



HHSA Employees Brighten Holidays

This young child took a nap while waiting to pick out gifts during a Toys for Tots distribution in the North Central Region. HHSA employees opened their hearts to make this holiday season more enjoyable for our customers. Agency employees put on or participated in nearly two dozen charity drives to help fellow San Diego County residents. See story on page 8.

What's Inside:



Serving Our Country
Pages 4-5



A Tribute to John Gaffaney
Page 6

New Decade, New Vision

I hope everyone had a healthy and enjoyable holiday season. As we kick off the new year, we all share many existing and emerging challenges in our joint efforts to serve the needs of county residents. Despite the tough economic times, this is not the time to retrench and retreat when it comes to innovation. I want to take this opportunity to talk with you about the County's Health Strategy Agenda – which will guide our priorities in the area of health for the next ten years and beyond.

I'll start by asking you to imagine – at this moment – a place in San Diego County where you are likely to find people with influenza, chest pain, stab wounds, broken bones and broken spirits. There are young people, old people, wealthy people and those with few possessions beyond the clothes on their backs. Step foot in any emergency department in our community and you will find a microcosm of the complex web we call our "healthcare system."

While there is great diversity among people visiting emergency rooms there is one haunting commonality among most emergency departments. They are overrun with people seeking care.

There just has to be a better way.

Did you know that four preventable chronic diseases (Cancer, Type 2 Diabetes, Heart Disease/Stroke and Respiratory Conditions) account for over 50% of deaths both locally and nationally?

If you're alive and healthy, you're still on the hook for this one. Direct costs of preventable disease are enormous – totaling more than \$4 billion annually in San Diego County alone.

There just has to be a better way.

It is for these reasons, and others, that our Chief Administrative Officer and County team have committed to forging the path to meaningful change. HHSa is leading the charge to significantly improve the health and wellbeing of our neighbors in San Diego County. We will focus our efforts in improving lives in three key areas: health, safety and self-sufficiency or "thriving." Our first strategy addresses health, which in-

cludes physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. We are formulating goals, now, to work with community partners and other County departments during the next ten years to revolutionize prevention, access, and care and treatment in San Diego County.

In the area of prevention, we will encourage people to modify three behaviors (tobacco use, poor diet, and lack of physical activity) which lead to chronic diseases that often end in death. Doesn't it make sense to tackle health problems before they morph into chronic, expensive health conditions? People in San Diego County should have the knowledge and tools to manage their own health; our prevention goals will be formulated with this in mind.

Imagine visiting one facility to receive mental health counseling and your annual physical. One-stop-shopping certainly makes healthcare more convenient. However, our goal to improve healthcare access reaches beyond co-locating people and services. We want to explore how technology can expedite services and increase health information, applications and services. HHSa has already made some strides in this area. Public Health Nurses in our North Region, for example, partner with the County's Mobile Libraries to provide health screenings to library patrons. Our goal is simple: make it easy and more convenient for people to access the health information and care they need.

For one population, this is certainly not the case. Did you know that people with serious mental illness and substance abuse problems die, on average, 25 years earlier than

From the Director's Desk

the rest of us?

There just has to be a better way.

The final transformational health goal we are pursuing relates to treatment and care. Imagine how different our emergency rooms would be if the "regulars" had medical homes. Rather than seeking expensive emergency care, imagine if individuals with complex mental and physical health problems received consistent care from a medical provider in his or her own neighborhood.

We can't accomplish this alone. Improving prevention, access and treatment and care will require partnerships with our other County departments, advisory and advocacy groups, hospitals and clinics, physicians, and many others. That is why I am asking you to join me on this journey. Help us complete our health strategy which outlines how HHSa will prioritize our actions for the next decade in the area of health. The work you do every day changes lives and I know the wealth of knowledge we need to refine our goals resides with you and your team – our front line HHSa employees. Please participate in this discussion by offering your ideas for how we can improve prevention, access and care and treatment in San Diego County. Your Executive Team, together with many employees from throughout the Agency, is actively engaged in this effort to finalize our health strategy goals. If your voice is missing in this process – please speak up.

There is a better way...and together we will find and pursue it.



