

RCP

QUARTERLY

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RIVERSIDE COUNTY
PROBATION
DEPARTMENT



NEW HORIZONS

A NEW YEAR BRINGS THE PROMISE OF CHANGED LIVES.
IN THIS ISSUE OF RCP QUARTERLY, WE CELEBRATE THE
STAFF WHO HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN AND THE CLIENTS
WHO MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR SECOND CHANCE





MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



IN A YEAR THAT CONTINUED TO BRING UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES, I WITNESSED THE WARMTH, CARE AND COMMITMENT DEMONSTRATED BY OUR TEAM AT EVERY TURN. I WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND TO ITS MISSION TO THOSE UNDER OUR SUPERVISION. I HAVE BEEN INSPIRED AND AM APPRECIATIVE OF THE WILLINGNESS OF STAFF TO ADAPT TO THE DIFFICULTIES PRESENTED BY COVID-19 AND ITS VARIANTS. THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOU, YOUR FAMILIES, OUR CLIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL CONTINUE AS A HIGH PRIORITY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE VIRUS DID CLAIM THE LIFE OF ONE OF OUR OWN IN 2021 - PCO RYAN SANTANA. I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN DONE TO SUPPORT THE SANTANA FAMILY AND ASK THAT YOU PLEASE KEEP RYAN'S WIFE, HAYLEY, AND THE SANTANA FAMILY IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS.

WE WILL REMEMBER 2020 AND 2021 AS LANDMARK YEARS FOR THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT. YOUR EFFORTS HAVE SHOWN THE TREMENDOUS VALUE OF TEAMS WORKING TOGETHER AND OF THE IMPACT YOU CAN HAVE ON THE COMMUNITY. YOUR STORIES OF OUTREACH AND CONCERN HAVE BEEN SHARED WITH THE COURTS, THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE AND THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. THEY CONTINUE TO BE IMPRESSED WITH ALL THAT YOU DO IN THESE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES. DEPARTMENT AVERAGES SHOW THAT 75 PERCENT OF OUR CLIENTS ARE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING PROBATION. FREQUENTLY IN THOSE SUCCESS STORIES WE HEAR THE WORD 'HOPE.' THOSE CLIENTS WERE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD BECAUSE YOU BELIEVED IN THEM, ALLOWING THEM TO BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES.

THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS CONTINUES TO DROP WITH RECENT NUMBERS REFLECTING APPROXIMATELY 9,300 ADULTS UNDER SUPERVISION AND 752 YOUTH. FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WE SUPERVISED APPROXIMATELY 20,000 ADULTS AND 5,500 YOUTH. WE HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY SMALLER FOOTPRINT NOW THAN IN YEARS PAST AND WE ARE ADJUSTING TO THE NEW REALITIES. WHILE NUMBERS MAY BE SMALLER, THE COMPLEXITY OF THE WORK HAS INCREASED EXPONENTIALLY. WE HAVE MADE SOME CHANGES TO ADDRESS SPECIALIZED FUNCTIONS SUCH AS SB 823 PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS AND PLACEMENT.

ADDITIONAL CHANGES MAY BE NEEDED AS WE TAKE ON A GREATER ROLE WITH PRE-TRIAL AND OTHER PROGRAMS DUE TO LEGISLATIVE CHANGES.

OUR WARRANT NUMBERS ARE ALSO SHOWING IMPROVEMENT. THANK YOU FOR A BALANCED APPROACH WHILE WORKING WITH OUR CLIENTS. WITH OUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BECOMING INCREASINGLY OPERATIONALIZED, THERE WILL BE INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES TO ALIGN OUR DEPARTMENT TOWARD THE OUTCOMES WE ARE AIMING FOR: SAFE AND SECURE DETENTION / TREATMENT FACILITIES; OPPORTUNITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH COMMUNITY SUPERVISION; AND A ROBUST SUPPORT SYSTEM.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALL THAT YOU DO AND FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WE SERVE.

RONALD L. MILLER II
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER



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IN LOVING MEMORY



PROBATION CORRECTIONS OFFICER

RYAN SANTANA



Probation Corrections Officer Ryan Santana served the Riverside County Probation Department from January 2016 at Riverside Juvenile Hall (RJH) to December 2021 at the Alan M. Crogan Youth Treatment and Education Center (AMC-YTEC).

