

# HHSA Connection

APRIL 2008 A Monthly Newsletter for the Employees of San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency

## Agency Collaboration Saves Lives



Thanks to a recent collaboration between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and the local healthcare community, heart attack patients now have a better chance of survival. The Cardiac System of Care dramatically improves the time before heart attack victims receive potentially lifesaving treatment.

County health officials worked with local cardiologists and hospitals to develop the new system, which enables paramedics in the field to better identify the most life-threatening type of heart attack by using 12-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) equipment.

For more details, please see “From the Director’s Desk” on page 2.

*Dr. Bruce Haynes, Medical Director of HHSA’s Emergency Medical Services, is interviewed by a local tv station following the Cardiac System of Care press conference.*

## Doors Open for County Foster Youth

### HHSA and California State University San Marcos Sign Historic Agreement



*Under a new agreement, California State University San Marcos will guarantee enrollment to any San Diego County foster youth that meet admissions standards. The pact should lead to an increase in the number of foster youth that are able to attend a four-year college.*

San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency’s Child Welfare Services (CWS) continues to expand opportunities for foster youth with the signing of a historic agreement between HHSA and California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) that guarantees foster youth admission to the school if they meet academic standards.

The university signed a similar agreement last year with Escondido’s San Pasqual Academy, a residential education campus for 135 foster teens. The new arrangement opens this opportunity to all foster youth.

CWS’s **Margo Fudge** said the main goal is to overcome disadvantages for foster youth and significantly increase the number who go to college.

As part of the agreement, CWS will work with students on career and academic counseling beginning in ninth grade and CSUSM will set up a special program to help students transition to college life.



## From the Director's Desk

Jean M. Shepard, HHSA Director

Having a heart attack is a very frightening and serious event. But thanks to cutting edge technology and practice that's been implemented in San Diego County, your chances of surviving a heart attack have greatly improved!



The Cardiac System of Care project was implemented in January 2007 in collaboration with our local healthcare community. It created standards and procedures that enable paramedics to quickly identify the most lethal type of heart attack and empower hospital staff to begin catheterizing patients the moment they enter the emergency room.

The project, spearheaded by the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division of Public Health Services, addresses the amount of time patients wait to receive catheterization treatment, which opens up clogged arteries in the heart. Before the Cardiac System of Care project started, that time was about 124 minutes. Today, the time has been cut to about sixty minutes – a staggering fifty percent decrease in a patient's average wait time. Thirteen hospitals in San Diego are participating in the Cardiac System of Care. Cardiologists from these hospitals have worked closely with EMS to develop this new system.

Partnerships have always been an integral part of the Agency's success. Outcomes such as this one benefit the entire community.

Hospitals participating in the Cardiac System of Care include: Alvarado Hospital; Naval Medical Center, San Diego; Palomar Medical Center; Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla; Scripps Mercy Hospital; Scripps Mercy Hospital, Chula Vista; Scripps Memorial Hospital, Encinitas; Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center; Sharp Grossmont Hospital; Sharp Memorial Hospital; Tri-City Medical Center; UCSD Medical Center, Hillcrest; and UCSD Thornton Hospital.

## Employee Spotlight

It's easy to figure out where Esperanza Pettit, Senior Clerk, can be found on a Sunday afternoon or Monday night in the fall. It's highly likely she's in front of the television watching football.



Esperanza Pettit

"I love football!" said the self-described football fanatic. "My favorite day of the week is Sunday..., Monday... and Thursdays during the playoffs. I live for football."

It's amazing she has time for football when you consider how busy she is at the North Coastal Public Health Center in Oceanside. "The biggest challenge of my job is not having enough hours in the day to complete all my work but I work with a wonderful group of clerks who, thanks to their hard work and dedication, make my job a lot less challenging," she said.

"I enjoy having the opportunity to really serve the public and make a difference in people's lives big or small and I enjoy working with my staff. They are just a wonderful group of hard working people."

