

What's NEWSLETTER

KEEPING STAFF INFORMED AND CURRENT

MARCH 2017

Ten Questions with Mark Refowitz

We sat down with Mark Refowitz, whose last day as Director of the Health Care Agency is March 30th, for an interview that touched on his more than 30 years of professional experience in public sector healthcare and social services. The goal was to ask questions that would interest our colleagues across the Agency and share his unique and inspirational perspective. Thanks, Mark, for being such a good sport – and for your leadership, humor, and dedication. You will be missed, and we sincerely wish you all the best in your retirement.

- 1. You were named Director of the Health Care Agency (HCA) in 2012, having spent the previous eight years as our Deputy Agency Director of Behavioral Health Services. You were no stranger to the department, but this new role was exactly that – new. What surprised you the most?**

I think I was the most surprised by the number of people who assumed I didn't know a thing about service areas outside of Behavioral Health. Hey, that was only partially true! Co-workers asked me not to make any rash decisions, and to take the time to learn. Well, I started learning my first day on the job, and haven't stopped since.

- 2. Would you tell us about one accomplishment during your time here that really stands out in your memory?**

One of the accomplishments I'm most proud of is having been a driving force in getting the Mental Health Services Act formula changed to better represent the people who actually use our services and to include a greater number of folks without insurance. As the President of the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California, I worked with our governing board to make a recommendation to the State of California on the formula they were developing that was ultimately worth about \$100 million to the people of Orange County. This

Mark Refowitz, Director

legislative fix involved lots of cooperation; we had to develop a tremendous amount of buy-in on both sides of the aisle to bring to fruition.

- 3. How about one challenge?**

If you look back, the spread of Ebola in West Africa in 2014-2015 was something that frightened everyone. We kicked into gear and did what only we do at HCA; local surveillance. Monitoring folks who had traveled there and returned here. Partnering with hospitals and community partners to conduct drills and assess our ability to respond. Though we had no cases here – had we been next, we were ready. That's the kind of thing that isn't readily apparent to the public. The number

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of visitors we have here in Orange County is the equivalent of hosting the Super Bowl every single day. We have to be ready to respond to disasters, and terrorist attacks using biological weapons, you name it. Things we never hope will happen, but might. The fact that we diligently prepare today for whatever may come tomorrow is something folks should really take comfort in.

4. If you could travel back in time to your very first day on the job as Director of the Group Living Project at the Connecticut Department of Corrections in New Haven, 1973, when this path began – what advice would you offer yourself?

I would share all I've learned over the years about trauma-informed care. This was a work release pilot program and many of these women, while inmates, were also victims. The theory at the time was that people's moral development happened in stages, and that framing specific group interactions would speed that process along. We knew folks had rough lives – some had been found guilty of manslaughter or murder when they'd been defending themselves or their children against horrific domestic abuse – but Battered Person Syndrome wasn't on the books then, so we did the best we could to get our participants to think about issues, make group decisions, and set rules themselves. Understanding the impacts of trauma as I do today, I would have advised my younger self to weave more individual counseling into our program to help these clients understand how their decision-making was being colored by the traumas they experienced in the past. I would talk about the importance of giving people more space to work through their issues.

5. What's the best piece of advice, personal or professional, that someone's ever given you?

My mom told me a long time ago, "Don't make up stories, you'll never remember them." I'd couple that with, "Be nice to everybody." Both have served me well.

6. You've dedicated your professional life to improving the health and wellbeing of others. What has this taught you about people and about yourself?

People at their core are good. One of the things you learn early on in social work is to just stay focused on helping your client achieve what they want to

achieve. If someone doesn't have hope, they won't be able to take even the first step. Ask yourself, "What's the right thing to do for this person?" At the end of the day, focus on what's right for them, and you'll generally find yourself on the right track.

7. What has kept you motivated?

Every day is a different day! Overall, I've tried to stay humble and admit what and when I need to learn something new. For me, learning all the different service areas has been like getting 5 graduate degrees. Learning has been intellectually inspirational and battery charging.

8. What advice do you have for staff who aspire to an executive management position one day?

Develop a thirst for learning and actively seek out different experiences. Always be on the lookout for new and better opportunities.

