Congratulations on finishing such a successful semester, CASSA! This past semester has been filled with 18 community service events, 13 meetings with seven guest speakers, four walks for a cause, 7 donation drives, 1 conference, 4 fundraisers, and 4 social events. WOW - Give yourselves a pat on the back for all of your hard work, we couldn’t have done it without YOU! I truly wanted to take the time to thank each and every one of you for being so actively involved because CASSA would not be CASSA without every single one of you and all that you do for the community.

On behalf of the CASSA Executive Board, we thank you for your involvement and dedication to CASSA and the children, adolescents, and families that we work with. We all highly encourage you to run for an Executive Board position for next academic year; being on the Executive Board enhances your leadership skills, promotes networking and team building, assists in the formation of lifelong connections and friendships and gives you a myriad of opportunities to make a difference at CSUF and within the lives of many children, adolescents and families.

Cheers to an even better Spring 2017 semester!

- Ashley Allen, CASSA President
Orangewood: 11/4 – Elena Park

I attended Orangewood Children’s Home with other CASSA members. Even though it was my first time, I wanted to create an activity based on Thanksgiving. These children might be having family issues or don’t get the things that they want, but I wanted them do create something fun they would appreciate. As other CASSA members brought activities for the children, my activity was a Turkey Cup which was based on drawing hand for the feathers, decorating their own turkey and filling up with candy and chocolate. The main point was to write what they are thankful for, and I’ve got lovely answers. I’ve been surprised by how open the children are and the love that they have for us. It truly touched my heart when the children said “I’m thankful that you came here today!” One thing that I regret was not having enough time to prepare, but thankfully some members from CASSA helped me cutout some materials and set up the table so I was able to do the activity. It was also very nice to engage with the members. As I got to know them, it became a better and comfortable environment which resulted in great teamwork. I would love to visit back and create more activities and bring more happiness to the children.

Family Fun Day: 11/5 – Saika Batliwala

While I had prepared myself for a day full of activities and games, I hadn’t realized how driven the organizers of this event were. CASSA members, along with the Child Guidance Center members, were told, "Just run! Make sure the kids are running!" The main motivation was to earn 10,000 steps through the pedometers children were assigned. After every game, children ran up to members, asking them to read out the steps they had run. While all the games we played were enjoyable, my top two favorite games would have to be “Run from the Adults” and “Swat the Bug” because they were the most interactive. “Run from the Adults” was a game of tag, where adults were chasing the kids. “Swat the Bug” was an interactive game in which adults had flies, made from paper plates and string, then ran around the park while the kids were chasing and swatting the flies with a pool noodle. It was hilarious to see the difference in how the children swatted the flies: some were aggressive, intent on killing the fly, while others were gentler, scared they might hurt it. The event offered a place where children were happy, smiling, and sweaty. I cannot wait for the next Family Fun Day event!
Second Harvest Food Bank: 11/11 – Melissa Lopez

Volunteering at Second Harvest Food Bank was an eye-opening experience because it really reinforced the fact that there are a tremendous number of children and families who are hungry every month. The event began with the coordinator explaining Second Harvest’s philosophy and their method for supplying food to families. One of the ways they do this is through a School Pantry Program. In this program, the food bank delivers food to families or sets up a location in an area of high need where food can be picked up. After the introduction, we began sorting through bags of potatoes, and then we packaged food for families. The first group was in charge of creating the boxes, another group added canned and dried goods into the package, and the third group was in charge of restocking food items. Overall, we helped to pack over 1,400 food boxes! For most people, that one box wouldn’t last a day, so these families’ ability to ration food during economic hardship is incredible. Knowing that I helped provide families with food made this a very rewarding experience and inspired me to continue helping at Second Harvest Food Bank. At the same time, participating in this event with CASSA revealed just how much this organization cares about children and families, and I’m glad to be part of such a wonderful group.