Pettit has been with HHSA for more than six years. She started as a temporary employee in December, 2000, and then passed the Intermediate Clerk Typist test, working as an ICT for nearly four years. She then passed the Senior Clerk test and worked as acting Senior Clerk for about a year. When the opportunity opened up, she dropped the acting tag from her job title and was promoted to Senior Clerk.

"I chose to work for HHSA because it is the best department in the County of San Diego," Pettit said. "There is nothing more gratifying than helping to better peoples' lives and giving people a helping hand and a friendly face."



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Health & Human Services Agency Director - Jean M. Shepard

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- Alcohol & Drug Services: Martha Armenta
- Central Region: Elise Lorentz
- Child Welfare Services: Margo Fudge
- East Region: Katie Judd
- Financial & Support Services: Donna Matta

- Mental Health: Sabrena Marshall
- North Central Region, North Coastal Region,
- North Inland Region: Nina Constantino
- Public Health: Wilma Wooten
- South Region: vacant



## Padres Salute Agency, Wildfire Workers

The Health and Human Services Agency was one of several organizations honored by the San Diego Padres on Friday, March 28 prior to their game with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. The team used one of their last pre-season games to honor survivors and first responders from last fall's wildfires.

County of San Diego Public Health Officer, **Wilma Wooten**, M.D., M.P.H., represented the Agency at the ceremony. Padres players and coaches exchanged baseball caps with Dr. Wooten and individuals from more than 35 other first-response organizations that assisted in wildfire relief efforts. The players then wore those hats during the game. As part of the salute, the Padres provided free tickets to individuals and families whose homes were lost or significantly damaged during the October 2007 disaster.



*Dr. Wilma Wooten  
Public Health Officer*

The Padres also showed a video tribute saluting first responders.

### CWS



### Makes



### Connections

Family Finding Services is a HHSA Child Welfare program that attempts to find relatives for foster children who have little or no family connections. This program researches the child's extended family network and contacts individuals who may be interested in establishing a connection with the child.

"Jane" is a 14-year-old foster child who returned to the foster care system after two failed adoptions. "Jane" was referred to Family Finding Services in hopes of locating relatives. The program was ultimately successful in locating Jane's maternal grandmother, who had previously adopted Jane's sibling.

Jane's grandmother did not want to interfere, assuming that "Jane" was residing with her adoptive family. **Dawn Hanlon**, social worker, was uncertain how Jane would react to the news that her relatives had been located.

"I wish you could have seen this child's face when we explained what we had for her," said Hanlon. "No words can do this justice.

"When we showed her a picture of her sibling, she could not stop staring and repeating, 'I have a family?'"

There are plans for Jane and her family to meet for the first time and continue to have contact with one another. CWS is committed to assisting children who have little or no family connections, a commitment that is demonstrated through stories like Jane's.

# HHSA connection



## Want to Learn the "New Buffettology" ?

San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector **Dan McAllister** has announced the next Investment & Retirement Symposium presented by the Deferred Compensation Division. The presentation will take place on Wednesday, May 21st from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Sheraton 4Points.

Famed Author Mary Buffett and professor Alan Gin will be the speakers. Buffett has written "The New Buffettology" and "The Tao of Buffett" to guide investors through Warren Buffett's investment approach for exploiting a down stock market – a strategy that has made him the world's richest person. Come see Mary as she walks through the step by step process behind the billionaire's strategies.

Gin, creator of San Diego's Leading Economic Indicator Index and member of The Burnham-Moores Center for Real Estate, will lead a discussion of San Diego's economic outlook. Build on your understanding of how to advance your retirement goals in today's economic environment.

The cost is \$15.00 per person or \$25.00 per couple. Dinner and parking are included with your paid registration. Seating is limited and pre-registration by May 16th is required. For registration and information, please call the Deferred Compensation Department at (619) 531-5840 or **Lyn Howarth** at (619) 531-5454.

## Children's Expo Combines Learning and Fun For All

Imagine an elementary school age boy "Johnny" whose medical condition makes it difficult for him to walk without special devices. All he wants to do is to play sports like other boys his age, but he simply can't. "Johnny's" parents aren't sure where to turn for help or if activities even exist for kids like their son.

