

Human Services Connection



CN • DAAS • PSD • DCSS • PERC • TAD • VA • DCS



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Linda Haugan

Administrator's Message

Once again, it's that time of year when we are waiting to see what happens with the state budget. The good news, according to the Governor's recent May Revision Budget Package, is that state revenues are higher than January estimates (to the tune of \$4.8 billion). The bad news is that relatively little of this windfall will be used to help out social services programs. Most of this new found money will be used for schools and disaster preparation, such as the avian flu.

Overall, it appears that most of our programs will stay relatively flat, except for the CalWORKS allocation, which will see yet another decrease. You all know by now that flat funding actually means that less money is available for staff and program needs. As the cost of doing business continues to go up each year, it takes a bigger chunk out of our administrative allocations. Therefore, even when we get the same amount of money as the prior year, worker's compensation costs, retirement costs, salary increases and inflation whittle away at what we can purchase with the same amount of money. That turns out to be less staff and less stuff.

Because of the state's trend of not providing cost of doing business increases to social service programs, Art Gomez and I have been sharing our philosophy with the Human Services directors since we both took on our new positions. Hopefully, your managers have been sharing this philosophy with you. As described in our Human Services business plan, our goal is to "identify opportunities to streamline programs, eliminate duplication of services, consolidate facilities, reduce capital expenditures and decrease staff where necessary." All of our departments and divisions need to become as efficient as possible, while still providing the needed service to our clients.

In recent months, you may have seen some movement of staff in your department or division to accomplish this goal. Art and I have asked each department head and division chief to look within his/her own areas to eliminate or shift job tasks to where they make the most sense. In addition, I've asked that front-line staff be preserved. It is very important to me that, Social Worker, TAD Eligibility Worker, Employment Services Specialist and Child Support Officer positions not be sacrificed to preserve administrative support positions. I want to make clear that this exercise has not and will not lead to layoffs. Any reductions to staff will be made through attrition or transfers. It is our hope that once we have become as efficient as possible, we will have money to add more frontline staff.

With that said, I am still advocating at the state for increased funding through the County Welfare Directors Association. There are several new or expanded programs on the state horizon, which eventually should lead to additional money. Since TANF was reauthorized last fall, it appears that the CalWORKS program will see significant changes and new opportunities for augmentation. Legislators have a renewed interest in Child Welfare Services and the "2030" caseload study done a few years ago. It is our hope that this will lead to much needed caseload relief for DCS social workers. *(Continued on pg 2)*



Olivia Sanchez

There are lots of great articles in this edition of the Connection, thanks to our wonderful contributors and our new editor, Olivia Sanchez. But, good work does not go unnoticed. Just eight short weeks after coming to PERC, Olivia has received a promotion to the Solid Waste Department. Some of you may have had the good fortune to work with Olivia as part of Public Service Recognition's Awards for Excellence event. A great employee with a Service FIRST

attitude, we will truly miss her in Human Services and wish her well. Speaking of Service FIRST, CAO Mark Uffer, HR Director Andrew Lamberto and CLO Diana Alexander have been extremely busy sharing the Service FIRST message with County employees. Sessions filled up as soon as they were advertised. Over 1300 employees attended sessions in April alone! You've heard the expression "Coming to a theater near you" . . . well, Mark, Andrew and Diana may be doing just that!

If you have not been able to register because the sessions are full, new dates should be available soon.

In the meantime, enjoy our latest edition of the Connection!

Peggy Dillaman

Communication & Career Services Manager
Performance, Education & Resource Centers

Administrator's Message (continued)

As you go through your day and see opportunities for reducing costs, please let your managers know or send an email to Art or myself. We may not be aware of redundancies or money-wasters that you encounter in your day-to-day job.

In other news, I want to thank all of you who have already gone to Service FIRST training. I have heard mostly positive feedback about Mark Uffer's presentation. It sure is a big time commitment for him to do all of the training himself. It also speaks volumes on how important customer service is to him. There is more to come on this initiative and I'll bring you up to date as it happens. Until next time....

Linda Haugan

Assistant County Administrator
Human Services



Department of Aging and Adult Services Senior Information and Assistance – The Little Program That Can

Every team has one – the Go-To guy who pushes to the goal, shoots the 3-pointer or hits one over the fence. For the Department of Aging & Adult Services (DAAS), the Go-To program is Senior Information and Assistance (SIA). Need to get information out about a new program? Call SIA. Want to distribute free bus passes to seniors? Call SIA. Need help manning the information booth at a local health fair? Call SIA.

SIA is the backbone of DAAS and provides the most visibility to the community. Yet only twenty staff members cover the entire county. That's right – from Needles to Chino, from Earp to Upland. Most importantly, each SIA staff person knows what programs and resources are available locally within the communities they serve. Other than being a senior citizen, there is no

qualifying in order to receive SIA assistance.

