it starts to float around the building. Then people get happy and excited and start wondering what is going to happen next or I have a couple extra dollars lets donate that.

So why is it so important to me? That is a really personal story and I have only told a hand-full of people. But I feel it's ok to tell the story now. About 11 years ago, I had quit my job. Stupid thing to do, but it wasn't working for me. Well, a couple of days later I was injured and I wasn't able to look for work. Then it was Christmas time. I had bought the items

for Christmas dinner so we had that set, but the rest of the time our meals consisted of tortillas and peanut butter. I can still hear my daughter telling me that she was hungry and I had nothing to give her. Honestly, I didn't even know about the food bank then. I felt like I was failing as a mom. Shortly after, I started at Opportunity Junction, a job training and placement program. Aside from job training, I learned about different resources for food and I was finally able to feed my family. I swore my daughter would never tell me she was hungry again. No one should ever have to go to bed with an empty stomach. I know how it feels.

**See how you can help with the 2020 Counties Care Holiday Food Fight on page 8.**

# Help Contra Costa Claim Another Food Fight Win!

By Tish Gallegos, Community/Media Relations Manager



Past Winners of the Big Apple trophy:  
Contra Costa 2014  
Contra Costa 2015  
Solano 2016  
Solano 2017  
Solano 2018  
Contra Costa 2019

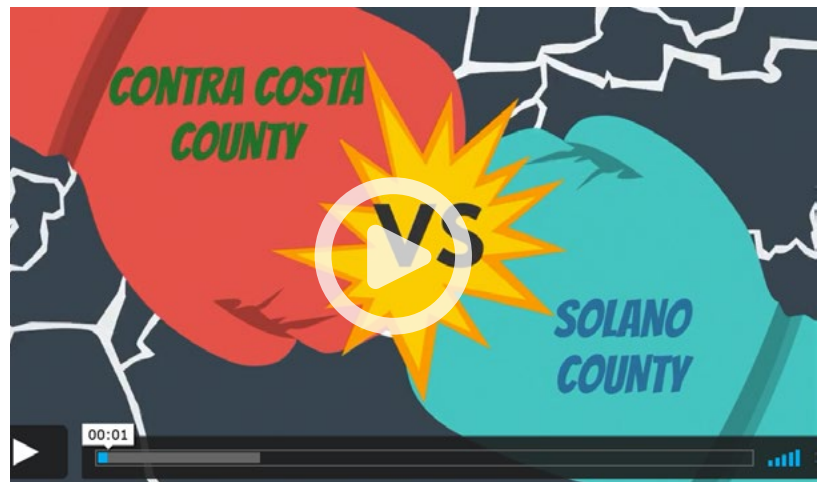
The 2020 Counties Care Holiday Food Fight is on! The friendly competition between Contra Costa and Solano Counties to support the Food Bank is an entirely virtual event this year.

The Food Bank is working harder than ever to meet the growing need among community members who need help supplementing their food budgets and ensuring they have enough nutritious food to feed their families. The Food Bank is accepting only monetary donations, which it will use to purchase fresh produce and other perishables to provide families with the most nutritious food possible.

Contra Costa won the coveted

Big Apple Trophy in 2019 by raising \$84,500 which covered the cost of 169,000 meals. That was a big win for Contra Costa and the community members in both counties who rely on the Food Bank for support.

You have until December 31st to contribute to this year's Holiday Food Fight, and help Contra Costa bring back the Big Apple Trophy in 2020. This marks the 16th year of the campaign, which has raised more than \$1.6 million overall for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.



CLICK on the play button and watch the Competition video EHS Media Specialist **Alan Wang** produced for the County

## IMPORTANT LINKS

[EHSD Donation page](#) - Contribute what you can!

[Online Donation Tutorial](#) - Walkthrough the online donation process.

[Food Bank video](#) - See how the Food Bank is helping during these challenging times.

[Competition Video](#) - Learn more about the Holiday Food Fight

If you have questions about the Counties Care Holiday Food Fight, email [EventsCommittee@ehsdccounty.us](mailto:EventsCommittee@ehsdccounty.us).



