

Headlines

**Maria Rios,
from Farm
Fields to
Head Start
Classroom**
(clickable video story)

Meet New WDB Director
Tamia Brown

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CONTRACOSTA
COUNTY

EMPLOYMENT &
HUMAN SERVICES

WDB's New Executive Director Tamia Brown Joins EHSD

By Kathy Gallagher, EHSD Director



Tamia Brown, Workforce Development Board Executive Director

Welcome **Tamia Brown**, who joined the EHSD team as the Workforce Development Board Executive Director on July 6th.

Tamia previously worked with the Workforce Development Board in Alameda County

where she held the position of Program Manager. She has also worked with the City of San Jose Economic Development Department as a Special Projects Analyst.

Tamia is an approachable and engaging leader with extensive experience in the workforce field and collaborating with local and state commissions, boards and community agencies.

Tamia takes pride in being a driver of innovative workforce strategies that will be especially valuable in facing the challenges of an economic recovery. "The Workforce Development Board has a new branding and communications campaign focused on Achieving Equity: Equitable economic growth for Contra Costa County through innovative, sustainable solutions," says Tamia.

Tamia holds a Master's degree in Public Administration/Organizational Leadership from National University and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration-Organization/Management from San Jose State University. She is also a graduate of the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) Executive Development program with the University of California at Berkeley, and holds a certification from the Alameda County Global/MHI leadership program.

Building Brighter Futures Together



EHSD's East County Outreach

At the first in-person education and outreach event since the start of the pandemic, EHSD connected with community members at the Antioch Resource Fair held on July 24th at Contra Loma Estates Park. Navigator **Maria R. Muñoz** of 4 Our Families with support from IT CalWIN's **Willie Balitaan** represented EHSD at this East County event. A steady flow of people stopped at the EHSD table to learn about CalFresh, Medi-Cal, 4 Our Families, and County jobs. Attendees were able to get COVID-19 vaccines as well as enjoy music, food and prizes. Contra Costa Health Services partnered with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Contra Costa to host the Community Resource Fair.

Workforce Development Board Refresh

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) is always a contributor to the Employment component of the Employment & Human Services Department, but its role became even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic – as businesses struggled and so many county residents experienced job losses.

During the public health emergency, WDB launched the #BounceBackContraCosta initiative. It included a dedicated web site and a COVID-

specific call center. WDB staff conducted more than 1,700 engagements with businesses and job seekers through that channel, along with many other services. In addition, WDB distributed more than \$200,000 to qualified individuals

impacted by the pandemic (\$400–800 per person) and \$100,000 to 26 small businesses through Layoff Aversion Funds (up to \$5,000 per business).

WDB will continue to hold a pivotal position in the community as we emerge into a post-pandemic world. While the unemployment rate in Contra Costa has stabilized (6.3 percent as of May 2021), it remains almost twice as high as pre-pandemic levels, and some places in Contra Costa remain in double-digit unemployment. Additionally, there are

notable employment and opportunity disparities related to race, ethnicity, level of education and lower-wage vs. higher-wage jobs.

In order to support an equitable economic recovery – and with full force –WDB has refined and energized its strategy for 2021. This includes a new branding and communications campaign focused on Achieving Equity: Equitable economic growth for Contra Costa County through innovative, sustainable solutions.

Key goals are to support businesses, especially small and minority-owned businesses and under-invested communities and to support Job Seekers in moving toward self-sufficient careers and a path to the middle class.



Check out WDB’s “Our Focus” video for a quick overview of who we are and what we do!

A centerpiece of the communications rollout is the improved [WDB web site](#), which launched at the beginning of July. It better reflects WDB’s ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and features enhanced content, easier and faster navigation and a refreshed look.

Check out the new Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County website at wdbccc.com.

COVID Emergency Relief Still Available

Before the pandemic, a great number of Contra Costa families were already struggling to make ends meet. COVID-19's impact amplified their financial challenges and, for other families, created new ones. EHSD's Volunteer & Emergency Services (VES) Team is offering lifelines to hundreds of families through the Emergency Relief Fund.

The [Season of Sharing \(SOS\) Emergency Relief Fund](#) is still available for eligible applicants who need help paying for rent, deposits, utilities, furniture, transportation and medical equipment costs resulting from the pandemic. SOS is a lifeline for families and can truly make a difference in how they are pulling through the pandemic.

VES has awarded more than \$2.47 million in rent relief funds to 917 families since the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic, from January 2020 through May 2021. The program's extraordinary progress is largely due to the dedicated work of the VES team. With great care and compassion, **Alvaro Florez**, **Eugenia Hidalgo-Malacas**, and **Dorothea Norris** have directly assisted COVID-impacted families who were short on funds for their

rent or mortgage payments, household utilities, transportation and other expenses. Program Coordinator **Cindy Smith** leads the VES Team, and

Policy & Planning Division Manager **Lynn Peralta** oversees the VES/VESTIA unit.

"This financial support to families represents a significant share of the County's total awarded rent relief, of which the state's portion is \$18.5 million to date," explained Lynn. "Thanks to our small but mighty VES team, this remarkable work has been possible!"



