



## County Wins 19 National Achievement Awards

Alameda County made a stellar showing in this year's **National Association of Counties (NACo)** awards program, drawing national distinction with **19 Achievement Awards** for innovations and accomplishments covering a wide range of services.

One of the winning Alameda County programs, an effort led by the **Department of Public Health (DPH)** to improve immunization rates in local schools, received top honors nationally in NACo's Civic Education and Public Information category. Public Health's "**Community Immunity Honor Society**," helped spark a 1-year immunization rate improvement of nearly 8 percent, best in California. "Alameda County surpassed the State average and became one of the best immunized counties in California," NACo said in announcing the award.

The County's haul of NACo Achievement Awards was impressive not only for its large number, but for the diverse array of services commended by judges from around the country. Programs earning awards included campaigns to reduce gun violence and improve residents' health; a new app that gives users instant information on the latest road closures; and numerous innovations to improve business practices and reduce waste.



"This past year has been marked by amazing work across the County organization," said Susan S. Muranishi, County Administrator. "Our impressive showing in this year's NACo awards should be a source of pride for every member of our County workforce."

In addition to DPH's countywide school immunization program, Alameda County's 18 other Achievement Award winners were:

- **Reimagining the Ashland-Cherryland Healthy Community Collaborative** – A renewed effort driven by the **Sheriff's Office** and **Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League (DSAL)** that leverages County partnerships with community and faith-based organizations and other groups to overcome poverty, safety challenges and poor health and education outcomes in these unincorporated communities.

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## Alameda County Fair in Pleasanton June 15 – July 8

The Alameda County Fair returns to Pleasanton on June 15 to begin an 18-day run featuring new attractions, first-rate entertainment and the return of several longtime Fair favorites.

One of those Fair favorites is the Opening Day Cattle Drive, with cowboys and cowgirls guiding cattle through downtown Pleasanton. The one-of-a-kind procession should make its way down Pleasanton's Main Street about 10:30 a.m. on Friday, June 15.

As usual the Fair will feature headline musical acts. This year's Fair will include performances by LeAnn Rimes, Smash Mouth, En Vogue, Clay Walker, the Tubes, Blue Oyster Cult and other artists. There also will be plenty of corn dogs and cotton candy, horse racing, livestock auctions, carnival rides, games and exhibits.

The Fair runs from July 15 to July 8 at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., with the Fair closed Mondays and Tuesdays. On July 4, Fair hours will be 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., with the gates closing at 3 p.m.

Tickets and season passes can be purchased on the Alameda County Fair [website](#). See your Agency/Department head to inquire about the availability of employee discount tickets.



## "Write to Read" Teacher Wins Bay Area Jefferson Award

An Alameda County Library employee has been chosen to receive a Bay Area Jefferson Award for Public Service for helping youth at San Leandro's Camp Wilmont Sweeney to improve their reading skills.

Cyrus Armajani was chosen by KPIX television and All News KCBS Radio to receive the award for work he performs at Camp Sweeney through Write to Read, a reading skills program presented through a partnership involving the Library, Probation Department and County Office of Education.

Jefferson Awards are given in communities around the country to people who help others in extraordinary ways through public service.

For the past 15 years, Cyrus has been teaching young men aged 15 to 18 at Camp Sweeney, a transitional facility run by the Alameda County Probation Department that houses juvenile offenders for an average of eight months.

The Write to Read program has been a big success in helping students make extraordinary gains in reading comprehension. The 36 students who completed the Write to Read program in 2017 showed an average of six grade-level gains in reading comprehension while also making significant improvement in areas such as reading out loud, word recognition and writing.

Such dramatic improvements were cited by KPIX and KCBS in choosing Armajani for the Jefferson Award. On June 5, the Board of Supervisors also commended Armajani for work that is helping young Camp Sweeney students to "look towards their future achievement in work and school."



## County Breaks Ground on New Cherryland Community Center

On April 12, Alameda County celebrated the official groundbreaking for the \$22 million Cherryland Community Center construction project. The Community Center project is funded by Alameda County and will be located on the 17000 block of Boston Road at Hampton Road, adjacent to the Meek Estate, in unincorporated Cherryland near Hayward.

The Community Center will be a significant capital improvement providing recreation and gathering space for Cherryland. The project is scheduled for completion in July 2019.

Alameda County and the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD) are collaborating on the Community Center project. Alameda County will construct and own the facility, while HARD will be responsible for programming, operations and maintenance.

