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STATEWIDE SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK MEETING INFORMATION



DATE: Thursday, September 24, 2020



TIME: 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM

This is a teleconference and zoom meeting only. There is no physical location being made available to the public. Per [EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20](#), teleconferencing restrictions are waived during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, committee members are not required to list their remote locations and members of the public may participate telephonically or by Zoom from any location. Accessible formats of all agenda and materials can be found online at www.scdd.ca.gov.

JOIN ZOOM MEETING: <https://bit.ly/ssan92420>

MEETING ID: **960 6123 5963**

MEETING PASSWORD: **481013**

Check out [Zoom Download Instructions](#) and [Tips on how to use Zoom](#) to learn the basics about the Zoom platform.

OR

JOIN BY TELECONFERENCE: (VOICE ONLY)

CALL IN NUMBER: **(888) 475-4499**

MEETING ID: **960 6123 5963**

MEETING PASSWORD: **481013**

Accessibility

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 11123.1 and 11125(f) and Executive Order N-29-20 (This Executive Order can be found by clicking the link on page one of the agenda, or by typing <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.17.20-N-29-20-EO.pdf> into your web browser), individuals with disabilities who require accessible alternative formats of the agenda and related meeting materials and/or auxiliary aids/services to participate in this meeting should contact Riana Hardin at (916) 263-8196 or Riana.Hardin@scdd.ca.gov. Please provide at least 3 business days prior to the meeting to allow adequate time to respond to all requests.

All times indicated and the order of business are approximate and subject to change.



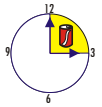
AGENDA

**September 24, 2020
10:00 AM – 2:30 PM**

- 1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**
Presented by: Nicole Patterson, Chairperson, Desiree Boykin, Vice-Chairperson, and Lisa Cooley, Secretary
- 2. Public Comment**
Public comment is welcome. Comment on agenda items is taken as they are discussed
- 3. Review and Approval of Agenda**
Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Vice-Chairperson
ACTION
- 4. Review and Approval of Minutes June 24, 2020**
Presented by: Nicole Patterson, Chairperson
ACTION
- 5. Updates from the SSAN Chair**
Presented by: Nicole Patterson, Chairperson
Information
- 6. SCDD Update**
Presented by: Aaron Carruthers, SCDD Executive Director
Information
- 7. CFILC and YO! Disabled and Proud**
Presented by: Russell Rawlings, CFILC Statewide Organizer
Information



Break



8. **Voting in the 2020 Election and Voting Rights Training**
Presented by: Scott Barron, DRC SSAN Rep
Gabriel Taylor, DRC Voting Rights Advocate
9. **Approval of SSAN September Newsletter**
Presented by: Robert Levy, Newsletter Workgroup Chair
ACTION
10. **Planning for December and Adjournment**
Presented by: Nicole Patterson, Chairperson
Information



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SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 4
ACTION ITEM**



Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2020 MINUTES

Attachments

June 2020 Minutes

Recommended Action

Approve the June 2020 SSAN Meeting Minutes.

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Statewide Self Advocacy Network Meeting Minutes June 24, 2020 Zoom

SCDD Regional Members Present

Nathan Florez — North Coast
Lisa Cooley — Sacramento
Robert Balderama — North Valley Hills
David Forderer — Central Coast
Rebecca Donabed — Sequoia
Julie Gaona — Los Angeles
Sean Sullivan — Orange County
Daniel Fouste — San Bernardino
Paul Mansell — San Diego–Imperial

Agency Members Present

Desiree Boykin — ARCA
Robert Levy —UCD MIND Institute
Wesley Witherspoon — USC CHLA
(SCDD Representative)
Kecia Weller — UCLA Tarjan
CenterScott Barron — DRC
Russell Rawlings—CFILC
Nicole Patterson — DDS