TOP ROW (L-R): Lynn Peralta, Policy & Planning Division Manager oversees the VES Unit; Cindy Smith, VES Program Coordinator manages the Season of Sharing's COVID Relief Fund; Alvaro Florez is the lead on SOS program coordination.

BOTTOM ROW (L-R): Eugenia Hidalgo-Malacas handles client intake and assists families; Dorothea Norris processes applications for the SOS Relief Fund.

MORE RESOURCES

As an additional resource, the CA Rent Relief Program continues to accept applications for rental assistance. Renters can apply by visiting [Housing is Key](#). To learn more, see [COVID-19 Rent Relief](#) on ehds.org where you can also download flyers in several languages.

The CA Rent Relief Program has also produced short videos to promote the program. You can view them in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Avoiding Rental Scams

Contributed by the Contra Costa District Attorney's Office

What is a rental scam?

A rental scam is a listing for a property that someone does not own and has no authority to rent. According to the Contra Costa District Attorney's Office, this may involve posting a property online (Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, etc.), and claiming it is not available to show so a prospective renter hands over money.

Types of rental scams

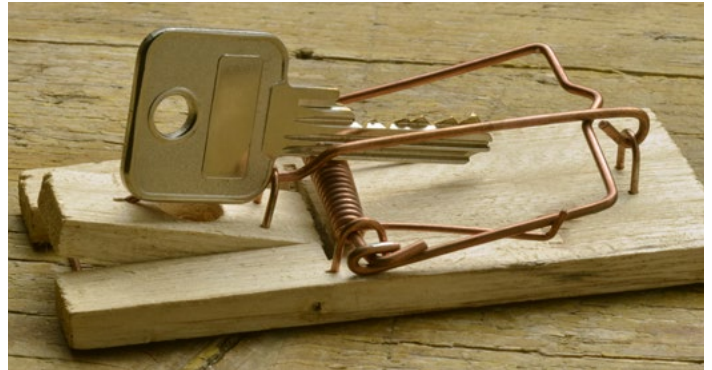
- **Knockoff listings** - copied and pasted from a legitimate listing, but then offered at a low price.
- **Illegal sublets** - person has access to a listed property, then shows the unit as if the owner or with authority to rent it.
- **Ghost rentals** - a promise of low rent and great amenities to lure a potential renter into giving money before finding out a property is not for rent or does not exist.

What are the signs?

- Wire transfer request for first month's rent, security deposit, application fees or vacation rental fees.
- Request for funds prior to signing a lease or viewing a property with the excuse that the property is in high demand, adding an urgency to the transaction.
- Claim that an agent or lawyer is handling the transaction while the person renting out a property is out of the country.

Tips to help consumers

- Verify who owns the unit or building. To ensure legitimacy, search online or visit the [Contra Costa County Recorder's office](#) at 555 Escobar St., Martinez CA 94553.

