

Cal-Liope

Join CWC
The Professional
Association
For Workforce
Professionals

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MESSAGE FROM THE CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE CONNECTION **PRESIDENT**

*By Dr. James Thomas, President,
Silicon Valley member*

On May 2, 2025, our conference unfolded as an electrifying celebration of innovation and leadership. The atmosphere was charged by the attendees with excitement, and the event was nothing short of extraordinary. A standing ovation to our phenomenal Conference and Program Chair, Raymond Cabrera whose meticulous planning and visionary leadership orchestrated an event that was both seamless and inspiring. Our Master of Ceremonies, Ken Gomez, Deputy Division Chief of the Workforce Services Branch, captivated the audience with his charisma and kept the momentum soaring throughout the day.

A heartfelt thank you to Amy Faulkner, Chief Deputy Director of the Employment Development Department, for delivering insightful departmental updates.

Special thanks to our CWC EDD Liaison, Employment Development Administrator Ruby Rojas, whose exemplary leadership, and professionalism set a high standard and inspired all attendees.

We were privileged to hear from two powerhouse speakers Carol Marzouk, the Executive Lion Tamer, who energized the room with her dynamic insights into leadership and motivation. Followed by Dr. Tobi West, Director of the Coastline Cyber Center, who enlightened us with innovative perspectives on cybersecurity and innovation. Their presentations were not only informative but also ignited a spark of inspiration among all attendees.

The Awards Luncheon, masterfully presented by Arlene Bautista (State 2nd VP) and Val Moeller (State 1st VP), was a highlight of the day. The room buzzed with excitement as we honored outstanding



PRESIDENT DR. JAMES THOMAS

achievements, and the joy of the awardees was truly contagious. This conference was more than an event; it was a vibrant tapestry of ideas, connections, and celebrations. The energy was palpable, the discussions were enlightening, and the memories created will fuel our collective drive forward.

Here is to another year of groundbreaking achievements and unwavering commitment to excellence.

We hope our members read and enjoy the *Cal-Liope* Newsletter for activities and event from the Executive

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What is California Workforce Connection's Future?

*By Dr. James Thomas,
CWC State Chapter President,
Immediate Past President, Silicon
Valley Newsletter Editor*

*Verletta (VAL) Moeller,
First Vice-President,
Parliamentarian, Cabrillo Del
Rio Secretary/Treasurer, District
3 Treasurer, Past Presidents
Association President*

*Arlene Bautista, Second Vice-
President, State Chapter Awards
Chair, East Bay President*

*Phil Dwyer, CWC State Treasurer,
Puerto Del Sol member*

*Raymond Cabrera, District 4
Director, 2025 State Conference
& Program Chair, Inland Empire
member*

IS THERE A FUTURE FOR CWC?

The California Workforce Connection (CWC) held their Annual Educational Conference/Convention on May 2, 2025. There was an outstanding program put together by Conference/Convention Chair **Raymond Cabrera** and the planning team. The educational part included motivational speaker **Carol Marzouk**, 'Executive Lion Tamer'; **Dr. Tobi West** with a presentation on Cybersecurity & Avoiding Identity Theft; a

Bybee Team presentation; and Employment Development Department (EDD) remarks from **Amy Faulkner**, Chief Deputy Director; and **Ruby Rojas**, Employment Development Administrator-Disability Insurance, EDD/CWC Liaison.

This is also the event where we recognize those members and non-members for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the Workforce Development program and the CWC

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CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

President
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District II Director
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District III Director
ANGEL URBINA

District IV Director
RAY CABRERA



**Our association
is dedicated to
bringing education,
opportunity, and
innovation to all
individuals with a
common interest
in workforce
development**

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF CWC? FROM PAGE 1

organization during the Awards Luncheon.

Additionally, at the Convention portion of this event, there is an election for the positions of President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Treasurer, and the Membership Coordinator. They are elected by the members at the convention. Unfortunately, there were NO nominations for any of the offices. As such, under the CWC Bylaws Article III, Section 2, the terms of such offices shall be for one (1) year beginning with the Administrative Year (July 1, 2025) or until a successor takes office. This information is also contained in the CWC Operating Procedures 3.02 – Terms of CWC Officers. So, the following officers remain in place: **Dr. James Thomas**, President (Retiree); **Verletta (VAL) Moeller**, First Vice-President (Retiree); **Arlene Bautista**, Second Vice-President (Retiree); **Phil Dwyer**, Treasurer (Retiree); and **Lucely Tut**, Membership Coordinator (still working).

As you can see, four of these officers are retired. The rest of the elected officers are the four District Directors who are elected by the membership of the local chapters in their respective district in the District Caucus at the Convention. The same directors were elected: **Kim Wesley**, District 1; **Fred Ruibal**, District 2; **Angel Urbina**, District 3; and **Ray Cabrera**, District 4 (Retiree). The other three are still working for EDD.

Is this any way to run an organization? More than half (56%) of the officers are retired. The above-named people comprise the Board of Directors (BOD) along with the elected Local Chapter President or their designated alternate, the Secretary (appointed by the

President), the Bybee Board Chair, and the Immediate Past President (who in this case is also still the Acting President). There are 11 officers, 12 local chapter duly authorized representatives, the Karl E. Bybee Chair, and 8 Standing Committee Chairs. At any meeting of the BOD before any business can be undertaken, there must be a quorum of 50% of the officers and 50% of the local chapter representatives. We have three officers who also may have to represent their local chapter. Your vote can only be counted once as either an officer or a local chapter representative. There is one local chapter without credentials (this means they have no officers). We had board meetings on August 10, 2024; November 23, 2024; and February 22, 2025, prior to the board meeting on May 1, 2025. For the three meetings prior to the May 1 meeting, we had four chapters who did not have representation at these meetings. As such, we struggled to meet our quorum requirements for all of these meetings. Many of the officers who are retirees, have held their positions on average more than seven years.

