



PROBATION CONNECTION

4TH Quarter 2021

TAKING CARE OF
EACH OTHER

- ▶ Our Staff
- ▶ Our Community
- ▶ Our Youth



CHIEF'S MESSAGE

“

“We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It’s easy to say, “It’s not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.” Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.”

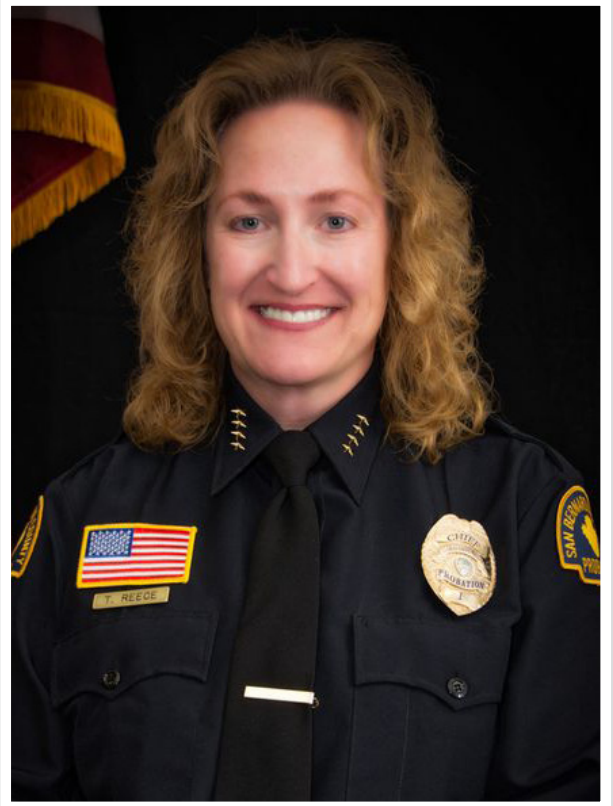
- Fred Rogers, aka **“Mr. Rogers”**

”

That quote inspires me because it is a reminder of what this Probation Department is called to do every day. Our goal, first and foremost, is to protect the community. However, we are also called to look out for each other.

This edition of Probation Connection Magazine highlights the care we have for our community, our coworkers, our family, and our Department. There are articles about how our staff distributed enhanced hygiene kits to the at-risk and reentry population and went out of their way to help a youth see his newborn daughter. There are also articles about the first-ever Domestic Violence Core Class, which was created to train and enhance our DV Probation staff to care for victims and better understand offender behavior, and the training our Honor Guard goes through to represent us well.

As the New Year approaches, let’s focus on ways to take care of each other – ask people how they are, lend a hand to those who need it, connect with



people, check on those who matter to you, try to help -even in small ways, encourage each other, serve instead of waiting to be served, and listen – really listen - when someone needs to talk.

We have made it our job to care for others, whether it be that stranger on the street, that client who needs guidance, or that co-worker next to you. It is our way of building stronger families and improving the lives of those we serve. But please don’t forget about yourself. My hope for all of you in the coming year is that you take time to care for yourself as well, because taking care of yourself is just another way to care for others. You are, after all, our Department’s most valuable asset.

Tracy Reece
Chief Probation Officer



PROBATION CONNECTION CONTENTS



TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

3 CHIEF'S MESSAGE

"Our goal first and foremost is to protect the community. However, we are also called to look out for each other."

6-7 FEATURED PHOTO

The Great Shake Out on Oct. 21, 2021

8-9 DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION

PO CORE 30, PCSI Ydren Jones, Jr., and PO III Tricia Vlasak make our Department proud.

10-11 MAIN ARTICLE DV CORE

The 2-day training is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of Probation staff in the DV unit.

14 JUST BEGINNINGS

The visitation program aims to strengthen the relationship between youth housed at the JDAC and their children.

15 NICU

With the click of a mouse, a youth at HDJDAC can see his beautiful baby girl.



OLYMPIC FAMILY

Department information Services Administrator cheered on his Olympian nephew from 5,000 miles away.