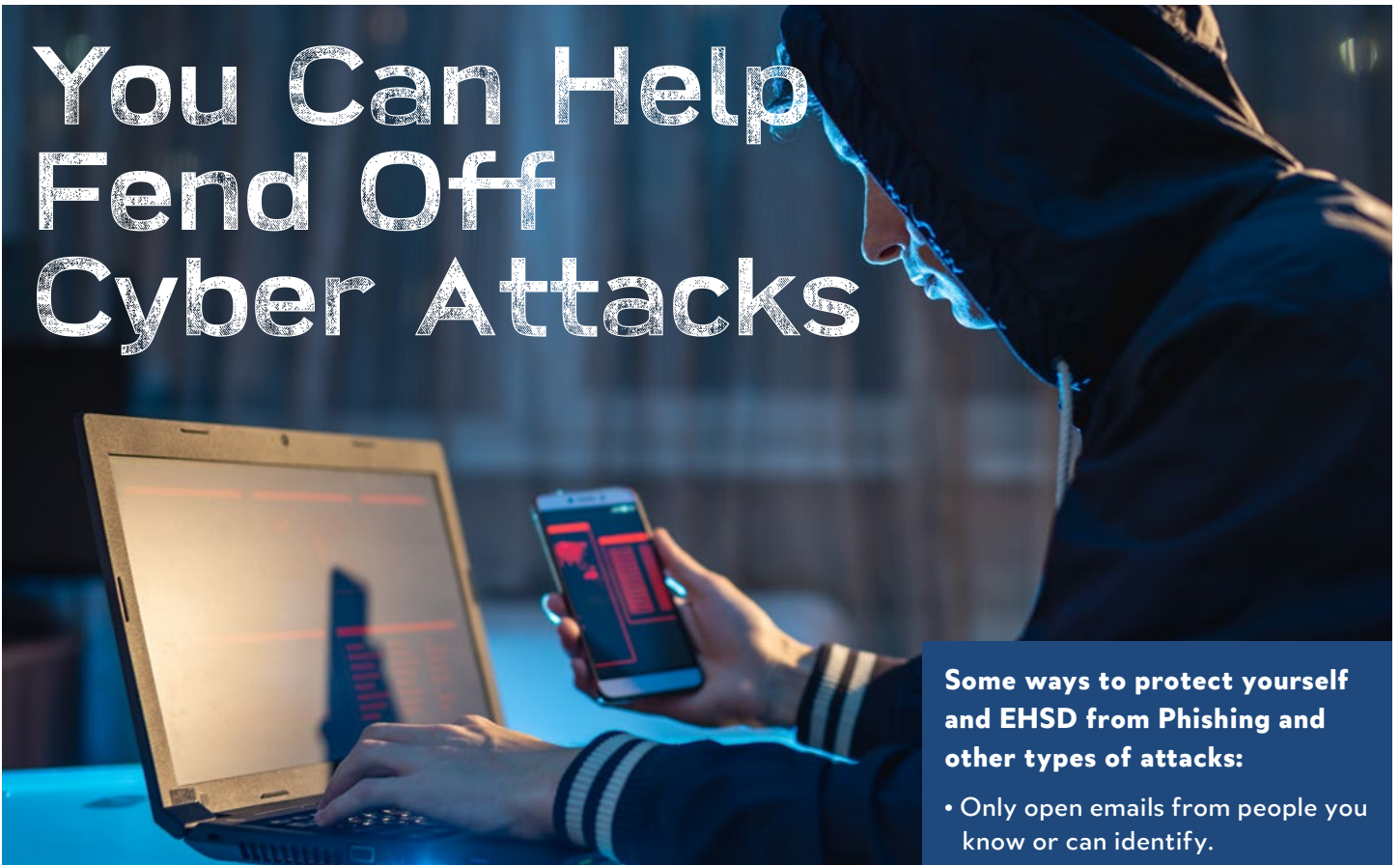


- Search online for the listed address, agent or alleged homeowner's name, email and phone number. Be cautious of images possibly cropped and adjusted for fraudulent ads.
- Legitimate landlords will arrange a tour of the interior of the property without excuse or hesitation, take an application and conduct a background check before money is exchanged.
- Landlords typically accept a personal or cashier's check, or money order for first month's rent and security deposit.
- Never provide advance payment before signing a legitimate agreement. Do not pay in cash or via wire transfer.
- Do not give personal information until you verify the leasing party.
- Ask detailed questions about the unit, application and move-in date/process.

Spanish translation: [Consejos para evitar estafas de alquiler](#)

More Info: [Contra Costa District Attorney website](#)

You Can Help Fend Off Cyber Attacks



As a department of more than 2,000 staff members, EHSD and many large organizations are vulnerable to attacks on computer networks. We know of at least two over the past month. People who want to do harm send misleading emails to employees and citizens so the recipients will open attachments and links, enabling hackers to breach the network. The intent may be ransom of information, gaining access to confidential or personal information, identity theft, installing malware or just mischief. Regardless of the motive, these types of attacks are disruptive, expensive, time consuming, and have the potential to cause data loss and/or damage to equipment and networks.

Attacks can be especially insidious using “spoofing” to disguise email, making it appear as if it is from a trusted source. These emails often go directly to a staff member, using her/his name and EHSD email address.

EHSD has been using a vendor to help train staff about these types of attacks, and to test the effectiveness of the training and our readiness to prevent them. The County and EHSD use multiple types of protection on our network to prevent intrusion, but unfortunately the attacks continue. Each of you is part of the County’s and EHSD’s defense against hackers. Thank you for remaining vigilant!

Some ways to protect yourself and EHSD from Phishing and other types of attacks:

- Only open emails from people you know or can identify.
- Be wary of opening any link or attachment on an email.
- Never give out your username, password or personal information, in an email or on the phone; EHSD will never request that information in an email.
- If you suspect you have replied to a phishing email, opened an attachment or clicked on a link, call the IT Help Desk (x17200) immediately with the description of the email and as much detail as possible. Passing this information to a person in IT is critical.
- Forward the original suspicious email to IT staff BEFORE clicking on Phish Alert so there can be an immediate response.
- Call the Help Desk if you entered personal information including passwords in a form from an unfamiliar source.

Supervisors Play Key Role in Retaining Child Welfare Workers

By Kim Shaw, Social Work Supervisor II, Children and Family Services

Every month the Children & Family Services (CFS) County Culture/Staff Retention Committee meets to identify ways to improve staff morale and retention. Having a knowledgeable and supportive supervisor turns out to be a pivotal factor in the retention of child welfare social workers. In fact, research shows that the quality of supervision is the strongest predictor of satisfaction among child welfare caseworkers. It's the most commonly cited factor related to staff retention.



Positive supervision is linked to supportive working relationships, increased teamwork, and improved staff health and well-being. Supervisors best understand the responsibilities of caseworkers, the daily demands they face, and can advocate for them. They recognize and respond to social workers' needs and concerns, providing direction and guidance. Good supervisory support can help mitigate the stresses of the job.

Supportive supervision does not only positively affect staff retention. With less turnover in case managers, children end up spending a shorter time in foster care and parents have a consistent, supportive professional to guide them through

the reunification process. These are the positive outcomes we are all working to achieve.

Social Workers can take a proactive role in letting their supervisors know what they need to be successful. Talk with your supervisor about what is working for you and what is not. Then strategize together to make improvements.

