VOLUNTEER NOTES

Extra PPE Accepted
Do you have extra, unopened boxes of N95 masks, surgical masks, isolation masks, disposable gowns, or latex gloves? The county is accepting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donations of any quantity during the pandemic.

To give, please complete our online donation form. PPE may be dropped off at The Salvation Army, 351 Mission Avenue, San Rafael, which is collecting on behalf of the county’s Emergency Operations Center. Donation hours: 1:00-4:00 pm weekdays.

Please don’t buy new PPE or sacrifice masks from your disaster kit. The collection effort is for existing excess inventory only. We are not collecting handmade masks; those should be kept for personal use.

Pandemic Causes Pause
A few Marinterns students and Marin Shares volunteers are active — most from remote locations — as public health stay-home orders remain in effect. Meanwhile, the vast majority of volunteer and intern roles are on pause, awaiting the full reopening of county facilities.

Please keep on wearing face coverings and staying six feet apart. For local updates, visit the county’s Covid-19 information page.

Volunteer of the Year Fights Scammers
By Scott Harrop
For her outstanding efforts in protecting Marin residents from scams, Maria Gregoriev is the County of Marin’s 2020 Volunteer of the Year! As her supervisors, Mandy Reyes and Mark Vanderscoff, stated in their nomination of Maria for the award, “She is always on the lookout for news bulletins detailing the latest scams targeting older adults, and passes those articles on to us to share with the team.”

A licensed financial advisor, Maria has volunteered for 10 years with the Marin County Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST), a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to preventing financial abuse through educating older adults about possible scams.

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Intern of the Year Focuses on Public Service
By Tiyona Pariani
A driving interest in public service prompted PJ Nave to intern on Fridays after school for the Marin County Board of Supervisors. For outstanding efforts as he learned about connecting with the community and making decisions, PJ is the county’s Student Intern of the Year. Serving in Supervisor Damon Connolly’s District 1 office, PJ’s responsibilities include researching district policies and attending meetings.

The most interesting project PJ worked on was researching Assembly Bill 2057, proposing comprehensive regional transportation planning. He read press releases and the bill itself. It was exciting for him to discuss what supervisors consider when making decisions.

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Supervisor of the Year: Chloe Cook
By Natalie Dybeck
For her dedication to interns and experiential learning, Chloe Cook is the Marin County Staff Supervisor of Volunteers & Interns of the Year. Serving in Supervisor Damon Connolly’s District 1 office, PJ’s responsibilities include researching district policies and attending meetings.

The most interesting project PJ worked on was researching Assembly Bill 2057, proposing comprehensive regional transportation planning. He read press releases and the bill itself. It was exciting for him to discuss what supervisors consider when making decisions.

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Volunteer Fights Scammers

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In cases when financial abuse has already occurred, FAST is able to perform forensic accountings to assist with possible prosecution of perpetrators. Maria has a long list of relevant contacts: the State of California Department of Business Oversight, the Federal Trade Commission, and Adult Protective Services, to name just a few.

“Maria goes above and beyond,” Senior Program Coordinator Mandy said in the nomination. Maria consistently attends and contributes to team meetings and continuously volunteers to be a presenter in the community on scams, fraud, and financial abuse. She not only assembles handout material for all presentations but also orders, manages, and keeps the pamphlets and brochures up-to-date and relevant to current scams.

Most scams involve robocalls or email to prey on elders. “It’s all about trust. Or fear,” Maria says. Often, scammers seek a Medicare card or Social Security number to commit financial fraud or identity theft. Others demand money for phony medical crises, supposedly involving grandchildren or other family members.

One of Maria’s acquaintances in the Monterey area was targeted in a “sweetheart scam” when a woman read his wife’s obituary, stalked him, dated him, then demanded her name be put on the deed to his house. Maria alerted Monterey County Adult Protective Services. A detective uncovered that this was the fourth scam the woman had perpetrated.

