



Quick Blurbs

JANUARY 2024

The newsletter is calling for your participation!

Employees and employers, do you have an extraordinary story you're itching to share? Perhaps a memorable community event you recently attended, or an outstanding achievement that deserves recognition? How about a special shoutout to someone who has gone above and beyond?

Your experiences make our community vibrant, and we want to feature them in our newsletter! Share your tales and accolades by sending them to Social@stepagency.com. Let's make this newsletter a reflection of the amazing stories within our STEP community. Your voice matters!

Page 2: Referral Bonus

Page 3: Employee Recognition

Page 4: Message from Jacquie

Page 5: Gingerbread Houses

Page 6: Marching Band

Page 7: Transit Champion

Page 8-9: Reflections

Page 10-11: Mind Matters

Page 12: Horoscopes


Page 13: Activity Page


Page 14: Calendar


Page 15-16: Flyers



Why refer someone to STEP?

 **Join Forces with the Best:** STEP is more than just a workplace; it's a family where innovation, support, and growth thrive. By bringing your loved ones and friends on board, you're giving them the chance to be a part of a fantastic team.

 **Earn and Celebrate Together:** Imagine celebrating with your loved ones as they embark on their journey with us. Your referral not only enriches their lives but also adds a spark to yours with that extra money in your pocket!

 **Empower Others:** By referring someone, you empower them to contribute to our mission of making a difference. It's a win-win situation – they find a fulfilling job, and you earn a bonus!

How does it work?

1. Refer: Simply refer your family, friends, or acquaintances to join STEP.
2. They Join: Once your referral becomes a STEP employee and completes a successful 90 days, you earn your \$100 bonus.
3. Gain that \$250 bonus if the referred employee exceeds 1 year of employment in good standing
4. Celebrate: Celebrate your successful referral and enjoy the extra cash!

Let's spread the word and make our STEP family even more vibrant, diverse, and supportive. Together, we can create a workplace where everyone feels valued, inspired, and part of something incredible.

Thank you for being a crucial part of STEP. Get ready to refer, earn, and celebrate the spirit of togetherness!

New Talent Joins STEP!

We have some thrilling news to share with you all. Strategies to Empower People (STEP) is growing, and we're delighted to welcome new members to our team! These individuals bring valuable expertise and a deep commitment to our mission of empowering people and making a positive impact in our community.

Please join us in welcoming:

James W	Courtney M	Jhajnell P	Matthew C	Tristyn M
Tatiana B	Tyler A	Anthony S	Samantha B	Tatiana M
Sonnai C	Jerzie S	Marlayna B	Ernestine L	Shelly T
Chase G	Jennifer L	Izabella D	Tristan W	Shelby T
Jessica M	Lavesha P	Krystal P		

Celebrating Dedication and Success

Congratulations on reaching another milestone with us as we celebrate your anniversary at STEP Agency. We want to take this moment to express our appreciation for your unwavering dedication and remarkable contributions to our team's success.

As you commemorate your anniversary, it's also a time to remind yourself of another exciting achievement - your vested amount in our Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) could be increasing! Through our ESOP, you have a unique opportunity to share in the company's prosperity and success.

Chris D - 1 Year	Alicia S - 2 Years	Tycen P - 5Years	Julie S - 12Years
Ruth H - 1 Year	Sheyla S - 2 Years	Ashley T - 5Years	Heather C - 12Years
Karen M - 1 Year	Natalia G - 2Years	Wendy S - 6Years	Joseph J - 13Years
Tianna M - 1 Year	Xavier C - 2Years	Angela C - 6Years	Rachel S - 14Years
Bobbie G - 1 Year	Edwin B - 2Years	Nikki B - 7Years	Dionny D - 15Years
Xaya A - 1 Year	Andrew P - 3Years	Michael R - 8Years	Dante V - 18Years
Maribel V - 1 Year	Consultant S - 3Years	Andre W - 9Years	Doug F - 23Years
Mina P - 1 Year	Shirley D - 3Years	Jenny H - 10Years	Patricia D - 27Years
Bethany G- 1 Year	Joyce A - 3Years	Salvador A - 10Years	
Haley - 2 Years	Merrilee G - 3Years	Sandra A - 11Years	
Marcquicia G - 2 Years	Dena K - 4Years	Terrence S - 11Years	