Some strategies that supervisors can use to support and help retain social workers are:

- Recognize and celebrate accomplishments
- Link client progress to caseworker efforts
- Provide specific, positive and genuine feedback
- Help staff establish priorities
- Encourage self-care, like taking time off
- Advocate for the needs of individual staff members and units
- Give staff the opportunity to discuss feelings and concerns
- Demonstrate empathy
- Encourage teamwork
- Be alert to signs of staff burnout and intervene to reduce stress

Click this link for more ideas about effective supervision: https://www.caltrin.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/4.-Reflective-Supv_quickguide.pdf

You Can Help Build a Positive Workplace

Contributed by Personnel Services

A positive workplace is one that promotes employee growth, goal attainment, safety and well-being—an environment that supports employees in performing at their highest abilities. People at all levels of an organization can play a part in making the workplace supportive instead of negative.

While there are plenty of difficult daily challenges in the workplace, don't dwell on negatives; shift gears as soon as possible into active problem solving with your colleagues.

Don't get pulled into gossip. Gossiping about others doesn't help anyone's long-term credibility. It only causes ongoing division between people. If you see it happening, excuse yourself as gracefully as possible.

Take every opportunity to compliment others in the workplace for their contributions and conscientiousness. If you offer positive energy, it will return to you.

Browse more topics at www.magellanascend.com.



Magellan Ascend

UPCOMING WEBINAR:

Strategies to Navigate Stress and Build Resilience August 11

Register for this webinar to:

- Build optimism
- Manage counterproductive thinking
- Practice mindfulness on a daily basis
- Rethink stress

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 and click on "Sign up".

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

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[Click here to access the LifeMart Discount Center in your web browser.](#)

Your Feedback, Our Response

By Cheryl Leonor, Administrative Services Assistant III

To all of you who took the time to provide feedback during the recent Personnel Survey, we really appreciate it! We received more than 800 responses, and will continue to share the survey's key points with you. One of the top themes was that we need to do a better job with communication. What does Personnel do and how do you get in contact with us?



Personnel assists over 2,400 employees by providing various services such as:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Payroll Administration
- Employee Relations
- Coaching and Counseling
- New Hire Orientations
- Leave Administration including Americans with Disability Act Interactives and Family Medical Leave (FMLA/CFRA)

Through our [Personnel page on the EHSD Intranet](#), you can learn more about what we

do. Current organization charts, contact lists, Personnel related Frequently Asked Questions, active bids, and Ecotime Resources can all be found [here](#).

We are also excited to share upcoming projects launching in the next few months:

Personnel Track-It: This system automates requests to Personnel staff using a ticketing system similar to the Information Technology Help Desk process. Users will have the ability to review notes and status of Personnel requests through a Self-Service portal.

Performance Management Program: The purpose of EHSD's performance management program is to deliver a structured, consistent, equitable and comprehensive system where all employees understand the impact their contributions have on the achievement of our mission, vision, and values, while affording an opportunity for ongoing personal and professional development. Training and templates are included in this program.

Make sure to check STARS, the Personnel page and *Headlines* for more Personnel news!



Head Start Teacher Feature, Maria Rios

By Alan Wang, Community Relations Media Specialist

The tears begin welling up when I ask Maria Rios how she began her career as a Head Start teacher. That's because the Head Start program touched her life at a time when she was extremely vulnerable and her future was uncertain.

In 1986, Maria left her home in Moroleón, Guanajuato, Mexico, for Brentwood, California where she became a farm worker with the Chechini & Chechini Asparagus Company. She was 18 years old, knew very little English and spent long, grueling hours packing asparagus all day.

The uncertainties of life were even more overwhelming when Maria became a young mother with two daughters. Preschool was too expensive, but she needed childcare. That's when she found out about the Head Start preschool program for early learning development.

"When I knew there was a place to bring my children where they were going to be safe and learn, I went to work feeling very well," says Maria, who starts choking up. "When they came home and I asked them 'How was your day?' and they started talking about the activities, the books, the stories, the art... that was great. That's the reason why I fell in love with this profession. It encouraged me to do this for the rest of my life."

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Head Start Teacher Feature, Maria Rios

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Maria decided to attend Los Medanos College (LMC) and earn an Associate degree in Child Development. Twenty-one years later, she is a Master Teacher working at the Marsh Creek Head Start Center in Brentwood, helping other young children get off to the right start.

“We teach children a lot of life skills,” says Maria. Her daughters took those same life skills and put them to good use. Evelyn (now 22 years old) graduated from Sacramento State University with a degree in Criminal Justice and today she works as a Behavioral Intervention Therapist. Katzvianey, now 20 years old, earned her associate degree from LMC and will be working on a Bachelor degree in Psychology at Sacramento State University. Maria’s youngest son will be a sophomore at Freedom High School in Oakley.



Maria comforts one of her students during class. She says the job is demanding, but very rewarding because she is helping teach children skills they will use far into adulthood. **CLICK** on the play button to hear from Maria.



Maria (far right) was packing asparagus in the fields around Brentwood when she sent her daughters to Head Start. That’s when she realized she wanted to become a preschool teacher.



Maria graduated with an Associate Degree from Los Medanos Community College and got her first job with Head Start.

Maria’s Rios’ story is part of a Head Start teacher recruitment campaign. Due to the pandemic, nationwide childcare staff has decreased more than 17 percent. If you know anyone who may be interested in a career with Contra Costa County Head Start, encourage them to contact the EHSD Personnel office (925) 608.5020 or [apply online](#).



