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Editor: Robert Levy

Contributors:

- Wesley Witherspoon
- Project SAFEE
- Paul Mansell
- Rebecca Donabed
- David Forderer
- Nicole Patterson

Preparing Emergencies

By Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children’s Hospital SSAN Representative



We live in a culture of emergencies. There are many types of emergencies: fires, earthquakes, pandemics, floods, active crime scene, medical, heat wave, blizzard, drought, volcanoes, tornadoes, windstorms, brush fires, avalanche, tsunamis, and ice storms. It is important to prepare for an emergency. We don’t know when an emergency will occur. Do you know what to do when you must leave your home? Preparing for an emergency can mean the difference between life and death. Do you have a First Aid kit? You can buy supplies for your First Aid Kit from discount stores. It is important to also include things like: your medication, clothes, food and water in your emergency kit, these are often things that people may not think about. Talk to your first responders such as fire fighters, police officers, and ambulance workers about how to survive in an emergency. Your local State Council on Developmental Disabilities office can be a good resource for education and training on emergency preparedness. I do a lot of trainings on emergency preparedness and other topics for my job, so you can always contact me if you want to learn more about emergency preparedness. Do you know where the shelters are located? What if the emergency occurs when you are working, shopping, or traveling? You can take a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) class as well. You can also sign up for emergency alerts. You can turn to TV or radio if you are having an emergency.



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





Justice, Tragedy, and Self-Advocacy

By Paul Mansell, San Diego Regional SSAN Representative

Justice, ethics, morality, the good life, and self-advocacy are linked. Justice is a founding principle of society that guides and shapes our ethics or sense of right and wrong, as well as our morality. Justice is about more than laws or doing the greatest good for the majority of people. To have a sense of justice, you are not only committed to treating people fairly and giving them their due, but you are also committed to giving others mercy when they make mistakes and offering them the chance to change. Justice is not black or white but can see a broad spectrum of gray. Justice is embodied in a nation's constitution, laws, policies, regulations, and institutions in the just state.

Self-advocacy has both personal and social meanings. Personal self-advocacy is individually speaking up for your rights and sharing your needs, concerns, hopes, and dreams with the people in your life. Social self-advocacy is the collective civil rights movement of people with developmental disabilities voicing their concerns to leaders in society to make systemic changes in their lives so that they may achieve their potential and be integrated into their community.

Just governments or "states" give citizens or people the highest potential to lead a happy and good life. People have a voice in the way our government works and while sharing in the state's wealth, goods, and resources. Just governments promote the community's general welfare, protect and defend when a community is in danger, maintain the community's peaceful order, and divide and distribute goods, services, resources, wealth, and property. Citizens or "the people" are connected to each other and are an important part of promoting a just state in order to increase the well-being and happiness of the community.

Ideally, a just state treats all its citizens equitably, promotes fairness and holds people accountable for their actions because no one is above the law, regardless of status or wealth. A just state makes sure that the following services are accessible to its citizens: education, transportation, food, water, utilities, healthcare, law enforcement, and housing, leaving much to individual initiative and industry.

People vary in abilities, situations, opportunities, and fortunes. The just state has the responsibility to support the needs of people who are marginalized and vulnerable. We self-advocates benefit from this entitlement, but in return we have a responsibility to help create and maintain peace.

People have freedom of choice to decide how we live without worrying that others will take away our voice or choice. People generally act to promote their self-interest but may be inspired to work to promote the well-being of a group as a whole. We have the strength, with the right support, to reach our goals. When Self-advocates unite and voice our needs and concerns, we can make meeting our needs a priority and help make society more just for all its citizens.

(Continue on page 4: "Justice")



(Continued from page 3: “Justice”)

I firmly believe that Self-Advocacy is part of a much bigger whole of a just and fair society. Self-advocacy embodies many of our rights, including freedom of speech, fairness when we are on trial or in a hearing, and the right to choose who we hang out with. It is important not to dismiss peoples’ concerns as not a problem or as whining/complaining. The concerns of people with disabilities deserve to be heard and listened to. At the very least, we deserve respect, to be listened to, and not to be discounted. Self-Advocacy is the civil rights movement of persons with developmental disabilities speaking up for themselves, advancing their cause to further policies that will better empower them to reach their potential in their community with needed support. All we want is to be treated fairly, given our due, and afforded dignity just like every other person. Is that too much to ask for?