# Contra Costa Wins Gateways for Growth Challenge Award

By Tish Gallegos, Community/Media Relations Manager

Contra Costa is receiving national recognition and a timely boost to the County's efforts of immigrant inclusion. The New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America selected Contra Costa County to receive a [Gateways for Growth \(G4G\)](#) Technical Assistance award as part of a nationwide initiative. **EHSD's Policy and Planning Team** collaborated closely with **Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS)** to submit a competitive proposal. The County and this year's other awardees join 71 other localities across the country that have received this award since the start of the initiative in 2016.

In light of the scale and severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [Gateways for Growth Challenge](#) this year prioritized localities that demonstrated a public-private commitment to better integrating immigrants into recovery efforts and emergency management systems.

The immigrant community in Contra Costa is wide and diverse, representing 25 percent of the county's population. The partners involved in the Gateways for Growth effort will include both new arrivals and longtime residents, and a number of previously unengaged groups. In addition to seeking out language minority and immigrant communities, the County will bring in more small community-based and faith-based organizations to support this work.

Contra Costa is one of three winning California counties that will lay the groundwork and build the infrastructure for economic, civic, and social inclusion at the local level.

Technical assistance and research provided through the award will support the planning

process for the County's new County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice for the purpose of advancing inclusion and fairness.

"Respecting diversity by honoring individual differences is a core value for EHSD that echoes that of Contra Costa as a welcoming county," said EHSD Director **Kathy Gallagher**. "Our County has strongly opposed federal rule changes that limited the scope of benefits under the public charge rule and affected immigrants on their path to citizenship. We remain committed to the continuation of the DACA program, and to supporting ongoing inclusion and long-term economic and social integration of newcomers to our community."

As in previous years, G4G awardees will receive a combination of **customized quantitative research reports** from NAE on the demographic and economic contributions immigrants make in their communities; and/or **tailored technical assistance** from NAE and Welcoming America to help communities draft, execute, and communicate a multi-sector immigrant inclusion strategy.

Contra Costa County is among 19 Localities to join the network deploying economic research and multi-sector welcoming plans for promoting inclusion and economic opportunity for all.

Year-round, NAE and Welcoming America maintain an interactive map at [gatewaysforgrowth.org](https://gatewaysforgrowth.org) that serves as a clearinghouse for the successes of all current and prior G4G awardees.



# Contra Costa County Achieves Third Highest Self-Response Rate in the State for Census 2020

Contra Costa County achieved the third highest Census 2020 self-response rate of all California counties with a rate of 77.4% for the once-a-decade count of all residents. The County's self-response rate also surpassed its Census 2010 rate of 72.1% by more than five points or a 7.4% increase.

The County's Census 2020 self-response rate outperformed the country's 67% and the state's 69.6% self-response rates. Nearly all of the cities in the County surpassed their 2010 rates, and those that did not were within 1% of doing so. See response rates by city in Contra Costa County in this Census 2020 report.

Contra Costa County's Complete Count Steering Committee and 67 community based organizations collaborated on the Census 2020 count. The County's high response rate is owed in large part to the work of cities, agency and community partners, and trusted messengers who helped reach Contra Costa residents, including hard-to-count populations.

"Our success in Contra Costa County could not have happened without the strong partnerships with our local non-profits and community based

organizations," said District 3 Supervisor Diane Burgis, Chair of the Complete Count Committee. "We have built lasting relationships and capacity that will be mutually beneficial as we collaborate on outreach in all aspects of our work."

"Thanks to all of the residents who responded to the Census. You have guaranteed that Contra Costa County will receive its fair share of representation and much-needed funding for critical programs and infrastructure for the next decade," said District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen, Vice-Chair of the Complete Count Committee.

Now the U.S. Census Bureau will prepare the data to present to the President on December 31, 2020.

The redistricting process will begin in Spring 2021.



Information about Contra Costa County's Census 2020 outreach and impact are available at [www.cococensus.org](http://www.cococensus.org).

## Giving Time to the Housing Crisis Randolph Hudson Helps Build Oakland's Tiny House Village

By Randolph Hudson, CFS Research and Evaluation Manager

With Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's legacy at the forefront of my mind, I am reminded of my personal desire to help others. The building of the Tiny House Village for Transitional Aged Youth, in Oakland, is an historic project that will not only impact the lives of young adults, it has impacted my life. Working on such a great project (at a safe distance) with volunteers of all ages and backgrounds has filled me with enthusiasm and pride of a job well-done in the service of others.

