

January 29, 2015



## COUNTY RECEIVES NATIONAL HEALTH RECOGNITION

This week, I was honored to accept an award from the National League of Cities on behalf of Santa Clara County's Salad Bar in Schools program. The bronze medal—the fifth medal for the County—was presented for the completion of a key health and wellness goal for Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties program. The program is a major component of First Lady Michelle Obama's comprehensive initiative to ensure that kids can grow up healthy.

Previously, Let's Move! has recognized Santa Clara County with gold medals for two policies I developed: a ground-breaking ordinance restricting incentives for unhealthy kids meals and comprehensive nutrition standards for meals and drinks provided through County funding. The County also received bronze medals for its efforts to translate MyPlate educational materials into Vietnamese and its Walk and Roll Safe Routes to School Program.

Let's Move! works closely with local elected officials nationwide to adopt policies that improve access to healthy affordable food and opportunities for physical activity for their constituents across five goal areas. Cities and counties have the opportunity to earn up to five gold medals, one for each actionable goal to which they commit to as part of the initiative. Medals are awarded to local elected officials based on their achievements.

The Salad Bar in Schools program is a local collaborative including the Public Health Department, the County Office of Education, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson's Team California for Healthy Kids, The Health Trust, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, and Kaiser Permanente. The Public Health Department is coordinating the effort at participating schools to support the overarching goal of creating a healthier school environment.

School salad bars are a proven effective strategy to increase kid's fruit and vegetable consumption and help them develop healthier eating habits. Salad bars are the easiest way for schools to meet the new nutrition standards for school lunch, which double the amount of fruits and vegetable served and emphasize a colorful variety.

The goal of the Salad Bar in Schools program partners and funders is to improve the health of Santa Clara County children, one salad bar at a time. The Let's Move! recognition is in honor of their national goal to expand access to meal programs before, during and after the school day, and/or over summer months.

I am excited by this recognition from Let's Move! because I am proud of the hard work this County has undertaken to combat childhood obesity. It shows that we have come a long way toward reversing the trend of a generation of kids expected to live shorter lives than their parents. We still have a way to go, but I know that this community is up to the challenge.

To learn more about Let's Move! and the Santa Clara County programs that have been recognized, visit <http://tinyurl.com/letsmovescc>.

As always, I encourage you to contact my office if you have any concerns or are interested in additional information. You can reach me at (408) 299-5040 or via e-mail at [Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org).



## **RESTAURANTS CONTINUE TO MAKE KIDS MEALS HEALTHIER IN RESPONSE TO COUNTY POLICY**

Earlier this month, fast food chain Wendy's announced that it will be removing sugary soda from its children's menus. This follows promise by McDonald's in 2013 to phase out their kids' meal soda offerings by later this year. This leaves Burger King as the only Big 3 burger chain still with soda in meals specifically intended for children.

In 2010, I led the charge for a first-of-its-kind law requiring restaurants in unincorporated Santa Clara County to meet minimum nutritional standards for food offered in kids' meals. A few months later, San Francisco passed an ordinance of its own. Cities like New York and Chicago explored the idea as well. The industry took notice, and these bold new laws help increase the visibility of messages around childhood obesity.

The following year, Jack in the Box stopped offering toys as part of their kids' meals. Instead, they focused on providing healthier and better quality offerings such as grilled chicken strips and apples. McDonald's also started taking steps that year by reducing the serving size of French fries and including fruit in all of their Happy Meals.

Kids' meals are big business. Restaurants spend millions of dollars in marketing. Many fast food chains dangle the latest must-have toy in front of a child as a reward for their parents buying them what amounts to extremely unhealthy fare.

Some fast food offerings are more than twice the daily fat, calories, and salt a child requires. Furthermore, studies have shown that drinking just one additional sugary drink every day increases a child's odds of becoming obese by 60 percent.

While parents bear the responsibility for feeding their children, an overabundance of fat, calories, and sugar in foods and drinks marketed directly to children makes parents' jobs harder. The restaurant industry must take responsibility for its role in the childhood obesity crisis.

