

# I SPEAK

**Independence · Success · Power · Education · Advocacy · Knowledge**

A Self-Advocacy Newsletter Brought to You by Self-Advocates and SCDD San Diego Imperial

**Summer 2021**



## Going Back to Work During COVID-19

Hello Readers,

My Name is Alison Portner and I work at Marshalls in El Cajon. When I go to work, the first thing I do is go through the front door and do a health check. I hand over my self-health assessment form to one of the employees and then I take my temperature with a thermometer. Every day, prior to work, I fill out my self-health assessment form at home.

In May during the COVID-19 pandemic, one of my job duties was to clean and disinfect all the shopping carts. That part of my job has now been eliminated. As a store cleaner, I still collect and clean the carts using a product named “Vindicator” which is a special spray that’s supplied by my employer. I wipe each cart entirely including the seat where the baby or toddler sits.

At the store entrance there is a hand sanitizer and wipe station for customers to either wipe down the carts themselves or to clean their hands using hand sanitizer. Every employee at Marshalls always wears a mask.

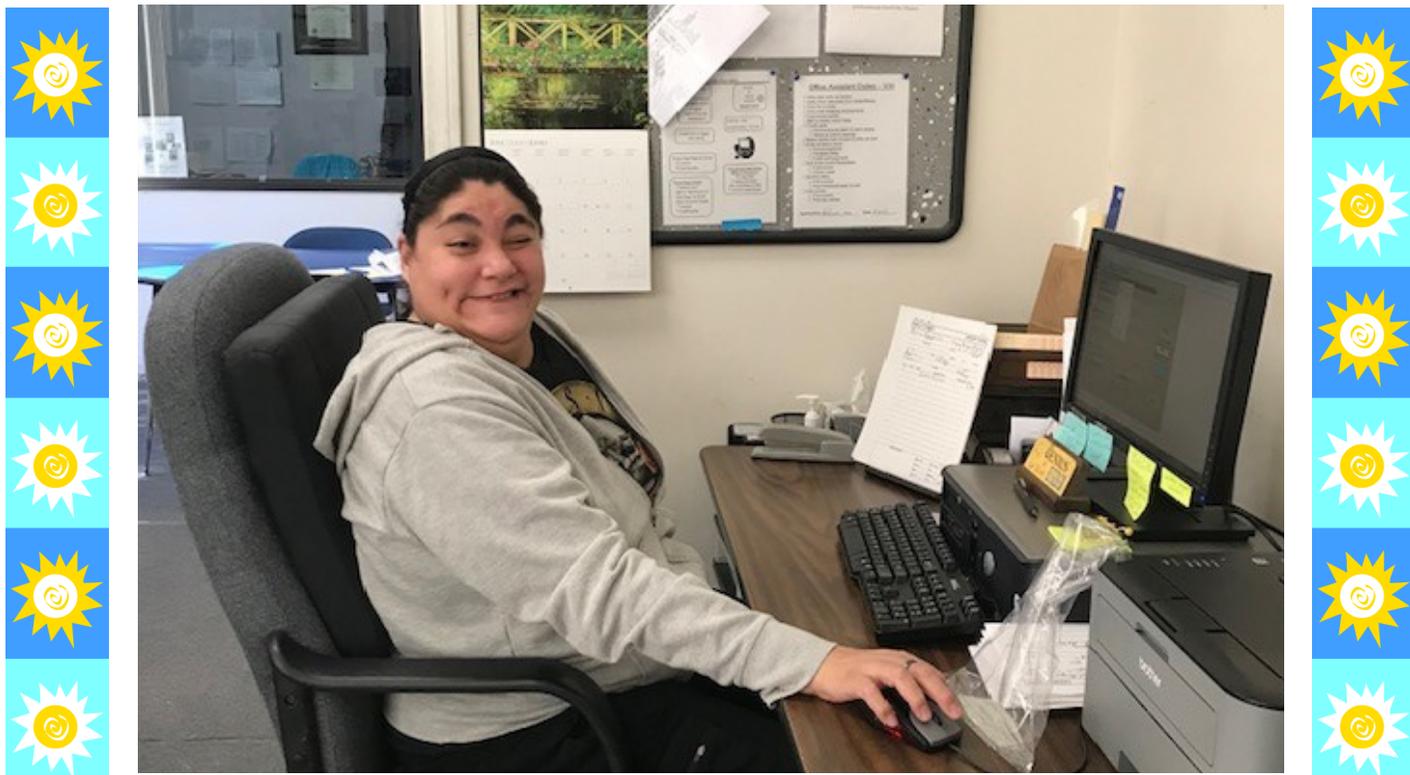


If a customer doesn’t have a mask the greeter will offer a disposable one.