We feel strong as self-advocates, but the news is full of many troubling topics – hate crimes, mass shootings, foreign wars, and the national divide. This is heartbreaking, causing frustration, anger, resentment, and grief. Often, we feel overwhelmed and unsure of how to help in situations of civil unrest or tragedy. I, for one, have stopped watching the news because I don’t want to be overwhelmed or feel hopeless with all the negative things happening or experience negative emotions.

It is more than enough that we put up with harassment, stigma, and prejudice directed at us for having disabilities: but to also feel helpless when there is so much injustice in the world, is too much. We must work hard to unite to end those forms of abuse. The time has come for others to end these tragedies. Enough is enough.

Disability Pride in the Park

By **Rebecca Donabed**, Sequoia Regional SSAN Representative



Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV) is planning the first ever Disability Pride event and is looking for partners to help support this first ever type of event celebrating the central valley disability community.

This event will have keynote speakers addressing important issues, cooking contests, food, music, arts and crafts, information booths and so much more. So, mark your calendars for October 22, 2022 and join us from 10 am to 4 pm in Fresno for a great time. If you can, or if you know of someone able to, consider becoming a sponsor of the event that is sure to be an empowering and inclusive event that celebrates everyone.

For more information, you can contact Susan Manuel at smanual@ricv.org.



Issue Spotlight: The Importance of the Disability Vote

By Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children's Hospital SSAN Representative



Voting is a very important issue as it is a way for people to tell law makers and elected officials about the issues that are important to them. There are a lot of different groups that meet to talk about voting issues. One of those groups is called [Disability Vote California](#) or Disability Vote

CA. We met with Independent Living Centers (ILC) representatives to discuss voting. Voting is beneficial because it expresses what you want. I enjoy collaborating with people across California as they work to make voting accessible for all who choose to. Voting processes are organized by each county. There are 58 counties in California, so the voting experience is different depending on the county that you live in. In the past, people with disabilities were excluded from voting. The California Secretary of State has a whole page on options for [Voters with Disabilities](#) where you can learn about all the different ways that California is working to make the voting process more inclusive. California has over 39 million people, so voting can be very complicated. People have so many different opinions when it comes to voting. You vote the way you want to. Please vote in the election, if you choose to.

SSAN Members

- Nathaniel Florez – North Coast
- Charles Nutt – 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
- Recruiting – San Bernardino
- Paul Mansell – San Diego Imperial
- Desiree Boykin – ARCA
- Recruiting – 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
- Maria Marquez – SCDD



How a Bill Becomes a Law

By David Forderer, Central Coast Regional SSAN Representative

A bill starts with an idea that someone brings to a legislative body. Then that idea is put into language that would help to inform policy makers if the bill becomes a law. Once the language is completed, then it is discussed with the author's staff to adjust for any changes that need to be made. Once that is completed, it is presented to the members of the legislative body of which the bill's author belongs. The body then assigns the bill's idea to the appropriate sub-committee of the body, which has the responsibility of making any adjustments to the language of the bill. From there they could add additional language (broadening or narrowing the bill's focus) which would make it more appealing.

It is then voted on to either move it out of the committee, to shelve it (put into suspension or hold area), to keep working on it or to kill the bill entirely because of lack of support.

In California it is presented to both the senate and the assembly houses for approval. If both houses approve the bill it then moves on to the governor's office for approval. If it is approved, it becomes law. The governor can also veto the law (disapprove of the law) which stops the bill's movement. Then it repeats the legislative process all over again. It then can go to a conference committee where additional changes can be made to appease the governor or other legislators.

Once these changes are made, it moves into what is known as "final passage". From there it moves onto the governor's office again for approval. He can do one of the following: sign it, veto it or ignore it. If they don't sign the bill it will become law after a period of 10-12 days.

