

# Headlines



**Gizmo & Wasabi  
2021 Halloween Pet  
Parade Champions**



**Honoring  
EHSD Veterans**

**Take the County  
Employee Survey**

**Above and Beyond  
Customer Service Champions,  
Maria Preciado & Kimberly Durley**



## EHSD Veterans

Veterans Day is a day not only to remember those who died in service to our country, but also to recognize those who continue to serve today. Americans are encouraged to say thank you to those who fulfill this patriotic duty to maintain the freedoms of our country. This year, Veterans Day is on Thursday, November 11th, and is a County holiday.

We would like to honor all EHSD veterans in our November issue. We thank you for your service, and we thank you for your continued service to Contra Costa County residents in need. We also honor our veterans' families and loved ones.

For each veteran, we have listed their branch of service, rank, classification, years served, EHSD bureau and title.

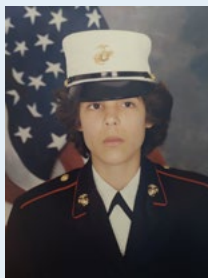


**Lidia Gonzalez**  
U.S. Army (Active) and U.S. Army Reserve  
SGT (E-5) Enlisted, 31B Military Police  
2002-2011  
Children and Family Services, Social Worker II



**Cheryl Deck**  
U.S. Army (Dental Corps)  
Specialist 5 (Dental Specialist)  
1974-1978  
Children and Family Services, Sr. Level Clerk  
in Resource Family Approval (RFA) Unit

**Iliana Choate**  
U.S. Marines  
Lance Corporal  
1986-1988  
Admin. Services,  
Staff Development Specialist



**Michael K. Glass**  
U.S. Navy  
Machinist's Mate, MM2  
(Second class Petty Officer)  
1985-1993  
Admin. Services, Information Systems  
Programmer/Analyst IV

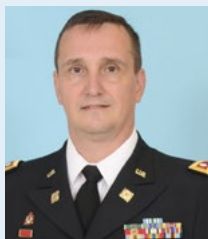


**Mariano Vazquez**  
U.S. Marines  
E-5 Sargent  
2004-2008  
Aging and Adult Services, Social Worker



**Ritche Martija**  
U.S. Army  
Staff Sergeant  
2000-2008  
Community Services Bureau,  
Business Systems Analyst

**Michael Roark**  
U.S. Army  
Lieutenant Colonel, Logistics Officer (90A),  
Simulations Officer (57A),  
1988-2021 (Retired Aug 2021)  
Admin. Services,  
Information Systems Manager I



**Araceli Ramos**  
ARMY  
Staff Sergeant/Noncommissioned Officer  
1986-2008  
Aging and Adult Services,  
Eligibility Worker III



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**HONORING ALL WHO HAVE SERVED**

## EHSD Veterans

Continued from previous page



**Robert Raines**  
U.S. Navy  
E6 Storekeeper  
1977-1985  
Workforce Services, Clerk Specialist



**Joe Louis Blacksher Jr.**  
U.S. Army  
Sergeant 11B (infantry) 12B (combat engineer)  
1986-1994  
Aging and Adult Services,  
IHSS Social Worker



**Roy DeLa Vega**  
U.S. Army  
Specialist Four – E4  
1970-1973  
Admin. Services, Senior Social Services  
Information Systems Analyst



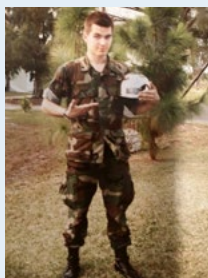
**Marco Ruiz Madrigal**  
U.S. Navy  
Petty Officer Third Class / Machinist Mate  
2001-2004  
Aging and Adult Services,  
Eligibility Worker III



**George E. Carter III**  
Army  
E-4, 19E Armor Crewman  
1984-1986  
Workforce Development Board, Workforce  
Services Specialist/CCWORKS Manager



**Billy Crawford**  
U.S. Navy  
Machinist Mate 3rd Class Petty Officer  
1985-1989  
Aging and Adult Services,  
APS Social Worker III



**Michael McGloin**  
U.S. Army  
Specialist 4 Combat Medic 91BP  
1985-1988  
Aging and Adult Services,  
Information & Assistance Social Worker



HONORING ALL WHO HAVE SERVED

# Homelessness Awareness Month in November

By Sherry Lynn Peralta, Policy & Planning Division Manager

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness is promoting learning, engagement and celebration during the month of November, and honoring **National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week** (November 13-21), an annual recognition taking place the week before Thanksgiving.


This year, the Council on Homelessness will recognize volunteers, landlords, innovative projects, jurisdictions and hotel owners who have made a significant impact on the lives of people facing homelessness at the November Continuum of Care (CoC) [Learning Hub on November 8th](#). This panel discussion is an opportunity to hear from people who have experienced homelessness and moved to housing in Contra Costa. The Q&A session will also feature agencies that helped these individuals and families achieve their goals.

We are grateful to our hardworking and committed EHSD staff members who work closely with our homeless and General Assistance (GA) population – helping the most vulnerable in our

County find housing or file for SSI benefits. The COVID pandemic has taken an immense toll on so many and, with the expiration of the County evictions moratorium on September 30th, our housing programs provide a critical safety net now more than ever.

The [Homeless Awareness Toolkit](#) from Contra Costa Health, Housing and Homelessness (H3) is available to help promote all that is happening throughout November. The toolkit connects people with ways to learn about homelessness, engage in events (see toolkit's calendar for dates, Zoom links, etc.), volunteering and donation opportunities, and celebrate the experiences and successes of addressing homelessness in Contra Costa.

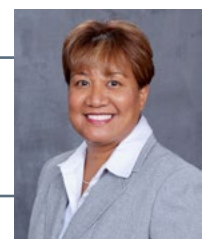
For more information, visit <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/awards.php>.



**“I went to work each day and still could not afford to pay rent.”  
- Joshua**

“H.O.P.E. – Hearing Other People’s Stories” is a powerful video to learn directly from people who have experienced homelessness – their challenges, what helped them, and what they want you to know. Click on the arrow to view.

