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Sacramento County Recognizes First César E. Chávez Holiday *Employees volunteer for community service projects on March 31*

Sacramento, CA – Thursday, March 31, 2016 will be recognized for the first time as an official Sacramento County holiday to commemorate the birthday of civil rights and labor movement leader César E. Chávez. In 2015, Supervisor Phil Serna proposed adding a new holiday/day of service in recognition of Chavez' legacy of service and encourage employees to give back to the community by participating in worthy local projects. On June 9, 2015, the Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the County's personnel ordinance to add March 31 annually as a County holiday.

Chávez, who served as a mentor to Serna's late father, Sacramento Mayor Joe Serna Jr., believed that people have an obligation to contribute to their community.

"Ever since introducing the idea of a César Chávez holiday, I expected it would be an appropriate time for all of us to recommit ourselves to community service," said Serna. He adds, "In my heart of hearts, I know that is how César Chávez would want us to celebrate his legacy, by helping others."

On Thursday, approximately 100 employees represented by several employee organizations will participate in community service projects at area nonprofits and social service agencies. Members of the Attorneys' Association will help remove invasive plants from the wildfire restoration site on the American River Parkway; United Public Employees, Local #1 members will prepare the community gardens for spring planting at Cottage Housing's Serna Village Apartments; Probation Association volunteers will sort and bag nonperishable food for distribution at Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services; and members of the Deputy Sheriff's Association Youth Services Unit will lend a hand with needed maintenance at Salvation Army's César Chávez playground and classrooms.

State workers won the holiday in 2000 when California Governor Gray Davis signed a bill creating the César E. Chávez Day of Service and Learning. It marked the first time that a labor leader or Latino has been honored with a public legal holiday. "It was long overdue that Sacramento County joins the state and other jurisdictions to honor Chávez' contribution," said Serna.

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