



Community Service Restitution Unit

Triannual e-Newsletter

Sewing Our Youth Since 1980

January - April 2015



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Chief Probation Officer
Lynne Wilkerson

Deputy CPO
Early Intervention
Karl Johnson

CSR STAFF

Pete Gonzales
Supervisor

Sylvia Scott
Office Assistant

SPECIALISTS

Joe Medellin (Lead)
Alesha Girdy
Amanda Torres
Arturo Gutierrez
Crystal Guerra
Jesse Vielma
Judy Larkin
Steven Lerma

BBQ Fundraiser

Our 6th annual barbecue plate fundraiser took place on March 5th at the CSR Warehouse, 233 E. Mitchell. With the support of many, we were able to profit \$1,532. Monies raised from this fundraiser are to be used to buy incentives for our youth and purchase supplies for service learning projects.

As usual, CSR staff cooked, sold, and served the smoked chicken and sausage plates. Again, we kept the price at \$6 per plate. Do not know how much longer we can keep the price this low. But we were happy to do so once again.

Gratitude goes to probation department staff and community partners who supported the fundraiser. Of course, all our CSR staff contributed to make this event a success. In particular, Andrew Ramos and Steven Lerma got up in the wee hours to barbecue on a bitterly cold, wet and windy morning. Crystal Guerra planned and organized the event. And our good friend, Diego Espinoza, at Johnny's Mexican Restaurant (1818



(Pictured Left to Right) Steven Lerma and Andrew Ramos

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N. New Braunfels) kindly cooked forty pounds of rice.

This year's ticket sales efforts were spiced-up. CSR staff decided that the top ticket seller would get to hit CSR Supervisor, Pete Gonzales, with a pie to the face. Crystal was highly motivated. She sold ninety-one tickets. For this sales deed, she got to slam Pete's face. And the operative word is slam. All good fun for a good cause.

Here's looking forward to next year's fundraiser. ■



For questions, comments or suggestions on this newsletter,
please contact

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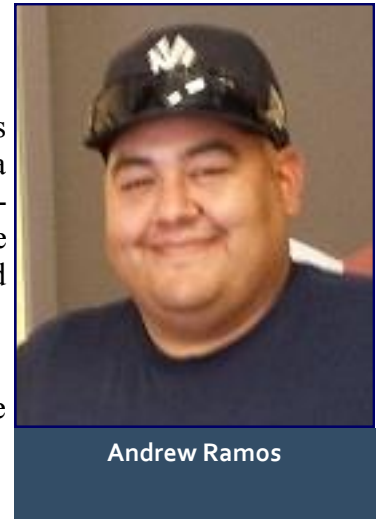
Congratulations to longtime CSR Specialist, Andrew Ramos. He was promoted to Program Assistant with the SAIP Unit. Promotion took effect on March 9th.

FAREWELL

Andrew started with the CSR Unit in 1999. While at CSR, Andrew stood out as one of the unit's top performers. He managed his caseload very efficiently with a high successful case closure rate. Equally important, his skill-set meshed extremely well with community service program needs. Plus, his easy-going nature and willingness to go the extra mile made him one of the unit's most valued and valuable employees.

Without a doubt, Andrew was relied on heavily at CSR and is sorely missed. He is, however, a great addition to SAIP.

We miss Andrew at CSR, but are very happy for his promotion. ■



Andrew Ramos

Congratulations and thank you to the Greater Randolph Area Services Program (GRASP). This community-based agency is CSR's "2014 Top Work Site." This award is given annually to that community partner that not only has a high number of community service hours performed at its site, but also demonstrates responsiveness and flexibility in interactions with our staff, clients and their families. Jay Higginson, President & CEO for GRASP, graciously accepted the award on Saturday, April 11th, at the VIP Banquet.

GRASP



Since 2008, GRASP has served as a CSR work site. It, however, has been helping the needy in northeast Bexar County as well as Guadalupe County since 1983. GRASP offers a comprehensive array of human services. It provides emergency assistance for rent, utilities, and medicine. It operates a thrift shop and food pantry. And, it provides socialization and nutrition services to seniors at its community center located in Converse. More information on this fine organization and the many services it provides is available at <http://www.grasp211.org/>.



Jay Higginson

Once again, congrats and many thanks to Jay and his staff. ■

Sunday Work Crews

On January 25th, a first for CSR took place. In an effort to better meet the needs of our clients, we piloted a Sunday work crew project. Holding a work crew on Sundays helps parents who work on Saturdays and cannot bring their children to our regular Saturday work crews.

Eight Sunday work crews are scheduled through the end of May. Early results have been very positive. We will, therefore, incorporate Sunday work crews on a routine basis. Typically, they will be scheduled every two weeks.

In part, Sunday crews are focused on bringing back on-line our greenhouse, which is located on the north side of the juvenile detention center. Youth attending these crews earn 6-credit hours each Sunday, same as Saturday crews. Due to our staffing complement, Sunday crews are presently limited to male youth.

Our Beginning

In 1978, a one-of-a-kind public service restitution (PSR) project was implemented in Bexar County. The project enabled first-time youth offenders to pay their debt to society without going through the court system or being placed on probation.