Sherry Lynn Peralta, P&P Division Manager, is the Vice Chair of the Council on Homelessness



# Reaching Seniors in East County

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

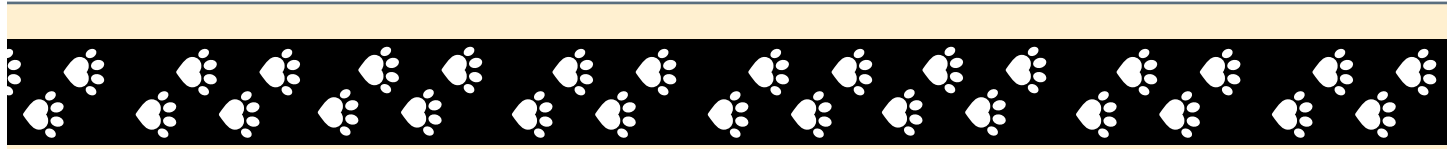
Seniors who live in East Contra Costa County had the opportunity to connect with EHSD programs and community resources at the free Roving Resource Fair on October 28th. Workforce Services Navigators **Maria R. Muñoz** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez**, with IT support from **Fred Aldana** and **Staci May** served a constant flow of people that stopped by EHSD's table in the parking lot of the Oakley Senior Center.

“Overall, it was a great event and the day was perfect to be outdoors,” says Maria, one of the Navigators that Community Relations can always count on to help staff outreach and education events to support our community members.

Maria reports that fifteen community based organizations inquired about the services EHSD provides, and how they can refer clients to the 4 Our Families program. The EHSD team also provided general information to several community members, with a handful asking specific case questions pertaining to active CalFresh cases.



Roving Resource Fair: (L-R) Sandra Zepeda-Lopez, Stacy May, Fred Aldana and Maria R. Muñoz ready to serve



**EHSD Virtual Pet Parade** – starts on page 12

# Roll Up Your Sleeves for the Holiday Food Fight

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

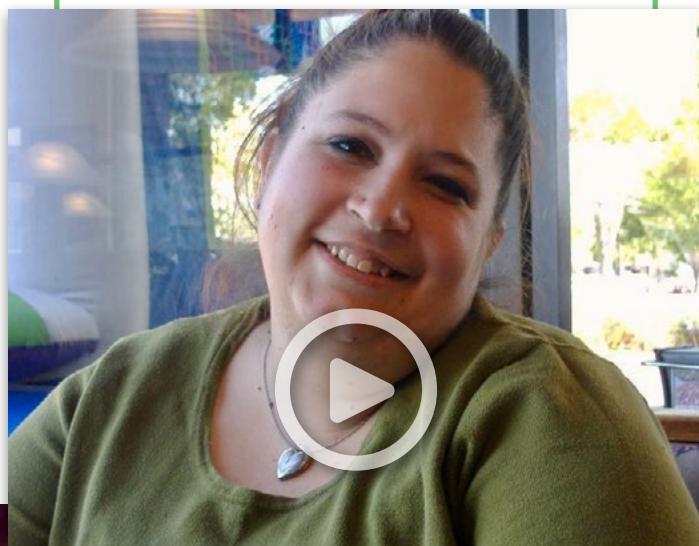
It's time once again to compete – are you ready? The 2021 Holiday Food Fight will launch on Monday, November 15th and end on the last day of the year. The **Counties Care Holiday Food Fight** is the friendly competition between Contra Costa and Solano Counties to support the Food Bank. The prize is the highly coveted Big Apple trophy. Contra Costa won it two years ago and Solano won in 2020. So, 2021 is OUR year to bring the trophy back!

This is the 17th year of the campaign, which has raised close to \$2 million overall for the Food Bank. Of course the real winners are the families who rely on the Food Bank to help supplement their food budgets and get enough nutritious food on the table.

More details about how you can support this year's Holiday Food Fight will soon be available over STARS. Stay tuned and get ready to rumble!

## Call for Building Champions

If you would like to help support the Holiday Food Fight by being a point of contact or coordinating a fundraising activity/event at your location, please email [EventsCommittee@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:EventsCommittee@ehsd.cccounty.us) by Friday, November 12th.



Workforce Services Senior-Level Clerk, **Trina Huerta**, talks about hunger and the need to support the Contra Costa/Solano County Food Bank. Trina is a longtime Holiday Food Fight building champion.



# Combined Charities — Reaching for the \$100K Goal!

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

You have a chance to help community members – AND win a raffle prize – by donating to this year's **Combined Charities Campaign**. The campaign is extended a few weeks and now **ends on Friday, November 19th**.

Donating is super easy and convenient to do online. You can make a one-time contribution or set up monthly payroll deductions that begin in January 2022. Just use this donation link to get it done! <https://give.chcimpact.org/pl/contracostacounty>

To donate by check and to see other Combined Charities details, donation form and donor guide, visit the [staff page](#) on [ehsd.org](http://ehsd.org).

So far, the County is more than half way toward reaching

its \$100,000 goal for the 2021 campaign. Keep those donations coming!

Just after all donations are in and accounted for at the end of the campaign, there will be a final countywide raffle. All Combined Charities donors receive automatic entry for a chance to win!

*Thank you to EHS'D staff for stepping up to help those in need. Your contributions will help Contra Costa County employees reach the 2021 Combined Charities goal!*



Donate to help Contra Costa County charities that support and help people within our community.

# I Walk Challenge Winners!

By Deb Johnson and Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media

The winners are...everybody who stepped up, stepped out and upped their steps! EHSD's I Walk Challenge is all about health and wellness, and the word on the pavement is that many who participated added more steps to their daily activity than they might have without being part of the challenge. That adds up to a lot of WINNING among all teams! Congratulations and we hope you had fun stepping out with your co-workers and friends.