9. We're not all the best at dealing with change! What's important for staff to know about what your departure means for the Agency?

The unknown can be anxiety producing. It's a transition, and change is the only constant. My hope is that your next department head will be selected before I retire, and that we will work together to ensure a smooth transition. Once he/she begins, it's typical to perform an assessment of what's working well and what needs improvement. While changes will happen, I'm confident they will be well thought out. I encourage you to welcome the fact that change is an opportunity for progress, and to focus on the work.

10. What would you like to say to your friends and colleagues reading this article today?

It has been my colleagues and peers that have sustained me. You've given me guidance, support, served as a sounding board, and helped me test ideas. Thank you for being there, for uttering a kind word when needed, and being honest and critical when that was needed, too. I'm still trying to figure out what comes next for me, but I plan to stay involved in the community and to use the things I've learned along the way to help others. I plan to travel, spend time with my new grandson, improve my Spanish, learn to surf, and enhance my culinary skills. All while continuing to be active and trying to stay healthy.

Remembering Anthony “Tony” Rose

In January, the Health Care Agency (HCA) lost an exceptional leader, mentor and local and statewide advocate for children with the passing of California Children’s Services (CCS) Division Manager **Anthony “Tony” Rose**.

As a hobby, Tony enjoyed disc jockeying (DJ) and was a true connoisseur of music who enjoyed sharing his passion at various events and gatherings. A memorial service to celebrate his life featured his close DJ friends who played music while attendees inscribed well-wishes on stones for his wife and daughter and left their mark on a “fingerprint tree” guest book.

“It was an honor to know Tony and to be part of his celebration of life,” said HCA Director **Mark Refowitz**. “The music and ambiance was truly a happy one as HCA staff along with Tony’s family and friends all gathered to remember the great life he lived.”

Tony is known by his colleagues and staff for being a great coach who provided positive encouragement, clear expectations, constructive criticism, and acknowledgment for a “job well done.” He created organizational change in a customer-oriented manner

by raising the bar for success in ways that were attainable by staff, drove the growth of the CCS Palliative Care Team and encouraged supervisors and managers to take on challenging projects and re-invent processes.

From 2010 to 2014, Tony served as HCA’s Administrator for the Medical Services Initiative (MSI) program where he managed department operations with an annual budget of approximately \$90M, set strategic priorities and maintained the MSI health care provider network.

With Tony’s contributions to HCA and the community, he was nominated by his colleagues and selected as February’s [Peer-to-Peer](#) award winner prior to his passing.



New Motel Assistance Program Begins Housing Homeless Participants

A new program designed to provide temporary housing to assist individuals who are struggling with a mental health or substance use issue and currently work with our Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Outreach and Engagement (O&E) team, has begun housing its first participants.

The Motel Assistance for Behavioral Health Homeless program is designed to provide housing to individuals in a motel for up to seven days to support their recuperative care, linkage to behavioral health programs or after they are matched to a housing opportunity through the [Coordinated Entry System](#).

The process begins with O&E staff who identify participants that are working toward rehabilitative

goals. Once a participant is determined, staff will connect with a BHS contract provider that has existing relationships with motels. The provider then sets up and funds the motel stay.

Since its launch February 23, the program has successfully housed several participants. Here are a few success stories:

- O&E staff had been working with an adult female who was matched for housing. She was scheduled for foot surgery prior to when her unit would be available. Staff all worked together to identify a motel and got her off the streets until she was able to move into her unit.
- A male that lives on the riverbed, who O&E

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New Motel Assistance Program Begins Housing Homeless Participants

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staff had been working with, was matched for a housing unit that wouldn't be available for a week. To get him off the riverbed, staff offered him a motel room until his unit was ready. He cried and commented that he hadn't showered in weeks and would be very happy to use this service.

BHS O&E provides outreach services to individuals of all ages who are homeless or at risk of

homelessness, and struggling with a behavioral health condition. The team develops trusting relationships with homeless participants in any public area and works with them to reduce barriers to housing due to behavioral health impairments and facilitates linkage to available resources and support services. To learn more about the great work they do, visit the [Outreach and Engagement](#) website or call 800-364-2221.



