

# No Residential Street Sweeping the week of May 31 Due To The Memorial Day Holiday

Due to the observation of the Memorial holiday on Monday May 31, there will be no residential street sweeping the entire week as Costa Mesa Sanitary District also observes this holiday pushing trash collection back one day.

This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it difficult for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule starting the week of June 7.

The following are a list of task that Clean Street's operators will be conducting next week.

1. City wide alley street sweeping
2. Sweeping of park parking lots and other city owned facilities
3. Accident call outs and special request.
4. Night route sweeping on all arterial streets.

For more information, residents can call the city's street sweeping hotline at (714) 327-7471, which has been updated with this information.

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# Jason Dempsey receives City Manager Leadership Award for April

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Emergency Services Administrator Jason Dempsey with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of April.

“Since the early days of the pandemic, Jason has been instrumental in our emergency operations and response,” Farrell Harrison said. “As someone with extensive military experience, including special operations forces, I knew we were in good hands right from the start. I am so grateful for all he contributed to our team during these difficult times.”

In August of 2018, Dempsey joined the City of Costa Mesa as the Emergency Services Administrator where he has helped the Police Department obtain over \$1 million in equipment from the federal government, managed the receipt and use of multiple grants, engaged with local and regional stakeholders on behalf of the city.

During ongoing efforts to maintain situational awareness, Dempsey became aware of a novel coronavirus, later referred to as COVID-19, in December 2019, and began tracking its development in January 2020. From January to early February, discussions were held with City Leadership regarding how the virus could impact the City.

On the evening of February 20, 2020, Dempsey was notified by Cal OES that Fairview Developmental Center was to be used as the first non-military quarantine/isolation facility in the Western U. S.

This site was to become active Monday, February 24, 2020 with minimal warning, reassurance, or safeguards in place.

Dempsey provided City Leadership with invaluable information in the first weeks of what became a historic pandemic, enabling the City to secure a rare Stay Order against the CDC, FEMA, and CalOES plans to use Fairview.

Dempsey's early recognition of the severity of these events, coupled with the national and international response to COVID-19, had a significant impact on the City response to the Pandemic and emergency protective measures implemented.

As he assisted with the City's COVID-19 response, he also continued to research ways to improve efficiency and secure resources to ensure we were prepared to serve our community in the event of an unforeseen natural disaster.

He facilitated technology and video updates in the Emergency Operation Center, assisted with civil unrest intelligence and planning during countywide protests, led efforts to be one of the first cities in Southern California with DHS authorization to use Wireless Emergency Alerts, and obtained a Hazard Mitigation Program Grant to assist the City in developing our Hazard Mitigation Plan.

In 2020, Dempsey received the Critical Event Management Award from Everbridge due to efforts to identify and address COVID-19 on behalf of Costa Mesa.

Dempsey began his career in 1997 when he enlisted as an infantryman in the Marine Corps. After September 11, 2001, he deployed as a member of Special Operations Command to Operation Enduring Freedom.

After completion of his third deployment, he moved into the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) field where he was physically embedded with infantry, Reconnaissance and Special Operations Forces (SOF) as well as foreign units such as the British Royal Marines 40 Commandos.

Dempsey's duties included providing direct EOD support to both

the president, vice president and secretary of state visits domestically and internationally.

Dempsey completed 8 deployments, as well as other international dignitary missions, before retiring from the Marine Corps in 2015 as a Chief Warrant Officer.

Following his military retirement and prior to coming to Costa Mesa, Dempsey took a position as an emergency manager with the City of Los Angeles. He spent most of his time at Los Angeles World Airport LAX addressing planning, response, and continuity considerations.

His participation ranged from supporting dignitary visits, interagency exercises with federal agencies such as FBI, CDC, and DHS, to helping develop continuity measures for the LAX EOC and Airport Operations.

Dempsey has two master's Degrees: one in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (USC), another in Homeland Security from the Pennsylvania State University as well as a bachelor's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management. He is a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) and a Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP).