Probation Corrections Officer (PCO) Santana was a good worker, who was easily a favorite amongst his co-workers. He was willing to learn and open to constructive criticism. He didn't hesitate to work past his normal scheduled shift to assist in the facility and volunteered in other units when needed. His smile and easy-going personality immediately drew you in, and once he began joking with you, or about you, you knew you were "in" with him. PCO A. Chaidez recalled her first encounter with Santana at RJH: "He approached me, put his arms out and said, 'Where you from homie?' I was confused but told him which city I lived in. Santana started laughing and said, 'You're not from there. You're from RJH. Welcome to the RJH fam.'"

PCO Santana always reported to work with a positive mindset and his presence alone allowed for his partners to feel a sense of safety with him. Upon entering the facility and looking at the posted lineup for the shift, staff recall feeling happiness to see Santana's name next to theirs, as they knew it would be a good day. Senior Probation Corrections Officer (SRPCO) H. Tinoco said, "Even though 6 a.m. is early to be up and working, he was always there with a smile on his face and a positive attitude to start off the day. Having our morning talks always helped me have a better outlook on the day." Staff also knew they could count on Santana during the shift to utilize his counseling skills to de-escalate an irate youth or provide reinforcement if needed during an incident. SRPCO Tinoco said, "No matter what the situation was, you always knew he would have your back."

Santana was able to build a good rapport with even the most difficult of youth, and at times, prevented issues from intensifying simply by speaking to a youth. He always maintained a positive outlook and made sure his partners knew they would all make it through the shift safely. "The unit may have been falling, but he would try his best to make it stand," said PCO Chaidez.

Because institution staff work so closely together day in and day out, the camaraderie that is built with your co-

workers is important and is typically what gets staff through the long shifts. Santana exhibited a warmth and humbleness about him that allowed the youth and his peers to gravitate toward him. SRPCO D. Garcia said, "Santana was always easy to talk to. He was one of those guys that could separate the bad from the good at work and find the positive in every situation." Santana's genuine character allowed for him to build great friendships among his coworkers, but it was his jokester personality that helped his peers make it through the day. "He was a goofball. He liked kidding around with me often. He would role-play that he was a gangster and bang on me," said SRPCO E. Rodriguez. When he wasn't joking around with staff, he could be found discussing sports, talking about food and communicating with his peers by way of funny memes.

While Santana made his mark as a PCO at work, his greatest treasure was at home in his family. He was so proud of them and spoke of them in great detail, to the extent everyone felt they knew them personally. Everyone was very much aware of his 20+ years long relationship with his wife Hayley and how much genuine love and admiration he had for her and the family they built. He was so very proud of all three of his children, Aiden, Annabelle and Troy. He regularly shared family stories and his face always lit up when he spoke of them.

Santana was a good man with a pure heart. It is not often you encounter genuine souls in your lifetime, but here at RJH/YTEC we were blessed to have one alongside us for almost six years. He made a difference. He made a difference with youth, his co-workers and especially his family. Santana is a true loss to all who knew him.



SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER

EVELYN BRICEÑO



ANTHONY'S CHANCE

Probation officers are proud to support clients as they overcome challenges and regain their lives. After years of addiction, homelessness and family estrangement, Anthony was ready to change. He just didn't know it yet. It took a little tough love to nudge him in the right direction. With the collaboration of Anthony's daughter, Deputy Probation Officer Patronas arranged for Anthony's arrest on a probation violation and helped him begin his recovery journey. Anthony has been sober for more than two years, attained employment and repaired damaged family relationships.



LETTER FROM ANTHONY'S DAUGHTER TO PROBATION OFFICER PATRONAS:

“

Officer Patronas has changed my family's life in a way that could never be put in words. In 2017, my father become homeless and going on the wrong path. At the age of 18, I became a caretaker of my father, making sure he ate every day, finding him on the streets, with one goal: to get him sober.


I often called Officer Patronas looking for advice and wisdom. She became a constant partner of mine over the length of three years, with the same goal in mind: to save his life. In August of 2019, I called Officer Patronas and told her my dad was on drugs and needed treatment. She got right to work and in December, my dad was arrested for the last time on a probation violation.

He has since completed the Salvation Army Rehabilitation Program, began working a full-time job, and reconnected with his family. We credit all of this to Office Patronas, who we will always consider family. You gave me my father back, gave my grandma her son back before she passed away. You saved his life. The Martinez family thanks you from the bottom of our heart. Riverside County is lucky to have you and God truly blessed us. Thank you, we love you!

”

[CLICK HERE](#) TO VIEW MORE OF ANTHONY'S STORY





"I started using drugs in high school. It was my ninth grade year. I would say when my daughter was born, I quit for maybe three years, but soon after that, I started drinking, taking drugs again, pills, and it never stopped. The only time it stopped was when I got in trouble and went to jail.