Membership has been declining for some time as well as most members do not participate in activities or run for local chapter officers. There has been a lack of local chapter meetings and activities. This means we are not serving our members. Chapters are not turning in activity and financial reports. Only four chapters turned in all four chapter activity reports for the 2024 calendar year. The treasurer reports that only five of the chapters are up-to-date with their financial reports. At the time of writing this article, very few of the local chapters have had elections for officers to start the new administrative year on

July 1, 2025.

Following are the summarized issues that our organization is faced with at the State level:

- Aging organization officers and many are retirees
- Some organization leaders are experiencing health issues
- Difficulty in recruiting members for state offices
- Active Board members have served for many years in the same positions without successors available
- Difficulty in reaching a quorum to be able to conduct business
- Many of the serving members hold more than one position, but can only be counted once for the quorum
- Lack of participation by members
- Decreasing membership
- Executive Office Manager/ Calliope Editor resigning effective June 30, 2025

• Zero (0) Bybee Grants or Thornton Education Grants utilized

Following are the summarized issues faced by the local chapters who have the above issues plus the following:

- Difficulty in recruiting local chapter members to run for local chapter offices
- Required meetings not held
- Activity reports not completed
- Financial reports not completed
- Few activities for members
- Inactive districts

So, where do we go from here? Do we have anyone who is willing to lead the organization? Does anyone care to continue the good works of the organization? Is there an interest in keeping the organization active? The answers to these questions will decide whether there is a future for CWC or not.

Who is ready to lead the future of CWC?

RETIREE CORNER

By Nanette Bowman,
Retiree Chair, Orange
Empire Member



NANETTE BOWMAN

Congratulations to **Jennifer Lucy** winner of the Retiree of the Year Award for 2024. Nominated by the Puerto Del Sol Chapter, Jennifer has demonstrated exceptional dedication, insight, and commitment in multiple areas, significantly advancing the goals of CWC, enhancing educational opportunities, and supporting the overall growth and development of the organization and its members. Her contributions to chapter leadership have strengthened the chapter's ability to deliver effective professional development opportunities. Jennifer's insights on chapter development and management have empowered chapter leaders to make informed decisions that align with CWC's broader goals. Through her consistent engagement and strategic input, Jennifer has been a key contributor to the chapter's continued success. Jennifer Lucy has significantly contributed to CWC's educational efforts by sharing expertise with the chapter and its members, most recently in roles such as Chapter Secretary, Education Chair and Chapter Advisor. Jennifer's willingness to mentor others, coupled with a deep understanding of workforce development, provides valuable learning opportunities for all involved. Jennifer has also been actively involved in shaping discussions at chapter events, always offering new perspectives that inspire others to expand their knowledge and skills in the field. Congratulations to Jennifer Lucy and thank you for your inspiring service to CWC following your retirement in 2022.

You are so welcome to send me ideas for articles or share what you are up to – you know my email: cwcsecretary2023@gmail.com.

Stay well and stay in touch.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FROM PAGE 1

Board, District Directors, Chapter Presidents, and members. Some of the information provided is the President Message, CWC Website, Retirement Message, Legislative Update, Personal Message, Activities throughout the state.

The website gives current information on upcoming events, Zoom presentations, new program developments, Chapter calendars, and District events. Visiting the website will keep you informed of events throughout the state.

INVENTING YOUR LIFE

"What We Deserve"

By Rob Claudio, Orange Empire

I was watching a movie that I had not seen in a few years and as I remembered some of the scenes that were playing out, I had to stop after hearing a line from one of the characters that I couldn't recall. The person stated, "we accept the love we think we deserve". This made me pause as I reflected for several minutes about what they were saying. It was a teacher speaking to a student and he went on to explain further. To him it meant that people tend to end up in relationships where they are treated as well or as poorly as they believe they merit. If someone thinks they are undeserving of real love and affection, they may accept a toxic or abusive partner instead.

The quote suggests we must believe we deserve goodness before we can have it. This was quite deep and yet, as I thought about the first time I possibly heard about love, as a very young person I did not have any sense of fully describing what that meant to me. That is because there are no biases or other learned behavior due to having that pure innocence that slowly starts peeling away from us in layers as we get older. It further made me think about the things that we believe we deserve beyond the feeling of love, affection or other emotional connections. How often do we ask ourselves about what we deserve and then follow it up with why haven't we received that yet?

I suspect that as an adult with lots of learned behavior which comes through life's experiences, we get to these instances where we take inventory of what we have achieved and look at what other things we believe we still can add to our list of accomplishments. Having self-awareness of oneself is quite helpful to quickly assess what are our attributes that can still help us achieve our next conquest. In addition, we can also look at any of our areas of improvement that may still need some work to help add more polish to us. Whether you aspire to obtain a new job, seek to finally lose the weight you have spoken about or perhaps want to achieve a different level of financial freedom, there is always some work to be done in order to accomplish any of it. Also, if you grew

up without a lot of reinforcement about

your self-esteem, self-worth or lack of nurturing, take the time to unpack some of this if it still exists within you.

What I have learned throughout my life is that there are multitudes of stories that I have been a witness to, where some folks had to grow up more quickly than others. Due to the home circumstances that were not ideal for some growing children, this could definitely have created some lack of self-esteem as part of that effect. Therefore, the beginning was lacking many things including loving support for some. When we get to adulthood is where we finally get to choose how we are going to live the next part of our life, while we can also decide to let go of some of that baggage that doesn't serve a positive purpose. Most of what I have witnessed was people choosing to live as survivors and not victims of any of what they encountered as children. The great part about making decisions as an adult is that you do not have to repeat what you experienced as a young person, especially if it was a negative incident.

Choosing to live out the rest of your life with a new perspective, filled with positive plans on your next potential achievements breathes new life into us and gives us a new meaningful purpose as we set afoot on these new ventures that now await us. I hope that you all feel that you deserve better and that you continue to work towards achieving your next goal whatever that may be. In doing so, remember to share your experiences with others so that we can help our counterparts grow via what we have already experienced and hopefully, we also can prevent others from making any decisions that may have negative consequences as well, by utilizing us as living examples.

"Having patience always gives you what you deserve."

– Fatma Alfalasi

Remember to follow the blog at:

inventingyourlife.blogspot.com



ROB CLAUDIO

Why Do People Want to Become a Leader?