The facility will include multi-use meeting rooms, a Pre-K activity room, an Alameda County Library Annex, and a modern reception hall with a catering kitchen to accommodate up to 230 people. The architect of the project is Noll & Tam of Oakland and the Contractor is Vila Construction of Richmond.

With a number of energy-saving and resource conservation features, the building is expected to attain a LEED Silver designation under the rating system established by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The Community Center project was identified in 2009 as a priority during the Eden Area Livability Initiative process. Redevelopment tax increment funds were set aside to pay for the purchase of property, design and construction of the project. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors was able to retain these funds after the State dissolved local redevelopment agencies in 2011.



*Supervisor Nate Miley speaks at the Cherryland Community Center groundbreaking*



**National Counties Month:** On April 17, the Board of Supervisors celebrated National Counties Month to promote the many services counties across the country provide to create healthy, safe and vibrant communities. Supervisor Keith Carson asked County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi to receive the Board's proclamation due to her leadership in supporting the work of counties across California and the nation.

## Hometown Support



We're lighting up Oakland's iconic Rene C. Davidson Courthouse and other County buildings in blue and gold to support our hometown Golden State Warriors as they head to the NBA Finals for the fourth straight year. Many County buildings are also adorned with banners boasting the Warriors' "Strength in Numbers" rallying cry. **Go Warriors!**

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- **Road Closures Tool** – This mobile-friendly tool developed by the **Public Works Agency** and **ITD** updates motorists on road closures, and links with social media to get out the message. It also allows users to enter information about closures they observe. The data is automatically sent to Waze to provide timely road closure updates to others.
- **“Save a Life Gun Safety Campaign and Toolkit** – A campaign led by the **District Attorney’s Office** to keep guns out of the hands of children and teens to reduce gun violence. The toolkit allows the campaign to be replicated easily in other communities.
- **Care Partners** – A partnership involving **SSA, the Health Care Services Agency (HCSA)** and community organizations that addresses racial and cultural disparities in access to end-of-life planning and care for low-income, older adults.
- **Shoo the Flu, Influenza Vaccination in Schools** – A school-based program led by **DPH** that provides free influenza vaccines to students in all public, private, charter and religious schools in the City of Oakland.
- **ULEP Mental Health Services Impact Assessment Tools** – Two community assessment tools used to measure the impact and effectiveness of mental health services provided by **Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS)** to underserved ethnic and linguistically isolated populations.
- **CalWORKs Public Service Trainee Program** – An **SSA**-led paid transitional jobs program pairing classroom skill-building with on-the-job training to public assistance clients facing acute employment barriers, to prepare them for jobs in the public and private sectors.
- **Special Assessments Portal for Taxing Agencies** – An automated process developed by **ITD** and **the Auditor-Controller** that replaces a manual, labor-intensive system for managing and distributing about \$600 million in annual property tax revenue the County collects on behalf of 57 local taxing entities.
- **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Online Appointment Scheduling** – An automated scheduling system developed by **ITD** that increases the flexibility and efficiency of the award-winning volunteer tax-preparation program led by **SSA** that helps low- to moderate-income residents take advantage of federal and State tax credits to maximize tax refunds.
- **Boards and Commissions App** – This upgraded system developed by **ITD** and **the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors** increases accuracy, efficiency and ease-of-use in managing membership of nearly 50 volunteer Boards and Commissions administered by the County.
- **IMPROVE.NET, business/personal property valuation system** – California’s first web-based property value system was developed by **ITD** and **the Assessor’s Office**. It delivers a highly efficient, logical process that has eluded other counties due to the State’s complex property tax code.
- **Authorized Approvers System for Online Forms** – Developed by the **Information Technology Department (ITD)** and **the Auditor-Controller’s Office**, the system replaces a paper-based process for authorizing select employees to sign expense forms and other documents on behalf of department heads. The system saves time, expenses and paper.
- **Contract Renewal Management System for Community-based Organizations** – A electronic system that allows the **Social Services Agency (SSA)** to manage over 200 contracts it renews each year with community-based organizations providing social welfare and health services to County residents. The system was developed through a partnership involving **SSA, the Auditor-Controller Agency, County Administrator’s Office** and **the Office of the County Counsel**.
- **Advanced Visibility in the Cloud** – **ITD** launched this project in March 2017 to provide greater visibility of the wide array of network services – including Cloud-based technologies - it manages on behalf of all County Agencies/Departments. The result is an enhanced ability to plan, diagnose issues and optimize the delivery of applications and services across the County.
- **League of Women Voters Affidavit Tracker** – A new system that allows the **Registrar of Voters Office (ROV)** to track voter registration drives led by the League of Women Voters. The system allows the League to focus on its critical voter outreach services and less on paperwork and administration.
- **Technology Refresh of Desktop Environment** – **ITD** replaced over 2,600 workstations within **SSA** and upgraded the agency to Windows 10, utilizing automation and modern business practices to complete in 10 months a conversion process that had been projected to last four years.
- **Wellness at Work** – A collaboration between **Human Resource Services** and Kaiser Permanente that offers incentives to employees to participate in biometric screenings, online health assessments and wellness classes to promote a healthy workforce.
- **Emergency Tracking System** – A project led by the **County Administrator’s Office**, in partnership with **ITD**, led to a new system allowing the County to closely track resources deployed in response to the devastating wildfires in the Napa/Sonoma wine country in October 2017. As management needs emerged, **ITD** developed the highly effective application in less than 24 hours.