In 2017, my parents got a restraining order against me. I was on drugs and [I thought] nothing was my fault, it was everybody else's fault. So when I got kicked out, it was all, "poor me."

I was homeless. I was sleeping on the streets. Sleeping in a garage. I just kept continuing using drugs and never thought that was the problem. I thought I had it all even with being on the streets and that's the insane thing about it.

Deep down inside, I knew that there was something wrong with me. I had great parents and they taught me morals and values and once I saw that disappearing when I was on the streets, doing things that I would normally never do, it started becoming a big problem.

2019 was the toughest year of being homeless. In November, I had an overdose. I thought I was just sick. My daughter ended up finding me and took me to the hospital and I didn't realize that I was overdosing on fentanyl. I knew my time was up.

I never in my life didn't want to live, but at that time, I didn't want to live. I was giving up. In December, I got arrested.

When I was able to get clean and sober and go home and see my mom, it was like two months after I got home from Salvation Army, that I found out that she had cancer. That was very hard. She told me every day how proud she was of me.

When I saw my mom deteriorate, and she got worse and worse, I was able to be there for her. And when she did pass in July, I knew that all my mom wanted was for me to be clean and sober. It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to deal with in my life. I know I was able to deal with it because of everything I've learned in my recovery.

I made a promise to my mom that I'll stay clean and sober. It doesn't matter how hard life hits, that's my goal. That's my plan and when I see my mom again, I can tell her, 'I did it.'"



CLIENT SUCCESS ACROSS THE COUNTY

BENJAMIN

Benjamin was initially admitted into the Indio Recovery Opportunity Center (IROC) program on February 21, 2020. Upon his release from custody, he initially entered the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission (CVRM). During his time in the IROC program, Benjamin faced numerous challenges with continued drug use and was not complying with the conditions of the IROC program. But with the help of his IROC treatment team (pictured), he overcame these challenges. Benjamin continued to move forward and completed a residential treatment program at Metcalf Recovery Ranch in Blythe in July 2020 and transitioned into a sober living home. Since completing his treatment program, he has successfully obtained his California Commercial Driver's License, bought a vehicle, obtained housing, found a job at Southwest Pump and Drill as a Pump Helper/Driver, paid off his court-ordered victim restitution and has maintained his sobriety for over 17 months. Benjamin successfully completed the IROC program on October 22, 2021, with his great efforts and commitment to his recovery.



FROM LEFT: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALIST III ANTONIA PRIDEMORE, DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER EFRAIN MELENDREZ, SUPERVISING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALIST GABE KASON, SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE EMILY BENJAMINI, ATTORNEY JESSICA DESALVA, DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY LAUREN DONOVAN, AND SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER YVONNE QUINTANA

SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER

YVONNE QUINTANA



JOE

Congratulations to our client Joe, who has found stability through services at our partner organizations. Joe reported to the Indio probation office after being released from prison. He was homeless and expressed a desire for housing. He was transported to the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission (CVRM) and entered the Gateway Program. While in the program, he regularly attended Alcoholics Anonymous classes and completed 35 hours a week of life skills learning. He successfully completed the Gateway Program and chose to continue his path at CVRM in hopes of finding employment and saving enough money for his own residence.

DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER

KARINA REYNOSO



LANCE



The Temecula Day Reporting Center (DRC) welcomes new Peer Support Specialist (PSS) Lance Courtney to the Temecula DRC team. Lance is a former participant of the Temecula DRC program. He successfully completed multiple DRC classes and obtained his GED during his time here. Lance remained connected with the Temecula DRC after discharging probation successfully and never hesitated to come back and share his story with other participants. Lance's hard work and motivation has shown through and he earned the PSS position with Riverside University Health System - Behavioral Health. We are very proud of Lance and his diligent efforts! Through his new position, he will be able share his story and inspire current DRC clients who are coming through the very same program he completed.



SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER

LETICIA SANCHEZ



DALTON

Congratulations to former client Dalton, who graduated from the Riverside Day Reporting Center (DRC) and is on a path to becoming a Peer Support Specialist (PSS). He first heard about the DRC during the prison discharge process when he was counseled about available services once released. One of his goals was to complete his GED or high school diploma and to enroll in college classes.

After completing his intake at the DRC, he was connected with PSS Samuel Murillo, and they immediately developed a bond. Dalton knew right away he wanted to become a PSS and was grateful to PSS Murillo for providing him with the “blueprint” for how to achieve this goal.

The first step to become a PSS was for Dalton to complete his high school education. Dalton attended classes offered through the Riverside County Office of Education and completed his credits on October 21, 2020. Because of his accomplishments, Dalton was chosen as a speaker at his high school graduation ceremony. In addition, he took extra classes at the DRC to assist him in his recovery: Wellness and Empowerment in Life and Living; Courage to Change; and Healthy Relationships.