Mud Day at CSB and Around the World

By Isabel Renggenathen,
CSB Assistant Director - Project

Lavonia Allen preschoolers dig for coins buried in the mud

On June 29, 2021, children and teachers from all of CSB Early Head Start and Head Start sites joined children and adults from around the globe to celebrate International Mud Day. International Mud Day aims to connect children from around world by encouraging them to experience the joy of playing with and playing in the mud. Early childhood professionals are encouraged to organize activities that prompt mud play.

Mud play is important because it allows children to develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills, increase awareness of their senses, particularly touch, and improve hand-eye coordination. It also encourages a positive relationship with earth.

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Mud Day at CSB and Around the World

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Teachers found creative and fun mud-play activities for different age groups to celebrate International Mud Day. Activities included, but were not limited to, digging through the mud to find buried coins, making mud pies, ice cream, baby dolls and soup, and painting with mud. The children loved playing in the mud and getting dirty, and look forward to more planned mud play activities.



Ms. Manjeet from George Miller Concord infant room playing with the mud with a young toddler.

TLC End-of-Year Celebration

By Isabel Renggenathen, CSB Assistant Director - Project

We were pleased to celebrate the 2020-21 Together Learning and Collaborating (TLC) cohort on June 24th. TLC is a professional development opportunity for teachers to learn from each other in a safe, caring, and responsive group environment with guidance from Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) instructors.

The 2020-2021 cohort consisted of nine teaching staff from five directly-operated Head Start and Early Head Start sites, and two sites from the YMCA. Participants in the Head Start group included **Lorena Perea**, **Khaek Thanthavongsa**, **Jennifer Cabral**, and **Jessica Murillo**, and they

were coached by **Crystal McClendon-Gourdine**. Participants in the Early Head Start group included **Turpekai Mangal**, **Manjeet Suman**, **Kafia Amin**, **Patricia Moreno**, and **Phone Lavanh**, and their coach was **Josephine Lee**.

During the TLC End-of-the-Year celebration, coaches and supervisors reflected on each participant and shared how honored they were to support the professional growth of these teaching staff members. Participants also shared how much they valued the coaches' feedback and enjoyed collaborating. They completed a survey to provide additional feedback on their experiences.

The survey results showed that participants were able to significantly improve their teaching practices and interactions with children, and that 90 percent of them highly recommend that their colleagues participate in TLC.

Participants expressed sadness that the 2020-2021 TLC cohort had ended, but look forward to opportunities to collaborate with one another in the near future.



Above: TLC participants from the Zoom celebration on June 24, 2021



Left to right: Ms. Jennifer from Los Arboles, Coach Crystal with Ms. Tiffany from Balboa via Zoom, Ms. Jessica from YMCA Giant Road, and Ms. Lorena from Ambrose

New CSB Director Talks about the LGBTQ Community

Cuerpo Corazón Comunidad is a Marin County Facebook Live show, and on June 23rd EHSD's new Community Services Bureau Director **Aaron Alarcón-Bowen** was a featured guest. The show covers current social and community service topics relevant to the Marin County Hispanic population. The recent program topic was, "Orgullo y apoyo a la comunidad LGBTQ" (pride and support for the LGBTQ community). Aaron spoke about LGBTQ History Month during the Spanish-language program, including his personal experiences, his new role as the Community

Services Bureau Executive Director and CSB's work in the community.

"Being an openly gay man for me is important because I am not ashamed of my identity. At the same time, I am much more than just my sexual orientation. I look forward to the time when being gay (or queer, or lesbian, or whatever orientation/nomenclature we identify with) is no longer that important for our society, and we are judged not based on aspects that we have no control of, but on our contribution to our community," says Aaron.



CSB Director Aaron Alarcón-Bowen spoke about his journey and his hope that LGBTQ is simply seen as another part of one's overall identity. CLICK on the play button to view the program. Aaron was also the host of the Cuerpo Corazón Comunidad show. You can watch him host the show by CLICKING on this link: tinyurl.com/dmd5xm2f.

Wanted: Input for Plan Welcoming Immigrants

By Claudia Lam, EHSD Workforce Services Specialist & Gateways for Growth Representative

Share your experiences and ideas to increase support for immigrants in Contra Costa County. As part of a community-driven process, feedback will be incorporated into a Welcoming Plan for Immigrant Inclusion to be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Register for a virtual focus group.



Over
1 in 4

Contra Costa residents are Immigrants

- Tuesday, August 3, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 11, 2 p.m.–4 p.m.
- Thursday, August 19, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
- Saturday, August 28, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Focus group sessions with community partners will take place in September. Volunteer facilitators who speak Vietnamese, Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese, Korean, Russian, Punjabi, Hindi, Dari, or Lao are needed. Training and support will be provided.

Contact: Jacquie Mesner,
jmesner@ehsd.cccounty.us, (925) 608-4886

[Gateways for Growth – Stand Together Contra Costa](#)

[Follow Gateways for Growth Contra Costa - Home | Facebook](#)

Share and fill out our Community Input Survey





Pets Need to be Prepared, Too

By Cora Young, EHSD Emergency & Safety Coordinator

With high-risk fire season in full swing, now is the time to make sure you and your furry family members are prepared.