Although there are a great many projects with which to give your time, I believe the housing crisis for "at-risk" and homeless young adults is paramount. As an outgrowth of this tremendous need for affordable and accessible housing, the Tiny House Village project was initiated by young people involved with **Youth Spirit Artworks' (YSA)** youth programs (<https://youthspiritartworks.org/>). There are more than 2,000 homeless young people in the SF Bay Area with less than 100 youth-designated beds in shelters and affordable housing. Young people facing housing instability have overwhelmingly experienced abuse and neglect, mental and physical health obstacles, and lack access to vital supportive resources.

YSA's first 24-unit phase of the Tiny House Village Project will significantly increase the number of youth designated beds in our region and we need your help to get youth housed before the end of the year. Although there are still many things to do, like painting or the final touches of 'home-welcoming', my personal role has been to help finish and install custom-built Murphy Beds.

### Interfaith Activism

The Tiny House Village is an interfaith project, working with over 25 congregations. YSA is continuously grateful for the religious community's values of justice, advocacy, and service work for the most vulnerable members of our communities. As a proud member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, I can think of no other project that provides such ethereal rewards.

**Get Involved:** We are still looking for volunteers to help finish this ambitious project and are seeking people of all ages and abilities to help. To

volunteer with Tiny House Village, please contact me or [please click here](#). If you would like to donate to the Tiny House Village, [please click here](#) and scroll down to "Tiny House Village."

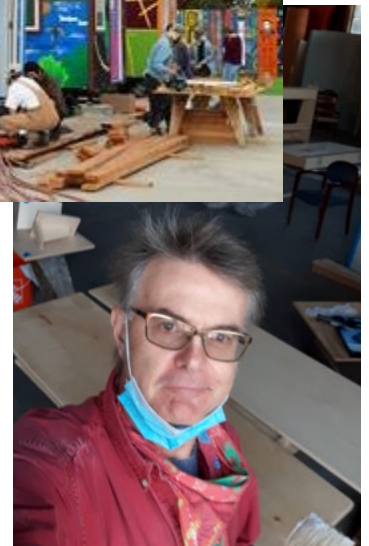
*"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"*

— Martin Luther King Jr. (1963). "Strength to Love"



Above: Randolph and other volunteers helped build 24 tiny houses for the Tiny House Village project

Right: Randolph Hudson volunteered at the warehouse working on varnishing Murphy beds for the Tiny House Village for transitional aged youth.





## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

# Be good to yourself as a caregiver

Contributed by Personnel Services

Magellan Ascend

If you're taking care of a loved one, you know the journey can be both rewarding and sometimes overwhelming. Many caregivers not only take care of elderly relatives, but also raise their own families, plus work outside the home. It's common for caregivers to feel exhausted and stressed, and to neglect their own needs. To stay well:

- Be proud of all you do. There's no such thing as a perfect caregiver, so do your best to get through each day. Don't dwell on what you can't control.
- Take breaks and arrange caregiving coverage. Tap a trusted relative, friend or respite caregiver to be with your loved one while you're out.
- Don't let caregiving consume your entire life. Strive to stay involved in activities that give you purpose.

Read the full article at [www.magellanascend.com](http://www.magellanascend.com).

### Upcoming Webinar: *Exploring Habits for Positive Behavior Change* – December 9

Register for this webinar to:

- Discuss why behavior change is difficult and how habits are formed
- Identify ways to form new habits and eliminate bad habits
- Describe how to manage habit slipping and procrastination
- Learn methods to track habits for positive behavior change

#### Missed the live webinar?

Don't worry, you can access webinar recordings by clicking on "Learning Center" and selecting "Webinars." If you haven't signed up to use the County Employee Assistance Program yet, follow these two easy steps:

Step 1: Go to [www.magellanascend.com](http://www.magellanascend.com) and click on "Sign up".