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**Costa Mesa partners with  
Providence, Edwards**

# Lifesciences and the cities of Irvine, Santa Ana and Tustin to open two free mass COVID-19 vaccination clinics



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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ORANGE COUNTY, Calif., April 21, 2021** – Providence, a national nonprofit health system, is partnering with Edwards Lifesciences (NYSE: EW), the Orange County-based medical technology company, and the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin to open two mass vaccination clinics at one of Edwards Lifesciences' campus buildings in Santa Ana and the Orange County Great Park in Irvine, providing convenient access for residents to protect themselves from COVID-19.

"I would like to thank Edwards Lifesciences and Providence health for giving us another opportunity to get these all-important vaccines," Mayor John Stephens said. "Clearly the more people we get vaccinated the better the chances are that we will put this pandemic behind us and get back to our normal lives."

The Providence clinic at the Edwards Lifesciences site, which was made possible in part by a generous \$500,000 donation from the company as well as significant facility and staffing

support, was strategically chosen due to its capacity and central location. The clinic opens today at 3009 Daimler St. in Santa Ana. A second Providence vaccination clinic in partnership with the City of Irvine will open at the Orange County Great Park on Monday, April 26. The drive-through clinic, at 8000 Great Park Blvd., will offer residents convenient access to life-saving vaccines from the comfort of their vehicles.

Vaccines are by appointment only and can be scheduled at [myturn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or by calling 1-833-422-4255. Free parking is available adjacent to the clinic location at Edwards.

To ensure smooth operation of the sites, the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin are providing resources, including public safety and equipment. Through targeted outreach and multi-lingual communications, the cities are also working to overcome accessibility challenges and immunization hesitancy within their local communities.

“Providence is committed to providing Orange County residents with access to the vaccine, particularly our most vulnerable communities that are bearing the brunt of this virus, and our strong partnerships are making that possible. Working with the dedicated staff at Edwards and the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin to open these two sites, helps us increase our capacity to deliver more vaccine doses and keep our communities healthy,” said Erik G. Wexler, president, operations and strategy, Providence – South.

Providence has helped lead vaccine distribution in the region, having administered more than 256,815 doses to date. Providence clinical and operations teams will staff the mass vaccine clinics, and through its regional operations, have access to the three U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson). Following the recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food

and Drug Administration, Providence has paused use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Once fully operational, the two sites together will be able to vaccinate up to 4,000 residents per day, with the ability to expand depending on vaccine supply. All vaccines are administered free of charge.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been over 44,000 diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in Santa Ana, equating to a 13.2% positivity rate. Neighboring cities have faced lower, but still high positivity rates, with Irvine having a 3.6% positivity rate; Tustin, 7.49%; and Costa Mesa, 7.59%. Furthermore, communities of color continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Providence is committed to helping reduce health disparities exacerbated by the pandemic, and recently made an initial investment of \$1.4 million to expand outreach and education and increase the COVID-19 testing and vaccination supply to marginalized communities. In addition to pop-up vaccine clinics in at-risk communities, Providence hopes these two new mass clinics will help support equitable distribution of vaccines across the county.

### **About Providence Southern California**

Providence Southern California is a not-for-profit Catholic health network with 11 hospitals, approximately 90 clinics, TrinityCare Hospice and its TrinityKids Care pediatric hospice, Providence High School, home health care services, eight wellness centers and numerous physician groups in its Southern California Region. Together these ministries, including secular affiliates and some representing other faiths, generate \$7.5 billion in net revenue and have approximately 30,000 employees – called caregivers – and nearly 5,200 physicians on staff.

Providence Southern California is part of Providence, a health system of 111,000 caregivers serving in 52 hospitals, 829

clinics and a comprehensive range of services across Alaska, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington. Providence strives to increase access to health care and bring quality, compassionate care to those we serve, with a focus on those most in need.

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## **Chief Glass announces he will retire from Costa Mesa Police Department in September**

After 31 years of service, which includes five years in the United States Marine Corps and a distinguished 26-year career with Costa Mesa, Chief of Police Bryan Glass announced on Wednesday, April 7, that he will retire from his position in September 2021.

