

# GSA Insider

Great Service Always!



GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023

## Inside this issue:

GSA Service Excellence	1
Food Share Canned Tree Build	2
Comings and Goings	3
Employee's Years of Service Annual Awards	4
Staff Compliments	5
What's New in Parks	6-7
Creative Services and the State of the County	8-9
County Softball Tournament	10
Operation Green Light	10
Veteran's Memorial Plaque Refresh	11
\$1 Million Check Received for Teen Center	11
GSA Utilizes Survey Tools	12
America Recycles Day	13
GSA Service Excellence	13
SEAwards	14



## From the Director

As we begin the New Year, let's take a moment to look back at the last quarter of 2023....

Our Parks department welcomes Stepping Stones riders to Santa Rosa Park. Stepping Stone will host horseback riding classes, events and trail rides. Parks also performed extra maintenance in preparation for winter.

GSA Business Support Services Creative Services group provided all the signage, table top signs and programs for the celebratory 150th anniversary 2023 State of the County.

At the County's Veteran's Memorial, there was plaque refresh and Operation Green Light where our Maintenance team did amazing work to prepare, clean and paint the memorial site for this special event honoring service members.

Our Special Services held its' America Recycles Day along with PWA giving away 100 bags of mulch.

We said goodbye to Stephanie Peres and Ross Matarazzo, both with over 20 years of County service.

A goal for 2024 includes the new GSA Strategic Plan. The management team will work together to revamp the agency's strategic plan.

Looking back on the year, it has been another amazing year for GSA and I thank you for all your hard work and commitment to our Agency's and the County's missions. Our employees truly know how to provide Great Service Always – to our County customers, fellow employees, and to the public at large.

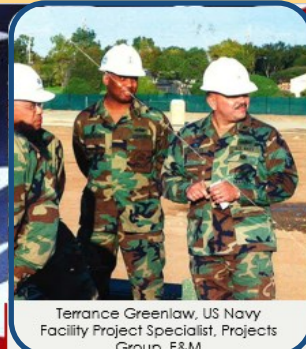
Happy New Year.  
Until next time,

David Sasek

## PROUD TO HONOR OUR VETERANS



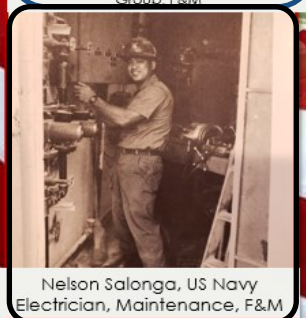
Timothy Baker, US Army  
OSC III, IT Services Group,  
Administration



Terrance Greenlaw, US Navy  
Facility Project Specialist, Projects  
Group, F&M



Chad Bowie, Senior Chief Petty  
Officer,  
United States Coast Guard,  
Parks Ranger I, Parks



Nelson Salonga, US Navy  
Electrician, Maintenance, F&M

# GSA Shows its "Can"-Do Spirit!!



On December 1, 2023, Ventura County FoodShare held it's 12th annual CAN-Tree event, with multiple County agencies participating in a little friendly competition to see who could build the most creative holiday trees out of canned goods.

This year, Business Support Services' creative minds came up with idea of a King Kong tree. Everyone who participated donned their holiday hats with holiday spirit, and joined several other County agencies, including Public Works, RMA, CEO, and others, to build their can trees eventually to be donated to FoodShare to help feed the less fortunate in Ventura County.

Agency Director David Sasek was there to lend a hand, and special thanks go to event coordinators Lieba Butler, Meighan Batinica and Rebecca Moak, who put in lots of time to fundraise money. Thanks also to all the GSA helpers who came to build trees on the rainy morning!



