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## **STATEWIDE SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK MEETING INFORMATION**



**DATE:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 and Wednesday, September 8, 2021



**TIME:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM  
Wednesday, September 8, 2021 10:00 AM – 2:00 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](http://www.scdd.ca.gov).

**JOIN ZOOM MEETING:** <https://bit.ly/SSANSept2021>

**MEETING ID:** **914 2697 7638**

**MEETING PASSWORD:** **247478**

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:** **914 2697 7638**

**MEETING PASSWORD:** **247478**

### **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](mailto: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 FOR DAY 1**

**September 7, 2021  
10:00 AM – 2:30 PM**

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**1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions/Member Report**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson, Paul Mansell, Vice-Chairperson, and Robert Levy, Secretary



**2. Public Comment**

Public comment is welcome. Comment on agenda items is taken as they are discussed.



**3. Review and Approval of June 2021 Minutes**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson  
**ACTION**



**4. Updates from the SSAN Chair**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson  
**Information**



**5. Conversation on Civility**

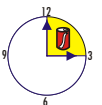
Presented by: SSAN Officers  
**Information**

**6. SCDD Update**

Presented by: Aaron Carruthers, SCDD Executive Director  
**Information**



**Break**



**7. SSAN Workgroups**

Presented by: ALL  
**Discussion**



**8. Accessible, Affordable Housing Options and Resources**

Presented by: Allie Cannington, Manager, Advocacy and Organizing,  
and Isaac Haney-Owens, Analyst, The Kelsey  
**Information**



**9. Recess Until Next Day**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson  
**Information**





## **AGENDA FOR DAY 2**

**September 8, 2021  
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

### **1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson, Paul Mansell, Vice-Chairperson, and Robert Levy, Secretary



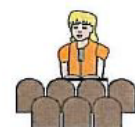
### **2. Review of Agenda**

Presented by: Desiree Boykin, Chairperson  
**Information**



### **3. Public Comment**

Public comment is welcome. Comment on agenda items is taken as they are discussed.



### **4. Voting Discussion**

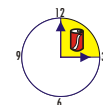
Presented by: Russell Rawlings, CFILC  
**Information**

### **5. Employment Panel**

Presented by: SSAN Employment Workgroup  
**Information**



### **Break**



### **6. Approval of September 2021 SSAN Newsletter**

Presented by: Robert Levy, Newsletter Workgroup Chair  
**ACTION**



### **7. Social Justice and Disability**

Presented by: Teresa Anderson, Arc of California, Public Policy Director  
**Information**

### **8. Planning for December 2021 Meeting**

**ALL  
Discussion**



### **9. Adjournment**

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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 3**  
**ACTION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Approval of June 2021 Minutes***

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***Attachments***

June 2021 Minutes

***Recommended Action***

Approve the June 2021 SSAN Meeting Minutes.

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## Statewide Self—Advocacy Network Meeting Minutes June 9 & 10, 2021 Zoom

### **SCDD Regional Members Present**

Teresa Moshier — North State  
Lisa Cooley — Sacramento  
Ellen Sweigart — North Bay  
Regina Woodliff — Bay Area  
Robert Balderama — North Valley Hills  
David Forderer — Central Coast  
Rebecca Donabed — Sequoia  
Julie Gaona — Los Angeles  
Daniel Fouste — San Bernardino  
(Day 2)  
Paul Mansell — San Diego—Imperial

### **Agency Members Present**

Matthew Lagrand — SCDD  
Robert Levy —UCD MIND Institute  
Wesley Witherspoon — USC CHLA  
Kecia Weller — UCLA Tarjan Center  
Scott Barron — DRC  
Nicole Patterson — DDS  
(Day 2)  
Desiree Boykin — ARCA

### **Members Not Present**

Nathan Florez — North Coast  
Sean Sullivan — Orange County  
Russell Rawlings—CFILC

### **SCDD Staff in Attendance**

Rihana Ahmad — SCDD HQ  
Aaron Carruthers — SCDD HQ  
Riana Hardin — SCDD HQ  
Beth Hurn — SCDD HQ  
Debbie Marshall — SCDD San Diego  
Sarah May – SCDD North State  
Charles Nguyen — SCDD HQ  
Mary Agnes Nolan —  
SCDD North State  
Tobias Weare — SCDD North Bay

### **Presenters**

Zack Hill  
Natalie Jackson  
Nora Parker  
Peter Selgado  
Viri Selgado  
Rick Wood

### **Others Present**

Maria Cafirma  
Ryan Duncan Wood  
Alicia Garispe  
Carol Hood  
Alissa Norman



# DRAFT

## **SSAN Minutes**

### **1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin, ARCA Representative, called the meeting to order at 10:13 AM.

SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin, requested that Riana Hardin, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator 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 of Agenda**

SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin let members know that there would need to be a change in the agenda for the meeting. Due to scheduling conflicts, the SCDD Update needed to be moved to the afternoon. The SSAN Workgroups will meet in the morning instead of the afternoon and the Member reports will take place after the SCDD DAC presentation. There were no objections to the change of order for day one of the June SSAN meeting.

### **4. Review and Approval of March 10 & 11, 2021 Minutes**

The members reviewed the minutes from March 10 & 11, 2021 Meeting. Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 7–14 of the June 2021 SSAN Meeting Packet.

**ACTION:** Motion #1 to approve the March 2021 minutes was made by Robert Levy/Seconded by Lisa Cooley. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 8.

### **5. Updates from SSAN Chair**

SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin, ARCA Representative, thanked SSAN Vice-Chairperson Paul Mansell, SCDD San Diego Regional Representative, and SSAN Secretary Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Representative, for doing such a great job of facilitating the March SSAN meeting in her absence. SSAN Chairperson Boykin expressed the hope that SSAN continues to thrive and that SSAN can inspire the next generation of self-advocates to get involved in the Self-Advocacy Movement.





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## 6. Social Justice Conversation

The rise in hate crimes against minority groups, along with ongoing civil unrest from interactions between law enforcement and black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and/or people with disabilities, has left many feeling uneasy. The SSAN Officers led members in a discussion about social justice issues and current events.

## 7. SSAN Workgroups

The SSAN Workgroups met using Zoom Breakout Rooms to talk about current projects and future projects. The following workgroups met:

- Legislative and Civic Engagement
- Employment
- Newsletter and Communications
- Self—Determination
- Youth Engagement

Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 27—30 of the June 2021 SSAN Packet.

## 8. SCDD DAC Project

Members of the SCDD Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) provided SSAN with an overview of the role of DAC within SCDD. Members of the SCDD DAC collaborate on projects aimed at improving accessibility and inclusion of employees with disabilities working at SCDD. The SCDD DAC is interested in putting together a series of educational training videos to promote/facilitate a culture of disability sensitivity and awareness within the agency and would like SSAN members' help.

SSAN members talked about what an inclusive workplace setting looks like and shared their experiences on being denied reasonable accommodations and feeling judged by coworkers and/or supervisors due to their disability in workplace settings.



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## 9. SSAN Member Reports

SSAN Members reported on their self-advocacy related activities since the March 2021 SSAN meeting.

Members talked about attending local self-advocacy meetings, self-advocacy chats, public transportation trainings, and employment/benefits trainings.

Several members talked about the importance of emergency preparedness, HCBS and Housing. Members reported collaborating with their local SCDD office on projects related to a wide range of topics.

Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 35–38 of the June 2021 SSAN Packet.

## 10. SCDD Update

SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided SSAN members with an update on SCDD activity since the March SSAN meeting. SCDD continues to educate communities about the COVID–19 Vaccine in order to address vaccine hesitancy. SCDD is also collaborating with community partners in an effort to organize accessible vaccine clinics for people with I/DD.

Executive Director Carruthers provided SSAN with an update on [California's Budget](#) and SCDD's efforts to distribute emergency preparedness kits or "GO Kits" to Californians with I/DD and provide them with emergency preparedness training.

## 11. Self–Determination Rollout Update

[Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee \(SSDAC\)](#) Co-Chair, Rick Wood provided SSAN members with an update on the roll-out of California's Self-Determination Program. Co-Chair Wood talked about barriers to implementation and factors keeping people from enrolling in California's Self-Determination Program that are highlighted in the [SSDAC Report on Barriers to Implementing the Self-Determination Program](#).

SSDAC is interested in ensuring that Self-Determination Program Training materials are in Plain Language and user friendly formats. SSAN members shared their thoughts on what self-determination means for the disability rights movement and expressed an interest in having a future update on



## DRAFT

the program and how SSAN members can support the rollout. Members were encouraged to reach out to their regional center to learn more.

### **12. Recess Until Next Day**

SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin declared the meeting in recess at 3:17 PM. The June 2021 SSAN meeting will return from recess at 10:00 AM Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.



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## **SSAN DAY 2 Minutes**

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

SSAN Chairperson, Desiree Boykin, ARCA Representative, called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

An attendance roll call for members present was taken.

### **2. Review of Agenda**

Members reviewed the agenda for day two of the SSAN meeting.

### **3. Public Comment**

There was no Public Comment.

### **4. Hopes and Dreams Conversation**

SSAN Officers led members in a discussion about their hopes and dreams for SSAN. Members expressed an interest in growing SSAN as a cross-disability network, connecting youth with disabilities to SSAN, addressing issues that impact people with disabilities, getting involved in and volunteering with the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), broadening social-media presence and increasing trainings/educational outreach in their communities.

### **5. Vaccine Hesitancy Discussion**

Members of Self-Advocates For Emergency Education (Project SAFEE), a group of self-advocates from across California who are interested in educating other self-advocates about emergency response, presented information about COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy. The presentation was followed up with a discussion about what vaccine hesitancy means and the role vaccines play in promoting the health and safety of our communities.

### **6. Approval of the June 2021 SSAN Newsletter**

SSAN Secretary and Newsletter and Communications Workgroup Chair, Robert Levy reviewed the DRAFT June 2021 Voices of SSAN Newsletter with members and called for a motion to approve the June 2021 Edition.

Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 45–58 of the June 2021 SSAN Meeting Packet.



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**ACTION:** Motion #2 to approve the June 2021 Newsletter was made by Kecia Weller/ Seconded by Regina Woodliff. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 8.

### 7. SCDD 2021 Legislative Update

SCDD Communications Manager, Lea Park-Kim provided SSAN members with an overview of how an idea moves from trailer bill language to legislation to law and the role that advocacy and storytelling plays in moving legislation along in the process. Members were encouraged to use tools like [Find Your Representative](#) to figure out who their state representatives are and to share their personal impact statements on legislation and issues that are important to SCDD and SSAN. the Members were encouraged to email Lea with any questions they might have at: [Lea.Park-Kim@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:Lea.Park-Kim@scdd.ca.gov).

For more Information relating to SCDD's legislative activities visit the [SCDD Legislative and Public Policy Committee Page](#).

### 8. Planning for September 2021 Meeting

SSAN members brainstormed topics/presentations for the September 2021 meeting. Presentation topics mentioned included:

- Ticket to Work
- 10 Years Working at the MIND Institute
- Affordable Housing in California
- California Recall Update
- Getting Rid of the "R" Word
- Social Justice
- Update on Self-Determination

Additionally, members requested that each day of a SSAN meeting be limited to 4 hours long.

### 9. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 P.M. The next SSAN meeting will be on September 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2021 using Zoom.



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## JUNE 2021 SSAN VOTE TALLY

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

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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 4**  
**INFORMATION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Updates from the SSAN Chair***

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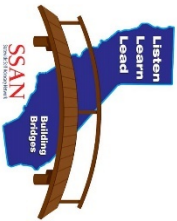
The SSAN Chair will provide a verbal update to SSAN members.

***Attachments***

SSAN 2021 Revised Member Report

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# MEMBER REPORT

KEY: SA-Self Advocate FA- Family Advocate O- Other (not SA or FA)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
TELL US IF YOU ...

PRESENTED (or spoke) at a Meeting, Conference or Training Event in your role as a SSAN member:

DATE	Title or Topic of Meeting or Event	How it Relates to SSAN/Self-Advocacy?	What did you LEARN?	Organization or Group Connected	WHERE it was held (Regional or Statewide)	How many SA	How many FA	How many Others

ATTENDED a meeting, training or conference in your role as a SSAN member:

DATE	Title or Topic of Meeting or Event	How it Relates to SSAN/Self-Advocacy?	What did you LEARN?	Organization or Group Connected	WHERE it was held (Regional or Statewide)	How many SA	How many FA	How many Others



**RESOURCES you would like to share with SSAN**

X	Title or Topic of Resource	Internet Link /address	Will bring a copy of resource

**Are there any BARRIERS that have kept you from participating in advocacy related activities?**


**Is there anything that your local self-advocacy group would like SSAN to work on?**


**Anything else you would like to REPORT or any questions or Training/project ideas you would like to share with SSAN?**


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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 5**  
**Information Item**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Conversation on Civility***

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Talking with someone you disagree with in a way that is still respectful to both you and them can be a challenge, especially when it comes to controversial or political topics. The SSAN Officers would like to have an open conversation on best practices on communicating with others who you may disagree with on any number of social or political issues.

The SSAN Officers request that both SSAN members and members of the public approach this conversation with an open mind and a willingness to listen to others.

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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 6**  
**Information Item**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***SCDD Update***

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Since the June 2021 SSAN meeting, the State of California, the United States of America, and many countries around the world continue to face challenges in addressing the public health and public safety challenges of COVID—19. SCDD continues to work with statewide and local partners to advocate for the inclusion of people with I/DD in the vaccination rollout. 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.

***Attachments***

- May 2021 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.**

## **May 25, 2021 State Council Meeting Summary**

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### **SIGNIFICANT ITEMS**

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- On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) held its third Council meeting of the year. The meeting's focus included a discussion on the Self-Determination Program with a panel of speakers including Rick Wood and Maria Marquez (Co-Chairs of the Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee), Amy Westling from the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) and Judy Mark from Disability Voice United (DVU).
- This month's Member Spotlight series recognized Councilmembers Sandra Aldana and Francis Lau. Sandra, a Self-Advocate and Francis, a Family Advocate, have served on the Council for the past six years and are now reaching the end of their terms. Sandra represented the Central Coast region and Francis represented the Bay Area region. The Council Chair, Councilmembers and SCDD staff thanked Sandra and Francis for all their work and advocacy over the years. For more details, check out SCDD's ["About The Councilmembers"](#) web page.
- Councilmembers heard reports from Executive Director Aaron Carruthers and Council Chair Wesley Witherspoon. Chair Witherspoon held a moment of silence to honor the one-year anniversary of the death of George Floyd. He also highlighted May as Mental Health Awareness Month and Asian-American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. Executive Director Carruthers addressed the current status of the COVID-19 vaccine campaign, as

well as details about the Isaias Cervantes shooting in Los Angeles, and new funding opportunities that may soon be available to the Council.

