



# VOICES of SSAN

Statewide  
Self Advocacy Network

June 2017

Volume 9

## Meet new SSAN Member Christina Mills from CFILC

Christina Mills has dedicated her career to disability rights and youth leadership. She is the Deputy Director of the California Foundation for Independent Living

eight years as a Governor appointee to the State Independent Living Council. Christina has been working in the Independent Living Movement for over 18 years.

Christina has assisted in developing a number of youth programs and projects across the country. She is a co-founder of Youth Organizing (YO!) Disabled and Proud and is a 1995 Alumna of the Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities, which is where she found her passion and drive for disability rights.

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Centers (CFILC), in Sacramento, CA. Prior to moving to northern California; Christina worked in various positions at both the San Diego and Orange County Independent Living Centers. She also served

*Newsletter of the  
Statewide Self  
Advocacy Network  
(SSAN)*



### Inside this issue

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- Being Evacuated
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For more information on SSAN see [www.scdd.ca.gov](http://www.scdd.ca.gov) website under self-advocacy.

SSAN Newsletter Editor and contributor-Robert Levy (UC Davis Mind Institute)

#### Contributors to this edition:

- Chen Curtiss
- Paul Mansell
- Christina Mills
- Teresa Moshier
- Nicole Patterson
- Kecia Weller

## SSAN Members



- **Charles Adams**  
North Coast
- **Teresa Moshier**  
North State
- **Lisa Cooley**  
Sacramento
- **Chen Curtiss**  
North Bay
- **Regina Woodliff**  
Bay Area
- **Robert Balderama**  
North Valley Hills
- **Cheryl Hewitt**  
Central Coast
- **Ramon Hernandez**  
Central Coast
- **Rebecca Donabed**  
Sequoia
- **Julie Gaona**  
Los Angeles
- **Robert Levy**  
Orange County
- **Daniel Foust**  
San Bernardino
- **Paul Mansell**  
San Diego Imperial
- **Desiree Boykin**  
ARCA
- **Christina Mills**  
CFILC
- **Nicole Patterson**  
DDS
- **Scott Barron**  
Disability Rights CA
- **Robert Levy**  
UC Davis Mind Institute
- **David Forderer**  
SCDD
- **Kecia Weller**  
UCLA Tarjan Center
- **Wesley Witherspoon**  
USC Children's Hospital  
of Los Angeles

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She currently serves on the board of Disability Rights Education Defense Fund, (DREDF) and is a State Board of Education Appointee on the Advisory Commission for Special Education.

Christina was born and raised in north San Diego County. She has a disability called, Osteogenesis Imperfecta, which means her bones can sometimes break easily. Christina's husband is also disabled and they have two

disabled children that they are very proud of.



Their son is two years old and their daughter, Olivia, recently passed away at the age of four. Christina is a passionate advocate and activist who cares deeply about youth with all kinds of disabilities and their ability to grow up with positive disability identity, disabled role models and opportunities.

## *Happenings from Across the State* North Bay – by Chen Curtiss

### Advocate for your transportation Needs

Do you live in Solano County? Do you feel your transportation needs are being met? If not the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) wants to hear from you.

Throughout 2017 mobility



summits will be held in seven cities throughout Solano County (Rio Vista, Benicia, Dixon, Suisun City, Vallejo, Vacaville and Fairfield) these summits will kick off on April 7<sup>th</sup>  
**(Continued Chen on Page 4)**



## DID YOU KNOW ?

### Mission Statement

The Statewide Self Advocacy Network (SSAN) promotes leadership and builds bridges that strengthen advocacy among disability communities by focusing on policy change.

SSAN past Newsletters, Annual Reports, and Meeting info, can be found at [www.sccd.ca.gov](http://www.sccd.ca.gov) under self-advocacy tab

Let us know if you want to see anything specific in future newsletters!