**Above:** Colin Weber, Valerie Urias, Kyle Zufolo, Jesse Pacheco and Tryna Huebner  
**Above Right Clockwise:** Valerie Urias, CEO Dr. Sevet Johnson, Director David Sasek, Charlotte Cubitt-Serrano, Lieba Butler, Rebecca Moak. Cliff Chroust, Mason King, Colin Weber, Kyle Zufolo, Brittany Stephens, Jesse Pacheco, Tryna Huebner, Rebecca Moak, Elmer Mayorga, Jesse Pacheco and Tryna Huebner  
**Bottom Right:** Elmer Mayorga, Mason King, Colin Weber and Lupe Lopez

# Movin' and Shakin' –

## who's coming, who's going in GSA

### New Hires/Transfers into GSA

- ◆ Irshad Ali, Buyer
- ◆ Chad Bowie, Park Services Ranger I
- ◆ JonCarlo Guzman, Park Services Ranger I
- ◆ Gary Howard, Staff Services Manager III
- ◆ Mason King, Park Services Ranger I
- ◆ John Kunsemiller, Environmental Resource Analyst I
- ◆ Diana Ly, Administrative Assistant II
- ◆ Cameron Meisel, Graphics Technician II
- ◆ Chinna Nahabedian, Program Assistant
- ◆ Lonny Padilla, Facility Projects Specialist
- ◆ Edward Palkovic, Accountant I
- ◆ Gabriel Pina, Accountant I
- ◆ Arcee Pyle, Technical Specialist II
- ◆ R I. Rosen, Student Worker III
- ◆ Leon David Sanchez, Heavy Equipment Garage Attendant
- ◆ Christal Scott, Office Assistant III
- ◆ Dante Smedley, Staff Services Manager II
- ◆ Amber Spahr, Accountant I
- ◆ Jaelyn Virrueta, Student Worker III
- ◆ Brandon Yu, Office Systems Coordinator I
- ◆ Xochi Zambrano, Student Worker III
- ◆ Alex Zarate, Accountant I

### Transfers from GSA

- ◆ Elva Rojas, Senior Accountant

- ◆ Juan Esparza, Custodian II

### Promotions

- ◆ Peter Acero, Parks Maintenance Worker Specialist
- ◆ Matthew Arve, Courier III
- ◆ Raul Avalos, Heavy Equipment Service Worker
- ◆ Andrew Becker, Principal Buyer
- ◆ Jerry Garcia, Courier III
- ◆ Chastity Gaynor, Accountant II
- ◆ Celeste Iyer, Senior Accountant
- ◆ Tonya Lettini, Communications Operator III
- ◆ Leon David Sanchez, Heavy Equipment Service Worker

### Retirements

- ◆ Ross Matarazzo, Certified Maintenance Engineer
- ◆ Stephanie Peres, Administrative Assistant II

### Resignations

- ◆ Karen Duffey, Clerical Supervisor II
- ◆ Ian Navarro, Student Worker III
- ◆ Matthew Kottak, Parks Ranger Trainee



After 24 years with GSA Maintenance, we wished Ross Matarazzo a happy retirement. Ross began with GSA in 1999.

Ross's skills and ability were recognized earning him a promotion to Certified Building Maintenance Engineer after successfully completing the 501 Union's BOMA certification process.

When asked what his first priority was in retirement he said "to do nothing, then get busy on projects around the house." He just purchased a travel trailer for him and his wife to explore the USA.

We congratulate Ross on a great career at GSA, he will be missed by all of us that had the pleasure of working with him, we wish him a long and enjoyable retirement.





## Employees' Years of Service Honored at Annual Awards Ceremony

On November 30, 2023, **GSA** honored its longtime employees celebrating 10 years or more of service at the annual awards ceremony, held in the Lower Plaza Assembly Room at the Hall of Administration. More than 75 GSA and County employees were present to honor 17 agency employees celebrating a combined **300 years of service**, including two employees with a memorable milestone: Fleet Auto Mechanic I, John "JJ" Jauregui, and Fleet Customer Service Supervisor, Joel Miller, celebrated their 40-year anniversary with the County.

The annual event featured refreshments from local bakery Nothing Bundt Cakes and was commemorated by **County CEO Dr. Sevet Johnson**, who welcomed the assembled guests and thanked them for dedicating their careers to public service. GSA Director David J. Sasek, Administrative Services Director Greg Bergman, Chief Deputy Director Craig Clutts, Chief Procurement Officer Cliff Chroust and Deputy Directors Chris Melton and Colter Chisum presented each honoree with their service award and a special gift. Congratulations to everyone who celebrated a milestone anniversary with the County and with GSA, and best wishes for many more to come!