It is only until recently that restaurants have been responding to local and national public health messages and policies to improve their menu offerings to children.

A Stanford study released last year studied the effects of San Francisco's ordinance over a two-year period. The study showed that fast food meals became healthier overall, even though local restaurants never fully complied with the law. In that time period, McDonald's in particular made big changes nationally to its Happy Meals, reducing the calories by 110 while cutting the sodium and fat content of the meal as well.

Changes in restaurant menus coincides with increased awareness of the public. A 2014 Field Poll study cited poor diet and lack of exercise as the top health concern related to kids in California. An overwhelming majority of Californians also now believe that community solutions are needed to help families prevent childhood obesity.

All this goes to show that our public health messages are working. Wendy's kids' meal soda change is another important victory. Now, we must continue to build on that momentum.

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### **ROTARY PLAYGARDEN TO OPEN SOON**

I have long advocated for building more parks and playgrounds in our community. They serve as important spaces for children and families to be physically active and engage with the outdoors. In 2013, Supervisor Chavez and I secured funds to help support the design and construction of an innovative new park in our region, the Rotary PlayGarden. I am proud to announce that this project has nearly reached completion, and the new park is set to open soon.

The Rotary PlayGarden is located next to the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens Visitor Center at 438 Coleman Avenue in San Jose. It offers natural features, play structures, and creative opportunities for fun. The park is specially designed to enable children of all abilities to engage and play equally, and to enable parents and caregivers with disabilities to play with their children.

There is traditional play equipment, such as a carousel, double seat seesaw, and swings, as well as slides embedded in earthen mounds. In the Water, Sand, and Music area, there are a number of creative play elements along a sandy riverbank. Further into the park, there is a beautiful apple tree labyrinth, along with natural elements such as a coyote brush ramble, gardens, and an oak meadow filled with colorful kinetic structures.

The Rotary Playgarden is a unique facility type in the region that will attract visitors from throughout the County and beyond. Similar facilities of this type in other parts of the State have attracted tens of thousands of visitors annually. It is a project that is consistent with County Parks' longstanding commitment to partnering with local cities to promote parks and recreation experiences of county-wide and regional significance.

The grand opening of the Rotary PlayGarden will be held on Saturday, February 21 at 10 a.m. There will be a brief program commemorating the construction of the park, followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony. I encourage families to enjoy this urban oasis, and I look forward to the park becoming a special place in our community.

For more information about the Rotary PlayGarden, please visit <http://www.rotaryplaygarden.org/>.

### **NEW COUNTY COMMISSION HAS OPENINGS FOR APPOINTMENT**

The County is seeking to fill openings on its newly created Commission on Equal Access and Employment Opportunity. The purpose of the Commission is to advise the Board of Supervisors on ways to promote equal access and opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse and multicultural population.

The Commission may take on such tasks as adopting a plan for reviewing equal employment opportunity and disability issues affecting the Santa Clara County community and employees in County agencies and departments, providing outreach to the community in terms of advancing equal employment opportunities within the County and providing information and education on disability rights, and reviewing the workforce profile of County agencies and departments with respect to equal employment opportunity and disability matters.

The Commission will be made up of seven member serving four year terms. Five members will be appointed by each Supervisor, and two additional members will be appointed by the President of the Board. Appointees should have knowledge of equal access and opportunity laws and regulations, as well as a demonstrated interest in meeting the needs of a diverse and multicultural population.

To apply, go to <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/bos/bnc/Pages/default.aspx>.

### **FREE TAX PREPARATION FOR LOW TO MODERATE INCOME FAMILIES**

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program is a local partnership that offers free tax help to low- to moderate-income people who want help with their tax returns. Eligible residents must have an annual income less than \$53,000 and cannot file as "Married, Filing Separate."

The VITA program is also working to raise awareness about a refundable tax credit called the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a federal tax benefit for working families with low to moderate incomes.

