



# HUGH NGUYEN

## CLERK-RECORDER

# BIOGRAPHY

BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES  
MARRIAGE LICENSES/RECORDS  
NOTARY REGISTRATION  
ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES  
PASSPORTS  
PROPERTY RECORDS

Orange County Clerk-Recorder Hugh Nguyen was born in Vietnam in 1967. As a child, he was told by his mother that his father was an American soldier who was killed in action while serving his country. This year, after an almost 50-year search and a DNA submission to ancestry.com, Hugh miraculously found his father who is very much alive and resides in Tennessee. Hugh was brought to America at the age of seven by his grandparents and his aunt who raised him. His journey to America began in 1975 aboard the USS Midway which took him from the Philippines to Guam and then to El Toro Air Base ending up at Camp Pendleton in California. Eventually, Hugh moved to El Centro and finally to Orange County in 1979. He graduated from Saddleback High School, attended Santa Ana College, and completed Orange County's Management Academy Program at Chapman University.



On April 2, 2013, Hugh was selected by the Board of Supervisors to fill the remaining term of office for Clerk-Recorder through December 2014. Hugh was selected after an extensive recruitment process in which 900 people applied for the vacant Clerk-Recorder position. The Supervisors selected Hugh due to his experience, hands on management style and desire to serve the public.

In June 2014, Hugh was elected to his first four year term of office. Upon taking the oath of office, Hugh became the first Vietnamese American ever to be elected county-wide to the position of Clerk-Recorder and the first Vietnamese American to be elected to the office of County Clerk-Recorder in the nation. On June 5, 2018, Hugh was overwhelmingly re-elected to another four-year term and will serve through 2022.

In 1993, Hugh was hired by the late County Clerk Gary Granville. During his first year at the County Clerk's office, he worked in customer services for marriage licensing, fictitious business names, and notary registration and environmental impact report filings. In 1998, Mr. Granville promoted Hugh to the position of Chief Deputy Recorder in which he served through 2006. From 2006 until his appointment to the position of Clerk-Recorder, Hugh was the Assistant Clerk of the Board expanding his management, budget, HR, and purchasing expertise while gaining valuable experience in dealing with the Board of Supervisors and county operations. Hugh has worked for the County of Orange for more than two decades, of which 17 years were at the Clerk-Recorder's Department.

Hugh was named one of Orange County's 2015 100 Most Influential by *the Orange County Register* for his efforts in making his department's services more accessible to working families. The annual 100 Most Influential list includes individuals who have influenced business, culture, education, food, giving, government, health, inspiration, science and sports. Under his leadership, his department received multiple CSAC and NACo Awards for the innovations Hugh has ushered in.

Hugh has been a resident of Orange County since 1979 and currently lives with his wife and two children in the City of Santa Ana.

NORTH COUNTY BRANCH OFFICE  
ANAHEIM CITY CENTRE  
222 S. HARBOR BLVD., STE 110  
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA 92805

ORANGE COUNTY  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION SOUTH  
601 NORTH ROSS STREET  
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701

OLD ORANGE COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE  
211 W. SANTA ANA BLVD. ROOM 201  
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701

SOUTH COUNTY BRANCH OFFICE  
LAGUNA HILLS CIVIC CENTER  
24031 EL TORO ROAD  
LAGUNA HILLS, CALIFORNIA 92653

### **Hugh's Goals for the Department include:**

- Provide “hands-on” management and leading by example.
- Operate the Department in a cost-effective manner.
- Protect and safeguard the County’s public records.
- Maintain a comprehensive security and backup plan for all systems and records.
- Provide a supportive work environment and leadership to staff.
- Increase the accessibility of services for the public at branch offices and Saturday openings.
- Maintain open communications with the business community for title and mortgage recordings.

