GSA CONTINUES SPIRIT OF GIVING DURING PANDEMIC



In 2020, GSA found their regular avenues for fundraising curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. While many of the agency's usual events held throughout the year—summer lunches, raffles, and the annual holiday partywere understandably postponed for the year, one thing employees were unwilling to compromise on was raising money to help those in need. GSA took their annual CAN-Tree Drive efforts to new heights, raising more money than ever before: a total of \$1,950 was donatedenough to build 3 can trees, one at each main GSA building. "In fact." said director David Sasek. "GSA's 3 trees represented 15% of the County's total for 2020. Great work, team!"

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ERVICES AGENCY NEWSLETTER

MAR 2021

From the Director



As the County, and the world in general, puts a challenging 2020 behind them and looks ahead to what we all hope will be a better. more hopeful year in 2021, I feel extremely fortunate to lead an agency that not only rose to the challenges that we faced with a global pandemic and what that meant for our community, but proclaimed, "what

can we do to help?" There's no way I could completely detail how GSA redefined what Great Service Always means in a year no one realized would exceed all expectations. But, at our annual All Hands' Meeting this past winter, we were able to brief the entire agency virtually for the first time ever, including awarding our extraordinary Employees of the Year for Administration, Line/ Field, and Supervision/ Management staff. In addition, GSA employees contributed more than 14,000 hours as disaster service workers, starting from March when the need arose, and continuing even now. The Ventura County Area Agency on Aging was particularly hard hit by the pandemic, as they serve our County's most vulnerable population-our seniors-and our landscaping crew in particular shifted from nurturing the

gardens here on campus, to nurturing those in our community who are most in need by joining the workforce with VCAAA—you'll read a heartfelt thank you to the team for their sincere efforts to help the community.

While the workforce dealt with the pandemic, the day-to-day work of GSA continued unabated, as we strove to meet the needs of our County customers. Check out this issue to read about process improvement efforts, and some of the great work our procurement buyers are doing to ensure our County stays ahead of the game in energy efficiency. Last, but not least, see what is going on in our parks now that the seasons are turning: there is so much beauty to be seen, our rangers can't wait to share it with you!

Until next time,

David Sasek

GSA Hosts First Virtual All Hands' Meeting

Publication of 2020 Annual Report coincides with this year's meeting

When the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way businesses conduct meetings both large and small, GSA—like most County agencies-shifted from in-person meetings to a hybrid of inperson and virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams and Zoom. As 2020 progressed, and teleconferencing became more ingrained in our regular business model, it became apparent that we would have to adjust our concept of the "employee meeting" to accommodate this new method of hosting meetings, regardless of the meeting attendance size. With this in mind, GSA's leadership team began to plan for the largest scale meeting the agency hosts each year: the annual All Hands' Meeting.

Normally held as three separate meetings that accommodate all of the agency's 290 employees, the first step was to decide which online platform would work best to host a single virtual

General Services Agency 2021 All Hands' Meeting

February 4, 2021 9:00am via ZOOM—click on the following link:

For those employees who are not able to watch the presentation at their individual work stations, we have reserved 3 conference rooms where you can be properly socially distant, comfortably attend and watch the presentation on a larger screen. A Management Assistant will be present in each conference room to facilitate.

- onference Rooms are: PWA Saticoy Conference Rooi Pacific Conference Room (HO Service BuildingTraining Rooi



(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

meeting. After exploring the capabilities of what was available, the team decided on Zoom, largely because Zoom could more easily allow GSA to host up to 500 meeting attendees, and would allow for video recording the meeting, and posting the recording to an online platform for later viewing. Zoom's meeting tools were also easy to use for the meeting host, something that was critical considering the number of attendees that would be logging into the meeting remotely.

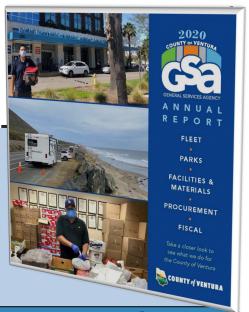
After several dry runs with the GSA IT Group team, on February 4, 2021 GSA hosted it's first virtual all-agency All Hands' Meeting from the Hall of Administration Lower Plaza Assembly Room. A minimal number of in-person staff were present: the Employee of the Year finalists were on hand to be presented their certificates, and the 2020 Employees of the Year were unveiled. In addition, GSA IT were on hand to ensure everything went according to plan and, other than one or two minor glitches, it certainly was smooth sailing, with the recorded presentation uploaded to the online platform and available for all employees the same day.

