



TCDSS *The Social Network*

January/February 2011

TCDSS by the numbers
for Oct/Nov 2010:

- 51 Clients obtained employment
- 6,872 Lobby walk-ins
- 1,052 New Assistance applications
- 276 Child Welfare referrals
- 170 Adult Services referrals

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From the desk of the Director

I hope you are reading this newsletter and finding it has helpful and useful information to assist you.

Earlier this year, through a staff survey, you decided a newsletter would be useful. Also, this will assist in our goal of improved communication here in TCDSS.

This year has been stressful for both employees and customers as we have seen increased workload in Social Services programs. The State Budget crisis and the recession has taken a toll with unemployment at 15% in Tehama County, increased homelessness, the housing crisis and more. The effects can be seen in our customer's lives and in our own families and loved ones.

We have accomplished a lot and continue each day to move ahead helping those in need. This year we provided through community partnerships, subsidized

employment for those who needed jobs through the federal stimulus package and our CalWORKs program. We also provided the funding for a Community Gardens and Summer Food Program that benefited hundreds of children and their families. We have actively done outreach to get the food out to those in need through Cal -Fresh (formerly known as Food Stamps) Outreach. CIV conversion is completed and was a monumental task for Eligibility, Employment Services, Fiscal, System Support, and Clerical staff.

We are currently gearing up to move into our 3rd year of VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) where we provide free tax preparation to maximize the return of tax dollars to the most needy families to build assets and stimulate the economy of Tehama County.

We've been through tough



Charlene Reid, Director

times before and I know we will meet these challenges again.

I hope each one of you take pride in the work you do to improve the lives of Tehama County citizens.

Your hard work is needed and appreciated more now than ever before. I am very proud and grateful for all that you do - thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Charlene

Assist. Empower. Protect.



TCDSS Moves into New Office

On October 1, 2010, Tehama County Social Services moved into a new office in Corning. This project has been in the works over multiple years in partnership with the Corning Health Care District.

Social Services has eighteen regular full-time staff from

Eligibility, Child Welfare, Employment Services, and Clerical stationed there. In addition, Health Services, Children First, Quest, and the Corning Health Care District Office are housed there to provide multiple services to clients who may need them.

Resources for the Unbanked: Stop high check cashing fees

March 31, 2010, changed the face of the electronic banking world for consumers who found themselves paying overdraft fees, in some cases \$35, for their lattes. This was due to the way banks would process transactions at the close of the business day by subtracting the largest item first from a person's checking account and the smallest last, leading to multiple overdraft fees that accumulated faster than a speeding bullet.

While this practice has now changed and debits are immediately subtracted from one's account, preventing the consumer from incurring overdraft fees when using their debit card when funds were not available, the damage was already done. Indeed, many people found themselves overdrawn so

deeply that either they abandoned their checking accounts and/or ended up in the CHEX System. Ending up in this system resulted for many people the inability to open bank accounts and being forced to pay the extraordinary fees associated with check cashing businesses.

A person visiting one of these check cashing establishments could find themselves spending up to \$70 or more per month in fees to handle everyday financial transactions. This works out to approximately \$840 annually. A new idea in banking has emerged due to the growing "unbanked" population. This "new" idea, called second chance checking, has actually been around for more than 10 years, but has kept a low profile in the banking community. In

Tehama County, Wells Fargo Bank offers the Opportunity Package which gives consumers a second chance at a checking account. They offer direct deposit, online bill pay, and savings accounts to help the unbanked establish a relationship with a banking institution.

In the recent economic climate it is now more important than ever for our unbanked population, which includes not only those receiving public benefits but many working families that have found themselves unbanked due to a poor credit rating or remaining in the CHEX System, to know that programs like the Opportunity Package at Wells Fargo and similar offerings at other institutions are available to assist consumers.