The SIA program provides information and assistance to help senior citizens solve problems and learn about opportunities. Assistance and advocacy in contacting organizations that provide needed services is also an important part of the program. Evaluations and follow-up procedures ensure that seniors received needed services. From insurance to house repairs, from utility assistance to yard cleanup, from medical transportation to legal assistance - if it's available, our SIA staff knows where to find it and who provides it.

An important part of the SIA program is community outreach. SIA staff makes presentations to local government and community groups, routinely visits local senior centers, participates in

numerous community events, and distributes important informational material on a large variety of programs available to seniors.

Recently, SIA has played a key role in assisting seniors with the new Medicare Part D program. Medicare Part D is overwhelming to some seniors faced with selecting a prescription program that best meets their needs from the multitude of programs offered. SIA staff has been instrumental in distributing Part D material, providing assistance in completing applications and forms, and directing seniors who need specialized assistance to informed insurance counselors.

SIA also plays a lead role in our Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP). Services provided under this program specifically target the needs of persons providing care for a

family member age 60 and older. Individuals who are age 60 and older who are raising a minor child also qualify. In addition to the availability of respite care, counseling, caregiver training and support groups, special projects under FCSP have included distributing free bus passes, gas cards, and gift cards for school clothing and supplies. SIA staff is responsible for assisting individuals in accessing these activities.

So, if you're wondering what programs and services are available for your great aunt Milly who just moved to Landers, do what we do – call SIA at 1-800-510-2020. They're the greatest!



Angela Stangle

On October 17, 2005 the Department of Children's Services launched a new court orientation. The original project came about because of a concern for legal paperwork that needed to be completed. The finished project has accomplished much more than could have been expected.

New Orientation Streamlines Juvenile Hearing Process

The orientation consists of a PowerPoint presentation that gives an overview of the process that parents will be going through. Parents attending their detention hearing at the Juvenile Dependency Court view the orientation in a courtroom. They get an introduction to the many terms that are used as well as other information that helps ease the learning curve. Additionally, staff including a Social Service Aid, Public Health Nurse and an Eligibility Worker are all present to help fill out and answer questions regarding the necessary legal paperwork.

The most amazing part of the process is seeing the transition that clients go through from the time they enter the courtroom to the time they leave. As they enter, you can see their hesitation, anger and confusion; but when they leave they are more relaxed, less angry and less confused. It lets them know what to expect and how to proceed. After the orientation, clients then meet with their attorneys and attend their detention hearing.

Social work staff has relayed how the process has helped with their client interactions. Since inception

of the orientation, there are fewer problems with incomplete paperwork. Moreover, clients are prepared with questions about what they need to do for their specific case rather than feeling frustrated with the whole system.

Members of the Grand Jury attended a presentation on the orientation and some DCS staff and County managers have had an opportunity to view it. Staff is welcome to sit in on the orientation that occurs every morning at the Juvenile Dependency Court.

Child Support Services Is 'Racing To Improve Performance'

This was the theme as the Department of Child Support Services recently welcomed Greta Wallace, State Director of the Department of Child Support Services. The Director was in San Bernardino to visit the local child support offices on April 11, 2006.

During her visit, Greta complimented the staff for the work they had done in the program, particularly in the last year. Greta noted that San Bernardino had improved its performance in the following areas:

Activity	2004	2005
Support Order Establishment	63.1%	67.7%
Current Support Collections	41.4%	44.0%
Arrears Collections	51.2%	57.5%

In addition, Greta praised the staff for its accomplishments while weathering three significant system conversions: CASES child support system, C-IV system, and the State Disbursement Unit (SDU).

Since February 2005, under the guidance of the new Director Connie Brunn, Child Support Services has geared up and left the racing pits full throttle – toward the goal of improving performance. Each member of the pit crew (line staff) is committed to this race. The department will have to change tires (be flexible), increase the horsepower (production), and add more fuel (work smarter) to make it to the finish line (most improved county in the state).

The crew chiefs (management team) are planning strategies to avoid the yellow flags. The approach to each lap requires that the windscreens (vision) remain clear of obstacles. No matter how sharp the turns may become, the department is dedicated and will continue in its quest to the checkered flag.

In order for the department to win the performance race, the managers agreed it will take a team effort. To be a successful team, everyone on the team needs to know:

- The performance measures.
- How each team can positively impact the measures.
- How we are doing on a monthly basis (milestones).

The executive and management team prepared a presentation of the

department's accomplishments for Greta highlighting:

- The annual Compliance Review rating of 94.8%
 - In the federal fiscal year 2005, the department attained 100% proficiency in the Data Reliability Audit.
 - In October 2005, the department created a Customer Call Center. The Center handles over 15,000 calls per month, with an average wait time of five (5) minutes and a 94.5% resolution rate.
 - In June 2005, the department formed Public Contact Teams. These teams handle over 4600 interviews per month, with an average wait time of twelve (12) minutes, and resolves 99% of customer concerns during the first contact.
- At DCSS, the engines are started! They are nearly halfway to the finish line and have proven they can work hard and overcome obstacles (performance has improved). They have traded jalopies (old practices) for stock cars (new practices) and are ready to WIN this race!

