

Service with a Smile

It was a good friend and social worker who first encouraged Lea Almazan to apply for a position with the County of Orange. In those days, Lea was working as a data entry technician for an automobile restoration company and was excited by the prospect of a change.

"I wasn't exactly sure what department the opening was with, but was so happy to find out it was a Child Support Services (CSS) job and would involve me helping kids and their parents," Almazan said. "It felt more humanitarian."

Three months later, she joined the Field Service Team and next transitioned into the Court Operations division processing legal documents and mail, answering telephones, and checking-in customers at the Lamoreaux Justice Center. "That was where I discovered how much being on the frontline face-to-face with clients would impact me," she recalls. "People are so anxious there, and it felt great to bring them some calm."

As part of the CSS team since 2006, Ms. Almazan has also held responsibilities with the Ombudsman's office and as a Customer Service contact and cashier. "In every position, I've tried to take a nugget of wisdom away from each supervisor," she said. "From them, I've learned to focus and to ask questions, to pace myself, and to stay flexible."

When Lea heard the department was launching a Customer Service Center, she applied for a representative vacancy and hoped for the best. CSS had discovered that many of its clients

Community Resource Center

Connecting You to Resources



Lea Almazan, Customer Service Representative with Child Support Services, greets customers at the Community Resource Center in Santa Ana.

lack basic resources, which creates difficulties that prevent their children from receiving adequate financial and emotional family support. To address this challenge, the Customer Service Center was created in November of 2012 and its specially-trained staff has since matched more than 5,300 clients with food, medical, clothing, monetary, shelter and legal resources. Lea is a vital member of this office and is praised by her colleagues and clients alike for

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her positive outlook and service-oriented approach. “Lea is very special, but she will tell you that she is just one of the many dedicated customer-service team members helping our customers be successful parents,” said Steven Eldred, Director of CSS.

Sometimes clients are very upset when they walk through the center’s doors. Ms. Almazan is stationed at a public-facing front desk, and is the first face a visitor sees upon arrival. “We have to have a heart to listen, to smile, and to ask, ‘How can I help you?’ Kindness is for free, and it’s something we can offer in every County building, not just Child Support Services,” she said.

Though staff is trained to respond to emotionally-intense interactions, safety is always a priority and a good attitude – she is certain – makes all the difference in the world when trying to relieve people’s anxiety and bring resolution to difficult issues. “I have faith that whatever walks through the door will be for the good; and, if it’s not, I believe we’ll turn it around for the good,” she said. When asked about the most challenging part of her job, Ms. Almazan responded that it can be hard seeing just how strong the need for resources can be in our community. “Sometimes the resources available are limited, but we empower people to use what is there to move forward,” she added. “I encourage our clients to stop looking back on any negativity or judgment they’ve experienced in the past, and to use this center as a stepping stone to move forward – to renew and refine their lives.”

As for future career goals, Ms. Almazan responded that she would love to become a Child Support Officer one day, but is determined to find joy along whatever path life takes her. She knows she will always work in a place that is focused on helping others. “I know I’m just getting started, but I also know that the work being done at this level, right here, is what’s going to make our directors and our commissioners a success,” she said. “It starts from the bottom up with great customer service.” ■

OC Parks Holds 3rd Annual Wilderness Celebration

OC PARKS WILDERNESS SLIDESHOW: [CLICK HERE](#)



The 3rd annual OC Parks Wilderness Celebration involved many of the partner organizations involved in the Irvine Ranch Open Space. Please click here to view the slideshow.

The red rocks of Black Star Canyon provided the scenic backdrop for OC Parks’ 3rd Annual Wilderness Celebration on July 13, drawing enthusiastic hikers and bikers for a day of back-country exploration and enjoyment.

The annual Wilderness Celebration marks the anniversary of the donation of 20,000 acres of protected open space to the County of Orange by The Irvine Company. The area known as the Irvine Ranch Open Space is a National Natural Landmark, recognized for its unique biological and geological resources. Many of the organizations that partner with OC Parks and the Irvine Ranch Conservancy participated in the

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event, providing information to the public on how to safely and responsibly enjoy the County's wilderness areas.

Third District Supervisor Todd Spitzer participated in a welcoming ceremony and thanked the many volunteers who have given tens of thousands of hours of their time to enhance the experience of visitors while protecting this ecologically sensitive area. Supervisor Spitzer also stressed the importance of balancing the need for preservation and conservation while providing the public with access to enjoy the land. Joining the Supervisor in welcoming Wilderness Celebration participants were Michael O'Connell, Executive Director of the Irvine Ranch Conservancy, and Mark Denny, the County's Chief Operating Officer who formerly served as Director of OC Parks.