Agency Cost Saving Suggestions

As budgets get tighter, the Administrative Team at TCDSS has offered at their own expense, pizza rewards to staff who submit cost savings suggestions that benefit the agency. When we are able to conserve limited funds within the agency, we can assist more families in need. The following is a partial listing of recent cost savings suggestions that have been implemented:

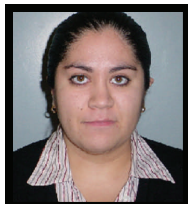
- 1) Begin charging clients who request copies of items in their case files.**
- 2) Use two-sided copies when preparing contracts for Board approval.**
- 3) Re-use large envelopes that come through the mail and have brad closures.**
- 4) Suppress unnecessary forms that were being printed automatically.**
- 5) Do not order color print cartridges for individual printers. Printers could be set to print in Black and White only to avoid using the color ink unnecessarily.**
- 6) Save on postage by folding documents for mailing in a 6 X 9 envelope rather than mailing in a 9 X 12 envelope.**

Suggestions are accepted year-round and can be submitted in the Suggestion Box in the Employee Break Room in the Red Bluff office or by sending an email to jmeehan@tcdss.org.

Meet Our New Staff for November/December 2010



Eric Sutter
Eligibility Worker I



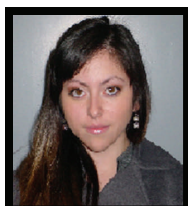
Mirta Reyes
Office Assistant I—Bilingual



Genessee Gardner
Eligibility Worker I



Glen Capobianco
Information Technology Supervisor



Brenda Guerrero
Office Assistant I—Bilingual

In addition, **Stephanie Cossa** has promoted from an Office Assistant III to an Eligibility Worker I, **Laura Marquez** has promoted from an Eligibility Worker III to an Eligibility Supervisor and **Cindy Sumpter** has transferred from an Eligibility Worker II to Office Assistant II. Congratulations to everyone!

Calendar

January

Eligibility Worker Appreciation Month

- 4 All Agency Mtg.
- 5 Jr. Mints Event
- 17 Holiday
- 26 Relay for Life Luncheon Fundraiser

February

- 1 VITA Tax preparation begins
- 1 Tickets go on sale for Valentine Basket
- 10 Relay for Life Valentine Basket Fundraiser
- 11 Holiday
- 21 Holiday
- 23 Relay for Life Breakfast Burrito Sale

March

Social Worker Appreciation Month

- 17 Jr. Mints Basket Drawing
- 22-24 Relay for Life Silent Auction

Client Success Story—Adult Protective Services

A frail man of 82 years was found unconscious in a field. He was taken to St. Elizabeth Hospital Emergency Room (ER) for care.

The ER Staff also placed a call to Adult Protective Services. When our staff tried to locate the male after he was released from the hospital, they found him living in a homeless camp in Corning. He had not applied for Medi-Cal or Cal Fresh (food stamps). He also did not have Social Security. He had nothing.

He was found to be very accepting of our help, but completely unassuming, and would never have asked for our assistance on his own.

Our staff was able to provide him with food vouchers, get him on Social Security, and find someone to be his payee, so he would not end up in the same situation again.

Our staff also was able to get him into a Motel temporarily, until his name is at the top of

the low-income housing list.

The people at the Motel just adore this man. In fact, they enjoy him so much, that he was asked to share their Thanksgiving with them.

His name will be on top of the housing list, hopefully, within the next 2 months, and in the meantime, staff are gathering furnishings for his home.

Without APS assistance, this wonderful man would have been left homeless.

Contest Winners Announced

Over the course of the fall of 2010, TCDSS initiated an agency wide contest to select a name for their newsletter. All staff had the opportunity to submit names and then vote. After an exhaustive selection process, "The Social Network" was chosen. Three staff members had submitted the name for consideration and each was presented a Starbuck's Gift Card donated by agency staff by Director, Charlene Reid for their endeavors. Winners were from left to right, Wendy Richards, Reid, Tabetha O'Quinn, and Elisa Morgan.



Division News

Adult Services

Do you know that many people incorrectly refer to our division as Adult Protective Services (APS)?

Yes, we do handle the Adult Protection Services Program; however, part of our job is the In Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS). We would like everyone to know us as ADULT SERVICES (AS), which runs 2 programs, APS and IHSS.