Perhaps most remarkable, the All Hands' Meeting—an event that usually spanned 3 days and 2 locations, for a total of 6 hours over 3 meetings—was held in a single meeting, one physical location, one virtual "location," and less than 2 hours. Feedback from employees was overwhelmingly positive, with many saying it was one of the best presentations yet, covering a depth and breadth of material that was impressive in scope.

The success of this year's All Hands' Meeting was certainly a testament to the adaptability and flexibility of our GSA team.

marked the third year in a row that GSA published it's yearly "Annual Report": a glossy, high-quality multipage brochure—produced by Business Support's Graphics team, of course! —that delivers a snapshot of GSA's year in review. This year, the focus was on how GSA was able to focus their efforts on responding to the County's call to support COVID-19 relief efforts, while still operating at a high level of efficiency as an agency on a day-to-day basis.

The current report, as well as archives of all previous years' reports, are accessible online at https://www.ventura.org/general-services-agency/annual-report



Outstanding List of Nominees Lead to Exciting Contest for GSA's 2020 Employee of the Year



This past year, while GSA employees faced some extraordinary challenges, many heeded the call to provide not just great service, but exemplary service—anticipating our customers' needs before even being asked. It's this quality that sets them apart and made this most recent year's contest for Employee of the Year a difficult one to decide. With a large list of contenders in each category, GSA's senior leadership team had quite a daunting task determining a list of finalists (shown in bold) from the nominees:

In the category of Administration, the nominees were:

- Lieba Butler, Management Assistant III, Facilities and Materials
- Josh Gannon, Graphic Technician II, Business Support Services
- Curtis Heath, Buyer, Procurement
- Andrew Smith, Senior Accounting Assistant, Fiscal

 Dana Vodantis, Senior Accountant, Fiscal

In the category of Line/Field staff, the nominees were:

- Vince Childs, Certified Maintenance Engineer, Maintenance
- Ali Esquivel, Courier III, Business Support Services
- Dave Fishman, Certified Maintenance Engineer, Maintenance
- Julie Goodaker, Garage Attendant, Fleet
- Scott Harris, Heavy Equipment Mechanic II,
- Radford Jackson, Senior Auto Mechanic, Fleet
- Alfredo Jauregui, Senior Heavy Equipment Mechanic, Fleet
- Wayne Kirkland, DSET II, IT Group, Administration

Continued from Page 2)

- Matthew Kreiger, Graphics Technician Specialist IV, Business Support Services
- Nathan Paul, Plumber, Maintenance
- Martin Rodriguez, Body/Paint Mechanic, Fleet
- Kenny Schmidt, Senior Body/Paint Mechanic, Fleet
- Esme Squires, Graphic Technician IV, Business Support Services
- Melyssa Vicencio, Inventory Management Assistant III, Business Support Services

In the category of Supervision/Management, the nominees were:

- Jeff Chiarella, Staff Services Specialist, Business Support Services
- Robert Crawford, Staff Services Manager, Fleet

- Lucy Fernandez, Human Resources Manager, Administration
- ◆ Alicia Francis, Safety Officer, Human Resources, Administration
- ◆ Lea Hubbard, Fiscal Manager II, Fiscal
- Paul LoVerme, Facilities Manager, Security/ Special Services/Housekeeping/Grounds
- Joel Miller, Customer Service Supervisor, Fleet
- Leslie Reed, Parks Operations Supervisor, Parks Department
- Jill Siela, Facility Operations Supervisor, Maintenance

Read on to find out who the winners are in each category, and find out why they were nominated, and chosen, as GSA's employees of the Year for 2020 (see page 4).