HONOR GUARD

The San Bernardino County Probation Department Honor Guard.

Olympic Cheering Squad

By: Media Specialist II Lori Fowler



While many of us cheered for Team USA Olympic athletes this past summer, we probably didn't have the same vested interest as Department Information Services Administrator Michael Donahue.

Michael's nephew, David Smith, competed on the United States men's national volleyball team during the summer Olympics, which were held July 23 through August 8, 2021 in Tokyo.

"He's typically a quiet, humble guy," Michael said. "But when he plays you can really see the intensity."

David, who is 6'7", plays middle blocker for Team USA. He is a 3-time Olympian - London in 2012, Rio in 2016, and Tokyo in 2021 - and a one-time Olympic bronze medalist, which the team earned at the 2016 summer games.

Michael has been cheering for his nephew since David, now 36, played high school volleyball. He says it is a pleasure to see his nephew doing so well in the sport, especially because David was born with mild-to-severe hearing loss and wears hearing aids to assist him on and off the court.

"I'm really proud of him," Michael said. "And the ability to see him play at the Olympics, across the world, is very, very cool."







Always Be Prepared

On Oct. 21, 2021, SBCProbation joined in the annual, state-wide earthquake drill known as the Great Shake Out. During the exercise, Probation staff throughout the county, along with youth in detention facilities, simulated an evacuation to ensure the Department is prepared to respond during an earthquake emergency.



SBCPROBATION

CORE 30



"Either You Run The Day Or The Day
Runs You."

RECOGNITION

Probation Corrections Supervisor I Ydren Jones, Jr.

On Nov. 17, Jones was recognized as the 2021 CAPIA Southern Region Outstanding Supervisor of the Year. Jones has been with the San Bernardino County Probation Department for 13 years and currently works in the Orientation Unit, Medical Isolation Unit, Quarantine Unit, and high school graduates Unit at the Central Valley Juvenile Detention and Assessment Center.

His detail-oriented and quality work, along with his steadfast commitment and character, earned him this award. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, he offered support, guidance, and leadership in the design and implementation of high profile units, and showed a willingness to be on the front line in a situation beset with difficulties. In 2020, he was part of a group tasked with staffing units for youth booked into the facility who potentially had COVID-19. Jones quickly and relentlessly assembled a group of staff, gave them appropriate directions, and led by example as the Orientation Unit became a high profile assignment within the facility. As a result of Jones's work ethic and leadership skills, two quarantine units were eventually staffed and successfully operated. His ability to lead, communicate, and set an example provided a successful operation of units.



Probation Officer III Tricia Vlasak

Vlasak, a freelance writer, received an editorial award for an article she submitted to the Monterey Bay Parent Magazine. She is one of five people honored with an excellence award in the 2021 Design & Editorial Competition from Parenting Media Association (PMA), a national trade association of regional parenting media companies that has members all over the United States, Canada, and Australia and reaches more than 6 million readers per month.

Her Silver Award Service Feature was titled "RV 101." From the magazine's website – "If you hadn't considered family RVing before, you might after reading this helpful and engaging feature. The writer breaks down the basics of how to get started with an RV, as well as addresses the realities of vacations spent hurtling down the highway while towing your hotel room."





INTENSE. INTERACTIVE.
INNOVATIVE.

DV CORE

By: Supervising Probation Officer Vicky Hurtado
and Media Specialist II Lori Fowler

Highly intense and interactive. Victim-centered. Trauma-informed. That is how the newly-developed Domestic Violence (DV) Core is described. The 2-day training is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of Probation staff responsible for the supervision of individuals convicted of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and child abuse.

“Probation officers throughout the State of California seek to increase their knowledge and improve their skills with respect to these types of crimes. Through research, more and more is known about the causes and contributing factors of these crimes, as well as the most effective methods of supervision and response,” said Ronesh Mistry, Director of Professional Development for the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC). “The goal of this training course is to enhance Probation Officers’ knowledge and provide assistance to victims.”

