

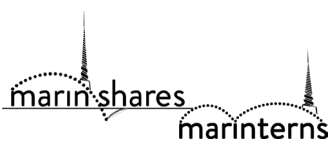
VOLUNTEER NOTES

Where Are They Now?

Former Marintern **Kyle Fennessy** has received a master's degree in public health and advanced to the position of senior hazardous materials specialist with the County of Alameda. Last year, he completed a public health preparedness internship with the Marin County Health and Human Services Department and earned a commendation from the Board of Supervisors. While interning, Kyle was completing grad school at San Jose State University and working as a hazardous materials specialist with Alameda County.

Intern Represents School

Marintern **Aarya Chowdhry** represented her school at the four-day National Association of Independent Schools' Student Diversity Leadership Conference in St. Louis during fall semester. Among myriad opportunities to learn, students could participate in affinity groups. Aarya found it "extremely moving" to spend time in the South Asian affinity group with peers who shared cultural experiences. She also enjoyed the guest speakers, especially author Dr. Omékongo Dibinga. Aarya, a San Domenico School senior, interns with the Human Resources Department.



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Photographer's Images Showcase Volunteer and Intern Service

By Scott Harrop

Regular readers of this newsletter will have seen several of **Doug Kaye's** photos. Along with four MarinShares volunteer teammates, he is called upon to provide images to accompany articles such as this one.

For example, Doug has taken portraits of MarinShares volunteers **Sheryl Hoy** and **Ray Peterson** and Marintern **Kate Lane**, and photographed the Volunteer Team of the Year and a large group of Career Explorer program participants. He also volunteers as a backup photographer for the public information team in the County Administrator's Office.

Doug's interest in photography dates to his boyhood in San Francisco. His father had a wet darkroom, and they would visit what is now known as the Harvey Milk Photography Center. His undergraduate studies were in the drama department at UC Berkeley.

Although he did learn cinematography in graduate school at New York University, for 20 years his only forays into still photography involved family photos.



PHOTO BY SCOTT LOFTENESS

MarinShares photographer Doug Kaye explores light and shadows at Mission Dolores in San Francisco using a Sony A9 digital camera.

His early career involved theater, film, and TV in San Francisco and New York during the 1970s.

Doug transitioned from film and TV work into software, starting his own company in 1978. Then he, his wife (now married 52 years), and their son

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High Schooler Lends a Hand with Homework and Library Help

By Alice Wolf

Marintern **Parinaz Sotoudeh** found a community within the Novato branch of the Marin County Free Library last summer. She took on various tasks, learning to shelve books accurately and assist with library projects and programs. In the fall she joined the [Homework Helpers](#) tutoring team and now serves younger students.

A frequent visitor to the library growing up, Parinaz's familiarity and comfort with the Novato Library motivated her to get involved.

Her summer supervisor was Library Assistant **Laura Beam**. They formed a bond, and Parinaz recalls stopping by the library after her first day of school to tell Laura about her day. "I was super

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High Schooler Lends a Hand with Homework and Library Help

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PHOTO BY BRIAN WILK



Parinaz Sotoudeh

excited to tell her about the first day of school and my schedule,” she said.

Laura praised Parinaz and said her work ethic makes her a standout.

“She is very conscientious, asks great questions, and is eager to be helpful,” Laura said. “I was impressed with not only her willingness to tackle difficult or more challenging tasks, but also that she specifically asked for them.”

When summer arrives, local kids bask in their freedom and take more trips to the library to check out the numerous events and programs there, which results in more opportunities to assist.

Parinaz’s summer service was exemplary, said Novato Library Children’s Services Supervisor **Laura Kennett**. “Parinaz was instrumental in keeping the children’s area in tip-top shape,” she said.

Parinaz, a San Marin High School junior, now serves as a Homework Helper at the Novato branch. It’s the first time the branch has offered the free tutoring program, and Laura said Parinaz was instrumental in making it available in Novato.

(The student-founded program began at the Corte Madera Library in February 2022, expanded to the Fairfax and Civic Center branches during the 2022–23 school year, and added the Novato location in September.)

Parinaz assists students in grades 3 through 11 with their school assignments. As a tutor she caters to each

student’s academic needs, whether one-time test prep or regular weekly homework sessions.

When not serving diligently in the library or doing her own homework, Parinaz has a wide array of interests including reading, drawing, and participating in her school’s swim team.

