

# GSA Insider

Great Service Always!

GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY NEWSLETTER JULY 2024



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## Safety Through Teamwork

With safety a high priority, Bob Talaugon and Brian Earles did an excellent job with getting the new safety mirrors installed! These mirrors will provide safety to those working on and around the loading dock in the General Services Building. This will allow our forklift drivers to be aware of any people walking around the corners. Bob and Brian provided excellent Customer Service while championing great Stewardship of our building. Thank you!



### From the Director

Great day, GSA!

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 has come to an end. Graduations are done and summer is in full swing. Let's take a moment to look back at the 2nd quarter of 2024...

GSA was busy putting safety first by installing mirrors at the loading dock and adding handles to the housekeeping tilt brutes. Facilities and Materials is currently working with Pacific EH&S to develop a fall protection plan.

Other great stories about how GSA employees have been going the extra mile: Maintenance making improvements on the HOA garage door, Procurement hosting a seminar to train staff on some of the valuable fundamentals in public procurement, Fiscal conducting fiscal year-end inventory, the Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation that July is Parks and Rec month, Special Services and Surplus held its' semiannual E-Waste collection. GSA also participated in PWA Day and National Bring Your Kid to Work day.

Our employees have not only stepped up their game in providing great customer service, showing that "great service always" is just an integral part of who we are but also brought home Gold and Silver medals in cornhole. Read on for some really great stories about our employees—from letters and notes of thanks, to brief anecdotes of how we help our customers.

With sincere gratitude,

Craig Clutts

Serving great people who deliver great service!

# HOA Garage Door Replacement

GSA team members quickly sprang into action! In late February 2024, the roll-up door for the underground HOA parking garage failed. Upon inspection, it was deemed the door was unrepairable and would need full replacement.

The maintenance team and GSA administrative professionals developed and implemented an action plan. GSA swiftly communicated to all impacted customers including the Board of Supervisors and multiple Agency/ Department heads. They temporarily blocked off parking spaces in Lot R for those who parked their vehicles in the garage and issued new temporary permits.



Before

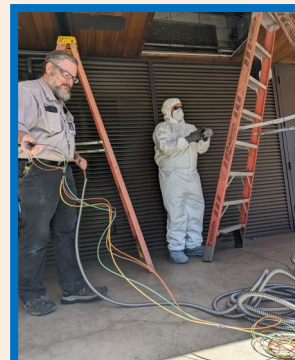
To welcome back our customers, Maintenance took advantage of the opportunity, while the garage was offline, to apply a fresh coat of paint and sealant to the floors.

Thanks to the impressive coordination and execution by our teams, the HOA Parking Garage reopened on 5/22, earlier than anticipated!

Many compliments to staff have been received! The new improved garage door system boasts speeds of only 2 seconds to open!



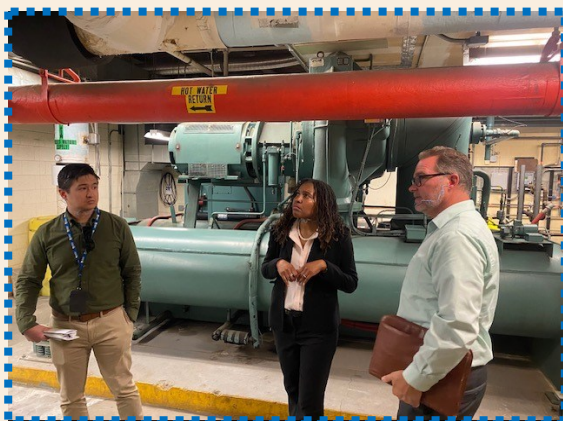
After



Steve Blair and Brent Clements, GSA Certified Maintenance Engineers, work on new door electrical wiring.

# CEO TOUR of HOA Central Plant

On May 7th, GSA Maintenance and Projects Divisions hosted our CEO, Dr. Sevet Johnson, on a tour of several HOA equipment areas including the Central Plant in early May. The goal of this tour was to provide Dr. Johnson a better understanding of the challenges involved with maintaining aging facilities and the County's Capital Renewal Program.



