

I SPEAK

· INDEPENDENCE · SUCCESS · POWER ·
· EDUCATION · ADVOCACY · KNOWLEDGE ·

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

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

My Independence

by Nora Parker

I was just 21 years old when I took a step towards independence by getting my own place to live. It was a tremendous accomplishment for me, especially being a young adult with Cerebral Palsy!

I was excited to get this far since no one believed I could ever be on my own.

The feel of excitement began to wear off and was soon replaced with fear. "How is this going to work?" I began to think about how I needed to get food from the grocery store, my apartment cleaned, and my laundry done.

The second step towards independence was my education. I enrolled in Grossmont College. During college, I met many other people with diverse disabilities.

At Grossmont, I was informed about IHSS (In-Home Supportive Services). I set up an interview with IHSS and began using their services to help me in my journey towards independence. This was the first time I used networking to solve an issue.



Another time networking helped me was when some friends helped me locate an affordable apartment. And, although my dad helped me get Social Security Income (SSI), I continued being independent no matter what.

The dream to live independently is a dream many young adults seek to achieve. Courage is needed to reach this goal. Many people look only at the outside of a person. But my cerebral palsy does not define me! It does not have to be a barrier in setting personal goals.

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



GROWTH

Growth in Self-Advocacy

by Peter Salgado

Before the pandemic, I didn't know what self-advocacy meant. Thanks to my SDRC Coordinator, Tanya Hudson, I connected with Debbie Marshall from San Diego Imperial Office of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD).

SCDD hosts self-advocacy groups on Zoom (an online video meeting platform). I started attending the Zoom meetings. In the groups, I learned how to become more independent by cooking for myself, I watched movies about people with disabilities, and I learned leadership skills. I also learned how to advocate for myself and be more confident in decision-making.

My growth in self-advocacy led me to get the Richard H. Sandberg Award for Outstanding Accomplishments from United Cerebral Palsy. I got another award from Project SAFEE through SCDD for valuable advocacy, peer leadership, and providing emergency education in the community.

I felt honored in receiving these two awards because I wasn't expecting to receive them. I was just coming to the groups to advocate for myself and learn how to be a leader. Now that I received these awards, I want to continue my leadership skills and teach others how to be leaders and advocate for themselves.

How Growth and Self-Advocacy Changed My Life

by Cali Williams

When I was younger, I learned a lot from my family and friends. They taught me how to step outside my comfort zone. I overcame my shyness and learned how to grow up in the real world. I learned how to speak out and use my voice to be heard. I learned how to let other people know that we matter and they don't need to be afraid of us.

What I learned in the past got me to where I am now. I know that standing up for what I believe in will make me stronger. Learning about self-advocacy gives me another perspective. Self-advocacy adds to everything that I've learned so far.

Self-advocacy has shown me that it's okay to ask for help. It is important to be flexible and accept change. Growing up and progressing is an important part of life. I have learned a deep love for self-advocacy. That love makes my self-advocacy even stronger!

Jam Sessions at “Banding Together”

by Clark Gurley

Hi, my name is Clark Gurley. Jam Session is a music therapy program that I go to at “Banding Together.”

I have been in this program for seven years. I always have fun there. We sing a lot and do drum circles. There are local artists that come in and sing for us. Everybody is dancing there and we always have a BLAST!

Jam Session helps me and others with socialization and a feeling of belonging.

[More information about “Banding Together.”](#)



Above: Participants pose for a photo at a “Banding Together” Jam Session. Clark Gurley is on the right, wearing a black and white “Rock Star” t-shirt and a white mask.

Join the *I SPEAK* newsletter team!
Share your ideas and stories and support self-advocates by contributing to the newsletter.
If you would like to join the I SPEAK team, please contact Debbie Marshall at (619) 913-8232 or debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov

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College Class and Self-Advocacy

by Zach Hill

In Fall of 2020, I took a class called Techniques of Exercise Leadership. It is an Exercise Science class that I took online through San Diego Miramar College. San Diego Miramar College is part of San Diego Community College District.

In the class they taught communication skills, program design, teaching strategies and more.

When I was taking the class, I noticed the syllabus was incomplete. It didn't have the dates of when homework was due and when exams were going to be. This was important information that I needed. I decided to use my self-advocacy skills to get the information.

I emailed the teacher saying it would really help if you can tell me when the exams are going to be and when homework is due. That way, I will know what I need to turn in first and how much time I need for studying. It took a couple of emails for the teacher to reply, but when he did I got everything that I needed.

This experience was a good reminder that it is important to be a self-advocate in college. If you have a question or need help in school, make sure that you speak up!