Will Williamson
Operations Manager
Department of Child Support Services



Racing To Improve Performance

PERC's New Chief Learning Officer



Diana Alexander

Diana Alexander, PERC's new Chief Learning Officer, sat down with the HS Connections Editor in March to answer questions about her new position, the direction of PERC and her personal interests.

Diana's tenure with the County of San Bernardino began in April 1993 as an AFDC Eligibility Worker (EW) for the Transitional Assistance Department (TAD). She remembers sitting in her EW Orientation & Induction class at Staff Development (now known as PERC) and thinking that if she ever decided to turn her County job into a career, she'd like to work as a trainer. Well, during her time with TAD her job became her career and she promoted to Lead EW, EW Supervisor I, and then left TAD for a promotion to a training instructor position.

Through hard work and perseverance of mind and spirit, she promoted up through several levels at PERC and is now the Chief Learning Officer for the County of San Bernardino.

As the Chief Learning Officer, she views her position with PERC as providing internal service to employees in the form of training and other resources, so that those employees can serve others throughout the county. It is her desire to assist County employees in upholding the highest level of service. Her aspiration is to partner with other departments to assess their needs and fulfill those needs – via training, facilitations, organizational development, referrals, or outsourcing. As Chief Learning Officer, it is also her duty to foresee trends in the industry and get a jump on the latest resources as a proactive measure against issues before they arise.

When asked what motivates her, she stated her faith. Her faith in answering to a higher calling and extending her help and services to others is a responsibility she takes very seriously. Diana believes she has been blessed with many opportunities to grow in the County, and feels that this job is where she needs to be at this time. Her desire is to return the gesture with the highest quality of service.

Diana's responsibilities have grown in proportion to her new position but she views challenges as opportunities to develop, not just in her scope of work but across the board. Challenges remind her that she doesn't know it all, and that she needs to ask the assistance of her team in solving challenging tasks. Asking her collective County team for advice allows her to increase her knowledge base and showcase the talents and skills of those employees. Overall, challenges cause the organization to grow and thrive as they mitigate those obstacles as a group.

Preschool Services Department

The Importance of Early Literacy By Alice Chung

Literacy development begins in the very early stages of childhood, even though the activities of young children may not seem related to reading and writing. Early "reading" from pictures and "writing" with scribbles are examples of emergent literacy and are an important part of children's literacy development. With the support of parents and teachers, as well as exposure to a literacy-rich environment, children successfully progress from emergent to conventional reading. A literacy rich environment that includes music, dance, art, puppets, writing materials, flannel board stories, books on tape, picture books, as well as word books will help children to become successful, confident readers

and writers.

Children who are read to will develop knowledge about an extensive array of topics. Children will also build a large vocabulary, which will assist in later reading comprehension and reading strategies. Reading aloud to children helps them associate reading with pleasure and encourages them to seek out opportunities to read on their own. By revisiting stories and nursery rhymes many times, children focus on unique features of a story and reinforce previous understanding.

The relationship between music, language, and reading is important because each subject requires similar skills such as concentration, memory and understanding of abstract concepts. When children

engage in musical activities such as moving, singing, snapping and clapping, they strengthen listening, thinking and word recognition skills. Music in the classroom can help teachers meet the needs of all their students. Effective integration of music and literacy creates an environment which children can enjoy while learning specific academic skills.

Children learn a lot about reading from the labels, signs, and other kinds of print they see around them. An environment rich with print, literacy is incorporated into children's dramatic play, enhancing the drama and realism of a pretend setting.

Going back to the basics in educating our children will enhance their literacy skills.

Each time children learn a chant or nursery rhyme, their reading skills improve. Each time children learn rhythmic patterns, they strengthen accenting and syllabication skills. Each time children learn a new song, their memorization and comprehension skills are enhanced. All along we were going back to basics in our classroom- we just didn't realize it.

Employee Of The Month

March - Larry Smith

(Program Integrity Division, Fraud Investigations Unit)



Larry Smith has been a Fraud Investigator with the Program Integrity Division since 1993. The duties of a Fraud Investigator include the review of cases that might contain erroneous or false information with regard to the eligibility for public assistance programs.

Larry consistently has been a hard working investigator who is a self-motivated, engaged and contributing member of the Fraud Investigations Unit. He was voted *2005 Investigator of the Year* by his peers. Also in 2005, he developed the idea for Operation Dad's at Dinner ("DAD"), a proactive household composition verification project that was carried out by the West End Fraud Investigations team in the summer of 2005. The operation has led to a revised format that will work toward the Unit mission of reducing welfare fraud and protecting the integrity of public assistance programs.

April – Joy Anderson

(Preschool Services Department)



Joy Anderson is currently a Program Supervisor for the Preschool Services Department (PSD), but her greatest strength is her willingness to look beyond job titles to do whatever is necessary for the organization to succeed.

Joy has been employed with San Bernardino County for seven years and with Head Start for 15 years. She currently manages six PSD sites, but recently completed a pilot project in which she became the first PSD manager since the agency transitioned to the County to successfully manage both the Education and Family Support functions of the program.