“It's comforting to know that when we place our homeless participants in a motel, they are safe and supported as they prepare for the next stage of their journey toward independent living.”

– Tammy Waitman,
Mental Health Specialist, Behavioral Health Services
Outreach & Engagement team

Correctional Health Services Launches New Recognition Program Inspired by “The Starfish Story”

The idea that anyone can make a difference in someone's life, even if it's just one person, served as the inspiration behind Correctional Health Services' (CHS) new Starfish Recognition Program that highlights staff and teams who've made an extra effort to make a positive change or contribution at CHS.

The Starfish program provides CHS employees at all levels with the perfect platform to recognize their peers for their positive efforts and dedication. Recognition for staff can take place every day through a simple nomination process. Each nominee is immediately acknowledged and becomes eligible for the Quarterly Award.

“Recognition happens in the moment, catching staff doing exemplary work and recognizing specific behavior(s),” said **Kim Pearson**, Deputy Agency Director for Correctional Health Services. “It's encouraging to see CHS staff embracing this program and recognizing their coworkers for making a difference. And like the story goes, recognizing just one starfish can make a world of difference.”



Starfish Award-Pushpa Hennayake:

Pictured (left to right) Erin Winger, Pushpa Hennayake and Dr. Chun Chiang.

CHS held its first Quarterly Starfish Award to recognize three employees out of 44 nominations received in the quarter for performing above and beyond the call of duty and displaying behaviors that promoted the CHS mission and vision. Congratulations to **Maria Theresa Thomas**,

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Correctional Health Services Launches New Recognition Program Inspired by “The Starfish Story”

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Marriage & Family Therapist II, **Pushpa Hennayake**, Office Specialist, and **Edwin Michael Tigno**, Comprehensive Care Licensed Vocational Nurse.

Recipients were recognized during an award

ceremony held in January where they received a certificate, starfish pin, knitted starfish (handmade by a CHS employee), and a written note of thanks from the Starfish committee made up of CHS supervisors and managers.

Starfish Award-Maria Teresa Thomas:

Pictured (left to right) Erin Winger, Kim Pearson, Maria Teresa Thomas and Richard Sanchez.

Starfish Award-Edwin Michael Tigno:

Pictured (left to right): Erin Winger, Kim Pearson, Edwin Michael Tigno and Richard Sanchez.

The Starfish Story

A young man is walking along the ocean and sees a beach on which thousands and thousands of starfish have washed ashore.

Further along he sees an old man, walking slowly and stooping often, picking up one starfish after another and tossing each one gently into the ocean.

“Why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?” he asks.

“Because the sun is up and the tide is going out and if I don’t throw them further in they will die.”

“But, old man, don’t you realize there are miles and miles of beach and starfish all along it! You can’t possibly save them all, you can’t even save one-tenth of them. In fact, even if you work all day, your efforts won’t make any difference at all.”

The old man listened calmly and then bent down to pick up another starfish and threw it into the sea.

“It made a difference to that one.”



Meet Christine Lane, Environmental Health's New Assistant Director

With a well-rounded background in environmental health and more than 20 years of experience in the regulatory field, it comes as no surprise that **Christine Lane** was selected as HCA's new Environmental Health (EH) Assistant Director.

During the first few months in her new role, its Christine's goal to see *EnvisonConnect Remote*, software currently used by food and hazmat inspectors that automates field data collection during inspections and provides up-to-date information, fully implemented. She's also working with a team to make the plan check process more efficient from start to finish by creating a step-by-step guideline toolkit for applicants.

Christine began her career at EH after graduating college. She became a Registered Environmental Health Specialist and worked for four years in the Food and Pool Safety program inspecting retail and wholesale facilities. Since then, she's promoted to other EH roles including enforcement coordinator, supervisor and administrative manager I working for the Hazardous Materials and Medical Waste and Body Art Inspections programs for the past 16 years.

Please join us in congratulating Christine! She can be at (714) 433-6473 or via email at CLane@ocha.com. To learn more about Environmental Health, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/eh.



Christine Lane, Environmental Health Assistant Director.