Recently, elders have been conned into signing up for supposed DNA testing; the scammers create a fake medical report and use it to claim up to $20,000 from Medicare. The victim never sees any test results. Worse, they can actually receive a bill from Medicare, and the Medicare card is compromised!

“You could write a book for the rest of your life, there are so many of these scams,” said Maria. She organizes information sessions at Rotary clubs, libraries, and assisted-living facilities, to inform and protect the elderly. “Maria is passionate about working to prevent older adult financial abuse,” said her supervisor, Public Guardian Mark Vanderscoff of the Health and Human Services Department.

The Board of Supervisors will recognize Maria with a formal resolution of commendation. The traditional ceremony in front of family, friends, and staff has been postponed because of the pandemic.

Left to right: FAST volunteers Chrisula Asimos, Valerie Lels, and Maria Gregoriev staff a table at World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Intern of the Year Focuses on Public Service

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“It has always been a dream of mine to work in the hallowed halls designed by Frank Lloyd Wright,” said PJ. “I deeply admire the government and its functions. It’s a body both historical and modern that affects our daily lives.”

Mary Sackett, aide to Supervisor Connolly, is PJ’s main supervisor. She guided him through the program.

“PJ is personable, warm, and genuine. He showed initiative and indicated there were no limits on what he was interested in and capable of doing,” said Mary. “He worked very quickly and without error. He was like a sponge!”

One of PJ’s assignments was reviewing the District 1 website. He looked for faulty links and located the correct information. After completing the work, he offered to do the same for the four other supervisorial districts’ websites. “They were surprised by the generous gesture, and most grateful,” Mary said.

Supervisor Connolly was also impressed by PJ’s work.

“PJ’s enthusiasm is infectious. He stays current on what is happening in the community and the state, and brings that information with him each week,” says Supervisor Connolly. “I believe the exposure PJ has gained through this internship will give him insight for his future, whether through advocacy, policy-making, or public service.”

Marin has been PJ’s home all his life. He lived the first 10 years in San Anselmo and now resides in San Rafael. (continued on page 3)
His great-great-grandfather came to San Rafael in 1888. “It’s truly an honor to continue the streak of Marinite,” says PJ.

A junior at Drake High School, he is scheduled to graduate in 2021. He has learned much in and outside the classroom and brings those skills to the Civic Center. He plans to pursue a career in the public sector.

PJ is an armchair historian and is particularly interested in 20th century United States history, as well as Marin’s history. He also fights for the Union as a Civil War reenactor.

“Public service is nothing to scoff at,” PJ says. “There are hardworking people in every department and agency, local to federal. Hard work and determination can get real change made for the people who need it the most.”

The Board of Supervisors will recognize PJ as Intern of the Year with a resolution of commendation.

Supervisor Connolly and PJ Nave
Supervisor of the Year: Chloe Cook
(continued from page 1)

“We have nurse interns, social work interns, and interns from the school of health professions,” she said.

The I&A unit promotes and protects the health, self-sufficiency, and safety of older adults and people with disabilities by providing assistance and referrals to services. Social workers conduct intakes for a home-delivered meal program, In-Home Supportive Services, and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. They also provide one-to-one planning and short-term services coordination through Marin’s Aging and Disability Resource Connection program in partnership with the Marin Center for Independent Living.

Chloe is not a registered nurse, so she recruited one to ensure supervision from a licensed professional. Public Health Nurse Rita Widergren (retired from Marin County HHS) teaches best practices. The curriculum focuses on person-centered care, equity issues, and more. An intern’s day includes visiting clients in their homes. Students may help with medication, nutrition, and medical appointments. They learn about community-based services by visiting community centers, community clinics, behavioral health settings, St. Vincent’s dining hall, and low-income neighborhoods. At day’s end, Chloe debriefs with students to help them reflect on situations they encountered.