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's past Newsletters, Annual Reports, and Meeting info, can be found at 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**

Check out the [SCDD YouTube Page](#) for stories from self-advocates, past meetings, and more!



DDS' CAC is RECRUITING!

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) provides advice to DDS on policies, programs, legislation, and regulations that affect the lives of Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

About the CAC:

- ☀ Fifteen (15) self-advocate members from all over California
- ☀ Meets at least four (4) times per year in Sacramento, or online with Zoom
- ☀ Members share information with their local self-advocacy organizations and bring
- ☀ input from those groups back to the CAC
- ☀ Transportation, hotel, meal, and facilitator costs (if needed) will be paid by DDS

If you would like to apply to be a CAC member, here is what you need to do:

- * Check the next page of the newsletter to see if we are recruiting from your regional center.
- * You must have an intellectual or developmental disability and received regional center services to apply.
- * You must be a member of a local self-advocacy group or other organization that serves or empowers people with developmental disabilities.
- * You **MUST** be nominated for membership by your local self-advocacy group or developmental disability organization.





The DDS CAC is currently recruiting members from the following regional centers:

- ☀️ Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)
- ☀️ East Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC)
- ☀️ Frank D Lanterman Regional Center (FDLRC)
- ☀️ Harbor Regional Center (HRC)
- ☀️ Inland Regional Center (RCRC)
- ☀️ North Los Angeles Regional Center (NLARC)
- ☀️ San Andreas Regional Center
- ☀️ Tri Counties Regional Center (TCRC)
- ☀️ Westside Regional Center (WRC)

Please note: Regional Center employees are not eligible for CAC membership.

Fill out the online application completely & submit it with your nomination letter at <https://www.dds.ca.gov/consumers/consumer-advisory-committee/>. If you're having trouble with the online form, use the contact information below to get help.



Celebrating Ten Years of SSAN: Members Reflect

“I’m grateful to the SSAN members for their willingness make your voices heard in the community. SSAN members are friendly and warm towards all members.”

– Desiree Boykin, ARCA SSAN Representative

“SSAN is celebrating its 10th anniversary. I have been a SSAN member for 7 years. SSAN has gone a long way to defining my identity. It gives me opportunities to practice my leadership, communication, and social skills. I love to write articles for its newsletter. It allows me to explore my understanding of Self-Advocacy and helps me grow in my appreciation of acceptance, tolerance, diversity, inclusion, and interconnectedness. It has expanded my appreciation for social justice and activism.”

– Paul Mansell, SSAN Vice-Chair, San Diego Regional SSAN Representative

“As we are in 2022 it hard to believe to that SSAN had just turned 10 this year. What a milestone year. As the 1st decade has closed for SSAN we have had a lot of staff and members. However, there are some founding members since it began 10 years ago. SSAN has helped to get a lot of bills signed into law. As self-advocate leaders we work hard to make sure that the work that we do makes things better for ourselves, as well as others who have I/DD and help them to have productive lives. So now that SSAN is heading for its 11th year, I look forward to working with staff and members of SSAN to keep doing the important work to improve the lives of people with I/DD, so they can feel included in their communities and have bright futures. So, happy 10th birthday SSAN.” – Robert Levy, SSAN Secretary UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD SSAN Representative

“I am just proud that it (SSAN) took off like it did. It was a seed that sprouted, like an experiment that went well! We keep doing good work for people with disabilities and can’t believe it has been ten years!” – Robert Balderama, North Valley Hills Regional SSAN Representative

“Ten years of SSAN means that more people with disabilities are continuing to develop their leadership skills in substantial and meaningful ways.”

