



# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A Newsletter of Palm Beach County Community Services

Volume 2, Issue 1



**JAMES GREEN**  
Director



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Asst. Director



## Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

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Verdenia C. Baker

**W**e are excited to share the Community Services Department's (CSD) accomplishments during the first quarter of 2017. This quarter, hundreds of low income families throughout the county received services to promote their independence and improve their quality of life. Our team continues to work diligently to provide a safety net for our most vulnerable citizens, giving special attention to our Seniors, Veterans, Farmworker and Special Needs families.

Moving forward, the CSD leadership team will be taking its first steps towards developing a strategic plan. All CSD staff will be fully engaged in this process and we will be soliciting input from stakeholders throughout the county. We invite you to increase your involvement with Community Services, as we charter a new course to strengthen families, transforming communities and improve the lives of our Palm Beach County residents.

Coming together is the beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success!

*James Green*



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# Strategic Planning

## Meet the CSD Leadership Team



*Front Row (left to right):*

**Faith Manfra, Natalie Diaz-Rodriguez, Taruna Malhotra,  
Sonja Holbrook, Julie Dowe, Amalia Hernandez**

*Back Row (left to right):*

**Geoffrey Downie, Wendy Tippet, James Green,  
Cynthia McMillan, Marilyn Munoz**

### VISION

A community where all residents of Palm Beach County have the resources and opportunities to achieve their full potential.

### MISSION

To promote independence and enhance the quality of life in Palm Beach County by providing effective and essential services to residents in need.

### CORE VALUES

Respect  
Equity  
Compassion  
Integrity  
Professionalism  
Empowerment

Our Agency has been officially enrolled into the 2017 Pathways to Excellence, a collaborative capacity building and improvement initiative. Recently, our Assistant Department Director, Taruna Malhotra and Team—Amalia Hernandez, Mary Woodard, Doris Davis and Daniel Ramos—attended this year's 2017 Pathways to Excellence Training and have brought back a wealth of information. Over the next few months, we will be conducting a Department-wide self-assessment of our management practices. We will be asking employees from each section and division to participate in the process.

The purpose of this initiative is to evaluate how we do business, using the latest Standards of Excellence and to identify the key areas in which we can improve how we run our organization. The criteria will help us to examine how good we are (or not) at:

- **Determining what our customers need and organizing ourselves to meet these needs;**
- **Developing and executing our vision, mission and goals to remain successful;**
- **Measuring and reporting what is most important about our overall success in the services we provide;**
- **Using appropriate measurements and analysis to understand our short- and long-term performance;**
- **Developing and harnessing the skills and knowledge of our employees; and**
- **Organizing the flow of work to make it easier for everyone to do a great job for our clients.**



**Left to right: Daniel Ramos, Doris Davis, Mary Woodard, Taruna Malhotra, Amalia Hernandez, and Jim Boyd (Instructor)**

The initial information gathering will be carried out by an internal leadership team who will complete the self-study process. Please keep in mind that the purpose of this exercise is to find out what we are doing well, but also what we are not doing well, so that we can improve it. All information collected will remain our own confidential data.

After the self-assessment is completed and the data results are collected, we will compile the results into a written report and submit to a third-party peer expert review panel for their feedback. The report will not focus on or mention any individuals—only policies and procedures. We will share the feedback report with all staff, as it will identify our key strengths and opportunities for improvements.

We are excited about this process because we are convinced that it will help us to become a recognized high-performing agency with motivated staff ready to serve the clients in our community.



# Division Spotlight



Palm Beach County Community Services Community Action Program (CAP) facilitated a "Cost of Poverty Experience" (C.O.P.E.) poverty simulation on February 24, 2017 in collaboration with Healthier Delray and over 45 participants.

The poverty simulation event allowed participants to live the individual life experiences that are common among low-income families. The simulation offers a glimpse into the obstacles that are faced, the decisions that are made and the consequences that impact low-income families every day.

Community Action Program's (CAP) mission is to remove barriers and create opportunities for low-income individuals and families that will enable them to become more self-sufficient. CAP facilitates poverty simulations in an effort to create awareness and educate community leaders, providers of services, and the public on the War on Poverty and the goal of eradicating poverty.

