

# Headlines

**Nancy  
Deweese  
Building a  
Cohesive Foster  
Family Team**

**Medi-Cal Renewals –  
Customers Must Take  
Action to Keep Coverage**

**Big Plans for Asian  
Heritage Celebration**

**Customer Service Champ:  
Uju Chimara**



## Important Info for Your Customers:

# Medi-Cal Redeterminations and Possible Scams

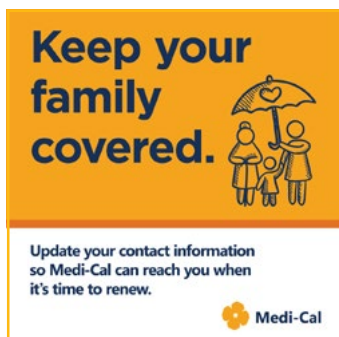
By Tish Gallegos, Community/Media Relations Manager

The unwinding of the Public Health Emergency affects many of our EHSD customers, specifically Medi-Cal beneficiaries in Contra Costa County, who **must take action** to ensure they and their family members keep their Medi-Cal coverage.

The Medi-Cal continuous coverage requirement that was implemented as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic ended in March. In April, the processing of annual redeterminations of eligibility, discontinuances, and negative actions for the Medi-Cal programs resumed.

This means that **starting with June renewal dates**, Medi-Cal recipients must complete their Medi-Cal renewals in the month they are due. They must report any changes to their contact information (name, address, phone number or email) or household situation to EHSD if they live in Contra Costa County.

EHSD is leading an outreach campaign to help community members understand what they need to do to ensure their Medi-Cal coverage continues.



EHSD has adapted materials from the Department of Health Care Service (DHCS) to help reach Medi-Cal beneficiaries about important renewal information.

If you receive inquiries from customers about their Medi-Cal coverage, you can direct them to [KeepMediCalCoverage.org](https://www.keepmedicalcoverage.org) or [MantengaSuMediCal.org](https://www.mantengasumediccal.org) (in Spanish) where they can:

1. Get to [BenefitsCal.com](https://www.benefitscal.com) for Contra Costa County
2. Complete a form to sign up for updates about Medi-Cal renewals (via email or text)
3. See a reminder to check their mailboxes for a letter about Medi-Cal eligibility

Community members can also call the MCSC line, however, we are encouraging them to go [online](#) to update contact info and complete renewals, whenever possible.

### More Tools and Info

**EHSD website** – Medi-Cal page, Help page, and news card on the [EHSD.org](https://ehsd.org) home page.

**Social media** – Posts in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) @ContraCostaEHSD on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

**Flyers and graphics** – Contact Community Relations at [media@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:media@ehsd.cccounty.us).

### Scam Alert

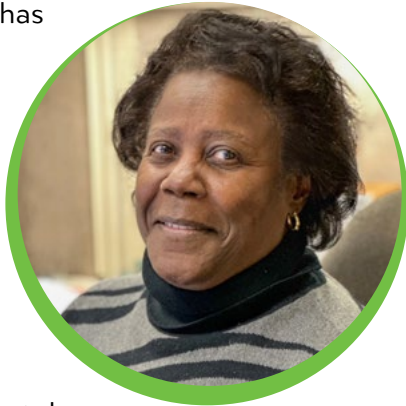
We are also alerting customers about Medi-Cal renewal scams that have unfortunately surfaced throughout the U.S. Anyone who suspects or knows of a scam should report the incident to DHCS by emailing [fraud@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:fraud@dhcs.ca.gov).

**Note that Contra Costa County and the State of California never require payment in the Medi-Cal application or renewal process.**



# Fiscal Unit Promotes Two Departmental Fiscal Officers

**Ernestine Cook** has been promoted from Social Services Fiscal Compliance Accountant to Departmental Fiscal Officer. Ernestine has more than 35 years of governmental



accounting experience working for the City of Birmingham, Alabama, in the Finance Department as a Sr. Accountant, and in the Police Department as a Budget Officer. She also worked at Ventura County Superior Court as a Court Budget Analyst; and in the Ventura County District Attorney's Office as an Accounting Manager. Ernestine holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, an MBA, a post-MBA Certificate in management and organizational behavior, and a Certificate in Leadership.

Ernestine is a Certified Government Finance Officer (CGFO), with a certificate issued by the Government Finance Officers Association of Alabama (GFOAA). She is also a member of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the US and Canada, and served two 2-year terms on the Budget and Fiscal Policy Committee.

When Ernestine is not calculating figures and juggling spreadsheets, she likes to read and watch old Perry Mason shows.

**Donn Matsuzaki** returns to the Fiscal Unit with a promotion to Departmental Fiscal Officer after serving as an ASA III at the Workforce Development Board (WDB). Donn started working for EHSD in 2021 after a long career working in the private sector. He has more than 25 years of experience in data analysis, report writing and training, and 15 years of fiscal and budgetary analysis.



Donn's work history is diverse, including teaching math, working in software, providing tech support and training, as well as owning a property tax consulting business. As a business owner and property tax consultant, Donn managed the \$500 million property tax portfolio for a Fortune 500 grocery chain. He oversaw and planned his company's workflow and calendar, including filing over 2,000 tax returns and paying over 5,000 tax bills across 30 states each year.