Principal Engineer Dylan Wheeler, CEO Dr. Sevet Johnson, Project Manager Dwayne Conary

During the tour, the team was able to paint the picture of how GSA and the Capital Renewal Program plays a critical role in maintaining mission-ready facilities, in direct support of the County's Strategic Plan Focus Area of Reliable Infrastructure, Resilience and Sustainability.

Extensive planning and coordination by GSA team members laid the groundwork



# GSA Gets Gold and Silver in Corporate Games

GSA had two teams that participated in the 2024 Corporate Games in the game of cornhole win Gold and Silver Medals.



Ventura County teams 1 and 2 played cornhole on Saturday, April 20, 2024. Team 2, Eric Ostrom, Certified Maintenance Engineer, and Vince Franco, Behavioral Health Administration took home the gold, not pictured. Team 1, Bob Talaugon, Certified Maintenance Engineer, and Kenneth Milton, Building Equipment Utility Worker, took home the silver, pictured right.

Congratulations!



## *GSA Participates in Public Works Day*

On May 21, 2024, General Services Agency participated in the annual Public Works Day. This nationally recognized event had lots to see and do. This included education for younger students and career opportunities for high school students. The event hosted 1,300 students from across the county. GSA had three booths, Human Resources, Parks and Grounds. Thank you to all that participated!



Far Left: Park Rangers Diane Grace and Mason King  
 Left: Lucy Fernandez, GSA HR Manager and Beeta Lopez, Asst. HR Manager  
 Above: Juan Rivera, and Sabino Benitez, Grounds crew members Lorenzo Villa Grounds Supervisor and Ruben Galabiz Grounds crew member.

# Safety Improvements for Custodian Tilt Trucks

The Custodian team deserves a special shout-out for taking the initiative to make a Safety improvement in their day-to-day operations. The custodians observed that emptying the tilt trucks into the recycling compactor was significantly more challenging compared to emptying tilt brutes that had handles. This difficulty posed a notable safety concern for the team. To address this issue, Custodian Supervisor Edgar



Villaseñor conducted thorough research to identify the appropriate handles for installation. Edgar commented, "As a result, we successfully equipped half of our tilt brutes with these handles, enhancing both efficiency and safety in our recycling process."

## STRATEGY

**Business strategy is a framework of the actions and decisions a company devises to meet its objectives.** A Strategic Plan outlines specific ways an organization plans to position itself, achieve its short-term and long-term goals, and grow towards its vision over a period of time.

**Get Excited!** GSA Kicked off the development of a new GSA strategic plan. Partnering with The Centre for Organizational Effectiveness to guide us through this transformative process over the next few months.



- This is an open interactive process, where we want lots of employee input. Your voice is highly valued!
- The purpose is to draft together where we want to invest our time and resources over the next 5 years. This is your opportunity to drive the process!

We invite you to please participate and encourage you to share your ideas. Check your calendars... we're hosting a series of in-person workshops, at your job sites, July 15-17th and August 5-8th.

We all want to be the #1 GSA and the importance of the strategic plan and its development process is to help drive us toward the same goal as an Agency. You and your teams will influence the ultimate strategic focus areas and help develop your departments' operational plans to move our Agency into the future, to continue to deliver what we are known best for ...Great Service Always!





## NIGP Introduction to Public Procurement Seminar

GSA Procurement Services hosted a multi-entity seminar through NIGP called Introduction to Public Procurement on May 6th and 7th. In this course, the group was trained on some of the valuable fundamentals in public procurement:

- Compliance, ethical standards, risk mitigation, and efficient procurement methods.
- Practical insights to develop valuable partnerships with stakeholders and embrace continuous professional development.
- Ensure compliant with expectations, laws, and regulations that govern public procurement. Determine the best procurement method for a particular solicitation.



## EXPLORING COUNTY HISTORY



Arcee Pyle, GSA Blueprint Archivist, spent hours scanning for future preservation and to develop this living history hallway!