The DV Core training was created by the CPOC Domestic Violence Advisory Committee and has been offered to SBCProbation staff four times - March, June, November, and December. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the classes are being held virtually for now.

“The Domestic Violence training I took about nine years ago gave me an understanding of what I would be walking into when dealing with our clients, but this training detailed some of the reasons behind our client’s behavior and techniques on how to work with our clients to strive for a change in the violent cycle,” said Probation Officer III Janice Puga, who attended the December training.

“In the Domestic Violence Unit, officers have to find creative ways to make sure our clients are following their terms and conditions of Probation, not only for the sake of the probationer, but for the sake of the victim’s and the community.”

The need for the progressive DV Core training came about because those who supervise individuals convicted of domestic violence offenses encounter issues that are not common in other types of supervision caseloads, said Supervising Probation Officer Vicky Hurtado, who was on CPOC’s DV Committee.

Participants in DV Core, which includes supervisors, sworn staff, and DV coordinators, learn about understanding victim and offender profiles and behavior, victim blaming, history of trauma and abuse, power and control issues, the legal role and authority of Probation, restraining orders, domestic violence courts, supervision technique - including awareness about LGBTQ issues, risk assessments, investigation issues, the expectations and requirements of Batter Intervention Programs, evidence-based interventions and fidelity, data collection, and secondary trauma and toxic stress. During the course, other Probation Department’s share their challenges – and strategies - with domestic violence clients and victims.

“While successful efforts to hold offenders accountable and to provide services to victims are occurring, continued education of the juvenile and criminal justice system is needed in order to identify, address, and ultimately prevent reoccurrence of these crimes and to meet the needs of victims more effectively. The DV Core training will not only benefit existing DV Probation staff, but also help newly-assigned officers understand what domestic violence is, what the best practices are when responding, and what resources exist to support their work,” Mistry said. “The ultimate goal is to build the skills, capacity, and comfort to address domestic violence offenders and those involved with expertise and care.”

“This training, along with the expansion of the Domestic Violence specialized units in October, supports the County’s efforts in developing an aggressive and integrated criminal justice response to abuse that will break the devastating cycle of domestic violence,” Hurtado said. Oftentimes referred to as a Coordinated Community Response Model, the premise of the unit

is that arrests alone will not stop domestic violence, and that system-wide coordination and collaboration among criminal justice personnel and non-profit, non-government domestic violence and sexual assault programs are essential to success.

“It is important to hold our clients accountable for their actions and to guide them toward rehabilitation and it is our job to help them understand how their actions affect not only the victim, but children, extended family members, friends, and anyone who else who is exposed to violence/trauma,” Puga said. “Our clients need to learn the techniques to break the domestic violence cycle not only for themselves, but for everyone around them.”





COVID-19 HYGIENE KITS HELP ARM THE COMMUNITY

By: Media Specialist II Lori Fowler

In the early hours of a weekend morning, when most people were sleeping in, San Bernardino County Probation Officers set out to distribute enhanced hygiene kits that would arm the at-risk and reentry population with added protection against COVID-19.