The PSR project was established by our department's Volunteers in Probation (VIP) program and the San Antonio Junior League. It was heralded as Texas' first public service restitution program.

Misdemeanant youth offenders performed public service in libraries, community centers, nursing homes, restaurants, and other local businesses.

“Established cooperatively by Volunteers in Probation (VIP), and the San Antonio Junior League, the program is ... Texas’ first restitution program”

The North San Antonio Times, “Program Helps Minors in Trouble,” March 27, 1980

In 1980, under the direction of then-Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Dr. Tom Broussard, our department established what is now known as the Community Service Restitution (CSR) Unit, with Carolyn McElroy serving as the first CSR Coordinator. With this, community service was no longer limited to non-adjudicated youth. Rather, our department began to also use CSR as a condition of probation for adjudicated youth. ■

Can't Beat Love



**Family
Violence
Prevention
Services, Inc.**

The Battered Women
and Children's Shelter

7911 Broadway
San Antonio, TX 78209

For the past six years, Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS) has sponsored a city-wide film contest, Can't Beat Love — San Antonio Youth Film Contest. Through this film project, FVPS invites area students to create videos on high interest topics in order to enlighten others on the issues and challenges facing today's teens.

For the second consecutive year, FVPS asked our community service youth to serve as peer judges for this contest. Students representing about twenty schools in our community submitted video entries on the critical issue of Peer Pressure. Over seventy films were submitted.

On Saturday, February 7th, nine of our youth judged twenty-six films. These films survived the cut after an initial round of judging by area dignitaries. Our youth watched each film, often multiple times, and scored each film based on criteria provided by FVPS. It was incredible to see and hear our youth process and debate the merits of each film. It was equally productive to allow them time to reflect on the topic of peer pressure. Additionally, our youth were proud to know that they had been entrusted to select that film to be presented with the "Peer Choice Award."

Youth judges were part of our regularly scheduled Saturday work crews. Judging took place at the 301 juvenile probation services complex. Activity was spearheaded by Alesha Giridy, CSR Specialist. FVPS contact on this project was Linda Canizales, Agency Services Liaison.

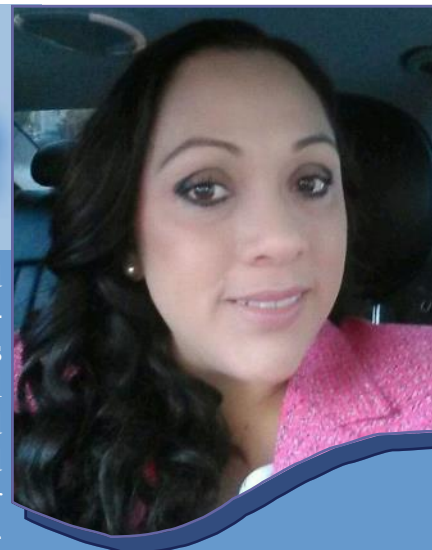
About FVPS

FVPS has been helping victims of domestic violence in San Antonio since 1977. It started as an emergency shelter for women and children. Currently, it offers a complete assortment of shelter, transitional housing, counseling, children's, and legal services to help individuals and families recover from the pain and long-term effects of domestic violence.

In 2008, FVPS joined our network of community service partners. Since then, it has provided our youth with community service opportunities at its donation center located at 2617 N. Main. At this center, FVPS accepts donations of furniture, electronics, clothing, shoes and a variety of household items. Any donation can be dropped off at the center, Mondays 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Pick-ups for large items can be arranged by calling the donation center. All donations are tax deductible.

To get more information on Family Violence Prevention Services, please call 210.821.3800 or go to fvps.org. To get more information on this film contest, please contact Linda Canizales at the same number or go to <http://www.cantbeatlovesa.org/>. ■

Welcome



Amanda R. Torres is the newest member to our unit. She officially joined CSR on March 25th. She began working for Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department on September 2008. Amanda graduated from Sul Ross University in December 2006. She is the proud parent of two wonderful yet very different and interesting children. DeAndre is 15 years old and Clarissa is 10 years old. On her spare time she enjoys reading a good book and is also an excellent cook. Amanda is very passionate about her job and is committed to helping juveniles succeed. She believes in treating people with the utmost respect.

2 for 1 Work Credit

Some of our youth have life circumstances which make very difficult compliance with community service obligations. In these instances, our juvenile courts and department impose a practical approach by permitting the use of paid work credit in lieu of community service hours.

All youth who are eligible for 2 for 1 work credit must meet the following conditions:

- Undergo an Intake with the CSR Unit;
- Probation Conditions and Deferred Prosecution Contract must reflect that 2 for 1 work credit is authorized by the court or probation officer;
- Juveniles who are not employed at the time of Intake must be assigned to the work crew or individual placement pending employment;
- Work hours should at least be double the CSR hours assessed. For example, if a child is ordered to complete 40 hours of community service at least 80 hours or employment must be documented; and,
- Submit verification of hours worked.

In calendar year 2014, 7% of all hours completed by CSR youth were in the form of 2:1 work credit. ■