### **Hugh's Accomplishments During his Tenure:**

- Relocated the department's North County Branch Office from Fullerton to Anaheim in February 2019, maximizing taxpayers' dollars by doubling the office's space and offering customers expanded marriage services with two ceremony rooms, document recording services, and passport services.
- Reached a milestone during May 2019 in electronic recording history by surpassing nine million electronically submitted and recorded documents - maintaining the department as a nationwide industry leader since 1997.
- Implemented Special Saturday Openings for over five years making the department’s services more accessible and convenient for working families and busy individuals - earning the department a 2015 NACo Achievement Award and a 2014 CSAC Merit Award.
- Launched the department’s new O.C. Weddings mobile app allowing customers to both complete a marriage license application and to set an appointment for a civil marriage ceremony - all from the convenience of any mobile device.
- Implemented Auto indexing and redaction of real property documents - making them available to the public two days after recording and earning the department a 2017 NACo Achievement Award.
- Implemented a Government to Government (G2G) component to the department's award winning SECURE electronic recording system - giving government agencies the ability to submit recordable documents electronically.
- Implemented a new Electronic Fictitious Business Name Statement application and filing system - making the process more users friendly and reducing the duration of phone calls, regarding FBN issues received by the department.
- Opened a passport and marriage license unit at the County Community Service Center in Westminster.
- Opened a passport services office at the Laguna Hills branch office to serve south county residents.
- Implemented the electronic processing of check payments received from title companies helping reduce processing times, saving staff time and increasing efficiency by reducing manual check processing from 90 % to 11%.
- Saved over \$ 3 million in salary and benefits since becoming Clerk-Recorder in 2013.
- Saved tax payers money by reducing the fee for passport photos from \$15 to \$10.
- Expedited the availability of birth and death certificates from 60 days to 30 days.
- Rolled out public terminals with touch screen technology at all of the department’s locations - making it easier for people to complete their applications for services without having to hassle with a keyboard and a mouse.
- Launched a pilot program to expedite the ordering of marriage certificates at the department's Old County Courthouse Marriage Services Unit - eliminating the need for couples to return to the office to purchase their marriage certificate or having to order it via mail, reducing the number of calls to the department's information line and to help shorten lines and waiting times at the department's offices.
- Streamlined real property recording services at the department’s Fullerton and Laguna Hills branch offices by adding an experienced recordable document examiner at each location.

- Digitized and converted 210 volumes of property indexes from 1889-1953 that are kept at the Orange County Archives to microfilm.
- Completed an extensive conservation of 210 volumes of property indexes from 1889-1953 as well as the most damaged deeds kept at the Orange County Archives.
- In September 2014, became the first recorder's office in the nation to process and record over 7 million electronically submitted documents - making the department the nationwide leader in electronic recording.
- Implemented policies and procedures for department staff to improve customer service.
- Strengthened accounting oversight by implementing stronger internal controls and documentation.
- Improved customer service by increasing weekday business hours at the department's branch offices making them more convenient to the public.
- Recruited additional experience staff for the Clerk-Recorder's financial group.
- Recruited additional experience staff to strengthen the Clerk-Recorder's purchasing group.
- Restructured the department's senior leadership to strengthen efficiency and oversight.

### **Awards and Recognitions Under Hugh's Leadership**

- In 2020, received a National Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties for the department's OC Weddings mobile app in the category of Information Technology.
- In 2019, received a National Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties for the department's G2G - Government to Government component in the category of Information Technology.
- In 2018, received a California Association of Counties Merit Award in recognition of the department's G2G: Government to Government Recordings Made Easy submission in the category of Government Finance, Administration & Technology.
- In 2018, received a Rose Award from the Orange County Taxpayer's Association for the department's innovation and services while saving taxpayers money.
- In 2018, was nominated by the Orange County Business Council for its Turning Red Tape into Red Carpet Award in the Leadership in Public Service and Business Retention categories.
- In 2018, was awarded the County Elected Official of the Year by the Republican Party of Orange County.
- In 2018, received the Community Award for Leadership from Westcliff University.
- In 2018, received an Orange County Taxpayer Watchdog Award from the Office of the Orange County Auditor-Controller's Office.
- In 2017, received a National Association of Counties Achievement Award in recognition of the department's Auto-Indexing and Redaction – Increasing the Accuracy and Access to the Public Records Program.
- In 2017, was nominated by the Orange County Business Council for its Turning Red Tape into Red Carpet Award for its Auto-Indexing and Redaction Project.
- In 2015, was named one of Orange County's 100 Most Influential by *The Orange County Register*.
- In 2015, received a National Association of Counties Achievement Award in recognition of the department's Special Saturday Hours – Increasing Access to Better Serve the Public Program.
- In 2014, received a California Association of Counties Challenge Merit Award in recognition of the department's Special Saturday Hours.