He started in the Fiscal Unit supporting the County Expense Claim before moving to WDB to work on budget, grants, contracts and program development for the Contra Costa Healthcare Initiative.

Donn was born and raised in Hawai'i and he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics with coursework in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering. When not at work, Donn enjoys cooking, food and wine adventures, and the great outdoors. Some of his favorite pastimes are skiing, water sports such as paddle boarding and white water rafting, golfing and cycling.

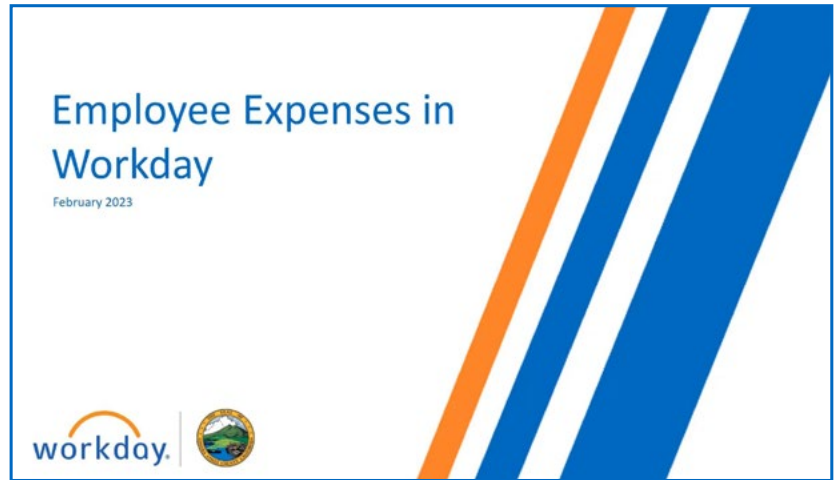
## Your Expense Reports in Workday

You may be aware that there is a new way to enter employee reimbursements now that Contra Costa County is using Workday, its new financial management system that went live on April 1st.

Before you prepare and submit your first Workday expense report, it is important that you take the online training that is now available, as well as reference the job aids that are on Vector Solutions. Detailed instructions for accessing the online training course are at this [STARS link](#).

All County employees are automatically set up with access to create their own expense reports and complete the form via employee self-service. To access Workday, you will need to set up a password and can do so in one of two ways:

Email [HelpDesk@DoIT.cccounty.us](mailto:HelpDesk@DoIT.cccounty.us) or call the **DoIT Help Desk at (925) 313-1250, option #2**. Be prepared to provide your employee number and email address.



Take the 15-minute online training on Vector Solutions to learn how to accurately complete and submit your expense report.



## We Care...You Care

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

**We Care Guidelines:** [click here](#)

**We Care Nomination Form:** [click here](#)



## Financial Wellbeing

Contributed by Personnel Services

Magellan Ascend

Financial experts generally define financial wellbeing as a state where you can manage your bills and expenses, pay your debts, weather unexpected emergencies and stay on track with your long-term financial goals. It's also about managing your thoughts and emotions around money.

- Remember that defining your self-worth simply by how much money you have can be harmful to your emotional health.
- Set financial priorities. Decide what matters most to you in life, and think through how you can align your current financial situation with those priorities.
- If you have a partner, convening regular money talks with them will help avoid money conflicts.
- Keep track of your numbers, such as income, expenses, savings, retirement goals and debt. If debt is a problem for you, work with a money coach to develop a debt reduction strategy.
- A money coach can offer expert advice on how you can reach various goals, from investing in education to saving for retirement. *Source: Healthwise Staff*



Browse more articles at <https://member.magellanhealthcare.com/>

### YOUR EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

#### Save on Major Brands & Everyday Essentials

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

#### UPCOMING WEBINAR: Managing Life's Micro-Stressors May 10

This webinar will:

- Define micro-stressors
- Identify common sources and causes
- Describe techniques to manage micro-stress

#### Missed the live webinar?

Webinars are listed in your Dashboard under "Upcoming". If you haven't signed up to use the County Employee Assistance Program yet, follow these two easy steps:  
Step 1: Go to <https://member.magellanhealthcare.com/> and click on "Sign up."

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

# Mentoring Program

By Coordinators Iliana Choate and Antonio Vasquez, Staff Development

We are thrilled to announce the start of the 2023-2024 Mentoring Program.

This year's program will run from August 2023 through January 2024 culminating in a graduation ceremony to be held in the month of February.

The EHSD Mentoring Program was created to offer opportunities for professional growth, development and leadership to employees throughout the department. Our program provides a positive environment where employees will benefit from learning opportunities offered through individual mentor and mentee relationship.

Leaders, we really need your help to make this a successful program. Please consider applying to be a Mentor to share your experience, expertise and success story with someone who can greatly benefit from it.



**If you are interested in joining our program as Mentor or Mentee, you can get more information by attending our virtual informational sessions to be held May 10th, 23rd, & 25th from 12:15 p.m.-12:45 p.m.**

Applications to become a Mentee or Mentor can be found in SMART or apply by clicking on the links below.

