DATE: February 21, 2011

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman
County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer’s Report for the week of February 21, 2011

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer.

This Week’s Topics: Monterey County staff, volunteers and programs earned praise from the United Way’s Community Service Awards, the Health Department partners with other organizations to get the latest flu information to the medical community and a department fundraiser that went to the dogs in a big way!

County Staff/Volunteer Recognition
Each year, the United Way Volunteer Center accepts nominations for a variety of community awards. Several county employees, volunteers and programs made it to the finals, and one outstanding employee from the Monterey County Free Libraries was honored as the community’s 2011 ‘Unsung Hero.’

Here are their stories:

Cathy Andrews – Winner, “Unsung Hero” Award

Cathy Andrews won top honors as the community’s Unsung Hero for her extraordinary work as a Literacy Specialist.

Cathy’s job is to coordinate and provide services to adults who are learning to read and write, and to assist them in passing these skills to their children.

“It is estimated that 28% of adults in Monterey County have less than a high school diploma, and 25% of the adult population reads below the 4th grade level,” says
Jayanti Addleman, County Librarian, as she explains the challenges facing the residents Cathy serves. “Seventeen percent of our residents do not speak English well or even at all, and 11% are not literate in any language.”

In just 15 months Cathy managed to double the number of volunteers who are tutoring adult learners in 5 library branches. She’s forging alliances with agencies and individuals, leveraging her 40 hours for increased productivity and effectiveness. The professionals she has recruited for adult education assistance allowed her to establish new programs, such as Tutor Roundtables - promoting teambuilding and resource sharing, and Drop-in Classes – a place for learners waiting to be matched with a tutor.

“Even more amazing is that while doing all this, Cathy has brought in thousands of dollars in donations to READ with MCFL,” according to Addleman, who says the fund allowed the library to purchase new materials and online services that were desperately needed by both tutors and learners.

And if this was not enough, Cathy also finds time to work with others interested in finding ways to assist Triqui community members in Greenfield, who have no written language. These residents find it especially difficult to transition to employment and medical care in our County.

“Cathy’s efforts are truly changing the lives of local residents, she truly is an Unsung Hero,” says Addleman.

Lupe Covarrubias-Martinez – nominee “Unsung Hero” Award

As lead staff of the Latino Campaign – Network for a Healthy California within the Monterey County Health Department, Lupe leads a program that brings nutrition education to tens of thousands of families throughout the three counties of the Central Coast, reaching them in their language and with sensitivity to their culture and challenges.

Lupe Covarrubias-Martinez

“Her enthusiasm shows in every interaction and has no boundaries,” says Christine Moss, Lupe’s co-worker at the Health Department. “For example, Lupe learned of a great teaching tool, the ‘people-powered smoothie bike,’ where pedal power creates tasty nutritious fresh fruit smoothies, something she could use to attract families to her information booth at family events such as El Grito and Día de la Familia. No money for the smoothie bike? Lupe got it donated; working her contacts to make sure her program had what it needed to do the job.”

Lloyd and Margaret Wenck – nominees “Partner Volunteers” Award

Lloyd and Margaret Wenck may not be county employees, but they play a very important role as volunteers at Natividad Medical Center.
Lloyd is a retired Cardiopulmonary Technician and Margaret is a homemaker and community volunteer. Together they share their special skills and caring with Natividad’s tiniest patients.

For the past 15 years, this husband and wife team has organized and sewn baby quilts and knit booties and caps for thousands of babies born at the hospital. This labor of love has significantly impacted patient care services, adding warmth and welcome to newborns and their families.

By the numbers, they have sewn 3,000 baby quilts and knitted 8,000 booties and caps, translating into an astonishing 27,000 hours of volunteer service.

**Internship Program – nominee “Agency Star” Award**

Monterey County’s fledgling internship program was nominated for its efforts in reaching out to local students with training and awareness, students who may well be the county employees of tomorrow.

Begun in 2008 as a pilot program, the Board of Supervisors recently approved modest funding to make it a permanent program.

Under the program, interns work on short-term projects assisting departments. In the academic year 2009/2010, 175 interns worked a collective 27,633 voluntary hours in 18 different County departments. Those hours have a dollar value equivalent of more than $600,000. In the program’s second year, the number of students applying for County internships increased by an amazing 145%.

Congratulations to all!

**Health**

The Monterey County Health Department is a member of the Monterey County Health Education Consortium, which offers health education to the medical community. Department Epidemiologist Dr. Krista Hanni is the Consortium chairperson.

Last month, the Consortium hosted a symposium, “Flu and You: Communication, Vaccinations, and H1N1 (2009)”.

*Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH, Health Officer from the San Francisco Department of Public Health spoke about the lessons learned during the H1N1 pandemic. Dr. Aragon’s presentation focused mainly on the way the key messages about H1N1 were
perceived by the public and how the perceptions affected response to the pandemic.

The second part of the program was a panel discussion about flu vaccinations and health care workers. Dr. Lisa Hernandez, Monterey County Health Department’s Deputy Health Officer, facilitated the panel which included Dr. Aragon, Susan Patronik, RN, Infection Control Nurse at Natividad Medical Center and Molly Hubbard, MS, Immunization Coordinator, Monterey County Health Department to discuss the issues surrounding getting healthcare workers immunized against the flu.

The Monterey County Health Consortium mission is to provide continuing health-related educational opportunities in the Monterey Bay area. The organizations represented in the Consortium include California State University Monterey Bay, Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, Monterey County Health Department, Monterey County Medical Society, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Natividad Medical Center and Salinas Valley Memorial Health Care System.

Also from the Health Department - Take a Dog to Lunch!

On Thursday, February 17th a group of Health Department employees held a fundraiser for Monterey County Animal Services.

The “Take a Dog to Lunch” event gave Health Department employees the opportunity to donate and receive a hot dog lunch. Department employees raised $1,230 to help the animals being sheltered at Animal Services.

This event was made possible by the many Department staff who volunteered to help with lunch. Thanks to Salinas Meat Market, Costco, Smart & Final and Hilda Ochoa for donating items for the fundraiser.

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