For more information about the Irvine Ranch Open Space, visit <http://ocparks.com/parks/irvineranch> or <http://www.irlandmarks.org/>. ■

Orange County Leadership Programs Featured at International Conference

Orange County: Sun, Surf and Servant Leadership was the title of a workshop presented at the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership International Conference held June 12-14 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

"We (the Greenleaf Center) were excited to hear about the County of Orange's programs and the County's commitment to developing future leaders," said Kevin Monroe of the Greenleaf Center. "Servant Leadership is a natural extension of the commitment to service imbedded in the County's - and each individual agency's - Mission. The County of Orange's story is one worth telling – and one we wanted conference attendees to hear."

Barbara Mizerek, Learning and Organizational Development Manager for Human Resource Services, shared the story of the County's investment in leadership through the Orange County Leadership Academy (OCLA) and the Orange County Leadership Lessons (OCLL) program. OCLA is a leadership development program focused on a leadership approach valuing the contributions of all staff, and focused on the County cultural values of respect, integrity, caring, trust and excellence.



During a recent visit to Orange County, Kevin Monroe of the Greenleaf Center met with members of the OCLA Alumni Steering Committee. Participants in the meeting included (l-r): Darren Smith, OCLA Alumni Chair; Lori Zucchini, Leadership Development Associates; Diana Banzet, OCLA Alumni Co-Chair; Kevin Monroe, Greenleaf Center; Barbara Mizerek, OCLA Steering Committee member; and Bart Bartlett, OCLA Steering Committee member.

Following the first OCLA class, attendees were challenged to take the Servant Leadership approach beyond the classroom and into the workplace. Graduates from each subsequent OCLA class are presented with a similar challenge. The OCLA Alumni group has spear-

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headed programs including the Countywide New Employee Orientation Program, the OCLA Annual Leadership Conference, and the David Kurtz Servant Leadership Award. OCLA Alumni and OCLL graduates also participate in numerous community events through the group's Community Outreach Committee.

Perhaps the most significant OCLA Alumni project is the Leadership Lessons program, developed to bring the Servant Leadership message to all County staff based on the belief that leadership exists at all levels. To date, approximately 2,800 County staff have attended *OCLL I: Leading as a Way of Serving* while over 1,000 staff have attended *OCLL II: Leading in Teams – Communication, Collaboration and Integrity*.

Information about upcoming OCLL classes is available on Training Partner at <http://tp2003.ocgov.com/TPOnline/TPOnline.dll/Home>. Visit the OCLA home page at <http://oclead.com> for additional information about Servant Leadership and OCLA Alumni activities. ■

Eco Challenge “Triple Play” Recycling Event Comes to Angel Stadium



OC Waste & Recycling has partnered with Goodwill of Orange County to host a special recycling event at Angel Stadium of Anaheim on Saturday, August 10th from 8 a.m. to noon.

The first 300 cars to drop off three bags of gently used clothing, working and non-working electronics, or documents to shred will receive two free tickets to an Angels Baseball game this year!

Plus, all cars will receive a free child admission coupon to Discovery Science Center to check out the Eco Challenge exhibit in addition to a tax deductible receipt from Goodwill for their donation. Last year, Goodwill diverted forty three million pounds of waste from Orange County landfills. This is a great opportunity to clean up the house while helping to keep our community clean and green.

To learn more about the types of donations that will and will not be accepted, please visit <http://www.ocgoodwill.org/business-services/e-waste>. ■

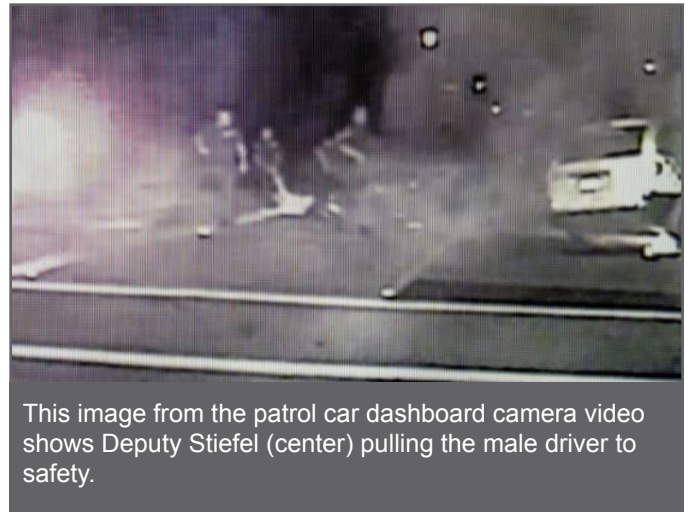
Sheriff's Deputies Rescue Man in Yorba Linda

While on routine patrol early one Thursday morning last month in Yorba Linda, Sheriff's Deputies Shayne Stiefel and Gilbert Lascurain came upon a burning car with the driver sitting inside still wearing his seatbelt.