Nick Macchione

A Holiday Thank You

My name is Rebecca Pate and I am an EMS Coordinator for the County of San Diego, HHSa, currently deployed as a Navy Reservist nurse to Kandahar, Afghanistan. I received all the wonderful boxes of items sent to me by HHSa employees for Christmas, and I must say, I was both utterly surprised and extremely honored!!

I gave our hospital's chaplain the toiletries you sent, which he organizes into packs to give to the injured Coalition soldiers and sailors who are recovering at the hospital. The snacks and food replenished our supply of items we keep at the hospital for staff to enjoy while at work. The cards from the children at the Polinsky center were incredible....I shared them with the staff at the hospital, but kept a few for myself....they're really amazing and you can see all the work they put into making them.

Thank you HHSa so very much! Your thoughtfulness is so greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Rebecca Pate





Neighborhoods for Kids Wins Statewide Honor

The County of San Diego recently received the 2009 California State Association of Counties (CSAC) California Counties Innovation Award for Neighborhoods for Kids (N4K) - the top honor presented in CSAC's annual Challenge Awards Program.

After just five years, N4K has produced promising results. Over half of the 350 children in East County who require out-of-home placement are placed with relatives. Seventy-two percent of those children not living with relatives are placed in East County foster homes and 67% of the school-aged children in out-of-home care are attending the same school as when they were removed from their home. The children experience very low change of placement rates, with 84% having less than three placements per year. This school year, 100% of East Region foster youth who were eligible achieved 12th grade completion.



Top row (left to right): **Judy Benson, Tonya Sloan, Rhonna Burrelle, Karen Martin, Debbie Comstock** (East County Family Justice Center), Jennifer Mendel (Grossmont Union High School District), **Pam Smith, Jane Simone, Dick Brown** (Alpine Kiwanis). Bottom row (left to right): Barbara Warner (Spring Valley Youth and Family Coalition), **Dana Parrino-Caldwell**.

A Time for Giving Thanks



Chef Isa and his staff in the Polinsky Children's Center (left photo) prepared a family-style Thanksgiving meal for each cottage, with traditional turkey and healthy side dishes. Meanwhile, Agency staff and hundreds of community volunteers delivered 1,284 Thanksgiving dinners to homebound seniors ages 60 and older. The meals were paid for with community donations. In the middle photo, above, Ken and 3-year-old Kaden Boyd were all smiles as they waited for dinners to deliver at the National City Nutrition Center. Above right, Maria Wright (right side of the photo) and her four children, two nieces and nephew also volunteered that morning. They visited with 92-year-old Alexander Kreiglowa (center), who was delighted to chat with them as they delivered his meal.



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Agency Employees Sacrifice to Serve Our Country



Rea Alvarez
Admin. Assistant,
Child Welfare
Services, Polinsky
Children's Center



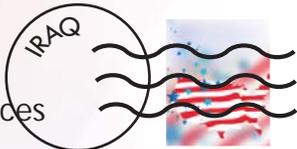
Rea Alvarez, Administrative Assistant at the Polinsky Children's Center, started as a student worker and has been with the county for 17 years. The single mother of two girls has been a reservist in the US Navy since 2000. She served as a Navy aviation support technician repairing aircraft engines, calibrating fuel pumps, and operating heavy equipment.

She served active duty for 60 days at Atsugi, Japan; Naples, Italy; and Bahrain before re-enlisting for another four-year-term and becoming cross-rated as a personnel specialist.

After 9/11, Alvarez has served active duty in China Lake, California and in San Diego. Her last active duty service was in August at Miramar, providing personnel support to deployed servicemen in regards to their pay, uniforms, medical records, dependents, benefits, and housing, as well as participating in daily readiness training as a unit.



Marivic Fields
Protective Services
Supervisor,
North Inland
Region



Marivic Fields is a Protective Services Supervisor assigned at the North Inland Region. She is also a Captain in the US Army Reserve, serving two active duty tours since joining in 2000.

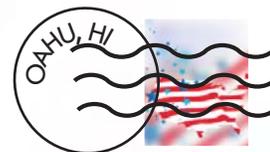
In 2003, Fields was deployed to Iraq as Social Worker for a Combat Stress Control Team. During this deployment, she was part of a prevention team attached to the 4th Infantry Division.

In 2007, Marivic was again mobilized and assigned as a social worker at the Behavioral Health Service, Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center, Fort Meade, MD. She served as Chief of Social Work Services and Family Advocacy.