How do you contact the SSAN Newsletter Editor Robert Levy? Leave a message for him by contacting the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator **Riana Hardin at (916) 322-8403**



## More Happenings from Across the State UC Davis Mind Institute- by Robert Levy



The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Supported Life Statewide Self Advocacy Conference was another success with all the planning for this year's conference. Many folks like Progressive Employment Concepts, other agencies and other people out in the community throughout our state attended. The state of Nevada was the farthest to come to the conference. There were many other volunteers who worked hard to make this conference a success again. There were almost 400 people who had attended on May 5-6, 2017 at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Sacramento. SSAN members, Lisa Cooley and I presented about the CAL ABLE ACT Works for People with Developmental Disabilities. The next Supported Life Self

Advocacy Conference won't be held again until May 4-5, 2018- It will be the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Supported Life Self Advocacy Conference. The next Supported Life Conference is in the fall October 5-6, 2017 at the same location. For the people out in the community you can still register online or fill out the registration packet for the upcoming October conference. It will be the 31<sup>st</sup> annual Supported Life Conference. The brochures and save the date are now available online. The online registration has not been posted just yet. You can check out at the Supported Life Institute website being at [www.supportedlife.org](http://www.supportedlife.org)

### Supported Life Institute



(Chen from Page 2)

At the Memorial Hall in Rio Vista. We all need reliable and accessible transportation to live an independent and productive life, if you experience problems with the service you receive please call the Solano Mobility Center at 800-535-6883 to register for the summit near to you and if you need transportation also request this when you call.



**Department of  
Developmental Services  
(DDS)**

**By Nicole Patterson**



My name is Nicole Patterson and I work for

the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS). DDS is the agency

through which the State of California provides services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.

These disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and related conditions. Services are provided through state-operated developmental centers and community facilities, and contracts with 21 nonprofit regional centers. The regional centers serve as a local resource to help find and access the services and supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Major functions for DDS include Early Start, developing new services, complaints, communicating with legislators on behalf of people with developmental disabilities, and creating

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**WE WANT  
YOU!**



**APPLY TO BE ON  
THE DDS CAC**

The regional centers catchment area DDS is recruiting for are Central Valley, North Bay, Far Northern, Tri-Counties and San Andreas, but we are taking all applications for future openings.

**WE WANT YOU!!**

The Department of Developmental Services is looking for people with developmental disabilities to apply to become members of the **Consumer Advisory Committee**. The Consumer Advisory Committee provides advice to the Department on policies, programs, legislation, and regulations that affect the lives of consumers in California. There are fifteen (15) Committee members from all over California who meet up to four (4) times per year either in person in Sacramento or by video/conference call. Members will also need to meet as much as possible with local People First and other self-advocacy organizations in their communities. The costs of transportation, attendants and facilitators, if needed, for Committee members are paid for by the Department.

If you would like to apply for possible appointment to this Committee, here's what you have to know and do:

1. You must have a developmental disability and use the services of a regional center or live at a developmental center.
2. You must be a member of a local People First or self-advocacy organization.
3. Your local People First or organization **MUST** nominate you for membership.
4. Fill out the attached application completely and send it along with a nomination letter to:  
The Department of Developmental Services  
Office of Human Rights and Advocacy Services  
1600 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 240, MS 2-15, Sacramento CA, 95814  
You can also e-mail them to [Nicole.patterson@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Nicole.patterson@dds.ca.gov) by March 31, 2017.

Questions? Call Nicole Patterson at (916)654-1494

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legislation and policies.

As Coordinator of Consumer Services, I provide expertise and knowledge to the Department's Director, staff, and advocates on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities regarding advocacy issues and concerns related to the DDS service delivery system and related programs.

I serve as the coordinator and liaison for the Department's Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings, activities, and on-going outreach projects. I prepare

meeting materials, coordinate travel for members and facilitators, develop various consumer publications, and coordinate distribution of information statewide and to other countries. The publications can be found on the Consumer Corner on the DDS website ([www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov)).

I provide information and training on consumer rights, services and supports, and advocacy skills techniques to consumers and Departmental staff as well as providers and family members

throughout the State by

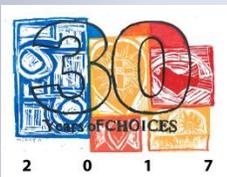


attending meetings, giving keynote speeches and break-

out sessions at conferences, and providing information at resource fairs.