- Executive Director Aaron Carruthers presented the 2021-2022 SCDD budget. He highlighted key information for the new fiscal year (2021-2022), and members voted to adopt the new budget. Additionally, Councilmember Brian Winfield of DDS (Department of Developmental Services) provided a broad overview of the details in the Governor's May Budget Revise for the Council to consider.

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### **SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTIONS**

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The Council:

- Approved the March 2021 Council meeting minutes
- Approved the 2021-2022 SCDD Budget
- Approved the staff recommendations for the Self-Determination interim report to be submitted to the Legislature

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### **FUTURE MEETING DATE**

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- The next Council meeting will be held on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 7**  
**Information Item**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***SSAN Workgroups***

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SSAN workgroups will meet to discuss current and ongoing projects. Workgroups are encouraged to review and discuss their workgroup Goals and Priorities, suggesting updates as needed. The following SSAN workgroups will meet using Zoom Breakout Sessions:

- Employment
  - Chair: Rebecca Donabed
- Legislative and Civic Engagement
  - Chair: Paul Mansell
- Self-Determination
  - Chair: Nicole Patterson
- Newsletter
  - Chair: Robert Levy
- Youth Engagement
  - Chair: Nicole Patterson

***Attachments***

- SSAN Workgroup Descriptions

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# SSAN Workgroup Purpose, Goals, and Measurable Objectives



## SSAN OFFICERS WORKGROUP

**Purpose:** The SSAN Officers are responsible for planning and setting the agenda for each Full SSAN Meeting, Review and Approve recommendations relating to SSAN Membership, and Review recommendations relating to changes to the SSAN Bylaws.

**Goal:** To increase participation and awareness of SSAN meetings and resolve issues relating to membership.

**Measurable Objective:** SSAN Officers will work together to plan up to four Full SSAN Meetings a year. Full SSAN meetings will include presentations/trainings suggested by SSAN members, and “standing” agenda items.

## SSAN MEMBERSHIP WORKGROUP

**Purpose:** The SSAN Membership Workgroup will review and make recommendations to SSAN Officers relating to SSAN Membership and the SSAN Membership Process.

**Goal:** To increase representation of self-advocates across California.

**Measurable Objective:** SSAN workgroup members review the SSAN Membership process for open positions on SSAN.

- Review SSAN Marketing Materials
- Review SSAN Application Process Materials
- Review Applications for SSAN
- Make Recommendations to the SSAN Officers about SSAN Membership



## SSAN EMPLOYMENT WORKGROUP

**Purpose:** The Employment workgroup will educate the community about the rights of people with disabilities and their ability to become contributing members of society by having competitive integrated employment.

**Goal:** To increase opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in competitive integrated employment. Increase access to resources available to support people with disabilities in the workforce.

**Measurable Objective:** Members of the SSAN Employment Workgroup will work with the SCDD Employment First Committee to provide feedback on the Employment First presentation. Members of the workgroup will continue to conduct outreach to individuals and groups to inform them about achieving gainful employment of the Cross Disability Community, outreach includes passing out fliers, doing presentations, hosting informational webinars.

## SSAN SELF-DETERMINATION WORKGROUP

**Purpose:** The SSAN Self-Determination Workgroup works to increase the number of people in all catchment areas that know about self-determination.

**Goal:** To increase self-advocates and their families, and the community's awareness of self-determination.

**Measurable Objective:** SSAN members will reach out in their communities to at least 3 individual groups per quarter to inform them about the new self-determination law.

- By providing individual information about self-determination
- By providing information by Power Point to different groups
- To identify groups that may benefit from a self-determination presentation
- Develop a tool to monitor how well the information is getting out to the community.



## **SSAN BYLAWS WORKGROUP**

**Purpose:** The SSAN Bylaws Workgroup will review and make recommendations to the SSAN Officers about updates to the SSAN Bylaws.

**Goal:** Ensure that the SSAN Bylaws are in plain language and easily understood by all members of SSAN.

**Measurable Objective:** Review the SSAN Bylaws at least once a year and make recommendations to the SSAN Officers on suggested updates in language and/or meaning.

## **SSAN YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKGROUP**

**Purpose:** The SSAN Youth Engagement Workgroup will work to increase awareness of youth with disabilities in California of the Self-Advocacy Movement and work to engage youth with disabilities in California in SSAN activities.

**Goal:** Create opportunities for cross generational interactions and include youth in the Self-Advocacy Movement.

**Measurable Objective:** Create a survey to distribute to youth groups on best practices for engaging, interacting with, and including youth in self-advocacy related activities.



## **SSAN LEGISLATION and CIVIC ENGAGEMENT WORKGROUP**

**Purpose:** The Legislative workgroup will inform and educate our partners and communities on statewide legislation that SCDD has taken a position on.

**Goal:** Increase the community's awareness on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities' legislative platform and priorities.

**Measurable Objective:** Develop materials that will increase the community's awareness and knowledge about bills and the California State Legislative Calendar.

## **SSAN NEWSLETTER/COMMUNICATION WORKGROUP**

**Purpose:** The Newsletter/Communication workgroup will highlight SSAN activities and upcoming conferences/events to communicate what SSAN is doing and how they are connected in the community.

**Goal:** Increase the community's awareness of how SSAN is promoting the self-advocacy movement within the state of California.

**Measurable Objective:** The Newsletter/ Communication workgroup will produce 4 newsletters highlighting SSAN's advocacy work throughout California. The Newsletter/Communications workgroup will make an effort to ensure that future editions are in accessible formats.

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**SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 8**  
**Information Item**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Accessible Affordable Housing Options and Resources***

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The shortage of affordable and accessible housing in California is an ongoing issue across the state. It can often be difficult to understand the different programs, incentives and laws around affordable and accessible housing. Fortunately, organizations like The Kelsey exist to provide advocates with valuable information, training and supports aimed at empowering and transforming people with disabilities into housing advocates.

Allie Cannington, Manager, Advocacy and Organizing, and Isaac Haney-Owens, Analyst at The Kelsey will provide SSAN Members with information on how to become a housing advocate by knowing your housing rights.

***Attachments***

- Disabled Leaders for Housing – Advocacy Tip Sheet
- Individual Housing Resource
- Examples of Federal + Statewide Planning Processes

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# Disabled Leaders For Housing

## Tips for Advocacy

Lots of people at The Kelsey just started doing housing advocacy. We came up with these tips to help people learn more about advocacy. They can help you think about where, what and how you advocate. You can find lots more tips in other places, too.

### 1) Google is your friend!

You can use Google (or your favorite search engine) to learn many things, like:

- Problems you might want to advocate about
- People who have the power to help fix those problems
- The history of the problems you care about

The more you know about a problem, the better your advocacy will be!