## Work Begins to Finalize FY 2018-19 Alameda County Budget

County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi will be presenting a Proposed FY 2018-19 Alameda County Budget to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, June 12, in the board chambers, 1221 Oak Street, 5th Floor, Oakland. At that time, the Board will hear several recommendations for closing Alameda County's projected \$65.9 million funding gap for FY 2018-19. The Board will hold budget hearings June 25-27 with the Board's adoption of a Final FY 2018-19 Budget scheduled for Friday, June 29. That will be the culmination of a public process that began in April with regular meetings of our Budget Workgroup and a series of Early Budget Work Sessions held by the Board. At those sessions, County department heads outlined their achievements over the past fiscal year and their plans for serving communities across the County in FY 2018-19. Departments and Agencies across the County organization have been hard at work determining their contributions to the budget balancing process. The projected funding gap is less than last year's figure of \$108.5 million, but it is still significant. County officials say revenues have been boosted by a relatively strong economy and robust housing market. They warn, however, that an economic downturn is likely to occur sometime in the next few years and that the County must maintain a cautious fiscal approach to prepare for tougher times ahead.

## Campaign Urges Residents to Steer Clear of Sugary Drinks, Toward Fresh Food

Alameda County recognized **CalFresh Awareness Month** in May through a monthlong campaign, "CalFresh for Health." Led by our Social Services Agency, the campaign raised awareness about sugar-sweetened beverages and their links to obesity. In Alameda County, 54.6% of adults and 34.7% of school-aged children are overweight or obese, and 63.7% of adolescents drink one or more sugary drinks each day. As a result, they are potentially adding an additional 1,000 calories per week to their diets in sugary drinks alone.

On May 22, the Board of Supervisors acknowledged the CalFresh for Health campaign by issuing its fifth annual CalFresh Awareness Month proclamation. This year's campaign not only sought to raise public awareness about the potential health impacts of sugary drinks, it also touted the availability of fresh, seasonal foods at a growing number of farmer's markets in our communities.

Raising awareness about the availability of healthy, fresh foods is a potentially powerful way to support health and wellness in Alameda County, where there are five times as many fast food restaurants and convenience stores as there are grocery stores and farmer's markets. The CalFresh for Health campaign placed additional emphasis on Farmer's Markets throughout Alameda County that accept Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards and participate in Market Match, allowing CalFresh participants to use their benefits to increase their buying power and make healthy food choices for their families.

Known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, CalFresh assists qualified individuals and households in meeting their nutrition needs. Currently, 55,784 families and individuals in Alameda County rely on the CalFresh program to feed themselves and their families.

Said Lori A. Cox, Director of the Alameda County Social Services Agency, "Many County residents would be shocked by the statistics from their own community: one in six Alameda County residents misses a meal weekly. It is estimated that 13% of County residents live in poverty. Many students and young adults face food insecurity and make tough decisions daily, such as choosing between food and books. CalFresh can and does make all the difference between hunger and nutrition."



On May 22, Board President Wilma Chan gathered with leaders in a local coalition fighting food insecurity to celebrate CalFresh Awareness Month and the local "CalFresh for Health" campaign

## REACH Ashland Youth Center Celebrates 5-Year Anniversary

REACH Ashland Youth Center celebrated its 5-year anniversary on May 18 with an event that allowed a broad cross-section of the community to relax and mingle within the uplifting space on East 14th Street and to take stock of the positive impact the facility has had on unincorporated Ashland.

The family-friendly Friday afternoon celebration was hosted by the REACH Youth Leadership Council (YLC) and included carnival activities, food, and youth performances.