The maximum benefit for the 2014 tax year is \$6,143 for a family with three or more children, \$5,460 for a family with two children, \$3,305 for a family with one child, and \$496 if there are no children.

Certified volunteers sponsored by various organizations receive training to help prepare basic tax returns in communities across the country. There are volunteers who speak a number of languages, including English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Russian.

VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Most locations also offer free electronic filing. VITA sites and schedules can be found at [www.211scc.org](http://www.211scc.org) or by calling 2-1-1.

This year, a free online tax preparation service for those earning \$60,000 or less is also being offered. Eligible residents can go online and prepare their taxes by themselves using the free service. The online service is available at <http://myfreetaxes.org>.

## WATER CONSERVATION AWARDS SEEKS NOMINATIONS

Water is one of our most critical, life-sustaining natural resources. It is vital to the health and economic vitality of our region and to the environment. The Water Conservation Awards are presented to organizations, agencies, businesses, and individuals whose programs and leadership have advanced water conservation in Silicon Valley (San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and Alameda County from Hayward south).

The goal of the Awards is to raise awareness and celebrate outstanding achievements in water conservation through best practices, efficiency and innovation. Applications and nominations for the 2015 Silicon Valley Water Conservation Awards are now being accepted. The closing date is February 27, and the winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on March 23 in Palo Alto.

The award categories include Government Agency/Water Utility, Business, Organization, Greenscape Management, Education, and Water Champion. Additional information and nomination forms can be found at <http://www.waterawards.org>.

## NOMINATE A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HERO

It is important that we raise awareness of the challenges faced by those with behavioral health illnesses, and recognize those who offer support. With this goal in mind, the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Board (SCCBHB) is seeking nominees for its Community Heroes Awards. These awards are given to community members who have made an extraordinary difference in the lives of people with behavioral health illness.

Six members of the community will be given Community Heroes Awards. The award categories include Agency, Consumer/Clients, Elected Official, Family Member, Mover and Shaker, and Program. Nominations are being accepted until January 31, and the Awards will be presented on April 22 in San Jose.

For more information or to acquire a nomination form, contact Llolanda Ulloa at [llolanda.ulloa@hhs.sccgov.org](mailto:llolanda.ulloa@hhs.sccgov.org) or call the SCCBHB at (408) 885-5779.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Super Guadalupe River Run 2014

**What:** Guadalupe River Park Conservancy's Super Guadalupe River Run offers participants a great way to kick off Super Bowl Sunday. Don't fumble the opportunity to burn some calories. Whether you go long for 6.2 miles or tackle the 3.1 mile quarterback sneak, you'll earn your gametime guacamole on the Guadalupe.

**When:** Sunday, February 1 at 9 a.m.

**Where:** Guadalupe Gardens, 438 Coleman Avenue, San Jose

**More Information:** Visit <http://www.grpg.org/>.

### **Honoring of Nelson Mandela**

**What:** In recognition of Black History Month, the Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations Dispute Resolution Program invites the public to a special live reenactment of the life of Nelson Mandela. This event includes dramatic readings by local professional actors portraying Mandela's life journey from rebel to prisoner, to leader of South Africa, and his exemplary achievements through a mediated and peaceful transition of power. A short reception will follow the performance. Admission is free, but registration is required. To register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/NelsonMandelaSCCOHR>.

**When:** Monday, February 2 from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Isaac Newton Senter, 70 W Hedding St, San Jose

**More Information:** Contact the Office of Public Affairs at (408) 299-5119.

### **Silicon Valley Reads 2015 Kick Off**

**What:** The Campbell Library and Commonwealth Club Silicon Valley are initiating this year's Silicon Valley Reads, an annual community program that selects books focused on a contemporary theme and offers events to engage the public in reading, thinking and discussing the topic. The theme for 2015 is "Homeland and Home: The Immigrant Experience." The program is free, and all are welcome to join.