### 2) Look things up and ask questions

It doesn't matter how long you've been an advocate. There is always more to learn about advocacy. You might hear words in meetings or emails that you don't know. You can look those words up to learn more about that topic. Sometimes it can help to look up a whole question. You can type in something like "How does affordable housing get paid for?".

You might notice people saying the same words over and over again. If you don't know what the words mean, that means you should look up those words. You might look up the words and still not understand what they mean. That's okay! You still have the right to advocate. You can ask people you know for help understanding. Reach out to people you know from meetings. They can help answer your questions.

### 3) Write down questions as you go

Part of advocacy is going to meetings or events. You might have some questions you want to ask there. But sometimes, we don't get to ask the questions we have right away. We might need to ask them later, or look them up on our own.

That's why it can help to write down your questions before asking them. That gives you more time to think of your question. It can help you remember to ask someone later about them. It can help you remember to look up the answer later.



#### **4) Do what you can with the information you get**

You might not know everything you want to about a problem. It can be hard to get all the information about a problem. But don't let that stop you from advocating. You should still have your voice heard. At the same time, be aware of what you don't know. You may have to listen and learn more than you speak. It's a balance. It's okay to do advocacy while you learn more about a problem.

#### **5) Play into your strengths**

You don't have to be an expert on everything to advocate. Everyone has something important to add to advocacy. Everyone has things they're good at. For example:

- You might have a story that shows why that advocacy is important. You might be great at sharing that story.
- You might know things about a problem that other people didn't think about.
- You might know lots of people or groups who would advocate with you.
- You might be great at listening and writing things down.
- You might be great at using social media.

All of these strengths are important to advocacy. Try and figure out what your strength is. Use those in your advocacy.

#### **6) Finding Focus**

There are so many problems that we can advocate about. You might want to work on all of them at once. Trying to advocate for all of them can be too hard. It can make you stressed or burned out. That makes it harder to make a difference about any of the problems.

Try and focus on what problems are most important to you. Think of 1-3 problems you want to focus on. Be specific about what you want to do. Think about intersectionality between the problems you focus on. It's okay if your focus changes over time. Just don't focus on too many things.



## **7) Finding Allies**

Allies are people who don't have disabilities or who don't have the same identities as you. But they care about the same problems you do. Working with allies is important. You can get help advocating from your allies. They might have resources or information that you don't.

You might not agree with your allies about everything. Your allies might advocate for changes you don't want. Or, they could discriminate against you and not realize it.

Be honest with your allies about problems that come up when you work together. Let them know if they said or did something that hurt you. But try not to get angry when you talk to allies. Assume that your allies want to help you. Good allies want to change so they can help you and your community. Work together to make sure your allies do the right thing.

## **8) Care for yourself & each other**

Advocacy can be hard. It is hard to talk about problems that affect your life. It can make you tired, sad, angry, or anxious. It's important that you take good care of yourself. Take breaks to take a deep breath. Do things that help you relax. Talk to people you trust. That can help make advocacy a little easier.

There will be times when people, even allies, hurt you. There will also be times when we hurt others. It could be on purpose, or by accident. It is good to let people know when they hurt you. Let people know when things need to change. You might want to tell them right away. Or, it might be better to wait until later. And be open to when people tell you that you hurt them. Be open to changing things if you need to. Keep being there for yourself, your allies, and the communities you advocate with and for.

For more information: Contact [hello@thekelsey.org](mailto:hello@thekelsey.org) or visit us at [www.thekelsey.org](http://www.thekelsey.org).



# Individual Housing Resource

The Kelsey focuses on helping people with disabilities learn about and advocate for better housing. But The Kelsey doesn't help people get housing. We ***can't*** help you with things like:

- Applying for housing
- Making your house accessible
- Asking your landlord for accommodations
- Fighting for your own housing rights

We made this information sheet to help you learn about groups that can help with these things. If you have resources that you would like to share with us, please send them to [hello@thekelsey.org](mailto:hello@thekelsey.org).

## Fighting for your rights

- The law says that every state has to make a nonprofit to help protect the rights of people with disabilities. These nonprofits are called Protection and Advocacy organizations (P&As). P&As help make sure disability rights laws get followed. They can help you if you get discriminated against because of your disabilities. Some of the topics P&As can talk to you about are:
  - Community living
  - Housing
  - School
  - Work
  - The police, getting arrested, and prison
  - Voting

You can find your state's P&A by going [here](#).

- One way people with disabilities can fight for our rights is by making a lawsuit. You might want to make a lawsuit to fight for your rights. The Disability Rights Legal Center can help. They are a nonprofit that helps people figure out if a lawsuit is a good idea. They can also help work with you to make a lawsuit. You can learn more about the Disability Rights Legal Center by going [here](#).



- You have rights at your job as a person with a disability. Legal Aid at Work can help you fight for those rights. They are a nonprofit that gives people free information about their rights. They can help you learn more about your rights, or make a lawsuit if you need to. Find out more about Legal Aid at Work [here](#).

## **Your rights when you rent housing**

- The Fair Housing Act is a law that was made in 1968. It says that people who give you housing, or help you get housing, can't discriminate against renters with disabilities.
- Landlords have to give you reasonable accommodation because of the Fair Housing Act. If you need help asking for reasonable accommodations for your housing, check out your local protection and advocacy agency (P&A)
- To learn more about the many federal laws that help promote equal housing opportunity for individuals with disabilities, [click here](#).
- The National Housing Law Project can help if you're being discriminated against. They are a nonprofit in San Francisco that helps people fight for their housing rights. They help families who don't make a lot of money. They can help you fight for your rights as a renter with a disability. They can give you more information about your rights. They also give presentations and training about housing rights. To learn more about the National Housing Law Project, visit this [site](#).
- You can also find your state and local fair housing groups [here](#).
- Know your housing rights during COVID19 - here is a [video & more information!](#)
- Some places made rules so you can't get kicked out of your housing during COVID19. You can find out if where you live has those rules by checking [this map](#).



## Making Your House More Accessible

- There are many ways to make your housing more accessible. The [National Directory of Home Modification and Repair Resources](#) can help you learn more. They have a list of ways to make your housing more accessible. They also have a list of groups in your area that can help make changes to your house.
- You can also get money to make your house more accessible. There are groups that give out money to help people make disability accommodations in their house. These are groups like nonprofits and the government. They could help you pay for part or all of making changes to your house. You can find a list of some of these groups [here](#).
- There are Centers for Independent Living (CILs) all across the U.S. They help people with disabilities get what we need to live on our own. They can help you find ways to make your housing more accessible. Find your local CIL by checking [here](#).
- If you are an older person with a disability, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has information for you. They have a guide on how to make changes to a house to make it easier for older people to use. You can find the AARP's HomeFit Guide by going [here](#).

## Section 8 Help and Other Affordable Housing

- Section 8 is now called the Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Section 8 is part of a law called the Housing Act of 1937. It helps people pay rent if they don't make a lot of money. Section 8 gets paid for by a part of the government called the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Can I get Section 8 Housing?
  - It depends on where you live, how big your family is, and how much money you make. The groups that decide who can get Section 8 housing are called Public Housing Authorities (PHAs). PHAs are run by the government. They can let you know if you can get help from Section 8.