JJ Jauregui accepts his certificate for 40 years of service.



Joel Miller accepts his certificate for 40 years of service.



Tony Harber accepts his certificate for 10 years of service.



Monica Sanchez accepts her certificate for 15 years of service.

# Staff Compliments

Just wanted to give you a big thanks for the help yesterday 09/10/2023 at Nordoff Ridge heading to Sisar peak via the 33 Highway and Rose Valley Camp Ground. Per your mechanic Steve Kasten, the radiator failed and leaked all the coolant out. We were a few miles from the Sisar Communications Site summit and trying to get a 9000 lbs generator to the site. After being on the road for 2.5 hours it was challenging to have to bring the truck back down to have it towed as the terrain was complete off-road. Steve Kasten and the tow truck made everything go smooth. Your mechanic was very professional, efficient and excellent work. It was a very long day and you made it easier.  
Alex Caldera in ITDS: "

On short notice, Kenny Schmidt and Gabriel Martinez performed a 2-way radio & antenna install on a Transit Mid Roof van for Pleasant Valley School District. They were able to complete the install in about 3 hours so the van could be used for student pick-ups that afternoon. Another great job by our Upfit Shop!

Dear Bob Talaugon, I came back from Sacramento and walked into a new office! My thanks for all your great work with the diplomas and photos, and my gratitude for always being so responsive to the DA's office and our maintenance needs. We are fortunate to have you and wanted to let you know that your efforts are recognized and very appreciated!  
Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney

Cinthya Santos de Perez and Jaime Lemus Morales did a FANTASTIC job cleaning our offices and the Grand Jury Chamber! We are having a protocol visit this afternoon, so the timing of the cleaning could not have been more perfect! Everything is spotless! We certainly appreciate all of the Housekeeping staff's hard efforts. We can be proud to have visitors in chambers because of them.

Cyndy Taschman, Grand Juror

"I wanted to email a thank you for the work that Lorenzo Villa and his landscape crew, Carlos Nicasio, Sabino Benitez, Antonio Barajas, Juan Rivera and Ruben Galabiz, did for us at the rear of the Thousand Oaks station, including planting a sentimental tree in honor of our fallen Sgt. Ron Helus. They did a great job in quick fashion. I really appreciate their work and effort."  
Captain Matthew Young of the VC Sheriff's Office "

*A big shout out to Jeri Cooper and Leslie Reed for rapidly opening up the Rincon RV camp sites on 12 hours notice. The area has been closed for 3 weeks due to a Caltrans paving project. The works has fallen off schedule and the 3 week closure has amounted to a \$120,000 revenue loss in addition to over 1,000 groups/families/individuals missing recreational opportunities. We successfully negotiated two reopening time blocks with Caltrans and Jeri and Leslie quickly worked out messaging, social media, staffing schedules and reservation system logistics to open on short notice.*

Shout out to the Security Team, Sean Payne, James Dollar, and Dave Barley, from the CEO's office for their work supporting the State of the County presentation – "Sean, it's incredible to know our County has its own secret service that ensures we and our guests are safe and secure. Your professionalism is impressive, and I'm grateful for your role in the event."

The CEO's office gave a shout out to the GSA Graphics Team – Seen Robinson, Matthew Krieger for their support of the annual State of the County: "The posters, check in signs, and program looked FANTASTIC. There were MANY compliments on how great the signage was for the event! It's always such a pleasure to work with your team. Your creativity and commitment to producing high-quality products that literally show off and display the County in our best light is invaluable and appreciated!"

A huge "Thank you!" to Johnny Wong, Tryna Huebner, Nacho Fernandez, and Kyle Zufolo. Over the last month, two of our clients VCAAA and VC Library have been ramping up for major events ([The Fall Prevention Forum](#), HICAP Event for VCAAA and the [Celebration of Books for the VC Library](#)) and they have had multiple last minute requests for printed materials that were needed for the events. Even though the print production floor is experiencing its busiest time of the year, in every case, they have exceeded expectations by finding room to squeeze in the projects by the deadlines and making our clients look great and keeping everyone's anxiety levels under control.

# What's New in Parks?

## Sprucing Up Campgrounds During Off-Peak Season



Peter Acero and Jared Rohlring at Hobson Beach Campground.