On April 2nd, California Children Services, a program administered by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, partnered with California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) to host a "first-of-its-kind" recreation and wellness event for children and young adults with special needs.

Hundreds of families including children like "Johnny" learned about sports and recreation opportunities for young adults and kids; participated in demonstrations and hands-on activities; and visited booths to gather information and resources on sports leagues, summer camps, healthcare information, client advocacy and referral, transportation and mobility resources and equipment vendors with specialized equipment such as hand cycles.

## Lizarraga Answers the Call

**Ignacio Lizarraga**, an employee of the Aging & Independence Services Call Center is featured in an advertisement that encourages more businesses to hire people with disabilities. Lizarraga's ad has been in national magazines, including Forbes and Fortune, plus the San Diego Union-Tribune on Super Bowl Sunday.

In his spare time, Ignacio gives presentations to local companies about transportation obstacles, and to disabilities awareness groups about the advantages of employing disabled persons.

**I hired Ignacio because:**

- he is remarkably dependable
- has such a positive attitude
- highly professional
- and, tells great jokes!

The California Health Incentives Improvement Project (CHIP) partners with the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to increase employment and services for workers and job seekers with disabilities.

**Talent Knows No Limits.**

www.talentknowsnolimits.info  
800.695.0350 Voice  
916.654.9820 TTY

**EDD** Employment Development Department  
**CHIP** California Health Incentives Improvement Project  
**Partnership** Partnership for the Workforce

Funded under a Medical Infrastructure Grant from the Century for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, grant number: 11-A-82299-0102.

*Aging & Independence Services' **Ignacio Lizarraga** is featured in a national ad for the "Talent Knows No Limits" campaign.*

### Director's Call-In

Share your ideas and concerns with

**HHSA Director**  
Jean M. Shepard

**Director of Operations**  
Paula Landau-Cox

First Friday of each month 8 a.m. - noon  
(619) 515-6555

Compliance Office:  
(619) 515-4244

Toll-free Compliance Hotline:  
(866) 549-0004

An ethical workplace is your right...and your responsibility!

## Mark the Date

To celebrate National Infant Immunization Week (April 19-26) and Toddler Immunization Month in May, Immunizations is hosting a special kids event on April 22nd at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum (Pacific Beach Club Room) in Balboa Park. Call Immunizations at (619) 692-8661 for more information.

# Employee Spotlight

## Do you work with someone who deserves to be recognized in the HHS A Connection Employee Spotlight?

Each month the HHS A Connection Employee Spotlight will feature one of your co-workers and let you get to know them a little better. If you know someone who provides excellent customer service, works hard at their job or is just an interesting person with a story to tell, you can submit their name for the Employee Spotlight.

The Agency's Media Strategy Team will select an employee to be featured each month from the nominations received.

To nominate someone for the Employee Spotlight, simply send an email to [thomas.christensen@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:thomas.christensen@sdcounty.ca.gov) with Employee Spotlight in the subject line.

Tell us the employee's name, where they work and why you think they should be featured in the employee spotlight. It's that simple!

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### Employee Spotlight

For most Californians, when they hear the name Arnold they automatically think of Governor Schwarzenegger. Not around HHS A. Anytime anyone mentions the name Arnold, they think of **Arnold De Guzman**, Graphic Design Specialist with the Office of Media and Public Affairs. He also handles all the audio-visual duties.

De Guzman has been a lifesaver for many HHS A employees making presentations, giving trainings or conducting press events.

"He did an exorbitant amount of work on the Administrative Secretary's appreciation event," said **Jenny Pietila**, Administrative Secretary III, Strategic Planning and Operational Support. "He brought all the equipment and set it all up. Everything went smoothly and he went above and beyond the call of duty."

De Guzman's job includes a wide variety of duties. He provides audio-visual consulting and support, graphic design materials, HHS A website content support, backs up the audio/visual services at County Board meetings and more.

The newest addition to his workload is video production, which has him excited.

"It's new for HHS A and I'm looking forward to producing videos for the Agency," said De Guzman. "My background is heavily in video production and I'm glad I'll get to share my talents with HHS A."