Members Not Present

Teresa Moshier — North State
Regina Woodliff — Bay Area

SCDD Staff in Attendance

Rihana Ahmad — SCDD HQ
Aaron Carruthers — SCDD HQ
Charlotte Enders — SCDD HQ
Riana Hardin — SCDD HQ
Dena Hernandez —
SCDD North Valley Hills
Beth Hurn — SCDD HQ
Mary Agnes Nolan —
SCDD North State
Ron Usac — SCDD Bay Area

Non-SCDD Facilitators

Jana Chapman-Plon
Wayne Glusker
Angela Lewis

Presenters

Dante Allen – CalABLE

Others Present

Renee Wooten
Sandra Kent



DRAFT

SSAN Minutes

1. Call to Order, Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions

SSAN Chairperson Nicole Patterson, Representative from DDS, called the meeting to order at 10:08 am.

SSAN Chairperson Nicole Patterson requested Riana Hardin, SCDD Self—Advocacy Coordinator to assist in the attendance roll call. Members introduced themselves, and the region or agency that they represented.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Review and Approval of Agenda

SSAN Chairperson Nicole Patterson, reviewed the agenda for the day. Members reviewed and approved the agenda.

ACTION: Motion #1 to approve the Agenda was made by Kecia Weller/ Seconded by Wesley Witherspoon. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 7.

4. Review and Approval of Minutes March 4 – 5, 2020

The members reviewed the minutes from March 4–5, 2020 Meeting. Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 7–13 of the June 2020 SSAN Meeting Packet.

ACTION: Motion #2 to approve the March 2020 minutes was made by David Forderer/ Seconded by Scott Barron. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 7.

5. Updates from SSAN Chair

SSAN Chairperson Nicole Patterson asked the new CFILC Representative, Russell Rawlings, to introduce themselves. Russell Rawlings spoke about how excited he was to be apart of SSAN and looked forward to collaborating with members on future projects.



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6. SCDD Update

SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided members with an SCDD Agency update on SCDD related activity since the March Meeting. Executive Director Aaron Carruthers addressed SCDD agency wide efforts to respond to the challenges created by the COVID—19 public health crisis. Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided members with an update on California’s Budget Process and how COVID—19 has impacted the State of California’s economic realities. Executive Director Aaron Carruthers took the time to answer members’ questions.

Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 17–30 of the June 2020 SSAN Meeting Packet.

7. CalABLE Update

CalABLE Executive Director, Dante Allen, provided SSAN members with a presentation on recent programmatic updates to California’s ABLE program known as CalABLE.

8. Approval of the June 2020 Newsletter

SSAN Newsletter Workgroup Chair Robert Levy presented members with a draft of the June 2020 edition of the SSAN Newsletter. The following corrections were made: add “If it helps, this is the same amount of time that it takes to hum “Happy Birthday” twice” to the first tip on page 4 of the newsletter. Members discussed ideas for the September 2020 edition of the newsletter. Submission Deadline for the September Newsletter is August 14th. Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 31 – 40 of the June 2020 SSAN Meeting Packet.

ACTION: Motion #3 to approve the 21st Volume of the Voices of SSAN Newsletter with the suggested changes, was made by Wesley Witherspoon/ seconded by Kecia Weller. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See the vote log on page 7.

9. Input for Next SSAN Meeting

SSAN members suggested the following items to be possible topics of discussion at the September SSAN meeting:

- Voting Presentation – Scott Barron
- Conflict Resolution



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- Social Security During COVID—19 (UCEDD Training)
- Human Trafficking and/or Benefits Trafficking
- California Budget
- CFILC Programs
 - YO! Disabled and Proud
 - DO Network
- Neighbor to Neighbor Project
- Black Lives Matter Movement and Inclusion
- Law Enforcement

The next SSAN meeting will be on September 24th using Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:05 PM