**The building with the highest percentage of walkers in an EHSD building (per ASSIST):  
CSB Child Care Center at 2000 Giaramita Avenue, N. Richmond with 88 percent!**

**The top three teams with the highest average steps walked (not necessarily the team with the most steps):**

Team	Average Steps
<b>2 Steps Ahead, Ooh Baby!</b>	450,388
<b>Connecting with Steps</b>	399,932
<b>Queen of Soles</b>	391,632

**Individual staff members in each step bracket who walked the most steps:**

Bracket	Walker/Bureau	Total Steps	Team	Location
600,000 to 999,999	<b>Dyann Rosales/WFS</b>	895,370	2 Steps Ahead, Ooh Baby!	4545 Delta Fair, Antioch
400,000 to 599,999	<b>Laura Malone/CFS</b>	580,832	Your Pace or Mine?	40 Douglas, Martinez
100,000 to 399,999	<b>Laneisha Terrell/Admin.</b>	394,340	Your Pace or Mine?	40 Douglas, Martinez

And a shout out to a few teams – **Cirque Du Sore Legs, The Tator Trots, Zapatos Gatos, and The Young and the Breathless** – who came up with especially creative and clever names that inspired some fun for this department event.

To everyone who participated in the **I Walk Challenge**, may you continue to receive the benefits of improved mental and physical health from all that stepping!





# Honoring Stephen L. Weir for Decades of Public Service

If you've lived or worked in Contra Costa a while, you may be familiar with the name Steve Weir, the County Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters from 1989-2013, nearly a quarter century.

Mr. Weir's public service career spanned four decades. He also served as Concord City Councilman and Mayor, a member of the Contra Costa Water District, a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and staff member to the late Assemblyman and Senator Dan Boatwright.

In honor of Mr. Weir's public service in Contra Costa County, the Clerk-Recorder-Elections building at 555 Escobar Street in Martinez is now dedicated as the "Stephen L. Weir Building."

The dedication took place during a special ceremony that the Board of Supervisors and current County Clerk-Recorder Debi Cooper hosted on October 4th. They held the event in front of the building at 555 Escobar Street in Martinez.

Chair of the Board of Supervisors Diane Burgis summed it up. "There is not a more fitting legacy than to name the Clerk-Recorder facility after a public servant like Steve Weir," she said. "His career



was distinguished by a reputation for integrity, dedication, diligence, sincerity, and professionalism. Essential to his mandate, Steve brought credibility to the office of the Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters for Contra Costa County."

"For more than 25 years I had the remarkable privilege of working directly with Steve – including 23 years while he was the County Clerk-Recorder," noted Debi Cooper. "He served the public with unfettered integrity, dedication, and a natural genuineness. The Clerk-Recorder-Elections Department continues the customer and voter-centric focus Steve instilled during his tenure. He is a mentor and a friend and I cannot imagine a more fitting tribute to his legacy than dedicating the Clerk-Recorder-Elections facility in his name."

# CFS Welcomes a Fresh Batch of New Social Workers

By Ariana Martinez, CFS Staff Development Specialist

In the midst of unparalleled times, forming strong connections is paramount to regaining any sense of normalcy as we move forward. The latest Children and Family Services (CFS) New Worker Training Unit (NWTU) cohort was able to do just that, bringing levity and grace into the classroom as they navigated newly implemented systems, curriculum, and policies. Throughout the ever-changing circumstances of the pandemic, this group demonstrated an adaptability and sense of cohesion that was apparent to everyone who had the pleasure of working with them during their induction.

On September 28th, this special group of nine Child Welfare Social Workers successfully completed their training and graduated into full time work within the district offices. CFS Deputy Director **Roslyn Gentry** welcomed and awarded each graduation certificates alongside some of their supervisors and division managers during a hybrid graduation ceremony.

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

## FALL 2021 GRADUATES:

### West County

- **Daniel Mendieta** – Continuing Services
- **Oshmin Oden** – Court

### Central County

- **Monika Bugarin** – Continuing Services
- **Scott Greenberg** – Emergency Response
- **Kimberly Clark** – Screening

### East County

- **Teroll Melton** – Emergency Response
- **Janice Corrales** – Emergency Response
- **Sarah Pieters** – Emergency Response
- **Tiffany Wren** – Emergency Response



Group Photo of New Workers (from L to R): **Janice Corrales, Sarah Pieters, Tiffany Wren, Monika Bugarin, Daniel Mendieta, Scott Greenberg, Kimberly Clark, Teroll "TJ" Melton, & Oshmin Oden**

# Your Feedback as a Contra Costa County Employee

Over the past 19 months, our County has faced unprecedented challenges, and we are incredibly proud of the many ways you have all come together to meet the moment with determined professionalism. Our organization adopted a remote work policy that addresses new ways we can remain effective working and delivering services to our customers. Now, as we look to the future, we seek to strengthen our commitment to our greatest asset: our people. We want to gather your feedback about your experience over the past months and use it to better design our future ways of working and spaces.

We need your input now more than ever and encourage you to participate in the following survey. It includes questions about how you typically work, the tools and spaces that allow you to be most effective, and your post-COVID expectations. **Your responses will be confidential and anonymous.**

## How It Works

1. The survey will be open through Friday, November 5.
2. It takes 15 or less to complete and can be closed and completed at a later time for convenience. Simply click on the link below from the same device and browser to return to your survey in progress. Do not complete the questionnaire in “private browsing” or “incognito mode” - this will disable the auto-saving functionality.
3. Your participation is highly encouraged. We encourage you to use this as an opportunity to make your voice heard.

## Survey Link

The survey is administered by our design partner, Gensler, through the Qualtrics survey platform. Please [click here](#) to take the survey. If you have questions about the survey or encounter technical issues, please contact Ananya Kanaiya at [ananya\\_kanaiya@gensler.com](mailto:ananya_kanaiya@gensler.com).