› **Mentee** <http://ehsdhome/Staff-Development/Documents/Mentee%20Application.pdf>

› **Mentor** <http://ehsdhome/Staff-Development/Documents/Mentor%20Application.pdf>

- Applications are due by May 26, 2023.
- Watch for the Mentor Recruitment Announcement coming soon in STARS.
- Mentoring Program Video <https://app.vyond.com/videos/bac5c76e-afd8-43ab-a0b4-a44525871c64>

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## Outreach Roundup

### Cesar Chavez Celebration in Pittsburg

On April 1st, 4 Our Families Navigators **Susan Padan** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** shared CalFresh, Medi-Cal and General Assistance information at the César Chavez & Dolores Huerta Celebration hosted by Stand Together Contra Costa. The Rally and March began at City Hall at 65 Civic Avenue in Pittsburg. Following was a celebration at Marina Vista Elementary School on East 8th Street. Other participating departments and organizations

included Contra Costa Health, Pacific Community Services of Pittsburg, the Mexican Consulate, Los Medanos College, and La Clínica.



Navigators: **Susan Padan** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez**

### One Day at a Time

The One Day at a Time (ODAT) Youth Leadership program's Annual Brentwood Village Community Easter Egg hunt/outreach event was a great success on Sunday, April 9th.

About 14 community organizations, including La Clínica, Family Justice Center, Teacher Leaders of America, Edna Hill English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), Planned Parenthood, Brentwood Police Department offered support and information. Attendees enjoyed bounce houses, face painting, music, and photos with the Easter Bunny and much more.

Navigators **Susan Padan** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** provided information regarding CalWORKs,

Medi-Cal, CalFresh, 4 Our Families Navigator program, and other community resources.



Navigators: **Susan Padan** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez**

### Veterans Job & Resource Fair – Concord

The Veterans Job & Resource Fair at the Veterans Memorial Building was well attended on April 20th. Navigators **Maria R. Muñoz** and **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez** provided information on CalFresh and General Assistance. Dennis Rojas, a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, was very excited about the 4 Our Families Navigator program that he made it a point of connecting our EHSD team with several service providers, and shared the impact our partnership has made.



L to R: **Sandra Zepeda-Lopez**, **Dennis Rojas**, **Maria R. Muñoz**

*“What we experienced is what is possible when organizations, agencies and providers come together, setting aside their individual program purpose and focusing on the larger mission to serve our veteran community.*

*Mission accomplished.”*

- Leonard Ramirez, Veterans Accession House

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## Outreach Roundup

Continued from previous page

### Get Connected! California Day

Staff support: Patricia Perez, Larena Baldazo, Maura Connell

EHSD partnered with Contra Costa County Library to host a Get Connected! California Day at the San Pablo Library on Saturday, April 22. We joined 13 other locations around the state to promote the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and help people enroll on site. The ACP is a federally funded program that provides monthly credits up to \$30 toward internet service bills for eligible households, as well as a one-time discount up to \$100 toward the purchase of a laptop, desktop computer or tablet, with participating providers.

The EHSD team featured Susan Padan and Sandra Zepeda-Lopez, EHSD Navigators; Larena Baldazo, EHSD Web Producer; and Patty Perez, Workforce Services Specialist. Also on hand were representatives from the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), which sponsored the day of events. After a few

start-up bugs, we were able to help several people enroll in the program and learned a lot about how ACP operates in the process.

EHSD has been actively supporting access to low-cost internet offers through its *Get Connected Contra Costa!* webpage since 2020. The site was recently updated to highlight the ACP, with step-by-step guidance provided. We will be increasingly engaged in ACP outreach activities in the days ahead, coordinated through Community Relations.

Please share information regarding ACP with your clients and direct them to the webpage.

If you have any ideas to share regarding how to share ACP details with our clients and Contra Costa County community, contact Larena at [Lbaldazo@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:Lbaldazo@ehsd.cccounty.us). To learn more about ACP and the application process, visit the landing page [here](#).