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Name	Region	Roll Call	Motion 1	Motion 2	Motion 3
Wesley Witherspoon	SCDD	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below
Nathaniel Florez	North Coast	Present	For	Abstain	For
Teresa Moshier	North State	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present
Lisa Cooley	Sacramento	Present	For	For	
Vacant	North Bay	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Regina Woodliff	North Valley Hills	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present
Robert Balderama	Bay Area	Present	For	For	For
David Forderer	Central Coast	Present	For	For	For
Rebecca Donabed	Sequoia	Present	For	For	For
Julie Gaona	Los Angeles	Present	Not Present	For	For
Sean Sullivan	Orange County	Present	For	For	For
Daniel Foust	San Bernardino	Present	For	For	For
Paul Mansell	San Diego	Present	For	For	For
Desiree Boykin	ARCA	Present	For	For	For
Nicole Patterson	DDS	Present	For	For	For
Robert Levy	Mind Institute	Present	For	For	For
Wesley Witherspoon	USC – CHLA	Present	For	For	For
Kecia Weller	Trajan Center	Present	For		
Russell Rawlings	CFILC	Present	Abstain	Vacant	Vacant
Scott Barron	DRC	Present	For	For	For

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**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 5
INFORMATION ITEM**

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network



UPDATES FROM THE SSAN CHAIR

The SSAN Chair will provide a verbal update to SSAN members.

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 6
ACTION ITEM**



Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

SCDD UPDATE

Since the June 4—5, 2020 SSAN meeting, the State of California, the United States of America, and many countries around the world have continue to face challenges in addressing the public health and public safety challenges of COVID—19. In addition to COVID—19 SCDD has been closely monitoring the state of California’s wildfires and their impact on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the state. SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will update SSAN members on Council activity related to meeting the needs of Californians with I/DD during these challenging and unique times. Executive Director Carruthers will also provide members with an update on the development process of the SCDD 2022—2026 State Plan and its impact on SSAN.

Attachments

- July Council Meeting Summary

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Ensure that Californians with developmental disabilities are guaranteed the same full and equal opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as all Americans.

July 14, 2020 State Council Meeting Summary

SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

- On July 14th, 2020, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) held its Council meeting remotely, using the Zoom platform. The Council continues to prioritize safety and social distancing guidelines issued by the Governor of California.
- Council Chair Maria Marquez reported that even though we are still seeing COVID-19 case numbers rising, the Council will keep moving forward with its mission. Council staff have been actively working to get PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) sent out to as many people as possible. As of the July 14th meeting, more than 27.5 million pieces of PPE had been ordered or distributed. Chair Marquez also spoke about the Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC). The group met via Zoom on June 9th and worked to identify barriers to the Self-Determination Program and things that need to change before the program can expand next year.
- Councilmembers also heard a presentation from SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers. He informed members that Council staff have been continuing to work on community in-reach, providing information, and advocating for people with disabilities. The Council's top priorities right now are safety, employment, housing, and education. Mr. Carruthers also noted that throughout the months of April and May, 560,407 Californians received information, technical assistance, or training. For more details, check out his [full Executive Director report presentation](#).
- Councilmembers had an open discussion as a group about how COVID-19 has affected their lives. Members talked about a variety of topics including the effects of isolation, plans for school and education in the fall, and housing concerns for people with I/DD. It has been a very difficult time for many people, but the Council continues to hold a positive outlook about the future.
- Councilmembers listened to a presentation about the Cycle 43 grants given by State Plan Committee Chair Kilolo Brodie and Executive Director Carruthers. They talked about the grant review process and gave summaries of each application that was selected for grant funding this year. Five regional grants were awarded, leaving excess funds available for other uses. For detailed information, visit the following pages to keep reading:
 - [Cycle 43 Regional Grant Proposal Summaries](#)
 - Cycle 43 Excess Fund [proposal for Virtual Training](#) and [proposal for Web Platform](#)

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTIONS

The Council:

- Approved the May 2020 Council meeting minutes
- Approved the Cycle 43 Regional Grant recommendations
- Approved Cycle 43 Excess Fund proposals

FUTURE MEETING DATE

- The next Council meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2020.