Your family's evacuation plan should include an emergency kit for your pet. Review these kits regularly to ensure their contents are fresh. Here are some items to consider including in your pet's emergency kit:

Leash and collar with ID tag/crate or sturdy carrier for each pet. Consider including a picture of you and your pet together to help you document ownership and assist in identifying lost pets

Several days' supply of your pet's food and water in airtight, waterproof containers as well as food and water bowls

Medications and sanitation needs (litter and litter box, and/or plastic trash bags)

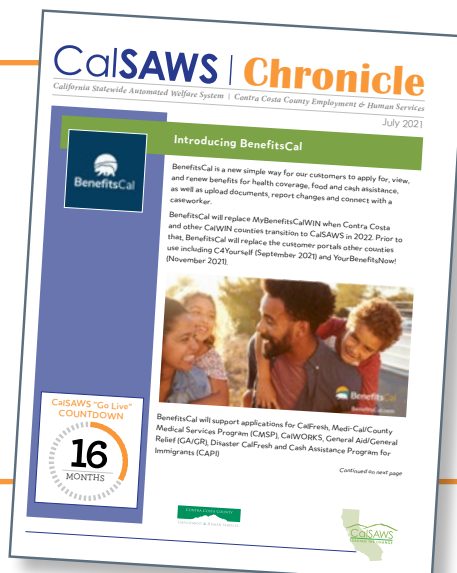
Also, consider microchipping and registering your pet in case they get lost or separated during an emergency or disaster

You can find more on Pet Preparedness at [Ready.gov/pets](https://ready.gov/pets).

CalSAWS Chronicle, July 2021

In the July issue of *CalSAWS Chronicle*, learn more about BenefitsCal, the new customer portal that will eventually replace MyBenefitsCalWIN. Find it here:

[CalSAWS Chronicle- July issue](#)



People and a Place We Won't Forget

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager



Tish Gallegos (far left) and her daughter, Analisa (far right), posing for pictures with the Morales family in front of their newly-built home.

As I grew up, I heard almost every type of music at home. Along with rock, R&B, classical, and pop hits of the day, we listened to my parents' favorite mariachi songs from albums on the turntable. *La Golondrina* (The Swallow) is one I remember well. The old song's beautiful words have new meaning for me following a recent trip my daughter Analisa and I took to Mexico.

In June, we went to Tijuana in Baja California as part of a 15-person team from our church. This mission trip may have been about "serving those in need," yet we received much more than we could offer.

The first morning we spent time with people who live on the streets, bringing



Raising the first wall

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People and a Place We Won't Forget

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them sandwiches and water. Our big project for the rest of the week was building a house for the Morales family who was living in a crumbling, tattered concrete structure. Our Martinez team, along with the Morales' neighbors and friends, worked together to add a modest, but lovely home on the family's property. More than painting and putting up walls, we built connections with the family and people we worked alongside, including our hosts from [Puente de Amistad](#), who serve the people of Tijuana year round.

The Morales family and their friends showed humility, warmth and generosity, caring for us as they prepared delicious chicken stew, tamales, and quesadillas during our workdays. They opened up to us with their stories of adversity and hope. They live with few material comforts (by our standards), yet I sensed no disappointment or regret from them. Instead, I saw them living with profound dignity and gratitude for family, community and simple blessings.

Slowing down to view life through this lens helped me reflect on what is truly important, resetting my perspective and checking myself for complaining over insignificant things. Despite their circumstances, I saw people who choose to live in abundance, with immense capacity for giving.

The morning we left Tijuana, Marcial, one of the lead builders on the host team there, affectionately sang *La Golondrina* to us. It is a song about departure, longing and hope of return. As we hold our weeklong experience in our hearts, Analisa and I hope and plan to stay connected with the people we met while in Tijuana, a place that we *will not forget*.



A grateful Morales family inside their new home.



To hear Marcial sing part of *La Golondrina*, click the arrow on the photo. The last line - *Adiós, amigo, y si no vuelvo a verte, que seas feliz y no te olvides de aquí* - loosely translates to "Goodbye, friend, and if I do not see you again, I wish you to be happy and don't forget this place."

If you would like to write about an enriching personal experience for *Headlines*, please send it to Headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us.

New Faces at Staff Development!

By Linda Linnell, Staff Development Supervisor

2021 has been a big year of changes in Staff Development. Three retirements and a promotion created vacancies that allowed us to hire Interim Manager Tracey Lee, and three TU Specialists: Rupinder Sandhu, Krista Holguin and LaTosha Stockholm. The trainers joined the team in July 19th and hit the ground running! Introducing...



Rupinder Sandhu

Rupinder has been with Contra Costa County since 2010. She started her career as an Eligibility Worker and promoted steadily through the ranks. She has been an EW Supervisor since 2016, supervising EWTU, OJT, CalWORKs Field, and Multi Program Intake units. Rupinder has expertise in all programs. She has a Bachelor's of Arts degree, with majors in Psychology, English and Political Science. Rupinder is excited about her new role in Staff Development and eager to share her talents with EHSD.