If you would like more information or assistance in providing training to a group or agency, please contact me at [Nicole.Patterson@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Nicole.Patterson@dds.ca.gov) or (916) 654-1494.

*Pictured above: Nicole Patterson at the CHOICES Conference with SCDD North Valley Hills office technician- Marigene Tacan-Regan*



## **CHOICES 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference- by Robert Balderama**

The CHOICES Institute held its 30<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Stockton and over 500 self-advocates participated! SCDD Executive Director, Aaron Carruthers and new Valley Mountain Regional Center Executive Director, Tony Anderson spoke to the crowd on April 7, 2017. SSAN's own- Nicole Patterson was a keynote speaker and had a Department of Developmental Services (DDS) resource table at the event! The theme was 30 Years of CHOICES and there were Self Advocate keynote speakers that talked about the choices they have made to live the life they wanted!



**By Kecia Weller**



**Tarjan Center Goes to the Hill:**

In March, 2017 Dr. Olivia Raynor, Melina Melgoza, Violetta Chavez-Serrano, Dr. Artha J. Gillis our Diversity Fellows, and Cindy Liu, TAC member attended the 2017 Disability Policy Seminar which was sponsored by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, The Arc, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered, and United Cerebral Palsy. While in D.C. the trainees visited the offices of Representative Lieu, Representative Cardenas, and Representative

Brownley to advocate for protecting Medicaid. They also discussed the value of their training experience with the Tarjan Center. Cindy relayed her powerful personal story as a parent to make sure there is an inclusive path forward for her daughter. We were well received by responsive legislative offices who valued our visit.

**Competitive Employment Incentives that May Impact the Engagement of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD):**

The Tarjan Centers Open the Doors to College hosted a webinar on “Competitive Employment Incentives that May Impact the Engagement of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)” that took place on Monday March 6, 2017. The purpose of the webinar was to provide California community colleges and

community partners with information on two newly authorized programs (i.e. the Competitive Integrated Employment Incentives Program and the Paid Internship Program) for individuals that are regional center consumers. Participants learned about two new regional center programs. The first is funding (up to \$3,750 per regional center client) for regional center vendors who assist individuals with IDD to transition from school to competitive integrated employment. The second is up to \$10,400 per intern per state fiscal year in funding to cover wages during a paid internship for a regional center client as a pathway to competitive integrated employment.

**UCLA PEERS® Team presents at the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Gatlinburg Conference:**

Dr. Laugeson, Director of Training at the Tarjan Center, and her team attended the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Gatlinburg Conference on **(Continued Tarjan page 7)**

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Research and Theory in Intellectual and Developmental Disorders in San Antonio, Texas. Dr. Laugeson presented a symposium on the results of her study, "Using Parent Assistance and Virtual Coaching to Improve Social Skills in Teens with Autism: The UCLA PEERS® Program" to several hundred conference attendees.

Research assistants from the PEERS® lab also presented at the conference. Ana Mendoza presented a poster entitled, "The Relationship between Social Anxiety and Perceived Intelligence and Happiness among Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder." Yuan Zhang presented a poster examining "Self-esteem as a Mediator of Social Skills Improvement and Social Anxiety for Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) following the UCLA

PEERS® Program." Rhideeta Jalal presented a poster investigating "Positive Self-Esteem as a Predictor of Treatment Outcome in Adolescents with ASD following the UCLA PEERS® Intervention."

**National Arts and Disability Center (NADC) Announcement:**

ANNOUNCEMENT: The National Arts and Disability Center (NADC) would like to announce that funds are available for the [2016-2017 Arts and Accessibility Grants Program](#). Artist grants are for specific projects that contribute directly to their professional goals and development. California-based arts organizations may request support for the hiring or involvement of artists with disabilities in arts events, and/or to increase the attendance and enhance the experience for audiences with disabilities. Please read the [Guidelines](#) for more information. If you have

any questions feel free to reach Beth Stoffmacher, NADC Arts Specialist, [bstoffmacher@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:bstoffmacher@mednet.ucla.edu)

**On March 28, 2017, Wilbert Francis, Attended the National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup Meeting in Washington, DC:**

The Accreditation Workgroup is responsible for the development of accreditation standards for postsecondary education (PSE) programs for students with intellectual disabilities (ID). PSE institutions and programs seek accreditation from at least one of the regional accreditation agencies.