Miracle Babies Superhero Walk: 11/13 – Vivian Lu

The Miracle Babies Walk 5k Orange County was a very fun and eye-opening experience. I not only got the chance to bond with my CASSA friends, but I got to be a part of a wonderful team to raise money for such an important cause, babies in the NICU. We often don’t think about babies in the NICU, but they are fighting for their lives every second they are in there. It is not easy for them or their parents, nevertheless the parents still have to worry about the financial burden. The Miracle Babies Foundation relieves the parents financially by providing support and financial assistance, so they can keep their focus on their little ones. During the 5k walk, I got to build lasting relationships and learn more about babies in the NICU through facts and statistics posted throughout the trail. The constant support and cheering from the volunteers really helped make the atmosphere fun and encouraging from start to end. This made my first 5k extremely fun. Miracle Babies is a great foundation, by looking out for at-risk mothers and taking care of the little ones that are in need. This experience made me feel so blessed to be a part of something so great!
College of Education Center’s Open House: 11/17 – Kelly Servantes

I attended the College of Education Center’s Open House. I had been there before, but I wasn’t aware of all the opportunities the center offers. It is a great place to do homework, study, or just hang out. They provide access to computers and free printing, which I appreciated because not every student has access to a computer or printer at home. Also, they have counselors to talk to about one’s academic plan or any questions one may have through appointments or walk-in hours. Overall, the center is filled with helpful staff and other students. If you are looking for a great place to hang out on campus or do homework, make sure to go to EC-379. It is a great place to get work done and meet new people.

Roller Skating Social: 11/17 – Arlin Antunez

I had the pleasure to attend CASSA’s Roller Skating Social. Although it was at a roller skating rink, we were able to bring roller blades as well. I have always enjoyed roller blading since I was very young, but it had been a year since I had last rollerbladed. I was excited to attend the social because I had never been in a roller skating rink before, and I got to interact with other CASSA members. During the social, I was able to enjoy rollerblading and going along with the beat of the music. I attended the social with a good friend, who is also a CASSA member. She rented a pair of roller skates but was not an experienced, and I had the pleasure to help her practice. I enjoyed helping her learn to skate, and I realized that there were other members who were practicing to skate as well. It was lovely to see some CASSA members help their peers to balance and practice skating. Besides helping my friend, I was also able to skate on my own and enjoy the moment. Moreover, I felt very comfortable with the members that were present and I had the chance to talk to some of them and get to know them better; I loved seeing the members skate and socialize with one another. Towards the end of the social, my friend and I bought snacks and took a few group pictures with members. Furthermore, I went to the social not knowing what to expect, but I truly enjoyed every minute of it and I would definitely love to go again.
Orangewood: 11/18 – Lauren Solorio

It was my first time visiting Orangewood and I was more than happy to spend my Friday night hanging out with the girls there. The age group consisted primarily of 15-year-old-girls, and it was a different experience than what I am used to. Due to my past experience solely working with younger children, I was unsure how I was going to interact with an older age group. After meeting the girls and introducing ourselves, it was easier to keep the conversations going. We made a fun Thanksgiving Turkey craft out of some treats provided by CASSA. The girls seemed to enjoy making it and enjoyed the extra candy as well. We got to hear music of their preference and played some games. I felt that it was easier to talk to them because they really do appreciate the visits and the time we spend with them. One of the girls was really outgoing and enjoyed speaking her mind; I liked that she felt comfortable enough to be herself around us. If I get the opportunity, I would definitely visit again. It showed me that I could connect with people at different ages and not just younger kids.

Road to Teaching Conference: 11/19 – Maria Lezama

By attending the 20th Annual Road to Teaching Conference, I learned helpful strategies that I can use as a future teacher. The conference included Dr. Mary Funaoaka as the keynote speaker. I was inspired by her speech and message about finding your passion for the teaching profession. This inspired me more to become an elementary school teacher. There were various workshop topics, which included technology, time management, appealing to different learners, and test preparation. The workshop that I enjoyed attending was the one regarding different learners because it’s important to provide various learning opportunities for all learners. This workshop included group collaboration and engagement. The Road to Teaching Conference allowed me to network with other students who want to be a teacher or work with children. I plan to continue attending this conference in the years to come, and I highly recommend other CASSA members to take the opportunity to attend it!
**American Music Awards Taping: 11/20 – Faith Colburn**