Spring Fling

by Ramon Golder

On March 18th, I went to the Spring Fling Dance. It was organized by Therapeutic Recreation Services (TRS), which is part of San Diego's Park and Recreation Department. It was held at the Balboa Park Club.

I was really excited about going to a dance that was held early in the day.

The flyer said the Spring Fling was for people 16 years old and up. But when I got there, I felt uncomfortable because it seemed like there were only high school girls and boys there! I did not see any of my friends or peers my age. The only adults I saw were teachers and parents. I felt like I was the only person over 40 there.

Although it was uncomfortable, I survived. Next time, I will ask ahead of time if there will be people my age at an event.

[Find out more about TRS](#)



SAVE THE DATE

San Diego People First
Self-Advocacy Conference 2022

**"Self-Advocates
Moving Forward United"**

Friday, August 26 & Saturday, August 27
DoubleTree Hotel in Mission Valley

For more information:

Debbie Marshall

debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov

or Melissa Hough

meberg@sdsu.edu

(Subject to change depending on current
COVID-19 guidelines)

Gay PRIDE

by Jerome Williams

I like the San Diego PRIDE Parade because it includes everyone. This year it was held on July 16th in Hillcrest.

San Diego PRIDE has year-round programs, training, advocacy, and events to raise awareness about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities.

San Diego PRIDE's values are diversity, respect, honesty, integrity, accountability, and freedom of any bias. The PRIDE vision is a world free of prejudice and bias. I like that vision!

[Learn more about San Diego PRIDE!](#)



Thrift Stores and Your Old Goods

by James Stolerak



Here are some tips on what you can do with items that you don't need anymore. What can you do with them? You can donate what you have outgrown and other old items that you no longer use. You can donate to Goodwill, Father Joe's Villages, Salvation Army, and Auntie Helen's.

The items accepted are glassware, silverware, clothes, furniture, and electronics. Electronics can be donated to *Computers 2 Kids* and *San Diego Futures Foundation*. Donating will help you to keep your house clutter-free.

I would like to tell you what happens to your donations once they hit the store. They usually go through the donation centers to sort out stuff like glassware, metalware, black pants, jeans, furniture, and electronic items.

After the donations are checked in the back, they are placed on rolling racks to be put in the right place in the store.

I know about thrift stores because I used to work at one. My favorite thing to do was check through the books and movie shelves.

Finding your Vision

by Paul Mansell

The transition period of Self-Determination has many pieces—Orientation, Person-Centered Planning (PCP), Certification of the Individualized Budget, the Spending Plan, and the Individual Program Plan (IPP).

Within the pieces, there are sub-pieces. For example, one of the sub-pieces of PCP is Vision. It is the heart and soul of your Self-Determination Plan.

Because Vision is so important, let's define it. Try to be realistic but don't be confined by the status quo or caught up with what the system, family, friends, or peers tell you what your future should or should not look like. This is your Vision. No one has the right to tell you what it should be.

First, ask **who** would you like to accompany you in the future? It could be your family, your friends, that someone special in your life or a pet. They mean a lot to you, and their presence makes a difference in your life.

Your Vision is the future you would like to have and share with people important in your life. It would be the best of all possible worlds for you. It would be three to five years in the future. Not right now, but not too much down the road.

Ask **what** would be in your future? It could be school and work. It could include hobbies and recreation activities, or anything else you do for leisure.

Ask **where** your future would be? Would you move and relocate? Would you live at home with your family, in a group home, or would you live independently? Would you live by yourself or with someone else?

Ask yourself **how** you will make this happen? What supports, people, and benefits will you need to make this work? What would you do for money, healthcare, and transportation?

Ask yourself **why** this future means so much to you? What do your wants, needs, values, hopes, and dreams tell you? Talk to yourself, have a conversation, and come to an agreement.

In answering these questions, try to be clear as possible. The clearer your Vision, the easier it will be to line up supports, benefits, and resources.

Finally, consider what happens when you need to change your Vision? Life circumstances or changes in personal preference may make you change your Vision.

Let me share my experience to illustrate these points. When I graduated from college, I wanted to be an economist and work for a bank forecasting (attempting to predict the future of the economy). It was an ambitious goal, and that goal made me very excited.

Being an economist required a Ph.D., so I entered graduate school. However, because I couldn't handle the coursework, I had to change my Vision.

I went to another school for computer technology. I graduated from the program, but I discovered I was not productive enough to make it professionally. My Vision had to change.

I got into web design and development. But I couldn't code, so my Vision changed again.

Then I landed a job as a self-advocate, and I discovered my passion. This time I made a career out of it!

When I retire, my Vision will include both advocacy and website development. (I have discovered that, these days, I can design and develop websites without coding.)