Accreditation is an indication of quality, a commitment to student outcomes, and efforts towards continuous improvement. Currently, higher education programs for students with ID are not accredited by regional accreditors. The workgroup has  
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developed standards for quality PSE for students with ID and is working with the U.S. Department of Education to identify an agency that will review and provide accreditation to PSE programs for students with ID. The Accreditation Workgroup established three committees (i.e., Accreditation Outreach Committee, Student Learning Outcomes and Credentials Committee, and the Self-Study Development Committee). Mr. Francis is a member of the Self-Study Committee and attended this meeting in Washington DC.

### **Reproductive Healthcare Experiences of Women with Cerebral Palsy:**

Dr.'s Katharine Hayward, Eileen Fowler and colleagues in UCLA OB/Gyn department and the Center for CP at UCLA had their manuscript "Reproductive healthcare experiences of women

with cerebral palsy" accepted for publication in the Disability and Health Journal. It will be published in a special edition of the journal in July. This work was funded by the Cerebral Palsy Foundation. They found that pregnancy rates and discussions were higher in women with the greater functional ability. Mobility decreased during and after pregnancy but there were relatively few referrals to physical or occupational therapy. There was a higher rate of Cesarean section deliveries and preterm births compared to national averages. As 20% of the 375 women with cerebral palsy surveyed experienced at least one pregnancy, there is a need to increase awareness, education, support and advocacy.

### **UCEDD Directors Retreat and Technical Assistance Institute:**

Dr. Raynor attended the UCEDD Directors Retreat in April, 2017 where she

networked, and meet with federal project officers, and learned new initiatives, national trends, and other information vital to the administration of the UCEDD.

### **In April, Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson Visited Japan for the Launch of the Japanese Translation of Her Book, "The Science of Making Friends."**

Dr. Laugeson collaborated with Dr. Masatsugu Tsujii and Tomoko Yamada on the translation of this book, which is based on the PEERS® program and offers parents a step-by-step guide to provide "social coaching" to teens and young adults. It includes concrete rules and steps of social etiquette identified through research.

Prior to the launch of "The Science of Making Friends" into Japanese, validation of PEERS® for Adolescents was conducted by Tomoko Yamada who completed (Continued on page 9)

a cross-cultural validation study with PEERS® at Osaka University and found similar findings to what Dr. Laugeson has found in her research studies in North America.

While in Japan, Dr. Laugeson also hosted a Q&A with young adults for the Asperger Society of Japan, and conducted a 1-day workshop to introduce PEERS® to

Japanese mental health professionals and educators. Check out the UCLA PEERS® Clinic Facebook page to see the photos from the event!

**Dr. Liz Laugeson will be presenting on Navigating the Dating World for Young Adults with Diverse Challenges:**

On May 5, Dr. Liz Laugeson presented on “Navigating the Dating World for Young Adults with Diverse Challenges” at the Hel Group’s 2017 Advance LA Conference.

This conference featured nationally prominent experts whose research and practice support young people with autism, learning differences and ADHD in their transition to college, the work place and beyond. The speakers discussed ways to encourage and guide young adults as they connect to themselves, to others, and to their academic and vocational pursuits in order to create meaningful and rewarding lives.

***More Happenings from Across the State***  
**San Diego & Imperial – by Paul Mansell**



Self-Advocacy is alive and well in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Imperial Valley People First held its annual conference on March 4<sup>th</sup> at the Barbara Worth Hotel in Holtville. 121 people attended. The theme was “Don’t be Ordinary, be Extraordinary.” The key note speaker was Miguel Lugo. San Diego Regional Center during March gave presentations to staff on Employment First. In March San Diego Regional Center started giving presentations to clients on HCBS. SDRRC has formed a CalABLE task force and is preparing for it to become up and running this summer. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, San Diego People First will hold its 27<sup>th</sup> annual Self-Advocacy conference at the Marriott Hotel in Mission Valley, San Diego. The theme is “Dare to dream.” The keynote speaker is Miguel Lugo.