Once the mask wearing mandate is over everyone including management, associates and customers won’t have to wear masks anymore unless they are unvaccinated.

Won’t that be nice!

For current guidance regarding COVID-19, check the following national and local government web-sites: [Centers for Disease Control](#), [State of California](#), [San Diego County](#), [Imperial County](#)



## **Viri Salgado, SCDD San Diego Imperial's Intern**

Interviewed by Zach Hill

Hello my name is Viri. I am currently getting paid as a part-time intern with the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD). I found out about the internship through Debbie Marshall (Advocate) and Mary Ellen Stives (Manager) of the SCDD San Diego Imperial Office. I started my internship in March 2021.

My job title is *Information and Outreach Intern*. I like my internship a lot. There was no certificate, degree, or training required before I started the internship. However, I decided to study material on creating accessible documents and learning more about disability rights in California so that I can be successful.

A normal day for me is working with self-advocates, staff, and group members to develop leadership skills. We do this by educating ourselves and others through conversations, projects, presentations, and self-discovery.

I like to offer suggestions for what the group could be working on as they learn about leadership, define who they are as a group, and plan new team projects.

I want to sharpen my leadership skills and expand my knowledge to advocate for others. I want to share my story about the adversities and triumphs I have experienced in my life as an individual with a disability in the hope it will inspire others to pursue their desires and aspirations.

I want to encourage other self-advocates to share their stories and learn about their needs so we can build a society of inclusion and safety. I want to look for ways that other people with disabilities can reach their full potential.



# JUNETEENTH CELEBRATING FREEDOM

## Juneteenth Celebration

by Ramon Golder

Juneteenth, a holiday usually held on the third Saturday in June, is a celebration and commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19<sup>th</sup> of 1865, Federal Troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved people (and all Texans) of their emancipation.

The celebration of Juneteenth occurs in its birthplace every year in Galveston, but it is also celebrated all around the United States. On June 17, 2021, Juneteenth became a U.S. federal holiday.

What does Juneteenth mean to me? It helped me learn about my background and how Black enslaved people became free. I am glad that Juneteenth is a Federal holiday. Now I can celebrate a Black holiday. A lot of people should take the time to learn about their backgrounds and their family trees.

Join the *I Speak* newsletter team. This is an opportunity for readers such as yourself to share your ideas and stories or support self-advocates to contribute to the newsletter. *If you would like to join the team, please contact Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232 or [debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov)*



# ADA 31



## Americans with Disabilities Act

Celebrate the ADA! July 26, 2021

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990, by President George H.W. Bush. The ADA is one of America's most comprehensive pieces of civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life--to enjoy employment opportunities, to purchase goods and services, and to participate in State and local government programs and services. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin--and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973--the ADA is an "equal opportunity" law for people with disabilities.

Source: [ada.gov](http://ada.gov)

Explore: [8 Ways in Which the ADA Changed Everyone's Lives](#) and [Susan Madison Talks about the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)





## **Social Justice and the Disability Experience**

by Paul Mansell

*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.*

—Robert F. “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 have 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, work in campaigns, and vote.

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

## Going Back to the Movies

by Peter Salgado



This is a picture of me at a movie theater. I decided to write about what it is like to return to the movie theater during a pandemic. Well, it looks a lot different everywhere in the movie theater. There are hand sanitizer dispensers and seat wipes to wipe down your seats where you sit. Ushers recommend you buy your movie tickets online, but they are now accepting in-person ticket purchases.

When they first opened the only option was to buy online tickets including your snacks. If you plan to go, I recommend you go during the week instead of the weekend to avoid big crowds. If you get to your seat 20 minutes

before the movie starts you can play an online car racing game against other people online and share your high scores. Its free and you play along by downloading a free app. The movie I went to see was Cruella with Emma Stone. It was a good movie.

Because I have been vaccinated, I feel safe going to the movie theater with caution.

## Looking Forward to Life After the Pandemic

by Adrian Smith

During the pandemic, I couldn't hang out with friends, go to the movies, or work. I had to use Zoom to get work updates and for different interactive classes. I used Facebook messenger to keep in contact with friends. I am a little apprehensive, but excited, about some of the restrictions being lifted. I can get back to some "normal" life and enjoy some of the activities I did prior to the pandemic.



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## AWO: The Reopening

by Natalie Jackson

Arms Wide Open (AWO) is a dance, music, and theatre arts program in San Diego which was established in 2008 and is located in El Cajon. This organization has made a huge impact in the community for people with disabilities.

AWO is well-known for their annual musical productions and community performances. They offer a variety of classes for special needs kids and adults like Hip Hop, Jazz, Contemporary, Swing, and Line Dancing, Musical Theatre, Acting, and much more.