**When:** Wednesday, February 4 at 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Campbell Heritage Theatre, 1 West Campbell Avenue

**More Information:** Visit <http://siliconvalleyreads.org/>.

### **Fourth Annual African American History Flag Raising**

**What:** San Jose City Councilmember Ash Kalra and the NAACP San Jose/Silicon Valley Chapter invite you to celebrate African American History Month at San Jose City Hall. The event will feature a prominent key note speaker, ceremonial presentations, art, performances, food, and more.

**Where:** San Jose City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara Street

**When:** Friday, February 6 from 5 to 8 p.m.

**More Information:** Call (408) 535-4902 or email [district2@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district2@sanjoseca.gov).

### **Heart & Soles 5K**

**What:** Get a little exercise, have a lot of fun, and help raise money for this incredibly worthy cause. The Heart & Soles 5K, presented by Lam Research, supports "Salad Bars for Santa Clara County Schools," an initiative of the State's "Team California for Healthy Kids Initiative." The goal is to raise funds to place 100 salad bars in Santa Clara County K-8 schools. There will be a 5k Run/Walk for participants ages 8 and up and a Kids Fun Run for participants ages 2-7. Registration costs \$38 and \$12, respectively.

**When:** Saturday, February 7 at 9 a.m.

**Where:** Hellyer County Park, 985 Hellyer Avenue, San Jose

**More Information:** Visit <http://heartandsoles5k.com/>.

### **The Public Library: A Photographic Essay**

**What:** Bestselling author and photographer Robert Dawson will speak about his new book, "The Public Library: A Photographic Essay." A California native, Dawson has been travelling across America for the past eighteen years, documenting and photographing public libraries of all shapes and sizes. These libraries, located in small rural towns as well as large metropolitan areas, represent a fraction of the 120,000 libraries currently in the United States.

**When:** Saturday, February 7 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

**Where:** Campbell Library, 77 Harrison Ave.

**More Information:** Visit [www.sccl.org](http://www.sccl.org).

### **Public Comment on Vector Control's Draft Environmental Evaluation Report**

**What:** The Santa Clara County Vector Control District is holding a series of community meetings to receive public comments about its draft Environmental Evaluation Report. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the Vector Control District's current operations and activities and their potential impact on the environment. The District's operations and activities are currently compliant with environmental law. Although the District's operations are exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County is voluntarily seeking the public feedback on Vector Control activities. This draft also lays the groundwork for any future changes in operations which would require further impact analysis. The draft Environmental Evaluation will be available for public review at <http://www.SCCgov.org/sites/vector/Pages/Environmental-Evaluation.aspx>. The comment period will be open to residents interested in submitting written comments or questions, until February 28, 2015.

**When:** Wednesday, February 11 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Where:** Campbell Community Center, 1 W. Campbell Ave, Campbell

**More Information:** Email [vectorinfo@deh.sccgov.org](mailto:vectorinfo@deh.sccgov.org).

### **Immigration Reform Gathering**

**What:** The Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations is hosting "Immigration Reform at a Crossroads: A Regional Convening for Discussion & Planning." This event will feature a number of speakers, from elected officials to immigration specialists, who will lead discussions on the effective implementation of President Obama's Executive Order on Immigration. Registration is \$35, which includes breakfast and lunch. To register, visit <https://immigrationreformatacrossroads.splashthat.com/>.

**When:** Wednesday, February 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Where:** Sobrato Center for Nonprofits, 1400 Parkmoor Ave, San Jose

**More Information:** Contact Milina Jovanovic at [Milina.jovanovic@ohr.sccgov.org](mailto:Milina.jovanovic@ohr.sccgov.org).

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*This is an informative newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on issues that I am working on, local updates, events in District 4, and County resources. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and put the word "remove" in the body of the email. To receive a text-only version of the newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and put the words "text only" in the body of the email. To change the email address where you receive your newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and indicate the old and new email addresses in the body of the email. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail to [supervisor.yeager@bos.sccgov.org](mailto:supervisor.yeager@bos.sccgov.org) with the subject: "Add."*