Krista Holguin

Krista began her career with Contra Costa County in 2004 as an Eligibility Worker I. She promoted to EW II, EW Specialist and to EW Supervisor over the 17 years that followed. She is currently supervising EWTU and her contributions make a difference, wherever she serves. Krista brings both program and system expertise to our team. She will continue to guide staff through transformational change in her role as a Staff Development Specialist.



LaTosha Stockholm

LaTosha has been with EHSD for more than 15 years, and has experience in CalWORKs and Welfare to Work with over seven years honing her skills in supervision. She has an A.A. in Sociology and a B.A. in Human Development. She is a huge fan of Disneyland and enjoys bringing fun and creativity to the workplace. LaTosha is excited to be a part of the Staff Development team, and looks forward to serving EHSD in her new role.

Do Your Part, Save Water

By Cora Young, EHSD Emergency & Safety Coordinator

This past winter our state experienced its second dry winter in a row. This is only five years from our most recent, historically notable drought event that spanned from 2012 to 2016.

In May, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency and issued a drought declaration in 41 of California's 58 counties, including Contra Costa, that covers 30 percent of our state's population. According to the [United States Drought Monitor map](#), the entire San Francisco Bay Area is experiencing an "extreme drought." Being in this category is a wake-up call that affirms the heightened risk of a potentially catastrophic wildfire season.

At EHSD, here are a few ways you can conserve water while at work:

- Use lower flow water pressure at the sink by only opening the faucet part-way
- Turn off the water faucet while scrubbing your hands with soap and when washing dishes before turning water back on for rinsing
- Double-check to make sure the faucet is not dripping after use
- Apply water reuse practices such irrigating indoor plants with leftover drinking water

Contra Costa County is partnering with several regional water agencies and conservation organizations for the [Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge](#), which details actions that can be taken at home to conserve energy, water, and save money! You can sign up to join the challenge, find tips on being water wise at home, and learn how to save money doing it. To encourage all California residents to conserve, the state launched the [Save Our Water website](#), offering tips for embracing wise water use as a daily practice.

Thank you for doing your part to conserve water in the workplace and everywhere you can.



Free Resources
from Contra
Costa Water
District

[CCWD Water
Efficiency](#)

[CCWD Free Water
Conservation Devices](#)

Wildfire Helpful Reminders and Safety Tips

Equipment Use Safety

- Never mow or trim dry grass on a Red Flag Warning Day. (Mow before 10 a.m. on a day when it's not hot and windy).
- Never use lawn mowers in dry vegetation.
- Spark arrestors are required in wildland areas on all portable gasoline powered equipment.

Defensible Space

- Residents should make sure they have 100 feet of defensible space around structures.
- Clear dead weeds and vegetation.
- Remove leaves and needles from gutters.
- Trim branches 6 feet from the ground.

Vehicle

- Never pull over in dry grass.
- Ensure trailer chains don't drag on the ground.
- Make sure your vehicle is properly maintained.
- Have proper tire pressure to avoid driving on wheel rim.
- Never let your brake pads wear too thin.

Other

- Make sure cigarette butts and other smoking materials are properly extinguished.
- Never burn landscape debris like leaves or branches on NO Burn Days or when it's windy or areas where not allowed.
- Target shoot only in approved areas, use lead ammunition only, and never at metal targets.
- Report any suspicious activities to prevent arson.

Contra Costa County Residents Guide to WILDFIRE Preparedness & Evacuation

Vallejo, Antioch, Concord, Oakland, San Francisco, San Leandro

California Public Utilities Commission's High Fire Threat Zones, 2019

PREPARE YOUR HOME *How will you ready your home?*

HAVE A PLAN *What will you do?*

MAKE A KIT *What do you need?*

STAY INFORMED *How will you get information?*

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS *How will you work together?*

See ConFire's Resident's Guide to Wildfire for more information on preparedness and evacuation:
[English](#) [Spanish](#)



Hooray for Reading!

More Open Hours at 17 Contra Costa County Libraries

Contra Costa County Library has every reason to celebrate after increasing its open hours at 17 community libraries in July. Thanks to funding from city partners, nine libraries added hours. The County also increased the number of base hours it funds at each library from 35 to 40, allowing for an increase in hours at eight libraries. In total, libraries will be open an additional 121 hours per week, 16.5 hours more per week than before the pandemic began.

“It is wonderful that so many cities and towns in the county see the immense value library services provide to our communities,” said Diane Burgis, chair of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. “Prioritizing an increase to library hours means more access to important services and resources for everyone.”

Five libraries also changed their hours of operation as of July 1st. The new schedules help align staffing at libraries across the county and address a goal in the Library’s Strategic Plan, to deliver a consistent, high-quality, and inviting experience at all points of contact.

Following the Independence Day holiday, three additional libraries opened to the public for the first time in more than 15 months. The Pinole Library, which had been serving as a COVID-19 test site since May of 2020, opened. The Rodeo Library and the Crockett Library, two of the smaller libraries that have offered only Front Door service in recent months due to social distancing requirements, have also reopened.

The Ygnacio Valley Library in Walnut Creek is no longer serving as a COVID-19 test site. The parking lot is currently being replaced and the library is slated to reopen in early fall (exact date TBD).