Chloe says good supervisors are hardworking, creative, responsible, and “support each member of their team by helping them to grow and succeed in their own unique way.”

In response to being named Staff Supervisor of the Year, she said, “I love my work and feel it’s my duty to cultivate a future employee pool by introducing and training staff and interns to the important and fulfilling work we do with Marin Health and Human Services.”

Jenay Cottrell, program manager in Aging and Adult Services and Chloe’s supervisor, said, “Chloe puts passion and compassion into action every day and is incredibly creative in identifying and operationalizing ways—to provide assistance to vulnerable older adults and persons with disabilities.”

Three of Chloe’s former interns have been hired by the county. She finds it satisfying when people she has supervised achieve career successes.

Chloe also contributes during emergencies. “In response to recent Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, Chloe was instrumental in deploying students to administer preparedness surveys, food, and flashlights to Marin City residents,” said Jenay. Information gathered during that effort will support future responses during disasters or PSPS events.

And early in the pandemic, Chloe and her team helped get food and information to residents in need. “I feel proud that my team can face this hardship with optimism and resilience,” she said.

The Board of Supervisors will recognize Chloe with a formal resolution of commendation.
Going on a Bear Hunt

Inspired by English author and poet Michael Rosen’s classic children’s story “We’re Going On A Bear Hunt,” the Marin County Free Library and friends are joining a national teddy bear hunt. Children are searching for something to do during quarantine and a bear hunt is an opportunity for fresh air and fun while social distancing. Bears, such as the one shown in the picture, have been showing up in front windows all over Marin for children to spot as they pass by.

Who’s New & Welcome!

Casey Addicks (Novato), Marin Search & Rescue (SAR) Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Alexa Altamirano (San Carlos), Aging Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Nursing Student, Health & Human Services (HHS)
Courtney Baclig (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Juliet Batturaro (Sacramento), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Livia Buckley (Valencia), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Jessica Casero (Fresno), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Hailey Connery (Larkspur), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Daegan Cutter (San Anselmo), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Arin Davis (San Mateo), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Patricia Estrellado (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Cadence Evans (Mill Valley), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff Office
Troy Evans (Mill Valley), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff Office
Haley Fanfelle (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Solomon Fragakis (Larkspur), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Lauren Friedman (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Blen Getahun (Walnut Creek), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Brad Hartwig (San Francisco), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Leah Heinrich (Kenwood), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Christian Hellwig (Mill Valley), Steward, Marin County Parks
Tatum Hoover (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Vicky Huang (Elk Grove), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Helena Janku (San Anselmo), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Earl James Johns (Daly City), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Kim Juarez (Tiburon), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Samantha Kubota (San Ramon), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
William Kuimelis (San Anselmo), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Salamah Locks (San Rafael), ADRC Volunteer Runner, HHS
Sarah Luther (Danville), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Camero Maidenberg (Oakland), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Tatyana Martinez (Gilroy), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Tiffany Mathew (San Jose), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Aya Matsushima (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Neil Mendez (San Leandro), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Rachel Merchant (San Rafael), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Any Miller (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Emily Milstein (Mill Valley), Post-Bar Intern, Public Defender Office
Eric Molina (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Emily Morrison (Novato), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Carissa Ng (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Kelly Ng (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Brian Nishinaga (San Rafael), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Julia Niven (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Dylan O’Connor (Greenbrae), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Anna Ramos (Daly City), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Julia Regalado (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Karen Rehder (San Rafael), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Maria Robles (Vallejo), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Terrell Sheridan (Corte Madera), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Tori Spencer (Sacramento), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Max Thompson (San Rafael), Marin SAR Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Ebub Tontas (San Francisco), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS
Luke Tusher (Belvedere), Marin SAR Youth Volunteer, Sheriff’s Office
Kylie Voelker (Novato), Marin SAR, Youth Volunteer, Sheriff Office
Cameron Yap (Daly City), ADRC Nursing Student, HHS