"The YLC wants to show our appreciation and love for the REACH staff and privilege of this beautiful building," said Terris Ricks, 21, YLC member. "It is a big deal for REACH to be here for 5 years. Helping kids and running REACH is a lot of work. So much love and heart to help kids is shown by the staff."

Added Pedro Naranjo, REACH Executive Director, "It is an honor and a privilege to serve the young people of the Ashland Community because the young people are our biggest asset."

REACH is a 31,500-square foot hub of youth development activity in Ashland, next to San Leandro. REACH includes a health clinic, media studio, dance studio, fitness room, library, outdoor amphitheater, computer lab, employment center, educational, vocational and artistic activities, an infant and toddler development center, and an onsite café. The center focuses its work on supporting youth ages 11-24, living in Ashland/Cherryland.

In 5 years, REACH has made great strides in meeting its mission to become a source of positive community building in a racially and ethnically diverse area where 20% of youth are living in poverty. The center's comprehensive programming seeks to address root causes of problems that have challenged young people in the area for years, including a lack of opportunity and poor health and educational outcomes.

Statistics show that REACH has served an average of 3,000 youth each year over the past 3 years. According to a recent survey of youth at REACH, 91 percent said they took advantage of wellness services offered at the center, including medical, dental, counseling, and nutrition services. In addition, the percentage of youth who report talking with a staff member at REACH about personal challenges has increased from 31 percent in 2014 to 67 percent in 2017. Ninety-three percent of REACH members surveyed agreed with the statement, "as a result of participating in REACH activities, I have become actively involved in improving my community."

To learn more about the REACH Ashland Youth Center, go to [reachashland.org](http://reachashland.org).

## Voter Registration Drive and Election Forum at REACH Ashland Youth Center

REACH Ashland Youth Center hosted a special Voter Registration Drive and Election Forum on May 16th. The event once again illustrated the Youth Center's power in engaging youth about community issues in an area that historically has had low voter participation.

About 50 people attended the event, which was co-sponsored by the Resources for Community Development housing nonprofit. One focus of the event was to pre-register 16- and 17-year-olds so that they will become legal voters as soon as they turn 18. REACH members as well as residents of the Ashland community turned out to learn about the wide array of local issues on the June 5 Primary Election ballot in Alameda County.

Ice cream also was served, thanks to Aisha Knowles, Trustee on the Alameda County Board of Education.

The event echoed a series of voter-engagement efforts led by REACH in 2016. Those events helped to increase voter registration in that precinct by 60 percent, with voter turnout increasing by 20 percent over 2014. These figures demonstrate the potential for community engagement brought by REACH since it opened in 2013. REACH will once again be a polling place for the June primary, offering a new measure of convenience for voting-age youth who participate in programs at the bustling community center.



## Summer of Library Love: Fine Forgiveness, June 1 – July 31

The arrival of June means many things to many people. At the Alameda County Library, it means the **Summer of Library Love** has begun!

This is good news for library patrons. For the second straight year, the Library will be forgiving fines on all overdue items from June 1 thru July 31! Love breaks barriers. Don't let fines keep us apart. Simply return your library materials to us in good shape and your fines will be removed!

Were your fines forgiven? Show us your story of fine forgiveness on social media, using the hashtag **#LibraryLove2018**. Patrons who get their fines waived will get a groovy Summer of Library Love sticker while supplies last.

Still have overdue fines for items you've already returned? Visit the library circulation desk, call your local branch library, or submit a request to **Ask Us** and your fines will be forgiven.

- Overdue materials can be returned at the circulation desk or book drop at any Alameda County Library branch.
- Damaged and unusable items are not eligible for fine forgiveness. Nor are overdue or lost materials that have not been returned or replaced, or items from other library systems
- If your library account shows overdue fines for items that have already been returned, visit the library circulation desk, call your local branch library, or submit a request to **Ask Us** between June 1st and July 31st and your fines will be cleared.
- There will be no reimbursement for previously paid fines.
- You can also help others have their fines forgiven, if you have that person's materials, or are a parent, guardian, or additional user on that person's library account.



## Election Season

The Registrar of Voters office has been pulling out all stops to prepare for the big **June 5 Primary Election**, registering voters at a brisk clip and setting up polling places around the County. The election features many important federal, State and local races, with numerous local measures on the ballot. Early voting began on May 7. There are more than 850,000 registered voters in Alameda County. After June 5th, election results will be available on the Registrar's website at [acvote.org](http://acvote.org)



Photos by Jovan Lozano