



COUNTY OF MONTEREY
CAO Weekly Report

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SPECIALREPORT



Dr. Vanessa Lopez-Littleton includes stories of African Americans with leading roles in healthcare as part of her presentation at the Health Department's Black History Month program.

County Notes

- > The Employee Wellness Program has a jam-packed schedule of interesting workshops and activities. Check out the event calendar [here](#).

Black History Month Event Focuses on Public Health

While Black History Month events generally promote the contributions of Black Americans, the Health Department's annual Black History Month Celebration narrowed that scope this year - focusing on those contributions in the public health field and the goal of achieving health equity for Black populations.

Some 90 Health Department staff and community leaders gathered Wednesday, February 24th to honor the past and inspire the future, which was this year's event theme.

This year's guest speaker was Dr. Vanessa Lopez-Littleton, an assistant professor at CSUMB's Collaborative Health and Human Services program. Dr. Littleton's research interests are in the areas of racial and ethnic health disparities, social equity and cultural competency. Her presentation included examples of public health officials and their roles in advancing American society as well her expertise in explaining how cultural competency, the ability of an agency to come together to work effectively in cross-cultural situations, plays an important role in reaching out to the area's black population with services and information.



Attendees enjoy the program at this year's Black History Month Celebration at the Health Department.

Event organizer La'Quana Williams says Littleton's remarks go directly to the heart of why the event was launched three years ago.

"I wanted to make sure our staff had opportunities to interact with community members who are also working on health related issues in the local African American community," she explains. "That has been a success as evidenced by the community groups which came to our event such as the NAACP President and Health

Committee Chairs, and Behavioral Health Cultural Relevancy/Humility Committee members. In this way we are building bridges between the community and the Health Department and hopefully between communities and government overall."

Attendees were also treated to some delicious examples of traditional African American foods. African-influenced dishes such as Creole Etoufee and Jambalaya were featured as well as traditional 'Soul Foods' such as collard greens, biscuits and gravy, cornbread, okra, black-eyed peas and sweet potato pie. All foods were made by event committee members who love to show off their culinary skills.

Many thanks also to event committee members: Sharon Barnett, Mary Gustus, Karen Jones, Patricia McFadden, La'Quana Williams, Ramona Spears, Moira Lewis, Rosa Jones, Angela Cook, Nazarie Whipple, Kontrena McPheter, Ifeoma Okolie and Janine Woods

This event has become so popular over the last three years that it has outgrown its space at the Health Department and organizers will be looking to secure a larger venue for next year.

Parks, Wellness Program Offer Employees Annual Pass Deal

Monterey County has great parks – have you visited one lately? If you are already a parks enthusiast or haven't yet been to one, here is great deal for you.

For a limited time, County employees may purchase an Annual Park Pass for just \$60_- that's a 25% discount! This special deal is part of an Employee Wellness Program collaboration with the Parks Department. The idea is to get participants in the Exercise Challenge to take their exercise outdoors but you can enjoy our beautiful parks whether you are in the challenge or not.

The Parks Annual Pass has many benefits beyond enjoying the great outdoors. It is good for vehicle entrance and parking at Toro Park, Jacks Peak Park, Laguna Seca Recreation Area, Royal Oaks Park and San Lorenzo Park. The annual pass is also good for 50% off vehicle day use admission at Lake Nacimiento. Annual day use passes are good for unlimited visits and valid for one year from date of purchase (passes are not valid during special events or holidays).

This offer is good until March 18th. To purchase a pass, visit the Parks Department office at 855 E. Laurel Drive, Building G, in Salinas. You'll need to have your ID and proof of County employment. The Parks Department accepts cash, check, VISA, Discover and MasterCard.



Health Department Director Retires

After five years at the helm of the Health Department, Director Ray Bullick is retiring and saying goodbye to Monterey County. He was honored with a resolution by the Board of Supervisors this week, and his last day in the office is today, Friday, February 26th. Bullick shared some of his thoughts about the last five years, and some fond farewells.

"The past five years have flown by so fast it seems as though it was only yesterday my assistant Susie McKee met me outside the door to welcome me to my new position. I will take away special memories of Monterey County as a place to live as well as a place to work.

Never take for granted the wonderful environment we have here in Monterey - Barb and I loved exploring the trails and various beaches, it's a great place to stay active.



CAO Lew Bauman (left) and Supervisor Jane Parker (center) present a resolution to Ray Bullick (right).

As for a place to work, the culture and expectations for service to our community are above reproach. I have told many colleagues and friends that if you want to work in Monterey County, you better bring an 'A' game.

Where else can a person provide for others, plan for the betterment of the generations to come and still have fun doing it? There is a great group of department heads and it is wonderful to work in an environment that shares a common vision and works together as a family.

I must acknowledge the fantastic staff which supported our work here in the Health Department. One of my favorite things to do was go on work place 'walk-a-bouts' from time to time to visit with staff I wouldn't typically get a chance to chat with. They have tolerated my

moods and efforts to change some of our priorities, from the introduction of a different strategic planning process, new performance matrices to my ongoing requests for information. Staff has been nothing short of excellent.

As you can probably tell it will not be easy for me to leave today but I must close this chapter and start a new one. I look forward to the new challenges of grandbabies and woodworking but would love it if folks would keep in touch and share some of the exciting happenings from the world by the Bay."