Chief Glass, who is highly respected by his peers and the Costa Mesa community, climbed the department's ranks, rising from officer to Chief of Police in October 2019, when he was appointed by City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison.

"I have had a blessed career with Costa Mesa that has been highlighted by the opportunity to lead the organization through 2020, which was a year like no other," said Chief Glass. "I'm grateful for the support I have received from the community, City Council, City Manager, City staff and my family. Time and again, I have been honored and humbled by the support I have received and continue to receive from the members of the Costa Mesa Police Department. I am proud to serve with the members of the Costa Mesa Police Department and

the department's success is a result of their professionalism, resilience, hard work, and dedication."

When Chief Glass assumed his role as leader of the organization in October 2019, his goal was to ensure stability and continuity within the Costa Mesa Police Department and continue the legacy of community policing.

"I'm so proud of the work Chief Glass has done during one of the most challenging times in history," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "When I appointed him to the role of Police Chief, we needed his steady leadership, extensive knowledge and expertise. Chief Glass has been a guiding light for us during some dark and uncertain times this past year as we faced multiple challenges including a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic and civil unrest. I am honored to work with him, and while I will miss his friendship considerably, I am happy he will be able to retire and spend time with his beautiful family."

In addition to the pandemic and unprecedented civil unrest, Chief Glass also dealt with the fiscal challenges posed by the pandemic.

"I respect and admire Chief Glass," Mayor John Stephens said. "He's been an exemplary Chief during a very challenging time in Costa Mesa. I wish Chief Glass the best in his retirement. He has served our community well over his distinguished career."

Chief Glass placed an emphasis on recruitment and hiring efforts to fill department vacancies and elevated staffing to levels not seen since 2012. He has been an advocate for professional development and succession planning through various promotions and assignment transfers throughout the organization and was instrumental in lobbying for two more police officer positions that were added to the budget this year.

During his tenure, Chief Glass strengthened and maintained the department's overall collaborations and relationships with an emphasis on community engagement, interaction, and partnerships. He ensured the replacement of several critical infrastructure systems, including a new in-car video and body-worn camera system and the department's current new mobile data computers project.

Chief Glass was originally hired by the Costa Mesa Police Department in October 1995 and attended the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy. Chief Glass graduated from the academy in March 1996 and promptly began his career as a Costa Mesa Police Officer.

In September 2015, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of captain. He was assigned as the Support Services Division Captain, overseeing the Investigative Services, Records & Evidence, and Telecommunications Bureaus. In December 2018, he became the Field Operations Division Captain, where he oversaw the Patrol Services, Field Operations Administration, Traffic Safety Bureaus and the department's elite SWAT Team.

Prior to his role as captain, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in January 2010 and was assigned as the Field Operations Administration Lieutenant. This was followed by assignments overseeing the Telecommunications Bureau, Patrol Services – Area 2 Command, and Professional Standards Bureau. He also served as the SWAT Commander for a time.

His prior roles were as a sergeant assigned to Patrol Services until being selected as the Chief's Adjutant and department Press Information Officer. As an officer, Chief Glass had the opportunity to work a variety of assignments throughout the department. Those assignments included Patrol Services, Gang Unit, SWAT, Master Police Officer & Field Training Officer, Area 2 Problem Oriented Policing Officer, Narcotics & Vice Detective, and Property Crimes Detective.

Chief Glass is a veteran who served five years in the United States Marine Corps and was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station in Tustin. During his enlistment, he was deployed twice to Okinawa, Japan and once to Somalia, Africa for Operation Restore Hope. In September 1995, Chief Glass was honorably discharged at the rank of sergeant.

Chief Glass has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from Chapman University, a Master of Science in Emergency Services Administration and a Master of Public Administration degree from California State University Long Beach. He is also a POST Command College graduate.

City Manager Farrell Harrison will be hiring an executive search firm to conduct a national recruitment to replace Chief Glass in September. Chief Glass will work closely with the City Manager to ensure a seamless and successful transition.

Chief Glass' last day with the City is anticipated to be Sept. 2, 2021.