To Learn more about our ESOP visit our website at www.stepagency.com or reach out directly to our HR department for more information 916-679-1555

Message from Jacquie Foss

Founder: Strategies To Empower People

Introducing STEP's new CEO: Jay Kolvoord

As I reflect on the journey that began in 1988 I just have an overwhelming sense of gratitude for that one choice to apply for a job at a group home . On that day in 1988, my life changed forever. I tell people on that day I arrived at my destination. The opportunities to pursue my passion have been the foundation I needed. To be of service to those with intellectual and developmental disabilities has been the greatest honor of my life. On 4/1/94, I became the founder of Strategies To Empower People. Today, STEP is a 100% Employee Owned Agency.



On 12/11/23, the Board chose Jay Kolvoord as the new CEO effective 1/1/24. Jay will lead the agency with integrity and vision, I am excited for the next generation of STEP. I will focus my attention on governmental affairs and public policy. What I will also do is focus on my physical and mental health, I will spend time with my beloved John Foss , my family, my friends, and my doggies. I will go on more adventures and travel. I have loved the last 36 years of pursuing my vocation, but the time has come for me to slow down and appreciate just being Jacquie. So many people to thank and I can't wait to celebrate on December 22nd with Stuart, Alex, Sharlene, John, Charlotte , Debbie, Mike , the STEP OGs and I will feel the presence of Tina, Jerome, Valerie, Pam, Jackie and the list goes on. I am not going anywhere, I plan on participating in more circles of support, going on trips with folks, and just being present.

A special recognition to my core team, Claudia Elliott Loveless , Sandy, Patti, and Diana J Miller , with me from the start. To the entire STEP team, I am humbled by your dedication and commitment. Look at what we accomplished. HeartRight Always.

And the journey goes on ..

My new role will be Director of Governmental Affairs and Public Policy

I will remain as Chairperson for the ESOP Board



Gingerbread Houses



Get ready for a whirlwind of holiday euphoria as the enchanting ingredients – candy canes, chocolate pieces, gingerbread, and a cascade of frosting – collide to concoct the most dazzling and festive gingerbread houses you could ever imagine! The professional office was bursting at the seams with employers and employees, all poised for an epic decorating extravaganza. But wait, it's not just any mundane office day – it was a full-blown celebration of creativity, and the atmosphere is electric.

Now, imagine the scene unfolding as gingerbread houses take shape. But here's the twist – not all the delightful creations make it to the end unscathed. Picture a delightful chaos as some of the edible

masterpieces succumb to irresistible temptation. Yes, you heard it right – the allure of the sugary wonders proves too tempting, leading to impromptu taste tests and sugar rushes that rival the speed of Santa's sleigh.

So, as the final dollop of frosting finds its place and the last sprinkle lands on a masterpiece, the professional office is not just adorned with colorful gingerbread houses; it's transformed into a haven of joy, laughter, and the pure magic of the holidays. Welcome to the gingerbread spectacle, where each bite tells a tale, and every giggle echoes the joy of the season!



Marching Band

In a tale that echoed with the festive spirit of the season, Carl P emerged as a leading charge with the Citrus Heights Marching Band for not just one, but two spectacular Christmas Parades. The streets of Rio Linda and Downtown Roseville were about to witness a holiday spectacle unlike any other.

The day of the parades arrived, and there was an air of excitement that transcended the usual holiday buzz. As the marching band gathered, instruments in hand, Carl P was there decked out in a festive ensemble ready to lead the band!



With a grin that could light up the darkest winter night, Carl took his place at the front of the band, banner in hand, ready to lead the musical charge through the streets during each event. The crowd erupted into cheers as they witnessed the Citrus Heights Community March band march by, musical instruments blaring with whimsical music. The parade route, typically lined with spectators, now became a stage for genuine connection and shared joy.