In November, I went to the American Music Awards as a seat filler with nine other CASSA members. It was so much fun! It was a very long day that involved a lot of waiting and standing around, but it was worth it! I was selected to sit in the very front row, and I got to stay there for the entire show! I was able to sit front row for performances from artists like Bruno Mars, Lady Gaga, the Weeknd, and so many more! I also got to meet and hang out with several celebrities including Ariana Grande, Selena Gomez, and DJ Khaled! Overall, it was an incredible once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. If a member has the chance to go, he/she should definitely take it. It was incredible, and I had so much fun with all of the other CASSA members!

**Orangewood 12/2: – Stephanie Arroyo**

CASSA had another wonderful opportunity this fall semester to bring activities for the children at Orangewood. I was given a chance to be a part of this event, and I planned an emoji holiday themed painting activity for the children. CASSA members provided the children with five activities: painting, balloon toss, Mason jar craft, popsicle-stick craft, and holiday craft. As soon as CASSA members arrived in the recreational room, we eagerly set up different stations for the activities. At first we were anxious to know how many children were going to be in attendance, but little by little children began to enter the room and explore the activities. As time went by, more children entered the room and the atmosphere became holiday spirited, and some of the kids hummed holiday tunes while they painted at my station. Arranging activities and interacting with the children at Orangewood was an illuminating and heartening experience. I really enjoyed observing some of the older kids, aged 11-13, that also visited the room and participated in the activities because it brought a feeling of harmony. I would definitely recommend CASSA members to consider the opportunity to attend an event at Orangewood because the experience teaches us about ourselves and our communication skills with children. Most importantly, it teaches us about how each child is unique in their own way.
Baby Daddy TV Taping: 12/2 – Jenna Henson

The Baby Daddy TV Taping was one of the best tapings I’ve been to so far! The comedian had us laughing, and the DJ had us dancing the whole time. We couldn’t have asked for a better experience! It was so much fun being able to interact with CASSA members at such an exciting event, and after the taping we were actually able to meet some of the cast! They were super friendly and interactive throughout the event, but meeting them at the end was the icing on the cake. I look forward to more CASSA events like this!

Autism Speaks Walk: 12/4 – Diana Rios

I attended the Autism Speaks Walk with several other CASSA members at Angels Stadium in Anaheim. As soon as I arrived, I saw families proudly donned t-shirts that had team names representative of a loved one in their life who has autism. Even before the event started, we watched the opening ceremony, which consisted of inspirational dances, singing and a martial arts performance that incorporated many children with autism. Once the event had begun, we all started at the finish line and walked along the perimeter and also through the Angel's Stadium while being cheered on by volunteers who were on the sidelines. I was delighted to see so many smiling faces there among the crowds of people, which was a melting pot of so many people from different walks of life. Attending the Autism Speaks Walk truly made me feel inspired and empowered to help people in my community who may be affected by autism.
**Miller Children’s Hospital: 12/5 – Jennifer Urrutia**

On the fifth of December, I was given the opportunity to attend Santa’s workshop at Miller Children’s Hospital. The other volunteers and I had to make a craft for the children, so I decided to take foam ornaments that the children could make. The ornament kits consisted of many small pieces, so before the children arrived we cut up all the pieces needed to decorate and make the ornament. As the children began to show up, we realized that the ornaments were difficult and time consuming, so we put the difficult pieces onto the ornaments to make the activity easier. This event was a new experience for me, and I am glad I had the opportunity to attend. It was an amazing feeling to see children smiling, laughing, and enjoying themselves. I would gladly return to an event like the workshop. Being there was a new experience I won’t ever forget.

