Smiles, appreciation and congratulations spread across the state last week, as the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) surpassed its 100,000th home visit—a milestone for the program that started in 2012 and now includes 25 sites in 24 Local Health Jurisdictions.

Jaime Baculpo, a public health nurse with Contra Costa County’s Nurse-Family Partnership since the program’s inception, conducted the celebratory visit with CHVP staff in tow on June 24 at the home of her participant, Danielle. Danielle enrolled in the program during her pregnancy to gain “insight on becoming a mother.” Her daughter is now 20 months old.

“My daughter is a happy baby and without getting the knowledge that I get from Jaime and the program, it would probably be a different story,” she said.

Jaime helped Danielle deal with postpartum depression and has also offered encouragement and education in a number of areas, such as breastfeeding, nutrition and resources for returning to school.

The home visitor described the progress she’s seen in Danielle, who is “amazing and a great mom,” and also discussed the strengths of the program.

“I do believe when they have a nurse that comes in consistently—we’re showing up, listening, helping, guiding, teaching, answering questions—it’s really establishing that therapeutic relationship that they may not get from anybody else,” Jaime said.

Dawn Dailey, Contra Costa County’s Public Health Nurse Program Manager, knows there are many tangible benefits of home visiting, such as coordinating care and augmenting the health care system. But she also acknowledges the not-so-tangible moments between home visitor and participant, such as role modeling and realizing potential.

“I’ve been on home visits where the client said she wants to be a nurse because of what she sees her home visitor nurses doing,” Dawn said. “So it’s also the connection, the relationship, the role modeling that triggers clients to think about new ways of framing their hopes and dreams and goals that they want to attain because of this amazing time that they get to spend with their nurses.”

Meanwhile, more than 100 miles away, Janice MacDonald, program supervisor of Nevada County’s Foothills/Truckee Healthy Babies, which uses the Healthy Families America model, received word that she won CHVP’s “Guess the Date of the 100,000th Visit” contest. Her prize: registration to the 2016 California Home Visiting Summit in August!

At CHVP headquarters in Sacramento, with staff gathered around to acknowledge the milestone, Kristen Rogers, Ph.D. and chief of the Maternal and Infant Health Branch and CHVP, said, “We celebrate 100,000 home visits with all of our NFP and HFA sites who are providing such a valuable service to literally thousands and thousands of vulnerable families in California. It is an honor to be part of such an outstanding program and we thank and congratulate all of the family service providers we are fortunate to work with throughout the state. Here’s to the next 100,000 home visits!”