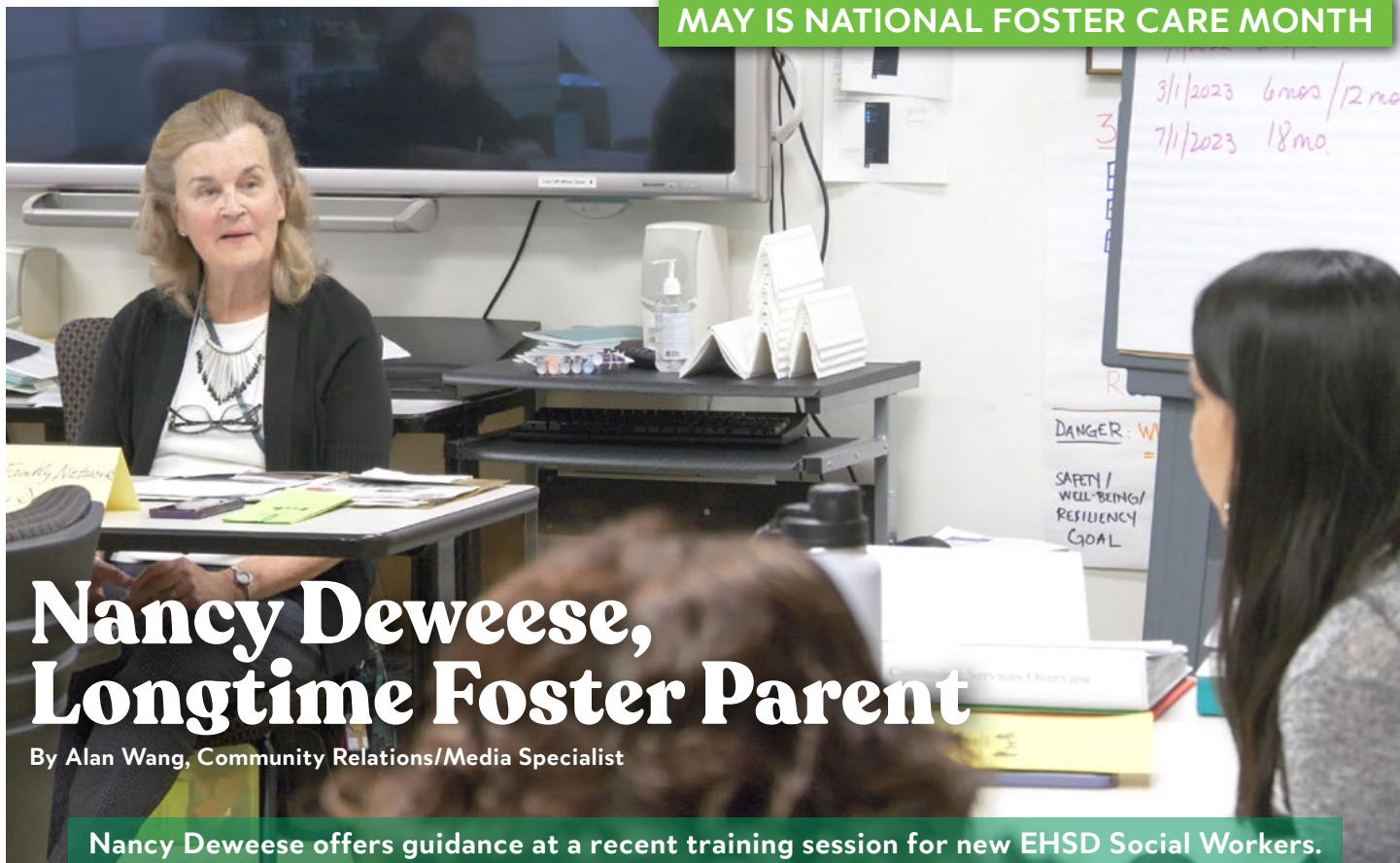


Navigators Susan Padan and Sandra Zepeda-Lopez pose with CETF's Nadine Hugg at the San Pablo Library for Get Connected! Day.

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## MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH



# Nancy Deweese, Longtime Foster Parent

By Alan Wang, Community Relations/Media Specialist

Nancy Deweese offers guidance at a recent training session for new EHS Social Workers.

When you sign on to become a foster parent, you find out very quickly that there's a learning curve – figuring out where to find the services and resources for the child or teen in your care. How to interact with the birth family. How to navigate the legal system.

For those answers, many new foster parents turn to Nancy Deweese, one of Contra Costa County's most respected foster parents. For nearly 34 years, she and her husband Gary have been fostering mostly drug-exposed infants while tapping into Nancy's professional experience as a neonatal nurse to care for them. Nancy has been the State Foster Parent Association local chapter president for the past 15 years. The mother of four biological children has also been running the foster parent mentor program for the past eleven years. The program matches new foster

parents with experienced ones who know the ropes. And for six years, from 2008 thru 2014, Nancy ran the foster parent orientation meetings for people interested in signing up.



"I couldn't do it without him" says Nancy about her husband Gary who helps take care of the kids when Nancy needs some relief. **CLICK on the play button to watch an interview with Nancy.**

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## Nancy Deweese, Longtime Foster Parent

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“It’s rewarding to reunite babies with their biological parents after counseling, or watching the babies grow up and thrive in their new adoptive homes,” says Nancy. “I respect the legal system for the work they do, but I don’t always agree with the decisions that come out of courts.”

While caregivers may not decide where children are ultimately placed, their insight is valuable when considering reunifying children with their biological families. Reunification remains a priority when safe for the child/teen, and in the best interest for her/his wellbeing.

Nancy expresses concern that many of the face-to-face working relationships between

foster parents and social workers have suffered in the wake of the COVID pandemic. “I think the hands-on work is being lost in all of the paper work,” she says. Meanwhile, the Foster Family Network is working with CFS to improve and strengthen those ties for the sake of the children and the families, and to retain current foster parents.

During National Foster Care Month, EHSD salutes Nancy – and all our foster caregivers – for their ongoing dedication to children and teens who need a secure, loving environment in which they can grow and thrive.

### Building a Strong Team

Over the years, Nancy Deweese has shared her experiences with EHSD’s Children and Family Services to help strengthen connections between caregivers and social workers. Nancy says that continuously improving communication and teamwork to support children and families is key.

- Honor State regulations with monthly in-person visit and discussion with Caregiver to pinpoint resources and referrals for child’s needs.
- Respond to Caregivers’ calls and messages in a timely manner.
- Consider Caregivers part of the team. Invite them to Child Family Team (CFT) meetings, provide child’s attorney contact information and keep them informed about the progression of the child’s case.