While campgrounds throughout the County are utilized year-round, off-peak season is the best time for the Parks Department to give some extra special care to our well-loved campgrounds.

Parks Facilities & Maintenance teams were hard at work in October and November at Faria, Hobson and Tapo Canyon Campgrounds.



Jim Jordahl sprucing up Faria Beach.



Caleb Newcomb doing extra maintenance at Faria Beach Campground.

Projects include storm drain maintenance in preparation for winter, replacement of fire rings, pressure washing tables, deep cleaning of restroom facilities, adding base materials in campsites, and installation of new RV pedestals.

Parks Department has received numerous compliments from guests regarding the repairs that have been made at each campground.

## Creating Community through Collaboration!



In 2024, Ventura County Parks will welcome Stepping Stones Riders, a non-profit horseback riding organization, to Santa Rosa Park. This long-time user of the Santa Rosa Park was looking for a new location for their program and this park provided the right fit. With support from Supervisor Jeff Gorell and District 2, Stepping Stones Riders will now host classes, events, trail rides and house their equestrians at the park.



(Con-

(Continued from previous page)



For more information on Stepping Stones, visit their website at [www.stepsstonesridingprogram.org](http://www.stepsstonesridingprogram.org).



## New Playground Coming Soon!



In October, the Board of Supervisors approved additional funding for a new playground at Warring Park in Piru. This inclusive playground is made possible by grant funding from California Parks & Recreation Society, GameTime, and

the CEOs Office State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The inclusive playground will include a wheelchair accessible merry-go-round, musical instruments, a zipline and shade structures for keep kids safe from the Piru summer heat. Anticipated ribbon cutting will take place in Summer 2024.



## Contact Us

If you have questions about park projects, please e-mail Jeri Cooper at [Jeri.Cooper@ventura.org](mailto:Jeri.Cooper@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](mailto:county.parks@ventura.org)

Visit us on the web at:  
[www.ventura.org/general-services-agency/parks-department](http://www.ventura.org/general-services-agency/parks-department).



# Business Support Services Creative Services

## 2023 State of the County: County of Ventura Celebrates 150 Years

Last year, 2022, was the first year that GSA Creative Services worked with the CEO's office on the State of the County (SOTC) event. They teamed up with Gloria Martinez and David Yoshitomi to provide all of the signage, social media images, ads and print flyers for the event. It was Dr. Sevet Johnson's first year as CEO and the event was a huge success. So for this year's special 150th celebration event, they again contacted GSA Creative Services to assist with the SOTC event.



CEO Dr. Sevet Johnson delivering the State of the County at the podium displaying the podium sign designed by Creative Services.

Of course, GSA jumped at the opportunity to partner with the CEO's team once again. Their team asked Business Support to create the SOTC Event Program and all Event Signage (the social media and other collateral was produced by an outside agency).

Creative Services had a short window of time to design and produce all the requested materials. And as you would expect, there were multiple last minute changes that took them right up to the day before the event.

Seen Robinson immediately began on the program design. Seen collected images, information and ads and worked them into a lean, professional layout. Matt Kreiger handled the design of the signage, continuing the look established for the event.





Once the designs were approved, the print production team was waiting to work their magic. And they sure did!

In less than 48 hours, they printed:

- ◆ 550 programs (24-page, 5.5"x8.5", saddle-stitched book),
- ◆ 9 large 18"x24" posters (print & mount to foam core),
- ◆ 60 table-top signs
- ◆ 1 podium sign

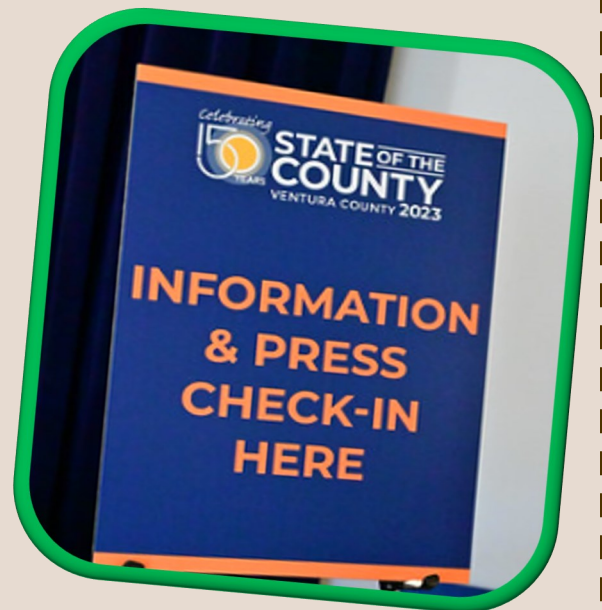
The GSA Creative Services Graphics team, Seen Robinson and Matthew Krieger, were given huge kudos by the CEO's team for their work:

"The posters, check in signs, and program looked FANTASTIC. There were MANY compliments on how great the signage was for

the event! It's always such a pleasure to work with your team. Your creativity and commitment to producing high-quality products that literally show off and display the County in our best light is invaluable and appreciated!"



While this acknowledgment was addressed to Seen and Matt, it really reflects the efforts of the entire Business Support Creative Services and Print Production Teams working together to provide great service once again. Tremendous team effort shined and the State of the County 2023 was an exceptionally successful event.



## GSA Softball Team Places 2nd in County Recreational Softball Tournament

Congratulations to the GSA Softball team for going 4 and 1 in the County Recreational Softball Tourney!

Team Roster : Jeri Cooper, Luz Avitud, Rebecca Moak, Emelia Contreras, Sam Crostic, Cynthia Martinez, Colin Webber, Ryan Stover, Gabe Martinez, Joel Miller, Greg Bergman and Colter Chisum



The team secured wins over CEO, DCSS, MEO (twice) to join HSA in the finals. Unfortunately, they lost in the final game, but still put a good fight earning a second-place finish in the tourney. The entire team contributed on offense and defense through the 5 hours of softball. Offensive production was led by Greg Bergman and Luz Avitud who secured the most hits and runs for GSA. Defense was solid all around with the majority of the put-outs coming from strong left infield performances by Greg and Joel.



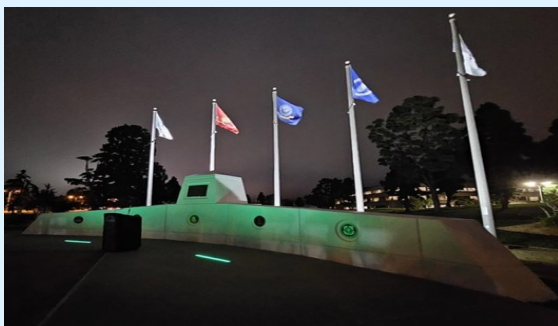
What a great day and great representation by GSA!!

## Operation Green Light

Monday, November 4, 2023, the County of Ventura with the assistance of GSA honored our military veterans through Operation Greenlight, a nationwide initiative that brings communities together in support of our veterans.

Jennie Pittman, Human Services Agency Deputy Director, and Dan Schneider, HSA Government Relations Manager, expressed their deep gratitude to Rick Bobosky, Steven Blair, Kerry Crawford, Matt Krieger, and the GSA team

for helping to make Operation Green Light happen to celebrate and recognize our veterans. She said, "Anything we asked, GSA said we'll make it happen. And they sure did!"



It was a very moving event and only possible through GSA. The site was recognized on the National Association of Counties website. (naco.org)

Highlights from 2023 Operation Green Light for Veterans | National Association of Counties

Thank you, Rick and GSA, for turning the lights on to support our veterans!



# County of Ventura Veterans Memorial Plaque Refresh

On Saturday, October 14, 2023, a small group of dedicated veterans and Seabees from Naval Base Ventura County gathered to update the plaques at the County of Veterans Memorial on the Government Center campus. Sailors from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 worked with the Disabled American Veterans to renew the plaques at the memorial in tribute to the military services.

Be sure to pay a visit to the Veteran’s Memorial to admire their good work!



