health care agency
WHAT'S UP
keeping staff informed & current
ISSUE 12-12
DECEMBER, 2012

# Mobile Food Program earns OCBC Award

Congratulations to Environmental Health's (EH) Mobile Food Program on receiving a "Turning Red Tape into Red Carpet" Award from the Orange County Business Council (OCBC). The awards program recognizes leaders in local government whose policies and programs eliminate the barriers to economic growth and private sector job creation.

EH received recognition for the food vehicle inspections they provide at the Orange County Fair. Each year, over 100 food vehicles arrive at the fair to serve food to the more than 1.3 million guests who attend.

California law requires that each food vendor obtain a health permit. Many of the

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*Pictured (back row, left to right) are Kevin Dugan, Randy Dossett and EH Director Richard Sanchez. Pictured (front row, left to right) are Assistant EH Director Denise Fennessy, Janene Bankson, Karen Newe, Villia Simpkins and Glenn Dimaano.*

# A Message from the Director

Paintings created by Behavioral Health Services clients and staff are currently showcased in both my office and the HCA executive lobby area located at 405 W. 5th Street on the 7th floor.

This particular "collective circle" painting located in the executive lobby was created by more than 200 participants from the Vietnamese Americans – Resilience and Recovery from History of Trauma Conference held on August 29, 2012. Participants took part in a circle painting together to paint away grief and/or trauma, process what they learned at the conference and express their emotions and connectedness with others.

The painting is part of this unique and meaningful process and depicts the County of Orange and the community we serve. If you're located at the HCA Headquarters building or visiting, please take a moment to admire the painting in the executive lobby area on the 7th floor.

Sincerely,
Mark A. Refowitz
Agency Director

# Compliance Officer's Update 2012

2012 has been a year of change in the Office of Compliance. Here is a quick look at the updates:

- In April 2012, Compliance Analyst Caroline Matthew joined HCA. She is the lead on compliance investigations, policies, compliance plan reviews for contractors and other compliance matters. She can be reached at (714) 834-4399 or via email at cmatthew@ochca.com.
- In July 2012, the duties of the County HIPAA Privacy Officer were transferred to HCA. As a result, the Office of Compliance has made the following changes in assignment:
  - Thea Bullock, CHC, Chief Compliance Officer for HCA is also serving as the County Privacy Officer.
  - Linda Le, CHP, CHPC assumed the role of the Deputy County Privacy Officer. She will continue to support HCA, as well as the other HIPAA covered components in the County. Linda can be reached at (714) 834-4082 or by email at lile@ochca.com.
  - Nikoo Tabesh was promoted from Compliance Specialist to HCA Privacy Analyst responsible for assisting HCA programs and addressing privacy concerns within HCA. Nikoo can be reached at (714) 834-5172 or by email at ntabesh@ochca.com.
  - Following an internal HCA recruitment, Erika DeAnda joined the Office of Compliance in November 2012 as the Compliance

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*Pictured with Santa are (left to right) Erika DeAnda, Linda Le, Thea Bullock, Caroline Matthew and Nikoo Tabesh.*

# New "What's Up" format

To keep staff informed and current, HCA's "What's Up" employee newsletter will soon be taking on a new design in the format of an intranet only, blog-based newsletter. The new design will allow employees access to new articles and learn about events as they are posted online rather than waiting for a monthly edition to be completed.

This will also give staff the opportunity to announce current or upcoming events to employees that sometimes may not be included in "What's Up" due to submission deadlines and/or newsletter distribution dates.

While "What's Up" will still be designed as a monthly newsletter, current articles will post more frequently and will be featured on the main "What's Up" intranet page. The page will also include a menu bar with a complete list of each edition's articles and also list tabs for particular newsletter sections.

Stay tuned for more exciting information on the new design and interactivity of "What's Up!" For any questions regarding the newsletter or to submit an article, please send an email to Tricia Landquist.

# EPRP tuition reimbursement FAQs

The Education and Professional Reimbursement Program (EPRP) was created to encourage employees to continue their professional and educational development through a variety of opportunities per the Personnel and Salary Resolution. The program's mission is to "obtain reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred by HCA employees as quickly as possible."

### *What are eligible expenses?*

Eligible expenses are those related to the employee's job with the County or those that have the potential for preparing the employee to move into another position within the County.

### *Does EPRP pay for mileage?*

No. Those expenses are covered under mileage reimbursement, if the event is related to the employee's work and occurs during business hours.

### *Does EPRP pay for parking?*

Yes, as long as the parking stub shows the date and time of the event and the parking fee is included with the event application AND claim form.

### *Does EPRP pay for books and supplies?*

Yes, as long as they are required when taking a class or attending a workshop to receive CEU's or to pass an exam to receive business related degrees, certifications, accreditations or licenses.

### *What is the process for getting reimbursement?*

EPRP has a 2-step process:

1) Submit an application/request for reimbursement along with verification of cost to your SUPERVISOR, through the EPRP intranet application. Applications must be submitted and approved by your supervisor prior to attending the event.

2) After the event, submit the following 3 documents: proof of attendance, proof of payment, and claim form. Verification of cost is also required, which is submitted in step 1.

### *How will I know what is happening with my claim?*

You will receive a link to your "queue" on the EPRP web application when your application is first approved by your supervisor. You can click on that link at any time to see the status of your claim or to view messages from us about documentation needed to process your claim.