## Oroville Dam Crisis-Teresa Moshier's Interview with SCDD's Mary Agnes Nolan on Being Evacuated!

### How were you notified that you had to evacuate?

I received phone calls from family members who were watching TV who told me to get home right away because they were evacuating Butte, Yuba, and Sutter Counties immediately saying the Oroville dam was about to break. I also received a text from my county alert system.

### Was it scary when you were told to leave?

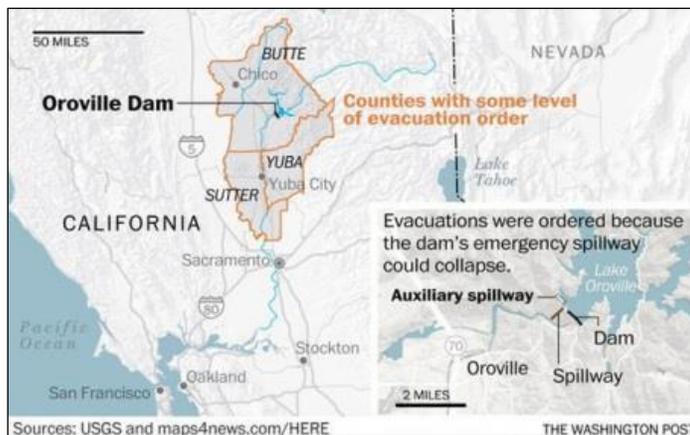
It was scary because I was 10 miles west of Yuba City and my son was not with me. I had to rush home while trying to reach my son and convince him that he had to get home. He was refusing because he wanted to stay with his friends and play Axis and Allies Board Game. The

drive back to Yuba City was stressful because there were a lot of cars leaving and I wasn't sure they'd let me back in. I was also concerned about my dog because he doesn't travel well and I knew I would be stuck in traffic for a long time. I have several neighbors who don't have any family in California and they didn't have anywhere to go. They were very scared so it took time to help them get directions to my property in Williams so they could take their animals.

### How did it feel to be evacuated?

It felt like a lot of work. I am lucky because I have had some emergency

had To Go Bags ready for my dog and myself. I thought my son had his To Go Bag ready but it wasn't even though he told me it was. The news covered the problems with the dam for days before we were told to evacuate so I knew to Be Prepared. The experience was frustrating because it was hard to get consistent information about what was happening and how much time we actually had to leave. I was getting many calls from friends who were worried about us and at the same time, I was trying to listen  
**(Continued Moshier page 11)**



**(Moshier continued from page 10)**

to the news. The news stations were giving conflicting information. There was a lot of pressure coordinating with our neighbors to ensure everyone had a place to go. I was also having a hard time talking my son into leaving because he didn't believe we were be told we had to evacuate and his

To Go Bag wasn't ready. He finally believed me when I showed him the mandatory evacuation alert from Sutter County.

### **Where did you go?**

We went to Williams in Colusa County. We stayed at our family ranch. Several of my neighbors, 6 dogs and 3 cats went with us.

### **How long did you have to evacuate?**

At first we were told we had 1 hour to leave.

Later we were told it would take 6 hours before the flood would hit Yuba City. We were gone from Sunday to Tuesday afternoon when we were told the evacuation was lifted to an "Advisory Status." Advisory status means it was RECOMMENDED to stay evacuated but we didn't HAVE to. We were also told we were needed to be prepared to leave again at a moment's notice.

### **What did you learn from the evacuation?**

I learned that people often think they are prepared and they actually aren't. I had friends who didn't have their medicines with them. I saw a lot of people run out of gas and the gas stations ran out of gas to sell. There were a lot of accidents. People were panicking. A lot of people left their animals and were very worried

about them. We were lucky because my family has practiced what to do and where to go but most people hadn't thought about what they would do. Years ago I took the DDS Emergency Preparedness Training so I knew what to do. I recommend everyone practice what to do in case of an emergency, don't just talk about it. I didn't panic because I knew what to do and we had practiced it. Because I have practiced what to do, I wasn't as stressed as everyone else. My son also learned to believe me when I tell him it is an emergency.