## *\$1 Million Check Received For Teen Center*

The County of Ventura began a public input process on necessary improvements to Saticoy Park, after hosting several meetings with the Saticoy Municipal Advisory Council. Top of these requests was to build a Teen Center for the Boys and Girls Club and additional requests to improve existing park structures. With that input, the County released an RFP in the summer of 2023 and has selected an architect to begin design work on the project. The project includes an approximate 2,500 square foot addition to the existing Boys and Girls Club structure for the Teen Center and building public restroom facilities. Ideally the Teen Center will be contiguous. The project is estimated to cost 6 million dollars. The one million dollars dedicated from Senator Limón will be matched with 5 million dollars the County received in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) or American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.



# GSA Utilizes Survey Tools

GSA utilizes its Employee Survey and Customer Survey as tools all throughout the year to improve as an Agency. The more specific, the more leadership can address the comments. Managers actively review and listen to employees and customers to make changes and strive toward “Great Service Always.”



*Thank you for all your responses!*

## Customer Survey



- Comment: When vehicles were completed, the correct person was not being notified. Sometimes the person dropping off a vehicle is not the person who will be picking it up.  
Response: Fleet promptly changed their intake form to include a specific field for preferred contact name and method to assist its customers.
- Many agencies are experiencing turnover and are unaware of all that goes into the GSA Projects shop. Employing their partners at Business Support, Projects developed a stylish pamphlet to positive customer responses and even more requests for Project manager assistance.
- Several customer responses addressed the work order process and communication. Maintenance took direct actions to change the process and request the majority of work orders be submitted online by the customer. This allows the customer to add much more detail and the work order system will notify the customer directly through the system creating greater efficiency. Most importantly, when customers directly input their work request online, maintenance has a faster, greater ability to communicate with the work requestor and provide quicker expert service to our customers.
- Procurement manages the procurement card program with nearly 30,000 transactions for \$5.9 million in procured goods. Utilizing the County’s new learning management system, Cornerstone, Procurement developed the 1<sup>st</sup> online P-card training course for the 485 cardholders across County agencies to improve communication and training for customers.



[County of Ventura VC Learning Hub \(csod.com\)](https://www.countyofventura.com/VCLearningHub)

## Employee Survey

- In response to comments about receiving more recognition, multiple departments were nominated for the County CEO Service Excellence Award. Outstandingly, 3 teams were awarded the SEAward and recognized in front of the County Board of Supervisors and each was celebrated with prizes and parties.
- Comment:  
“We could do with another Command Center for our cleaning solutions. One for an entire building is not enough.”  
Response: Staff met with custodians regarding more command centers for mixing chemicals for every building which once identified was corrected and more were added.
- Comment: “Fastener supply cabinet in body shop could use restocking more frequently”  
Response: Fleet instituted a new vendor with a more timely response rate for the Body shop.
- In response to numerous employee comments tackled the confusion between the classification of Certified Mechanical Engineer (CME) and Mechanical Engineer (ME). Maintenance leadership published CME expectations and held specific meetings to address the topic and work equity in detail.




**These surveys are completely anonymous. However, due to customer demand...GSA is adding a field on the next survey. “If you would like to discuss your specific comment, please add your contact.”**

## America Recycles Day

In recognition of America Recycles Day, GSA held it's semi-annual E-Waste collection in on November 15th. The Public Works Agency joined in donating 100 bags of mulch to giveaway to the local community.

The light rain did not deter people from recycling. GSA collected 10 pallets of materials including TV's, computers, microwave ovens, and a wide variety of other electric items. The estimated weight exceeded 2 tons of recyclables that were steered away from the landfill.



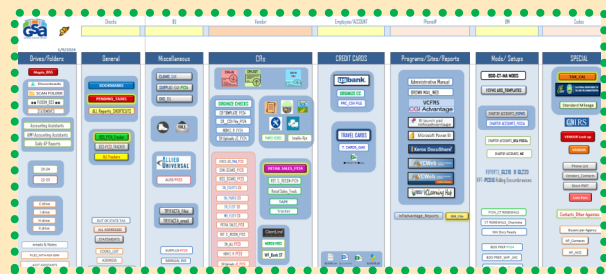
America Recycles Day   
Andrew Becker accepting recyclables.