- Respect Caregivers’ time and family life when scheduling biological parent visits, etc.
- Have a transition plan collaborating with Caregivers’ input and child’s needs.
- Inform Caregivers when there is a change in the child’s assigned Social Worker, and provide new social worker’s contact information.
- Develop a Respite Home list to provide relief for seasoned Caregivers.

Nancy collects photos of each of her foster children and maintains relationships with many of them. She has stayed connected with foster child, Lauren, since her birth and has watched her grow up to be a young professional adult.





# How a Big Gift is Helping Improve Family Healing

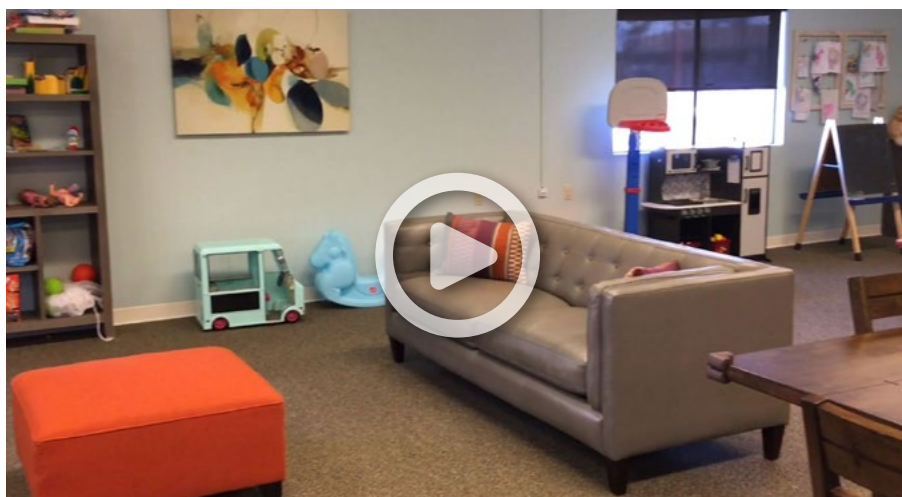
The Taylor Family Foundation donated \$15,000 last year to VESTIA with a request to direct the funds toward children. VESTIA Board of Directors approved giving it to Children and Family Services to enhance the CFS visitation rooms in the various district offices with toys, furniture, cribs, etc.

Visitation rooms help foster continued family connections for children who have been removed from the care of their biological parents and/or guardians. The rooms provide a safe and private place to heal despite the removal of children from their primary homes during court ordered visits between children, parents, guardians and siblings who are not in the same foster placement.

The rooms are outfitted with comfortable furnishings and age appropriate toys to assist the family in engaging in activities. Visitation supervisors provide support and encouragement to parents who are experiencing difficulty in engaging with their children; they provide feedback and input on the progress of visits for social workers to update the Court.



Family Visitation Room flyer



Here's a look at a Family Visitation Room created through a joint venture between Contra Costa and San Francisco Counties. **CLICK the play button to watch the video.**

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# CalFresh Awareness Month

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

In Contra Costa County, 93,822 residents are receiving CalFresh as of February of this year. CalFresh food benefits stretch household budgets, enabling recipients to afford nutritious food, including more fruits, vegetables, and other healthy options. During **CalFresh Awareness Month** in May, EHSD and our partners across the County and the state are encouraging residents to apply for CalFresh. By helping eligible community members meet their nutritional needs, CalFresh can help many children and families achieve better health and well-being. Approximately 4.7 million Californians currently receive CalFresh food benefits, yet it is estimated that nearly 2 million may be eligible for food assistance and do not yet use it. CalFresh is not welfare and it is not considered cash aid. Many who may be eligible include college students, full- or part-time workers, and U.S.-born children with non-citizen parents.

Source: EHSD Data Dashboard & California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

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**CalFresh**  
**RESOURCE FAIR**

**Hosted by**  
**FOOD BANK**  
of Contra Costa & Solano

**MAY 19 1-4PM**

Church of Good Shepherd  
3200 Harbor street  
Pittsburg, CA 94565

**Resources:**

- CalFresh Application assistance
- Assurance Wireless
- St. Vincent de Paul resources
- Kids Activities

For questions or tabling inquiries:  
925-603-3316  
[CF@foodbankccs.org](mailto:CF@foodbankccs.org)

# Ready to Respond Wildfire Simulation Prepares County

By Tish Gallegos, Community Relations/Media Manager

The County Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinated and led a wildfire tabletop exercise on Wednesday, April 19th. The event was a valuable opportunity for Contra Costa County departments and agencies to simulate how the County would respond during a wildfire incident. Participants worked through operating in a unified command, and increased understanding about how the various Emergency Operation Center (EOC) branches would share critical information.

**Cora Young**, EHSD Safety Coordinator, provided input related to the Shelter & Care function. **Tish Gallegos**, Community Relations/Media Manager participated as part of the County PIO team.

In May, County staff from across all departments will have another chance to build upon the learnings from the tabletop exercise during a Golden Eagle Training & Drill with the Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) and Bay Area Joint Information System (JIS).