Movin' and Shakin' — who's coming,

New Hires

Jade Alamillo, Maintenance Worker II, Grounds (rehire)

Barbara Alvarez, Graphics Technician II Anthony Apodaca, Parks Services Ranger I

Rory Aronsky, Office Assistant III, Administration

Ron Casas, Custodian II
Arthur Cervantes, Custodian II
Ivan Dooley, Courier II
Joya Fabie, Graphics Technician I
Jose Galaviz, Student Worker III, Fleet
Chastity Gaynor, Accounting Assistant I
Ayalineh Moges, Custodian II
Vuong Nguyen, Student Worker III,

Pannipa Pantutamangkul, Purchasing Technician

Alma Perez, Office Assistant I, Business Support Services

Cynthia Rodriguez, Management Assistant II, Maintenance

Daniel Torres, Student Worker III,

Crystal Zendejas, Office Assistant IV, Administration

Promotions

Erica Agnew, Senior Parts Specialist





Recently promoted Accountant II Andrew Smith

Patrick Squires, Staff Services Manager III

Andrew Smith, Accountant II

Retirements

Mark Flores, Maintenance Engineer, March 19, 2021, 17 years of service

who's going in GSA

Jeff Chiarella, Staff Services Specialist I, Document Management, January 30, 2021, 7 years of service Donna Schmidt, Graphics Technician III, January 29, 2021, 7 years of service Radford Jackson, Senior Auto Mechanic, December 16, 2020, 39 years of service Theresa Lubin, Staff Services Manager III, Parks Department, December 12, 2020, 32 years of service

Resignations/Separations/Transfers

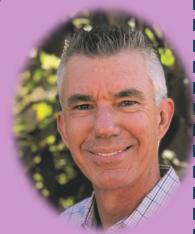
Daniel Aguiniga, Housekeeping Roland Berg, Grounds Marcos Cavazos, Housekeeping (transfer to PWA) Sabrina Fraijo, Purchasing Andy Islas, Fleet Lee Judie, Fleet Lydia Louis, Maintenance (transfer to VCFD) Janice Pulley, Housekeeping Juan Rodriguez, Fleet Jesus Sandoval, Parks Anthony Santiago, Mailroom/F&M (transfer to PWA) Todd Pineda, Housekeeping

Congratulations to GSA's 2020 Employees of the Year

Congratulations to the employees of the year for 2020: Matthew Kreiger, Graphics Technician Specialist IV-PH, Business Support; Dana Vodantis, Senior Accountant, Fiscal; and Lucy Fernandez, Human Resources Manager, Administration. Their nominating team members and fellow coworkers had plenty to say about the great work these folks do every day.

Matthew Kreiger, 2020 Employee of the Year, Line/Field Staff:

Matt Kreiger's work as a graphic designer is well-known across the County. As the most requested designer by key executive-level customers, he has received several accolades for his innovative designs, superior quality, and fast delivery. His skills range from editing to creating new themes for projects and agencies. He often finds new ways to design, or new mediums on which to create his works of art. A recent collaboration with the County Information Officer and CEO's office resulted in the County's 2018 Annual Report earning an "EPIC Award" from the California Association of Public Information Officers. He is always humble about his achievements, ensuring



that his customers' needs come first, and that he can meet their expectations. It is always a pleasure to work with him.

Dana Vodantis, 2020 Employee of the Year, Administration:



Dana has excelled in her position as Senior Accountant with GSA Fiscal. With a strong work ethic, solid accounting skills, and complete dedication to her craft, Dana has made positive, significant contributions to the success of the department and the agency. These include updating desk manuals to aid in training and succession planning – a contribution that is greatly appreciated in the current impacted work environment. In taking over the Parks accounts, Dana maintained dual roles as both the Parks accountant and the Fleet accountant – during rates development for Fleet and budget development for Parks. When the pandemic forced mass cancellations of Parks reservations, resulting in large-scale issuance of refunds for Parks customers at the same time that Parks' lessees needed to request rent relief, Dana learned the operations, processes, and systems necessary to deal with

the various crises and make the necessary adjustments prior to the close of the fiscal year. In addition, Parks accounting underwent a banking transition that included a change of credit card processors. Dana coped with all of these challenges beautifully.

