



COUNTY OF MONTEREY

# CAO Weekly Report

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SPECIALREPORT

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*Lupe Birruete (left) and Lucy Vasquez (right) accept a state award for their work with the Monterey County Probation Department's Child Advocate Program.*

## County Notes

- > Congratulations to Eddie Urena, Information Technology, who was the winner of the final Combined Giving drawing for the LED Smart TV from the Clerk of the Board's Office.

## Probation Staff Honored for Child Advocacy Work

**Did you know that within the Probation Department there is a Family Violence unit? Two of its members have been singled out for state accolades for their work as the unit's Child Advocate Program team.**

For the last eight years, Lupe Birruete and Lucy Vasquez have made up the CAP team, a critical program for children who experience or witness violence.



CAP specifically targets children who are in families with one or more parent on probation for family violence. In most cases, these children live with the victims of domestic violence or are themselves the victims of abuse. Birruete and Vasquez say despite the situations that present themselves, the greatest satisfaction with their job is seeing positive changes within the families they encounter.

“We do make a positive difference not only in the children’s life but the parents,” explains Birruete. “We see changes with parents by observing their positive attachment with their children while addressing their own mental health or substance abuse issues.”

The CAP team provides case management with families for 12 to 18 months including parenting classes, home visits, intervention and prevention services to approximately 120 families each year. Team members develop trusting relationships with families many of which continue long after the case management is over.

The team’s supervisor says Birruete and Vasquez were selected by the California Probation, Parole and Correctional Association to receive its prestigious James Rowland Correctional Victim Services award for significant and exemplary contributions to crime victim services. It was a well-deserved honor.

“Throughout their years of service, they have obtained a great deal of knowledge and have established key relationships that have made the CAP unit a strong service provider to families with children that have experienced trauma and toxic stress,” says Probation Services Manager Aaron Kaelin. “Their ability to engage victim’s families and provide appropriate referrals to collaborative agencies truly makes a positive impact on these families.”



## Library Celebrates Milestone for Literacy Effort

**Thirty years ago, the Monterey County Free Libraries launched a literacy tutoring program to help adults come out of the shadows and get the help they need to learn to read or improve their limited skills.**

Since that beginning, hundreds of county residents have benefitted from this program: getting the help they need to reach their goals, whether job related or as basic as passing the driver’s license written test, or as personal as wanting to read a book to a young child.



Assistant CAO Manny González, Librarian Jayanti Addleman and Literacy Coordinator Cathy Andrews with Board resolution (above). Youngsters enjoy Wheelie Mobilee activities (right)



“We’re currently helping 95 adults reach for their dreams, it’s the largest number we’ve served at one time in the 30 years of the program,” explains Cathy Andrews, Literacy

Program Coordinator. “This program works thanks to our dedicated volunteer tutors, and we desperately need more of them. There are more than 100 people waiting for a tutor.”

Volunteer-led conversational English classes are also available for people to practice and build their language skills.

The Library held a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at the Marina Branch Library. The weather was sunny and warm, just right for an event featuring cake for attendees, crafts and books for kids and music provided by a local rock band, The Heist.



Members of the band ‘The Heist’ played at the literacy event and welcomed the library mascot Monte as a band member.

After Assistant CAO Manuel González presented Library Director Jayanti Addleman and Literacy Coordinator Cathy Andrews with a resolution from the Board of Supervisors marking the program’s anniversary, one of the program tutors shared her experiences with helping others.

Andrews says tutors report that helping a learner is one of their most rewarding experiences.

New volunteers may join anytime. For more information about the program or to register for training, please call 831-883-7597, or email [AndrewsCS@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:AndrewsCS@co.monterey.ca.us).

# Health Department Celebrates Latino Heritage for Staff and Customers

Each year, the Health Department and Natividad Medical Center team up to celebrate Monterey County's Latino heritage.

On Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, the Health Department and Natividad Medical Center hosted the annual Latino Heritage Month celebration.

This celebration and learning event featured information tables with artifacts from Latin countries. Staff who had traditional dress were encouraged to wear it for the occasion. No celebration is complete without foods, and there were many traditional dishes to sample while traditional harp music was performed by William Faulkner.

"This event and others like it are great opportunities to share and learn more about each other and the people we serve," says Elsa Jimenez, Monterey County Health Director.



*Monica Baigorri, Environmental Health Specialist, wears traditional Chilean dress.*



*Health Department Director Elsa Jimenez shares information about health policies that benefit the county's Latino residents.*

Jimenez was the featured speaker and is the first woman and Latina to head the Health Department. A native of King City, she shared what led her to public health as a career and her vision for a healthier Monterey County. Jimenez says her vision is that Monterey County is a place where everyone has the opportunity to be healthy, which includes safe parks for kids to play in, access to healthy foods, access to healthcare and where children feel like there are opportunities for them to succeed.

Attendees also learned more about the contributions of Latinos to public health.

This heritage event is part of the Health Department's strategic initiative to ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, customer-friendly services.