Dalton then completed his PSS training at RI International, where he graduated as valedictorian of his class. After graduating from RI International, he enrolled in classes at the California Nurses Education Institute (CNEI) to receive his certification as a substance abuse counselor. He reported that he was one of the top students in his class and stated that when he attended high school, he struggled to pass tests, but now flies through his classes. He credited this new ability to his now strong spiritual base and a deep passion toward his studies.

Dalton reported that his instructor at CNEI recommended him for a job and he is now employed as a Detox Technician. He is patiently waiting until July 2022, as it will be one year since his probation expired. This will make him qualified to apply for a job as a PSS with the County of Riverside, as his goal is to work at the Indio DRC.

DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER

JEI ROBERTS



EDWIN

Edwin was admitted into the Blythe Recovery Opportunity Center (BROC) program in March 2020. He was ordered to participate in a 90-day residential treatment program at the Gibson House for Men, which he successfully completed. After returning to the Blythe community, Edwin started the BROC program. He maintained his sobriety and resided at one of the local sober living homes where he held the status of house manager. Edwin mended and rebuilt relationships with his family, particularly his children and his parents. He obtained employment at a Taco Bell restaurant and saved enough money to purchase his own vehicle. Lastly, Edwin completed the 12 Steps and Traditions of the Alcoholics Anonymous program with his sponsor, and he continues to incorporate these principles into his daily life. Edwin has worked extremely hard the past 18 months to become the man he is today. On December 7, 2021, Edwin successfully completed the BROC program and proudly announced he had 689 days clean and sober. His grant of probation was terminated early and his criminal charges were dismissed. While Edwin has officially completed the BROC program, he is still well connected in the local recovery network. He hopes to help others and sponsor those who are new in recovery. We are so proud of Edwin and everything he has accomplished. Congratulations Edwin!



SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER

ASHLEY DEFREESE



The Giving Claremont – A Life's Mission

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT AND LOCAL CLAREMONT BUSINESS FOCUSING ON FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

Four justice-involved youth were treated to a private event to honor their successes and achievements. Graciously, Owner and operator of The Giving Claremont, Ray Robles, closed his doors to host an evening of education focused on female empowerment. Ray was joined by assistant Pat Morrow, as well as KutHaus Salon stylists Richard Canales and Kristina Yorba who donated their time and talent to offer the youth hair refreshing.

Senior Probation Officer Michele Ewing led the evening with a female empowerment exercise that scrutinized the current state of advertising, the oversexualization of the female body to sell goods and services and the unrealistic expectation it places on young women. Youth were given a task to share what true qualities matter and to depict their word of empowerment. Words of the evening included youth reminding themselves of their strength, tenacity and positive qualities.

The evening continued with Ray providing tips for successful job interviews and obtaining employment. The youth were given the opportunity to select clothing that represented their best self and were generously gifted items. The value of this event cannot be measured in numbers nor statistics; however, to see the smiles, positive disposition and camaraderie spoke a thousand words.

Events such as this are targeted at improving social and emotional wellbeing while strengthening community partnerships which are vital to at-risk youth. Probation officers connect to community-based partners and businesses willing to donate their time and efforts to offer meaningful and needed links to youth. These affiliations generate mentorship, opportunity and positive experiences in hopes of driving success, education and expanding the youths' perspectives. In the presence of Ray, it is clear, giving to others is his life's purpose and mission. The Riverside County Probation Department extends its sincere gratitude to Ray and The Giving Claremont and KutHaus Salon for their generosity.

The Giving's mission is to, "Create fashionable clothing, tell inspirational stories and give to worthy causes and people in need." The Giving is known in the Claremont community for offering fashionable clothing for reputable causes, including offering free school supplies to teachers, donating to those in need suffering from cancer and offering families in need gift cards to purchase perishable items. This was the second time in 2021 that The Giving supported RCP at-risk youth, as clothing items were thoughtfully supplied in July 2021.



SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER
CARI SHEPHERD



"Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give."

