

Kern County HR

County Administrative Office



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Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

PRESENTATION OF 2019 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Fiscal Impact: None

Every year, the Human Resources Division facilitates the County's Employee Recognition Awards Program. This program intends to show our employees not only how much they are appreciated, but also highlights the incredible, and often hidden, work that our County team performs every day. Nominations are solicited County-wide from all employees, and a Review Committee of five management and five non-management employees then evaluate all submitted nominations in order to select the final candidates. Awards are given in five distinct categories, designed to recognize a variety of exceptional work. The awarded listed below were nominated by County employees and selected by the Review Committee as the most deserving of recognition for their work in the past year.

The winners of the 2019 Employee Recognition Awards are:

(TIE) MAC AVANCENA AND ELAINE SALGADO – OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP

Mac Avancena was nominated for his leadership of the Information Technology Services Division in the County Administrative Office. Since joining the County as Chief Information Technology Officer, Mr. Avancena has led various initiatives aimed at improving outcomes and leveraging scale within the County organization. Mr. Avancena created the Information Technology (IT) Leadership Board that has multiple County departments' IT teams meeting monthly to help unify and coordinate IT efforts Countywide; he has also brought his background in data analytics to his role, working with many departments to improve their ability to make business decisions based on available data; and he has been critical in his leadership on the County's multi-million dollar Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software systems project, with his background in project management helping the team working on the Request For Proposals (RFP) to gather information and finalize selection of the vendor now working on implementation of this significant IT undertaking. He has also successfully negotiated improved pricing with various IT hardware and software vendors by combining contracts for economies of scale, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars for products the County already uses. Mr. Avancena's positive energy and fresh ideas have inspired staff and improved transparency, cooperation, and accountability in County IT.

Elaine Salgado works in the Emergency Response Division of Child Protective Services (CPS) at the Department of Human Services (DHS). Ms. Salgado was also selected as winner last year in the category of Workforce Excellence for her exceptional work as a Social Service Worker. This year, Ms. Salgado was selected for her outstanding leadership work in training and supervising new hires at CPS. During training, she is known to be firm in correcting staff, but does so in a way that emphasizes exercising good judgement and avoiding errors, preventing future mistakes that could put children in jeopardy. She sets a high standard for staff to live up to, paying attention to detail and quickly finding and correcting any mistakes. Ms. Salgado exemplifies accountability and integrity, focus, and hard work. She teaches staff to work diligently, passing on her expertise, and high standards, all of which help continue the work of safeguarding Kern's children and families.

ELISABETH DUVALL – CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Ms. Duvall was nominated for her tireless innovation and promotion of library services in the Kern River Valley area. Although the library is often short-staffed in this area of the County, Ms. Duvall has worked hard to provide high quality and innovative programs and services to make the library a clearly relevant and beneficial part of that community. Her efforts include implementing a “Veterans Connect” program that assists veterans in finding services they need; creating a safe and engaging environment for local teens through a “Teen Advisory Board” where participants can plan library programs directed at their peers; through extensive local outreach, including attending local events to promote the library’s services, visiting the majority of kindergarten classrooms in the area to instill an early love of reading in children, and giving the gift of music to grateful community members by adding guitar lessons taught at the library. Ms. Duvall exhibits an exceptional work ethic in providing above-and-beyond customer service; her patience and welcoming attitude leave residents with a very positive impression of County services.

CURTIS GRIFFITH III – WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE

Mr. Griffith was selected for his exceptional work as a Public Works Maintenance Worker, leading the concrete crew at Public Works. Mr. Griffith epitomizes workforce excellence by always doing more than asked. His work ethic is contagious and keeps his crew motivated. He is the backbone of the concrete crew, has an excellent ability to identify problems and find the best solution, instructs new employees and has taught all current concrete workers how to set grade, set forms, and pour and finish concrete. Mr. Griffith has also taken it upon himself to learn all aspects of his work in the area of concrete maintenance over his more than 10 years at Public Works, even attending seminars and conventions on his own time to bring back ideas to improve work processes. Mr. Griffith’s professionalism and leadership have been instrumental in completing numerous projects, big and small—and he is always trying to find ways to save the County time and money.

DHS MAINTENANCE STAFF (HOMELESS RESOURCE FAIRS) – EXCEPTIONAL TEAMWORK

The DHS maintenance staff was nominated for their work on the 2019 Homeless Resource Fairs. DHS maintenance staff were critical in assisting with several of these events around Kern County, including in Bakersfield, Delano, Wasco, Taft, Arvin, Lake Isabella, and Mojave. Staff would pick up large amounts of donated goods and supplies, including bottled water, toiletries, and clothing from multiple locations and deliver them to each of the resource fair locations. At the site of the fairs, staff assisted with unloading these items, as well as setting up and tearing down canopies, chairs, tables, moving heavy boxes of goods and supplies, and setting up temporary portable toilets and washing stations. Staff also assisted many other vendors and agencies with their unloading, set-up, and tear-down, as well as helping the elderly and disabled participants carry donated items. The DHS maintenance team (including Joana Leyva, Joe Ayala, Tori Zimmerman, Jessy Avalos, Joe Bernal, James Sampson, Isaias Lopez, Dennis Diffie, Nicolas Marquez, David Harding, Michael Garcia, Lisa Lewis, and Jerry Carmon) helped to make these events a success, and helping some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT (READY, SET, BACK-2-SCHOOL FAIR) – SUSTAINED EFFORT

The Department of Child Support Services was selected for their collaboration and teamwork in organizing their annual “Ready, Set, Back-2-School” health and wellness fair to benefit children and families throughout Kern County. Since 2009, Child Support staff have fundraised to supply now more than 5,000 children with a backpack and school supplies each school year. The department also partners with other organizations to create a well-rounded event with a variety of services that families can look forward to attending each year. “Ready, Set, Back-2-School” has become the largest backpack giveaway in Kern County, with events in Bakersfield and Ridgecrest that include over 85 community partners providing services and information to local families—with everything from immunizations to haircuts. This event’s

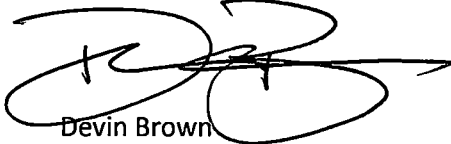
success comes as a result of Child Support staff's creativity and drive in ensuring every child has a backpack and supplies.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Although the above winners were selected as the most exceptional stand-outs from this year's nominees, many more deserving nominations were also received. The list in Attachment A shows all of this year's "Honorable Mentions," whose incredible stories are still just a sampling the many hours of hard work and dedication that our employees put forth daily all across Kern County.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board hear presentation of the 2019 Employee Recognition Awards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Devin Brown", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Devin Brown
Chief Human Resources Officer

Attachment

cc: Assessor-Recorder
Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
Child Support
County Counsel
General Services
Department of Human Services
Information Technology Services
Library
Planning and Natural Resources
Probation
Public Health
Public Works

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Outstanding Leadership

Angela Garcia
Greg Gonzalez
Jason Giffard
Jeff Fariss
Karen McKinzie
Laurie Collom
Michelle Cully
Teshia Starling

Customer Service Excellence

Juan Arredondo
Laurie Collom
Marcia Duval

Workforce Excellence

Julie Williams
Keith Hollins
Kevin Ealy
Lanisha Randle
Martha Marentes
Susan Saelee

Exceptional Teamwork

DHS Employee Picnic Committee
ERP MVP Team
CAO-GS Soledad Mountain Relocation Team
CAO-HR Health and Wellness Team
Probation Lean-Six-Sigma Team

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