- How do I apply for section 8 Housing?
  - You can apply for Section 8 Housing by talking to your local Public Housing Authority (PHA). You can find out how to reach your PHA by going [here](#).
- Resource on [Requesting Accommodations & Section 8](#)
- What other housing is available if I do not receive Section 8 Housing?
  - There are buildings throughout the United States that you can apply to live in if you make under a certain amount of money. These are called public housing or low income housing. To apply you need to find a project that has an open waitlist or an open lottery.
  - To look for public housing opportunities with open waitlists [you can search here](#)
  - To look for local low income housing projects with open waitlists reach out to your PHA
    - For the [San Francisco Bay Area](#), this is a list that is updated monthly that shows apartments with open waitlists

## More Affordable Housing information

- [What You Need to Know About How Section 8 Really Works](#). This page also has a list of Facebook groups. You can join these groups to ask more questions about housing.
- [“Section 8 Guide for the Disabled and Plucky – How to Get On”](#): This has great resources beyond Section 8 and describes the difference between low income housing, public housing, and Section 8



**Here are examples of federal and statewide planning processes where you can advocate for inclusive, affordable, and accessible housing.**

Federal	State & Local (Specific to each state) - Example of California
<p><b>The Consolidated Plan:</b> the major federal planning document for cities and urban counties receiving funds from five major federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs: HOME, National Housing Trust Fund, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for People with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA). Each year these entitlement jurisdictions receive millions of federal dollars for housing and community development, housing assistance and services for the homeless and for people with HIV/AIDS.</p> <p><b>Continuum of Care:</b> This plan is often a companion to the Consolidated Plan. To encourage service providers to coordinate with each other, HUD requires that each community submit a single application for McKinney-Vento Homeless funds.s. Ideally, the Continuum of Care serves to</p>	<p><b>The Housing Element:</b> Every city and county in the state of California must adopt a housing element on a regular schedule, ranging from 4 to 8 years</p> <p><b>Relocation Plans:</b> The plan is the mechanism for providing proper notice to displaced households and the public when the loss of housing is inevitable, ensure that displaced households continue to have access to affordable housing for a specific amount of time. It further ensures that local government will proceed in accordance with the various relocation laws designed to protect lower income families from displacement.</p>





Federal	State & Local (Specific to each state) - Example of California
<p>coordinate government agencies, homeless service providers and advocates for the effective administration of the housing designed to bring people out of homelessness: the continuum of transitional, supportive services and permanent housing programs.</p> <p><b>Public Housing Plans:</b> Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) administer conventional public housing for lower income households as well as the Housing Choice Voucher program. The PHA planning process includes both a Five Year Plan and an Annual Plan that are submitted to, and approved by, HUD. The plans are developed with the assistance of residents and the public and incorporate basic PHA policies and rules regarding the local public housing operation, program and services</p> <p><b>Section 3:</b> When certain HUD funds are received by Public Housing Agencies, cities, counties or other government agencies, Section 3 obligations are tied to those funds. Recipients of the HUD funds must</p>	



Federal	State & Local (Specific to each state) - Example of California
<p>prepare a Section 3 Plan and submit reports on their ongoing implementation of the program.</p> <p><b>Assessment of Fair Housing:</b> Every jurisdiction receiving HUD funding must prepare an Assessment of Fair Housing. Through the Assessment, the local jurisdiction examines fair housing impediments that are prevalent in its community. These may include zoning restrictions, racial discrimination or neighborhood opposition to low-income housing. HUD provides access to mapping tools to facilitate an in-depth analysis of these issues. Once identified, the local jurisdiction must then develop a plan to eliminate these impediments to “affirmatively further fair housing.”</p>	

### To learn more:

- [National Low Income Housing Coalition Advocates Guide](#)
- Affordable Housing Advocates Guide: [Housing for All](#)
- [Public Housing Agency \(PHA\) Plans - HUD | HUD.gov / US Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)
- [Consolidated Plan Process, Grant Programs, and Related HUD Programs](#)

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**SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**  
**SSAN DAY 2 AGENDA ITEM 4**  
**Information Item**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**  
***Voting Discussion***



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The upcoming California Governor Recall Election will be different than most other elections in the State's history. Just like the 2020 Presidential Election, ballots were mailed out to every registered voter in California and can be turned in (post-marked) by Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup>. This agenda item will explore the importance of the disability vote and what your vote means in the upcoming recall election.

The SSAN Officers request that both SSAN members and members of the public approach this conversation with an open mind and a willingness to listen to others.

***Resources***

- SCDD 2021 Recall Flier
- [DRC California Recall Election Fact Sheet](#)
- [CA Secretary of State Information Page on Governor Recall Election](#)
- [CA Accessible Voting Options](#)
- [Requesting an Emergency Medical Ballot](#)
- If You Are Having Difficulty Voting Because of a Disability, Call DRC's Voting line at:  
1-888-569-7955

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# 2021 RECALL ELECTION

RECALL means REMOVE FROM ELECTED OFFICE



**What is this election about?** Voters will decide if Governor Newsom should stay as Governor of California. If voters remove Governor Newsom from his job, then voters will choose who will replace him.

**Two issues are on the ballot.**

1) Do you want to recall Governor Newsom?

**YES**

If most voters say YES, then Governor Newsom will lose his job.

**NO**

If most voters say NO, then Governor Newsom will keep his job.

2) If Governor Newsom is recalled, who do you want to replace him? Voters will choose from a list of people who want to become Governor. If Governor Newsom loses his job as Governor, then the person who gets the most votes will become Governor of California.

**How do I vote?**

All registered voters in California will get a Mail-In Ballot. There are 3 ways to vote.



**1) MAIL:** Put your signed ballot in the return envelope and mail it by September 14.



**2) DROP OFF:** Find a voting site or secure voting box to drop off your signed ballot.



**3) VOTE IN PERSON** at a voting site on September 14 before 8:00pm.

**At in-person voting sites you can:**

- Drop off your completed ballot.
- Vote with an accessible voting machine.
- Get help and voting materials in other languages.

**AUGUST 16**

First day to vote by mail

**AUGUST 30**

Register to vote by August 30 to get a regular ballot.

**SEPTEMBER 14**

Election Day!

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**SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**  
**SSAN DAY 2 AGENDA ITEM 5**  
**Information Item**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**



***Employment Panel***

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The SSAN Employment Workgroup has organized an employment panel of people with different types of jobs and disabilities to share their experiences with SSAN members.

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**SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 6**  
**ACTION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Approval of September Newsletter***

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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 2021 Voices of SSAN Newsletter
- Voices of SSAN Newsletter Article Tips Newsletter Article Tips

***Recommended Action***

Approve the DRAFT September 2021 Voices of SSAN Newsletter

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# VOICES of SSAN

September 2021

Volume 26

## IN THIS EDITION:

**Article 1:** Connecting Community

**Article 2:** California Statewide

Self-Advocacy Conference Recap

**Article 3:** SCDD Self-Advocacy Role

**Article 4:** Public Transportation Tips

**Article 5:** FNRC Service Coordinator

**Article 6:** 10 Years Working at UC

Davis MIND Institute

**Article 7:** Role of Support

**Article 8:** Social Justice and

Disability

**Article 9:** Interview: Far

Northern Regional Center

**Article 10:** Kudos Corner

**Article 11:** Community Resources

**Article 12:** Save the Dates

**Editor:** Robert Levy

## Contributors:

- Ellen Sweigert
- Desiree Boykin
- Wesley Witherspoon
- Matthew Lagrand
- Teresa Moshier
- Robert Levy
- Julie Gaona
- Paul Mansell

## Connecting Community to SSAN

**By Ellen Sweigert,** North Bay Regional SSAN Representative

As Self Advocates, it's our responsibility to connect our communities to SSAN. How you ask? Starts with the self-advocates, by developing your relationship with your communities. Getting involved with networking is another good way to connect your community to SSAN. It is important to make a good impression when networking. Connecting to the right people in the field of disability advocacy could really improve peoples' awareness of SSAN. Once we connect with other disability advocates and agencies, it is important to have a tool for keeping a portfolio of the agencies and advocates that we meet. It is also good to have an idea about the information that you want to share with others. By sharing information about SSAN with other groups and sharing information from other groups to SSAN: we can be sure to keep each other informed and up to date about what is going on at both the local, regional and statewide levels.