To read the full article, visit <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/local/palm-beach/delray-beach/fl-drp-cope-0308-20170307-story.html>

**Speakers:**  
**Front: Doris Davis; Back: Taruna Malhotra**



# Employee Spotlight



Community Action Program (CAP) sponsored about 35 clients through the Vocational Training and Job Placement program who were interested in Home Health Aide (HHA) and Patient Care Technician (PCT). Through the program offered to our clients, CAP was able to impact many lives in a positive way. One of the lives we would like to highlight is Ms. Tran. Ms. Tran is a single mother who was unemployed and came to Community Action Program (CAP) for assistance with her electric bill deposit. At that time, the only income Ms. Tran was receiving was Unemployment and awaiting approval for her Food Stamps.

While seeking assistance, she inquired about training programs offered through CAP, specifically the PCT

Training. For the PCT program, clients must first be certified and working as Home Health Aides for at least three to six months. The Case Worker, Ms. Gayle Love, explained it's a free program if she's eligible under the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). Ms. Love also informed the client of other requirements that she would need to meet, such as attending a Financial Management Workshop. This Workshop was designed to help clients learn and maintain a budget once they have obtained employment. Ms. Tran expressed that her passion was to care for others and to work in the medical field. With the information she received, Ms. Tran enrolled in HHA Training Program at Care Hope College.



**Left to right: Tesa Tran and Gayle Love**

On February 23, 2017, CAP Program Coordinator Natalie Diaz and Community Outreach Specialist I, Elcana Dantzler, attended Care Hope College's Graduation for students receiving their diplomas and degrees in Home Health Aide, Licensed Practical Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistant, and other vocations. Out of 55 students, Ms. Tran was chosen as the Valedictorian. Ms. Tran expressed how grateful and unexpected it was to be chosen as Valedictorian of her program. She shared that CAP was a huge help to her and her family and she's grateful for the opportunity that was afforded to her to obtain a HHA Certification. With the help of Caseworker Gayle



**Left to right: Natalie Diaz, Tesa Tran, Gayle Love, and Elcana Dantzler**



# Employee Spotlight, continued



Love, Ms. Tran is now working. Ms. Tran has moved from not having any income, to having a full-time job, and furthermore, pursuing a PCT Certification. Below is Ms. Tran's full speech where she speaks in great detail about how her life has changed with the help of CAP.

*"Class of 2016, my name is Tesa Tran, and I'm honored to represent all of us who have completed the HHA/CNA/PCT course to start our journey into this vast industry we call the healthcare profession. I know that going to school at any age has its challenges, however, this graduation is rewarding when it takes your life from a place of surviving to thriving! My two sons, Austyn and Noah, have been*

*my strength and inspiration in showing them that no matter what happens, you can*

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**I truly believe in people helping people and this program does just that...help!**

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*achieve your dreams as long as you want it enough. Y'all must have wanted it enough because you are here. I don't know about you, but I have faced domestic violence,*

*divorces, single parenting and even homelessness just to stand here in front of you today. I want to give a special thanks to Ms. Love and the staff of CAP for helping me achieve this goal. I truly believe in people helping people and this program does just that...help! If you are just starting out or continuing your education like me to go on to greater things, I want to say Congratulations on having the courage to follow your dreams that have brought you here thus far. Together, let's go out into the world to be great examples in making a difference—one patient at a time."*

—Tesa Tran

# Program Updates



## Community Action Program (CAP)



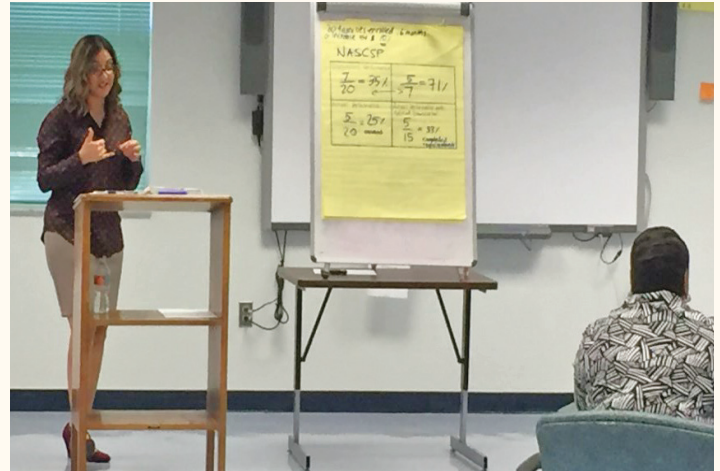
CAP collected Summer Camp Scholarship applications for children between the ages of 5–14 from February–April 2017.