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SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 7
Information



Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

CFILC AND YO! DISABLED AND PROUD

Russell Rawlings, Statewide Community Organizer for the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) will provide SSAN members with an overview of the Youth Organizing (YO!) Disabled and Proud Network and other programs and networks that CFILC supports throughout California. This presentation will address the potential future collaborations between SSAN and CFILC Programs.

Additional Resources

Information about each of the CFILC Networks and Programs can be found at:

- [YO! Disabled and Proud](#)
- [Disability Organizing Network](#)
- [Ability Tools](#)
- [Digital Access Project](#)
- [Disability Disaster Access and Resources](#)

More information can be found on the [CFILC website](#) on the work that CFILC does throughout the state of California.

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2020
SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 8 INFORMATION ITEM
Statewide Self-Advocacy Network



VOTING IN THE 2020 ELECTION AND VOTING RIGHTS TRAINING

Scott Barron, Disability Rights California (DRC) SSAN Representative and Gabriel Taylor, Voting Rights Advocate for DRC will provide SSA N members with an overview of the importance of voting. This presentation will cover the changes that have been made to the election process in California in order to the address public health and public safety concerns of COVID—19.

Additional Resources

- [DRC Voters with Disabilities](#)
- [Register to Vote](#)

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2020
SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 9
ACTION ITEM



Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER APPROVAL AND IDEAS FOR NEXT EDITION

Robert Levy, Chair of the SSAN Newsletter Workgroup will present SSAN members with a DRAFT version of the September Newsletter and ask members for any changes or additions. Robert will then lead a discussion about ideas for the December Newsletter.

Attachments

- DRAFT September Voices of SSAN Newsletter

Recommended Action

Approve the DRAFT September Voices of SSAN Newsletter

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IN THIS EDITION:

Article 1: Neighbor to Neighbor Project

Article 2: Advocacy and the Pandemic

Article 3: The Importance of Voting

Article 4: My New Podcast

Article 5: SSAN Turns 8!

Article 6: Camp Fire: Remembering Almost 2 Years Later

Article 7: New Member Bio

Article 8: Member Interview

Article 9: Community Resources

Article 10: Save the Dates

Editor: Robert Levy

Contributors:

- Wesley Witherspoon
- Paul Mansell
- Daniel Foust
- Teresa Moshier
- Sean Sullivan
- Russell Rawlings
- Robert Levy
- Nicole Patterson

Neighbor to Neighbor Project

By Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children's Hospital UCEDD Representative

COVID—19 has changed a lot about the day to day lives of people in California and across the country. Prior to COVID—19, people were giving handshakes and hugs. But because of the need to practice social distancing to fight this pandemic, some people with disabilities are feeling isolated from others. At one day program I attended prior to COVID—19 some of the participants did not have any friends. Having someone to talk to is important to our well-being. The State Council on Developmental Disabilities partnered with the Governor's Office and California Volunteers to put together The Neighbor to Neighbor project as a part of [Listos California](#), a resource hub for COVID—19 materials and community planning response tool for natural disasters.

[The Neighbor to Neighbor Project](#) focusses on checking in with your neighbors with disabilities in all kinds of ways, using different communication tools like the phone, computer, or smartphone. Many people do not talk to their neighbors regularly, so you can also talk to your staff. You can also talk to your family. If you are fortunate enough to talk to your neighbors, you can. It is normal to feel isolated from time to time. You have the right to have a person to talk to you, however some people will not let you talk to them, just move on to the next person. We can have people talking to us if we want it. Check out this [Neighbor to Neighbor YouTube video](#) to learn more about the project.



Advocacy and the Pandemic

By Paul Mansell, San Diego Regional Representative

March seems so long ago, as we continue to shelter in place because of COVID—19. In some ways sheltering-in-place is nothing new for me. I don't drive because I have epilepsy and getting out of my apartment has always been a real pain. I have to take the bus which takes forever or Uber which I can't afford.