*I thank you in advance for your participation in the employee survey.*

**Monica Nino**  
County Administrator, Contra Costa County

# Pet Parade Delivers Interactive Fun

By Alan Wang, Community Relations, Media Specialist

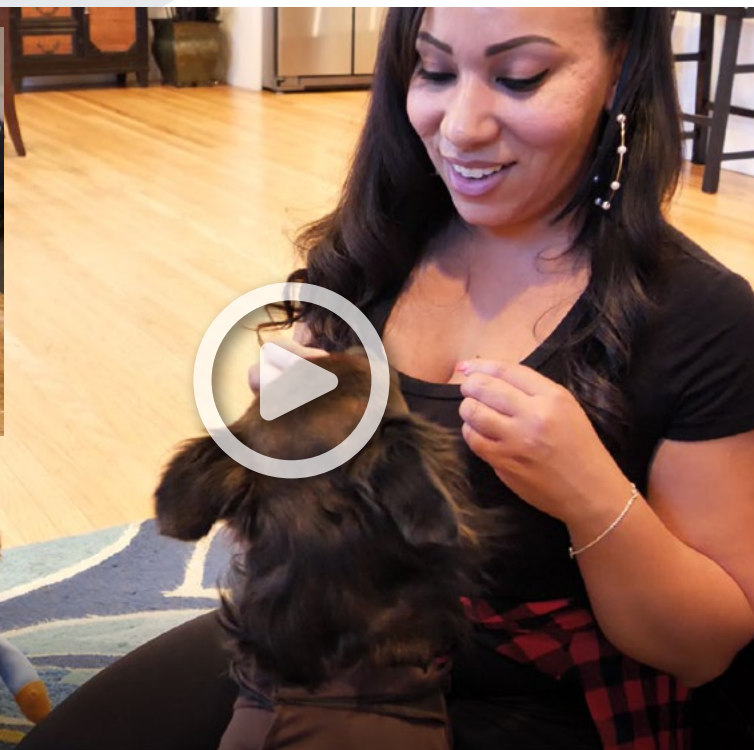
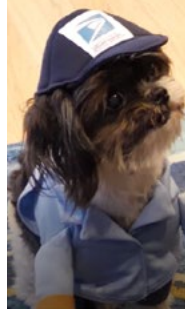
The highly anticipated EHSD Halloween Pet Parade, held on October 28th, via Zoom, included pet dogs and cats (even horses) owned by employees from almost every bureau. The owners took the time to wrestle their pets into hilariously-themed costumes while skillfully firing off the perfect photo to submit for the contest.

This year's winner, 10-year-old Wasabi and five-year-old Gizmo dressed up as the Dueling Delivery Dogs. Wasabi donned a U.S. Postal Carrier's uniform and Gizmo wore a UPS delivery outfit. The winners were chosen by the audience who initially selected three finalists in a Zoom poll, then crowned the winners in a final round of voting. The Delivery Dogs narrowly edged out their 2nd place competitor Charlie (Monday Morning) owned by **Susan Bain**, Admin. Division Manager. 3rd place contestant, Charlie (Baby Chewbacca) owned by **Ritche Martija**, CSB Business Systems Analyst.

Wasabi and Gizmo's owner is **Jenese Culp**, an In-Home Support Services (IHSS) Social Worker at 1275 Hall Avenue. She says her dogs are anxious to get into their costumes only because it means they each get some Pupperoni treats. If you'd like to watch Jenese, Wasabi and Gizmo in action just **CLICK** on the play button in the photo below.

Right: Pet Parade Winners 2: The competition between delivery men is fierce. Gizmo, the UPS driver, is caught snarling at U.S. Postal carrier, Wasabi, who is trying to get a package to its destination at EHSD.

Below: 10-years old, Wasabi, waits patiently for his photo shoot.



Jenese Culp uses Pupperoni treats to coax her dogs into wearing their Halloween costumes. **CLICK** on the play button to watch Wasabi and Gizmo prepare for their photo shoot.

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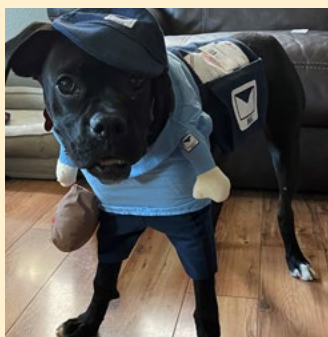
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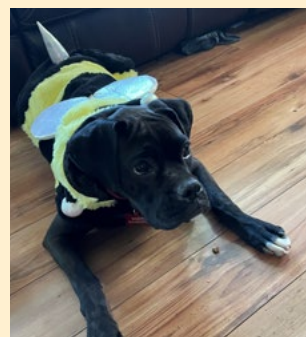
If you missed the Halloween Pet Parade, you can still view all the irresistibly cute pets in costume by watching the [recording](#).



Daz, Camille & Diamond, 49er Fans – **Mari Solis**, CFS Staff Development, CFS



Koda the Mail Carrier, Koda The Care Bear, Koda The Bumble Bee – **Cris Reed**, Eligibility Worker II, WFS



Cody, Stitch from the animated Disney film, Lilo & Stitch – **Lorena Orellana**, Program Manager PA, IHSS



Dueling Delivery Dogs Wasabi and Gizmo – **Jenese Culp**, Social Worker, IHSS



Zoey is a 5 month old female Schnoodle – **Chris Valliere**, Welfare Fraud Investigator, Admin

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## EHSD Virtual Pet Parade

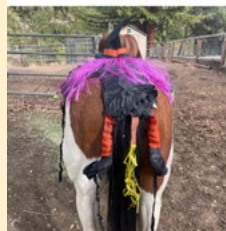
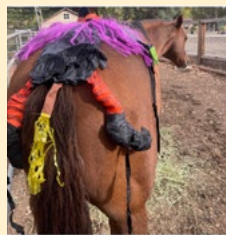
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Paco as Storm Trooper – **Charlotte Alvarez**, Senior Level Clerk, WFS



Obi (French bulldog) as Sulley and Chip (Stanford shire terrier) as Mike Wazowski from Monsters Inc – **Ariel Richards**, Social Worker III, CFS



Tucker (top left), Affaire (bottom left) and Minky (right) – **Tracy Story**, Fiscal Analyst, Admin



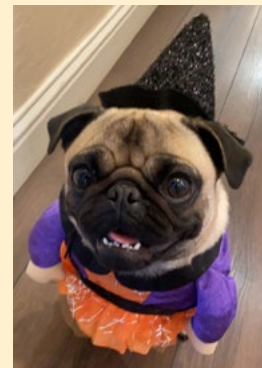
Ramen the Dinosaur, 7-month old labradoodle – **Eve Quezon**, Social Worker, AAS



Tita as Daenerys Targaryen, the mother of dragons from Game of Thrones – **Lidia Gonzalez**, Social Worker II, CFS



Tigger, Pirate – **Rebecca Darnell**, Deputy Director, WFS



Luna (a.k.a Chana) – **Magda Y. Picasso**, Clerical Specialist-Building/Admin Lead, WFS