**Illumination Foundation: Holiday Carnival: 12/10 – Andrea Cuiris**

The holiday event for the Illumination Foundation was an amazing experience. I was really excited that I got the opportunity to go with CASSA. I was very eager to bring joy and some Christmas spirit to the children. At the event, we had a booth where we provided games and candy for the children. The best part was when I played tic-tac-toe with the children. It was delightful to see them come back to play with me. Aside from our booth, there was also a booth for crafts, face painting, meet and greet Santa and much more. It was a really magical event for the families and the children. It was rewarding seeing the children smiling and having fun. Also, I was pleased to see that a lot of families came to be part of this special event. I would definitely recommend other CASSA members to participate in this event in the upcoming year.
Faculty Spotlight: Professor Dallas Stout

Name: Dallas M. Stout, Psy.D.

Undergraduate Education:
- AA in General Studies/Transfer Requirements from Cypress College
- BS in Human Services from California State University, Fullerton

Graduate Education:
- MA in Clinical Psychology (Marriage, Family & Child Therapy) from Azusa Pacific University
- Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology (Family Psychology) from Azusa Pacific University

Favorite class or subject matter to teach: Adolescence

An interesting fact about yourself: I grew up fairly poor and was not prepared for college in the school system I graduated from. As a result, I spent 16 years, working all the way, from start to finish completing my college education. Also, I met my wife while I was a student at CSUF and we have been married over 22 years.

Hobbies: I am a history buff so I read a lot. I like to travel. I have driven in 46 US states, as well as Canada and Mexico. I have a goal to visit all 50 states.

Q: What was one of the biggest challenges you have faced in your college experience and how did you overcome that?

College was not easy for me the first 4 or 5 years because I didn’t know anything about it when I arrived and no in my family knew anything about it either. Because I had to work so much, I really never took the time to learn about any of the programs that existed that could have helped a student like myself do better in college either. For example, I managed to finish my undergraduate education without knowing anything about basics like the option to get a minor or doing well to get on the Dean’s list. I progressed one semester at a time probably by sheer stubbornness. It wasn’t until I got married and started my Master’s program that I became a better student & really excelled in college.
Q: How were you able to balance your life with work, school, family, and friends throughout your college experience? How have those methods changed over time?

At one point I was struggling to balance school, work, marriage, internships, and church responsibilities so I spoke to one of my faith leaders. He encouraged me to just be present, wherever I was and to do the best I could in that moment. That advice really helped me a lot. I learned to become an expert scheduler. I had a different color on my calendar for each aspect of my life. Another thing I have always done right up until now is every Sunday evening I create a “To Do” list for the week ahead. This allows me to encapsulate all I have to get done, without feeling overwhelmed, while also keeping me focused on my priorities.

Q: In your courses, what do you hope your students take away from your teaching style aside from learning the material? In other words, how are you making an impact on your students?

I make a concerted effort to teach from an enthusiastic, action oriented, experiential approach that will engage any kind of learner. In each and every class meeting I attempt to employ a mix of small group interaction, class discussion and debate, and opportunities to actually practice applied teaching skills. I push my students to overcome their fears of stepping up when asked and of public speaking in general, both important professional skills. The response I’ve had from students in our department to my teaching methods has been very positive.

At the end of the day, I want them to actually be able to apply the material we covered in class on some random Thursday afternoon when life happens. I would also like them to be more comfortable around teens in general.

Q: What are some common challenges that you perceive students to face when first coming to college or throughout their college experience? What advice would you give to them?

I have always felt strongly that there is something to be said about our overall health during the process of our education. Each of us needs to look for ways to de-stress and take care of ourselves in ways that work for us. I also think finding balance is hard for many students. I have found that prioritizing priorities, instead of prioritizing time, will really make life easier. When you are clear on your priorities, decisions often take care of themselves. Finally, if emotional things come up for you in class, consider not just pushing them back down and avoiding them. Think about them. Analyze and process them. If they are really tough, consider going to a counselor for a few sessions to work it out. There are many non-profit counseling centers all over the county that will see a student for $5 or $10 a session, or free if necessary. Take advantage of this resource now to let go of some things that aren’t serving you well anymore.
CASSA Photos!

Orangewood 11/4

MOM TV Taping

Roller Skating Social

Orangewood 12/2

Second Harvest

Miller Children’s Hospital

Autism Speaks Walk

AMAs

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