Eleanor Roosevelt



BREAKING THE CYCLE

IJH STAFF JUMP INTO ACTION TO SAVE THE LIFE OF A YOUTH

INDIO JUVENILE HALL

On July 8th, 2021, Senior Probation Corrections Officer (SPCO) Jeremy Somers stayed after his evening shift at Indio Juvenile Hall to provide follow-up training to Probation Corrections Officer (PCO) Sara Sanchez. At approximately 11:40 p.m. they, along with SPCO Tina Staton, heard a coughing/sneezing noise coming from a room. While it is not uncommon to hear coughing and sneezing noises on the unit at night, they quickly realized this noise sounded different. They systematically looked in each room to identify the youth. SPCO Somers heard a faint noise from one of the rooms and discovered a youth who appeared to be having a nightmare. He entered the room to check on the youth. He discovered the youth was in distress and had possibly suffered a seizure. The youth was aspirating through the nose and did not appear to be breathing. SPCO Staton immediately

advised PCO Gabriela Fermon in control to contact 911 and called PCO Michael Keechler to the room.

The team jumped into action and quickly employed their CPR/First Aid training. After an evaluation of the youth's condition, it was discovered the youth was unable to breathe and was beginning to turn blue. PCO Keechler attempted to clear the youth's airway. PCO Sanchez raced to retrieve the AED machine while PCO Sugi Johnson-Haynes assisted with performing safety checks on two units. After multiple rounds of CPR and repeated rescue breaths, PCO Keechler was finally able to clear the youth's airway. Paramedics arrived just as the youth regained the ability to breathe independently and took over medical treatment before transporting the youth to the hospital. After a short hospital stay, the youth was released back to the facility and

celebrated their 18th birthday the next day.

The years and hours spent training for an emergency situation like this enabled staff to take immediate action and provide life-saving measures. They came together as a team to fulfill an important role during this incident and ensure a successful outcome. The combined response of SPCO Tina Staton, SPCO Jeremy Somers, PCO Sara Sanchez, PCO Michael Keechler, PCO Gabriela Fermon and PCO Sugi Johnson-Haynes leaves no doubt that their actions saved this youth's life.

DIVISION DIRECTOR

MICHAEL BRINKMAN



YTEC YOUTH VISIT RIVERSIDE PHILHARMONIC HOLIDAY EVENT

ALAN M. CROGAN YOUTH TREATMENT AND EDUCATION CENTER

Two youth from the Alan M. Crogan – Youth Treatment and Education Center were treated to a live holiday concert by the Riverside Philharmonic in December. The concert was held at the historic Cesar E. Chavez Community Center in Riverside. The youth were in awe of the symphonic sounds flowing through the room which were harmonic and calming. With world-renowned music director Tomasz Golka at the helm, the orchestra played classic holiday songs. The mood was upbeat, and there was an atmosphere of cheer and joy as

the historic building came to life. The youth had never experienced a live concert of this magnitude and were incredibly thankful for the opportunity. They were able to take a photo with Santa Claus and said they felt like kids again. As the concert came to a crescendo, the energy in the room grew. The applause became louder, and the smiles grew warmer. A live chorus began to sing along with the percussion of instruments and were in sync with every note. At the conclusion of the concert, the two youth were rewarded for their positive behavior

with a nice meal at a local restaurant. The event was enjoyable and introduced the youth to a new experience. On behalf of the Riverside County Probation Department, we would like to thank the Riverside Philharmonic for the invitation.

SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER

RUBEN CORREA



NEWLY PROMOTED!