Come explore the fascinating history of our county government center buildings! Dating back to construction in 1975, GSA's Facilities and Materials has carefully preserved a wealth of architectural plans and historical photographs. Walk the hallway outside of the Lower Plaza Assembly Room in the Hall of Administration to see a glimpse of County past and present!

These plans not only depict our County's development and serve as a tribute to our County's past achievements but also highlight the enduring spirit that define us. Please do visit and connect with the history of our County as we remember the journey that has shaped our identity over the years!



# GSA'S INVENTORY QUEST: How it all adds up!

Inventory management is a critical process in GSA. Inventory, in general, refers to all goods and materials an organization holds for the purpose of resale, production, or operational use. It encompasses everything from raw materials, finished products, office supplies and equipment. Conducting inventory audits ensures accurate tracking and asset management. Additionally, a proper warehouse prevents overstocking or shortages, reduces costs, and guarantees items are available when needed. GSA Business Support, Maintenance and Fleet's parts warehouses are all exceptional examples of careful inventory management keeping operations running smoothly daily and cost-effectively.



Ryan Pimentel and Emily Olvera in the warehouse.



Emily Olvera and Emilia Contreras count maintenance parts.

GSA STAFF COUNTED \$2.25 MILLION IN PARTS AND SUPPLIES INVENTORY THIS YEAR!

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, the last day of the fiscal year, the GSA Accounting team deployed for their annual physical inventory audit. Where it counts, all the operations teams in GSA's various departments demonstrated preparation, efficient operations, and contributed to a smooth close of the fiscal year. Accounting and GSA Leadership want to thank everyone who spent hours handling all the pre counts while maintaining excellent customer service delivery and daily tasks.

Fiscal's audit proved nearly 97% accuracy for over 3,000 line items. Dedicated Fleet personnel like Fermin Ontiveros and Jose Acosta at the Saticoy Fleet garage, Joseph Bergeon and Arcee Pyle in Maintenance parts, Tryna Huebner in Graphics, and others actively participated and facilitated counts.

INCREDIBLE ACCURACY! 97%



Ruben Silva, Joel Landin, and Emilia Contreras in Stores Warehouse.

For example, the GSA Warehouse manages a wide range of items from custom designed envelopes for HSA, equipment for ITSD, housekeeping necessities, crucial health supplies for women and children for the HSA WIC program, and much more. Handling millions of dollars of products for the County annually, the warehouse team currently comprises just four dedicated team members. It's incredibly impressive to see how a small team can manage such a vast array of inventory. GSA team members truly are remarkable!



Emilia Contreras and Martin Cortez at Government Center Fleet Garage.

**PARTNERSHIP!** The success of these inventory audits is a direct result of the seamless partnership between GSA fiscal department and the many operations teams. The collaboration enabled the entire process to be completed faster than last year, reflecting the strong teamwork and staff commitment which are hallmarks of GSA. It is this spirit of cooperation, not only with its customers but also within its various departments, that drives GSA and makes it a robust and reliable Agency in managing the diverse needs of the County.



# Hip Hip Hooray! Hats Off to Graduation!



Christopher Becker, son of Andrew Becker, Senior Procurement Specialist graduated Transitional Kindergarten.



Autumn Feldhans granddaughter of Darren Downey, Certified Maintenance Engineer, Maintenance, graduated from Cabrillo Middle School 8th grade with a 3.86 GPA.



Christopher Chroust, son of Cliff Chroust, County Chief Procurement Officer, graduated from Westlake Hills Elementary School and will move on to Colina Middle school next year where he is excited keep playing in the band!



Olivia Lorenzen, daughter of Melissa Lorenzen, Senior Procurement Specialist, graduated 5th grade from Loma Vista Elementary School on 613. She received the President's Award for Academic Excellence in all subjects. She will attend Cabrillo Middle School next year.