Charlie, Baby Chewbacca **Ritche Martija**, Business Systems Analyst, CSB



Bella, OG Punk Rocker – **Zaria Minor**, Social Services Program Assistant WFS



Clinton, 15 year-old Persian mix – **Ellen Wienecke**, Senior Level Clerk, CFS

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# Take the Track-It Training Get Ready to Explore

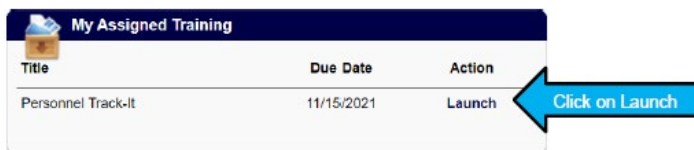
By Cheryl Leonor, Administrative Services Assistant III

Last month, Personnel launched the Track-It system which includes a Self-Service portal where all staff can create, update, and obtain the status of requests (tickets) to the Personnel Services Division. Similar to the Information Technology Help Desk, Personnel's system tracks requests for services including but not limited to Payroll (Ecotime, timesheet adjustments, work schedule changes, employment verifications etc.) changing, updating employee information, supervisory advisement, questions about merit/step increases, and much more. Be sure to check out the full list of categories monitored through Track-It here: [Personnel Track-It Resources](#) in the "Track-It Transaction Type Descriptions" document.

Click [here](#) for a copy of the training material to follow along. Please reference the email sent by Staff Development with instructions on how to access the training per the October 1st [STARS memo](#). To manually access the training:

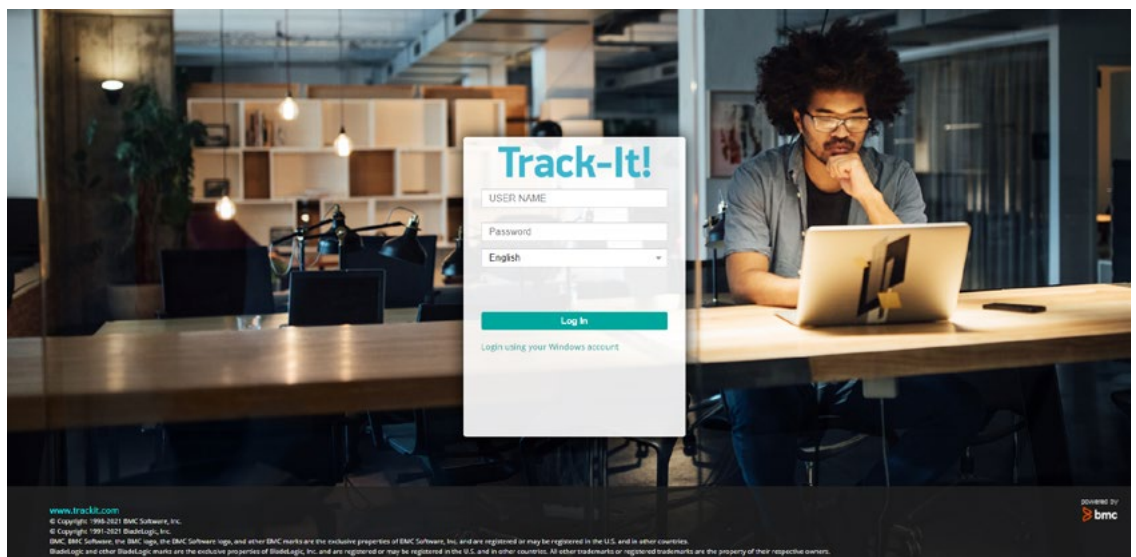
- Go to your EHSD intranet: <http://ehsdhome/Pages/default.aspx>
- Click on "SMART" located on the left column, under "MyLinks"
- Under "My Assigned Training" you will see Personnel Track-It
- Click the "Launch" button to start the training

For questions about the training, contact Staff Development at (925) 608-4570 or [smarthelp@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:smarthelp@ehsd.cccounty.us). If you have trouble logging in to [Track-It](#), contact the IT Help Desk at 1-7200 or 521-7200. Take the training and explore [Track-It](#) today!



Title	Due Date	Action
Personnel Track-It	11/15/2021	Launch

Prior to using the system for the first time, you will need to complete an online training. All employees are required to complete this training by November 15, 2021.



## EHSD Nonprofit VESTIA Gives Back During the Holidays

Contributed by Supervisor Candace Andersen, Contra Costa County, District 2

This holiday season, not every Contra Costa County resident will be able to enjoy lavish feasts or an abundance of presents underneath a towering, manicured tree. There are some that may not even have a warm place to sleep during the cold fall and winter nights.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated several of the issues our County was in the process of working to overcome prior to March 2020. With many individuals now out of a job entirely, or grappling with reduced work hours, problems involving housing and food security are more glaring than ever.

For those in need in our County, there are many places to turn to for help. With several

organizations and a network of generous residents, there are resources year-round. Many charities place an emphasis on serving children during the holiday season. Every child deserves to enjoy a magical Christmas with gifts to open.

For the past 35 years, Pleasant Hill-based VESTIA (Volunteer Emergency Services Team in Action) has worked to make this possible. VESTIA, a 501(c)(3) non-profit partner of the

Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD), strives to provide supplemental support to at-risk individuals and families.

Through its partnership with EHSD, VESTIA offers its annual Holiday Helpers Warehouse, connecting community donors ranging from service groups, corporations, churches, schools, and individuals, with Contra Costa residents in need. Many of the residents are referred to the program

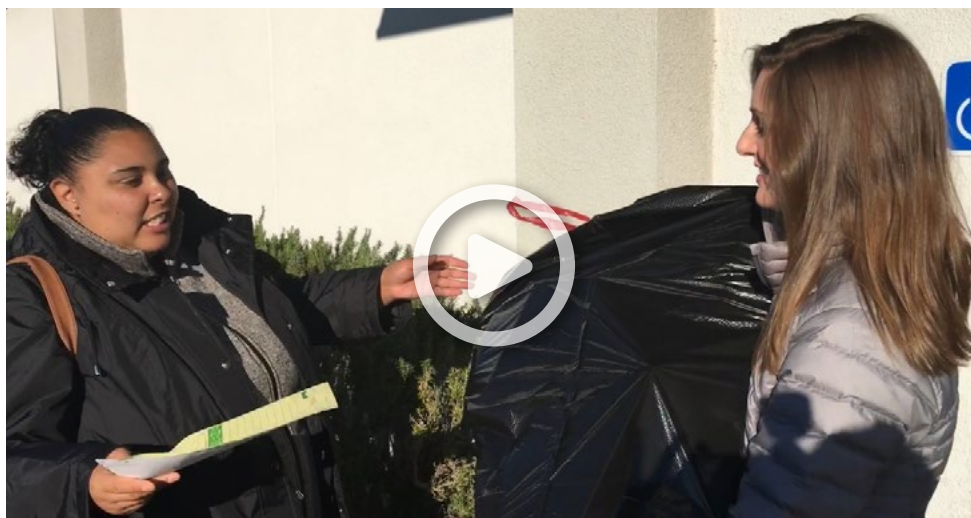
by an EHSD social worker.