By B.J. Sims,
Website Administrator and
Marketing Chair

Leadership is a lot of responsibility, takes up your time, and can be very lonely, so why do it? Don't confuse managing as the same as leading. Leading involves inspiring people to work together to get things done where managing involves working with others and following processes to get work done. Managers can lead but are not always leaders.

Leaders take on the role for a variety of reasons all personal to them, which can be altruistic or selfish. Motivations to become leaders include:

- **More Responsibility:** Some just want to do more and have a desire for responsibility by taking on leadership roles. This is often shown by individuals who thrive on accountability and the opportunity to guide others. It is a way to validate an individual's sense of self-worth.

- **Impact:** Many may have a desire to have an impact on their organizations and influence others. Leadership offers recognition and influence, motivating others through their power to shape decisions and policies.

- **Personal growth and professional development:** These are a strong motivation to take on the responsibilities. Learning and applying new skills are ways to find personal satisfaction in your life.

- **Validation:** Reinforcing your sense of self-worth by overcoming challenges contributes to self-confidence and developing a sense of pride in oneself. This is a circular process.

- **Opportunity:** Wanting the opportunity to realize a purpose and developing a vision will spur individuals to seek leadership positions.

- **Improved Finances:** The desire to increase income and financial status is a strong personal incentive to embrace leadership potential.

- **Power:** Some may have a need for control and want others to follow them.

- **Service:** There are those who genuinely enjoy serving others. They lead because they want to bring out the best in others and are working toward the good of the whole.

Remember that leadership also involves guiding oneself towards a better life which is authentic and rewarding for you. Do you identify with any of the motivations above, are you interested in taking leadership roles and why? Review your goals, attitudes, and values to decide what makes it worthwhile for you to become a leader. If you are interested in leadership and as the old commercial said, "Try it, you might like it."

CWC can offer opportunities to stretch yourself and try at the local and state organizational levels by volunteering with your local chapter. CWC is always looking for those who want to contribute their time, skills and want to be leaders.

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

– John F. Kennedy

Use the Contact Us to be connected to your local chapter: <https://www.californiaworkforceconnection.org/contact-us>

Life Doesn't Stand Still

By Raymond Cabrera District IV Director

"If you look at the people in your circle and do not get inspired, then you do not have a circle, you have a cage."

– Lion Tamer

I can remember that when I was a young kid and a holiday came around, my family arranged for us to make a dish to share at the family gathering. My father had a large extended family and we met at my aunts condo to celebrate the event.

We lived on the east side of Manhattan, New York City and my aunt's condo was on the west side of Manhattan. The buildings on the West side all had larger protected condos. It was easier to gather there to celebrate all the holidays.

As the years passed my cousins grew-up and started to have lives of their own. We still celebrated events at my aunts condo, but there was less and less in attendance.

The time came when a number of the older adults passed and their children moved away. The gatherings were less attended and finally my family also moved away. My aunt & uncle finally lost interest in having the family gatherings and moved away to Florida. Their daughter, my cousin kept the condo and tried to reestablish the gatherings, but the interest was not there. Less and less family came to the celebrations.

What used to be a gathering of about fifty people or so, was now less than 20. The interest in assembling at special occasions waned to the point little or nobody came. When I was released from military duty, I moved to California, got married and started celebrations with my in-laws.

When I first became involved with CWC it was still a very viable organization. Members were eager to network with each other and learn from the older members. Now the older members have started to retire and leave the organization. Do not get me wrong, we still have fun celebrating at our annual State Conference. We meet members we first met years earlier and made friends with new members.

Now after 30 years we see less and less new members interested in picking up the mantle of the CWC organization and stepping up and filling the important officer positions that new young members usually run for. Some of the officers have held their current positions over seven years with nobody interested in taking over. Less and less come to the gatherings, yet building a conference has not gotten any cheaper, Speakers cost more and more as the years go by. When will it stop being an organization, we all are eager to join and gather with friends to learn and share our past experience?

Current State Officers are mostly retirees and the organization is in need of new blood. It is more young members that are needed to carry members to the next level. This could be an exciting time for CWC members going forward. Do not be afraid to step-up and learn to be a leader. I am sure that you are what the organization is looking for.

Fill out the nomination form and send it in run for an officers position while there is still time. Come and play in the great sandbox and make a difference, there is plenty of space for more players. Do not live in a cage.

How Do I Stop Being Bored When Retired?

By Dinah White,
Los Angeles Chapter

You spent many working years envying retirees only to wonder, “What do retired people do all day?” once you join their ranks. Losing the stimulation of your job can leave you kicking around the house like a kid grounded for breaking the rules. Below are some common approaches for banishing boredom from retired life. Make a list of topics that interest you, and then find a club focused on that subject. Facebook and Nextdoor are good places to hunt for local clubs.

Look around your house and identify all the little things you never got to because you were too busy working. Numerous small fix-it chores and household updates could keep you busy for months. Commit to learning new skills. Once you get good at something (or bored with it), switch to a new challenge. Embrace your new role in society. Retirees have the time to do things younger people don't. Find Fun and Engaging Things to Do When Retired and Bored. These specific activities fit into the general methods for avoiding retirement boredom. Pick one or more things to try. You're sure to find something that engages you.

Now is your time to plan trips or join a book club. You can plan multiple small getaways to local attractions, festivals, or historic sites throughout the year. Or, put together one grand vacation every year to big museums, the tropics, or other exotic destinations. There are travel clubs for this exact purpose that you can Google and join. Bookish folks can join a book club to discuss plots

*Be sure to
maintain
your CWC
membership*

and characters to their heart's content monthly at a book club. Ask if any are accepting new members at your library or bookstore.

You can also put together your family genealogy; piecing together a family tree would connect you with family and introduce you to the world of vital records archives. Everyone has interesting and notable people among their ancestors, and some people really love tracking down lost information. Or, maybe you were practical and didn't indulge your creativity during your working life. Now you have an opportunity to express yourself. With painting, you can enter a soothing flow state where time has little meaning. You can also study and learn a new language. Learning a new language is always challenging and does not get easier with age. Even so, there are audiobooks and phone apps to help you pursue the goal of conversational fluency.