Joy has also been instrumental in the implementation of the department's automated record keeping and tracking system, which was mandated by its federal funding source three years ago. Even now, Joy continues to take a leadership role in the department's continuing efforts to give system access to all department staff countywide. Joy approaches her responsibilities with a strong focus and commitment to encouraging personal growth among her staff and the families her group serves.

This positive, "You Can Do" approach results in people improving their quality of life as well as the lives of the families they serve.



Fad Diets Revisited

By Julie Mortimore, RD, Public Health Nutritionist
San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Nutrition Program
(909) 387-6331; jmortimore@dph.sbcounty.gov

an ongoing story about the gullible seeker of easy, quick weight loss and the happy to oblige profiteer.

This is the **second** in a series of **three** articles.

HONORABLE MENTIONS: CORTISLIM AND LEPTOPRIN

In August 2003, CortiSlim and CortiStress hit the market through deceptive format infomercials. The infomercials looked like episodes of the talk show called *Breakthroughs* featuring Gregory Cynaumon as the host and Shawn Talbott as the guest and aired on Access Television, the Travel Channel, TVN Direct, and the Discovery Channel. It is never revealed during the ads that Cynaumon and Talbott are

part of a joint venture to create, manufacture, and market CortiSlim and CortiStress.

These paid advertisements falsely claim that a persistently elevated level of the stress hormone cortisol is the underlying cause of weight gain, especially in abdominal area. Marketers also falsely claim that by controlling cortisol levels, CortiSlim causes rapid and substantial weight loss by all users. Particularly disturbing are the inaccurate claims that CortiStress can prevent conditions such as osteoporosis, obesity, diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. The FDA and the FTC took action against the Los Angeles-area based marketers Window Rock Enterprises, Inc. and

Infinity Advertising, Inc., for making false and unsubstantiated claims. A court order stipulated Window Rock cannot make false claims and future claims require competent and reliable scientific evidence.

The fact is that cortisol, also called hydrocortisone, is one of many essential hormones made by the adrenal glands. Cortisol is the "stress" hormone because levels can elevate in response to physical or emotional stress. Yet, it is misleading to focus solely on the function of cortisol with regard to weight control because it takes a complex process out of context. There is no evidence that the ingredients in CortiSlim, or any other cortisol-managing dietary supplement, will have an effect on the body's cortisol levels, or that by doing so these supplements can cause (Continued on pg 8)

In the summer and winter of 2000, the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health Nutrition Program contributed articles about fad diets to two different San Bernardino County publications, *Well, well, well...* and the Human Services *Connection*. The articles reviewed by nutrition professionals were weight loss schemes. Since the year 2000, a number of interesting developments have made their mark in fad diet history. Some of these happenings may have made a favorable impact by intercepting deceit and protecting consumers from harm's way. Some are simply repeats of

Service Pins

The following employees received service pins at the Board of Supervisors meeting held Tuesday, December 20, 2005. Each employee has served the County for 20 years or more. We extend our congratulations to the following dedicated employees:

30 Years of Service 2005

Not Pictured: Evelyn Riker, DAAS/ Public Guardian

20 Years of Service

2005



Top row, left to right: Dominga Garcia, TAD; Brendlyn Clark, DCS; Dale Pelser, PID; Trudy Moe Roser, TAD; Linda Clark, PID; John Hurst, PID

Bottom Row, left to right: Brenda Bewley, DCSS; Eve Morris, DAAS; Doris Baggett, TAD; Lynden Rodriguez, DCS; Denise Shefchik, PID; Jane Adams, DAAS

Not Pictured: Angel Chong, DAAS; Eileen Anthony, TAD; Jaryl "Jerri" Beatty, TAD; Miguel Luna-Candelas, ASD; Sheila Flores, TAD; Lily Sanchez, PID; Margaret Scott, PID

25 Years of Service

2005



From left to right: Debbi Ming, PDD; Wanda "Missy" Phillips, DCSS; Michael Schultz, TAD; Gail Fraser, ASD

Not Pictured: Sheila Richards, PID; Sharon Romero, PID

Service Pins

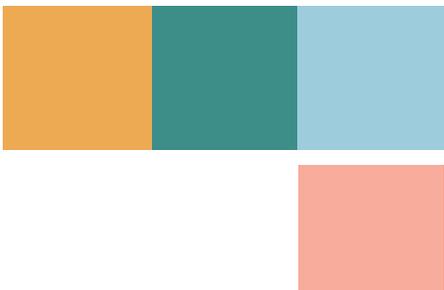
35 Years of Service

2006



Debbie Simpkins, PERC

Not Pictured: Marsha Seals, Quality Review Unit



30 Years of Service

2006



Gloria Carbajal, DAAS

Not Pictured: Judy Cline, DCS



2005-2006

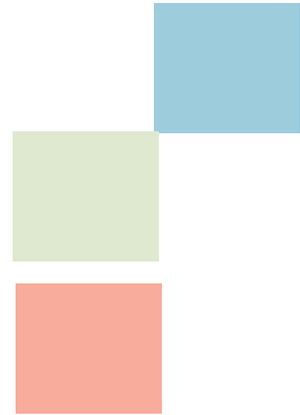
20 Years of Service

2006



Left to Right: Francine Beedie, Program Development Division; Sandra Beverly, DCS; Rachell Bell, TAD; Gloria Gilbert, HS/Auditing; Eddie Powell, TAD