Due to the pandemic, last year VESTIA's Holiday Helpers shifted away from a toy giveaway program to providing direct funding support to community-based organizations

serving low-income families in Contra Costa County. To have the greatest impact again this year, all donations to Holiday Helpers will help VESTIA support these organizations that offer services to children and families in need throughout the county.

The Angel Tree Program specifically serves approximately 1,800 foster care children in

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VESTIA's Holiday Helper program now focuses on direct funding to support local organizations that serve low-income families. Although this video shows the toy giveaway from previous years, the Holiday Helpers spirit of giving will continue to have a great impact on the lives of many community members this holiday season.



## EHSD Nonprofit VESTIA Gives Back During the Holidays

Contra Costa. Again this year, in lieu of wrapped gifts, donor “Angels” will be providing \$50 gift cards to children in the program. Angel Tree is an opportunity to tell these children that they matter, and that they are not forgotten.

If you can donate, please visit [www.vestiainc.org](http://www.vestiainc.org) to choose the program you would like to support. VESTIA is also in need of hygiene kits, convenience

kits, and snack kits for EHSD’s homeless clients. You can purchase these items on Amazon. Due to the ongoing pandemic, VESTIA is only taking these in-kind donations by mail. You can send donations to the VESTIA office at 400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523, or drop them off at my Danville office at 309 Diablo Road, Monday through Friday between 9 a.m and 4 p.m. All donations are tax deductible.

## EHSD Virtual Pet Parade *Continued from page 14*



Charlie, 7-year old Bichon Poodle mix, Monday Morning – **Susan Bain**, Division Manager Admin



Bella Eddy – **Karina Eddy**, Senior Level Clerk, WFS



Nacho – **Beverly De Annunzio**, Senior Level Clerk, WFS



# Understanding Diverse Perspectives

Contributed By Personnel Services

In your work and personal lives today, you're likely to encounter people who differ from you—in areas such as culture, ethnicity, age group, physical abilities or limitations, educational background, gender identity and sexual orientation. However, don't let such characteristics divide you! If you take the time to learn about others' lives and treat them with respect, you'll almost certainly find more commonalities than differences.

Magellan Ascend



- Ask people to share some of the customs and practices associated with their cultures.
- Encourage them to tell their personal stories; you'll get a fuller picture of who they are—their feelings, nuances and the richness of their lives. Plus, they'll be pleasantly surprised by your interest.
- Practice accepting ideas that are different from your own, and show respect to those in your daily orbit regardless of their orientation.

Browse more resilience tips and more topics at [www.magellanascent.com](http://www.magellanascent.com).

## UPCOMING WEBINAR:

### *Overcoming Financial Pitfalls* • November 10

Register for this webinar to:

- Identify common financial pitfalls
- Coordinate different financial areas of your life
- Learn how to manage the accumulation, distribution and conservation phases of wealth
- Discover how to build a well-rounded financial plan

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.magellanascent.com](http://www.magellanascent.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.](#)

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES USING A RACIAL EQUITY LENS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH | 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM (PT) | VIRTUAL



Building relationships with families who come into our system takes a level of self and cultural awareness, understanding and trust. Data shows that families of color are disproportionately represented in the foster care system, and experience poorer outcomes. This virtual training will provide some historical context associated with child welfare and the standards that our society upholds regarding parenting. It will include a discussion of types of racism and how they are at play in our global child welfare infrastructure. The training will focus on how child welfare professionals can collaborate with families to enhance their capacity to protect their own children, with a focus on family engagement as a key strategy. Participants will be invited to envision a new system and to articulate their own role in addressing racial equity.



REGISTER NOW



Click the button to register or visit:  
[www.cirinc.org/events](http://www.cirinc.org/events)

By the end of this training, participants will be to:

- Explain the impact of Implicit Bias in child welfare organizations and practice
- Prepare at least two strategies to drive change and promote equity
- Give at least two examples of power-balancing strategies to use with clients
- Describe the importance of family connection and sacredness of family ties



**Presenter Biography:** **Dr. Jessica A. Pryce** is an Assistant Professor at Florida State University. For over 10 years, she has been involved at multiple angles of child welfare (direct practice, teaching + training & policy and research). Her TED Talk on Implicit Racial Bias in Decision Making has since been viewed over 1.3 million times. Dr. Pryce has worked on the frontlines of child welfare, conducted primary research, been a policy advisor to Florida's legislature and taught graduate level courses in child welfare. In 2019, she received a 5-year appointment to the Advisory Board of the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, where she consults and advises on leadership and workforce interventions around the country. She currently sits on the Florida Dependency Court Improvement Panel, alongside judges and advocates who are working towards a more trauma informed approach within the judicial system. Her paramount goal includes re-building and leading a child welfare system that focuses on strengthening families instead of pulling them apart.

**Continuing Education Units:** All attendees will receive a Certificate of Attendance. Participants may apply for continuing education credits (CEUs) when they fill out the follow-up survey. Certificates for CEUs will be mailed to participants within two weeks following the event.

Course meets qualifications for 1 hour of Continuing Education Units (Provider #128510) as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences). CEUs are provided by the Center for Innovation and Resources, Inc. (CIR), which is approved by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists to sponsor continuing education for LMFTs and LCSWs. CIR maintains responsibility for this program/course and its content. CEUs will be available after the webinar for a fee of \$20.