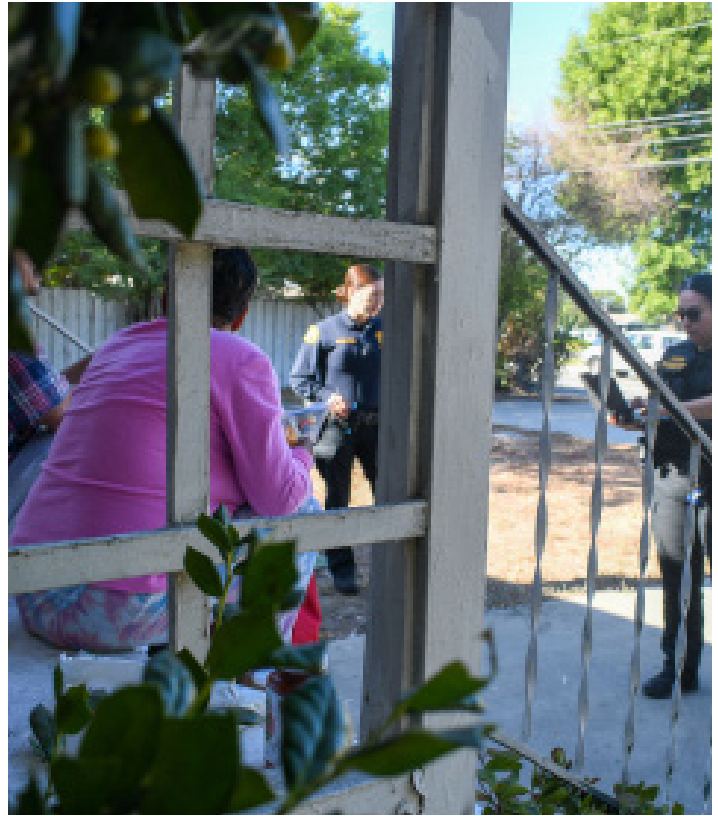
Hundreds of kits were distributed during the three-day community outreach event, which spanned Saturdays in September, October, and November. More than 225 officers and staff from the Central, West End and High Desert regions participated.

"I don't think we've ever done what we did in those three days," said Supervising Probation Officer Angela Gentry, who was Operations Chief for the community outreach events. "Most operations have months to plan ahead of time, but this was

a grant operation. From start to finish, the three operations were planned in less than 60 days."

The Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) Program was the grant that made all of this possible. CESF provides federal funding to states, local governments, and tribes to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. The San Bernardino County Probation Department, which was one of three local agencies the grant was allotted to, used part of their funds to order and stock enhanced hygiene kits that included a first aid kit, blanket, water, gloves, light sticks, masks, sanitizer, a toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, a washcloth, and socks.

"We had to figure out in a very short amount of time what we were going to



order, how it would be packed and how we were going to track it,” said Office Assistant III Michelle Reynosa, who was involved in the planning and support for all three events.

She credits everyone from the line staff to fiscal for stepping up and making things happen.

“There were just so many working pieces, looking back I’m so proud of the team,” she said.

The combined number of enhanced hygiene kits distributed was 776 - 237 on Sept. 11, 176 on Oct. 2, and 363 on Nov. 6 – nearly tripling how many hygiene kits were handed out by the Department within the last year.

That’s a lot of people to receive help within a short period of time.

“But we didn’t look at it as the number of kits distributed, we didn’t measure it that way,” said Division Director II Kory Oberlies, who manages the Adult Mental Health Supervision Unit and Adult Day Reporting Centers. “We measured it by the number of contacts we made with people who need assistance and the amount of resources we were able to offer a community in need.”

“What we were able to distribute far exceeded what we ever expected to do,” said Division Director I Juan Preciado, who was Incident Commander for the community outreach events.

One of the challenges Probation Officers faced was getting at-risk and reentry probationers to trust them and talk with them.

“We had to bring out the backpacks first and let them know immediately that we were not there to arrest them or to push them out of their spot. We were there to give them water and resources,” said Probation Officer II Julia Briseno, team leader for the community outreach events. “Once a rapport was established, they were grateful for the kits and took time to connect with us.”

The grant-sponsored events might be over, but the Homeless Outreach Unit’s work is not done.

“Now the hard part comes in - how do we get the remaining backpacks out to the community?,” said Rodney Sermons, current Supervising Probation Officer for the Housing Outreach Unit.

The enhanced hygiene kits are currently located at Adult Day Reporting Centers throughout the County so probationers seeking services can have access to them.

“They will be placed there until the end of the grant, or until they are gone,” Sermons said. “This is just another way we can reach those in need.”



Just Beginnings Fosters a Father's Growth

By: Probation Corrections Officer Johana Quiles

“Building stronger families and safer communities by improving the lives of those we serve through assessment, treatment, rehabilitative services and enforcement.”

The San Bernardino County Probation Department's mission statement plays a big role in shaping which programs we offer at the Juvenile Detention and Assessment Centers (JDACs) and Just Beginnings does just that.