So many organizations want volunteers. Food banks, hospitals, churches, libraries, and schools have volunteering opportunities. You might also be helpful at community events, museums, or women's shelters. Your community might have a group dedicated to line dancing, square dancing, or ballroom dancing. This is an excellent social activity that provides exercise as well. Hopefully, I have got you thinking about your next adventure and bring joy back to life activities.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

CWC MEMBERSHIP CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

By Annette Wiley,
Membership Chair,
East Bay Chapter

A CWC membership chair is vital to the sustainability and growth of any member-driven organization. The role focuses on recruiting new members, engaging current ones, and retaining them. The chair wants to ensure the organization remains vibrant and mission focused. Developing outreach strategies, hosting events, and communicating the value of

membership. The chair helps foster a powerful sense of community and belonging. Additionally, the membership chair will oversee data management and reporting, providing leadership with insights into member trends and engagement levels. The chair is aware that these actors are crucial for strategic planning. Without a dedicated membership chair, CWC could risk stagnation, decreased participation, and diminished impact. Leaders, step forward and become the CWC Membership Chair.



OUR BUSINESS IS YOUR SUCCESS

By Mary Jane Van Loom,
Legislative Chair,
East Bay Chapter

This article provides essential information regarding the Employment Development Department.

“The Employment Development Department (EDD) is one of the largest state departments with employees at hundreds of service locations throughout the state. Since 1936, we have connected millions of job seekers and employers in an effort to build the economy of the Golden State, and provide a variety of services, including the following:

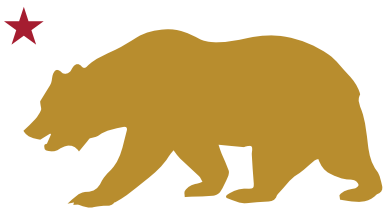
Unemployment Insurance (UI) – The UI program provides unemployment benefits to eligible individuals who are out of work or have

had their hours reduced. The UI program provides critical support to unemployed and underemployed workers in California to help sustain eligible workers while they are looking for their next job.

Disability Insurance (DI) – The California State Disability Insurance (SDI) program provides short term DI. The SDI is a partial wage-replacement insurance plan for California workers. Eligibility may be established for those who are unable to work due to non-work-related illness or injury, pregnancy, or childbirth.

Paid Family Leave (PFL) Benefits – The SDI program provides PFL wage replacement benefits to eligible workers who need time off work. Eligibility to receive PFL may be established for:

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ADOPTING TO A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

2025 CWC STATE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE & LUNCHEON

One More Great CWC Conference

*By Raymond Cabrera,
Conference & Program Chair,
District 4 Director*

One more great CWC conference was put to bed Friday, May 2, 2025.

It was another conference that was well attended and recorded via video for our website. In about two or three weeks our videography team will have edited the conference and our website Administrator, BJ Sims who will place a copy on our 'Members Only' sight for those who were not able to attend in person. A number of pictures were taken by the photographer and are already posted on our website

The conference was a work

of great expectations for the association. The planning took some time, but it all came together as registrations kept coming in. The hotel and the guest speakers were contracted well in advance, giving the program team plenty of time to establish a program that the members could all appreciate. And, if the word I am hearing is true, it was a huge success.

I would like to thank Employment Development Department Chief Deputy Director Amy Faulkner for stepping in when the EDD Director Nancy Farias could not make it and Workforce Services Branch Deputy Division Chief Ken Gomez for stepping up and agreeing

to being our master of ceremonies. He did a heck of a great job. Finally, Employment Development Administrator Ruby Rojas, who instilled in us that it is teamwork that is still the ultimate competitive advantage. All the EDD speakers gave us an insight of things to come with some anticipation of the future at EDD.

I would also like to thank our two speakers, Carol Marzouk Executive Lion Tamer who gave a great motivational presentation. An excellent speech was made by Dr. Tobi West, Coastline Cyber Center Director who spoke on Cybersecurity & Avoiding Identity Theft. Word

is that both speakers gave an enlightening presentation that the members really enjoyed.

A conference is not a great conference without a good Awards Luncheon to honor our members who did an outstanding job during the prior year. The team of Arlene Bautista (State 2nd VP) and Val Moeller (State 1st VP) organized a well scripted awards presentation. The meal was not bad either. The cheese cake at the end was to die for.

Our congratulations to all this year's nominees and all the award winners. We also would like to thank all the nominators who penned such great award nominations.



The Executive Lion Tamer: How Carol Marzouk Inspires the Transformation of Mindsets Into Workplace Actions

*By Jennifer Orozco, 2nd VP, and
Delia Hernandez-Gorospa,
Los Compadres Chapter Treasurer*

Carol Marzouk, widely known as the "Executive Lion Tamer" and a catalyst for fostering workplace harmony, kicked off her motivational presentation at this year's Annual Educational Conference with an energizing interactive movement activity. She had everyone on their feet, dancing, and smiling; a routine she encourages people to do each morning. This daily ritual, which she calls the "power pose," involves standing confidently in front of a mirror, striking a bold stance, and speaking positive

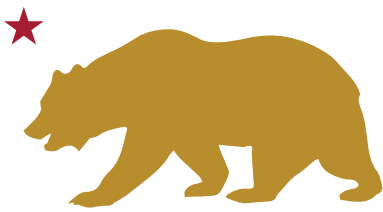
affirmations aloud. According to Marzouk, this simple practice can shift our mindset, especially when we're feeling stuck.

Marzouk emphasized the importance of leaders staying grounded. To do so, she introduced her idea of "filling your buckets" which referred to maintaining a balance in different areas of your life—physical, mental, and spiritual—so you can lead effectively and stay energized. If one becomes empty, it can negatively impact your overall resilience and ability to function at your best. Marzouk encourages us to intentionally take the time to reflect and ask ourselves

tough, but necessary questions: When or where do I feel energized? What's draining me? And most importantly, what am I going to do about it? Marzouk emphasized keeping proactive in assessing which bucket(s) needed replenishing so you can prevent burnout and navigate challenges with clarity and strength.