Lucy Fernandez, 2020 Employee of the Year, Supervision/ Management:

Lucy Fernandez, Human Resources Manager, is a huge asset to the agency and the County. In the two years she has been with the agency, she has been a very visible and active member of leadership. Despite minimal staffing in GSA HR during the pandemic this past year, Lucy set an example and inspired her team to remain proactive. For example: during COVID-19 response, Lucy and her team managed Workman's Compensation claims; determined essential versus nonessential worker status; compiled attestation forms; and coordinated tracking of Disaster Service Worker assignments across the County. On top of these extra COVID duties, Lucy still conducted regular HR investigations and completed a LSS Kaizen to streamline the hiring process and trim it by 14-20 days.



A Special Thank You From VCAAA to GSA's DSWs



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



Ventura County Area Agency on Aging

December 31, 2020 at 3:45 PM · 3

The VCAAA has been fortunate to have had 63 County of Ventura Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) join our team since the COVID-19 crisis hit Ventura County in March. These men and women have played a critical role in helping us reach more than 30,000 people with services this year, and have helped deliver a staggering 2.95 million meals.

Among the DSWs who have joined us are Antonio Barajas-Trujillo (pictured on the left) and Sabino Benitez (pictured on the right). They joined our team in March to lead the VCAAA COVID-19 Food Pantry efforts. Today marks their last day with the VCAAA, but we cannot end the day without noting that the success of the pantry has been due to their hard work and the work of their colleagues, including co-pantry leader Jorge Vallardes-Fernandez, who remains a part of the VCAAA team.

We are incredibly grateful to have had the chance to work alongside Antonio and Sabino. 'Thank you' just isn't enough.

Customer Service Shout Outs

"I am contacting you to bring to your attention the outstanding and kind work of Juan Esparza, Custodian II. I have been on leave and have also been working from home. I have a small refrigerator in my office. Mr. Esparza noticed that the fridge was leaking. He was concerned about the water damaging my files and documents in close proximity to the refrigerator. This very considerate man took the time to fix the insulation strip on the door to prevent any further leakage. I want to commend him on his

THRUK

dedication to his job and helping other employees. Those of us who work in the daytime never get a chance to interact with those that keep us working in a clean and supportive environ-

ment. I salute Mr. Esparza and your staff."

- A senior member of the District Attorney's Office

Cliff Chroust responded to a highpriority request for additional housekeeping services for the vaccine site at the fairgrounds. PWA's Joan Araujo, who is leading that site for the County, expressed high appreciation for the quick work. "Jim Fitzgerald and Roy Morris are consistently highly responsive, knowledgeable, and creative in their IT solutions. Both helped me iron out a Mail Merge issue, which will allow for better user satisfaction and avoid tedious rework when emailing DocuShare/VCPrint users." – Esme Squires, Business Support Services

"I just wanted to give a special thank you to Isaac Borrego for helping me [save my picture board from damage when it separated from the wall]! It was the weekend and I was at home but thankfully my co-worker was here to let you in. You saved us from coming in and finding a big mess on our hands, or worse, having to buy another board."

—Sheri DeBenning,

Ventura County Sheriff Office

"Thank you to Yolanda Ruíz and the Fiscal staff for the wonderful service you have been providing to PH Fiscal. It may not be expressed frequently enough, but it is none the less sincerely felt." – Christina Stevens, Fiscal Department, Public Health



Steve Romero has been hard at work on Pine Needle Patrol. He has removed bushel after bushel of pine needles from our campus. We have filled several roll offs with just Pine needles. This project has been long overdue. Steve has embraced his project and has never once complained. He does it with a smile on his face. His work and exceptional attitude is much appreciated!

Lorenzo Villa, Jade Alamillo, and Jeff Ellis have put in additional time and effort in maintaining a healthy and thriving multipurpose turf sports field at the Juvenile Justice commitment yard. They mowed at a shorter height for two weeks, adjusted and replaced 25 sprinkler heads, and applied fertilizer. Efforts were indeed recognized by JJC staff, with additional kudos for reducing the gopher population. Not only does the juvenile population have a safe and even surface field to practice soccer on but this beautiful grass field was watered at a 20% water reduction! Kudos to the Grounds team!

What's New from GSA Human Resources

id you know that you can find the "GSA Injury and Illness Prevention Program" as well as injury and illness reporting procedures online at GSA's Health and Safety Website? The address is: https://www.ventura.org/general-services-agency/health-and-safety-home/



GENERAL SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION .