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

## Behind the Scenes: Keeping EHSD Humming Along During Trying Times

*While many EHSD staff members are working remotely during the pandemic, it would be nearly impossible to continue the department's vital programs without the in-office work of so many others. We greatly appreciate our frontline workers who are showing up for EHSD customers out in the field or in our offices. Throughout the next few pages, we also acknowledge some of our "back-of-house" staff members who each help keep EHSD moving forward through their dedication and service.*

### Admin Support Team at 40 Douglas



**Patty Lund,  
Clerk Experienced Level**

During the COVID-19 pandemic I have been in the office, available to answer phones, print documents, get signatures, scan material back to my coworkers who are working remotely, and sent out and tracked notifications to staff about positive COVID-19 cases in our workplaces.



**Daly Young, Secretary  
Advanced Level**

I support **Kelley Curtis**, WFS Bureau Director, and the needs of our division. During this COVID-19 crisis, I have taken client communications seriously to ensure we answer their requests and questions promptly. It helps them so they can continue with active cases to meet their needs in their road to self-sufficiency. I appreciate the recognition, and want to acknowledge our staff in our various units that work tirelessly, now and always, helping the less fortunate. A little appreciation can go a long way.



**Kathleen Friedlander,  
Secretary Advanced Level**

I support **Michael Roetzer**, Administrative Services Bureau Director, and a member of the Admin team providing support to each other. At the start of the pandemic, I was arranging and coordinating meetings with Health Services, Red Cross, and Alternate Care Sites and gathering up information for reports. There was an abundance of reports and documents to staff. Over the past several months, we have been involved with the reopening of our buildings. There is still on-going coordination with Risk Management focusing on making our facilities safe for the return of our staff and customers.



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## Behind the Scenes: Admin Support Team at 40 Douglas

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**Shirley Sears, Executive Secretary to EHSD Director Kathy Gallagher**

When the pandemic erupted, like many of us with loved ones at home in the “high risk” category or children needing care, I had to make the difficult decision of whether or not to work remotely. I decided to work from home. The experience brought about the realization of just how deeply the implications of that decision impacted my work, and how important interaction is with my boss and colleagues to do my job properly. Needless to say, I was back in the office in just under two weeks! Since then, my Zoom skills have increased tenfold and my duties are many. But one that stands out is answering the Hotline and speaking to clients whose lives have been turned upside down due to COVID-19. I am humbled by their resilience and thankful for the support our Department can provide to the community.



**Ann Lindstrom, Secretary Advanced Level**

I work in Aging & Adult Services, which means we work with a vulnerable senior population. Currently, the Senior Centers are closed, due to COVID-19 and social distancing. The Great Plates Program is one program where we have contracted with four restaurants in the county to prepare and deliver nutritious breakfast, lunch, and dinner for isolated seniors. Many areas of EHSD have been involved in the process and I help coordinate with getting payments to the vendors in a timely manner once available. The restaurant owners/managers have told me the Seniors are so glad to have someone to talk to when the food gets delivered, and the restaurants are grateful to be able to keep some people employed. It’s a win-win situation that I am happy to be a part of!



**Julie Rafighi, Secretary Advanced Level and Jessica Wiseman, Secretary Journey Level**

During the pandemic **Julie Rafighi**, secretary to **Kathy Marsh** and **Jessica Wiseman**, secretary to **Roslyn Gentry** have been tracking daily attendance for all of Children & Family Services’ nearly 400 staff members. We have learned how to schedule and host meetings via new virtual platforms as well as tracking and ensuring new protocol for traveling staff are followed. This has been an unprecedented time and certainly nothing we ever anticipated nor imagined.

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## Behind the Scenes: Application Support

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In spite of the pandemic, Application Support continues to provide user support for the statewide systems, including CalHEERS, MEDS, ebtEDGE, CMIPS II, OCAT, CWS/CMS, and department user requests, including reports development, system administration and troubleshooting issues. (L to R from the bottom) **I-Mei Chen, Alana Hogan, Najah Duran, Pam Wilson, Wurn Waa Phan, Teresa Shannon** (retired) **Nancy Opek** (center) Right-hand side starting from the bottom corner: **Veronica Underwood, Anna Domingo, Susan Dineley, Colleen McLaughlin, Uju Chimara, Betty Steggall, Rossio Aliaga-Caro** (not pictured).