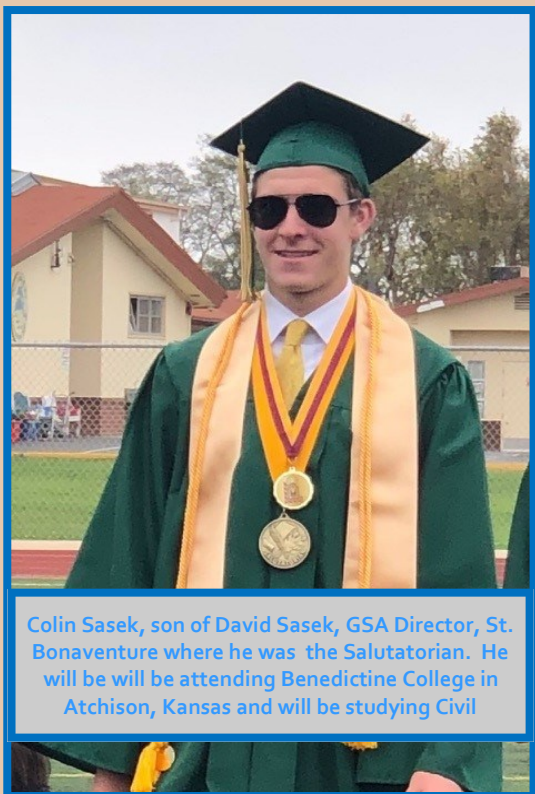
*If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in the dark with a mosquito.*



Penny Serrano, daughter of Charlotte Cubitt-Serrano, Clerical Supervisor in Maintenance, not only did she get the lead in the school play this year, but she was Valedictorian of her graduating 8th grade class with the highest cumulative GPA 3.89 and will be attending Foothill Technology High School next year.

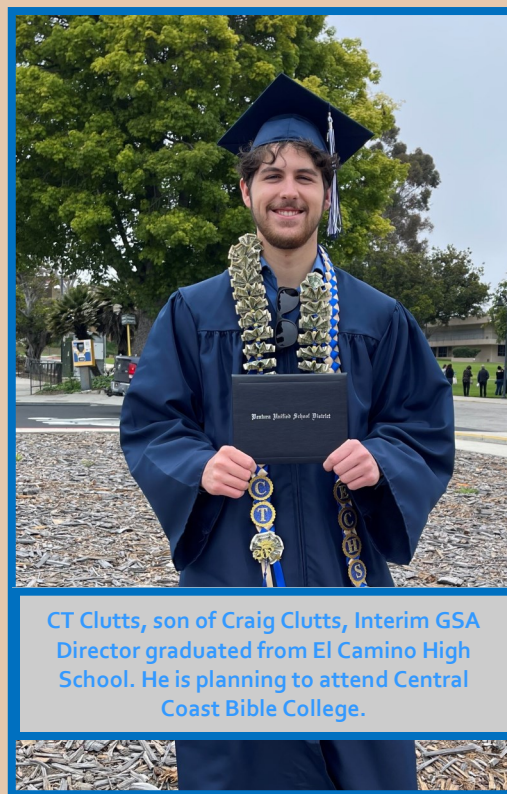


# Class of 2024! Don't wish upon a star, reach for one!



Colin Sasek, son of David Sasek, GSA Director, St. Bonaventure where he was the Salutatorian. He will be attending Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas and will be studying Civil

Happy  
GRADUATION



CT Clutts, son of Craig Clutts, Interim GSA Director graduated from El Camino High School. He is planning to attend Central Coast Bible College.

*The road to success is always under construction.*



Klarissa Barley, daughter of David Barley, Interim Chief Deputy Director, graduated with her Masters in Secondary Education. Her goal is to be a high school English Teacher.



Keira Bergman, daughter of Greg Bergman, Administrative Services Director. graduated from Lesley University in Boston, Summa Cum Laude, with a double major in Psychology and Elementary Education, with a minor in Sociology.



# What's New in Parks?

## July is Parks and Rec Month



On June 18th the Board issued a proclamation on June 18th marking July as Parks and Recreation Month. Staff from the Ventura County Parks Department were on hand for the honor.

## Stepping Stones Riding Program

On December 28, 2023, the Parks Department entered into a new land use agreement with Stepping Stones Riding Program (SSRP). SSRP operates on a 1.5 acre space at Santa Rosa Valley Park. SSRP are a 501(c)3 founded in 2012 with the mission of connecting horses and people regardless of life circumstances and



wealth. They provide lessons and horse rescue services. A ribbon cutting event led by Supervisor Gorell was held June 1<sup>st</sup>.