She is currently assigned as a Case Manager for Behavioral Health Services in the military, where her primary duties involve managing the care of patients, ensuring continuity and easy access to care. Fields also provides treatment, psycho-social assessments and initial screenings of soldiers, and provides support for the Warrior in Transition Unit.



Carlos R. Renstrom
Departmental
Human Resources
Officer, Behavioral
Health Services



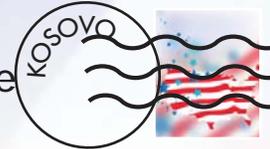
Carlos R. Renstrom serves as a Human Resources Specialist (42A) in the U.S. Army Reserve. Carlos served one active duty tour in 2001. He has been stationed in Columbia, South Carolina and Schofield Barracks in the island of Oahu, Hawaii, where he completed active duty.

During active duty, he was part of the Personnel Action Center for the 84th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) in the 25th Infantry Division (Light) providing Human Resources services to 600 soldiers and their families. He was in charge of processing military personnel promotions, demotions, personnel actions, leadership briefings, data processing as well as making sure that soldiers' families were receiving military benefits and counseling as needed during deployments.

In 2004, Carlos received the Good Conduct Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Marksman on M16 and M249 Rifle, Expert on Grenade and Overseas Medal.



Maria Ysela Galvan-Dupree
Special Education
Services, Mental
Health Services



Maria Ysela Galvan-Dupree, a Major in the National Guard assigned to the Medical Service Corps, G9 Civil Military Operations, recently returned from a one-year deployment to Kosovo. She was involved in medical planning operations (MEDCAPS AND VETCAPS) and offered civilian medical support to Albanians and Serbians in the region. She was in charge of municipality events and worked with nine local mayors to plan activities. Galvan-Dupree, given the nickname MGD by her fellow peers, was the only female soldier in her section.

She has been a county employee for several years and works in the Special Education Services department doing mental health assessments for school aged children referred by local school districts.

She is back home now and on leave following her deployment.

Agency Employees Sacrifice to Serve Our Country



Sonia Estevez
Office Assistant,
Child Welfare
Services,
South Region

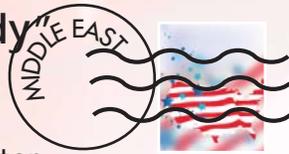


Sonia Estevez is currently employed with the County of San Diego as an Office Assistant in Child Welfare Services, South Region, and is a member of the United States Air Force Reserve, serving since July 2003.

At HHSA, Sonia provides support to staff conducting child abuse investigations and service delivery. Her contribution in the smooth running of this program is pivotal as she deals directly with providing important public information. The office support she provides is invaluable and her contributions are greatly appreciated.



Gilbert "Andy" Valasquez
Communicable
Disease Investigator,
HIV, STD and
Hepatitis Branch



Gilbert "Andy" Valasquez has been deployed for much of the past three years. He is a Captain in the United State Army.

Valasquez, who is married with one son, began work with the County as a student worker in 2002 conducting STD presentations to high-risk youth. He was hired full-time in July, 2004.

He graduated from San Diego State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Science with an emphasis in Community Health Education and a minor in Military Science.

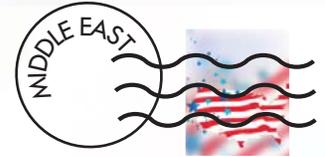
Margaret Domiguez
Public Health Nurse IV,
North Central
Public Health Center



Margaret Domiguez is currently on her second tour of active duty with the U.S. Army. She was first called in March 2003, assigned to Fort Hood, TX, and returned to County the following year. Her present tour of duty began in Oct., 2007, and she is currently assigned to Fort Meade, MD, providing operational support for Operation Enduring Freedom. She is expected to return to her County duties on June 1, 2010, unless she is redeployed on active duty. She has been with the County since May, 2000.



Takeshi Oho
Sr. Protective
Services Worker
Adoptions, Child
Welfare Services



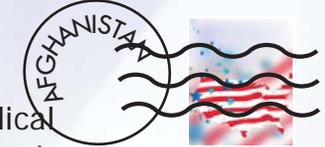
Takeshi Oho is a Senior Protective Services Worker in Adoptions. Oho enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve in Nov. 2001 after 9/11. He was activated at the end of Nov. 2007 and deployed to the Middle East from Feb. to Sept. 2008 with Maritime Expeditionary Boat Detachment 111, which is a unit that uses armed, patrol boats to provide security for our forces.