## Behind the Scenes: EHSD Collections Unit



**Aurora Aguayo,**  
Program Asst



**Gina Fabrizio,**  
Supervisor



**Sofia Acosta,**  
Clerk-Sr. Level

**The EHSD's Collections Unit** has been working diligently during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the ever-present objective of helping our clients meet their financial obligations to the county. Staff, which includes supervisor, **Gina Fabrizio**, and ELC clerk, **Sophia Acosta**, have been busy accommodating those clients that have been greatly impacted by the adverse events surrounding COVID 19 and the individuals and families who have experienced extreme financial changes. In July, SSPA, **Aurora Aguayo** joined the team, to primarily assist with the collection efforts for our Spanish Speaking clients and the various collections/administrative tasks. With safety in mind, we chose to staff our unit with rotating shifts of those reporting in office. As always, our number one goal is to service our clients making payments towards their debts and satisfying their claim accounts. The unit remains tight with a strong sense of emotional investment with our team and the public alike and the safety of all those we work with. We are fortunate enough to collaborate with an organization whose leaders are stepping up in critical areas to ensure our workplace safety and health.

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## Behind the Scenes: Fiscal

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**The Fiscal Unit** has been busy preparing current year budgets, monitoring, and reporting on COVID-related grants. The budgeting process includes projecting caseloads, expenditures, and revenues and has been more challenging during these very uncertain times. Since the Account Clerks, supervised by the Account Clerk Supervisor, are not able to perform their jobs remotely, they have been coming into the office to ensure EHSD's contracted Community Partners are paid and customer payments are processed daily. At the same time, our Accounting Technicians supervised by the Supervising Accountant prepare statistical reports, collect overpayments, and monitor time studies. Furthermore, the Chief Financial Officer, Departmental Fiscal Officers, Fiscal Analysts, and Accountants are developing the fiscal year 2021-22 budget while the Fiscal Secretary supports the unit by performing a variety of administrative tasks.



**Ron Millard, Chief  
Financial Officer**



**Lisa Epps,  
Departmental Fiscal  
Officer**



**Alicja Hermanson,  
Departmental Fiscal  
Officer**



**Allyson Eggert,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Annie Phetinta,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Bonnie Bienkowski,  
Accountant III**



**Chris Cho,  
Accountant III**



**Christopher Dunn,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Erik Brown,  
Departmental Fiscal  
Officer**



**Jessica Venzon,  
Secretary-Advanced  
Level**

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## Behind the Scenes: Fiscal

*Fiscal Unit continued from previous page*



**Juvelyn Cobol,  
Accountant III**



**Kathy Arana,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Tammy Campers,  
Administrative  
Aide**



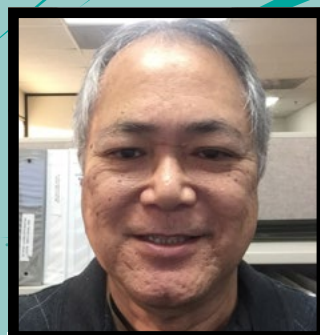
**Tina Rahmani,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Tom Ta, Fiscal  
Compliance  
Accountant**



**Tracy Story,  
Administrative  
Services Assistant III**



**Vincent Villacorta,  
Accountant III**



**Malou Lyttle, Acct. Clerk Sup**

**Bobby Stange, Acct. Clerk Adv**

**Ellise Allison, Acct. Clerk Adv**

**Shirley Iman, Acct. Clerk Adv**

**Anne Rankin, Acct. Clerk Adv**

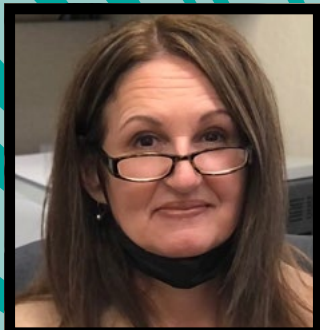
**Judith Flores, Acct. Clerk Adv**

**Rossel Tongol, Acct Clerk Exp**

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## Behind the Scenes: Fiscal