A big HEARTRIGHT shout out and immense gratitude to Des M for being an unwavering advocate, ensuring that community access remains a cornerstone for all employers. Des M's commitment has not only paved the way for inclusive opportunities but has also fortified a crucial pillar in the construction of enduring relationships within our community.

Thank you for your dedication to fostering a connected and vibrant community for all.



Transit Champion

Guess what? Sacramento Regional Transit District recently held a board meeting to go over usual business. But! hold on, because that's not all – two outstanding community members were also nominated as Community Transit Champions, and guess who's in the spotlight? That's right, it's none other than Rick H himself!



But wait, there's more to the story! The Sacramento Regional Transit District's very own General Manager and CEO, the esteemed Henry Li, personally nominated Rick H for this prestigious recognition. It's not just any title – Rick is now officially dubbed the unsung hero of public transit, and we couldn't be more thrilled!



Picture it: a room buzzing with excitement, applause ringing through the air, and Rick H, standing tall as a beacon of dedication and hard work. It's not just an acknowledgment; it's a celebration of an unsung hero making waves in the world of public transit. Now that's the kind of news that gets your heart racing!

Reflections

December 22nd, an exhilarating date etched in the 2023 finale of Strategies to Empower People's epic year-end celebrations! The stage was set for the awe-inspiring Reflections Holiday Party: a dazzling affair heralding the dawn of the next generation.

Picture this: Employers and Employees mingling in a vibrant atmosphere, animatedly reminiscing about the bygone year with co-workers and friends. But hold on tight because this wasn't your run-of-the-mill holiday shindig – it was a seismic event unveiling the future!



The spotlight shone on Jay Kolvoord, ascending to the helm as the dynamic new CEO of Strategies to Empower People, and Jacquie Foss, the trailblazing Founder, transitioning into the pivotal roles of Director of Governmental Affairs and Public Affairs.



The night unfolded like a symphony of beats and a feast of delectable delights, creating an intoxicating blend of unforgettable memories and infectious laughter.

Reflecting on the glorious journey spanning three decades since STEP's inception in 1994, the festivities resonated with the awe of how swiftly time has soared. This was no mere soiree; it was a celebration of legacy, innovation, and the exciting chapters yet to unfold.

Let's raise the roof with a thunderous applause for the OG's of STEP, the pioneers who laid the groundwork back in 1992: Alex, John, Charlotte, Stuart, and Sharlene. Special mention to Tine and Joe, who may have left us but live on in the spirit of STEP. It's their resounding "yes" that built the foundation of STEP, and tonight, we celebrate the incredible journey they set in motion!

As the night's excitement settled into a warm glow, a collective wave of nostalgia swept through the crowd. Amidst the soothing melodies and the fading echoes of laughter, everyone took a reflective journey into the past. The torch had been passed to the new generation, and the horizon was ablaze with limitless possibilities.



Pictured: The OG's of STEP
Alex, John, Charlotte, Stuart and Sharlene
Not Pictured: Tina and Joe



Mind Matters: Fostering Mental Health through Open Communication

In our fast-paced world, where productivity often takes center stage, it's easy to overlook the crucial aspect of mental health. The truth is, mental well-being is not just a personal matter; it profoundly influences our professional lives, relationships, and overall quality of life. In this edition, let's explore the importance of mental health and how open communication plays a pivotal role in fostering a supportive environment.

Breaking the Silence:

Mental health is a topic that, unfortunately, carries a certain stigma. However, it's essential to break the silence surrounding mental health issues and create a space where individuals feel comfortable discussing their struggles. When we open up about our experiences, we not only validate our own feelings but also encourage others to do the same.



Creating a Supportive Culture:

Workplaces play a significant role in influencing the mental well-being of individuals. Employers and colleagues alike can contribute to creating a supportive culture by fostering open communication. Encourage team members to share their experiences, whether positive or challenging, and actively listen without judgment. Sometimes, all it takes is a compassionate ear to make a significant difference.