With the Navy, Oho is a Personnel Specialist and handles matters related to personnel administration, such as service records and pay. He is also a tactical craft (patrol boat) coxswain, and is responsible for the boat, crew, weapons, and all equipment onboard. Early in the deployment, he earned his Patrol Leader qualification and had tactical control/overall responsibility for all the boats on the mission. He also earned the Expeditionary Warfare Specialist designation while deployed.

He was promoted to Chief Petty Officer over the summer and is currently serving in a reserve status with the same unit, MAR-EXBOATDET 111.



Rebecca Pate
Emergency Medical
Services Coordinator,
Public Health
Services



Rebecca Pate is an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Coordinator for Public Health. She has also served in the United States Navy Reserves as a Trauma Nurse for fourteen years and holds the rank of Lieutenant Commander. Pate was mobilized in August and is currently serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan. For the first three months she was the Senior Nurse in the Emergency Room where casualties from the field initially arrived for care. Pate is now the Trauma Ward Team Leader where she supervises a team of officers and enlisted medical personnel.

This is not Rebecca's first time being mobilized. She served at the Navy Medical Center San Diego Emergency Department for two years as staff, charge and triage nurse. She co-authored Emergency Department-specific policies for evacuation and disaster response. Her time as a member of the command disaster management committee has been invaluable in her position at EMS. In 2007 she received the Bea Rattner Award as Nurse Corps Officer of the Year in the Navy Reserve.



A Fallen Hero

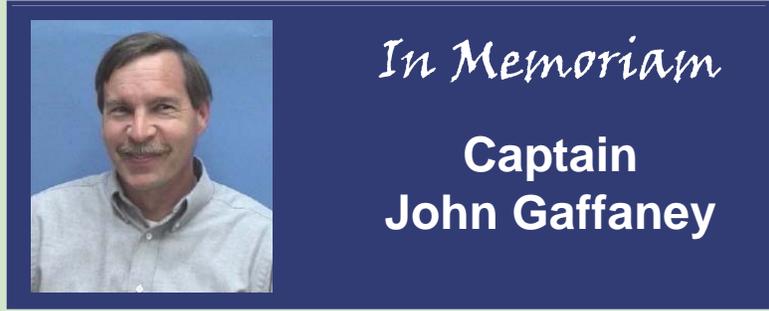
On Nov. 5, we lost a special County colleague and friend when John Gaffaney, 56, was killed at Fort Hood, Texas. John was a supervisor for the Agency, assisting seniors who had financial problems or were victims of abuse. He was a registered nurse with special training in mental health counseling and had worked for the County for 22 years, the last nine with Adult Protective Services (APS).

John was in the Navy from 1973 to 1978 and the California National Guard from 1984 to 1999, retiring with the rank of major. He re-enlisted as an Army reservist with the rank of captain three years ago on the condition that he would be deployed to the Middle East. He had been in Texas one day before he died.

Everything about John was ideally suited to helping soldiers who were suffering the stresses of war. He was enormously patient and calm. He was sensible and wise. He engendered respect by showing respect to everyone he met. He faced very tough situations head on. He loved solving problems and, as a supervisor, guiding his staff to solutions of their own.

How ironic that his quick action put him in harm's way. "He tried to rush the shooter and took at least five rounds," said Army Reserve Colonel Kathy Platoni, who was in the room where John was shot.

Those selfless instincts were a big part of John's character. He be-



lieved in doing the right thing, in serving others, and in protecting people who were less capable.

Even though John couldn't accomplish the mission he pursued so doggedly, his memory will live as an example of someone who sought purpose in his life and gave his all.

As intense as John could be about many things that mattered to him, he always had a wry smile. In a journal that AIS employees gave to John's family, many co-workers describe his "teasing sense of humor," his "positive attitude," and that "twinkle in his eye."

As a Harley-Davidson lover, he would have grinned at the salute from 100 members of the Patriot Guard on motorcycles who welcomed his casket when he returned to Miramar Naval Air Station.

Our deepest sympathies go to John's wife, Christine, and son, Matthew. We join them in mourning the loss of this hero who would shake his head at being called one.

