



# Employee Wellness Spotlight

## November 2017: Meet James!

Meet James La'a, Senior Information Systems Coordinator for Monterey County's Health Information Technology Department. James has been with the County for 17 years.

When asked how he enjoys staying active, James shared his passion for outrigger canoe paddling, which helps him perpetuate his culture and maintain good physical condition. James paddles single and 6-man outrigger canoes. He participates in sprint regattas during the spring, distance canoe racing during summer, and the Wave-Chaser series involving various watercraft races during the winter. Race locations vary from the northern and central coasts of California to the Hawaiian Islands. James has participated in two separate Hawaiian island races this year - NaPali Challenge, a 41-mile crew change race on the island of Kauai and an 18-mile co-ed race, Queen Lili'uokalani at Kona, Hawaii. The last long distance race of the year was the Monterey Bay Crossing, a 26-mile ironman race from Santa Cruz to Del Monte Beach.

"When not practicing with the team or racing, I am often paddling solo or with a few friends at Moss Landing or Del Monte Beach," he says. James is also the Sergeant of Arms and the novice women's coach for Ke Kai O'Uhane Outrigger Canoe Center, a local paddling group located in Monterey. Ke Kai O'Uhane Outrigger Canoe Club actively participates in sprint and long distance racing in California and Hawaii.

James invites you to experience recreational paddling sessions on the first and third Sunday of each month! If you are interested in paddling please go to [kekaiouhane.org](http://kekaiouhane.org) for more information.

If you would like to nominate an employee to be featured in our Wellness Spotlight please email Melissa Pouch at [PouchM@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:PouchM@co.monterey.ca.us).