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## **Fire & Rescue's Lora Ross presented with City Manager Leadership Award**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Fire & Rescue Executive Administrator Lora Ross with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of March.

"Lora is the glue that holds the fire team together," Farrell Harrison said. "I know her colleagues and Chief Stefano hold

her in high esteem and I appreciate all she does for Costa Mesa and the Fire & Rescue Department. Congrats to her for this well-earned award.”

Because of her reputation for professionalism, her strong work ethic and positive attitude, a colleague recruited her to come work for the City of Costa Mesa in 2004.

Ross is not only dedicated to her roles and responsibilities as the Executive Assistant for the Fire & Rescue Department, she is also a true friend to her colleagues; she genuinely cares for each and every one of them. One of her many notable achievements, of which she is most proud, is her early involvement in the department’s Administrative Intern program.

Ross was instrumental in the program’s development and the departments interns; she continues to manage and lead the interns who are working toward full-time positions within the fire service.

“Lora has continued to play an important role for us and the city, remaining strong and steady in her day-to-day and long term contributions to the department and the city, often under the radar,” said Chief Dan Stefano. “Her commitment, professionalism and loyalty throughout the pandemic have been greatly appreciated, remaining on-site to help support the efficiency and effectiveness of the department’s operation.”

She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology from National University.

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# Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens takes oath of office

On Friday March 26, former Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens was sworn into the office of Mayor by Second District County Supervisor and former Mayor Katrina Foley.



Stephens, who most recently served as Mayor Pro Tem and later on the Planning Commission, was directly appointed to the mayor position by the City Council at the March 16 meeting to fill Foley's seat after she was elected to the County Board of Supervisors. His first official meeting as Mayor will be at the Council's next regular meeting on April 6.

"I'm honored that the City Council appointed me to serve as Mayor," Stephens said. "We have an active, engaged Council and a talented, hard-working city staff. We have accomplished much, but there is still work to do on important issues like public health and safety, economic recovery, housing, homelessness, and the environment. Together, we will achieve great things and have a lot of fun while we're at it."

[Click here to watch a video of the swearing in.](#)

Mayor Stephens was first elected to the City Council in 2016, achieving the second highest number of votes in a field of seven candidates. He served for four years at-large until November of 2020.

“I am really excited about working with Mayor Stephens,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “I appreciate his thoughtful manner and dedication to our community and City staff. Our residents and City Council are very fortunate to have him return in the role as Mayor as we hopefully put some difficult times behind us and forge ahead on a path of continued success.”

While on the Council, he was named Mayor Pro-Tem in 2018. As Mayor Pro Tem, he was the 2018 Chair of the Association of California Cities-Orange County Homelessness Task Force and is a member of the Orange County Library Advisory Board.

He was a Director on the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency Board (“Toll Roads”). He serves as Council Liaison to the Financial Pension Advisory Committee (“FiPAC”), the Animal Services Committee, the Special Districts (Sanitation, Water, and School), and the OC Fairgrounds. He is also a founding member of the Costa Mesa Early Childhood Coalition.

Additionally, Stephens served on Council Ad Hoc Committees relating to cannabis and Fairview Developmental Center. He has served on Ad Hoc Committees for the Costa Mesa Motor Inn litigation and the City Manager recruitment. Stephens initiated the City’s Independence Day Celebration and has brought joy to families of all ages as Santa Claus at Snoopy House for the past five years.

Mayor Stephens was born in Pasadena, and raised in San Gabriel and attended San Gabriel High School. He earned his Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Cal Poly Pomona, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1986. He

received his law degree from the UC Davis Law School in 1989 and was named to the Order of the Coif (top 10%), Law Review and Trial Practice Honors Board.

Stephens has practiced for 32 years and in 2006, he founded his firm Stephens Friedland LLP, which was named the Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) Law Firm of the Year in 2019. It's based in Costa Mesa.

Mayor Stephens and his wife Amy live in Costa Mesa's Mesa Verde neighborhood and have four children: Tom, Nate, Carolyn and Olivia.