Around 2:35 a.m., training officer Deputy Stiefel and his trainee, Deputy Lascurain, observed a Chrysler minivan taxi near the intersection of Clydesdale Avenue and Bastanchury Road with its front end stuck against the curb and a no-parking sign. As the driver pressed down on his accelerator, tire friction ignited liquid leaking from underneath the car – which began to spark and erupt in smoky flames.

Deputies approached and instructed the man to exit the vehicle, but he was suffering from an acute medical emergency with disorientation so severe that he instead remained sitting inside attempting to light a cigarette. Deputy Stiefel then reached inside the open window and used a knife to cut the seatbelt away, pulling the man to safety just seconds before the vehicle was engulfed by fire.

"We are all very proud of the quick actions performed by Deputy Shayne Stiefel," said Sheriff



This image from the patrol car dashboard camera video shows Deputy Stiefel (center) pulling the male driver to safety.

Sandra Hutchens. "Without regard for his own safety, he successfully rescued a man from a burning vehicle. While Shayne would say he was just doing his job, we consider his actions heroic and in keeping with the traditions of the Orange County Sheriff's Department."

Thanks to the Deputies' quick actions, the man was taken to Western Medical Center in Santa Ana for treatment. ■

National Awareness Campaign Kicks Off in Orange County

A localized version of the nationwide anti-terrorism campaign, "If You See Something, Say Something," launched on July 12th in Costa Mesa to remind community members to be on the lookout for suspicious packages or bags.

To bring awareness to the campaign, a 10-foot-tall red backpack will appear at different locations throughout Orange County for a year to remind people to use common sense when reporting things that do not seem right. John Wayne Airport is currently hosting the backpack in Terminal C in hopes that the traveling public and passengers become aware of their surroundings and report suspicious objects or activity to Airport Police Services.

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The 10-foot-tall red backpack made its debut at the OC Fair for the kick-off of the campaign. It is currently on display at John Wayne Airport in Terminal C until August 13.

The following are a few examples to help you identify a questionable object or behavior:

- An unattended bag, briefcase or box in a public venue
- Someone drawing or measuring important buildings
- Strangers asking questions about security or building security procedures
- Cars or trucks left in No Parking Zones in front of important buildings or venues
- Unusual smells or smoke that worry you
- The purchase of supplies or equipment that can be used to make bombs or weapons

If you see something that is out of the ordinary, please contact your local police department or call 9-1-1 to report suspicious activity or a crime in progress. To learn more about the campaign, visit www.KeepOCSafe.org

Internal Audit Fraud Hotline

If you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of County resources, contact the OC Internal Audit Department Fraud Hotline at (714) 834-3608 or visit www.ocgov.com/audit. Messages are accepted any day or time and can be made anonymously. In addition, employees are provided protection under the California Whistleblower Law. ■



24/7

Fraud Hotline

714.834.3608

Other Hotline Numbers:

Child Abuse
714.940.1000

Consumer Protection Unit
714.648.3600

U-TIP Safety & Loss Prevention Hotline
714.285.5597

County Employees Worker's Compensation Fraud
714.648.3650

Welfare Fraud & Public Assistance Fraud Unit
714.347.8636

Medi-Cal Fraud
800.822.6222

Our Vigilance Never Sleeps!

Hotline Phone Number: 714.834.3608
Call us and remain anonymous.
Call anytime, anyplace, day or night.
Report questionable behavior, waste, and abuse involving County vendors, employees, and processes.

**Hotline Website Information/
Online Submission:** <http://www.ocgov.com/audit>

Address to send documentation:
Fraud Documentation
County of Orange Internal Audit Department
12 Civic Center Plaza, Room 232
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Help us keep the
County honest,
fair, and efficient.

The Orange County Fraud Hotline is intended for the use by County employees, the general public, or vendors reporting suspected waste, fraud, violations of County policy or misuse of County resources by vendors, contractors or County employees. County employees wishing to report complaints are protected under the New Whistleblower Law, California Labor Code 1102.5 and 1106. The California State Attorney General's Whistleblower Hotline number is 1-800-952-5225.