Many agencies in our communities probably have not even heard of SSAN. It's up to us to get those agencies to lean on us to lend a voice for them. To feel comfortable connecting with SSAN through their own statewide organizations. By providing leadership for people with disabilities, we can always use more self advocates that are passionate about disability advocacy just like us.

## SSAN Youth Survey

SSAN has created a [SSAN Youth Survey](#) to get information about the interests of youth with disabilities. SSAN encourages people with I/DD and/or other disabilities ages 17 to 30 to provide their feedback; but welcomes anyone who is interested in participating to fill out the survey.



## California Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference

By SSAN Chairperson Desiree Boykin, ARCA SSAN Representative

On May 7, 2021 the Supported Life Institute celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year of hosting the Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference. Over 200 self-advocates and support staff attended this conference virtually over Zoom. The Conference started with a popcorn style getting to know each other activity in the breakrooms. Jackie Armstrong, an advocate from Sacramento, had led a discussion about the value of going from a shelter workshop to employment alongside people in your community. She inspired many self-advocates to keep on striving.

The second speaker, Chris Benedict talked about overcoming fear and pain. Chris gave examples of how fear can stop adults with disabilities from moving forward. Self-advocates need to push from the negative images and create their own vision for a wonderful future. Chris ended this speech by saying that he wants all self-advocates to have a positive life. There was a break in the speakers for returning favorite: Zumba fitness instructor Yulissa, who gave us Zumba class.

Keynote speaker Russell Lehman, a motivational speaker and poet from Las Vegas, shared his experience with depression and finding his voice. With the support of his family and therapy, he was able to overcome his sad times. He has written books and consults with self-advocates in all 50 states. Russell's message was to accept your disability and get the supports to move forward with your life.

The third session focused on Emergency Preparedness. The presenter, Catherina Nelson talked about how being prepared for a fire or an earthquake can help in the long run. Having food and water for a week, personal necessities, extra batteries and an extra charger for your phone. All these items need to be included in your emergency bag, in addition to contact information to a family member or friend outside of the state of California. Also, an extra battery for your wheelchair if you need it.

Paul Mansell, SSAN Vice-Chairperson and Client Advocate from San Diego Regional Center, along with SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator Riana Hardin explained the ABC's of Self-Determination program. The presentation covered: who can be a part of the program, the role of a fiscal manager and an independent facilitator. The Self-Determination Program went to effect this summer and is an alternative to traditional services at the 21 Regional Centers. Paul gave his personal story of how the Self-Determination program changed his life and living a life that puts his hopes and dreams first. **(Continue on Page 3: "Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference")**



# VOICES of SSAN

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**(Continued from Page 2: “Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference”)**

The last session was “Relationships...Happy and Loving One is the Best to have” by Herb Hastings, Client Advocate at the Regional Center of the East Bay. In this final session he talked about the social cues to know if someone is interested in a relationship or friendship. Rejection happens but keep on moving forward. Some helpful tips included: don’t ever go to someone’s house on the first date and meet them in a public setting like the beach, movies, mall, and parks. It is a good idea to make sure you have enough cash to get home. Always tell 5 people where you’re going and what time your returning. After the first date or meeting keep on communicating, it takes 10 to 15 dates to know if the person is serious about you. In time you will meet family members. If they have social media accounts look to see what they might be going for that day. But don’t judge anyone based on posts. Conference attendees found the information in this presentation to be a helpful tool for seeking healthy friendships and relationships. Self-Advocates look forward to meeting in May 2022.

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## Role of the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator

**By SCDD Chairperson Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children’s Hospital UCEDD SSAN Representative**

I had the chance to talk with SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, Riana Hardin on her role at SCDD recently and wanted to share what we talked about with you.

As the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, Ms. Hardin has a lot of different responsibilities. A big part of Ms. Hardin’s job is providing technical support (scheduling/hosting Zoom meetings, preparing meeting materials, and distributing information and resources) to self-advocates across California through supporting the Self-Advocates Advisory Committee (SAAC) and the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN). Ms. Hardin is also a part of SCDD’s State Plan and Self-Advocacy Unit and reviews SCDD materials to make sure that they are in plain language and are also digitally accessible to people who uses screen readers.

Ms. Hardin enjoys the fact that there is a lot of variety in the different projects that she works on and that there are always opportunities to contribute to the work of SCDD. Ms. Hardin enjoys talking to advocates and learning about the different issues that are important to them. Ms. Hardin hopes that by working with self-advocates to create presentations, papers, articles and events, that she can give them the tools and resources to advocate for themselves and others.

Ms. Hardin is amazed that there is a council on developmental disabilities in each state and territory in the United States. **(Continue on Page 4: “SCDD Self-Advocacy Role”)**



## **(Continued from Page 3: “SCDD Self-Advocacy Role”)**

It is neat to learn from other state councils on developmental disabilities to figure out if there are any best practices that would work in California.

An example of this is the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) started hosting monthly national self-advocacy chats focused on topics that are important to people with I/DD near the end of last year. After attending one of them, Ms. Hardin put together a project proposal for the California Statewide Self-Advocacy Chats, which has increased the number of self-advocates and community members that know about SCDD.

Ms. Hardin thinks that one of the awesome things about SCDD is that when a problem or an issue comes up (like wildfires, mass shootings, COVID-19) SCDD staff work together to figure out what the needs of a community is and work collaboratively with each other and other agencies/organizations to help address those needs (like distributing PPE and Go Kits or putting together trainings/conferences).

It is important for self-advocates to know that you have a voice, you matter, and you can make a difference in your life and for others. An important step in having your voice heard is by connecting with your local Regional Office of SCDD for upcoming events, resources and information. You can also sign-up to be on our mailing list for up-to-date information about what is happening in California and nationally.

The future of self-advocacy in California is promising. There has been a lot of positive changes in the recent years with adoption of the Employment First Policy, the start of the Self-Determination Program, efforts to transition people from developmental centers to community living settings, and the recent mainstreaming of tools like Zoom. Ms. Hardin is confident that self-advocates in California (and across the country and even the world) can meet the challenges and work together to find solutions to problems and barriers.



## Public Transportation Tips

**By Matthew Lagrand, SCDD SSAN Representative**

Family has been important in developing self advocacy skills. I have learned a lot about self-advocacy from my dad. My dad taught me to use public transportation when I need to go places in town. He and I would go places using public transportation.

Since I do not drive, public transportation is an important tool that helps me to get to places on my own, independently. Before I learned how to use public transportation, someone would have to drive me there.