Exercise participants from Contra Costa County departments and agencies came together at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Martinez to work through how they would respond to a wildfire.

## Cultural Diversity Day



World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development is Sunday, May 21st. You can learn more about the importance of protecting the diversity of cultural expressions, why cultural diversity matters, and the day's origin and purpose by visiting the [United Nations website](#).

Celebrate Cultural Diversity in Contra Costa during the multicultural celebration to honor Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) cultures and traditions. On Tuesday, May 9th, the County Board of Supervisors hosts the inaugural AANHPI Celebration featuring dance, music, food, and unique customs from Nepalese, Korean, Filipino, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao, Thai, and Burmese, and more.

Watch live online at [www.contracosta.ca.gov/6086](http://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6086) or [www.contracostatv.org](http://www.contracostatv.org).

The celebration will also broadcast live on Contra Costa Television (CCTV) channels: AT&T U-Verse 99, Comcast 27, or Astound 32 & 1027. Television viewers can enable SAP to hear Mandarin interpretation. Simultaneous interpretation available via Zoom in eight different languages, including American Sign Language (ASL).

Learn more by visiting the [County website](#).

A decorative graphic for the AANHPI Celebration. It features a circular emblem with the text "Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors Invites You to the 1st Annual Asian American Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander (AANHPI) CELEBRATION UPLIFTING OUR HERITAGE, RESILIENCE & LEGACIES". Below the emblem is a QR code. The graphic also includes illustrations of a decorated elephant and a red dragon. Text on the right provides event details: "JOIN US! Tuesday, May 9, 2023 9:30 AM Board of Supervisors' Chambers 1025 Escobar Street, Martinez WATCH LIVE ON AT&T U-Verse Channel 99, Comcast Channel 27 or Astound Channels 32 & 1027 STREAM ON CONTRACOSTA.CA.GOV CONTRACOSTATV.ORG".

**JOIN US!**  
**Tuesday,**  
**May 9, 2023**  
**9:30 AM**

Board of Supervisors' Chambers  
1025 Escobar Street, Martinez

WATCH LIVE  
ON  
AT&T U-Verse Channel 99, Comcast Channel 27 or  
Astound Channels 32 & 1027

STREAM  
ON  
CONTRACOSTA.CA.GOV  
CONTRACOSTATV.ORG



# EHSD Joins Efforts to Lead Climate Action

## *Plus 3 things you can do today to help!*

By Monica De Vera, CSB Professional Development Analyst

Raise your hand if you like to hike, immersed in lush trees towering above as you encounter animals peacefully strolling along, or maybe dawdle at the beach as you dip your toes into the ocean, the sun kissing your skin? Maybe you just had a long day in the office, and it feels nice to step out to get some fresh air?

These are the nourishing gifts of our common home, Mother Earth. Sadly, she is threatened and one of those biggest threats is Climate Change.

Climate Change shifts in temperatures and weather patterns – is normal over long periods of time, but due to intensive human activity such as burning fossil fuels and animal agriculture, it's happening too fast. In the past few years, we've already seen increasing wildfires that have taken lives as well as more severe droughts, these would only get worse with a rapidly changing climate. As you can see, climate health is human health.

In response to the climate crisis, Contra Costa County's Board of Supervisors, along with

public health officials, have now recognized Climate Change as a primary health emergency, and has since taken swift action, which has led to the creation of the Climate Action Task Force's Green Government Group (G3) Champion Program. G3 consists of staff representatives across all departments to raise awareness on CC and lead and implement best practices that tackle it.



The G3 Champion Group came together on April 13th in partnership with Friends of Alhambra (FOA) Creek for a Community Planting Event located at the Martinez waterfront. From left to right: Jody London (DCD, Sustainability Coordinator), **Monica De Vera** (EHSD CSB), Andrea Kroll (Library), Wade Finlinson (Health Services), Linda Farmer (CCC HR), Marena Yarnell (National Park Service Team), Emily Groth (DCD), Jane Moore (FOA), Mikayla Gregory (National Park Service), Jeannine Gendar (FOA), Elaine Jackson (FOA), Mark Sever (FOA). Front kneeling: Victoria Woolfolk (Recreation & Conservation), and Cicily Bryant (DCD).

Because data shows Climate Change affects the most vulnerable, the very population we work to serve, protect and empower – **we are proud to share that EHSD is now part of the G3 Program and is represented by CSB's Professional Development Analyst, Monica De Vera.** More details to come soon on what this entails exactly, stay tuned!

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## EHSD Joins Efforts to Lead Climate Action *Plus 3 things you can do today to help!*

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For now, here are three personal actions you can take that will make a BIG difference in combatting climate change:

1. Save energy whenever possible. Tips: [Home Energy | United Nations](#)
2. Reduce animal-based foods (meat, dairy, eggs, etc.) whenever possible – perhaps adopting Meatless Mondays & Dairy free Tuesdays – and expand plant-based meals – better for your health too! Kaiser Permanente guide: [plant\\_based\\_diet\\_e.pdf \(kaiserpermanente.org\)](#)
3. Practice the 4 Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose – tips: [Meet the 4 R's of Green Living: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose \(chariotenergy.com\)](#)

Want to be part of the movement? Email **Monica De Vera** at [mdevera@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:mdevera@ehsd.cccounty.us) for more info. and/ or how to get involved. Together we create a sustainable future for our children and generations to come.