Not Pictured: Carolin Rivera, Program Development Specialist



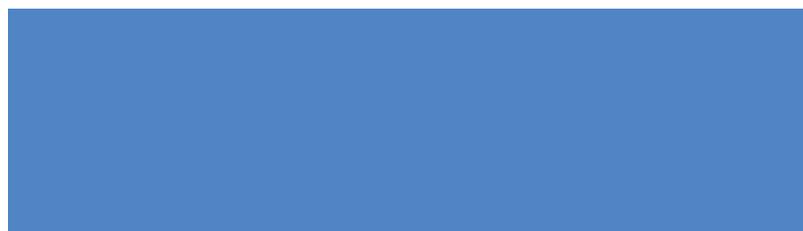
25 Years of Service

2006



Left to Right: Cynthia Cureton, DAAS; Bob Wheeler, TAD; Faye Gillentine, HS/Auditing

Not pictured: Vanessa English, TAD; Chris Garot, HS/Auditing; Linda Limon, TAD; Roderic Moers, DCS; Linda Ronk, DCS; Kathy Watkins, Legislative Research Unit; Irene Weaver, DCS



Suggestion Award Winner:



BONNIE PECK

Congratulations to Bonnie Peck. Child Support Officer with the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS). She has a difficult, but extremely rewarding and gratifying position at Child

Support Services. States Bonnie, "I'm proud of my department, and the advances we have made in the past five years- but there is always room for improvement!" Improvement indeed, Bonnie identified an avenue that DCSS could use to streamline their processes. Her suggested improvement is to create an automated check-in kiosk for clients. A client inputs his or her social security number and the case is automatically tacked to an assigned team to interview the client. The benefit of such a system would minimize client's wait time, increase staff productivity and substantially improve customer service. Way to go Bonnie!

Women: Take Charge of Financial Lives

Do you need to take charge of your financial life quickly? If you are a woman, you might have room for improvement, according to the results of several studies. The online version of *Parents Magazine* offers some tips from experts and savvy moms to lessen the intimidation of taking financial charge.

Regardless of the fact that you may be the one balancing the checkbook or paying all the family bills, always **involve yourself in making all family financial decisions**. It's more likely that women do not take a leadership role in making major and long-term financial decisions in families. Try to set aside time each week to deal with financial issues and become part of the decision making process.

Women report that they are more intimidated when it comes to investing. According to a poll by Charles Schwab, women did not have confidence in their ability to invest. It is imperative for women to **learn to invest**. The Internet is a great place to do research and find resources that can tell you what you need

to know.

Women often find themselves sacrificing their financial health in order to perform care taking duties. **Start saving regularly—now**. Don't put it off. Save what you can and invest it and let it grow.

Most women need to prepare for living up to 15 years or longer without a paycheck. Plainly stated, **start saving for retirement**. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 58 percent of women report they are behind schedule in saving for retirement.

One harsh fact that women have to face is that they often suffer credit problems because of their relationships. **Protect your credit rating**. Don't cosign loans or credit card applications for someone who is not responsible. Avoid attaching your name to a spouse's business venture funded by credit card debt. If you're getting a divorce, go to a lawyer. Protect yourself and your assets. Do not depend on the other person to do the right thing.

From Ragan Communications
FIRSTdraft

Fad Diets Revisited (continued)

significant weight loss. For more information on cortisol-reducing weight loss supplements, go to The Blonz Guide, www.askdrblonz.com.

Most loathsome are the marketing ploys that target the "significantly overweight user" in short-form infomercials featuring seemingly credible middle-aged women that speak in a sympathetic, heartfelt way about the hardships experienced by those who are significantly overweight. The Utah-based common enterprise doing business as American Phytotherapy Research Laboratory claims their product Leptoprin is not for those with 5-10 extra "vanity pounds." No, according to this marketer, Leptoprin is clinically proven to cause weight loss of more than 20 pounds, including as much as 50, 60, 147 pounds in significantly overweight users. In June 2004, the FTC issued a notice order that prohibits this company from making future false and unsubstantiated claims for weight loss or that clinical testing proves certain efficacy claims.

Also noteworthy is Leptoprin's inclusion of a dangerous combination of Ephedra, caffeine, and aspirin commonly called ECA. Random controlled trials have shown that the use of ephedra-containing dietary supplements plus caffeine is associated with two to three times the risk of nausea, vomiting, psychiatric symptoms such as anxiety and change in mood, autonomic hyperactivity, and palpitations.