### Tips:

- Sit near the driver
- Let the driver know what stop you are getting off at
- Look both ways when crossing the street to get to a bus stop
- Wear bright colors when traveling at night
- When taking the train, you can sit anywhere you want to
- Wear a face covering when appropriate
- Practice social distancing when appropriate
- No food or drink on the bus

Public transportation helps me travel to different parts of California and even to other states to visit family and friends.

### SSAN Members

- Nathaniel Florez – North Coast
- Teresa Moshier – North State
- Lisa Cooley – Sacramento
- Ellen Sweigert – 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 Fouste – San Bernardino
- Paul Mansell – San Diego Imperial
- Desiree Boykin – ARCA
- Russell Rawlings – 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
- Matthew Lagrand – SCDD



## An Interview with Morag Longmire, my Service Coordinator!

By Teresa Moshier, North State Regional SSAN Representative



I appreciate all the work that my Service Coordinator does to help me be successful and wanted to ask her about her job. Morag Longmire has worked for Far Northern Regional Center for over 21 years and has had quite a journey!

Ms. Longmire graduated from Chico State in 1995. After traveling around Europe for a few months, she returned to Chico and started working for the Arc of Butte County in 1996. As an Independent Living Services (ILS) worker,

Ms. Longmire provided ILS to adults with developmental disabilities and was my ILS worker for about 1 ½ years. While at the Arc of Butte County, Ms. Longmire worked in the day program and was the Parenting and ILS Coordinator before she was hired at Far Northern Regional Center.

Ms. Longmire's favorite part about being a Service Coordinator is working with people and supporting them in developing goals and working towards accomplishing them. She enjoys the learning about the different life experiences of the people she works with and supports and the fact that every day is a little different. Ms. Longmire has a caseload of 81 people.

The pandemic has been a bit of an adventure for regional centers and staff has had to learn and adapt to manage their jobs and continue to support people and families. FNRC staff has learned to work remotely, but without the support of the Office Assistants, it would have been much harder. Ms. Longmire appreciates the dedication of FNRC IT department and the fact that all the employees have supported each other during these times. The good news is Far Northern Regional Center staff have returned to the office on June 21, 2021 and the "normalcy" is a great feeling. Although they have lots of COVID-19 protocols in the office.

I feel Morag Longmire is very helpful. I remember how helpful she was as my ILS Worker and appreciated working closely with her. I even remember a pasta salad she taught me to make. She is very reliable and has always been there for me. Morag is important to me and we go way back!





## My Work Experience from the Last 10 Years at UCD MIND Institute

**By Robert Levy**, UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD SSAN Representative

When I first started on Wednesday, April 27, 2011 I was an unpaid CEDD staff intern as a volunteer, now I am currently a paid staff. When I first started out at the UCD MIND Institute UCEDD I did not know how to do my job duties. My supervisor Steve Ruder has shown me how to do my job duties and showed me how to do presentations and become part of SSAN and other self-advocacy groups. He even showed me how to present and became a self-advocate and helped me develop my leadership skills. I have presented at the state Capitol for Capitol Action Day, I even presented for our nation's capital at the Association University's Center on Disabilities conference. I also testified and met with my national and state legislatures and their staff members to support the bills by explaining to them why those bills should become law for other people with disabilities to have a productive life. Some of the bills I have supported were Employment First and Self Determination services that both became law in 2013. I have been advocating for eliminating subminimum wage since 2017 and I am supporting the current bill SB639.

Now I have developed some leadership skills. I became the chair for the Newsletter/Communication work group committee in 2015. I just became an officer for SSAN as a Secretary. Next year when the SSAN group members have elections I would like to run again for either Vice Chair or Chair for SSAN. Being in a Leadership role has helped me to build on leadership skills to have my work resume.

When COVID hit I learned how to use new technology like how to use zoom to attend meetings and how to use the otter recording system by getting information from upcoming conferences or webinars that I will need in the future for my personal use.

The other thing I learned is how to use Qualtrics self evals forms to get online data from either the UCD Davis MIND Institute UCEDD for their training workshops and their conference trainings and workshops. It is great that both SCDD and SSAN also use Qualtrics to collect survey information on who is attending meetings and trainings, since I am already familiar with the process. Luckily, if I have questions, I can always ask for help.

Since I have been working from home over a year now, I have been learning a lot of new ways to do my job. It will be interesting to see how my job changes as more work comes once we all meet back in person once the COVID pandemic ends.

As I work on my next decade of employment at the UCD MIND Institute UCEDD I'd like to continue working on my self-advocacy work for the UCD MIND Institute UCEDD and for the community too.



## The Role of Support in Independence

By Julie Gaona, Los Angeles Regional SSAN Representative

Independence is important for all people in general.

Unfortunately, sometimes the people who have developmental disabilities are not raised or looked at that way. Self-advocates and people that support them to be independent should advocate for their independence. Parents play a big part of their child being independent. Unfortunately, fear, lack of knowledge and resources to help their child with developmental disabilities can keep children with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) from being independent.

There needs to be more advocacy promoting independence for people with I/DD to have independence. An example of this would be presentations in schools, day programs, etc. My husband and I give presentations every year to parent groups that have children with developmental disabilities. We talk about our life story and how we became independent. The parents learn a lot from our presentation. We open their eyes about how their child can be independent. I feel if the self-advocates do more presentations like this from different disabilities and points of view that we can change people's lives in a positive way. Sometimes, self-advocates are so focused on advocating for their own needs that they forget the importance of educating others. We need to focus on the youth to help us be better advocates as well.

The parents that support their child with I/DD in a positive way must be advocating to the other parents the importance of their child being independent. My mother, husband, and I did a presentation for a group called Tiger.

**(Continue on Page 9: "Role of Support")**

### 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](http://www.scdd.ca.gov) under the "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**



# VOICES of SSAN

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## (Continued from Page 8: “Role of Support”)

Tiger supports parents that have children with I/DD. My mother told the parents it's important to have meetings with each other. The reason why is to discuss different techniques they use when advocating to make their child's life more independent. Another benefit of parent groups and sharing stories is that it allows for the parents to support each other. By working together, parents can change policies that are there to stop children from being independent. This collaboration really helps change the barriers their children face to be independent.

The caregivers need to understand they are also part of developing independence in people with I/DD. People with I/DD who are raised to be independent, can still get ignored by the caregivers. This is a problem. Caregivers that are taking care of the people who need them, need to respect their wants and wishes to be independent. People with I/DD must believe in themselves, so they don't get left behind and are able to be independent. Today, there is more opportunity for children to be mainstreamed in public schools. People with I/DD must be educated to know that it is possible, that they are able to be mainstreamed. In the world we live in today, there is a lot of technology that can help a person with I/DD be independent without being judged.

## 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

Self-Determination is LIVE in California. Check out the [DDS Self-Determination Newsletter](#) for the latest on California's Self-Determination Program. Talk to your service coordinator to learn more.



## Social Justice and the Disability Experience

By Paul Mansell, San Diego Regional SSAN Representative

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.”

—Bobby Kennedy

When I think about what self-advocacy means, I am struck by many different definitions and ideas, but a common theme is the call for social justice for people with disabilities. Many different topics fall within social justice. All having the common theme that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and have access to the services and supports needed to live. Social justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. Social justice issues include tolerance and acceptance, equality, voting rights, climate/environmental justice, affordable, accessible and integrated housing, access to adequate healthcare, racial/ethnic injustice, income/wealth gap, gun violence, education and economic opportunity, hunger, and food insecurity.

