Welcome to “Spring Edition”, the fourth edition of I Speak. This newsletter was created to give readers such as yourself the opportunity to express your ideas, learn information and provide support for self-advocates and their allies. If you would like to join our newsletter team, please contact Debbie Marshall at (619) 688-4236 or debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov.

Our Newsletter Creation Team:
Paul Mansell, Adrian Smith, Loren Hobrock, Randy Smith, Robert Guthrie, Rissa Chavez, Zoe Eldridge, Debbie Marshall and Briana Robinson.

As the great Jedi Master Obi Wan-Kenobi once said, “You’ve taken your first steps into a larger world”, so must we all take our steps into the greater galaxy that is life.

Dear Readers,

My name is Adrian Smith. I would like to tell you the story of how I became involved in self-advocacy. It was during one of the Regional Center workshops that I developed an interest in self-advocacy because I felt like I wanted to make a difference in not just myself, but the lives of other individuals with disabilities and self-advocates to-be. Being a self-advocate means that you have to defend yourself along with your rights, take action in your responsibilities, and speak up for those whose voices cannot be heard. For those of you who are interested in becoming a self-advocate or if you have any questions regarding self-advocacy, Debbie Marshall and I can assist you.

May The Force Be With You,
Adrian
What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-Advocacy is speaking up for yourself and others about wants, needs, hopes, and concerns. It means educating others in Self-Advocacy and taking charge of your life. It means making decisions and taking responsibility for those choices.

Principles of Self-Advocacy

1. Make decisions for your life
2. Speak up for yourself.
3. Solve problems in your life
4. Know your rights and responsibilities
5. Contribute to your community

Places where you can be a Self-Advocate

IPP planning  Voting  School  With family and friends  At the doctor’s office
SELF-ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT

Our featured self-advocate for this edition of the newsletter is Vickie Lawrence, founder and director of a non-profit organization, Dancing Around the Oak Tree Art Studio. Vickie Lawrence has had a passion for art since she was a young girl. This passion led to her dream of having a business that would give back to the community and provide an opportunity for people with disabilities to have a safe place to be creative and develop their skills at self-expression through art. In 2014, Vickie’s dream business became a reality.

Through art classes Vickie provides, students are taught valuable lessons about self-respect, encouraging students to not only respect themselves but also respect others. Vickie explained that being an artist and teaching art has brought healing to her life. The passion for her work clearly shined through as she enthusiastically shared the purpose and outcomes she desires for her organization and the people it serves. Vickie said, “Learning about running your own business is a process,” and with a smile added, “There is hope for me. I do the best I can and not think about what people say.” When asked about her future hope, Vickie said that she would like to see art studios open across the United States. Her advice for others who are interested in starting their own business is, “Get advice, do your research, be committed no matter what and get support.”

Currently Vicki offers art classes at the Central library, local day programs and special events throughout the year. For more information about Vickie and her studio, check out www.facebook.com/dancingaroundtheoaktree
Internet Awareness and Safety
By Loren Hobrock, Adrian Smith and Randy Smith

While the internet is a useful tool, providing us with valuable information and helping us stay in contact with our friends and family, we must not forget the dangers and risks to our safety when exploring online. Here are some tips to help keep you safe while surfing the web:

Protect your Computer:
- Install or Update your antivirus program
- Do not click suspicious links such as advertisements or links to unrelated material

Social Media Privacy:
- Review your privacy settings regularly on social media sites such as Facebook or Instagram.
- Keep your cell phone number and email address private.
- Make sure friends on social media are friends you have met in real life. (Be careful when adding strangers who message you online).
- Always remember the individuals you friend can see what you upload so be mindful of who you add as a “friend”.

Online Dating:
- Don’t give out personal information (Cell phone number, banking acct., home address).
- If meeting in person, go to a public place like a coffee shop or food court and tell a family member or friend where you are going.
- Call your friends and family before and after meeting this person.
- Beware the consequences of online dating.

Online Purchasing & Online streaming
- Do not click on pop-ups when purchasing online.
Announcements

COME JOIN US AT THE NEXT
SDPF QUARTERLY MEETING

DATE AND TIME:
May 14, 2018
10:00-1:30

LOCATION:
Ballard Center
2375 Congress Ave
San Diego, CA

Questions:
619-688-4236

Conference Update
San Diego People First held a Conference Strategizing meeting consisting of self-advocates and community partners. We decided that at this date it is not possible to hold a conference this year and we are looking at having a conference in 2019. People were excited about that possibility. The next Conference Strategizing meeting will be 10:00 AM, April 26, 2018 at the SCDD office. More details to follow. We hope to see you there and help make our dream a reality.

COMING SOON...

MICROENTERPRISE
CLASSIFIED SECTION

If you or you know a self advocate who has their own business and you/they would like to advertise in the I Speak newsletter please contact:
Debbie Marshall
(619)688-4236

Three tips for voting:
1) Register  2) Research  3) Vote

For a presentation on voter education contact the SCDD office at 619-688-4236

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