EPHEDRA BANNED

In February 2003, 23 year old, Baltimore Orioles pitcher Steve Bechler takes three tablets of the Xenadrine RFA-1 before a routine workout and dies 24 hours later. A medical examiner attributes his death to the use of the Ephedra-containing supplement. One year later, the Food and Drug Administration announced the ban of Ephedra from all marketed dietary supplements. Many popular dietary supplements for weight loss, energy boost, or athletic enhancement contained the ingredient Ephedra, also known as ephedrine alkaloids or Ma Huang. The FDA released the ban based upon several factors: 1) the well-known pharmacological effects of ephedrine alkaloids such as raised blood pressure and increase heart rate; 2) the peer-reviewed scientific literature that suggest the health risks outweigh potential health benefits associated with insignificant amounts of weight loss, if any; 3) the adverse events reported to have occurred in individuals following consumption of dietary supplements containing ephedrine alkaloids.

Since the Ephedra ban, synephrine has replaced Ephedra as the ingredient with the most exaggeration claims for weight loss. Synephrine is the main active compound found in the fruit of a plant called Citrus aurantium. The fruit is zhi shi (in traditional Chinese medicine), and bitter orange. Interesting theories exist on how compounds found in Citrus aurantium might work to boost metabolic rate or curb the appetite. Yet there is no credible evidence to demonstrate effectiveness for weight loss in humans. (continued on pg 9)

Medicare Phone Scams

Medicare Beneficiaries

Urged to be on the Look-out for Phone Scams

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) warns seniors and people with disabilities to be aware of a scheme that asks Medicare beneficiaries for money and checking account information to help them enroll in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

This scheme is called the “\$299 Ring” for the typical amount of money Medicare beneficiaries are talked into withdrawing from their checking accounts to pay for a non-existent prescription drug plan. Consumers can report these cases to their local law enforcement agencies or 1-877-7SAFERX (1-877-772-3379).

Medicare has received complaints against several companies from Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts New Jersey and Georgia. However, authorities believe the companies are the same and typically based outside the U. S. As soon as CMS receives these complaints, they investigate and refer them to federal law enforcement authorities.

No Medicare drug plan can ask a person with Medicare for bank account or other personal information over the telephone. No beneficiary should ever provide that kind of information to a caller. They should contact their local police department if they believe someone is trying to take money or information from them illegally.

People with Medicare should also remember that they should be on the lookout for anyone trying to take advantage of them and take steps to protect themselves by remembering:

- No one can come into your home uninvited.
- No one can ask you for personal information during their marketing activities.
- Always keep all personal information, such as your Medicare number, safe, just as you would a credit card or a bank account number.
- Whenever you have a question or concern about any activity regarding Medicare, call 1-800-MEDICARE.

In addition, legitimate Medicare drug plans will not ask for payment over the telephone or the Internet. They must bill the beneficiary for the monthly premium. Typically, that amount is set up as an automatic withdrawal from the beneficiary’s monthly Social Security check. Beneficiaries may also opt to pay the monthly premiums in other ways such as writing a check or setting up automatic payments from their checking accounts.



Fad Diets Revisited (continued)

Synephrine is found in weight loss products combined with other mild stimulants, such as kola nut or guarana (both are caffeine sources) or with salicylates such as white willow (a natural form of aspirin). Combinations of two or more stimulants allegedly amplify each other’s stimulatory effects. Synephrine is chemically similar to Ephedra and is purportedly it’s calmer cousin. Bitter orange is on the Consumer Report’s Dirty Dozen list of supplement ingredients to avoid. The known dangers include high blood pressure and increased risk of heart arrhythmia, heart attack and stroke. Individuals with cardiovascular concerns such as hypertension should avoid products containing synephrine alone or synephrine combined with other stimulants.

Next: The South Beach Diet and advice from “Miss Piggy”

Eighth Annual Shine A Light on Child Abuse Prevention

Awards Breakfast

April 2006 is Child Abuse Prevention Month, as proclaimed by the state and federal government, to promote community involvement in preventing child abuse. San Bernardino County's Children's Network, Children's Fund, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center and First 5 San Bernardino sponsored the "8th Annual Shine A Light On Child Abuse Prevention" Awards Breakfast at the Ontario Doubletree Hotel on Wednesday, March 23, 2006, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. The event honored many dedicated, compassionate and skilled individuals working under enormous pressure to protect children in the County.

The 2006 Blue Ribbon Child Abuse Prevention Campaign was kicked off in conjunction with this event. The goal of this month-long observance is to increase the awareness of child abuse and prevention. The objectives are to reach over 500,000 San Bernardino county residents with the message that preventing child abuse is everyone's responsibility, and to increase the use of parenting and counseling programs and services by those who may not otherwise have reached out for help.

The Awards Breakfast began with a special performance by the Ontario-Holt Head Start group, followed by a moving Prayer for Children, read by Children's Network Officer Kent Paxton.