Promoting Your Pre-Teen's Health

Jan. 17-23 is Pre-Teen Vaccine Week, and one of the best ways to keep your pre-teen healthy is with a visit to the doctor to make sure he or she is up-to-date on immunizations to protect against serious diseases.

There were 139 cases of whooping cough reported to the Agency in 2009, more than twice the number of the previous year. And we all know that H1N1 can result in serious complications.

If you're a parent of a preteen, schedule a visit with your doctor now, and urge other parents to do so, too.

Visit the San Diego Immunization Branch website at www.sdiz.org (go to the Community section and click on Pre-Teens and Adolescents) or call 619-692-8661.

Preteen (11-12 years old) Vaccine Checklist

- Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- Meningococcal
- Regular Seasonal flu (annually)
- H1N1 (swine) flu
- HPV (one brand is licensed for use in boys as well as girls)
- Varicella (Chickenpox) 2nd dose

South Region Staff Honored

The Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) recognized HHS South Region Health Promotion staff **Curley Jordan** and **Elena Quintanar** for their work as leads of the Healthy Eating, Active Communities initiative. Both staff members have been instrumental in supporting environmental changes to improve opportunities for children to eat healthy and be active.

HEALTH NEWS

New Year's Resolutions VIDEO



[Click here to see the video](#)



Nurse Family Partnership Celebrates 10 Years

The Nurse Family Partnership program (NFP) started in the fall of 1999 in East Region and has served about 900 families as it celebrates its 10th anniversary. NFP is a public health program that helps transform the lives of low-income mothers pregnant with their first child. Each mother is partnered with a Public Health Nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing support and guidance until her child's second birthday.

This partnership can help break the cycle of poverty by empowering and nurturing mothers to become confident, skilled parents able to prepare their children for successful futures.

Many outcomes have surpassed established goals.

- Immunization coverage rates for children 24 months old at 98%
- Initiating of breastfeeding at 92%
- 32% Reduction in maternal smoking for NFP graduates.

Many NFP graduates have gone on to college, including several to nursing schools. Congratulations to East Region NFP for achieving 10 years of quality service. May your next 10 years be as successful!



East Region Nurse Family Partnership team: front row (l to r) is **Indira Caunin**, **Irene Anderson**, and **Gaby Kuperman**. Back row (l to r) **Christine Alcalá**, **Barbara Hale**, **Roxanne Rosengarten**, **Judith Hays-Zavala** and **Nissa Barbawy**.

Job Shadow a Success

Escondido high school students stepped into the shoes of North Regions' employees during a job shadow day in Dec. Seven students followed workers in Child Welfare Services, Public Health Nursing and at a Family Resource Center.



Bea Moniz, Public Health Nurse, shared her knowledge and experience with **Jasmine Benitez** of Orange Glen High School.



Human Services Specialist **Michelle Gregson** walked **Kaitlin Lingnau**, a San Pasqual High School student, through the steps of helping a family become self-sufficient.

All in One Shot



Public Health Nurse **Meagan McGraw** (right) gives a flu shot to **Lisa Gray** of Child Welfare Services during the East Region's annual Mass Vaccination Clinic. Both the H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines were available and a total of 1,928 immunizations were given.

Safety First for Tots

Dann Crawford, North Regions Assistant Deputy Director, speaks at a press conference held in conjunction with the North Central Family Resource Center's Toys for Tots distribution. Deputy Public Health Officer **Dr. Dean Sidelinger** (right) also spoke and offered recommendations on choosing safe and age-appropriate gifts.





Giving Back

‘T was the last weeks in December, and all through the County All the children were stirring in search of holiday bounty, The wee ones all prepared wish lists with care, HNSA employees set out to fill them, all without fanfare. From blankets to socks, toys to food & greetings for the military, All done with care and love to make the holidays merry.

