

VOLUNTEER NOTES

Board Cheers Honorees

The Board of Supervisors recently held a special ceremony to celebrate annual honorees of the MarinShares and Marinterns programs.

See this issue for features on the two Staff Supervisors of the Year: **Michael Turrigiano** of Health and Human Services, who supports senior peer counselor volunteers; and **Héctor García**, who mentors interns and youth volunteers for the Marin County Free Library. Staff liaisons are integral to the volunteer and intern programs. Their involvement allows the county to offer a wide range of roles.

Future *MarinfoNOW* issues will highlight Volunteer of the Year **David Mitchell** of the Sheriff's Air Patrol; Intern of the Year **Camilo Ibarra** of the Probation Department; the Volunteer Team of the Year, the Terra Linda Broom Club, with Marin County Parks; and the Intern Team of the Year, the Find Your Way Youth Lead Team, with the Board of Supervisors District 2 Office.

A photo of honorees with county leaders is on page 2.

Supervisor of Interns of the Year Adds Opportunities for Youth

By Calla McBride



Héctor García speaks about welcoming interns and youth volunteers to the Marin County Free Library.

Community Library Specialist **Héctor García** has helped transform the South Novato Library into an inclusive programming hub since joining the staff in 2021. Among his responsibilities, he supervises interns in the Marinterns, Career Explorers, and Youth Working for Change programs, providing support as they develop skills and confidence.

For his outstanding work with interns and youth volunteers, Héctor has been named the county's Supervisor of Interns of the Year. He was honored at a May 27 ceremony hosted by the Marin County Board of Supervisors recognizing exceptional service.

Natalie McCall, a senior librarian at the South Novato branch and Héctor's

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Top Supervisor of Volunteers Supports Senior Peer Volunteers

By Finbar LaBelle

The County of Marin's Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year is **Michael Turrigiano**, a licensed marriage and family therapist with a long history of delivering compassionate and therapeutic care.

After receiving his graduate degree from Dominican University, Michael began his 15-year journey with the Helping Older People Excel (HOPE) program in the Marin County Health and Human Services Department. HOPE offers full-service partnership and wraparound care to clients across the county.

Starting as an intern, Michael worked with older adults experiencing chronic and acute mental illness, then advanced

to a senior social worker position in West Marin.

Now Michael has returned to his previous position within HOPE, where he continues to provide psychotherapy to those in need.

Among his responsibilities, Michael oversees the Senior Peer Counseling program and its 20 MarinShares volunteers. He recruits, trains, and leads clinical supervision meetings with the volunteers, who, in turn, "give supportive counseling to seniors dealing with age-related adjustment like isolation, loneliness, and loss of independence."

Each June, Michael welcomes several new volunteers aged 55 and older who

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Top Volunteer Supervisor Supports Senior Peer Volunteers

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PHOTO BY STEVE ZIMAN



Health and Human Services Department Assistant Director Todd Schirmer, left, praises Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year Michael Turrigiano, center, while HHS Director Lisa Warhuus listens.

are interested in contributing to the community. As a result, the team includes newcomers and veterans with up to 20 years of volunteer experience.

Every week, dedicated Senior Peer Counselor volunteers provide free, in-home visits to elders facing challenges. Michael provides coordination and support, and the volunteer counselors make meaningful differences in the lives of their clients.

The Senior Peer team “works a rich environment because of the cross-pollination from different backgrounds and disciplines” among volunteers, Michael said.

Michael’s work supervisor is Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Unit Supervisor **Alex Dang**, who nominated him for Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year honors.

Alex attested to the quality of Michael’s character and work: “Since I’ve known him, Michael has been caring, eloquent,

and articulate. He continues to be extremely professional, empathic, and responsible. I’m honored and privileged to have him as the Senior Peer Counselor program supervisor on the HOPE team.”

The Marin County Board of Supervisors gave Michael a formal resolution of commendation recognizing him as the Volunteer Supervisor of the Year during a May 27 ceremony for annual honorees of the MarinShares and Marinterns programs. Several Senior Peer volunteers attended to cheer Michael, and Health and Human Services Director **Lisa Warhuus** and Assistant Director **Todd Schirmer** spoke about his positive impact.

Michael, however, emphasized the importance of spotlighting the volunteers and program rather than his own attributes.