*Fiscal Unit continued from previous page*



**Vickie Wetzel,**  
Dept. Fiscal Officer



**Leolin Oblena,**  
Account Clerk



**Rodrigo Tolentino,**  
Account Clerk



**Theresita Foster,**  
Accountant III



**Haydee Ilan,**  
Accountant III



**Theresa Anderson,**  
Account Clerk



**Angela Winn,**  
Accountant III

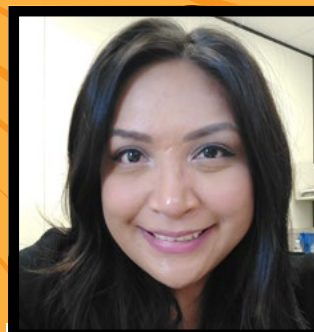


## Behind the Scenes: Personnel Services

During the pandemic, Personnel Services has been busy supporting EHSD by filling vacant positions throughout the department as well as within the Personnel Services Division to support the bureaus sufficiently. Our Leaves Team continues to track Leave of Absences in consideration of the surge of those employees currently on leave and in anticipation of new leave laws coming in the new year. Our Departmental HR Analysts, Clerks and Technicians are still facilitating in-person New Employee Orientations using multiple methods of technology and conference rooms while the Ecotime Administrators continue to manage the Ecotime system, procedures, and inbox. Our Payroll Team will soon be fully staffed. They have been ensuring employees are paid accurately, assisting with time-sensitive audits, and keeping up to date with new payroll procedures from the Auditor's Office. Departmental HR Analysts continue to help facilitate the Sensitivity in the Workplace trainings and remain available to employees to help answer Personnel related questions.



**Bao Tran,**  
HR Analyst



**Cheryl Leonor,**  
Admin Services Asst

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## Behind the Scenes: Personnel Services

Personnel Services continued from previous page



**Cynthia Legaspi,**  
Personnel Technician



**Eva Gaipa,**  
HR Analyst



**Julie Bloxham,**  
Secretary Advanced  
Level



**Marcie Clark,**  
HR Analyst

## Behind the Scenes: CalWIN

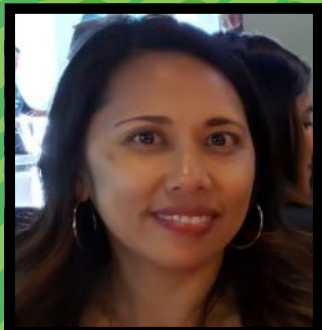
The **CalWIN Team** has been planning migration to CalSAWS and completed various migration preparation activities. It has continued to implement CalWIN changes and provide support while coordinating the automation and implementation of work-arounds for programs affected by the pandemic. CalWIN has also provided dashboard reports on applications, demographics and trends that helped with decision making and processing during the pandemic. Meanwhile, CalWIN Help Desk assisted with processing intake applications.