### Our CAP Team

**Back row: Diana Colunga and Alma Rios, Farmworker Counselors; James Green, Director Community Services**

**Front row: Cynthia Hatten, Community Outreach Specialist I; Winston Hudson, Community Outreach Specialist II**

## Results-Oriented Management & Accountability Principles Training (ROMA)



**Trainer Natalie Diaz**

## CAP Poverty Simulation





# Program Updates, continued

## Financially Assisted Agencies (FAA)

### Bidder's Conference

The Contract Management and Compliance Section negotiated 14 new FAA contracts for the Seniors and Poverty/Economic Stability Service Category. Forty (40) new FAA amendments were renewed. A new monitoring schedule was developed. Fifty-four (54) agreements were monitored, analyzed and assessed throughout the year. Thirty-two (32) Partnership Agreements were approved and five (5) agencies received extensive technical assistance. Forty (40) Agencies received General Evaluation Scorecards. This information is collected to assist with the FAA RFP Process—Past History Data.



**One hundred and thirty (130) participants received training in the 3rd Annual FAA Providers Training. (Presenters: Amalia Hernandez, Taruna Malhotra, John Carey, Sonja Holbrook, Thomas Easton and Nancy Bolton).**

### The Planning and Evaluation Section

The Planning and Evaluation Section has been providing ongoing support of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). They completed the update to the Palm Beach County Indicator Report, finalizing the FAA Annual Report FY16 and are working on the FY17 FAA Monitoring and Evaluation agency

visits. They are currently going through the FAA RFP process with the issuance of the FAA RFP Planning Process Summary Reports for both Special Needs/ Developmental Disabilities and Behavioral Health and the FAA RFP Guidance, holding public forums and the Bidder's Conference, and recruiting Review Panelist.







## Farmworker Career Development Program

Clairemencia is currently enrolled in the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program at the Academy of Nursing and is a member of our Advisory Board. The Farmworker Career Development Program is accepting applications from seasonal and migrant farmworkers or their dependents who are interested in vocational training.



Counselors will be recruiting and accepting applications at the following locations:

- **Wednesdays only:**  
Community Action Program,  
6415 W. Indiantown Road,  
Jupiter, FL 33458
- **1st Monday of every month:** El Sol, 106 Military Trail, Jupiter, FL. 33458

For more information, contact the **Farmworker Career Development Program**  
**Phone: 561-992-7405 or**  
**Fax: 561-992-7416.**



**Center: Clarissa Gutierrez, Valedictorian**

◀ **Left to right: Angelica Pacheco and Clairemencia Pierre-Saint**

## Division of Human & Veterans Services

The Division of Human Services started a new Rapid Re-Housing Program in October of 2016. Rapid Re-Housing is a program model used throughout the country as a way to house individuals and families experiencing homelessness directly from the street or shelter to stable housing and support services. The program works closely with the Lewis Center and our Homeless Outreach Team to refer clients from the street or shelter.

Since October 2016, we have housed 50 individuals and ended their homelessness. These clients

have signed a lease and engaged with a Case Manager. Our Case Managers work with their clients to increase their income either through employment or benefits, with the goal of paying 100% of their own rent and living expenses. The national benchmark for decreasing the length of time people are homeless is measured by the time between identifying a client for the program and the time they sign the lease. Currently, we are very close to meeting the set benchmark of 30 days, with a program average of 35 days until move in.

This program is a picture of partnership and teamwork. Division of Human Services staff, starting with our Housing Locator, works with clients referred from Goodwill or the Homeless Outreach Team to identify affordable housing for the client. After housing has been located, our Move In Case Managers assist the client with picking out furniture from Goodwill for their apartment and physically moving them into their apartment. Finally, once the client is moved in, the Case Manager begins working with the client to stabilize them in housing.