**#StrongerTogether**

*Building Brighter  
Futures Together*



EHSD representative **Monica De Vera** introduces her plant to its new home before uniting it with the soil. She believes that because climate change affects the most vulnerable, to take action is an act of justice.



**These delicious tacos are meatless and plant-based!**

*Photo credit: Hannah Sunderan*

Plant-based meals aren't just salads, for example try these: At Yardhouse, get the Gardein "chicken" wings or get your eat on at Concord's burger joint, Next Level Burger (by Whole Foods); Thai restaurants have loads of tasty options too! At the grocery store, try these brands: Impossible Foods and Gardein to recreate your favorites: tacos, snacks, and more!



## ADMINISTRATIVE *Professionals Day*

**Tamina Alon**, Acting Departmental HR Officer II, prepared a delicious breakfast feast in appreciation of Personnel Services Staff for Administrative Professionals Day.



Rashonda Trammel, Alexandra Sanchez



Shalise Santos, Tamina Alon, and Bao Tran

*Thank you  
for your  
awesomeness!*



## Customer Service Champion

This individual is being recognized for going the extra mile by delivering excellent service to our customers. She went above and beyond in her willingness to help and demonstrate EHSD's emphasis on providing exemplary customer service. Congratulations on a job well done!

### Uju Chimara

**Sr. Social Service Info Sys Analyst**

By Dana Wargo, Social Service Program Analyst (Medi-Cal)

**Uju Chimara**, Sr. Social Service Info Sys Analyst, was nominated by **Dana Wargo**, Social Service Program Analyst (Medi-Cal). Dana says Uju is very helpful and responsive for issues related to MEDS (Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System). She is willing to go above and beyond to deliver excellent customer service and help applicants get access to care. As a system analyst, she recently assisted with a complex case where the beneficiary was granted Medi-Cal erroneously and requested to be re-enrolled in their Covered California plan for ongoing medical care. Working with our EHSD Ombudsman, she was able to assist with MEDS so the customer could receive continuity of care.

Uju recently assisted with an SSI recipient who had an erroneous death date in MEDS due to our CalFresh case. She was able to remove the death date to give immediate access to care. Uju was also helpful with incorrect addresses on MEDS that caused disenrollment from the managed care plan and reached out to the Managed Care Ombudsman to correct the situation.

Uju has been with EHSD for over 20 years and is knowledgeable and very responsive. She readily takes on issues that require immediate attention. Uju is a huge help to the Medi-Cal program and is a pleasure to work with.



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES

*Building Brighter Futures Together*

## DID YOU KNOW

Community Action Agencies have a 59-year history of promoting self-sufficiency for those with limited income. They were created when the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was signed into law.

Did you know that EHSD's Community Services Bureau (CSB) is the Community Action Agency for Contra Costa County?

CSB and its many community partners have made essential contributions to individuals and families in Contra Costa County by providing innovative and cost-effective programs. During Fiscal Year 2022, they assisted 12,181 unduplicated individuals in Contra Costa County using \$396,393 in CARES Act funding.

Low-income residents continue to need opportunities to improve their lives and their living conditions. Community Services Block Grant funding that the Community Action Program administers in collaboration with the Economic Opportunity Council continues to support safety net services to help alleviate poverty in our County.

We celebrate and recognize May 2023 as **National Community Action Month**, along with Community Action Agencies and Economic Opportunity Councils throughout the country.



### COMMUNITY ACTION'S REACH



1,000+ agencies covering 99% of America's counties

### COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH





**BAY AREA**

# BIKE TO WORK DAY 2023

Ride your bike to work on May 15-19 for the interdepartmental "BIKE TO WORK DAY" Competition!

Log your ride at <http://tinyurl.com/CCC2023BTWDSurvey> or at this QR Code\*:



Giveaways for all participants and a prize for the County department that has the most participation!

Bike often for any type of trip throughout the month of May for "BIKE TO WHEREVER DAYS."

For more information on BIKE TO WORK DAY and BIKE TO WHEREVER DAYS, visit <https://bayareabiketowork.com> or contact Robert Sarmiento, Department of Conservation and Development, at [robert.sarmiento@dcd.cccounty.us](mailto:robert.sarmiento@dcd.cccounty.us) or (925) 655-2918.

\*Surveys will be accepted through Friday, June 2.



## Schedule an Exit Interview

If you are leaving EHSD, please consider participating in an exit interview. An exit interview is an excellent way to provide feedback to the Employment & Human Services Department. These interviews with outgoing staff are confidential and go directly to EHSD Director **Marla Stuart**.

You can schedule one by contacting **Julie Peck**, EHSD Ombudsperson at [jpeck@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:jpeck@ehsd.cccounty.us) or (925) 788-1722.


## Operation Documentation for Veterans

The Clerk-Recorder's Office is inviting Veterans to bring their DD 214 (discharge paperwork) to them in Martinez where staff will record it at no charge for safekeeping and peace of mind. Whenever the Veteran needs a certified copy of the form, they can get one from the office at no charge.