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## **Costa Mesa residents sought to serve on city committees/commissions**

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on the following City Committees/Commissions:

**Parks, Arts and Community Services Commission:** This Commission meets monthly and assists the City Council and various City departments with issues relating to parks, parkways, recreation programs and community services. The Commission also actively encourages programs for the cultural enrichment of the community and solicits partnerships with senior organizations which share the common goal to serve Costa Mesa's senior population. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for one (1) member, from District 3 only. Applicants must be a registered voter in District 3. For further information, contact Executive Secretary Sylvia Chalmers at (714) 754-5009.

**Planning Commission:** The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land use, and development matters. The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land use approvals such as design review and, conditional use permits. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments. Applicant must be a registered voter in Costa Mesa. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for one (1) At Large position (Mayors appointment). For further information, contact Executive Secretary Julie Colgan at (714) 754-5270.

**Finance and Pension Advisory Committee:** This committee meets monthly and provides advice to the City Council regarding events and issues which may affect the financial status of the City. It also evaluates annual and long-term pension and financial impacts from changes in CalPERS contribution rates and/or actuarial schedule changes. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for one (1) member. Applicants shall have pension knowledge or shall be residents or individuals that conduct business within the City and have a background that includes experience in securities trading, financial planning, banking, auditing, accounting, or a closely related and relevant field. For further information, contact Acting Executive Secretary Francine Jimenez at (714) 754-5243.

**Historical Preservation Committee:** This committee meets monthly and serves to maintain, preserve, educate and promote the city's historical resources. The City is recruiting for a 1-year term for one (1) alternate member. For further information, contact Recreation Supervisor Kevin Stoddart at (714) 327-7561.

**Traffic Impact Fee Ad Hoc Committee:** This committee meets on an as-needed basis to assist staff on all aspects related to the updating and revision of traffic impact fees. The City is recruiting for one (1) Small Developers' Representative. For further information, contact Transportation Services Manager Jennifer Rosales at (714) 754-5180.

**Application Process** – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Committee/Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website ([www.costamesaca.gov/apply](http://www.costamesaca.gov/apply)).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov); or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. The deadline is 5 p.m., Thursday, April 8, 2021. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the April 20, 2021 City Council meeting.

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## **City announces arrival of new**

# Recreation Manager Monique Villasenor

The Parks and Community Services Department announced the hiring of its new Recreation Manager, Monique Villasenor, who will oversee all recreation programs and facilities, including special events.

“Monique brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Parks and Community Services Department,” said Department Director Jason Minter. “Her passion for recreation will enhance the services our Department provides to the community. Please join me in welcoming Monique to the City of Costa Mesa!”

Villasenor comes to Costa Mesa by way of Lake Forest, where she served as a Senior Recreation Supervisor. She spent 14 years with Lake Forest working all types of programs from facility operations and budget, working on public outreach and marketing, and coordinated efforts with local community groups.

Her experience in Lake Forest included the management and oversight of the new 86-acre sports complex, which featured a 27,000 square foot recreation center. She also helped execute the opening of the new Civic Center Campus and Performing Arts Center.

“Parks and recreation is a true passion of mine,” Villasenor said. “I couldn’t imagine doing anything else and I’m lucky to be doing what I love here in Costa Mesa now.”

Villasenor has a Bachelor’s Degree in Recreation Administration from Cal State University Long Beach and is working towards her Master’s Degree in Public Policy and Administration with an anticipated completion date in Fall 2021, also at CSULB.

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# City of Costa Mesa Process on Potential Mayoral Vacancy

The results of the special election for County Supervisor, District 2, indicate that the current Mayor of the City of Costa Mesa, Katrina Foley, will be sworn in to that seat this month, after the election has been certified by the Orange County Registrar of Voters. This will create a vacancy in the directly elected Mayor position in Costa Mesa.

A vacancy in the directly elected mayoral position is governed by California Government Code Section 34902(a), which provides, in part, "In the case of a vacancy in the office of the [elected] mayor for any reason, the council *shall fill the vacancy by appointment*. If the council fails to fill it within 60 days, it shall call an election to fill the vacancy to be held on the next established election date to be held not less than 114 days thereafter. A person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of the former incumbent."