CHIEF DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER

ELISA PORRAS



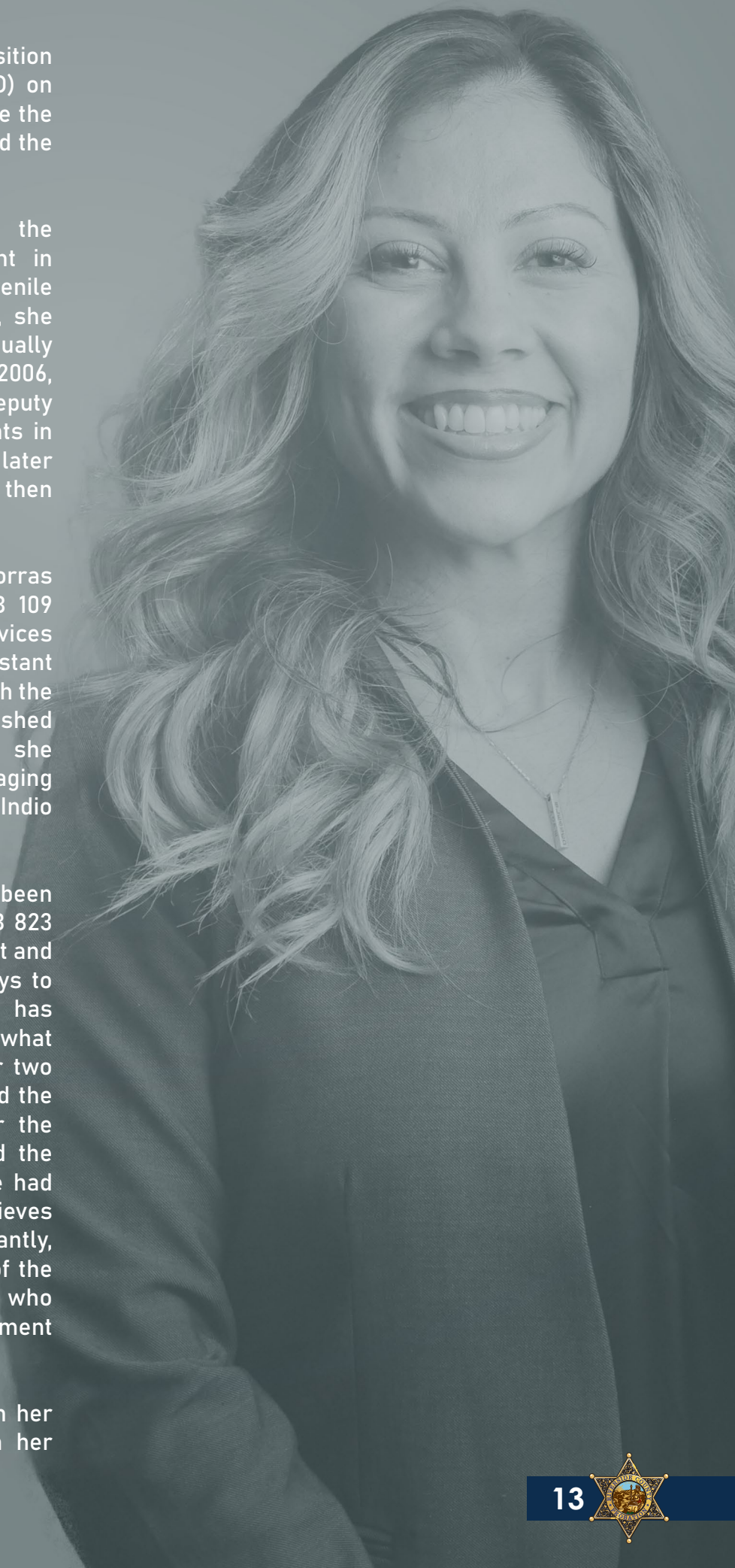
Elisa Porras was appointed to the position of Chief Deputy Probation Officer (CDPO) on January 27, 2022 and assigned to oversee the department's three custodial facilities and the Pathways to Success program.

CDPO Porras began her career with the Riverside County Probation Department in 2000 as a Group Counselor at Indio Juvenile Hall. While assigned to the institutions, she worked various assignments and eventually promoted to Senior Group Counselor. In 2006, she transferred to field services as a Deputy Probation Officer, working in assignments in both juvenile and adult services. She later promoted to Senior Probation Officer and then Supervising Probation Officer.

As an armed supervisor in 2011, CDPO Porras was instrumental in developing the AB 109 supervision model for the Desert Services Division. In 2014, she promoted to Assistant Division Director. She worked closely with the Coachella Valley community and established the community collaborative. In 2019, she promoted to Division Director, managing the Southwest Services Division and Indio Juvenile Hall.

Her most recent assignment has been navigating the very choppy waters of SB 823 – Division of Juvenile Justice Realignment and shepherding the creation of the Pathways to Success Program. While CDPO Porras has dedicated her career to the department, what completes her is being a mother to her two beautiful children (6 and 8), her faith and the importance of personal wellness. Over the course of her career, she has retained the same enthusiasm for our craft that she had on the day she started. She truly believes change is possible and, most importantly, she believes in the hard-working staff of the Riverside County Probation Department who fulfill the mission and vision of the department each day.

Please join us in congratulating Elisa on her promotion and wishing her success in her new assignment.



CAPIA'S BRIAN ANDERSON AWARD GOES TO CHIEF DEPUTY ELISA PORRAS

We congratulate CDPO Elisa Porras for receiving the Brian Anderson Award. This is an annual award presented by the California Association of Probation Institution Administrators (CAPIA) to managers who have developed and implemented innovative programming at their facility. CDPO Porras received the award for achievements during her time as Division Director at Indio Juvenile Hall.