She has big plans. “I want to study aerospace or chemical engineering in college and pursue that as a career,” she said. One day, Parinaz also hopes to have a pet as she is a lover of animals of all kinds.

Parinaz appreciates the opportunity to assist the Novato Library’s patrons. “I love the people and the librarians at the library and the people I work with,” she said. “They’re really sweet people and it feels nice to be able to help.” ■

Photographer’s Images Showcase Volunteer and Intern Service

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moved from New York to Marin, where he has lived in the same house since 1985. He sold his business in 1996 and then served as chief technology officer for four different dot-com startups, retiring in 2000. (His son now works as a light systems software engineer.)

It was for a safari in Kenya, in 2009, that Doug got his first digital camera. Although he takes headshots on occasion, his favorite portraits for *MarinfoNOW* are environmental photos. These involve capturing the volunteer or intern in a location representing their service, such as his photos of an intern at the Corte Madera Library and an Air Patrol volunteer pilot at Gness Field in Novato.

MarinShares Coordinator of Volunteers **Anne Starr**, Doug’s staff liaison, points out that the Human Resources volunteer

contributes to the newsletter in additional ways.

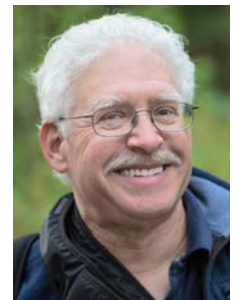
“Doug brings a keen eye for composition and portraiture that captures the essence of his subjects,” she said. “We are doubly lucky to have him on the editorial team: he not only takes great photos but also applies some of his executive skills to help schedule assignments for fellow Marin Photography Club photographers who, like him, volunteer with *MarinfoNOW*.”

(Club members who also volunteer with *MarinfoNOW* are photographers **Bob Dell**, **Bill Johnston Jr.**, and **Brian Wilk**.)

Doug credits much of his success in photography to participating in the Marin Photography Club, of which he is a past co-president. Its 170 members join various special-interest groups,

such as travel, landscape, and macro photography. They enter competitions, organize field trips, and enjoy get-togethers. (Interested readers may learn about the club via its [website](#) or [email](#).)

Meanwhile he looks forward to the next *MarinfoNOW* assignment. “I’m loving the opportunities to give back to our community and to learn more about what’s going on in the county,” Doug said. “The fact that it allows me to improve my photographic skills is an added plus.” ■



Doug Kaye

PHOTO BY KAREN HUTTON

Parks Intern Expands Knowledge, Gains Practical Experience

By Ellie Gilbert

Marintern **Gabriel Hartka** is a senior at Tamiscal High School in Larkspur with a passion for change and opportunities.

High school can become repetitive which is why Gabriel joined the Pathways Program. It provides an alternative educational route. “The Pathways Program offers a flexible schedule and is a great change from high school,” Gabriel said. Pathways students attend their high school on a limited schedule and also take two College of Marin classes per semester. The program also requires an internship that involves six hours of attendance weekly.

Gabriel interns with Marin County Parks, and his staff supervisor is Volunteer Program Coordinator **Kirk Schroeder**.

Gabriel is learning to maintain trails and bike paths. He also is expanding his knowledge of plants—for example, helping restore willow trees at Stafford Lake Park in Novato—and has helped the Boy Scouts create a picnic area. (Gabriel was introduced to the work as a Cub Scout and Boy Scout.)

The Pathways Program allows Gabriel to be involved with his community



PHOTO BY KIRK SCHROEDER

Gabriel Hartka poses at the Marin County Parks Lagoon Park Native Plant Nursery, across the street from the Marin Civic Center building in San Rafael.

year-round. “It’s just... fulfilling,” he said. “Even if it just seems like I’m moving dirt around, really I’m making space for mountain bikers to have races there and have their fun.”

“Gabriel has helped strengthen our volunteer program by enabling us to take on an expanded portfolio of projects,” Kirk said. “His approach to personal,

academic, and future professional endeavors is impressive—he seems to be able to take on a wide array of interests with both passion and ease.”

“I’m able to see these projects through,” Gabriel said. “I get to see this bad overgrowth turn into a good natural place and habitat for some of the wildlife that lives here in Marin.”

Another favorite aspect of his internship is interacting with Parks volunteers. He is “able to work with a generation of people I never would have worked with otherwise. I really enjoy the socializing and the conversations we get to have,” he said.

Gabriel also enjoys knowing his internship will have a lasting effect. “It just feels like a direct connection to the community.