Given the critical role of the Mayor for the City, an item will be placed on the City Council meeting agenda on Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss the process by which the City Council will appoint the new Mayor.

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# Four City Manager Leadership Award winners recognized

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison has presented four Costa Mesa City employees with City Manager Leadership Awards who continued to perform high-quality work even in the face of the pandemic.

Those awardees include Executive Assistant Lidian Estecoc, Senior Programmer Analyst Judith Luis-Ortiz, Assistant Recreation Supervisor Marianna Pena and Accounting Specialist II Amanda Koh.

“I am so blessed to work with these four talented professionals,” Farrell Harrison said. “Their hard work and dedication to their jobs during these difficult times is very much appreciated and I’m grateful to them all.”



Estecoc began her journey with the City of Costa Mesa in Sept. of 2004, when she was hired as a Police Records Technician. She quickly moved up the ranks, first as a Sr. Police Records Technician and later in 2013 as a Police Records Shift Supervisor.

Then in October of 2017 when her career path took a major turn and she was promoted to be the Executive Assistant to the City Manager, assisting with the day-to-day operations of the city as well as acting as a city ambassador and key contact with members of the public on behalf of the City Manager.

For the past year, she has worked closely with City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison to help manage her extremely busy calendar, setting up meetings with department heads and city leaders and assisting with public engagement.

As the COVID-19 crisis hit, Estecoc quickly adapted to the new normal and became proficient in the Zoom meetings and online schedules. She worked mostly from City Hall and helped manage the City Manager's Office while the majority of City Hall employees telecommuted. In particular, she has closely managed the City Manager's weekly Live Zoom meeting with employees, assisting with the script, finding new topics and creating presentations for the meeting.

Luis-Ortiz joined the City of Costa Mesa I.T. Department in January 2016. Regardless of the tasks assigned, she always approaches it with a very positive attitude. She has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously, and provides quality results.



Luis-Ortiz has established excellent working relationships with all City departments. As a result of her efforts, she has earned a very high level of respect from her co-workers. During the pandemic, she and the IT team have been instrumental in supporting the remote operations of employees who were telecommuting.

Pena began with the City of Costa Mesa in 2007 as a Recreation Leader IV and has steadily promoted through the organization to the title of Assistant Recreation Supervisor, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Senior Center.



Since the closure of most City programs in March of last year due to COVID-19, Pena has been instrumental in leading the Costa Mesa Senior Center's team to ensure Costa Mesa's seniors continued to receive meals, groceries, social services, and wellness checks.

Pena worked with Meals on Wheels to modify the Senior Center's Congregate Meal Program to move to an outdoor frozen meal distribution format and to arrange for Parks & Community Services staff to deliver frozen meals directly to self-quarantining seniors who were unable to pick-up meals on a weekly basis. From mid-March to the end of November, the Costa Mesa Senior Center has distributed more than 76,000 frozen

meals to seniors throughout the City.

As the direct supervisor of the Senior Center, Pena has been passionately dedicated to ensuring Costa Mesa's seniors have been served as best as possible during these trying times. These services would not have been possible without her, and it is for this reason she is deserving of the City Manager's Leadership award.

Koh joined the City of Costa Mesa in the Finance Department in December of 1998, working in the Purchasing Division. In 2005 she was promoted to the Accounting Specialist II position with the Accounting Division.



Since the retirement of her colleague Robindale Shepherd in December, she stepped up to assume full responsibility of the weekly payable check runs and year-end form 1099 preparation on top of her regular day-to-day tasks.

She worked through the December Holiday Closure to catch up on vendor warrants and with IT's assistance, dealt with challenges such as new 1099 formats.

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# **IKEA to donate \$85,000 in furnishing and design features to Costa Mesa's new Bridge Shelter**

In what appears to be a first nationwide, home furnishing giant IKEA will donate furnishing and design features for the new permanent Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter on Airway Avenue that is currently under construction.