“Our libraries served our communities in so many ways during the pandemic, with a safe Front Door Service option, as COVID test sites, using 3D printers to create PPE, collecting donations, and with more than 70 staff members working in disaster service roles,” said County Librarian Alison McKee. “We are very proud of the work we provided but are more excited to have all 26 of our libraries open to the public very soon.”

For the complete list of library locations and hours, click [here](#).

Visit cclib.org to sign up for a library card and get connected to books and resources. For questions about Library services and programming or account information, contact the Library via online [Chat](#), email ask@library.cccounty.us or text questions to (925) 290-7627.





SERVICE AWARDS | NEW EMPLOYEES | RETIREES

SERVICE AWARDS

25 YEARS

Frances Banda, Social Worker III, CFS
Maria Sepulveda, Social Worker, AAS

20 YEARS

Betty Garcia, Eligibility Worker III, WFS
Lupe Garcia, Teacher-Project, CSB
Chau Nguyen, Social Worker III, CFS
Suliana Teo, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS

15 YEARS

Marcie Clark, Departmental HR Analyst II, Admin
Kellie Ellison, Clerical Supervisor, Admin
Shelley Nickerson, Clerk-Specialist Level, WFS
Barbara Sumler, Associate Teacher-Project, CSB
Adrienne Tucker, Soc Svc Employment Place Cnsl,
WDB

10 YEARS

Christine Agostinho, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS
Kimberly Allen, Soc Svc Program Assistant, AAS
Cindy Alvarez, Clerk-Senior Level, WFS
Cassandra Amador, Social Work Supervisor I, WFS
Kea Chhay, Social Worker, AAS
Pascualito Co, Social Worker, WFS
Alice Dietrich, Workforce Svcs Specialist, WFS
Tammy Gochenouer, Eligibility Work Supervisor I,
WFS
Michael Homa, Soc Svc Sr Welf Fraud Fid Invs, Admin
Sandra Orellana, Eligibility Work Supervisor I, WFS
Kristine Phelan, Social Worker, WFS

New Employees and Retirees on next page

Continued from previous page



SERVICE AWARDS | NEW EMPLOYEES | RETIREES

NEW EMPLOYEES

Dylan Ackelbein, Info Systems Asst. I, Admin
Iyadunni Adeyeni, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Aaron Alarcon-Bowen, Community Services Director,
CSB
Audrea Alcalá, Clerk-Experienced Level, Admin
Carlos Alcazar, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS
Wilfredo Aldana, Info Systems Tech II, Admin
Raymund Baldoza, Accountant III, Admin
Michelle Brackett, Clerk-Senior Level, WFS
Rosalinda Camacho, Social Worker, AAS
Tajelisa Carter, Social Worker, AAS
Samantha Chandar, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Komal Dayal, Accountant III, CSB
Cristina Garotto, Social Worker, AAS
Nicole Hartman, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Trinidad Huerta, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS

Lynnette Ivy, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Noppol Keeratiyakul, Administrative Services Asst. III,
Admin
Carlos Manuel, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS
Janice Matthews, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Sara Leahy Mendez, Clerk-Experienced Level, CFS
Kacey Miller, Social Worker III, AAS
Michael Morris, Accountant III, CSB
Magda Picasso, Clerk Specialist, WFS
Tara Segura, Eligibility Work Supervisor, WFS
Ramadhan Ssentongo, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS
Louisa Snell, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS
Khushbu Thakar, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB
Marlina Wagoner, Administrative Services Asst. III,
Admin
Stephanie Washington, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS

RETIREES

Gina Prediville, Accounting Technician, Admin
Ruth Atkin, Senior Staff Assistant, AAS
Donna Burton, Sr Benefits Clerk, AAS
Sherri Delchiaro, Soc Svc Program Asst, WFS
Curtiss Dodson, Sr Soc Svc Info Sys Analyst, Admin

Gabriel Kaplan, Social Worker III, CFS
Sallie Leach-Barta, Social Worker III, CFS
Mary Anne Marks, Clerk-Senior Level, Admin
Karen Smith, Clerical Supervisor, WFS
Malama Sunia-Faoliu, Eligibility Work Supervisor, WFS

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

August

- **HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**
- **AUGUST 10** – National S'mores Day
- **AUGUST 13** – Left Hander's Day
- **AUGUST 21** – Senior Citizens Day

September

- **HEALTHY AGING MONTH**
- **SEPTEMBER 6** – Labor Day (holiday)
- **SEPTEMBER 12** – Grandparents Day
- **SEPTEMBER 15-16** – Yom Kippur
- **SEPTEMBER 19** – Oktoberfest Begins
- **SEPTEMBER 21** – International Day of Peace
- **SEPTEMBER 22** – Fall Prevention Awareness Day / Autumn Equinox
- **SEPTEMBER 24** – Native American Day

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

August 5 or 19 • 4 to 6 p.m.
September 2 or 16 • 4 to 6 p.m.
October 7 or 21 • 4 to 6 p.m.

For more information about becoming a Resource Parent visit us at 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

We Care... You Care

<http://ehsdhome/Pages/Service-Champions.aspx>

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

Follow us on Twitter
@ContraCostaEHSD
Like us on Facebook



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