The hardest thing to deal with is the isolation, loneliness, and change in my routine. My ILS worker no longer comes to my place, instead we meet remotely. I have to be very proactive about reaching out to friends and family to fill the emptiness. I go out of my way to phone, text, and email people. I have found complimenting others is an excellent way to stay connected and helps build closer relationships.

I went to Burger Lounge with a friend and had dinner outside. I felt like I was in heaven. We take for granted our human contacts until they are taken away from us, then it becomes a major issue. I can't recall the last time I gave someone a hug. I have a friend take me to Rite Aid to pick up my prescriptions, which I have a lot and have to go frequently.

Taking this extra effort to reach out to family, friends, peers, and co-workers has made a huge difference in my life. Instead of feeling sad and depressed I feel upbeat with a strong desire to connect with others—my mood is bright and colorful. Starting to exercise also helps. I advocated to my Service Coordinator for the Self-Determination Plan to purchase a treadmill. When I get it, I will be able to bike and walk while sheltering-in-place.

During the pandemic simple things like going to the supermarket have become a hassle. To reduce my need to grocery shop, I subscribed to Meal-on-Wheels, a meal delivery service for seniors. I also go online to Shipt.com and have my groceries delivered to my door. Also, I enrolled in On Trak, to improve my health and stay active. So even in a pandemic, we have power if we self-advocate.



The Importance of Voting

By **Daniel Foust**, San Bernardino Regional Representative

Paul Mansell, San Diego Regional Representative

Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children's Hospital Representative

Voting gives us the opportunity to have our voices heard through the choices we make in the people and ballot measures we support and vote for in an election. Voting gives people, the chance to have a voice in deciding the direction of our communities, state and country. Voting also gives you the chance to support the issues that are important to you by voting for candidates that care about those issues. There is a certain sense of pride that one feels, when you turn 18 and go through the process of [registering to vote](#), walking into your local polling location and casting your first ballot to participating in your first election.

With the challenges presented to the voting process because of COVID—19, voting in this election cycle looks different. Many polling places are having to adapt to follow social distancing requirements and there is an uncertainty about how many polling places are going to be able to meet the new requirements. Voting by mail is a good option because you can vote in the safety of your own home, and mail in your ballot with a limited risk to your health. Participating in the voting process is one way to participate in this system and in democracy.

People with disabilities have had to struggle to have their voices heard in the voting process and it is important that we continue to exercise our right to vote. There are many resources related to voting that help make the process of voting easier. The [Easy Voter Guide](#) put together by the League of Women Voters (**Continue on Page 4: "Vote"**)

SSAN Members

- Nathaniel Florez – North Coast
- Teresa Moshier – North State
- Lisa Cooley – Sacramento
- Chen Curtiss – North Bay
- Regina Woodliff – Bay Area
- Robert Balderama – North Valley Hills
- David Forderer – Central Coast
- Rebecca Donabed – Sequoia
- Julie Gaona – Los Angeles
- Sean Sullivan – Orange County
- Daniel Foust – San Bernardino
- Paul Mansell – San Diego Imperial
- Desiree Boykin – ARCA
- Renee Wooten – CFILC
- Nicole Patterson – DDS
- Scott Barron – DRC
- Robert Levy – UC Davis Mind Institute
- Kecia Weller – UCLA Tarjan Center
- Wesley Witherspoon – SCDD and USC Children's Hospital



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(Continued from Page 3: "Vote")

is a good resource that provides easy to understand descriptions of the impact of proposed ballot measures and where candidates stand on issues like access to public transportation and long-term services and supports for people with disabilities and aging adults. America is a democratic republic and important decisions are made at the ballot box. Casting our votes and electing leaders who value our concerns and needs is clearly in our self-interests. Another way of saying it, our leaders will only act on our behalf if they hear our message and see that they are beholden to our votes for their electoral victory.

The last day to register to vote in November's election is October 16th. We hope that you will make sure that you are registered and join us in voting in this, and future election cycles, because it is an important way to have your voice be heard.