He has a wide range of interests outside of work, from Italian art history to ceramics. He was raised in Mendocino County in a family of health workers and realized early he wanted to apply his own ethos—a genuine “passion for helping people see and realize healthy aging.” ■

Board Honors Outstanding MarinShares and Marinterns Participants



PHOTO BY STEVE ZIMAN

Honorees and speakers pose during an upbeat ceremony in Board of Supervisors chambers celebrating outstanding volunteers, interns, and staff supervisors of volunteers and interns. Board President **Mary Sackett** presided as participants were recognized in six categories: Volunteer of the Year, Intern of the Year, Volunteer Team of the Year, Intern Team of the Year, Supervisor of Volunteers, and Supervisor of Interns. Human Resources Director **Christina Cramer** emceed the May 27 event, and leaders from county departments spoke about their honorees’ qualities and contributions. See page 1 for articles on the staff supervisors of the year. Future newsletters will feature the individual and team honorees.

Photographer Shares Talent for Portraiture and Documentation

By Marjorie Grannan

PHOTO BY STEVE DISENHOF



MarinfoNOW photographer Bob Dell at the piano.

The “Attorney Search” on Google shows “Robert M. Dell, Attorney,” as if he still practices law. But Marinshares volunteer photographer **Bob Dell** retired some 10 years ago and now spends time doing what he loves: traveling around the world, playing what he describes as really bad piano, and taking carefully composed photos.

“We moved from Chicago in 1990 because my law firm asked me to open a San Francisco branch, and I viewed it as a great professional opportunity,” Bob said. The Dell family moved to Kentfield, which he describes as “pretty idyllic living.”

Bob is modest about his professional accomplishments, but we gleaned this much: he served as the global chair and managing partner of Latham & Watkins, and chaired the firm’s executive committee for 20 years, before retiring in 2014.

In recognition of his legacy, the firm established the Robert M. Dell Award for Extraordinary Pro Bono Service, which goes to a Latham lawyer or legal team

making exceptional pro bono contributions. Bob was the inaugural recipient.

In Bob’s honor, the firm also donates to the Legal Aid Society Employment Law Center, which protects the rights of low-income employees to work in a safe, respectful environment. Bob has served on the center’s board since 1993 and on its executive committee.

In retirement, “I’m doing things I enjoy, like photography,” Bob said. He belongs to the Marin Photography Club (as do several other Marinshares photographers) and has volunteered with the county since 2023.

Bob’s photos are published in this newsletter, on the county website, and in county social media.

He volunteers with two departments. He began with Human Resources (HR) and then branched out to the Office of the County Executive (OCE).

Bob takes portraits of fellow Marinshares volunteers and Marinterns students, sometimes including their staff super-

visors. He also covers County of Marin events, capturing candid moments and documenting official ceremonies. In addition, he’s in the midst of taking individual and group photos of employees. So far, he has photographed staff in 10 county departments—and all five members of the Board of Supervisors.

His OCE liaison is Media Specialist **Lorraine Triana Rueda**. “Working with Bob is a total joy,” said Lorraine. “He is my creative partner, steady support, and all-around amazing. He shows up with heart, humor, and a camera that somehow always captures the soul of the moment. I feel lucky to work alongside someone so generous, talented, and deeply committed to the work.”

In his HR role, his staff liaison is MarinShares Volunteer Coordinator **Anne Starr**. “Bob’s friendly, quiet manner puts people at ease—even those who shy away from cameras,” Anne said. “His portraits of interns and volunteers show them at their best, and the artistic quality of his photography raises the look of our newsletter and program materials. We love having him with us at the heart of the MarinShares and Marinterns programs.”

Meanwhile, Bob’s love of music has led him to serve on the board of trustees of San Francisco Performances. He plays piano, but for his own pleasure. “I wouldn’t subject others to it,” he quips.

With their three kids and four grandkids, the Dell family enjoys hiking and walking, and the whole family loves visiting Blackie’s Pasture in Tiburon. Both Bob and his wife enjoy travel; their most recent trip was to the Netherlands. ■

Who’s New & Welcome!

Steffen Bartschat (Mill Valley), Volunteer Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

Duriel Fortenberry (Oakland), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Arleene Gamboa (Stockton), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Leah Genkin (Novato), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Destiny Jerkins (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Purba Khan (Arcadia), AmeriCorps VISTA Intern, Health & Human Services

Rebecca Oliver (Kentfield), Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services

John Perry (Mill Valley), Volunteer Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

Terry Sones (Mill Valley), Volunteer Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

Supervisor of Interns of the Year Adds Opportunities for Youth

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Natalie McCall, a senior librarian at the South Novato branch and Héctor's supervisor, nominated him for the award.

"Héctor is mission-driven and combines both theory and practice, which is hard to do," she said. "He creates a trusting relationship with the youth that is rooted in an appreciation for the life experience they bring to the library."

"My goal is to create a space where young people feel they belong and can be proud of who they are," Héctor said. "I want them to know that their language skills, cultural identity, and life experiences are assets, not things to hide."

He played a key role in expanding the South Novato Library's involvement in youth workforce development. He built partnerships with the county's Probation Department, making South Novato the first library branch to host a yearlong Youth Working for Change internship.