“ I truly believe that our job in the regulatory field is to go the extra mile for our customers by providing great service and educating them about our role in public health. I'm excited to be serving with a team of dedicated staff who all work together to keep our food, water and environment safe. ”

– Christine Lane,
Environmental Health Assistant Director

HCA's 405 W. 5th St. Building Adds Extra Measure to Keep Employees/Visitors Safe

- HCA's 405 W. 5th St. building has an extra pair of eyes and ears to help keep employees and visitors safe. Meet **Arturo Pérez**, a security guard with Alpha & Omega Group Security Services, who's tasked with managing preventive security measures and monitoring people who enter the building.
- Arturo supports the building's Sheriff's Special Officer (SSO) and acts as a frontline deterrent that's stationed in the main first floor lobby from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. He's the first person you'll see when entering the front glass doors and provides visitors with a temporary name tag that identifies the floor and date as part of security measures.
- We all need to recognize that our work environment has changed. There are factors beyond our control that may impact coming to work, walking to lunch and leaving in the evening. HCA shares some new ideas about ways to communicate to avoid potentially difficult situations in a video available at <http://bos.ocgov.com/safety/tips.asp>. Visit the County Employee Safety website at <http://bos.ocgov.com/safety/> to access safety tips, important numbers, safety trainings and more.

Security Guard Arturo Pérez.

- Remember: If you see something, say something. Inform Arturo or report it to HCA's SSO by calling (714) 720-1561 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday. Don't hesitate to call 911 in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

STOP THINK ACT

EMPLOYEE SAFETY WEBSITE
The County of Orange is committed to working with employees to provide a safe work environment. You can help - if you follow common sense, and address concerns.
Visit bos.ocgov.com/safety and login with your employee email address to access:
• Safety Tips • Safety Trainings • Incident Blotter
• Important Numbers • Online Concern Reporting Form (non-emergency)

EMPLOYEE SAFETY PHONE NUMBERS
Planning ahead is critical for remaining safe during an emergency or threatening incident. One way to be prepared is to know important numbers and to program them into your phone for easy recall.

IN THE EVENT OF A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY SITUATION, DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL 9-1-1.

AGENCY/LOCATION	HOURS OF OPERATION	WHEN TO CALL	NUMBER
Sheriff's Department (S&D) Building 10 (Main Administration)	8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Monday - Friday	Report an incident or threat to the SSO in the lobby or hallway	(714) 720-1561
Sheriff's Department (S&D) Building 12 (Off of Administration)	8 a.m. - 10 p.m., Monday - Friday	Report an incident within the County Health Center	(714) 834-2250
Health Care Agency, Behavioral Health Services, Behavioral Engagement Team	8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday	Report non-emergency assistance for individual who may be experiencing mental health or substance use issues to Behavioral Health Center area	(800) 364-2221
Health Care Agency, Health Services	7 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday	Report an incident from the main lobby to the lobby	(714) 834-5441
City Center Response Unit	8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday Non-emergency only (911)	Report a problem, maintenance or other non-emergency issue in the City Center area	(714) 834-2001
County Police Department	24/7	Report an incident after hours or when walking through the building	(714) 834-4231

Click image to download full size poster.

“It's my job to be vigilant, visible and observe the surroundings to ensure the safety of visitors and staff. I've come to recognize many familiar employee faces, but I also ensure that anyone who enters the building has an identifiable County ID badge. If there are any issues, staff can report it to me and I'll coordinate with the SSO.”