The following honorees received awards:

Randee Sneed, Social Worker of the Year
Nancy Wolfe, Forensic Interviewer of the Year
Mary Alice Grosser, ACSW, Supervising Social Service Practitioner of the Year
Cora Stowe, Foster Parent of the Year
Rae Hunter, Public Health Nurse of the Year
Yvonne Pierre, Group Home Worker of the Year
The Unforgettables Foundation– Tim Evans, Community Service Agency
Shari Lowder, Community Service Clinician
Dr. Marti Baum, Physician of the Year
Briye McCann, Legal Advocate of the Year
Karen Wilson, Educator of the Year
Pastor Woody Hall, Faith Based Partner of the Year
Diane Terrones, Partner of the Year
Frances Vinciullo, Family Advocate of the Year
Roxie Findsen, Foster Youth of the Year
Debi Faris-Cifelli, Lifetime Advocate



4th District Supervisor Gary Ovitt presenting Rebecca Stafford and Kent Paxton with a Proclamation



2006 Shine a Light on Child Abuse Prevention Honorees



This Little Light of Mine Sing-Along



Ontario - Holt Head Start Performance



Ontario - Holt Head Start Performance



Debi Faris-Cifeli

A Guardian Angel for Abandoned Babies

The 2006 Shine a Light on Child Abuse Lifetime Advocate honoree is Debi Faris-Cifeli. She is the founder of the Garden of Angels Foundation in Yucaipa. She inadvertently began her organization in 1996 when she heard a news story of a newborn baby boy stuffed into a duffel bag and tossed from a speeding car along a freeway. This moved her to action. She and her family obtained that child's body and gave him and two others who met the same fate a proper and dignified burial.

The mission of the Garden of Angels is a message of love. "It's about the children. It's about giving them dignity and honor, instead of rejection. It's about giving them a name instead of a number. It's about giving them a voice instead of silence. It's about purpose that we all have to fulfill, whether it's here on Earth or in Heaven. It's about understanding the value God places on each one of us. It's about understanding these precious little ones are not only God's, but yours and mine. It's about what we could have done to protect the lives of these children, and what we can do now! It's about opening our ears and listening to the still small voice inside each and every one of us. It's about changed hearts and lives. But mostly, it's about love."

Beyond the burial of these forsaken children, Mrs. Faris-Cifeli felt more needed to be done to eliminate the discarding of children. She contacted Sen. Jim Brulte and asked him to write legislation that would decriminalize 'safe' abandonment. Safe Arms for Newborns (SB 1368) was created to honor all babies who have lost their lives to newborn abandonment. California law SB 1368 allows the parent of a newborn infant - within 3 days - to legally surrender her baby, anonymously and without fear of prosecution to any employee at any hospital emergency room or other designated 'Safe Haven' in California. In addition, SB 1368 allows for a two-week "cooling off" period, allowing the parent the opportunity to reconsider the decision, and work to reclaim the child. Since this law took effect January 1, 2001, 85 babies have been safely surrendered (as of April 2005).

The Garden of Angels works passionately to prevent the tragedy of newborn abandonment through educational and outreach programs. We are extremely fortunate to have Debi Faris-Cifelli as one of our Shine A Light on Child Abuse honorees. She is an excellent role model for the mission to prevent child abuse in our community.

Consider these Criteria for Online MBA Programs

Getting your MBA online is becoming more common, according to a recent story in Business 2.0. Enrollment for MBAs online has reached 125,000 from practically zero 10 years ago. And, it now seems that respect for online degrees is also on the upswing, and so these programs are starting to make good career sense.

If you're too busy to attend a brick-and-mortar program but you are unsure of how to pick a good online program (and avoid worthless online diploma mills), follow these tips from Newsweek's Cornel Garfman:

- Go to www.chea.org (the Council for Higher Education Accreditation) and find out if the school offering the program is accredited.



- Visit the Better Business Bureau's web site (www.bbb.org) for complaints lodged against any online school.

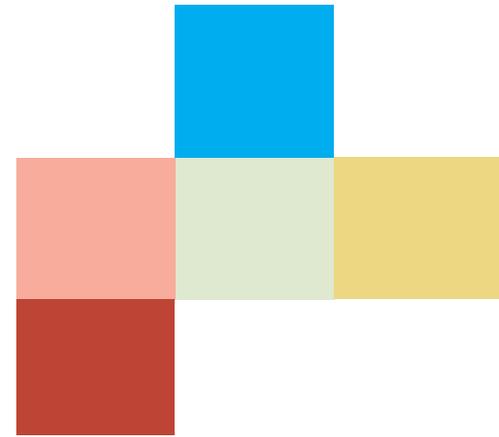


- Go to www.geteducated.com and make sure the institution you've selected is not a phony.



- Check out the admissions policy for the institution you are considering. Is it too easy to get in? If so, you may want to reconsider. Make sure your school of choice considers academic records and test scores.

From Ragan Communications FIRSTdraft



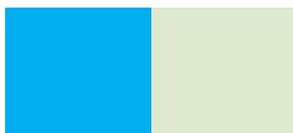
Plan Your Child's Education

According to the Oppenheimer Funds' web site, the cost of a college education during the 2004-2005 school year was \$20,082 for annual tuition at a private college or \$5,354 at a public college. With the addition of a year's room-and-board expenses, those numbers rose to \$27,516 and \$11,354, respectively. That's why no matter how young your child is, the time to start planning for financing his or her education is now.