The ultimate challenge for an institutional manager is to find an evidenced-based system that self-motivates staff to prevent or minimize negative incidents before they occur. CDPO Porras went “out of the box” to address this challenge. She worked with her supervisors and staff to develop a “Team Board” that scores the unit staff on items that contribute to a safe environment for our youth before there is a problem. This includes officer positioning on the unit, on-time performance, safety checks accuracy and proper use of equipment. The focus is on preventing negative incidents rather than a diagnostic review after the incident. Staff were divided into teams comprised of the staff on one unit for one shift. For example, the AM shift on Unit 1 is one team while the PM Shift on Unit 1 is another team. The staff contributed to the team concept by developing their own team names and creating motivational slogans. The Team Score Board is a large visual representation of each shift's progress during the month. It is near the staff lockers and staff routinely banter with friendly competitiveness about their progress and success. The results have been spectacular. Between October 2020 and July 2021, safety check errors were peaking at 36 events per month in October 2020 and have shrunk to 13 events in July 2021. Units that were averaging two fights per month decreased those numbers substantially and units have gone up to 120 days between fights. Lastly, the division has gone up to two months between instances of room confinement.

Overall, this system has successfully led to a safer environment for the youth and the staff. It is for these reasons CAPIA awarded CDPO Porras the Brian Anderson Award. We congratulate her on the award and thank her for providing a way to visibly show staff that their efforts are valued.

ASSISTANT DIVISION DIRECTOR

EMIL FISCHER



WHAT IS CAPIA?

The purpose of CAPIA is to enable the administrators of Probation Institutions (institutions include juvenile camps, ranches and juvenile detention facilities) throughout the state to join in mutual efforts, and in cooperation with the Chief Probation Officers of California to:

- Promote a mutual understanding, interpretation, and implementation of operational standards and legislation.
- Strengthen, design, and implement programs for the growth, development, and rehabilitation of those in custody.
- Secure competent, educated staff and provide ongoing opportunities for their training and development.
- Secure and maintain adequate facilities for the care, safety, and health of persons in custody.
- Gain recognition of the importance of Probation Institutions as a dynamic force in the overall correctional process.
- Form a representative body capable of developing group opinion on professional matters and to speak with authority for its members.
- Work with other related associations throughout the state to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas of mutual interest and development of approved administrative policies.





LEGAL AFFAIRS UNIT EXPANSION

The Legal Affairs Unit (LAU) was formed in 2020 and is responsible for the oversight of Public Records Act requests, department Policy and Procedure, monitoring and tracking of legislation that has an impact on the department and various research projects. The unit is expanding, and we are excited to welcome Senior Probation Officer Colleen Freitag as the newest member of the LAU. She began her career with the department in 2005 as a Probation Corrections Officer at Southwest Juvenile Hall. She promoted to Deputy Probation Officer in 2015 and was recently promoted to Senior Probation Officer. Colleen has been involved in projects including revamping the Out-of-Custody Intake procedures and the 2021 review of legislative updates impacting the department. Colleen is an excellent addition to the LAU. She welcomes the opportunity to learn about the dichotomy of the department and hopes to add to the conversation of how we as a probation department are best able to contribute to society.

As you can imagine, this position comes with great responsibility, but provides an excellent opportunity to learn. As we continue to define the roles within this unit, we look forward to sharing information and assisting in any way we can.

ASSISTANT DIVISION DIRECTOR

MELISSA GUZMAN



23RD ANNUAL YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT DAY



The Riverside County Board of Supervisors and the Riverside County Youth Commission hosted the 23rd Annual Youth in Government Day the week of November 8-12. This event usually offers students an opportunity to shadow employees for the day to explore career opportunities within the county government. However, due to COVID-19, the event was held in a virtual format where county employees were able to connect with youth through virtual mentoring sessions via Zoom. RCP thanks Probation Specialist Neyda Carrasco, Senior Probation Officer Henry Passmore, Deputy Probation Officer Jennifer Rivas, Deputy Probation Officer Pam Searles, and Supervising Probation Officer Cliff Vasquez for taking the time to inspire the youth of Riverside County!

"This was my third time participating in the Riverside County Youth Commission's Annual Youth in Government Day. This one was the most unique of the experiences for several reasons. First off, it was a virtual event. At this point holding virtual meetings is no longer out of the norm, but when acting as a mentor, it was a concern. The other difference from past events for me is that my mentee is enrolled as a freshman at Los Angeles Pacific University, and she is a former foster care youth. This is a youth that had been in the "system" and successfully made it out. This is the outcome I hope for with all the youth I have worked with throughout the years. The virtual meeting we had was great. It was just as interactive as if it was conducted in person. It was fulfilling to be able to discuss this career with a youth that had previously been in out of home placement and juvenile hall, but now expressed an interest in a career in probation after this event."