Marzouk also tackled the topic of change, reminding everyone that it's an inevitable part of both our personal and professional life. How we respond to change, she noted, can either deplete or replenish our vital buckets. She introduced the metaphor of

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ADOPTING TO A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

2025 CWC STATE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE & LUNCHEON

Amy Faulkner Attends 2025 CWC Conference

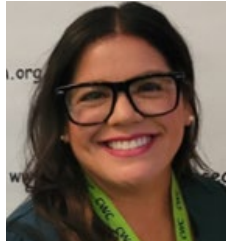
By Ruby Rojas, EDD Liaison, Sacramento Chapter

Chief Deputy Director of the Employment Development Department (EDD), Amy Faulkner, brought inspiration and insight to the California Workforce Connection (CWC) Conference held on May 2, 2025, in Ontario, California.

In a heartfelt keynote, Amy spoke about embracing change – both personally and professionally. She shared a moving story about her children recently leaving for college, drawing a parallel to the transformations happening within EDD. Her message resonated deeply with attendees, reminding them that change, while often difficult, opens the door to growth and innovation.

Amy highlighted EDDNext, a forward-thinking initiative aimed at reshaping service delivery for California's workforce. She emphasized the strides EDD has made in modernizing technology, including the use of AI-powered chatbots to provide quicker and more accurate assistance. She also celebrated the expansion of multilingual services, noting that UI applications now support eight of the most widely spoken languages in California and that 35 essential forms have been translated into 16 languages, with more in development.

Further demonstrating EDD's innovation, Amy shared that the Disability Insurance program is now supported



AMY FAULKNER: A LEADER WHO LEADS WITH HEART

by Amazon Web Services, offering virtual hold and

self-service tools that assist over 7,000 callers daily—without needing to speak with an agent. She also noted EDD's successful migration of one of the nation's largest tax systems to a secure cloud server and the automation of the Disaster Unemployment Assistance program, making access easier for federal workers and veterans.

Amy's leadership message centered on transformation, curiosity, and flexibility. "Leadership is how we show up. It's how we bring others along. It's how we make space for progress and purpose," she said, encouraging attendees to be visible and be bold.

During the awards ceremony, Amy posed with each awardee, offering warm congratulations and showing genuine support. Her gracious demeanor and infectious smile left a lasting impression.

It was an honor to have Amy Faulkner at the 2025 CWC Conference. Her presence reminded us that great leaders not only drive progress – they lead with heart. We look forward to welcoming her again in the future.



PHIL DWYER AND RUBY ROJAS



KIM WESLEY AND RUBY ROJAS

My Awesome Time at CWC

By Ruby Rojas, EDD Liaison, Sacramento Chapter

I have to start by saying – what an eye-opening experience I had at my first CWC Educational Conference! This group truly makes learning fun. More than that, they take pride in recognizing the incredible work our staff and managers do across EDD. No matter where you're located, whether in a UI, DI, or Tax office we're all part of the same mission. CWC brings us together to grow, develop, and thrive through hands-on educational sessions and leadership-building opportunities.

What stood out to me the most was seeing just how much EDD contributes to our communities. I witnessed UI, Tax, DI, and WSB teams participating side by side in community charity events. It was inspiring to see this collaboration in action and how it naturally builds the kind of communication and leadership skills we value in our workplace.

I even had the chance to share a little about my own story and leadership journey. If you're curious about what I said, you'll have to check out the conference video – it's worth it! Not just for me, but because we also got to hear from outstanding professional



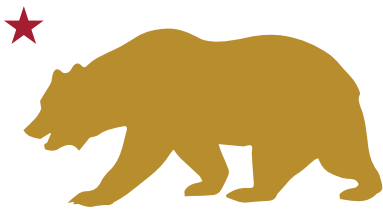
FERDINAND GUZMAN, AMY FAULKNER AND RUBY ROJAS

speakers, including Carol Marzouk and Dr. Tobi West, who left a lasting impact.

One of the highlights for me was the formal awards ceremony. It was a beautiful celebration of incredible individuals and teams making a difference. And I must say, the chicken marsala was absolutely delicious!

It was also a treat to see so many familiar faces, including Phil Dwyer, CWC Treasurer, whom I know from DI branch projects; my chapter president, Kim Wesley; my wonderful boss, Ferdinand Guzman; and our inspiring Chief Deputy Director, Amy Faulkner.

Attending the CWC Conference as the EDD Liaison was a true honor. I'm taking what I learned back to my teams and will encourage more EDD staff to step up, get involved, and experience the energy, learning, and connection that CWC offers. It's an opportunity not to be missed.



ADOPTING TO A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

2025 CWC STATE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE & LUNCHEON

California State Annual Award Event Honors Winners

By Arlene Bautista, California Second Vice-President,
East Bay Chapter President

The California Workforce Connection (CWC) held the annual Awards Event during the Educational Conference/Convention on May 2, 2025. Our sincere thanks to the awards' presenters: Ferdinand Guzman, Disability Insurance Division Chief, Michael Kane, Employment Development Administrator (EDA) at the Anaheim Unemployment Insurance (UI) Center, Rob Claudio, Workforce Service (WS) Deputy Division Chief in Orange County, Ruby Rojas, Disability EDA in the Northern Region and CWC-EDD Liaison, Nanette Bowman, Retiree Chair and CWC State Chapter Secretary and Val Moeller, State Chapter First Vice President and Past Presidents Association (PPA) President.