# Program Updates, continued

## Division of Human & Veterans Services, continued

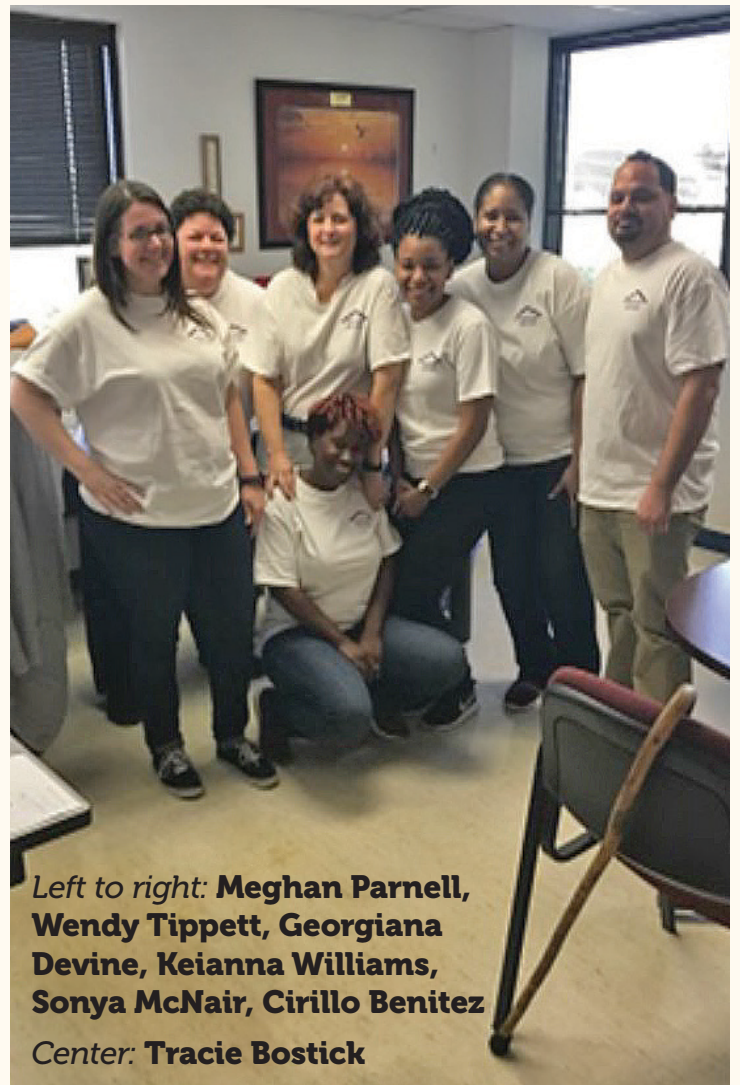
### 2017 Homeless Point In Time Results are in!

The 2017 Point-in-Time Count identified that across Palm Beach County during a twenty-four (24) hour time period, 1,607 individuals and families were homeless according to the Federal definition of homelessness, staying in places not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter or residing in a transitional housing program.

This year, the Point-in-Time Count was undertaken by a total of 240 individuals, including: Palm Beach County, nonprofit agencies, VA, School District, Homeless Coalition, and United Way staff; Board Members; staff from multiple municipalities; college students and volunteers.

Field outreach efforts were conducted by 17 teams who traveled across the County with the assistance of Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Districts and Law Enforcement Officers from Boca Raton, Delray Beach, Boynton Beach, Riviera Beach and West Palm Beach. The teams were also joined by staff from Palm Beach County Parks & Recreation Department, Youth Services and Community Services. Outreach Teams went into the woods, searched abandoned buildings and alleyways behind buildings, spoke with individuals at intersections and in front of stores, and traveled through parks seeking to count homeless persons residing across the County. A targeted outreach was conducted at midnight in John Prince Park, Currie Park, and Phil Foster Park. Individuals were also located across the County, to count in places where homeless tend to go, including food pantries, soup kitchens, and libraries.

The 2017 Point-in-Time Count reflects an 11.5% increase from the Count conducted two years ago. The data collected has shown a 49% decrease in unsheltered chronic homeless and a 62% decrease in unsheltered Veterans. Data also showed that there is a 33% increase in the number of seniors who are homeless and a 73% increase in the number of homeless youth.



*Left to right: Meghan Parnell, Wendy Tippet, Georgiana Devine, Keianna Williams, Sonya McNair, Cirillo Benitez*  
*Center: Tracie Bostick*





## Division of Human & Veterans Services, continued

### Coordinated Entry For Homeless Services

The Division continues to work with the Homeless and Housing Alliance (HHA) and the Continuum of Care (COC) to streamline entry into the homeless system for families, individuals and youth and coordinate outreach efforts to prevent service duplication and ensure all geographic areas throughout Palm Beach County are served. The utilization of a universal assessment tool has assisted in prioritizing placement

of the homeless based on acuity and has reduced the average length of time from assessment to permanent housing placement to 35 days. Special thanks to The Lord's Place, Gulfstream Goodwill and the Homeless Outreach Team for leading this effort.