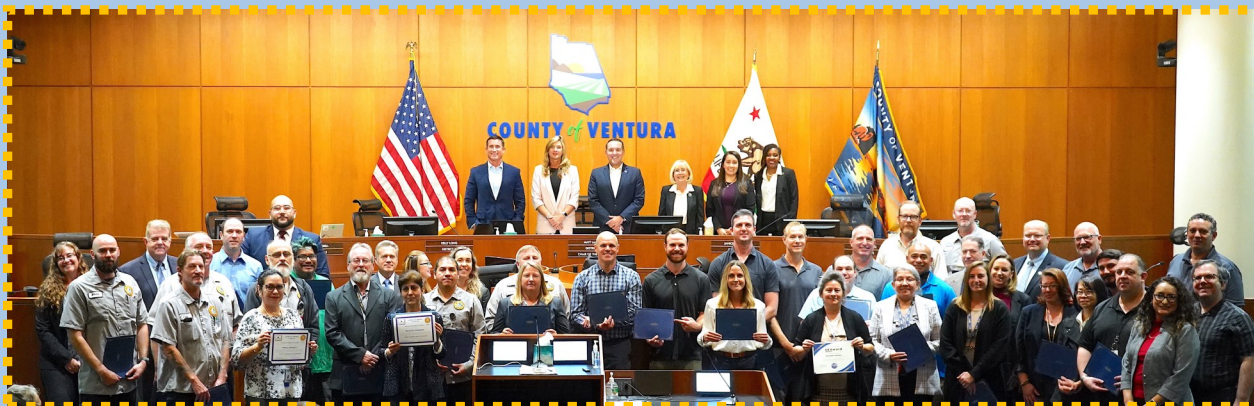
## GSA SERVICE EXCELLENCE

General Services Agency cultivates a diverse and innovative workforce dedicated to service excellence to meet our customers needs. GSA completed FY23 with a total of 17 process improvements and \$712,378 in savings.

A Tremendous Recent Example: Accounting Assistants Dashboards



Magdalena Cervantes, at her own direction, created a visual, centralized dashboard of links to the files, folders, and systems necessary for her daily tasks. This dramatically improves daily workflow, reducing time and button clicks, and is a highly professional view of her position responsibilities. She shared this tool with her direct peers, who implemented similar versions. This is above and beyond her desk requirements and has significantly improved her desk, her coworkers, and ultimately the speed of GSA Accounting. Thank you Magdalena for your dedication, leadership, and innovation!



CEO Service Excellence Council established the SEAward to award staff for improved customer service, reduced costs, faster processing times, and the implementation of tools to support improved productivity.

The Board of Supervisors on October 10, 2023 awarded **3** to GSA!

**“Implementation of Baseline Procurement”**

The master agreements (MA) methodology change that reduced internal staff time by over 50%, an estimated 948 staff hours saved annually. Savings exceeded \$48,000 and cycle time was reduced for County customers to increase throughput for quicker vendor payments.



Projects Team received the SEAward for their initiated “Vanguard Building Reuse/Repurpose” saving a total of over \$220,000 by lean and green innovative thinking. The repurposing of 128 height-adjustable ergonomically friendly desks to 9 County agencies, valued at \$140,800. From quote to invoice, Projects team reduced HSA move-out costs by \$79,931 through proactive management of contractor work, trash, and security schedules to maximize efficiency to avoid overtime and weekend rates and eliminate liability concerns.

**“TRJ Rebuild Parts Stations”**

Maintenance team at Todd Road Jail won for their innovative teamwork and savings where they custom fabricated construction stations to refurbish and rebuild critical jail infrastructure components on site instead of expensive new purchases getting equipment quickly back into operation and saving over \$14,000 in just 6 months.



**Congratulations!**

**Team Member Winners:** Scott Broggie, Christian Acuna, Eddie Aganinta, Vince Childs, Jeff Ellis, Eric George, Martin Marquez, Matt MacLaren, Clint McGauley, John Riddle, Charles Wilson, Paul Woolson, Sese “JJ” Vaivao, Cliff Chroust, Boyd Donavon, Leslie Percy, Julie Miller, Melissa Lorenzen, Maria Moreno, Bettina Vicencio, Ryan Stover, Samantha Crostic, Andrew Becker, Rory Aronsky, Gabriel Piña, Kallen Meyer, Geraldine Johnson, Pannipa Pantuta-