Here are the winners:

DISABILITY INSURANCE (DI)

Employee Performance Individual (Tie) – Winners: **Justin Norman**, DI ARU 218 Van Nuys; and **Ryan Almeida**, DI ARU 222 Chino Hills

Employee Performance Individual-Management – Winner: **Leticia Zarco**, DI ARU 222 Chino Hills

Employee Performance Group – Winner: **DI Money Network Project – Field Operations Division**, Hoi-ki (Rosa) Tsui, Mayte Escobar-Kelley, Prutha Suthar, Yolanda Perez, Mateo Manegdeg, Claudia Vasquez

Customer Service Individual – Winner: **Leann Graessley**, DI ARU 222 Chino Hills

Customer Service Group (Tie) – Winners: **The DI Launch Team ARU #208**, Jessica Cohagen, Chinyere Okugo, Melissa Lauritzen, Adrianna Cano, Anna Pongratz; and **The Appeals Group**, DI ARU 222 Chino Hills: Cashmere Haywood, Berenice Wright, Laura Garay, Glenn Fletcher, Grisela Padilla, Chelsea Ponce

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI)

Employee Performance Individual – Winner: **Breanna Zuvia**, UI ARU 857 Carnegie

Employee Performance Management – Winner: **Quynh Vo**, UI ARU 019 Pacific Center

Employee Performance Group (Tie) – Winners: **Rapid Response Team**, ARU 006 Inglewood: Ceneal Croxton, Vahe Yeghiayan, Eliza Euwing, Sandra Rosete, Cynthia Arrizon, Yesenia Olvera, Iselda Figueroa, Katrin Charmahali, Analisa Landers; and **The OP Pandemic Project Team**, UI ARU 017 Anaheim: Enrique Duenas, Michelle Zalazar, Jonathan Celio

Customer Service Individual – Winner: **Catherine Cruz**, UI ARU 857 Carnegie

Customer Service Management – Winner: **Thomasina Sanders**, UI ARU 857 Carnegie

Customer Service Group – Winner: **The Language Project Team**, UI ARU #017 Anaheim: Felicia Wong, Winna Hui, Phoebus Hon, Christi Trinh, Kathy Tran

WORKFORCE SERVICES (WS)

Employment Performance Individual (Tie) – Winners: **Maria Crespo**, WS ARU 042 Brea; and **Juanita Renteria**, WS ARU 010 Woodland Hills

Employment Performance Group – Winner: **The Upward Mobility Workshop Team**, LA/Coastal WS Division: Jessica Landaverde, Elvin Karimmasihi, Diana Hernandez, Bethlehem Ayele, Felix Cantu

Customer Service Individual – Winner: **Bianca Espindola**, WSB ARU 003 Glenda/Pasadena

Customer Service Group – Winner: **Region 1 LA/Coastal WS Division**, Oxnard/Santa Maria WS Cluster – Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Program: Veronica Orozco, Amanada Sanchez, Christina Berumen, Lucely Tut, Daniel Viveros, Yenizeth Meza, Susana Diaz-Corona

SERVICES TO VETERANS

Services to Veterans Individual – Winner: **David Uyematsu**, West LA WorkSource Center ARU 168

FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS AWARD

Winner: **WSB ARU 042 Workforce Services Brea Team**: Maria Crespo, Jessica Sifuentes, Ngocchau "Chau" Cagle, Huy Pham, Glory Turcios, Jenny Wang, Gurjeet Rehal, Tommy Le, Milena Recinos, Joleen Le, Minhtriet Vu, Chhaya Samtani, Faviola Hernandez, Lesley Sediva, Andrew Tsai, Trinh Do, Courtney Newsom

RETIREE

Winner: **Jennifer Lucy**

TOLL TRUST AWARD

Winner: **Michael Kane**

CHAPTER ACTIVITY AWARDS

Chapter Activity is the area where all the work the Local Chapters accomplish in serving their membership is recognized. Scoring from Local Chapter reports is done on a calendar quarter basis. Points are given in numerous categories based upon the documented activities of the chapter. This year's winners are:

Small Chapter – First place: **Cabrillo Del Rio**

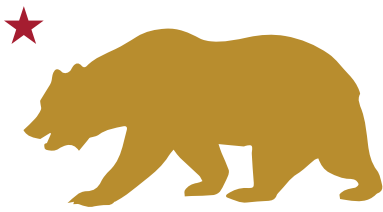
Second place: **Silicon Valley**

Honorable Mention: **East Bay**

Medium Chapter – There were no awards in this category

Large Chapter – **Orange Empire**

Congratulations to all the winners at the conference who are truly deserving of this recognition. Their hard work and dedication have paid off.



ADOPTING TO A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

2025 CWC STATE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE & LUNCHEON

MICHAEL KANE RECEIVES TOLL TRUST AWARD

By Nanette Bowman, Orange Empire Member

The California Workforce Connection Past Presidents Association honored **Michael Kane** with the Toll Trust Award at the luncheon held at the Annual Educational Conference/Convention on May 2, 2025. The Toll Trust was established to present an annual award to a CWC member whose activities or accomplishments contribute most to the advancement of CWC activities and are exclusive of job performance. Nominated by the Orange Empire Chapter, Michael Kane meets and exceeds the criteria for this honor.

The nominee has demonstrated a tireless commitment and dedication to the service of helping others during his career with the Employment Development Department. His current position is Employment Development Administrator with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Branch overseeing a UI field operation. Additionally, he has led and/or participated on many interview panels. He has given back and paid it forward by coaching and mentoring many individuals over the years inspiring them to achieve their dreams and goals. He provides training to staff and members focusing on upward mobility. Topics include: Interview Skills for Upward Mobility; Your Leadership Journey, and Nailing the Job Interview. He writes motivational articles for the local chapter newsletter and maintains an online blog: [Katalyst.beehiiv.com](https://katalyst.beehiiv.com). His compositional work has been featured in the *Cal-Liope*, various newsletters, books, websites, live events and various media.

Congratulations to Michael Kane, a truly deserving individual for this prestigious award.

LION TAMER FROM PAGE 6

“the swamp”—a place we can find ourselves stuck in during times of transition. To navigate this, she offered her framework of the “Three R’s”: Replace, Reinvent, and Reframe, all tools designed to help us regain clarity and momentum. Her audience appeared to resonate with her metaphor of being stuck in “the swamp” as many were observed nodding their head in agreement, others heard saying “it’s like she is talking directly to me.”

Tying these concepts back

to real-world leadership, Marzouk highlighted EDD Chief Deputy Director Amy Faulkners and Ruby Rojas as examples, making the message deeply relatable and relevant for the audience. Known for her masterful blend of psychology and corporate insight, Carol Marzouk left each attendee with practical wisdom and a renewed sense of purpose, reminding everyone that grounded leaders are best equipped to cultivate the grounded leaders of tomorrow.