Finding your Vision is not all that difficult if you answer the questions listed above. Once you have a nicely focused future, you and your circle of support can chart out a course to your Vision. It's fascinating and fun too!



Lemon Bars

by Demra Henderson

INGREDIENTS

For crust:

1 cup flour
1 cup powdered sugar
½ cup softened butter

For filling:

1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon flour
2 eggs
½ teaspoon baking powder
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel



Above: Demra gets ready to bake.

TO PREPARE

For crust:

In a bowl, combine flour, butter, and powdered sugar. Pat into a greased baking dish. Bake crust at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Then set aside.

For filling:

In a medium bowl, beat eggs, then add sugar, flour, baking powder, lemon juice and peel. Mix thoroughly, then pour over crust. Bake for 25 minutes until light golden brown. Dust with powdered sugar. Let cool, then enjoy!



Lanterman Act Q & A

by Adrian Smith

What is the Lanterman Act?

The Lanterman Act is a California Law that passed in 1969. It states that people with developmental disabilities have the right to receive services and supports they need to meet their needs and choices.

Why is it important?

The Lanterman Act is important because, without it, those of us with developmental disabilities would have difficulty speaking up and living more independently in today's society.

How does it affect you?

The Lanterman Act affects me because it allows me, an individual with developmental disabilities, to add my voice to the chorus of many who fight for freedoms and defend their rights.

Is the Lanterman Act in any other states?

No, it is strictly a California Act.

[More about the Lanterman Act](#)



Advocating for Library Jobs

by Nicole Brobeck



Above: Nicole Brobeck with State Librarian, Greg Lucas and service dog, Bailey

Hi, my name is Nicole Brobeck and I am a volunteer at the Mission Valley Library in Central San Diego County. I have been volunteering for seven years as the Children's Librarian Assistant. So far, I have worked alongside two Children's Librarians.

I primarily assist with weekly Storytime. I record attendance and prepare program material for the young patrons and their guardians.

One night before my weekly shift, I was informed that the State Librarian, Greg Lucas, would be our guest. He was on his Statewide library tour. I was really excited to meet a government official, especially one that works for all the libraries in California!

I picked out a nice outfit to wear with my favorite headband and made sure my service dog, Bailey, looked her best. I arrived just a few minutes after Mr. Lucas. He was introduced to the Branch Manager, Karen Reilly, and the Children's Librarian, Marika Jeffery.

During Storytime, he sat with me and Bailey on the outside patio. We listened to a Japanese tale about a fox. After Storytime, I asked Greg for a picture to remember the day.

Later, we discussed employment opportunities or programs to help persons with disabilities become librarians. Since there are no programs currently available, he made a note of the idea and stuck it in the breast pocket of his jacket.

When I got home, I excitedly shared the news with my mom and showed her the picture. She shared in my excitement.

A couple of days later, I told Mary Ellen Stives (Manager at San Diego Imperial SCDD). We serve on the Regional Advisory Committee or RAC. The RAC is an advocacy group of community members. It includes persons with disabilities, service providers, and other advocates.

Mary Ellen congratulated me for using my voice and encouraged me to continue speaking on issues that matter to me.



ARE YOU PREPARED?

Join us for a FREE virtual
Emergency Preparedness Training Series

Mark your calendars for these upcoming sessions:

Date	Time	Topic
June 10 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	General Preparedness
July 8 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Wildfires
August 12 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Power Outages/Heatwaves/Food Safety
September 9 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Earthquakes & Tsunamis
October 14 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Floods & Landslides
November 4 th	9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Home Fires

Get prepared before disaster strikes!

Registration Zoom Link:

https://bit.ly/ProjectSAFE_ARCTRAININGS

For more information, or if you need an accommodation to participate in these trainings contact:

Jennifer Lucas: jennifer.lucas@scdd.ca.gov

Debbie Marshall: debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov

In collaboration with:



**American
Red Cross**





SCDD Supported Self-Advocate Zoom Meetings

Monday

1st Monday of the Month – 1:00 p.m. – SDPF Conference Planning Meeting

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

Tuesday

11:00 p.m. – Cooking Prep

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

Wednesday

10:00 a.m. – Health and Wellness

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

4:00 p.m. – Afternoon at the Movies

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

Thursday

4th Thursday of the Month – 11:00 a.m. – I SPEAK Newsletter

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

Friday

1st Friday of the Month – 2:30 p.m. – Imperial Valley Self-Advocacy

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

3rd Friday of the Month – 2:00 p.m. – San Diego People First

[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

Additional trainings will be scheduled. Flyers will be sent out via email to let you know about them. Please contact **Debbie Marshall** to be added to the email list.

If you have questions or suggestions for future trainings, please email Debbie.Marshall@scdd.ca.gov or call **(619) 913-8232**