In addition, a programmatic philosophy shift from a direct-service model to a housing-focused approach has resulted in a decrease length of shelter stays (less than 35 days)

and an increase in the utilization rate of each shelter bed.

Another tool being used to address homelessness in our community is Diversion. Over the last year, multiple trainings have been held in our community around homelessness including diversion, solution-focused practice, housing first and rapid rehousing. Early results from diversion have shown that this practice has been effective in reducing shelter stays by 61%.

## Division of Senior Services (DOSS)

DOSS is dedicated to helping older adults remain active, engaged and independent in their communities. One way of accomplishing this is through DOSS's three (3) Senior Centers.

Senior Centers are recognized as a community focal point and have become a widely used service among older adults. Studies shows that older adults who participate in senior center programs both manage and delay the onset of chronic ailments and feel improvement in their physical, social, emotional well-being. Today's Senior Centers serve as a gateway to connecting older adults to crucial community services that can help them stay healthy and independent. Senior centers offer a variety of activities/programs such as:

- **Meal and nutrition programs**
- **Information and assistance**
- **Health, fitness, and wellness programs**



**North County Senior Center**

- **Volunteer and civic engagement opportunities**
- **Social and recreational activities**
- **Educational and arts programs**

DOSS senior centers are funded through Palm Beach County funds as well as Federal Older American Act funds for the meal and nutrition programs.

# Program Updates, continued



## Ryan White (RW)

- The Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Data Sharing Agreement with the City of West Palm Beach, Department of Housing and Community Development, was signed by the City and is scheduled to go before the BCC on 3/14. This will allow the data integration project to proceed with importing historical HOPWA data into Provide Enterprise (PE).
- The RW program is in the process of conducting a new Needs Assessment. This includes a consumer survey (completed), six focus groups (scheduled for early April), key informant interviews, and an updated epidemiological profile. This effort is being lead by Berthline Isma, the RW Health Planner.
- Program Evaluation designs are being developed for two projects: the HOPWA data integration project (funded by RAND); and the five-year local Integrated Plan. The latter involves coordinating evaluation priorities with local HIV prevention programs, which are administered mostly through the Health Department. Both evaluation projects will also involve a social network analysis to measure changes in the interorganizational networks that implement service delivery in Palm Beach County. We will be working with the Center for Network Science at the University of Colorado for this piece, using PARTNER Tool, an instrument developed with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation under their Public Health Practice Based Research Network project.

## Ryan White Retreat







## Palm Beach County Community Services Department Employees Continue to 'Live the Green Dot!'

Green Dot is an innovative violence prevention and intervention strategy designed to reduce—and possibly even eliminate—instances of power-based personal violence in our communities. This includes domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence, child abuse, bullying, elder abuse, and stalking. Housed in Palm Beach County Victim Services, the Green Dot strategy is delivered through fun and interactive Bystander Trainings. These monthly trainings are facilitated by Clarice Redding and Sandy Reynolds.

The Green Dot program saw great success in 2016, reaching over 800 county employees, and providing bystander training to more than 300 from the Public Safety Department, Palm Beach County Libraries, Community Services Department and Youth Services Department. The year also included the first annual Green Dot ACTION Month, in

which all county employees were invited to participate in a month-long poster art competition, as well as attend Green Dot ACTION Day at Greenacres Bowl—where the goal was to strike out violence.

With support from County Administrator, Verdenia Baker, Green Dot also attracted the attention of current Palm Beach County Mayor, Paulette Burdick, who attended the training in July. Not only did she enjoy the experience, but she is also encouraging more staff to attend. "This is wonderful," she exclaimed after being handed her Green Dot pin and certificate.

The goal is that, within five years, all county employees will be trained on how to implement the Green Dot Strategy using the knowledge and tools gained to make our community a safer place to live. The ultimate goal is that by year 2021, Palm Beach County is living the Green Dot.

This year, the Green Dot program will focus on training employees from Parks & Recreation Department, Tourist Development Council, Public Affairs, County Attorney, Engineering & Public Works, Internal Auditor, and Airports Department.

Employees from last year's target departments—Community Services Department, Libraries Department, Youth Services Department, and Public Safety Department—are also invited and encouraged to attend.