SUPERVISING PROBATION OFFICER
CLIFF VASQUEZ



"I had the honor of representing RCP as a mentor and talked to two young ladies that were interested in pursuing careers in criminal justice. This is the first time I have participated in the event and found it rewarding to be able to discuss what we do in probation. We discussed how I started working for probation, my educational background, and what choices led to this career path. We touched on the seriousness of the job but also the community bond within the department. Both young ladies were very engaging and asked a lot of questions about what we do and how to volunteer or become more informed about RCP careers. One of the young ladies said she had been interested in a career as a district attorney, but now is interested in learning about other careers...maybe even probation! This event is something everyone should participate in at least once because it is important to represent the entire department, as we all play an important role."

PROBATION SPECIALIST

NEYDA CARRASCO



"Every year I find it a breath of fresh air to mentor high school students for Youth in Government Day as they strive to build a better future for themselves and the community. This inspires confidence in the future leaders of Riverside County. While I do miss meeting in person and touring students around our wonderful offices and courtrooms, Sr. PO Henry Passmore and I were still able to provide our students with a description of probation supervision, daily officer duties, trainings, our educational backgrounds, client success stories, court procedures and discussed the many different hats we wear as probation officers. This year, we had a student that was a part of our mentoring group four years ago return. We were pleased when he expressed his interest in becoming a probation officer after he graduates college. The other students in our mentoring session had a lot of questions and expressed their willingness to give back to their community through work in public service after college. It's always an honor to participate. I highly suggest participating if you haven't done so yet in your career. Maybe you'll catch your breath of fresh air and impact a future leader's life."

DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER

JENNIFER RIVAS



"Youth in Government Day is a great opportunity for those who serve the community to share their knowledge with future generations. As a Senior Probation Officer, I was able to share my knowledge gained throughout the years with the department. I have been participating in the Youth in Government Day for more than seven years now; as a result, I have a good understanding regarding students' curiosity of a probation officer's role and responsibility to the community. We engage in conversations regarding how the probation department works, what a normal and abnormal day entails and their future aspirations. One of the students in this year's session was a mentee from a previous Youth in Government Day and stated that he enjoyed shadowing probation so much that he wanted to learn more. It is being part of stories like this that makes me want to continue yearly with the program. Sharing with the students also brings about a sense of pride in my work knowing that I make a difference by not only changing our clients' lives, but also our future generations. I strongly recommend participation in Youth in Government Day as it will encourage both the student and probation officer."

SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER

HENRY PASSMORE



STANDARD WORK RAPID IMPROVEMENT EVENT

In April 2021, the Management Support Team (MST) conducted a value stream mapping event to identify areas of the RCP Management System requiring improvement.

MST identified Standard Work, the sub-system by which job duties and/or processes are organized in written procedure, as a top-level improvement priority. Along with policy, standardized procedures are a cornerstone of any robust department. Following the value stream mapping event, MST collected 280 staff surveys and conducted 60 "Voice of the Customer" interviews to gauge the department's understanding of Standard Work.

From December 6, 2021 through December 10, 2021, an improvement team, representative of all service categories and line levels, participated in a Standard Work Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) to explore the findings. The team's goal was to develop a recommendation to the department on how to implement a fully functioning Standard Work system that addressed the following gaps: templates, storage & retrieval, creation, testing, process, training and auditing. The team developed three templates that would be utilized to document work processes: 1. Work Instructions 2. Checklist 3. Instructional Guide. They developed a Standard Work Template Decision Tool to assist staff in determining which template would best be utilized based on the criteria of the work process. Additionally, they created the new Work Instructions and Checklist templates, which include an audit card embedded within the template and developed Instructional Guides for each of those templates. At the conclusion of the event, the team met their objective by providing a recommendation on how to close

the gaps and reach the department's goal of implementing a fully functioning Standard Work system. Next steps include developing an implementation plan.

The success of the event was due to the tremendous effort put forth by the improvement team and the support of the MST facilitators. The team's innovation and ability to think globally helped them develop a plan that will benefit the department for years to come. We are proud of the team and the work they accomplished, and we thank each of them for their valuable time in supporting our system of Continuous Improvement.

The RIE was facilitated by the MST unit supervisors, and the improvement team included Division Director Rachel Ligtenberg, Assistant Division Director Melissa Guzman, Supervising Probation Officers Alana Jones, Senior Probation Officers Gabriela Hernandez and Natali Romero-Ambriz, Senior Probation Corrections Officer Heather Tinoco, Business Process Analyst Claudia Ornelas and Probation Assistant Gabriela Hernandez.



PROMOTIONS

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EVERY GREAT DREAM BEGINS WITH A DREAMER. ALWAYS REMEMBER, YOU HAVE WITHIN YOU THE STRENGTH, THE PATIENCE, AND THE PASSION TO REACH FOR THE STARS TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

Harriet Tubman

HARRIET TUBMAN



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