Oppenheimer recommends the following four steps to optimize your college-fund plan:

- **Ask yourself how long you have to invest your money.** The longer you have to invest, the better chance you have of reaching your goals.
- **Ask yourself how much the college education you want to give your child will cost.** Will you send your child to a public or a private school?
- **Decide how much money you will invest.** This will depend on several factors. The college you choose to send your child to, the length of time you have to invest, the funds you have available to invest, and how your investments do over time.
- **Create your college-fund investment plan.** Look at your goals and the time you have, and you will be able to determine a reasonable plan for yourself. You may also want to consider 529 plans, a tax-advantaged way to save for higher education; Coverdell Education Savings Accounts, formerly known as education IRAs; and mutual funds.

From Ragan Communications FIRSTdraft



Take Your Child To Work Day



Daliesa Hilton takes over her mother's job in HS Personnel at the Hardt St. office in San Bernardino.



Megan and Quentin Barber pose with their father before starting another work activity.



Megan and Matthew Brown smile for the camera with their grandmother before they start their day of work.



Angela Edwards is busy on working on her mother's computer.



Christopher Montanez kicks back during his work break.



Peyton Jay shares his father's work station at San Bernardino ITSD office.



Jennifer Jaramillo learns how to make a flier in a PERC training classroom.



Allison Baker and Andrea Echevarria take a “girls only” break from their work.



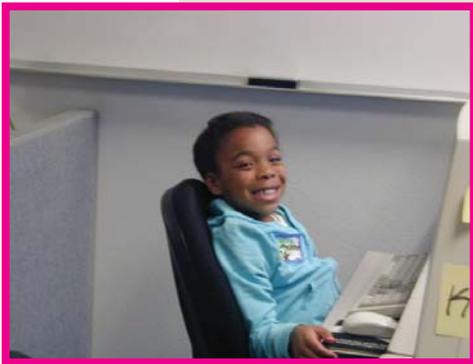
Daniel Lopez takes a moment from his gaming/mp3 tunes to give the camera a little smirk.



Abel Beltran gives his grandmother a hug before he runs work activity.



Erica and Ruben Jr. Lopez smile sweetly for the camera at the HS Personnel office in San Bernardino.



Bryanna Harris works at a computer station at PERC, she loved creating her own web page.



Manuel Paul creates a soccer themed-website at PERC.



Jazmine Amador learns the inner workings of PERC.



Schedule of Classes



Performance, Education and Resource Centers

Schedule of Classes

Offerings for April – June 2006



Schedule

General Development Classes

Classes will be presented at **National University** unless otherwise noted.

Class Name	Date	Class ID #	Fee	Time
Coping With Difficult People	4/4	18248	\$55	8:30 – 12:30
Identifying the Career That's Right For You (2 Days)	4/4 & 4/11	18246	\$250	8:30 – 4:00
Mapping Business Communications (2 Days) (PERC Ontario)	4/11 & 4/12	18259	\$500	8:00 – 5:00
Knockin' `em Dead: Interviewing Skills	4/18	18258	\$55	8:30 – 12:30
Service is an Attitude	4/26	18249	\$105	8:30 – 4:00
So, You Think You Want to be a Supervisor	5/4	18250	\$105	8:30 – 4:00
Power Writing	5/17	18251	\$105	8:30 – 4:00
Making the Most of Change	5/18	18252	\$105	8:30 – 4:00
Choose Your Battles	5/31	18254	\$55	8:30 – 12:30
Success in the People Zone	5/31	18253	\$105	8:30 – 12:30
Serving a Diverse Community	6/13	18255	\$55	8:30 – 12:30
Service is an Attitude	6/28	18256	\$105	8:30 – 4:00
Freedom Film Festival: Serving Diverse Customers	6/28	18257	\$105	8:30 – 4:00

Computer Classes

Computer classes will be presented at **2314 South Mountain Avenue, Ontario, CA** unless otherwise noted.

Classes presented by Soft-Train

Class Name	Date	Class ID #	Fee	Time
Excel 2000 Introduction	4/12	18353	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Word 2000 Introduction	4/19	18354	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Access 2000 Introduction	4/26	18355	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Excel 2000 Intermediate	5/3	18356	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Word 2000 Intermediate	5/24	18357	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Access 2000 Intermediate	5/31	18358	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Outlook 2000 Introduction	6/7	18359	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
PowerPoint 2000 Introduction	6/14	18360	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Outlook 2000 Introduction (Victorville PERC)	6/21	18361	\$105	8:30 – 4:30
Outlook 2000 Intermediate	6/28	18362	\$105	8:30 – 4:30

Pre-registration is required for the classes listed in this announcement; call (909) 388-4110. Payment, purchase order, or approved Education Assistance Proposal (EAP) must be received prior to the start of the seminar. When paying by check, make checks payable to San Bernardino County.

For additional information, please contact PERC at (909) 458-1616.