Please contact Kris Murphey at [kris.murphey@cirinc.org](mailto:kris.murphey@cirinc.org), for any questions or concerns or if you require any accommodations to participate in this training.

# Put a Freeze on Winter Fires Winter Home Safety Tips from Con Fire



## Heating

Heating is the second leading cause of U.S. home fires, deaths and injuries.

December, January and February are the peak months for heating fires. Space heaters are the type of equipment most often involved in home heating equipment fires, figuring in two of every five fires (40%).

## Carbon Monoxide

Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, etc. do not burn completely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of CO. Carbon monoxide incidents are more common during the winter months, and in residential properties.

## Winter Storms

Most of the U.S. is at risk for winter storms, which can cause dangerous and sometimes life-threatening conditions. Blinding wind-driven snow, extreme cold, icy road conditions, downed trees and power lines can all wreak havoc on our daily schedules. Home fires occur more in the winter than in any other season, and heating equipment is involved in one of every six reported home fires, and one in every five home fire deaths.

## Generators

Portable generators are useful during power outages, however, many homeowners are unaware that the improper use of portable generators can be risky. The most common dangers associated with portable generators are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, electrical shock or electrocution, and fire hazards.

According to a 2013 Consumer Product Safety Commission report, half of the generator-related deaths happened in the four coldest months of the year, November through February, and portable generators were involved in the majority of carbon monoxide deaths involving engine-driven tools.









## Candles

December is the peak time of year for home candle fires; the top three days for home candle fires are Christmas, New Year's Day, and New Year's Eve. Each year between 2012 and 2016, an average of 8,200 home candle fires were reported each year.

## Electrical

Electrical home fires are a leading cause of home fires in the U.S. Roughly half of all home electrical fires involved electrical distribution or lighting equipment, while nearly another half involved other known types of equipment like washer or dryer fans, and portable or stationary space heaters.

For more info, visit [cccfpd.org](http://cccfpd.org).

 <p>Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.</p>	 <p>Heating equipment is involved in 1 in every 7 home fires and 1 in every 5 home fire deaths.</p>	 <p>Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.</p>
 <p>Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.</p>	 <p>Install and test carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month.</p>	 <p>Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.</p>
 <p>Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year.</p>	 <p>Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.</p>	

# Free Virtual Home Composting Workshop

Practically anyone can learn to compost or improve their existing compost techniques. All they need to do is follow some basic steps they can learn by attending a **FREE Virtual Home Composting Workshop. The Department of Conservation & Development (DCD) is offering the workshop on Saturday, November 20, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon**, and will provide free instructional materials on home composting via email and upon request.

The instructor, Todd Sutton, an expert with more than 29 years in the environmental field, has appeared on national television, including Discovery and History channels, and has educated thousands on waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting.

## Good Reason to Attend

Food waste disposal is a national problem. Food waste is the largest discarded material category in the U.S., accounting for 14.1 percent of the municipal waste stream at 34.3 million tons per



year. Food waste sent to a landfill is buried and decomposes in the absence of oxygen, producing methane, a significant greenhouse gas. In terms of greenhouse gases, methane is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

Composting your yard trimmings and food scraps is easy, adds nutrients to your yard and garden, is kind to our environment, and is good for you too! Save money, save water, and conserve natural resources.

If done correctly, a compost pile can produce finished compost within three months, which can be used as a soil booster.

All Contra Costa County residents are welcome. Call Maureen at (925) 655-2909, email at [maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us](mailto:maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us), or register on Eventbrite. To learn more about composting or recycling, just go to <http://cccrcycle.org/>.

This event will be hosted live online via Zoom. Participants will receive the Zoom link by email from [maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us](mailto:maureen.parkes@dcd.cccounty.us) once they register.

## New Name for State's Health & Human Services Agency



The new logo is modern and the acronym emphasizes California. According to Secretary Mijic, the inclusion of the state's silhouette demonstrates CalHHS' commitment to ALL of California and ALL Californians, and the orange symbolizes hope for a brighter and healthier future for all.

CalHHS has also launched a few updates to its website, the first of a two-phase website refresh.

The California Health and Human Services (CHHS) agency announced it is changing its name (at least its acronym). In October, "CalHHS" unveiled a new logo as well as released updated guiding principles and strategic priorities. The agency considers the logo to be more in line with its goals and efforts as part of its ongoing evolution to be person centered, equity focused and data driven.

"The past year has taught us many powerful lessons," explains Marko Mijic, CalHHS Undersecretary. "As Secretary (Doctor Mark Ghaly) often says, COVID-19 has not only been the greatest unmasker of inequities, it also has been the greatest accelerant for change. As we begin to turn toward the recovery, we are strengthening

our organization so collectively we can seize the moment and ensure that we deliver meaningful outcomes for the people we serve."

In updating its guiding principles and strategic priorities, CalHHS notes the recovery from the pandemic is dependent on the ability to disrupt the very inequities that fueled COVID-19. As a result, CalHHS developed a collective vision for what a Healthy California for All means. To hold itself accountable and ensure that the agency marshals its human and fiscal resources toward its strategic priorities, CalHHS is working with departments to develop a set of data-driven impact goals that will guide its work and ensure that it is delivering meaningful change.



## 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.

**Guidelines:** [http://ehsdhome/Community-Relations/Documents/WeCareThatYouCare%20Guidelines\\_FINAL.pdf](http://ehsdhome/Community-Relations/Documents/WeCareThatYouCare%20Guidelines_FINAL.pdf)

**Nomination Form:** [http://ehsdhome/Community-Relations/Documents/WeCareThatYouCare%20Nomination%20Form\\_FINAL.pdf](http://ehsdhome/Community-Relations/Documents/WeCareThatYouCare%20Nomination%20Form_FINAL.pdf)

## 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!

### Maria Preciado

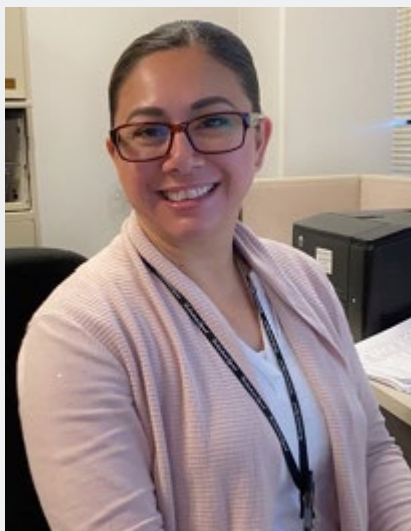
By Dana Wargo, Social Service Medi-Cal Program Analyst

**Maria Preciado** is willing to go above and beyond to deliver excellent customer service and help applicants get access to care.