There are four interrelated principles of social justice: equity, access, participation and rights. Recent media attention around interactions between police officers and people of color (some of which resulted in death) Breonna Taylor, Trayvon Martin, and George Floyd to name a few, has meant that social justice relates to calls for reform within the criminal justice system.

It is not enough to talk about Social Justice, it is time to act through thought, word, and deed. We need to study the issues and identify the problems. Come together, join up with open minded people, develop allies and partners, and organize. We need to brainstorm, formulate solutions, set goals, develop action plans, and take responsibility. We need to take bold steps--write articles for newsletters and newspapers, contact governmental officials, attend meetings and rallies, testify, make in person visits, working in campaigns, and vote.

Advancing Social Justice is at the heart of Self-Advocacy and working together, the disabled community can make it happen.

Check out my new [Blog on Self-Advocacy](#)



# VOICES of SSAN

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## Interview: Far Northern Regional Center

By Teresa Moshier, North State Regional SSAN Representative



Far Northern  
Regional Center



In order to learn more about what Regional Center staff do, I reached out to Melissa Gruhler, the Executive Director at Far Northern Regional Center. Melissa has been the Executive Director at Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) Ms. Gruhler has worked in many different roles at FNRC from Service Coordinator, Supervising Service Coordinator, Case Management Supervisor and Associate Director of Client Services, before becoming the Executive Director in July of 2019.

### Where did you work before FNRC?

Prior to starting at Far Northern Regional Center, I worked at a SMART Center – at the time it was called Private Industry Council, for a couple years and prior to that, I provided Independent Living Services (ILS) for adults with developmental disabilities in the State of Washington. In the early 90's I worked in a residential facility for emotionally disturbed children between the age of 6-13. Other positions in my early adulthood including cashiering, waitressing, and office work.

### What is your favorite part of being the Executive Director of Far Northern Regional Center?

Every day is a new day! My favorite part is being involved in upcoming programs and services. I enjoy launching new services and being involved in seeing them grow. Since I've been working at Far Northern Regional Center for almost 26 years and through all my positions, I've watched progress and have watched people blossom. I enjoy watching people reach their goals. I am appreciative of the work that FNRC staff does to support 8,300 people with developmental disabilities and their families (as of May 31, 2021).

### How has Covid-19 changed the way FNRC operates?

As of March 2020, most of the employees at Far Northern Regional Center were working remotely out of their homes. Recently our staff have returned to the office. We have learned that remote working can work and has many benefits, however, relationships have changed. Without face-to-face connection, there is an inability to make in-depth relationships. On June 11, 2021 Far Northern Regional Center opened the lobby doors in their Chico Office and on June 21, 2021, they opened the lobby in their Redding Office. Appointments are being requested for scheduling meeting with staff and safety protocols are in place in all common areas, including mask requirements.

### Where would you like to go for a vacation?

It's not where I want to go, it's who I want to spend it with! Whether it's at home, in Redding or anywhere in the state, I want to spend it with my family!



# VOICES of SSAN

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## Kudos Corner

By Wesley Witherspoon

I would like to give kudos to Daniel Fouste, who represents San Bernardino on SSAN. Daniel has been a member of SSAN for 5 years.

The thing I like about Daniel is that he is honest, persistent in his efforts to reach his goals, and always has a positive attitude. Daniel is committed to being an active participant of SSAN and has worked closely with the SCDD San Bernardino Regional Office to do outreach and trainings in the community. No matter how busy Daniel may be, he always makes time for his family and friends.

Daniel brings a valuable insight and perspective to SSAN and how to advocate for and include people with disabilities into activities. Daniel is not just great at advocating for himself: he advocates for other people with disabilities as well. Kudos to you Daniel!

## Community Resources

- Check out the State Council on Developmental Disabilities' [Series of Informational Videos on COVID—19](#) featuring people with disabilities on Youtube.
- [SCDD Plain Language Vaccine FAQ](#)
- Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) [Regional Center COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [My Turn CA](#) is can help you find a vaccine clinic near you
- [Vaccine Finder](#) helps you find a vaccine site across the USA
- The Social Security Administration (SSA) says [COVID—19 Stimulus Checks Won't Affect Your Benefits](#).
- Talk to your doctor to figure out which vaccine is best for you
- Need a ride to an appointment? Ride share companies can help

## SAVE THE DATES

Disability Rights California



Events and Trainings:

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

**Check with your Local Regional Center for Local Self-Advocacy Trainings/Events.**

CalABLE



News and Trainings:

<https://bit.ly/3lGuo46>

**Contact your SCDD Regional Office for:**

- upcoming trainings
- local self-advocacy meetings
- emergency preparedness resources for you and your family.

**Plain Language COVID—19 Resources Available on:**  
[SCDD Website](#)

**Register for the Monthly [California Statewide Self-Advocacy Chats](#) on Zoo**

**[Social Security Administration Tips to Keep Information Safe](#)**





## Voices of SSAN Newsletter Article Tips

**Audience:** Keep in mind that “Voices of SSAN” is shared with people across California. Try to write articles that would interest the statewide disability community.

**Purpose:** Is the article a human-interest story or an issues story? If it is a human-interest story, can you tie it back to an issue or larger regional or statewide problem?

### Helpful Tips:

- Tie your article back to the Mission/Vision/Purpose of SSAN
- Write articles about systems change (city/county/regional/statewide) problems
- Limit individual advocacy articles
- When Interviewing people, tie questions back to systems change advocacy, SCDD State Plan and SSAN
- Stay away from writing about personal details of an individual

**Types of Articles:** Articles in “Voices of SSAN” should be related to the SCDD State Plan. Here are some topic areas covered under the SCDD State Plan:

- Self-Determination
- Employment
- Housing
- Health and Safety
- Transportation and other Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS)

### Key Parts of Articles:

- Title
- Author (Your Name)
- Introduction: Tie the article back to SSAN
- Evidence or Support: 1-3 paragraphs
- Closing: Tie it back to SSAN

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**SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 7**  
**Information Item**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Social Justice and Disability***

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In a continuation of past discussions on the topic of social justice, the SSAN Officers have asked for a presentation on the topic at the September meeting. The continued rise and frequency of crimes against minority groups and continued civil unrest (protests and calls for action/change) in response to interactions between law enforcement and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and/or people with disabilities, has left many feeling uneasy.

The Arc of California Public Policy Director, Teresa Anderson will provide SSAN members with an introductory presentation on Social Justice and Disability.

The SSAN Officers request that both SSAN members and members of the public approach this conversation with an open mind and a willingness to listen to others.

In preparation for the presentation during the SSAN meeting, consider checking out these ARC Social Justice Resources:

- [Advocacy and Community Organizing Justice and Equity](#)
- [Building Power for Disability Justice](#)
- [Engaging in an Era of Police Reform](#)

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**SEPTEMBER 8, 2021**  
**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 8**  
**Information Item**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Planning for December 2021***

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The SSAN Chair will lead the group in a discussion about ideas for the December 2021 meeting and members will have the opportunity to complete meeting evaluations for the September 2021 meeting.

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