Recognizing the Signs:

Understanding the signs of mental health challenges is crucial for offering support. Changes in behavior, mood swings, withdrawal from social activities, or a decline in work performance may be indicators that someone is struggling. By paying attention and expressing genuine concern, we can create a safety net for those facing difficulties.



Wellness Initiatives:

Consider implementing wellness initiatives that promote both physical and mental well-being. Whether it's organizing mindfulness sessions, yoga classes, or simply encouraging regular breaks, these initiatives can contribute to a healthier and more balanced work environment.

Providing Resources:

In addition to open communication, providing access to mental health resources is vital. Many organizations offer employee assistance programs (EAPs), counseling services, or workshops that address stress management and resilience. By making these resources readily available, we empower individuals to take proactive steps toward maintaining their mental health.



Taking Care of Ourselves:

Lastly, let's remember that self-care is not a luxury but a necessity. Encourage everyone to prioritize their mental health by setting boundaries, practicing mindfulness, and seeking help when needed. When we prioritize our well-being, we become better equipped to support those around us.

In conclusion, by fostering open communication and prioritizing mental health, we contribute to a workplace culture that values the whole person. Let's continue the conversation, break the stigma, and create an environment where everyone feels seen, heard, and supported.



HOROSCOPES

By: Michelle Kebabjian

ARIES
MAR. 21 - APR. 19

You deserve some harmony in your life, Aries. Old patterns and stale, unchecked beliefs are moving out to make room for a more confident, stronger you.

TAURUS
APR. 20 - MAY. 20

With your intuitive powers on the rise, it is no surprise you're getting new ideas and insights now. Keep your attention on subtle shifts in the energy around you, and when the time is right for you to move, you will be ready.

GEMINI
MAY. 21 - JUNE. 20

Guilt and remorse are feelings you are meant to move through Gemini, not dwell on. True forgiveness comes from within, so grant it to yourself now and ease into a brighter, calmer state of mind.

CANCER
JUNE. 21 - JULY. 22

A new year brings time to reflect and dream new dreams of your future. Get specific about what you truly desire and signal the Universe by feeling/acting as if you already have it.

LEO
JULY 23 - AUG. 23

Your career and finances have an unruly energy around them that could take you by surprise if you refuse to pay attention now. Take careful stock of your spending and adjust accordingly to protect yourself from a potential disaster.

VIRGO
AUG. 23 - SEP. 22

A child or young adult could surprise you with their innocent insight into a situation you are worrying about, Virgo. Listen closely to the wisdom they openly share, and you will find something valuable to help you see things in a brilliant, fresh new light.

LIBRA
SEP. 23 - OCT. 22

Practicing balance in all aspects of your life (especially personal relationships) is of the utmost importance now, Libra. Care for yourself as much as you care for others to make sure you avoid potential burnout.

SCORPIO
OCT. 23 - NOV. 21

Your mysterious, aloof personality can keep "the bad people" away, and that's a gift, Scorpio. However, it can also keep the good people away- it is safe to drop your guard around friends and family who have proven their loyalty.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV. 22- DEC. 21

You pulled out all the stops to make the holidays a festive affair (and you nailed it!), but you're feeling kind of "let down" now. No worries, Sagittarius- plan a trip or start a new hobby to get your spirits back up to where you like them to be.

CAPRICORN
DEC. 22 - JAN. 19

"What is for you won't miss you" is the theme this month, Capricorn. Meaning, you don't have to do anything- if it's truly part of your destiny, it will find you no matter what.

AQUARIUS
JAN. 20 - FEB. 18

Purpose and joy can and will overlap this month, Aquarius. Consider some wild, innovative ideas that light your heart up- that feeling is the sign you're waiting for.

PISCES
FEB. 19 - MAR. 20

If you're feeling rested and energized this month Pisces, concentrate that energy on your work and finances to propel yourself forward. Small moves right now can set you up for considerable success further down the road.