FACILITIES/MATERIALS •

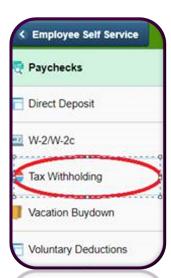
Policies and Procedures

COVID19 Prevention Program Policy 1-M

As COVID19 information continues to change, stay current on all the training and program updates by visiting the GSA Health and Safety Website and clicking on "COVID19 Prevention Program Policy 1-M." All updates and changes will be highlighted in yellow with revision dates. Go to: https://www.ventura.org/general-services-agency/health-and-safety-home/ to access.

Health and Safety Home

id you know that you can update your tax withholdings by clicking on the "Tax Withholding" tab under Employee Self Service in VCHRP?





Life Events Checklist

Do you know what to do and who to notify when you:

- > Change your name
- > Get legally separated or divorced

> Move

> Have a child who reaches the dependent age limit

> Get married

> Register a domestic partner

- Oct married

- > Have or adopt a baby
- > Change jobs, hours or have a salary change
- > Need time away from work > Leave County employment (including retirement)

Review this chapter for more information. If you need to make a mid-year change to your benefits, you may do so through VCHRP Employee Self Service - Benefits - Life Events, or you may complete an Enrollment & Change Form and Mid-Year Change Request Form. Additional information can be found on our websites: http://myvcweb/index.php/benefits (intranet), https://hr.ventura.org/benefits (internet), or contact your Department's Human Resources/Benefits Representative. A Beneficiary Designation Checklist is available on the websites noted above. See the Flexible Benefits Program Information and Miscellaneous Benefits chapters for descriptions of the plans and programs that appear below.

GSA's Fleet and Records Center Teams Honored for Service Excellence with Special Awards to Kick off the Year

As some of you may recall, in 2019 GSA Fleet Services was nominated for, and received, the County of Ventura's Service Excellence Award for their work retrofitting a Mass Casualty Bus for HCA EMS. The work they did repairing, repainting, upfitting, and rebuilding a purchased bus from the ground up—rather than EMS purchasing a new bus for the same use—saved EMS over \$200.000.



- ♦ Christopher Melton, Deputy Director, Fleet
- ◆ Jorge Bonilla, Fleet Operations Manager
- ◆ Joel Miller, Fleet Customer Service Manager
- Robert Keinzle, Senior Mechanic, Body Shop
- ♦ Kenny Schmidt, Senior Mechanic, Body Shop
- Alfredo Jauregui, Heavy Equipment Senior Mechanic
- ♦ Warren Falk, Auto Systems Technician
- Vladislav Markovic, Body Shop Technician

On March 16, 2021, Director Sasek presented the team with special awards courtesy of the County's Service Excellence Council, commemorating their commitment to quality, value, and excellence. Congratulations, Fleet, and well done!



GSA Director David Sasek first presented this project to the County Board of Supervisors at the March 10, 2020 Board meeting, and was sure to include the special video presentation that Fleet put together to showcase the partnership between EMS and Fleet.

Flash-forward a year, and we are honored and proud

to be able to recognize our Fleet Services team for their efforts and achievement. The team members consisted of:



Just a day later, on March 17, 2021 GSA recognized the second SEAward-winning team from 2019: BSS's Records Center. During FY19-20, the Records Center successfully relaunched a redesigned, revamped business model—one designed to be more efficient and save costs for the customer. The implemented improvements included implementing high-speed WiFi in the center, barcoding, web services, database lookups, and a customer portal. These improvements enabled staff to complete customer service requests within one business day—which meant sav-

ings of over \$225,000 in the first fiscal year. Revenue went up 13% year over year as well.

This project was also presented to the County Board of Supervisors during Director Sasek's presentation on March 10, 2020, where emphasis was placed on the efficiency of time saved—notably the reduction of cycle times. For example, large pick ups were reduced from an average of 3 months to 3-5 business days.