My New Podcast

By Sean Sullivan, Orange County Regional Representative

I have been contemplating starting my own podcast for months. It took me a while to decide what I would talk about on my podcast. I kept wondering what content I would make that listeners would be interested in, who I would interview and how I would find people to interview. After I tackled those problems I started right away. Some examples of topics I talk about are:

- Autism
- Down's Syndrome
- ADHA
- ODD and more

SSAN 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.scdd.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) 263-8196**



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SSAN Celebrates 8 Years of Advocacy

By Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD Representative



In 2012 the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) was born with the help of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD). There have been a lot of changes to SSAN over the last 8 years. In 2015, Area Boards became Regional Offices of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) and Partners became members. In 2016, SSAN members decided to be a cross disability training network working to further the self-advocacy movement in California. Members have come and gone, but SSAN continues to educate our communities on things like CalABLE, Self-Determination, Employment First, and legislation. SSAN has continued to work in the face of challenges like wildfires, earthquakes and now COVID—19. While it has been difficult to adapt to meetings on Zoom, SSAN members continue to attend self—advocacy meetings, and be leaders in their communities during hard times. Hopefully for SSAN’s 9th birthday and beyond we will be done having coronavirus and the world will go back to normal.

Learn About SSAN Member Organizations

- [Association of Regional Center Agencies](#)
- [California Foundation for Independent Living Centers](#)
- [Department of Developmental Services](#)
- [Disability Rights California](#)
- [University of California, Davis MIND Institute](#)
- [University of California, Los Angeles, Tarjan Center](#)
- [University of Southern California, Children’s Hospital](#)

Self-Determination Update

Check out the latest [DDS Self-Determination Newsletter](#) for the latest on California’s Self-Determination Program.



Camp Fire: What Paradise Looks Like Almost 2 Years Later

By Teresa Moshier, North State Regional Representative

On November 8, 2018, the Camp Fire nearly destroyed the town of Paradise, California. The Camp Fire was the deadliest fire in the Nation since 1918 and destroyed 18,000 structures and it took 17 days to put out the fire and caused the worst air quality ever recorded. The fire displaced 16,000 people, including 700 Far Northern Regional Center clients. All Far Northern Regional Center clients got out.



Now it's almost 2 years later and the town of Paradise is still recovering from the Camp Fire. So many buildings still are in the same state that they were when the fire hit. The only progress has been that their lots are cleared and cleaned up. The town of Paradise nearly lost their only hospital and they continue to rebuild their emergency room services, hoping to open again one day. They also lost Canyon View Clinic which was the original hospital and where I used to go for medical services. Through the PG&E class action lawsuit, insurance issues and lots of red tape, it's taking much longer for progress and rebuilding to happen.

Before the Camp Fire, the population in Paradise was over 26,000 people and now the population after the Camp Fire is about 5,000 people, which is a decline of over 82% of the people. Many people had to move away from Paradise to other parts of California and other states too. According to Laura Larson, the former Far Northern Regional Center Executive Director, 25 clients moved out of state to live somewhere else.



(Continue on Page 7: "Camp Fire: 2 Years Later")



(Continued from Page 6: “Camp Fire: 2 Years Later”)

My best friend, Taya Cooper, moved to Colorado to live near her family because there was no affordable housing left in Chico at that time. Now, my contact with Taya is through Facebook, Facetime and phone calls.

Although I’m glad she’s my best friend, I miss her a lot and I miss our “girls’ day” time together. We used to go shopping, do arts and crafts together and worked at [AMJaMB’s](#) The Call Connection together. I still have my job at The Call Connection and continue to make calls from my home, as the current pandemic put another curve ball in my path.