### *How fast do you process EPRP applications and claims?*

We process them immediately, upon receipt. If all steps are followed and all documentation is received promptly, you can be reimbursed in days!

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# OC Armory volunteer opportunity

The County of Orange Armory Emergency Shelter Program opened this month at the Fullerton and Santa Ana Armory locations.

Both Armories are tentatively scheduled to remain open seven days a week from December through March 2013. The Armory Emergency Shelter Program will offer hot meals, showers, clothing, blankets, a safe place to sleep, and shelter from the winter weather, as well as other supportive services to approximately 400 homeless per night.

The success of the Armory Program is largely due to the collaborative efforts of County agencies, churches, nonprofit agencies and dedicated individuals who generously volunteer their time. Volunteer opportunities include help with setting up tables and chairs, cleaning and putting out the sleeping mats, assisting with client registration, setting out snacks, distributing blankets or clothing, and serving dinner, as well as setting up and/or cleaning up.

While the program is operated by a nonprofit organization (Mercy House), volunteer opportunities are available for County employees. Last year 38,989 bed nights were provided to over 1,762 homeless individuals at the National Guard Armories.

If you are interested in volunteering, or know someone who is or would be interested, please contact Maygan Olsen-Malone of Mercy House via email at maygano@mercyhouse.net. More information about the Emergency Shelter program is available at www.mercyhouse.net.

# Successful BH fundraising event

*Behavioral Health Services held a "Rags 2 Riches" United Way fundraising event last month and brought in a record $1,030.80. The event held at HCA's 405 W. 5th Street building featured donated items from staff. Specials including a "fill a bag for $3" were popular with visitors. Many stood in line waiting for doors to open at the sale. Many of the items not sold including DVDs, clothes and shoes, were donated to program staff for clients. Congratulations to all who helped contribute to the success of the event!*

**Compliance**

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Specialist. She tracks compliance training, sanction screening, maintains compliance records and is also available to help you with compliance questions or concerns. Erika can be reached at (714) 568-5614 or by email at edeanda@ochca.com.

Thank you for your continued participation in promoting compliance and ethics within HCA and making compliance everybody's business.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may reach me at (714) 834-3154 or via email at tbullock@ochca.com. Those who wish to remain anonymous may contact the Compliance Telephone Hotline at (866) 260-5636.

Thea Bullock, MPA, CHC
Chief Compliance Officer

"You have succeeded in life when all you really want is only what you really need."
*—Vernon Howard*

**OCBC Award**
*continued from page 1*

food vehicles do not arrive until just before opening day of the Fair. To streamline inspection and permitting procedures EH created several tools to expedite the process.

Through the implementation of pre-Fair planning, posting of critical information on the www.ocfoodinfo.com website, and creation of a self-inspection check list, food operators addressed food safety risk factors prior to opening day.

This expedited process not only allowed food operators to get up and running in a timely manner, but also resulted in a substantial savings of staff time that would normally be dedicated to the food permitting process.

The OCBC Award program is in its second year and has awarded organizations including Orange County cities, school districts, County agencies and special districts. Each have successfully taken on the challenge of laying out the "red carpet" to business through innovative projects that cut regulations, reduce fees and streamline processes.

health care agency
WHAT'S UP
keeping staff informed & current

**WHAT'S UP** is a newsletter for employees of the County of Orange, CA, Health Care Agency.

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**EPRP**
*continued from page 3*

***How long do I have to submit a claim for reimbursement?***

You have 1 calendar year from the date of COMPLETION of the event. If this is a multiple day event or class, use the last day as your deadline.

***What happens if I submit a claim after 1 year has passed?***

EPRP will not be able to process your reimbursement, and your claim will be denied.

***Why can't you go past 1 year?***

EPRP applications are used to budget funds out of your program/division's tuition reimbursement budget. The funds are held for 1 year and must be used within that year. If the funds are not claimed, the funds are returned to the general budget. After 1 year, we no longer have the money for your claim.

***Can exceptions ever be made?***

Exceptions to the 1 year rule are rarely made, and we would need to be able to demonstrate that there are extraordinary circumstances for it.

***What happens if I don't submit an application for reimbursement (step 1) until after the event has passed?***

While we prefer for you to submit the application for reimbursement ahead of time to allow for budgeting in the proper Fiscal Year, we are generally able to still process your claim, as long as it is done within 1 year of the event completion date. To avoid difficulties with your claim, submit your application to participate as soon as you know you would like to attend the event.

***If I submit the application after the class/event has passed, will that affect the 1 year deadline to finish my claim?***

No. You still have 1 year from the COMPLETION date to get paid, as long as funds are available.

***Who should I call if I have questions?***

Contact Ramon Sanchez at (714) 834-5958 for routine processing questions or additional information about your claim. If you have more questions after speaking with Ramon, please contact Azahar Lopez, PsyD at (714) 834-2514, who oversees EPRP for HCA. For additional information, you can also visit the Tuition Reimbursement Intranet webpage at http://intranet.ochca.com/eprp.

## JANUARY HEALTH OBSERVANCES

**Cervical Health Awareness Month**

**National Glaucoma Awareness Month**

**Thyroid Awareness Month**

**Health Weight Week. . . . . .20-26**

When prosperity comes, do not use all of it.
*—Confucius*