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# Warring Park Now Open!

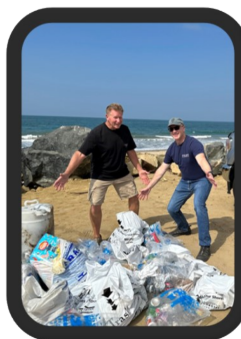
In October 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved additional funding for a new playground at Warring Park in Piru. This inclusive playground is made possible by grant funding from California Parks & Recreation Society, GameTime, and the CEOs Office State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. This fully grant funded project is providing an all new inclusive play facility with a wheelchair accessible merry-go-round, musical instruments, a zipline, slides, shade shade structures to keep kids safe from the Piru summer heat and other features to keep kids active and outdoors in Piru. The grand opening of the



playground was on June 27th.

## Coastal Clean up Day – Sept 21

Join us for Coastal Clean Up Day on September 21st at Rincon Parkway and Steckel Park, 9am to Noon.



## 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).







# Earth Day and E-Waste Event

In recognition of Earth Day, GSA held its' semi-annual E-Waste collection on April 22nd. The Public Works Agency joined in donating 100 bags of mulch to giveaway to the local community.



Twenty-three pallets totaling 14, 430 lbs of e-waste were collected. GSA Grounds also hosted a tour of the campus highlighting some of the County's initiatives undertaken to help protect our environment. Topics included solar energy, environmental friendly plantings, electric vehicles, sustainable irrigation, pervious concrete, the District Attorney's efforts in prosecuting environmental polluters and details on the ocean friendly and pollinator gardens.



Team members clockwise: Ruben Silva, Breanna Bertrand, Ruben Galabiz, Antonio Barajas, Chinna Nahabedian, Reyleen Dowler, Patrick Squires, Carlos Nicasso, Sabino Benitez, and Ruben Galaviz



# National Bring Your Kid to Work



On April 25th, the County of Ventura hosted their inaugural Bring Your Child to Work. This event is a national observance but a first for the County of Ventura. Children were invited to participate in a “Touch a Truck” event at Hall of Administration, tour the Government Center and their parent’s places of work.

Bring Your Child to Work Day began in 1992 in New York City. It was founded by Gloria Steinem as part of the Ms. Foundation, aimed to empower girls teaching them that intelligence is something to be proud of and their ideas are valuable.

GSA DSETS Wayne Kirkland, Ethan Edmonds and Larry Villa assisted in the set up of the event. GSA Business Support Services Graphics department assisted with printing the event coloring books and flyers. GSA Parks and Grounds had booths for kids to get to learn about what they do.

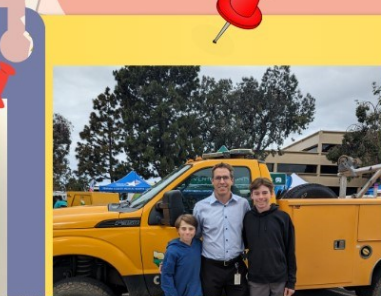
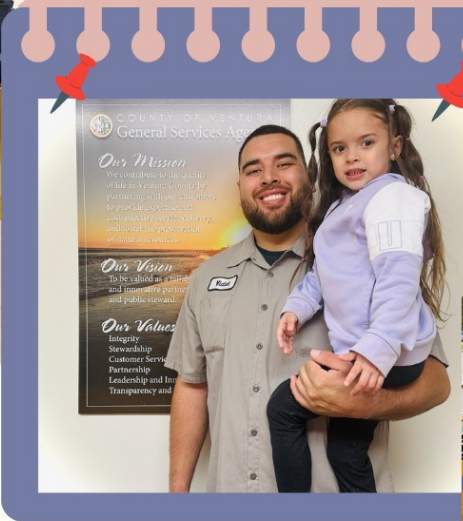
Many GSA employees participated and brought their kids to work. See next page for some of those that participated.