People First of Paradise was impacted by the Camp Fire. I was the President of People First of Paradise and my best friend, Taya, was the Vice President. We haven’t been able to meet since the Camp Fire, some people moved away and the restaurant, Cozy Diner, where we used to hold our meetings, still hasn’t opened because of the damage from the fire in November 2018. I keep in touch with some of the members through Facebook and phone calls. I hope that they can get another chapter started in Paradise. I like many others have had to move because of the Camp Fire. I hope to help start a People First Chapter in Glenn County, soon.



On the positive side, many people are rebuilding homes and working hard to move from RV’s and Camp Trailers to their newly built homes on their properties. That is good to see and good for the community. If I could sum up my article, I would say, Paradise is rebuilding slowly.



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New Member Bio: Russell Rawlings

By Russell Rawlings, CFILC Representative

Hello SSAN Members and Allies!

My name is Russell Rawlings, and I am the Statewide Community Organizer for California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC). I am responsible for leading the Disability Organizing Network (DO Network).



I am proud to join this group of experienced self-advocates. Some of your names are familiar, and I do hope to connect with all of you. I hope to bring your voices and experience into the DO Network, a statewide network of cross-disability advocates.

I want to introduce myself to all of you. Before becoming Statewide Community Organizer at CFILC, I was Director of Advocacy at Resources for Independent Living (RIL) in Sacramento. RIL is the Independent Living Center serving Sacramento County and Yolo County.

I began my journey toward “independent living” here in Sacramento. Growing up in Texas as a significantly disabled, powerchair user with cerebral palsy, I struggled with access to transportation. My parents’ van with a wheelchair lift was my only transportation. The nearest bus to my parents’ home was over 3 miles away, and there were no sidewalks along the roads.

I feel very lucky to have found RIL in Sacramento. It was there that I found my identity as a disabled person. I learned about the Independent Living Movement. I was given the opportunity to serve as President of Disability Organizing Group for Initiating Total Equality (DOGFITE), an advocacy group held at RIL. This experience gave me the opportunity and confidence to learn about community organizing.

From my experiences serving as President of DOGFITE for more than 10 years and learning about community organizing, I became confident advocating not just for myself, but for the entire disability community. This gave me the confidence to apply for my first job at RIL in 2017.

(Continue on Page 9: “New Member”)



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(Continued from Page 8: “New Member”)

RIL and California’s 28 Independent Living Centers all have staff working on “systems change,” or in plain language, helping their communities become more accessible by organizing people with disabilities to work on issue areas like: accessible, affordable housing, transportation, voting access and more.

It is my job as Statewide Community Organizer to help build the DO Network by bringing people with disabilities across California together to work on statewide systems change projects. Right now, our main project is advocating for a universal Long-Term Supports and Services benefit for Californians, to help Californians with disabilities have access to services that will help them live independently in their communities.

I look forward to connecting with each of you and learning more about the SSAN’s projects and priorities. I believe that the DO Network and SSAN do have similar goals, and I am excited to be able to bring the voice of self-advocates to our statewide network of disability rights advocates, organizers and activists.

You can reach me at russell@cfilc.org or by phone at 916-606-5300. I would love to talk to you or anyone you know in your community who is passionate about disability rights. Through our diversity, we are strong!



Member Interview: Wesley Witherspoon

By Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Institute Representative

I had the opportunity to interview Wesley Witherspoon about what self-advocacy means to him and the different ways he uses self-advocacy in his life. Wesley Witherspoon is the USC Children's Hospital UCEDD Representative to SSAN.

Why is self—advocacy important to you?

Self-advocacy is important because it lists what we like and don't like. Prior to Regional Center being used, people with disabilities did not have any rights. People with disabilities had to fight for their lives in the 60s and 70s to achieve the rights we have now. Without self-advocacy, someone else would make decisions for us.

How many different self—advocacy organizations do you belong to?

I am a member of the Self-Advocates Advisory Committee of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Westside Self—Advocacy Group, Strengthening Self—Advocacy Los Angeles County, and the Self—Advocacy Board of Los Angeles County.

How did you get involved with SSAN?