**Rachelle Clay,**  
HR Analyst



**Robin Bates,**  
HR Analyst



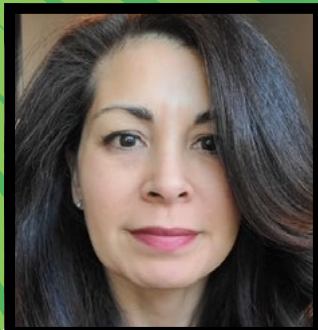
**Aileen Palompo,**  
Specialist



**Alicia Samue,**  
Specialist I



**America Patterson,**  
Supervisor



**Bernadette Rees,**  
Specialist

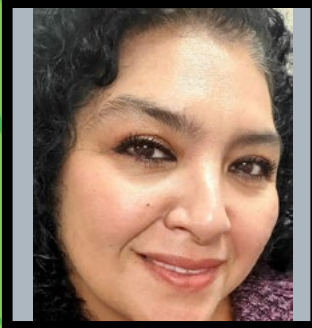
CalWIN continued on next page

## Behind the Scenes: CalWIN

CalWiN continued from previous page



**Celso Lira,**  
Specialist



**Patricia Viveros,**  
Specialist



**Curt Dodson,**  
Systems Analyst



**Rob Barnard,**  
Systems Analyst



**Roy DeLa Vega,**  
Systems Analyst



**Shari Garrity,**  
Systems Analyst



**Sonya Hopkins,**  
Systems Analyst



**Teri Howe,**  
Systems Analyst



**Terri Rose,**  
Systems Analyst



**Zeny Manalo,**  
Clerk Specialist



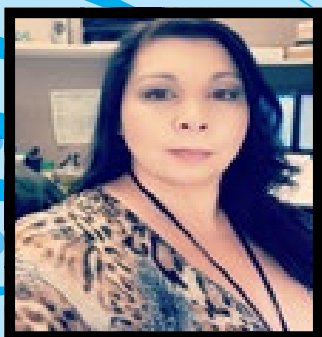
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## Behind the Scenes: EHSU Fraud Prevention Unit (formerly known as the "Early Fraud Unit")

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COVID 19 and social distancing have not stopped investigations of suspected fraud in the CalWORKs, CalFresh, General Assistance and Child Care programs, but it has changed how the Fraud Prevention Unit does their job. Normally, investigators spend the majority of their time out in the field conducting unannounced home visits and interviews, canvassing neighborhoods, and contacting schools and employers. With COVID-19 safety precautions in place, the investigators have been limited in the extent of contact they are able to make with the public. This has been the biggest change, as the investigators are constrained to investigating from their workstations. They have been contacting participants and involved parties from their workstations and, if warranted, will arrange to safely interview individuals in the office. They are diligently utilizing all resources available to them via certain law enforcement applications and systems, various State systems (CalWIN, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), etc.) and the internet.

The Fraud Prevention Unit continues to make every effort to assist eligibility staff during these difficult times. Our priority is making sure that workers have all of the Information they require to help those in need, and to ensure program integrity.



**Jacqueline Mendiola,  
Sr. Investigator**



**Mike Homa,  
Sr. Investigator**



**Tanya Cunningham,  
Sr. Investigator**



**Chris Valliere,  
Sr. Investigator**

## Behind the Scenes: IOPU Unit

During the pandemic, the Income Earnings Verification System (IEVS) Overpayment Unit (IOPU) has continued working to ensure the IEVS reports are reviewed to identify discrepancies in earnings. The IOPU works collaboratively with the District Offices in order to prevent issuance of incorrect benefits to clients. The IOPU unit also computes necessary overpayments that return funds back to the CalWORKs, CalFresh and General Assistance programs. This is especially important during the pandemic as this allows the County and State to continue providing financial assistance for the needy in our community.



**The IOPU Unit picture left to right: Annalee Sellers, Kelly Rule, Rumita Raj, Cozette Nguyen, Jackie Foust, Jolanta Ustaszewska, and Jona Camaisa.**

# Service Awards New Employees & Retirees

## SERVICE AWARDS

### 35 YEARS

Monica Galvan, Clerk-Specialist Level, CFS

### 30 YEARS

Kathleen Murphy, Eligibility Work Supervisor I, WFS  
\*Qadirah (Dee Tolbert) Sirraaj, Social Worker III, AAS

### 25 YEARS

Rima Kashou, Senior Clerk-Project, CSB  
Janelle Taggart, Children's Svcs Cler Spec, CFS

### 20 YEARS

Patricia Crain, Eligibility Work Supervisor I, WFS  
Laverne Parris, Eligibility Worker III, WFS  
Janice Wright, Associate Teacher-Project, CSB

### 15 YEARS

LeShawn Le Blanc, Eligibility Worker III, WFS  
Cindy Magee, Social Worker, WFS  
Dorothea Norris, Clerk-Senior Level, AAS  
Michelle Ramirez, Senior Benefits Clerk IHSS PA, AAS  
Nadiya Salcedo, wSoc Svc Program Assistant, WFS

### 10 YEARS

Brenda Lee, Account Clerk-Advanced Level, AAS  
Melason Motomura, Social Worker III, CFS  
Felipe Roxas, Senior Clerk-Project, CSB  
Angela Shakewsnider, Eligibility Worker III, WFS  
Eleanor Walker, Social Work Supervisor II, CF

\*Years of Service reached in November 2020

## RETIREEES

Donna Horton, Clerk-Senior Level, WFS  
Ana Kruger, Social Worker III, CFS  
Jaime Ray, Secretary-Journey Level, AAS

**NEW EMPLOYEES listed on next page**

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](mailto:djohnson@ehsd.cccounty.us) or (925) 608-4904.