I’m able to inform people about the importance of their work and possibly encourage them to come back.”

Besides serving with Marin County Parks, Gabriel is on a local mountain bike team and loves to surf. After high school, he hopes to major in business at the University of California, Berkeley. ■

Who's New & Welcome!

Eric Aguirre (San Anselmo), Student Service Intern, Fairfax Library

Henry Anderson (Greenbrae), Find Your Way Youth Visioning Intern, Board of Supervisors

Byron Diaz (Novato), Student Service Volunteer, South Novato Library

David Dietz (Sebastopol), Airport Administration Volunteer, Department of Public Works

Disha Divakar (Novato), OD Free Marin and Suicide Prevention Collaboration Intern, Board of Supervisors

Gabby Grujic (San Rafael), Find Your Way Youth Visioning Intern, Board of Supervisors

Britney Gutierrez (San Rafael), Nursing Student with Adult Protective Services, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Cameron Kamalpour (San Anselmo), Packet Assembly Student Service Intern, HHS

Amelia Lucey (Fairfax), Homework Helpers Intern, Fairfax Library

Nick Melniczek (San Rafael), California Room Volunteer, Civic Center Library

Sylvia Mills (Corte Madera), Marin Center Volunteer Usher, Cultural Services

Julia Owens (Novato), OD Free Marin and Suicide Prevention Collaboration Intern, Board of Supervisors

Happy Anniversary

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

45 YEARS

Bill Bastida (San Rafael), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

27 YEARS

Steve Toquinto (Novato), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Fire

22 YEARS

Gary Sello (Novato), RACES/ACS Volunteer, Marin County Fire

17 YEARS

Larry Lewis (Mill Valley), RACES/ACS Volunteer, Marin County Fire

15 YEARS

Carol Selig (Mill Valley), **Rand Selig** (Mill Valley), Volunteer Stewards, Marin County Parks

Peter Otis (Novato), RACES/ACS Volunteer, Marin County Fire

12 YEARS

Michael Landram (Novato), Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Parks

7 YEARS

Alexandra Cheney (Novato), Marin Center Volunteer Usher, Cultural Services

Lynda Pearson (Mill Valley), Volunteer Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services, and Volunteer Consultant, Human Resources

Brad Rippe (San Anselmo), California Room Cataloguer, Photographer, and Researcher, Civic Center Library

6 YEARS

Elizabeth Purcell (San Rafael), Volunteer Teacher Assistant, Probation Department

5 YEARS

Mark Brumwell (San Rafael), Volunteer Steward, Marin County Parks

James Cook (Rohnert Park), Veterans Remains Officer, Health & Human Services (HHS)

John Donaghue (Walnut Creek), Volunteer Design Consultant and Newsletter Cartoonist, Human Resources

Rob Hayden (Point Reyes Station), **Kathleen Pear** (San Anselmo), **Rita Wengler** (Novato), Volunteer Senior Peer Counselors, HHS

4 YEARS

Cynthia Bellows (Mill Valley), **Peter Nielsen** (San Rafael), Marin Center Volunteer Ushers, Cultural Services

Jackie Herzog (San Rafael), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

3 YEARS

Donna Eng (San Rafael), **Blair Ogden** (San Rafael), Volunteer Senior Peer Counselors, HHS

Anthony Fedanzo (Corte Madera), **Adriana Rabkin** (Corte Madera), **Ann Shores** (Corte Madera), Radio Communications Volunteers, Department of Public Works (Public Works)

Carol Hodges (Novato), **Peter Joseph** (San Anselmo), **Meghen Kurtzig** (San Rafael), **Georgia Pung** (Mill Valley), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers, HHS

Michael Rubin (Novato), Volunteer English Tutor, Novato Library

2 YEARS

Bea Goop-Lott (San Rafael), Client Assessments Volunteer, HHS

Sarani Puri (Kenfield), Homework Helpers Intern, Corte Madera Library

Robert Rowlands (Mill Valley), Radio Communications Volunteer, Public Works

1 YEAR

Lucy Bodle (Fairfax), Homework Helpers Intern, Fairfax Library

Lauren Olsen (Mill Valley), Homework Helpers Intern, Corte Madera Library

Ed Essick (Petaluma), Radio Communications Volunteer, Public Works

Max Gehm (San Anselmo), Newsletter Writer Intern, Human Resources

Jayne Goodale (San Anselmo), Volunteer Steward, Marin County Parks