Maria is so helpful and responsive when an application needs to be expedited or researched. As a Covered California liaison, Maria recently assisted with a complex case where the client was active to both Long-Term Care (LTC) Medi-Cal and Covered California at the same time. Working with Covered California, she was able to determine the best option for the customer to receive continuity of care.

Maria recently assisted with an Afghan Unaccompanied Refugee Minor and was able to give him immediate access to care so he could see the doctor. Maria was also helpful with Carry Forward cases that were not yet assigned but needed review.

Maria is knowledgeable and an excellent communicator. She readily takes on applications that require immediate attention. Maria is a huge help to the Medi-Cal program and is a pleasure to work with.



### Kimberly Durley

By Yesenia Orta,  
Social Work Supervisor I, IHSS



**Kimberly Durley** is an Experienced Level Clerk in IHSS in the Antioch office. Recently, Kimberly provided extra support to her IHSS clerical team. This was a great help to our department as it helped to increase the productivity on our intake cases making it possible to better assist our clients. Congratulations on a job well done!



## SERVICE AWARDS | RETIREES

### SERVICE AWARDS

#### 25 YEARS

Monika Bugarin, Social Worker, AAS  
Keva Dean, Eligibility Work Supervisor I, WFS  
Jaime Lopez, Social Services Program Assistant, CFS  
Kathleen McQuaid, Staff Development Supervisor,  
Admin  
America Patterson, CalWIN Help Desk Supervisor,  
Admin  
Kelly Rule, Social Services Program Assistant, Admin  
Danielle Wharton, Social Service Staff Dev Specialist,  
Admin

#### 15 YEARS

Lori Castillo, EHS Division Manager, CFS  
Jane Lao, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS  
Evaesi Unutoa, Clerk-Specialist Level, WFS

#### 10 YEARS

Emaly Karnsouvong, Associate Teacher-Project, CSB  
Emilzer Novoa, Social Worker, WFS

#### 20 YEARS

Emma Jones, Clerk-Specialist Level, Admin  
Karen Smith, Clerical Supervisor, WFS

### RETIREES

Cheryl Lazorik, Social Worker III, CFS  
Valerie Stewart, Eligibility Work Sup., Admin  
Vinh Troung, Eligibility Worker III, 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](mailto:djohnson@ehsd.cccounty.us) or (925) 608-4904.**

*New Employees listed on next page*





## NEW EMPLOYEES

Anum Akhtar, Clerk - Senior Level, CFS  
Tarra Anderson, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS  
Melissa Anino, Planning/Evaluator-Lvl B, Admin  
Hayley Augustine, Social Casework Asst., CFS  
Carmen Beltran, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB  
Lluvia Bravo, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Loretta Campbell, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Agnes Cerda, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Bernadette Crisologo, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Carlos Dominguez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Guy Fisher, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Jakeline Galdamez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Samantha Gange, Social Caseworker Asst., CFS  
Romina Gonzalez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Noe Gudino, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Roxanne Guillen, Associate Teacher-Proj-Sub, CSB  
Victor Guillen, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Fernando Guterrez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Destiny Hall, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Kameron Hatcher, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Vanessa Holmes, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB  
Renuka Khanal, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS  
Lucie Kheir, Eligibility Worker I, WFS

Ana Kruger, Social Worker III, CFS  
Makel Layton, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Andrew Lejano, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Tasha Lacy, Comprehensive Svcs Asst Mgr-Pr, CSB  
Oscar Menendez, Clerk-Experienced Level, AAS  
Miriam Mogollon, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Noemi Navarro, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB  
Megan O'Brian, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB  
Analyn Parangan, Teacher Assistant Trainee, CSB  
Ellena Pendleton, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Robert Phillips, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Tonia Quinones, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Kimberly Roesler, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Katsiaryn Sheludziayeva, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Alexander Stephens, Social Case Assistant, CFS  
Anthony Summerville, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Maria Sumulong, Clerk-Experienced Level, WFS  
Akiyah Tom, Clerk - Senior Level, WFS  
Miriam Tovar-Gonzalez, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Loren Haydee Tumang, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Alexandra Vargas, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Steven Weaver, Eligibility Worker I, WFS  
Kaitlyn Wellman, Eligibility Worker I, WFS

*Building Brighter  
Futures Together*

# SPREAD THE WORD

## November

**ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH**

**HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS MONTH**

- **NOVEMBER 2** – Election Day
- **NOVEMBER 7** – Daylight Saving Time Ends
- **NOVEMBER 11** – Veterans Day (Holiday)
- **NOVEMBER 15** – Counties Care Holiday Food Fight Begins
- **NOVEMBER 19** – Combined Charities Campaign Ends
- **NOVEMBER 25** – Thanksgiving Day (Holiday)
- **NOVEMBER 26** – Day after Thanksgiving (Holiday)
- **NOVEMBER 28** – Hanukkah begins
- **NOVEMBER 29** – Cyber Monday

## December

- **DECEMBER 6** – Hanukkah Ends
- **DECEMBER 7** – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- **DECEMBER 21** – Winter Solstice (shortest day of the year)
- **DECEMBER 23** – Festivus
- **DECEMBER 24** – Christmas Eve (Holiday)
- **DECEMBER 25** – Christmas Day
- **DECEMBER 26–JANUARY 1** – Kwanzaa
- **DECEMBER 31** – New Year’s Eve (Holiday)
- **DECEMBER 31** – Holiday Food Fight Ends

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

November 4 or 18, 2021 • 4 to 6 p.m.  
December 2 or 16, 2021 • 4 to 6 p.m.  
January 6 or 20, 2022 • 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)

### We Care... You Care

<http://ehshome/Pages/Service-Champions.aspx> and see page 22

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](mailto:headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us), if you have an upcoming event, article, our idea you would like to share.