– Arturo Pérez,
Security Guard

5 Things You Need to Know About the Local Rise in STDs

- 1 From 2011 to 2016, Orange County has seen a 412 percent increase in syphilis cases, a 204 percent increase in gonorrhea and a 59 percent increase in chlamydia. Read more about the rise in a recent [Orange County Register article](#).
- 2 Orange County STD rate increases are larger than other Southern California counties, but:
 - OC ranks 30th of California's 61 local health jurisdictions (LHJ) for chlamydia rates
 - OC ranks 35th of California's 61 LHJ for gonorrhea rates
 - OC ranks 18th of California's 61 LHJ for early syphilis rates
- 3 To address the increase in STDs, Public Health Services and our Medical Director of HIV/STD Services, [Dr. Christopher Ried](#) are actively promoting appropriate screening of men who have sex with men (MSM) by medical providers through outreach, educational events and newsletters. A new robust team of 10 Public Health Investigators were also brought on board to investigate syphilis and gonorrhea cases.
- 4 The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that sexually active women under 25 should be tested annually for chlamydia and gonorrhea, pregnant women should be tested for syphilis and chlamydia early in pregnancy and sexually active MSM should be tested for syphilis, chlamydia and HIV at least once a year. Learn more [here](#).
- 5 HCA's 17th Street Testing Treatment and Care offers testing and treatment for STDs, HIV testing and HIV medical care. For more information, visit the [STD/HIV Clinic website](#).

New HCA Communications Checklist Helps You Promote News, Events and Information

The HCA Communications team has created a new menu of services to help our colleagues better understand the variety of ways we're available to promote your news, events and information.

We are happy to meet in person, schedule a conference call, or chat via email to tailor a communications plan that meets your unique needs and goals as well as better understand your target audience(s), timeline and budget.

Please visit http://intranet/docs/qm/communications/HCA_Communications_Menu_of_Services.pdf to view the menu online. Questions? Please call us at (714) 834-2178 or HCAComm@ochca.com.



HCA Communications
Menu of Services

Phone: (714) 834-2178
Email: HCAComm@ochca.com

Social Media

☐ **Advertising:** Facebook offers a cost effective means to spread the reach of your message. For a minimal budget of approximately \$200, you have the ability to reach thousands of people in the Orange County community for one month. Ads can be geo-targeted based on location, gender, age and interests. Submit a budget, image/content for consideration and target audience.

☐ **Posts/Tweets:** Information about national health observances, events or HCA-related topics of relevance can be posted or shared on HCA's social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook. Please include details/information about what you'd like to post as well as a website link and any photos.



COMPLIANCE CORNER



Contact Cards Make Reporting Non-Compliance More Convenient

To provide staff with a simple way to report fraud, waste and/or abuse via phone or online, HCA's Office of Compliance created a Contact Card that's designed to be carried along with your County ID badges for easy access.

On the card you'll find a 24-hour hotline number where you can provide information anonymously, as well as an IT Service Desk number to report electronic-related Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) security issues.

"It's our hope that you'll carry these alongside your badge so that our contact information is always readily accessible," said **Chi Rajalingam**, Chief Compliance Officer. "If you'd like to discuss a compliance-related matter, my direct number is also included on the card."

Compliance staff will be also visiting programs to provide information on what they do and when to contact them to report suspected violations of the [Code of Conduct](#). To schedule a presentation or request contact cards, please call the Office of Compliance at (714) 568-5614 or via email at officeofcompliance@ochca.com.

Become a Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer to Help Others Prepare for Disasters

The Health Care Agency's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is actively recruiting volunteers who have



medical as well as non-medical experience to assist the Orange County community during natural or manmade disasters and at emergency preparedness events.

As an MRC volunteer, you'll help dispense antibiotics or vaccines, respond to threats ranging from pandemic influenza to bioterrorist attacks, participate in various health fairs and assist with seasonal Point of Dispensing (POD) influenza clinics.

"I've been an MRC volunteer since 2009 and have worked alongside school nurses to provide flu shots to children at several schools in Anaheim and also participate in numerous HCA POD flu shot exercises

held throughout the community," said **Christina Branch**. "It's a gratifying experience to be part of a group of volunteers from diverse walks of life who

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Become a Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer to Help Others Prepare for Disasters

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all come together with a singular purpose to help the community be prepared if and when a disaster strikes.”

MRC volunteers are all community members with different backgrounds and experiences. They include public health and medical professions such as nurses, physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and social workers, as well as those with non-medical expertise

such as interpreters, retired professionals, legal advisors and service workers.

To learn more about the MRC volunteer program or for details on how to sign-up, visit www.healthdisasteroc.org/mrc/volunteer or contact **Lindsey Greene**, MRC Project Lead via email at lgreene@ochca.com.