The weekly, structured visitation program aims to build and strengthen a relationship between youth housed at the JDAC and their children. Facilitated by our visiting staff, fathers are able to bond with their baby and learn different parenting skills during the one-on-one visit. How to take initiative, change diapers and clothes, provide bottles, learn the child's cues and signals, follow the child's lead, and talk to the child are taught and encouraged during the bonding time. Fathers also learn how to have positive communication with the mother or guardian when the child is brought in for a visit.

A comfortable space to spend time with their child that resembles a safe, homelike environment is also provided. There are toys and floor mats that encourage interaction, but more importantly, it is away from the housing units to allow the fathers to let their guard down and focus on the child. This space is designed to encourage trust.

There are a number of youth at our three facilities – CVJDAC, HDJDAC, and Gateway to ARISE – who have been able to experience this program and I have had the pleasure of facilitating some of these visits. It's been an honor to witness firsthand the trust and positive rapport being built between the father and his child. Each visit means more interaction and more growth as the youth learns how to be a father.



The NICU Baby

That Touched Everyone's Hearts

By: Media Specialist II Lori Fowler

With the click of a mouse and the tap of a few keys, a youth housed at the High Desert Juvenile Detention and Assessment Center can see his beautiful baby girl.

Once a day he can peer into a computer screen and see his daughter, who is currently being cared for 90 miles away at Children's Hospital of Orange County. Thanks to modern technology, and the hard work of Probation staff, the youth has a unique opportunity to bond with his baby.

"I like watching her sleep. I like watching her move," he said. "I can't be there with her, but being able to see her makes me happy."

During an afternoon session in November, the youth saw his nearly 2-month-old daughter open her eyes for the first time.

"It's amazing," he said. "I can see she's growing now." Probation Corrections Supervisor I LaShawndra Butler, who made this possible, sits beside the youth during the video sessions and gets to experience all of this with the new father.

"I wanted him to know that even though he can't be there physically, he can still be there," Butler said. "He can still be a part of her life and witness milestones."

When the youth arrived at the facility earlier this year, all he would talk about is how he was going to be a dad and how he wanted to be a better dad than he had, Butler said.

In September, the youth's girlfriend gave birth to the baby – three months early. She was born weighing one pound, 11 ounces.

The youth told Butler that the hospital had a site where he could monitor the baby 24/7. With help from Automated Services Division staff Michael Donahue, Christopher Blackett, Jose Herrera, Jose Ibarra, and Ernest Engeron III, they were able to utilize a Chromebook during shift exchange for him to watch

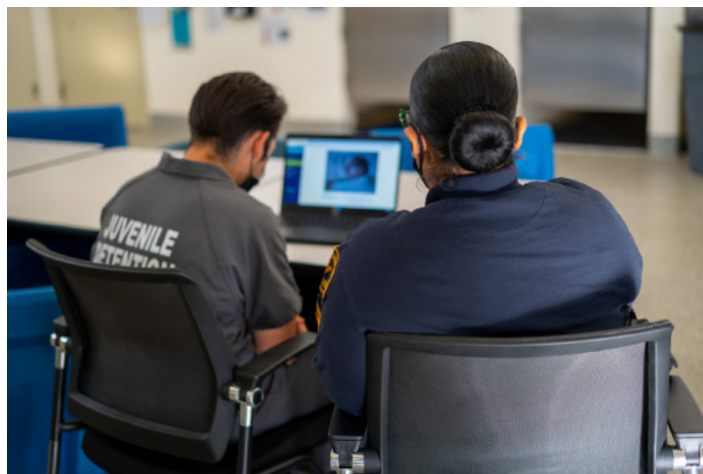
his daughter daily.

The collaborative effort of Probation staff clearly meant a lot to the youth.

"I tell her, like, I'm thankful for you, Miss Butler. I appreciate everything you do," he said. "This is like the most important thing to me. (The baby) just keeps me good, keeps me going. She's what keeps me trying to do good here."

Butler said she would have done this for any of her deserving youth.