WORD SEARCH

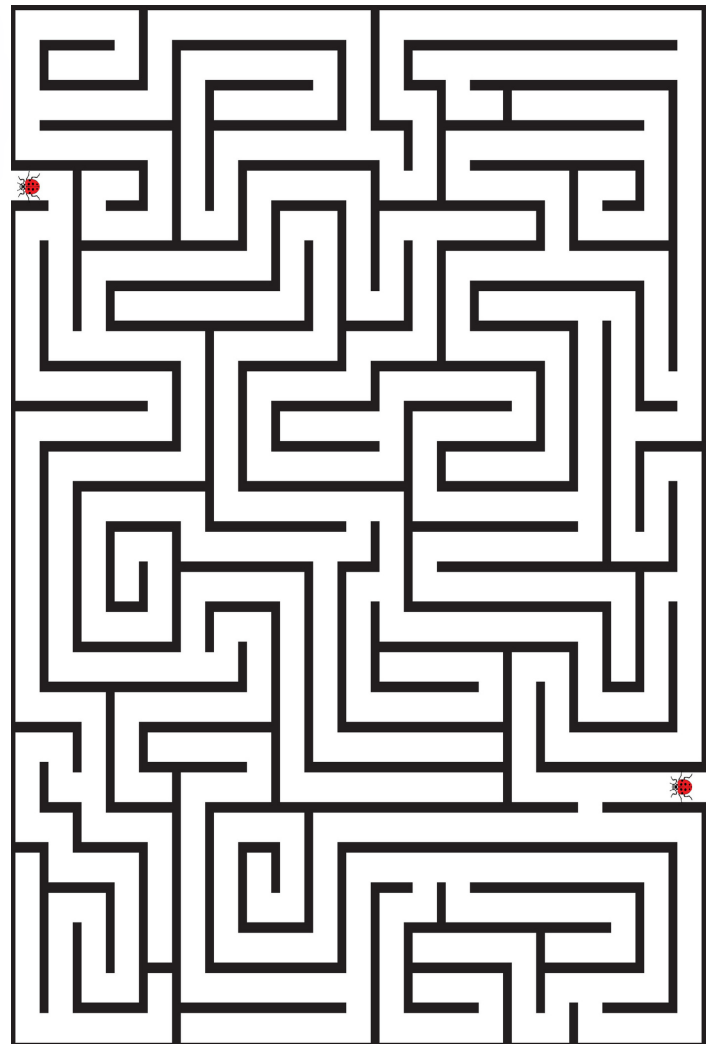
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- Reflections
- Generation
- Festivities
- Employer
- Employee
- Future
- Founder
- Achievement
- Career
- Success
- Team
- Beginnings
- Happy
- Goals
- Growth

SUDOKU

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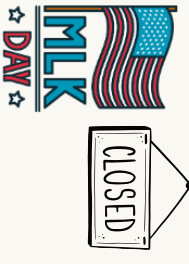
JANUARY 2024



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28	29	30	31			

MAHAYANA
NEW YEAR



PAY DAY



VISION BOARD
CENTRAL OFFICE
12-4



Create

VISION New Year, New You BOARD



LEARN AMERICAN
SIGN LANGUAGE



**NEW YEAR, NEW YOU
CREATE YOUR VISION
BOARD FOR 2024
JANUARY 23, 2024
12-4 PM
CENTRAL OFFICE
IN THE MATTY ROOM**

SAMPLE VISION BOARD



STEP HOSTED

Valentine's Day Mingle & Munchies

<p>13 FEB</p>	<p>Strategies to Empower People</p> <p>2330 Glendale Lane Sacramento, CA 95825</p>
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Singles Only Meetup from 2-4 PM
Followed by an Open Dance From 4-6 PM

*This Invitation is open to all Adults
receiving services from
Alta California Regional Center & North Bay
Regional Center.*

MUST RSVP BY February 6, 2024
Or, will be turned away at the door

RSVP or QUESTIONS HERE:
✉ Diversity@stepagency.com

Allergy Warning: Food may contain or come into contact with dairy, eggs, peanuts, soybeans, sugar, tree nuts and/or wheat.