County Launches “myOCgov” Mobile App

The County of Orange recently announced the launch of a mobile application (app) called “myOCgov,” a free interactive tool that makes information about County services easily accessible to community members on their mobile devices.

The new app, available online through the Apple iPhone “App Store” and through Android Google Play, gives users the ability to browse and search all County services near them or learn more about services in categories such as “Libraries,” “Parks,” “Health & Human Services,” “Public Safety” and “Other Government Services.”

The County of Orange offers many public services to make the County a safe, healthy and fulfilling place to live, work and play. This app gives users greater visibility to County of Orange services, particularly services close to an app user’s location.

The “myOCgov” app can be used in ways such as the following:

- Real estate agents can show clients the closest parks, libraries and other services available to a location.
- Job-seekers can locate the closest one-stop center to search for jobs.
- Entrepreneurs can easily get directions to file their fictitious name statements and register a “Doing Business As” (DBA) name.

INTRODUCING THE NEW
“myOCgov” MOBILE APP

The County of Orange “myOCgov” mobile app connects you with County services near you!

Download through the Apple App Store or Google Play by searching: “myOCgov”

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

- Health and social services can be easily located by proximity to the user’s location.
- Families can quickly locate the closest County park.

To download the app, visit <http://apple.co/2iILgi9> for Apple devices and <http://bit.ly/2lpzSO6> for Android devices. For more information about the app, please contact CEO Communications at ceocom@ocgov.com.

Suggestion Box

Since the virtual employee Suggestion Box program launched October 2016, we've had a remarkable response with many thoughtful and insightful comments received thus far. Be sure to keep an eye out for feedback regarding these comments in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please continue to drop us a line and tell us what's up! Click [here](#) to send the Director's Office a question, comment or suggestion.



Reminder

HCA's 2nd Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony

"SOAR Beyond the Stars Together"

- March 9, 2017
- 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- Hall of Administration



MARCH

Health Observances

[National Kidney Month](#)

[National Nutrition Month](#)

[Tsunami Preparedness Week](#) 19-27

[American Diabetes Alert Day](#) 22

[National Poison Prevention Week](#) 29-25

[World TB Day](#) 24



MISSION

In partnership with the community, protect and promote the health and safety of individuals and families in Orange County through:

- Assessment and planning
- Prevention and education
- Treatment and care



Connect with Us

The **What's Up** newsletter is created and distributed monthly by HCA Communications. Please call (714) 834-2178 with any suggestions or comments.

Welcome to

Uplift

a feature designed to bring each edition of our newsletter to a close with something that inspires you.

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"We went camping in Lone Pine, CA and drove up to Mt. Whitney to walk our dogs. As we were driving through the parking lot this awe inspiring waterfall just appears! It was just breath taking to see a waterfall flowing so freely – so tranquil and beautiful! Most definitely a stop you'd want to make if you're headed up that way."

– **Martha Schlegel**,

Staff Specialist, Information Technology

“ You’re human and you’re going to make mistakes. How you recover from them is what builds your character.” – Author Unknown.

– **Christine Lane**, Assistant Environmental Health Director, Environmental Health Division”

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“Between the rainstorms in January, I was riding on the bike path at Huntington State Beach and was struck by the beauty of the scene. I captured the moment with a photo and sent it to my sister to remind her of the time when she visited Orange County and our stroll by the pier.”

– **Sandra Clardy**,
Microbiologist, Public
Health Laboratory

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” – John Quincy Adams; the saying goes, ‘actions speak louder than words.’ It is a person’s actions that determine whether he or she is truly a leader. It is not the title on the business card or the slot on the organizational chart, but a person’s day in and day out conduct and actions that determine whether he or she is a leader.”

– **Lisa L. Alford**, Executive Assisant,
Office of the Director



What inspires you? Would you like to share a motivational quotation, photograph you’ve taken of something beautiful – even a fitness tip or healthy recipe – with Uplift for consideration? If so, send it via email to tlandquist@ochca.com, and please be sure to include your job title, division name, and a sentence or two about why it moves you. Please know that not all submissions will be used; decisions are at the discretion of HCA Communications.