



COUNTY OF MONTEREY CAO Weekly Report

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SPECIALREPORT



Child Support Services Wowee Award winners for 2016: Photo 1 (upper left) l-r: Dawn Yonemitsu, Supervising Child Support Officer; Jacquelyn Ruiz, Lead Child Support Officer; Jody Holtzworth, Director; Cheryl Knappen, Lead Child Support Officer and Susan De La Torre, Child Support Officer.

Photo 2 (upper right) l-r: Kathy Aragon, Child Support Assistant; Harriet Huff, Supervising Child Support Officer; LaShanda Hall, Legal Secretary; Martha Navarro-Martinez, Child Support Assistant and Kari Sanders, Legal Process Clerk.

Left: Brian Bland, Accounting Technician.

County Notes

- > Use the Office of Emergency Services [Winter Storm Preparedness](#) page for the latest weather, warning and driving information this weekend.

CSS Staff Continues its Winning, 'Wowee' Ways

Child Support Services launched an employee recognition program in 2014 and named it 'WOWEE.' This 'wow factor' program is still going strong.

The 2016 WOWEE winners are pictured above. Honors were given out in July and December of last year.

WOWEE stands for What Outstanding Work, Employee Excellence and recognizes employee contributions to the overall department objectives and mission.

The recipients are nominated and voted on by the managers and supervisors for demonstrating safety achievement, exemplary attendance, productivity, creativity in new and innovative methods and procedures, excellent internal and external customer service, superior quality of work product, positive attitude, team player, initiative and volunteering for outreach.

“We hold numerous events throughout the year in regards to team building and employee recognition but the main event is the WOWEE award,” says CSS Director Jody Holtzworth. “This semi-annual event is important because it recognizes individual employee contributions to the overall objectives and goals of Child Support Services, along with recognizing the entire office for a job well done.”

Winners receive some pretty nifty prizes: a \$50 gift certificate, a certificate of recognition and a designated parking space of their choice.



NMC Earns National High Performance Award

A national organization which measures and reports hospital performance has named Natividad Medical Center one of its ‘Top Hospitals’ this year.

This is the first time NMC has received this award from The Leapfrog Group. This award is widely acknowledged as one of the most prestigious distinctions a hospital can receive in the United States.

“The recognition from The Leapfrog Group is a testament to our continued focus on improving processes and care hospital-wide,” said NMC CEO Dr. Gary Gray. “It awards our efforts in providing high quality health care and minimizing injuries, accidents and infections.”



NMC was one of 115 Top Hospitals recognized out of more than 1,800 hospitals across the country. It is the only hospital with this recognition in Monterey County, one of only four hospitals in Northern California and one of only 12 in California.

The selection of Top Hospitals is based on the results of the 2016 Leapfrog Hospital Survey. Performance across many areas of hospital care is considered in establishing qualifications for the award, including infection rates, maternity care, and a hospital's ability to prevent medication errors.

“Being acknowledged as a Top Hospital is an incredible feat achieved by less than three percent of hospitals nationwide,” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group.

Twice this year, NMC also received a safety grade of “A” in The Leapfrog Group’s Hospital Safety Grade, Leapfrog’s other main initiative, which assigns letter grades to hospitals based on their record of patient safety.

Animal Control Officer Receives Customer Service Award

The Health Department’s Environmental Health Bureau handed out its annual customer service award. This year’s winner is longtime Animal Control Officer Valiska Lujan.



Valiska Lujan.

The award was established in 2014 and is given in honor and memory of Robert Hoffman, who worked in the Bureau as an Environmental Health Specialist and exemplified the highest level of customer service. Nominees are chosen for their exceptional customer service in all aspects of work, including the public, inter-agency, inter-department and inter-bureau.

Congratulations to Animal Control Officer Valiska Lujan, who was nominated for the award by Mike Richards, Interim Operations Manager of Animal Services.

“Even after many years, her passion for her work obvious and paramount,” explains Richards. “She is constantly taking the initiative, from organizing educational outreach to this year organizing a rabies seminar. The seminar included a number of speakers and was attended by veterinarians, health professionals and animal control personnel from multiple jurisdictions. It was a major achievement and a huge success.”

Richard says people may not be aware of how important customer services skills are for an Animal Control Officer or ‘ACO.’

“People are very emotional when it comes to animals and animal issues; in fact, many can have a deeper bond with their pets than their own relatives. ACO Lujan consistently shows compassion and caring for people even in difficult situations such as neighborhood barking disputes, dog bite cases and most significantly, rabies exposure cases. In one recent rabies exposure case, Lujan and County

Animal Services stepped in to assist the City of Monterey with a very difficult case. Once resolved, Lujan provided training on the subject to the staff at the Monterey Police Department.

Lujan admits excellent customer service can be challenging in a job that requires enforcement. She thanks her co-workers for their support and is looking forward to building on her outreach efforts.



Robert Hoffman Customer Service Award nominees. Pictured l-r are Pablo Poticar, Environmental Health Specialist; Valiska Lujan (winner), Animal Control Officer; Bronwyn Nielson, Environmental Health Specialist; Gabriela (Gabby) Carbajal, Environmental Health Specialist; Carrie Lynn Pearce, Office Assistant; Adrian Morales, Senior Account Clerk.

“This year, I will be taking seminars into our local schools to educate children about how to be a responsible pet owner,” she says, and will continue to share her expertise with other agencies. “The seminars for rabies control incorporate the Health Department’s epidemiology and communicable disease data as well as information on animal behavior and safety.”