The Veteran Service Office staff will also be on hand to meet with Veterans who need additional assistance. Other organizations and agencies will have information and resource tables available.



We are pleased to announce our next Operation Documentation!

<b>ADDRESS</b>  Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder-Elections Office 555 Escobar St. Martinez, CA 94553	<b>CONTACT INFO</b> For questions please contact Karen Tedford ..... <b>EMAIL</b> Karen.tedford@cr.cccounty.us <b>PHONE</b> 925.335.7863
<b>DATE</b> Wednesday May 31, 2023	
<b>TIME</b> 8:00AM - 12:00PM	



## EHSD staff supports Public Works Week!



National Public Works Week (NPWW) is May 21–27 and this year's theme is "Connecting The World Through Public Works". EHSD would like to give a great big shoutout to Contra Costa County Public Works for the amazing work they do each and every day.

[#cccpublicworks](#)

[#ConnectingTheWorldThroughPW](#)

[#NPWW](#)



## SERVICE AWARDS | NEW EMPLOYEES | RETIREES

### SERVICE AWARDS

#### 25 YEARS

Sheila Daniel, Clerk-Senior Level, CFS  
Rodney Dixon, Info Systems Supervisor, Admin  
Katie Nakasone, Social Worker II, CFS  
Reni Radeva, Departmental HR Analyst II, Admin

#### 10 YEARS

Ann V. Butler, Social Work Supervisor II, CFS  
Vera S Calhoun, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Alma Y Ceja, Clerk-Specialist Level, WFS  
Jenese M Culp, Social Worker, AAS

Najah I Duran, Sr Soc Svc Info Sys Analyst, Admin  
Deborah Elms, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Justina J Johnson, Medical Program Assistant  
Lindsey N Marshall, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Gerilyn M Molina, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Coretta M. Morris, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Melody L Muro, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Simon Phommachit, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Jonnie C Sendaydiego, Clerk-Senior Level, Admin  
Hao Voqui, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Chenoa A Williams, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Kennita J Williams, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Nicole M Wilson, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Tiffany Wren, Social Worker III, CFS

### NEW EMPLOYEES

Sharareh Ahmadicharoymagh, Intermediate Clerk –  
Project, CSB  
Tammi Cason, Social Worker III, CFS  
Diashalla Hicks, Clerk Specialist, WFS  
Cynthia Larios, Intermediate Clerk – Project, CSB

Adriana Martinez, Soc Svc Program Assistant, WFS  
Cecilia Nava, Senior Staff Assistant, AAS  
Abieyuwa Oghogho, Social Casework Assistant, CFS  
Navdeep Singh, Chief Financial Officer, Admin

### RETIREES

Jenny Anderson, Soc Svc Prgm Assistant, CFS  
Keva Dean, Eligibility Work Supervisor, WFS  
Angela Johnson, Soc Svc Prgm Assistant, 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.**



# SPREAD THE WORD

## MAY 2023

- CALFRESH AWARENESS MONTH
- COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH
- NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH
- OLDER AMERICANS MONTH
- MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH
- ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH
- JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH
- MAY 1-5 – Teachers’ Appreciation Week
- MAY 5 – Cinco De Mayo
- MAY 7-13 – Public Service Recognition Week
- MAY 12 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- MAY 14 – Mother’s Day
- MAY 15 – Peace Officers Memorial Day
- MAY 18 – Bike to Work Day
- MAY 20 – Armed Forces Day
- MAY 22 – Harvey Milk Day
- MAY 25 – EHSD Live!
- MAY 25-27 – Shavuot
- MAY 29 – Memorial Day (County holiday)

## June 2023

- ELDER & DEPENDENT ADULT ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH
- JUNE 4 – National Cancer Survivor’s Day
- JUNE 11 – Abused Women and Children’s Day
- JUNE 14 – Flag Day
- JUNE 16 – Father’s Day
- JUNE 19 – Juneteenth (holiday)
- JUNE 20 – American Eagle Day
- JUNE 21 – Summer Solstice (longest day of the year)
- JUNE 23 – National Hydration 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 needs your support to provide care for children 0–18 years of age. Please join us for a virtual orientation and learn more about becoming a caregiver.

### FREE VIRTUAL ORIENTATIONS

May 4 or 18 • 4 to 6 p.m.  
 June 1 or 15 • 4 to 6 p.m.  
 July 6 or 20 • 4 to 6 p.m.

For more information about becoming a Resource Parent visit us at [www.ehds.org](http://www.ehds.org). If you belong to an organization or community group interested in learning more about Resource Family Approval/foster parenting, we can schedule an individual session for your group, in English or Spanish. To register for a class, please call (925) 655-4230 or email [ResourceFamilies@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:ResourceFamilies@ehsd.cccounty.us)

**We Care... You Care**  
 CLICK here to learn more about nominating a coworker.  
 Updated We Care...You Care nomination form: [click here](#)  
 and see page 4

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

Follow us on Twitter @ContraCostaEHSD  
 Follow us on Instagram @HumanaCosta  
 Like us on Facebook



The next issue of *Headlines* will publish in early June. Contact us at our EHSD *Headlines* email, [Headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us](mailto:Headlines@ehsd.cccounty.us), by **May 16th** if you have an upcoming event, article, or idea you would like to submit.