3 Reasons Puerto Del Sol Attended the CWC Conference

On May 2, 2025, Puerto del Sol (PDS) members joined workforce professionals from across California at the 6th Annual Educational and Awards Conference in Ontario, CA. The conference theme, “Adapting to a Changing Landscape,” underscored

the importance of flexibility and innovation in today’s workforce development. Here are three reasons we attended:

First, Reigniting Purpose and Resilience – Carol Marzouk, the “Executive Lion Tamer” and CEO of Leadership 'N' Soul, posed the question, “What lights you up?” She emphasized nurturing our spiritual selves alongside physical, emotional, and mental well-being, encouraging professionals to align their work with their inner purpose.

Second, Learning from Leaders – The conference featured insights from esteemed leaders such as Amy Faulkner, EDD Chief Deputy Director, who shared strategic visions for California’s workforce development. Ruby Rojas, EDD Liaison, provided valuable perspectives on workforce initiatives.

First-time conference attendee and PDS member Ken Underwood noted Dr. Tobin West, Director of Coastline



LEFT TO RIGHT: KEN UNDERWOOD, PHIL DWYER, NOE REYES, PDS GUEST, LYNN LAMM



BJ SIMS AND MARITZA MARROQUIN-SANDERS

College’s Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense, gave a presentation that stood out for him, highlighting the importance of cybersecurity in today’s workforce landscape.

Third, Networking and Community – Noe Reyes, new PDS member noted, “As a first-time attendee, I appreciated the welcoming atmosphere and interaction with other members.” The Conference facilitated meaningful connections and opportunities.

Additionally, the Bybee Board offered an engaging presentation about the Karl E. Bybee Educational Grant, which provides financial assistance to CWC members seeking to enhance their skills in workforce development. To learn more, visit the [CWC Education page](https://www.californiaworkforceconnection.org).

A heartfelt thank you to our PDS Chapter Treasurer Lynn Lam for going above and beyond to connect me virtually to the conference when I had to step away for an important family event. Your support ensured I remained engaged and didn’t miss out on this enriching experience.

Be sure to check the [California Workforce Connection website](https://www.californiaworkforceconnection.org) for upcoming events.

ORANGE EMPIRE CHAPTER

By Nanette Bowman, Orange Empire member

The Orange Empire Chapter is proud of our support of the 2025 Annual CWC Educational Conference in Ontario. We contributed \$600 to offset the purchase of swag bags and paid the registration fee for 20 of our members to attend.

It was exciting to cheer for our winners of individual and group awards at the Awards Luncheon. Following are those to be congratulated: From the Unemployment Insurance Center Anaheim ARU 017 the Pandemic Overpayment Project Team of Enrique Duenas and Michelle Zalazar and the Language Project Team of Kathy Tran, Winna Hui, Christi Trinh, Phoebus Hon, and Felicia Wong; From the Unemployment Insurance Pacific Center ARU 019 Individual Employee Performance Quynh Vo; From the Disability Insurance Chino Hills ARU 222 Individual Employee Performance Ryan Almeida and Leticia Zarco, Individual Customer Service Lean Graessley, and the Group Appeals Unit of Cashmere Haywood, Berenice Wright, Laura Garay, Glenn Fletcher, Grisela Padilla, and Chelsea Ponce; From the Disability Insurance Field Office Division ARU 309 Employee Performance Group of Mayte Escobar-Kelley, Yolanda Perez, Rosa Hoi-ki Tsui, Prutha Suthar, Mateo Manegdeg and Claudia Vasquez; From the Workforce Service Branch ARU 042 Individual Customer Service Maria Crespo and Group Fostering Partnership Award Maria Crespo, Chau Cagle, Trinh Do, Faviola Hernandez, Joleen Le, Tommy Le, Courtney Newsom, Huy Pham, Milena Recinos, Gurjeet Rehal, Chhaya Samtani, Lesley Sediva, Andrew Tsai, Glory Turcios, Minhtriet Vu, and Jenny Wang.

Orange Empire was honored to receive the Chapter Activities Award for a large chapter, the Flyer of the month award for March and October. Michael Kane, EDA of the UI Anaheim Office won the Toll Trust Award. The convention culminated a productive and successful celebration of Orange Empire accomplishments in 2024. More to come in 2025.



PUERTO DEL SOL CHAPTER

BIRDING: A COASTAL ADVENTURE

By Maritza Marroquin-Sanders, Puerto Del Sol Chapter President

Once you've gone on a birding walk with the Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center, listening to the birds outside your window hits a little different. On Saturday, March 29, 2025, members and guests of the Puerto Del Sol Chapter of California Workforce Connection gathered with Nature Center guides – Mike, Pat, and Morgan – who led us through diverse habitats, including Buena Vista Lagoon, Maxton Brown Park, and the beach. We observed so many bird species including pelicans, sea gulls, ducks, osprey, and song sparrows.

We learned to tell crows and ravens apart: ravens are larger, have wedge-shaped tails, and make a deep croaking sound; crows are smaller with fan-shaped tails and a familiar "caw." Both birds are intelligent and have strong family ties.

Grackles impressed us with their shiny feathers that reflect

blue, purple, green, and bronze in sunlight. Hummingbirds added color, with males showing bright reds and purples, while females had more subtle greens and whites. Some birders used the [Merlin Bird ID app](#) by Cornell Lab of Ornithology to identify birds by photos and sounds.

It was a wonderful opportunity to support the Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center and learn about the development of the Payómkawichum Ecological Knowledge 101 Program that "...helps shape the future restoration efforts around Buena Vista Lagoon," says [Audubon California](#).

Special thanks to Tom Troy for coordinating the Coastal Birding 101 walk, providing accessible and engaging experiences for bird enthusiasts. To learn more, visit [bvaudubon.org](#). Have questions about how to get involved with the Puerto Del Sol Chapter? Email us at puertodelsolsd@gmail.com.