Clockwise: Wayne Kirkland and Ethan Edmonds, DSETS II, Brittany Stephens, Admin Asst IV., Elmer Mayorga, Park Ranger II, Juan Rivera and Sabino Benitez, Grounds Maintenance Workers II



# Bring Your Kid to Work





# Movin' and Shakin' –

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

### New Hires/Transfers into GSA

- ◆ Ryan Pham, Accountant I
- ◆ Justin Tapia, Buyer
- ◆ John Kam, Building Interiors Specialist II
- ◆ Leonardo Larios, Fleet Student Worker III
- ◆ Jackson Theisen Fleet Student Worker III
- ◆ Gabriel Pfeifer, Park Services Ranger Trainee
- ◆ Sheri Dickinson, Park Services Ranger Trainee
- ◆ Brandon Arana, Fleet Student Worker III
- ◆ Sharanya Palakodeti, Student Worker III
- ◆ Annyssa Morales, Student Worker III

### Transfers from GSA

- ◆ Melyssa Vicencio, Inventory Management Assistant III
- ◆ Gabriel Pina, Senior Buyer
- ◆ Monica Sanchez, Management Assistant II

### Promotions

- ◆ Phillip Siping, Maintenance Engineer
- ◆ Cinthya Santos de Perez, Custodian Supervisor
- ◆ Andrew Becker, Senior Procurement Specialist
- ◆ Melissa Lorenzen, Senior Procurement Specialist
- ◆ Aaron Wilson, Office Assistant IV

### Retirements

- ◆ John Riddle, Maintenance Engineer

### Resignations

- ◆ Dante Smedley
- ◆ Cristal Scott

## Staff Compliments

Jill Siela was involved in an Oral Exam panel and noted the outstanding job done by Chinna Nahabedian, "I appreciated Chinna's professionalism and her attention to details. It was a flawless two days and Chinna really did go above and beyond to make sure we had everything we needed, along with homemade yummy snacks." Thank you, Chinna, for your exceptional Partnership in supporting our hiring needs!

Jim Fitzgerald of GSA-IT has stepped up and provided tremendous customer service to GSA Security and its customers during the vacancy in the Security Access Administrator position. Jim has taken ownership of Security systems, technical support and coordination of multiple large projects, including the Star Panel replacements in the PTDF and Crime Lab; and, most notably, the SCC remodel. Jim exemplifies GSA values of Stewardship and Customer Service and is truly a team player. Thanks, Jim, for all your valuable and reliable support!

Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney:  
 "I recently came in one morning to the office and was greeted by a note from GSA informing me that my carpets had been cleaned by Lonnie Washington and Hector Garcia. Not only was the note very welcome but also the carpet in my office looked great! I realize the hard-working employees are not always recognized for their outstanding work at GSA by fellow departments, so I wanted to write a short note of gratitude and ask respectfully that you extend my thanks to Lonnie and Hector." Thank you for demonstrating such care in your Customer Service!

Friday night we had a fire panel issue that spread across multiple buildings in the county and I would like to recognize Darren Downey for his leadership in taking charge of the situation. Darren showed what it means to be a lead by organizing additional staff to support investigating the issue and constantly communicating the updates to make sure we were all on the same page. Darren called on others to support without even being asked to and handled the situation providing all that was needed to assure the issue was addressed and our buildings were secure. Great Job Darren your dedication to the GSA, "Great Service Always" moto and Leadership and Innovation is exemplary.



Peter Berry from Procurement was recognized by Tabatha Watcher and Dr. Fahradyan at VCMC who wrote, "I just want to thank you for all your efforts to make this case happen. This was the 1st free tissue transfer done at VCMC. The case went very smoothly." The aim of free tissue transfer, a type of skin grafting, is restoration of anatomy to near normal; with the least amount of trauma and scarring. The department asked him to rush the purchase on 1/26 when the requisition was received, and he got the PO finalized the same day the requisition was received so that VCMC could be ready for surgery to take place on 2/7. What a great example of outstanding Customer Service!