Héctor also created the Library Ambassadors program, which offers leadership opportunities to pre-teens, and he leads efforts to recruit and support Spanish-speaking youth as interns, a first for the library system.

"I believe in helping young people connect the dots between what they're



PHOTO BY STEVE ZIMMAN

Supervisor of Interns of the Year Héctor García, center, with Board President Mary Sackett and Marin County Free Library leaders.

doing now and the bigger picture," Héctor said. "It's not just about shelving books—it's about literacy, storytelling, justice, and joy."

Héctor's focus on equity and inclusion aligns with the Marin County Free Library's Anti-Racism & Equity Strategic Plan.

"My role within the library often deals with removing barriers to access for communities and individuals who are systematically excluded," he added. "The interns who serve with me greatly benefit from our commitment to decolonize the library."

Outside of work, Héctor enjoys the beach, hiking, live music, and practicing capoeira.

Originally from Papantla, Veracruz, Mexico, he now lives in Petaluma. He came to the U.S. in 2005 and has spent nearly half his life in each country. His family remains in Mexico.

"My goal is to continue learning and working in a community with interns, staff, and allies," he said. "Together, we can keep building joyful learning opportunities that uplift all. ■"



CARTOON BY JOHN DOMAGHUE

Happy Anniversary

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

46 YEARS

Michael St. John (Fairfax), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

31 YEARS

Robert Eichstaedt (Larkspur), Environmental Steward, Marin County Parks

26 YEARS

Eric Zeller (Rohnert Park), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Fire

22 YEARS

John Polman (Corte Madera), Volunteer Driver, Marin County Fire

15 YEARS

Sean Seeley (San Anselmo), Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

13 YEARS

David Atkin (San Anselmo), Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

10 YEARS

Stan Green (Greenbrae), Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) Volunteer, Health & Human Services (HHS)

7 YEARS

Deborah Fox (Corte Madera), Event Aide and Administrative Aide, Human Resources

Lynn Merlo (San Rafael), Preservationist, Corte Madera Library

Ann Shores (Corte Madera), RACES/ACS Volunteer, Marin County Fire

6 YEARS

Natalie Dybeck (Novato), Newsletter Writer, Human Resources

5 YEARS

Bryan Hendon (Fairfax), **Michael Pechner** (Fairfield), **Steve Quarles** (Mill Valley), **Robert Rowlands** (Mill Valley), Fire Lookouts, Marin County Fire

4 YEARS

Bruce Bartel (Novato), **Charles Benet** (Tiburon), **Dirck Brinckerhoff** (San Rafael), Radio Communications Volunteers, Department of Public Works

3 YEARS

Jalynne Allen (San Rafael), Seeds of Hope Volunteer, HHS

Lea Del Pomo (San Rafael), Seeds of Hope Photographer, HHS

Michelle Funez (Novato), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

Melody Mitchell (Larkspur), **Jonathan Posner** (San Rafael), Marin Center Volunteers, Cultural Services

Lee Notowich (Ross), FAST Volunteer, HHS

2 YEARS

Judy Sauté (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resources

Dhanya Subramanian (Novato), Find Your Way Intern, Board of Supervisors

Alexandra Sumski (Kentfield), OD Free Marin Intern, Board of Supervisors

Terri Tired (Novato), Marin Center Volunteer, Cultural Services

1 YEAR

Oldhina Alatraste (Novato), **Jason Balderama** (San Rafael), **Alex Buffington** (Mill Valley), **Barry Crotty** (San Rafael), **Kay Crotty** (San Rafael), **Karla Cruz** (San Rafael), **Elizabeth Ezell** (Novato), **Lucille Ezell** (Novato), **Bruce Frank** (Tiburon), **Susan Garcia** (San Anselmo), **Len Gaskell** (Novato), **Narda Gaskell** (Novato), **Dana Gross** (Santa Rosa), **Ron Gross** (San Rafael), **Megha Gupta** (San Rafael), **Karen Iacobucci** (Greenbrae), **Carol LaBranche** (San Rafael), **Jack Liebster** (Corte Madera), **Vicky Marquez** (Novato), **Adriana Sarahi Martinez** (San Rafael), **Janet Mowery** (Novato), **Shahd Rahman** (Novato), **Leslie Robinett** (San Rafael), **Devin Rocco** (Mill Valley), **Philip Sharp** (San Rafael), **Sharon Starr** (San Rafael), **Sarah Weber** (Novato), **Shari Weiss** (Novato), Marin Center Volunteers, Cultural Services

Andrew Contreras (San Rafael), **Daniel Frerich** (San Rafael), Marin Center Youth Volunteers, Cultural Services

Helen Hempel (Mill Valley), Senior Peer Counselor, HHS