"I believe the youth are more than the mistakes and poor decisions they have made," she said. "They deserve the opportunity to be a part of their children's lives in some capacity."





The Ultimate HONOR

San Bernardino County Probation Department
Honor Guard

By: Probation Corrections Supervisor II
Rene Rosas

People often attend Department graduations or public events and observe the Honor Guard, dressed in their Class A uniforms, announcing commands, while marching and moving in unison.



Organized events are usually a very busy time and some may forget to stop and think about the true meaning and significance the Honor Guard has in history. The historic origin of Honor Guard Units are not exactly clear, but some historians claim that similar units date as far back as 1000 BC with the First Persian Empire in the region known today as Iran. Honor Guard Units were known to be elite soldiers provided with special equipment and identifying uniforms assigned to protect emperors and heads of state.



During the middle ages, when battle consisted of line formations, Honor Guard Units were assigned to a unit called the Color Guard. The Color Guard was responsible for the protection of their state's flag, guiding soldiers into battle and preventing the flag from falling into enemy hands. In 1784, the 3rd U.S. Infantry Unit in the United States Army was the first among U.S. military branches to form an Honor Guard Unit called the "Old Guard." Other branches of the U.S. military developed Honor Guard Units between 1931 and 1965. Paramilitary agencies, like law enforcement, also developed Honor Guard Units similar to that of the military. Over the course of history, the role of the Honor Guard became clear relating to modern units in the United States as we know today. Honor Guard Units can still be seen performing Color Guard when presenting flags at opening ceremonies of special events, graduations, and funerals honored in tradition, history, and public service.

In 2012, the San Bernardino County Probation Department became the first probation department in California to establish an Honor Guard Unit. Other probation departments across the state of California have inquired into the Department's program in hopes to form an Honor Guard of their own. The unit, which has grown to 22 officers and attends one to two events per month, is currently managed by Division Director II Kathleen Huaman, from External Affairs, and coordinated by Probation Corrections Supervisor II Rene Rosas. Officers assigned to the Department's Honor Guard Program receive specialized training and meet regularly to practice ceremonial traditions in parade drills, timing, and marching techniques.

A lot of practice and hard work goes into being an Honor Guard and they strive for excellence when performing at every event. Each member of the Honor Guard feels a great sense of pride when representing the San Bernardino County Probation Department. They carry on a noble tradition with a deep devotion to duty and a strong sense of honor and dedication, while maintaining high standards in conduct and professionalism.

For more information, contact Rosas at Rene.Rosas@prob.sbcounty.gov.



Team Connection

SBC Board of Supervisors

Curt Hagman
Chairman
Fourth District Supervisor

Col. Paul Cook (Ret.)
First District Supervisor

Janice Rutherford
Second District Supervisor

Dawn Rowe
Third District Supervisor

Joe Baca, Jr.
Fifth District Supervisor

Probation Administration

Tracy Reece
Chief Probation Officer

Julie Francis
Assistant Chief Probation Officer

Edward Barry
Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Adult Community Corrections Bureau

Kimberlee Drury
Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Administrative Services Bureau

Kimberly Epps
Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Juvenile Community Corrections Bureau

Magazine Staff

Kathleen Huaman
DDII
External Affairs

Oleg LLaurado
SPO
External Affairs

Tanya Delaney
PCSI
External Affairs

Lauren Zinn
POIII
External Affairs

Thomas Y. Lynch
Media Specialist II
External Affairs

Lori Fowler
Media Specialist II
External Affairs

Renee Bailey
Media Specialist I
External Affairs

Jasmine Perez
Office Assistant III
External Affairs

JR Tijero
PSE
External Affairs

Teneka Hayes
Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Detention Corrections Bureau

Michael Donahue
Department Information Services Administrator

Thomas Kamara
Director of Probation Administration

Special thanks to our contributors

(In the order as they appear in the magazine)

Vicky Hurtado
Supervising Probation Officer

Johana Quiles
Probation Corrections Officer

Rene Rosas
Probation Corrections Supervisor II

Michael Donahue
Department Information Services Administrator