Keith Kleinkopf of PWA-IT submitted the following note: "I work with Steven Blair frequently, and he is a shining example of a top-notch employee. Your entire staff is a pleasure to work with, and they do an excellent job of maintaining this facility." Thank you for exemplifying outstanding Customer Service!

GSA Grounds received a request to troubleshoot an irrigation controller problem at the Fire Department Headquarters in Thousand Oaks. A vendor for the Fire Department had recommended replacing the controller at a cost exceeding \$6,000.00. After testing, Grounds Team was able to replace the transformer, using spare parts from a unit already in the shop, saving the Fire Department the entire cost! Great work Partnering with our customers and maintaining fiscal Stewardship over County funds.

Roy Morris wrote: I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the exceptional efforts demonstrated by Ethan Edmonds, Wayne Kirkland, and Larry Villa during the recent Touch A Truck event. Their initiative to invite my daughter into the broadcasting booth and allow her to operate a camera significantly enhanced her experience on "Bring Your Kid to Work Day." This gesture not only made the day memorable for Reine but also exemplified the dedication and spirit of the DSETs team. Thank you for fostering such a supportive and engaging environment of Transparency and Open Communication.

Deborah Cisneros from Public Works Agency writes, I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Matthew Krieger. Working with him is always a pleasure due to his exceptional ideas and his consistent help is creating amazing products. Matt has been instrumental in assisting me with various projects, including business cards, magnets, bookmarks, coloring books, banners, and photo backdrops. As we prepare for Public Works Week, Matt recently went above and beyond to coordinate the printing of 1700 coloring books. Our marketing company created a PDF copy of the coloring book, which I submitted to Matt. He promptly identified an error in the file and notified me. After I approved the change, he swiftly corrected the file and sent it for printing. His meticulous attention to detail caught an error that we had overlooked. Matt is a true asset, not only GSA but to the clients he serves. Thank you, Matt for your amazing demonstration of Partnership and Customer Service!

*From Chris Modica, Juvenile Field Services Division Manager.*  
I just wanted to send an email acknowledging several of your Fleet staff. Probation just received our very first K-9 vehicle, after it was upfitted with the custom k-9 kit, new lights/sirens and updated graphics. Your staff were super helpful, communicated well and took extra time to walk me through several options to consider. In the end, the vehicle although an existing one in our fleet, came out looking almost new. I certainly appreciate their attention to detail, despite staffing challenges, and a seemingly never-ending volume of work coming through. I appreciate them and we're thankful for their efforts. True example of Partnership and Customer Service. Well done!

**GSA Maintenance was recognized** by PTFD command staff for the facility receiving a "glowing" review/ inspection for medical accreditation. The Commander was very happy and thanked everyone including the maintenance department for their hard work. A great example of excellence in Partnership and Customer Service provided by Nathanael Dixon, Frank Macias, Matthew Alamillo, Jorge Ramirez, Isaac Borrego, Joseph Rodriguez, and Ken Milton. Well done team!

I wanted to write you a note regarding your employee Cinthya Santos. She cleaned our carpets last night (and has been caring for our building for as long as I have been here at CSD, I was previously at HOJ). Her work ethic and attention to detail is matched by no one else, in my opinion. Not only does she keep our office clean and tidy, but she also leaves "extras" in our office space – the whole area, where she knows the employees like to have supplies left. Her consideration and attention to detail goes above and beyond. Additionally, our floor is a floor full of people who need someone they can trust and Cinthya is that person. This means the world to us. Thank you for sending her to us. She is hard at work even still when I get here EARLY in the morning..." What a great example of daily dedication to great Customer Service! - District Attorney's Office

Custodian Supervisor Edgar Villaseñor took initiative and action to improve the Safety of his team's operations: "During our operations, we observed that emptying the tilt trucks into the recycling compactor was significantly more challenging because the tilt brutes lacked handles. This difficulty posed a notable safety concern for our team. To address this issue, I conducted thorough research to identify the appropriate handles for installation. As a result, we successfully equipped half of our tilt brutes with these handles, enhancing both efficiency and safety in our recycling process." Excellent work, Edgar, using Leadership and Innovation to show commitment to staff Safety!