I worked with SSAN for several years. I learned leadership skills, and got leadership experience by playing role games on computers and exercising. Those decisions I made helped me become a leader with SSAN. You need to know what the issues are concerning people with disabilities. I worked with several self-advocacy groups in the Los Angeles Area. I became a leader in the self-advocacy movement. My former supervisor Barbara Wheeler recommended me for SSAN. I have been involved with SSAN for over 3 years now.

How has self—advocacy helped you?

Before I got involved with self-advocacy. I did not have a job to go to. I did not have a significant other. I learned how to advocate for myself when I was a teenager. I learned about what I want and don't want. With self-advocacy, I learned how to set a goal and complete what I want to do. I found a mentor and learned from others how to do things for myself. Self-Advocacy means deciding about what you want and don't want.

(Continue on Page 11: "Interview")



(Continued from Page 10: “Interview”)

Why is it important for the 3 California UCEDDs to hire people with disabilities?

It is important to hire people with disabilities because they are a part of our communities. People with disabilities want the same things that people without disabilities have. A person with a disability likes to make money, have recreational activities, a chance for a social life they want. Without people with disabilities on staff, UCEDDs would have difficulties understanding the needs of people with disabilities. People with disabilities are essential for the advancement of the UCEDDs.

Do you have any statewide or national Collaborations with the 3 California UCEDDs?

We collaborate on the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network and the Association of University Centers for Disabilities.

Do you have any advice for other self—advocates to get involved in their communities?

My advice for self-advocates is that we are constantly learning. We are human, we are going to make mistakes. Learn from your mistakes. Know about yourself, what you like and don't like. Get involved with your self-advocacy group. Learn how to be independent, ask questions, have someone mentor you as you go through your life. Take an assessment of your abilities and skills. Volunteer your time in the community and learn how to be pro-social. Do something you want to do. Learn how to speak up for yourself and how to communicate what you want effectively to authority figures like the police, elected officials, or if you are in a conservatorship or under 18, the person who is responsible for making decisions on your behalf. Learn about the history and struggles of people with disabilities. Listen to people who been through similar situations.



VOICES of SSAN

September 2020

Volume 22

Kudos Corner

Desiree Boykin takes her job as Vice Chairperson of the SSAN very seriously, so much, so I think she has only missed one or two meetings since she began serving in 2013 as ARCA representative. She is a type of member that is always willing to help in any way possible to make the SSAN run smoother. We appreciate the work she does with the SSAN Newsletter Workgroup. She has a strong passion for young people and understands that we have a role in helping them become the leaders of tomorrow. Desiree, thank you for being a voice for the SSAN. Kudos to you!!

Community Resources



Disability Vote California is a non-partisan campaign to eliminate barriers to voting, promote accessibility of voting technology and polling places; educate voters about issues and candidates; promote turnout of voters with disabilities across the state, and protect eligible voters' right to participate in elections.

Check out the State Council on Developmental Disabilities' **Series of Informational Videos on COVID—19** featuring people with disabilities on YouTube.

California Disaster Strategies Coalition consists of a broad group of community service providers and advocates working on inclusive emergency planning, response, recovery, and mitigation.

SAVE THE DATES

Disability Rights California Events and Trainings



Training Page:

<https://bit.ly/3jmZV6N>

Supported Life Institute



Supported Life Institute

Conference Page:

<https://bit.ly/3gAfMwO>

More Plain Language
Resources relating to
COVID—19 can be found
on the SCDD Website:

<http://www.scdd.ca.gov>

Contact your regional
office of the State Council
on Developmental
Disabilities for
information on trainings
and local self-advocacy
meetings happening in
your area or to find out
how to get Personal
Protective Equipment
(PPE) for you and your
family.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 10
ACTION ITEM**

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network



PLANNING FOR DECEMBER AND ADJOURNMENT

The SSAN Chair will lead the group in a discussion about ideas for the December 2020 meeting and members will have the opportunity to complete meeting evaluations for the September 2020 meeting.

Attachments

None

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