AWO is currently open for everyone who is cast for the live musical show *Moana Jr.* this summer. Rehearsals have been ongoing and are moving really well. Tickets are currently on sale for the in-house performance in August.

Dance classes are open for everyone who is already registered and vaccinated or unvaccinated young adults with disabilities.

AWO has been an important part of my life from when I was in a high school theater club starting at 15 years old. Through the challenging and devastating times in my life, Arms Wide Open and having an acting career have been my passions.

[Learn more about Arms Wide Open](#)

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### Peanut Butter & Banana Sandwich

made by Demra Henderson

#### Ingredients:

- ◇ 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- ◇ 1 banana
- ◇ 2 slices of bread

#### Utensils:

- ◇ Butter knife
- ◇ Plate or paper towel

#### To prepare:

- ◇ Place bread slices on plate or paper towel
- ◇ Peel and then cut the banana into small slices
- ◇ Spread peanut butter on 1 slice of bread
- ◇ Place sliced banana on top of the peanut butter evenly
- ◇ Place the other slice of bread on top of the banana
- ◇ Enjoy!





## Food Jokes

by Zach Hill

I am writing food jokes because I like to make people laugh and laughing can put you in a good mood.

- What do you call a fake noodle?  
*An impasta*
- When potatoes have babies, what are they called?  
*Tater tots*
- Wanna hear a joke about pizza?  
Never mind, it's too *cheesy*
- What is a tree's favorite soda?  
*Rootbeer*
- Which Dessert is perfect for eating in bed?  
*Sheet cake*
- What happened after an explosion at a French cheese factory?  
All that was left was "*de Brie*"



## AMC Reopening in 2021

by Alex Tenorio

It was so exciting to hear the good news that I would go back to work in March 2021. I needed something normal in my life. I have been working for AMC Theaters since 2017, but they have been closed because of the pandemic. I like working with them. I like meeting people, but I also get free movies and popcorn.

Things have changed at AMC. We are working at only 50% capacity. You can pay with cash to get your tickets, but to get food, you need to use a gift card or credit card. When you get your food, do not forget to ask for condiments and napkins. There are no refills of popcorn or sodas and no outside food is allowed. We have a bar and yes, we are open. You need to be 21 years old with an ID.

We have safety in mind. You need to keep your mask on in the theater all the time. If you are eating, you can take it off. We clean the bathrooms every 15 minutes. So far, we are doing good.

We opened two movies this month. I just hope we will stay open for more than two months this time. In 2020, I worked only three months—the rest of the year I was on forced vacation. I had a lot of time on my hands, so I wrote a book and had fun with my family.

*"It ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." – Rocky Balboa*



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# State Council on Developmental Disabilities Presents:

## Fraud & Scams in the Time of Covid-19: How to Prevent Them from Happening to YOU!

Attempts at fraud and scams are up!

Are you a person with a disability or a family-member who wants to know more about this risk, and how to prevent becoming a victim of fraud or scams?

Please join us for this short, informative training.

Offered at two dates and times, via Zoom. CHOOSE ONE:

August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 1:00PM – 2:00PM

August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 4:00PM – 5:00PM



**Zoom meeting info:**

**(Please allow extra time to register for the meeting when you log in)**

Link to register for the meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUscuiqrzMsG9NLtHnKOl4n08B3ey0\\_r7mG](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUscuiqrzMsG9NLtHnKOl4n08B3ey0_r7mG)

Meeting ID: 811 5121 8617

Passcode: 788295

Dial in number:

888 475 4499 US Toll-free

For information or questions call Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232 or email [debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov)



# Let's Get Prepared

People with disabilities and self-advocates are invited to attend SCDD's virtual events on Zoom to learn about a variety of preparedness topics and share resources.

▶ August 3 at 2:00 (General Disaster Preparedness)

▶ August 10 at 2:00 (Home Fires)

▶ August 17 at 2:00 (Wildfires)

▶ August 24 at 2:00 (Power Outages & Extreme Heat)

▶ August 31 at 2:00 (Earthquakes)

▶ September 7 at 2:00 (Review & Preparedness Kits)

**Zoom meeting info (Please allow extra time for registration):**

[zoom.us/j/91869393776?pwd=M3RKR3FudVZwYVBISHVuN0Nqc2ZrZz09](https://zoom.us/j/91869393776?pwd=M3RKR3FudVZwYVBISHVuN0Nqc2ZrZz09)

**Meeting ID: 918 6939 3776**

**Passcode: 190336**

**Dial in number (US toll-free):**

**888 475 4499 or 877 853 5257**

**For information or questions  
call Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232  
or email [debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov)**



**American Red Cross**  
Southern California Region