The team consisted of:

- Shawn Mitchell, Staff Services Specialist I
- Joshua Gannon, Graphic Technician II
- Jacob Ward, Technical Specialist IV
- ◆ Teri McLean, Records Technician II
- Kit Pendergraft, Records Technician III

They were presented with special commemorative plaques, and both GSA and the Facilities and Materials division will have a new item to showcase in their lobby as well. Kudos to the Records Center team!



What's New in Parks?

Spring is just around the corner, and there's no better place to witness the changing of the seasons than in our County parks!

"We're so lucky to live in a county where our weather makes camping a great idea every season of the year," says Park Service

Ranger II Vanessa Varela. "You can take a trip in the winter at Dennison County Park and have a view of snow-covered mountains, or camp in the spring when the park is surrounded by wildflowers. Dennison is one of my favorite parks because the views in the park are beautiful 365 days a year!"





Campers playing at the newlyinstalled comhole boards at Faria Beach Park, as the sun sets over the park campground.





"With views of the Topa Topa Mountains, the expansive lawns and shade trees of Soule Park provide the perfect place for a picnic lunch or playing on the vintage rocket ship slide." – Patricia Monsour, Park Services Ranger I

Contact Us

If you have questions about park projects, please e-mail Colter Chisum at colter.chisum@ventura.org. All other inquires can be directed to the appropriate e-mail address or phone number listed below.

Park Reservations Line: (805) 654-3951 (to reserve group day-use areas and individual campsites)
Park Ranger Desk: (805) 672-2071
Park Maintenance Desk: (805) 672-2073
General Questions and Comments: county.parks@ventura.org

Visit us on the web at: www.ventura.org/generalservices-agency/parksdepartment.



GSA PROCUREMENT ISSUES LANDMARK RFP FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY

6 n October 2019, Melissa Lorenzen, Buyer/GSA Procurement, issued a request for proposals for an Energy Audit & Management Services consultant. After a robust evaluation process, the evaluation team

selected Base Energy, Inc. to conduct phase I of the project, which includes a comprehensive ASHRAE level I audit of GSA-managed infrastructures, reporting of audit findings, and recommendations for a preliminary projects list.

After completion of Phase I, the project will progress to Phase II, which includes an investment-grade energy audit of selected projects from the preliminary projects list, followed by Phase III, which is the implementation of the design and construction of these projects. The overall project will result in energy-saving solutions and improvements of facilities that will pay for themselves over time from cost savings, and continue to reduce operational costs to the County.



New Interactive Submission Process is Live for the GSA Newsletter

Starting in 2021, the GSA Insider wants to hear more from you! We are introducing a new online article submissions feature to help make it easier for GSA employees to submit questions, suggestions, ideas and even photos for the agency newsletter.

Do you have a question for HR that you want to see answered in the "What's New from Human Resources" section? You can ask it here. Is there something you'd like to ask Agency Director David Sasek? Submit it through the newsletter portal; every quarter, Director Sasek will answer a selection of questions in the newsletter—you do not need to supply your name, employee ID, or any identifying information unless you choose to. Maybe you'd like to give a shout out for the "Customer Service Shout Out" page; send it on and if we can, we'll include it in the next issue!

To access the new GSA Insider interactive portal, go to the agency's Quick Access Portal on the GSA website—you can access it via https://www.ventura.org/general-services-agency and click on "Quick Access Portal." Once on the Quick Access Portal homepage, click on "See More" after "Newsletter."

Newsletter

Stay up to date with the latest news from GSA



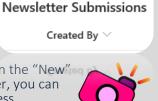
+ New \

You'll be taken to the GSA newsletter's homepage, where you can access both the current

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issue of the GSA Insider and archived issues, and also submit your ideas, questions, and shout outs via the "Newsletter Submission" button.
You'll be taken to an interactive SharePoint

page, where, by clicking on the "New" tab in the upper left corner, you can start the submission process.



Share

A submission window will open up, and you're all set! You can upload your attachments—such as photos or article drafts—or simply type in your

questions, compliments, and shout outs. Start your message by clicking on the pencil icon at the right, type in what you'd like to say, and, once you've finished, click "Save." You even have the option to edit your submission if you think of something to add after you've saved it!

Look for your submissions, as well as new features, such as "Ask the Director" and, hopefully, an employee photography showcase, in upcoming issues of the GSA Insider!