A Little Bit of Comfort

VIDEO



[Click here to see the video](#)

Holiday Drives

- Office of Strategy Management collected toys for the San Diego Foster Parent Association
- North Regions Toys for Tots
- East Regions Toys for Tots gave toys to 435 families
- Askew Building Military Care Package Donations
- Public Health (Rosecrans) sock drive for the homeless collected 470 pairs of socks
- Public Health (Rosecrans) donated to a food pantry
- Polinsky Children’s Center Holiday Cards for Troops
- Public Administrator/Public Guardian (PA/PG) Gift Drive for Seniors
- Askew Building Automation toy/food drive for the Linda Vista Boys & Girls Club and St. Vincent De Paul Village
- CWS Administration food drive
- South Region Toys for Tots gave toys to 1300 children
- South Region food drive for the San Diego Food Bank
- Northeast Family Resource Center Toy for Tots distributed 1,189 toys
- California Children Services (CCS) toy drive for children of our Medical Therapy Units
- CCS Medical Therapy Unit Rady Children’s Hospital toy drive
- Behavioral Health Services System of Care team provided gifts through Adopt-a-Family
- Central Region Toys for Tots
- Human Resources Toys for Tots
- Mental Health Services donated items for seniors through the Heritage Clinic
- North Coastal Family Resource Center staff hosted a gift drive to support PA/PG’s effort
- North Coastal and North Inland CWS staff hosted a holiday party for foster families
- North Coastal FRC provided outreach to 1,200 families at the Community Resource Center Holiday Basket program



Above, left, Askew House Committee members (l to r) **Leslie Pinka, Jenny Pietila, Pendeza Lawrence and Tom Christensen** get ready to ship off donations to Agency employees serving overseas in the military. Askew employees donated 125 pounds of items during their holiday party and the packages were sent off with more than 50 handmade holiday cards from the foster youth at the Polinsky Children’s Center. Above, right, a child gets a new bike courtesy of the North Central FRC Toys for Tots distribution. Left photo: (l to r) **Kim Stead, Jenine Lawrence, and Kelly Schadeck-hand** hand out toys to 435 families at the East Region Toys for Tots distribution.



- North Inland Child Welfare Services (CWS) employees and community volunteers hand-knit scarves and more than 300 blankets for foster youth.

Follow HNSA



2009 Biking Adventure Ends in First Place Win

Child Welfare Services Protective Services Supervisor **Laurie Horton** is a model for work life balance, according to her manager, **June Herzog**. Horton has taken up mountain bike racing and has done it in a big way.



Horton's 2009 biking journey found her doing several charity rides and competing in several races, culminating in a first place finish in the Women's Masters (ages 40+) division of a demanding 50-mile-race in Temecula.

Bottles for Books

Blanca Casaubon wants your bottles! And your cans and other recyclables as well. Casaubon, who has been dubbed the "Green Lady of Rosecrans", is inspiring others to recycle at the Public Health Services Complex at Rosecrans with a program called Bottles for Books that turns recyclables into books for children.



The money made from the recycling is used to purchase books for the Reach Out and Read program that gives books to children from six months to five years every time they visit their pediatrician.

Home for the Holidays



Charlene (13) and Alondra (10), from San Diego County Adoptions, were featured in "A Home for the Holidays" adoption special that aired on CBS on Dec. 23. Both girls had their dream come true as they were just recently placed in their forever adoptive homes and were able to celebrate the holidays with their new families.

Roche Honored by State SIDS Advisory Council

Public Health Nurse **Kitty Roche**, HHSA's San Diego County Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Coordinator, received a commendation for her service to the California SIDS Advisory Council. "As a Public Health Nurse, she is the Council's window on SIDS services in California," said Council Chairman Dr. Thomas Keens. "She has performed dedicated service above and beyond the call of duty, and her activities have been of vital importance to the work of the Council."

Edgemoor's Beecham named Health Champion

Edgemoor Hospital Director of Nursing **Nancy Beecham** has been presented with the San Diego Healthcare Champions award in nursing by the San Diego Business Journal. The Journal highlighted her vision to deliver the highest quality care in an environment that also "celebrates individuality, self-reliance and kindness..."

Investment and Retirement Event

San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister is pleased to announce the next Investment and Retirement Symposium presented by the Deferred Compensation Division. This evening symposium will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 20, from 6 pm to 8:30 pm at the Doubletree Hotel, Mission Valley, 7450 Hazard Center Drive, San Diego.

The cost is \$20.00 per person or \$30.00 for two. Dinner and parking are included with your paid registration. Seating is limited and pre-registration by January 15th is required.

For registration and information, please log on to www.myDCplan.com (under the Important Information Box) or call the Deferred Compensation Department at (619) 531-5840.

La Jolla Country Day School Donation

VIDEO



[Click here to see the video](#)