Training dates are available now through December 2017. For more information on the Green Dot program, contact Clarice Redding at [credding@pbcgov.org](mailto:credding@pbcgov.org) or Community Service Department representative: David Rafaidus, 355-4705 or [drafaidu@pbcgov.org](mailto:drafaidu@pbcgov.org). You may also want to view the Green Dot Public Service Announcement at <https://youtu.be/EYs0d3lwXlw>.

## Green Dot Challenge

**There are 160 Community Service Department employees. How many Community Service Department employees have completed the Green Dot Program as of April 14, 2017?**

**Send your answer to David Rafaidus. The CSD employee who submits the first correct response will win a prize!!!**



# Employee News



## New Hires

Hire Date	Name	Department
12/24/16	<b>Jason Josephs</b> , Volunteer Coordinator	Division of Senior Services (DOSS)
12/24/16	<b>Neeta Mahani</b> , Fiscal Specialist III	Community Services Administration
01/09/17	<b>Hugo Belanger</b> , Casework Supervisor	Division of Senior Services (DOSS)
03/04/17	<b>Jade Greene</b> , Community Housing Specialist	Division of Human & Veterans Services
04/17/17	<b>Lashawna Mitchell</b> , Administrative Secretary	Community Services Administration

## Employees on the Move

Promotion	From	To
<b>James Green</b> , Community Services Director	Youth Services	Community Services Administration

## Special Recognition

A special recognition goes to **Michael Dowe** who created the Community Services Department logo. Our new logo has been received well by the department and quoting Bernice Fitz-Gibbon, "Creativity often consists of merely turning up what is already there." Though we had the beginning of the logo, through Michael's help, we really got it "turned up!" Please help us thank Mr. Dowe for the work and creativity he put in our Department logo! THANKS MICHAEL!



**Community Services Department's newly designed logo**

## Fun Facts!



- **Smiling boosts your immune system.**
- **Smiles relieve stress by releasing endorphins.**
- **It is easier to smile than frown.**
- **It takes 5 to 53 muscles to smile.**
- **Babies are born with the ability to smile.**
- **There are 19 different types of smiles.**





# Employee Milestones



Thank you for your loyalty, commitment and dedication to our organization!

Years of Service: 5	Division/Section	Job Title
Christina Wright	Fiscal	Fiscal Specialist III
Natalie Diaz-Rodriguez	Community Action Program	Community Action Program Coordinator
Cynthia Sjogren	Human & Veterans Services	Asst. Veterans Services Officer

Years of Service: 10	Division/Section	Job Title
Mary Beth Rodd	Human & Veterans Services	Case Manager I

Years of Service: 15	Division/Section	Job Title
Cyril Gammie	Division of Senior Services	Outreach/Direct Service Worker
Felisha W. Spence	Human & Veterans Services	Casework Supervisor

Years of Service: 20	Division/Section	Job Title
Georgiana Devine	Human & Veterans Services	Homeless Program and Contract Mgr
Natasha P. McKenzie	Human & Veterans Services	Case Manager II

Years of Service: 30	Division/Section	Job Title
Joan Perry-Atkins	Division of Senior Services	Outreach/Direct Service Worker

Years of Service: 35	Division/Section	Job Title
Cynthia Hatten	Community Action Program	Community Outreach Specialist I

# Events Calendar



## MAY 2017

Date	Time	Event	Location
8		<b>REMINDER:</b> Last day to submit your Golden Palm Nominations to the department heads	
11	9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	CAC/HHA Meeting	810 Datura Street (Basement Conference Room) West Palm Beach, FL 33401
12	8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.	CSD “All Hands” Department Meeting	Mid County Senior Center 3680 Lake Worth Road Lake Worth, FL 33461
17	1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	Homeless Advisory Board Meeting	1440 Martin Luther King Boulevard Riviera Beach, FL 33404

## JUNE 2017

Date	Time	Event	Location
8	9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	CAC/HHA Meeting	810 Datura Street (Basement Conference Room) West Palm Beach, FL 33401

## We Would Like To Thank...

**Amalia Hernandez, Yolanda Asante, Randy Paul, Neeta Mahani, and Meghan Parnell** for their hard work and effort in creating the Community Services Department Newsletter!



**We want to hear from YOU!**  
Please let us know what you would like to see in the next edition of our newsletter!

**Contact Yolanda Asante at**  
[Yasante@pbcgov.org](mailto:Yasante@pbcgov.org)