FROM LEFT: LYNN LAM, JENNIFER LUCY, MARITZA MARROQUIN-SANDERS, PHIL DWYER, LUIS PEREZ



CHAPTER NEWS CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

SILICON VALLEY CHAPTER

By By Fred Ruibal

We were saddened to hear about the passing of Shunlonda Nathaniel this May. Shunlonda was an Employment Program Representative who worked out of the Oakland UI Center. Although I did not work with Shunlonda in a UI capacity, I had the pleasure of meeting her through CWC when she became involved with my chapter Silicon Valley. In knowing her, I found her to be a big supporter of CWC as well as a great person. Shunlonda was a member of the East Bay chapter, but then transferred to the Silicon Valley Chapter, where she held the positions of First Vice-President and Second Vice-President during her tenure. Shunlonda always shown enthusiasm, commitment, and a willingness to step up and support our organization. She had attended state board meetings as a proxy for Silicon Valley President, which included both in person meetings as well as Zoom meetings. She was slated to be our first VP for this coming year. She always had a positive attitude and was always willing to bring fresh ideas to the table for the benefit of our organization. She could always be counted on, which says a lot about someone with character and integrity. We will miss her. RIP Shunlonda and until we meet again.



SHUNLONDA
NATHANIEL



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM PAGE 5

- Caring for a seriously ill family member.
- Bonding with a new child.
- Participating in a qualifying event because of a family member's military deployment to a foreign country.

• **Jobs and Training** – The EDD provides no-cost employment and training services offered in partnership with state and local agencies and organizations through the America's Job

• **Center of CaliforniaSM (AJCC).** The AJCC locations provide easy one-stop access to California's employment-related services. These services are provided to prepare adults, youth, and dislocated workers for participation in the workforce, and connect employers with job openings with qualified job seekers.

• **Payroll Taxes** – California has four state payroll taxes

which the EDD manages. Employers contribute to UI and Employment Training Tax, and are required to withhold mandatory employee payroll deductions to pay into state payroll taxes for SDI and personal income tax.

• **Labor Market Information** – The EDD is the prime source of high quality and timely workforce and labor market information for the State of California. The EDD collects, analyzes, and publishes statistical data and reports on California's labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages and other important labor." Keeping you updated on current information regarding EDD.

The Employment Development Department offers vast array of services to Californians.

PPA Meets Via ZOOM

By Verletta (VAL) Moeller
and Nanette Bowman

The Past Presidents Association (PPA) held a ZOOM meeting on May 7. We usually meet at the Annual CWC State Educational Conference/ Convention to elect new officers. But there was a suggestion to meet via ZOOM and it paid off with several more members able to join us for the meeting. In attendance were: **Nanette Bowman, Raymond Cabrera, Sory Jordan, Tim Mullins, Joanne Sherrill, Dr. James Thomas, and Val Moeller.**

Attendees shared individual milestones and experiences. Tim Mullins shared that Past President (1996-97) **Lynn Goldman** resides at the Lovely Community Healthcare Center in Thousand Oaks. We decided to send her a card from the PPA. And, if you knew her, feel free to send her a card.

Past President **Yvette Quevedo** (2015-16) married Patrick O-Rourke on April 26. She left EDD employment May 5, 2024. The PPA wishes her well.

Consensus was not to change officers for 2025-26. Nanette Bowman remains as Secretary/Treasurer and Val Moeller remains as chair.

Be Prepared

Common Interview Questions



By Verletta (VAL) Moeller

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What do consider to be your greatest weakness?
- What is your greatest professional achievement?
- Tell me about a challenge or conflict that you faced at work and how you dealt with it.
- Tell me about a time that you demonstrated leadership skills.
- How would your boss and coworkers describe you?
- How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
- How do you prioritize your work?
- What should I know that is not on your application or resume?
- Is there anything else you would like us to know?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Membership Application

☐ New
 ☐ Update
 ☐ Renewal
 ☐ Cancellation

Date:

Mail application and payments to: **CWC Membership Coordinator**, P.O. Box 7858, Oxnard, CA 93031
 or email application to cwcworkforceconnection@gmail.com (mail payment, if applicable)

*Full Name:	First	Last		
*Local Chapter:	Select chapter you want to join	Telephone:		
*Personal email:				
*Address:				
*Employer:		*Location:		
*Job Title:		ARU#		*Bargaining Unit #:

*Type of Member	Annual Dues	*Payment Option
<input type="radio"/> Employment Development Department (EDD) Employee (Bargaining Unit 1 or 4)**	\$48.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Automatic Deduction (\$4.00) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check *SSN:
<input type="radio"/> EDD Supervisor/Exempt Employee**+	\$0.00	*SSN:
<input type="radio"/> Other State Employee (Non-EDD)** <i>Refer to your Bargaining Unit Contract for possible reimbursement</i>	\$98.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Automatic Deduction (\$8.17) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check *SSN:
<input type="radio"/> Partner (Non-EDD)	\$98.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check
<input type="radio"/> EDD Student/Youth Assistant**	\$36.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Automatic Deduction (\$3.00) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check *SSN:
<input type="radio"/> Retiree	\$36.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Check

I recognize that the processing of this form/payment may take 1-3 months. If I have selected the **Automatic Deduction** option, I hereby authorize the State Controller's Office (SCO) to automatically deduct from my salary each month the amount listed above and transmit, as designated, an amount for membership dues to the CWC; I understand that processing may take 2-3 pay periods. If I have selected the **cash or check** option, I hereby agree to be sent annual dues renewal invoices (**make check payable to: CWC**). I agree to provide my full social security number, which will be kept confidential. I certify that I am now a member of the CWC and allow the organization to establish, change, and/or cancel my deduction, as applicable. I understand that this authorization will remain in effect until I submit a written request to the CWC Membership Coordinator to terminate my membership and cancel any deduction, as appropriate. I also understand that the CWC organization does not issue refunds for unused dues or the months taken for processing.

*Signature: _____ *Date: _____

Name of Recruiter (if applicable): _____

* Required

** If you do not wish to provide your Social Security Number (SSN), then you must pay the full membership dues for that type of member by cash or check.

+ For this membership type, if you do not wish to supply the SSN, then the amount due is \$98.00.