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## NEW EMPLOYEES

Rose Castaneda, Account Clerk-Exp. Level, Admin  
Yvette Austin, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Dameris Baker, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Lluvia Bravo, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Chase Calvert, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Audreonna Capla, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Susana Conde, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
MyNesha Edwards, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Patriz Epstein, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Solace Fiadjoe, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Taukeiaho Fifita, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Adam Flores, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Leah Freeman, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Paulina Fregoso, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Gloria Gonzalez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Marlina Gutierrez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS



Rebecca Hagen, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Diana Lopez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Daniela Martinez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Katherine Melendez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Vanessa Moreno, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Kendall Morrison, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Andy Nguyen, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Manjinder Pannu, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Stephanie Perez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Huy Pham, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Juanita Reid, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Emi Taito-Taamai, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Guadalupe Verduzco, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Trena Wilson, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Alicia Zuloaga-Velasquez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS



## Statewide Award for CSB's Tech Innovations

Continued from page 2

clients without the use of their personal cell phone. It enabled them to call families and new clients through the internet using the CLOUDS web-calling application. During the shelter-in-place, there was limited cell phone availability, and this feature eliminated the cost of purchasing additional cell phones and data plans

Currently, there is no other child care management system in California with an

interactive communication system that can handle all state and federal childcare programs/funding, staff management and daily attendance and enrollment processes in real time, while providing the communication features CSB developed. These enhancements ensure that there are no missed calls out of the 1000+ per week that CSB receives, saving CSB time, money, and work hours.

## WDB Helps Small Businesses Prevent Layoffs and Closures

Continued from page 4

**The deadline to apply for the grant is Wednesday, December 2nd, at 5 p.m., with no exceptions.** Applications may be submitted [online](#) or mailed to WDBCCC, 4071 Port Chicago, Concord, CA 94520 and must be **received** no later than the deadline. Award/agreement letters will be

emailed to the email address on the application by Dec. 9, 2020.

To learn more about the grant, [visit our website](#), call the WDBCCC COVID-19 Resource Hotline at 833-320-1919 or email [bouncebackcoco@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:bouncebackcoco@ehsd.cccounty.us).

# SPREAD THE WORD

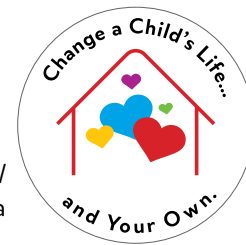
## December

- **DECEMBER 7** – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- **DECEMBER 10-18** – Hanukkah begins/ends
- **DECEMBER 21** – Winter Solstice (shortest day of the year)
- **DECEMBER 23** – Festivus
- **DECEMBER 25** – Christmas Day (Holiday)
- **DECEMBER 26-JANUARY 1** – Kwanzaa begins/ends
- **DECEMBER 31** – New Year’s Eve

## January

- **HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH**
- **ELIGIBILITY WORKERS MONTH**
- **JANUARY 1** – New Year’s Day (Holiday)
- **JANUARY 18** – Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Holiday)

.....  
 Contact us at our *EHSD Headlines* email, [headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us), if you have an upcoming event, article, our idea you would like to share.  
 .....



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 has more than 1,000 children who need your help. Join a free virtual orientation during the COVID-19 Health Order. We will update the in-person orientation schedule as restrictions lift.

### FREE VIRTUAL ORIENTATIONS

- December 3 or 17 • 4 to 6 p.m.
- January 7 or 21 • 4 to 6 p.m.
- February 4 or 18 • 4 to 6 p.m.
- March 4 or 18 • 4 to 6 p.m.
- April 1 or 15 • 4 to 6 p.m.
- May 6 or 20 • 4 to 6 p.m.

For more information about becoming a Resource Parent visit us at [www.ehsd.org](http://www.ehsd.org). To register for a class, please call (925) 602-6960, toll-free at 1(866) 313-7788, or email [ResourceFamilies@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ResourceFamilies@ehsd.cccounty.us)