– Lisa Cooley, Sacramento Regional SSAN Representative

“Over the last 10 years the Statewide Self-Advocacy (SSAN) has been an asset to the state of California because it has allowed a body of advocates from entities that deal with people with disabilities to come together as a voice. It has been an instrument for people to share information and get information to better the services and supports for people with disabilities in California. The evidence has shown over the last two years during the pandemic that SSAN has taken an important role to make sure that the word was getting out about vaccinations, CDC regulations, ways to get food and supplies that were needed, distributing personal protective equipment in their local areas, And being a support for each other. – Nicole Patterson, DDS SSAN Representative



Reflections on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

By Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD SSAN Representative



July 26th, 2022 will mark 32 years since the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) was signed into law on Thursday, July 26, 1990, by the late 41st US president George Herbert Walker Bush. The ADA has opened doors and opportunities for people with disabilities because we are able to have better access to employment, transportation services, public spaces and communication systems. People with disabilities are now able to go more places with the help of more accessible transportation services, that were not options for them before. This means that people with access and functional needs (AFN) are able to go to work and travel throughout their communities more freely, leading to their own independence thanks to adaptations on public transportation and the existence of curb cuts, ramps and accessible bathrooms. The need for advocacy is never done, but it is important to celebrate important advocacy and legislative achievements, so we know that we are making an impact. Thank you, all past or present self-advocates, for working on getting the ADA bill signed into law.



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Good News Corner

Here are some examples of websites that you can find uplifting news:

- [The Good News Network: California](#) for up to date information of interesting positive things happening.
- [Positive News](#) is a site that you can check out about what is happening around the world that is positive.
- [Good Good Good](#) shares really good news, not just feel good news.
- [Happy News](#) celebrates all that is good in the world.
- [Optimist Daily](#) is a site that shares solutions and good news from around the world.

Kudos Corner

By Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD SSAN Rep Kudos to Lisa Cooley! She has been a great Self-Advocate for the Sacramento Regional Office of the SCDD and a longstanding SSAN member since 2015. She was the State Council on Developmental Disabilities board member and is currently a Coordinated Future Planning Task Force Member for Alta Regional Center and member for the Community Advisory Committee for the Alta Regional Center. She is a Community Advisory Committee member for the UCD MIND Institute UCEDD where I work. Lisa is also currently a member of SSAN for the Employment First work group. I think that Lisa Cooley is a great Self-Advocate because she doesn't want to let her disabilities keep her from being active in the Sacramento region and advocating for people with disabilities. She also has done numerous presentations for our community and has written numerous testimony letters to our local and national legislators to get federal and state bills signed into law. Keep on trucking Lisa Cooley, by doing all the Self-Advocacy work in our community. Kudos to you Lisa Cooley!

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.



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Tips for Staying Positive in Trying Times

There is so much happening in our communities right now and at times it can feel over whelming. Here are some tips for keeping calm that we want to share with you:

- Listen to music: your favorite artist, or type of music
- Have a dance party and move around
- Try boxing or Thai Chi
- Talk to a friend or family member
- Mentor another advocate
- Write about how you are feeling or thinking
- Read and learn something new
- Go for a walk or jog outside: fresh air is good for you
- Check out a coffee/tea shop and people watch
- Volunteer for an issue that you care about
- Share your story/experiences with others
- Get plenty of rest to feel energized for the next day
- Try to eat healthy
- Practice Yoga/stretching or mindful meditation
- Know that you are not alone

Community Resources

- [SARTAC Zoom Meetings](#)
- [ARCA Regional Center COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [COVID–19 Stimulus Checks Won’t Affect Your Benefits](#)
- [DRC's Build Back Better Resources](#)
- [SSAN Youth Survey](#)
- [SSA Ticket to Work Tips to Open Your ABLÉ Account](#)
- **FEEDBACK WANTED:** [Assistive Tech Engagement Survey](#)
- [Office of Self-Determination Ombudsperson](#)

SAVE THE DATES

Disability Rights California



Events and Trainings:

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

**UC DAVIS
HEALTH**

**MIND
INSTITUTE**

[Summer Institute Registration](#)

**“We Belong: Preparing for
Community Life and
Fulfillment After Highschool”**

Date: August 3, 2022

CalABLE



News and Trainings:

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



Past Trainings:

[DO Network Training Library](#)

Plain Language COVID—19

Resources Available on:

[SCDD Website](#)

**Register for the Monthly
California Statewide Self-
Advocacy Chats on Zoom**