Vanessa Flores, the Loyalty Manager of the Costa Mesa IKEA, said she was approached last year by City officials regarding home furnishing solutions for the shelter.

Flores was excited about the opportunity and met with Mayor Katrina Foley, City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison and others to get the project going. Flores confirmed that this will be the first homeless shelter furnished with interior design features by IKEA.

"I'm truly grateful that our collaboration with IKEA this year, to serve the needs of food insecure families with weekly grocery distributions, is expanding to help us furnish and design our new permanent Shelter we will soon open in partnership with Newport Beach," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Costa Mesa has led the way with our Housing-First approach to assisting those experiencing homelessness and we value this new partner joining our efforts to provide quality care to our most vulnerable residents."

IKEA leaders were impressed by Costa Mesa's approach to addressing homelessness through the Network for Homeless

Solutions. This grass roots community collaboration is unique and effective.

That factor was a big selling point in getting the company to offer its support to the Bridge Shelter project, Flores said. IKEA has globally prioritized actions to support leading emergency relief efforts which includes vulnerable groups such as those experiencing homelessness.

Every year, IKEA Costa Mesa selects two initiatives to support in the local community, Flores said. Prior to the pandemic, the local Costa Mesa store selected homelessness and hunger, two initiatives that are big priorities in the community.

“The City of Costa Mesa is excited to be working with IKEA as a corporate partner in this effort to address homelessness,” Assistant City Manager Susan Price said. “The Bridge Shelter is more than just a building, we want to create an environment for healing, inspiration and hope. IKEA has contributed greatly so that this program will be successful.”



IKEA will be donating all home furnishing for the Bridge Shelter communal spaces. The company will be providing the bedding sheets and towels and all of the office furniture, including desks, chairs, office accessories and shelving

units.

“We estimate this project to be a little over \$85,000 in furniture donations,” Flores said. “We are also donating paint for the sleeping areas, inspirational graphics for the walls, as well as an investment cost of paid staff hours providing our co-workers with the opportunity to be hands-on and volunteer by building the furniture and creating the inspiration.”

“IKEA is honored and privileged to be a part of this effort to support our community. We believe everyone deserves a safe and healthy place to call home, even if it is temporary. We hope this is one of many ways we are able to positively impact Costa Mesa and its future growth.” Market Manager, Laurie Helm stated.

Indeed, IKEA has been a great partner to the City of Costa Mesa, opening up its parking lot to food and toy drives that have been so critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. It recently hosted the city’s annual Snoopy House holiday display.

“They have been such a great partner and we are so thrilled to be working together to ensure our community is well served,” Price concluded.

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**City names Alexander Gonzalez**

# as new Chief of Staff

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison announced that Alexander Gonzalez, an experienced government field representative and Navy Veteran, has been hired as the City of Costa Mesa's new Chief of Staff.

"Alex's experience in government makes him uniquely qualified for this job," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "The residents of Costa Mesa will find him to be a great resource as he assists the Mayor and City Council in addressing concerns from constituents. We are thrilled to welcome him to our team."

Gonzalez was one of numerous candidates who applied for the Chief of Staff position.

"Mr. Gonzalez joins our team with a unique working knowledge of Costa Mesa constituent issues as a long-time resident and former Congressional staff member," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Couple that with his experience and understanding of Veterans issues, especially those experiencing homelessness, and his multilingual skills, he will right away be able to work on our council priorities."

In this role, Gonzalez will be responsible for managing constituent services, legislative research and analysis and coordination with Federal and State elected officials among other duties.

Gonzalez most recently worked as a Military and Veteran's Field Representative in the Office of former U.S. Representative Harley Rouda, where he engaged with constituents regarding international affairs, trade, defense, intelligence, veteran's affairs and labor issues and collaborated with federal, state and local organizations at the Orange County Veterans Service Office.

He also worked as an Intelligence Specialist with the United States Navy. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and International Relations with a Minor in Asian Studies from Temple University in Japan. He replaces former Chief of Staff Connor Lock, who left the City in December.