Get the 411 on Public Administrator/Public Guardian

- The mission of the Offices of the Public Administrator/Public Guardian (PAPG) is to “compassionately and effectively protect, assist and manage the affairs of resident decedent estates and residents unable to care for themselves or who are gravely disabled.”
- The office of the Orange County Public Administrator serves the public by managing the estates of Orange County residents who died without a will or without the appropriate person(s) willing or able to act as executor.
- When it appears no one with higher authority pursuant to the probate code is acting to handle the decedent’s estate, it is the duty of the Public Administrator to make a diligent search for a will, the names and addresses of next of kin and any documents for the disposition of the decedent’s remains. If there is no one available to act, the Public Administrator may be nominated to act as the personal representative.
- Public Guardian’s goal is to provide the necessary oversight to treatment, care, and placement with our community partner, the Health Care Agency, so our clients may once again be contributing members of our society. The Public Guardian, when appointed the estate conservator, has a responsibility to marshal assets, redirect income, pay expenses, manage and sell real estate, oversee investment accounts, and store and sell personal property.

To learn more about the Public Administrator/Public Guardian, please visit:

<http://ocgov.com/gov/pa/>
<http://ocgov.com/gov/pg/>



Service Awards

For the Month of July

30 YEARS

Sandra Barnes
Auditor-Controller

Delia Arreola
Clerk-Recorder

Lupe Moreno
Health Care Agency

Catherine Smith
Health Care Agency

Kevin Smith
Health Care Agency

Le Lonnie Sylvester
Sheriff-Coroner

Mozelle Taylor
Social Services Agency

25 YEARS

Augustine Stewart
Assessor

Salvador Zamarripa
Child Support Services

Vantuyen Tran
District Attorney

Magali Bustamante
Health Care Agency

Manuel Correa
OC Community Resources

Kathy Kilar
OC Public Works

Mehdi Sobhani
OC Public Works

Wilfried Niemann
OC Public Works

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25 YEARS CONTINUED

Bryan Pastor
OC Public Works

Mike Sansky
OC Waste & Recycling

Maria Carmen Barreto
Probation

Mary McDermid
Probation

Mary Palomo
Public Defender

James Amesquita
Sheriff-Coroner

Christopher Bueler
Sheriff-Coroner

Daniel Hoffman
Sheriff-Coroner

Melanie SanJose
Sheriff-Coroner

Jerrald Van Wyke
Sheriff-Coroner

Dawn Blank
Social Services Agency

Nhan Dang
Social Services Agency

Sylvia Foster
Social Services Agency

Leticia Scheuermann
Social Services Agency

Connie Weinman
Social Services Agency

Marianne Zickrick
Social Services Agency

20 YEARS

Ruth Joyce Castaneda
Assessor

Sarah Quach
Auditor-Controller

Albert Zavala
Auditor-Controller

Sonia Acuna
Clerk of the Board

Cristina Dizon
Child Support Services

Annette Fisher
Child Support Services

Ricardo Haro
Child Support Services

Linda Newman
Child Support Services

Francesca Nguyen
Child Support Services

Linh Bui
Health Care Agency

Saba Fattaleh
Health Care Agency

Sheila Gill
Health Care Agency

Mike Haller
Health Care Agency

Elvira Navarro
Health Care Agency

Mauricio Prado
Health Care Agency

Anne Levasseur
Probation

Scott Sanders
Public Defender

Fernando Becerra
Sheriff-Coroner

Sergio Cerne
Sheriff-Coroner

Kwok Chen
Sheriff-Coroner

Cindi Coppock
Sheriff-Coroner

John Coppock
Sheriff-Coroner

Paul D'Auria
Sheriff-Coroner

Janet Dunford
Sheriff-Coroner

Carla Harer
Sheriff-Coroner

Robert Hunt
Sheriff-Coroner

Stephanie Jones
Sheriff-Coroner

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20 YEARS CONTINUED

Ann Lucenti
Sheriff-Coroner

Michael McHenry
Sheriff-Coroner

Kevin O'Brien
Sheriff-Coroner

Brian Schmutz
Sheriff-Coroner

Brian Sims
Sheriff-Coroner

Kenneth Smith
Sheriff-Coroner

Linda Sutton
Sheriff-Coroner

Michael Torley
Sheriff-Coroner

Scott Vanover
Sheriff-Coroner

Sterling Young
Sheriff-Coroner

Maria Castillo
Social Services Agency

Norma Castro
Social Services Agency

Alma Gonzalez
Social Services Agency

Ana Knight
Social Services Agency

Rina Martinez
Social Services Agency

Rosa Mendoza
Social Services Agency

Claudia Montelongo
Social Services Agency

COUNTY OF ORANGE

MISSION STATEMENT

"Making Orange County a safe, healthy, and fulfilling place to live, work, and play, today and for generations to come, by providing outstanding, cost-effective regional public services."

Click [here](#) to read the full mission and values statement.

CONTACT US

COUNTY CONNECTION is distributed monthly by the County Executive Office and is published by CEO Community/Media Relations. Call 714.834.6203 or e-mail ask.the.ceo@ocgov.com with any suggestions and comments.

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