IHSS: We have an average of 1096 individuals receiving IHSS services, and we receive an average of 50 referrals each month. IHSS services can be approved for eligible recipients of any age. IHSS services differ for each individual, depending on their level of need to safely stay in their home. Services can include some light housework, including laundry, grocery shopping, personal care, such as bathing assistance, and transportation.

APS: Adult Protective Services are for anyone who is disabled, (medical or mental) aged 18 to 64 years, or for the elderly, 65 and older. We receive approximately 50 reports of elder/dependent adult abuse each month. Elder abuse can range from actual physical, mental and emotional abuse, neglect, self neglect, or financial abuse. Many times, the abuser is someone who provides care to the victim or in a position of trust.

Assistance Programs

When you say Food Stamps what comes to mind? Lines wrapping around the old office on Lincoln Street, maybe standing behind somebody in the grocery store and thinking to yourself how much longer will this take? Now imagine what it would have been like if you were that person?

Well now we have EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) which electronically debits a card with "funds" for food (used like a debit card) which eliminates some of the stigma associated with Food Stamps and of course the long lines at Welfare Departments and grocery stores.

And in an effort to remove more of the stigma, California has renamed what was 'Food Stamps' and 'Supplemental Nutri-

tion Assistance Program' or 'SNAP' to 'Cal Fresh'. So welcome "Cal Fresh" may you live long and feed many.

Child Welfare Services

Child Welfare Services (CWS) is very excited about the success the Building Community Partnerships (BCP) workgroup has had in Corning and specifically with the Spring Mountain apartment complex. BCPs goal is to serve as the catalyst for communities and neighborhoods to organize themselves, identify their own needs, and develop solutions to these needs that are sustainable without reliance on CWS or BCP.

In Corning, BCPs influence led to a city mural on Solano Street, a summer lunch program, craft, cooking and ESL classes, summer and after school soccer camps, increased church presence, and a multi-site community garden. As a result, Spring Mountain has more people moving in and 1/3 less property damage. Corning Police, Fire, St. E's and CWS all report fewer calls/referrals from Spring Mountain. Team Decision making meetings (TDMs) are being held in the community in Corning, local churches are helping families, and extra food from the gardens has been donated to a needy family food program. In fact, these successes have been noticed by other apartment complexes, including some in Red Bluff, and they have expressed interest in having BCP assist them in starting similar efforts. Fantastic!!

Community Action Agency/ Employment Services

The Volunteer Income Tax Preparation (VITA) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) programs will kick off in January 2010. This program provides free tax preparation assistance to low income residents. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer tax preparer in the community please see Michael Baldwin, CAA Supervisor. This is a great opportunity to learn a new skill, and help out in our community!

Tax preparation will begin February 1, 2011 at the Red Bluff Family Resource Center, Corning Family Resource Center, and Los Molinos Family Resource Center.

Apple Cake Recipe



Directions

3 eggs
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup (1 stick) margarine or butter, melted
14 HONEY MAID Cinnamon Grahams, finely crushed (about 2 cups crumbs)
1 medium apple, peeled, cored and chopped
3/4 cup chopped Walnuts
2 Tbsp. powdered sugar
PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Beat eggs lightly in medium bowl with wire whisk. Add granulated sugar and margarine; mix well. Stir in graham crumbs, apple and walnuts until well blended.
SPREAD evenly into greased 8-inch square baking pan.
BAKE 40 to 45 minutes or until firm to the touch. Cool completely. Cut into 16 squares to serve. Sprinkle with powdered sugar just before serving.

Fiscal

Although still learning C-IV and the potentials, here are the 5 positive things that Fiscal staff has found:

1. Navigating the screens is terrific – simple and speedy.
2. Provides an easy way to search for issuances.
3. Desk-specific reports printed on demand. No unnecessary prints or wasted paper.
4. Ability for Fiscal or Eligibility to easily unlock a locked-out pin.
5. No need for Fiscal to rush benefits. The Eligibility Worker can now do it from their desk. A great timesaver for everyone.

C-IV is the new automated welfare system, implemented in June 2010, replacing the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System (ISAWS).