

I SPEAK

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

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

FALL/WINTER 2022-23

My Experience at the SDPF Conference

by Cali R. Williams



Above: Cali Williams, right, attends the SDPF Conference with Peter Salgado, Taylor Wiesner, and Nora Parker.

The San Diego People First (SDPF) Conference was held August 26th and 27th. It was their first conference since 2019. I thought it was perfect.

During the past year and a half, it was an honor to be a part of the planning team. Being a part of the team helped me believe in myself. It gave me a chance to be more independent and have the experience of being a leader.

At the Conference, I was able to be with my friends and see people in person whom I had only seen on Zoom during the past two years. Attending the conference allowed me to experience more independence than I have experienced in the past. I really liked it! Also, it was nice for my mom to see me doing things on my own.

This was the first self-advocacy conference I ever attended. There were a lot of ways for me to do things for myself. I was a presenter in several workshops and represented San Diego People First as an officer throughout the conference.

In my opinion, the food was very yummy. The workshops were informative and interesting. I really liked how the event was put together by the wonderful committee. Also, staying at the hotel made our experience cozy and comfortable.

Both my mother and I really enjoyed the conference and we would like to come back again. I would like to continue my passion and love for self-advocacy by representing SDPF and continuing to help and be a part of this amazing special Conference Planning Committee team.

Project SAFEE Workshop & Vision Board Experience

by Natalie Jackson

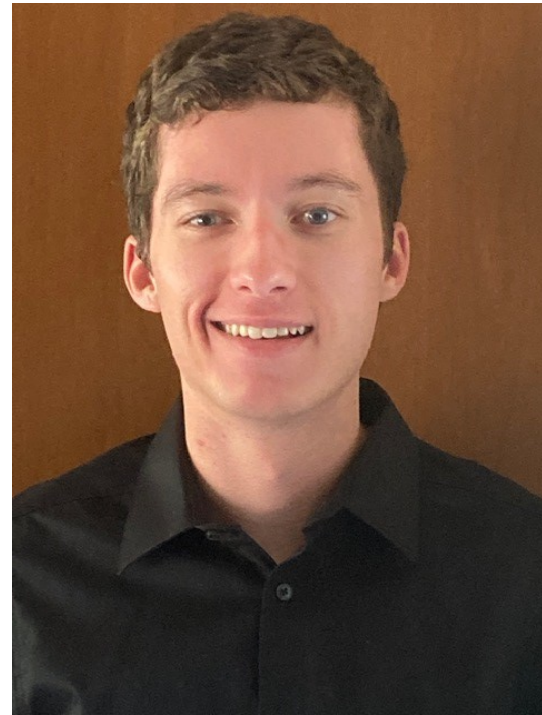
This year I participated in Project SAFEE and helped create a PowerPoint presentation on emergency preparedness and how to save lives. Our Project SAFEE team partnered with the American Red Cross to offer an online training series focused on different natural disasters. I really enjoyed creating the presentation with our team of self-advocates. We became good friends.

This training was also presented in person to more than 200 people at the recent San Diego People First (SDPF) Conference. As I prepared to present to the group and saw all the people in the audience, I got really nervous. To calm my nerves, I brought my fidget toy and pinpointed something in the room to focus on.

I joined SDPF's Conference Planning Committee and helped with several other subcommittees. I was also part of the Vision Board Committee. We worked on finding a theme and a layout for the vision boards. We also organized a schedule and made a list of supplies needed.

I started working on my vision board in my free time. When I completed five vision boards, I brought them to the conference for display.

It was an awesome experience to work in these groups and speak in public in front of all those people.



Presenting Emergency Preparedness Information to a Group

by Zach Hill

Peter Salgado, Debbie Marshall (from SCDD), and I did a virtual presentation on emergency preparedness for the San Diego Central County Parkinson's Support Group (SDCCPSG). The participants were older adults and all of them had mild or severe Parkinson's Disease.

We covered important tips such as adding emergency contacts to your phone. If an emergency happens, it is good to contact someone to let them know that you are safe and tell them your location. We also talked about preparing for an earthquake by making sure heavy items are secured so nothing can fall and hurt someone.

I really enjoyed presenting to SDCCPSG because they were focused on the information that we presented. The participants were asking questions which showed that they really enjoyed the presentation.

I really like doing these presentations because it involves communication. Practicing my communication skills helps me improve my advocacy. I've learned to tell people what I need and want.





Photo by Craig Adderley from Pexels

Journey to a Life Plan

by Peter Salgado

My name is Peter Salgado. I am a self-advocate going to college to study social science. My understanding of self-advocacy grew during the COVID-19 Pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, my San Diego Regional Center coordinator reached out and asked me if I wanted to join self-advocacy groups on Zoom. Because I wanted to become a better self-advocate, I said yes.

For the past two years, I have learned how to cook healthier and to take care of my mental and physical health. I learned what to do in case of an emergency. I learned to give presentations on different topics and how to advocate for myself and others.

Going to college was becoming difficult because my major was math. So, I decided to study a subject that could help me with my career search. I talked to my college counselor. I told her that I am learning so much in the self-advocacy groups that I figure I could use my self-advocacy skills to become a counselor.

I like helping other self-advocates learn about their rights and to encourage them to advocate for themselves. I want everyone who has a disability to be able to understand what self-advocacy is and make sure that they know their rights are protected by law.

I plan to study more about self-advocacy so I can teach others about how self-advocacy can make an important and positive impact on their lives. I want to finish Imperial Valley College in about a year and a half and start my path in self-advocacy.



What I Have Learned Going to Zoom Meetings

by Marie Kairuz

Hi, my name is Marie and I want to tell you about what I have learned on Zoom. Over the last two years, I have been going to Zoom Self-Advocacy meetings.

I have learned more about how to stay healthy. I can show people how I cook by doing cooking demonstrations. I really like to talk about how important it is to not eat too much sugar and salt so you can stay healthy.

I get to talk about self-advocacy and what my rights are and tell others how important it is to speak up. Zoom classes have given me a chance to show my leadership.

I also go to "Afternoon at the Movies" where we talk about movies or videos and having a disability.

I like going to all of the Zoom meetings because it helps me with my self-advocacy. And it helps others with their self-advocacy also.



Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.

Spreading the Word

by Clark Gurley

A few weeks ago, I went with Rissa Chavez, Gigi's Playhouse Site Manager, to do outreach for an event at GiGi's Playhouse San Diego. I went as the Ambassador. I want people to be aware of the program and what we do.

We handed out flyers in Pacific Beach and La Jolla. We walked and talked to a lot of people about how to become a donor. Going out and talking to people is a good way to spread the word about your organization.

Everyone we met and talked to was nice. We had a good time doing the outreach. I would love to do it again!



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



Image by Freepik

Family Traditions of Hanukkah

by Alison Portner

Hello readers,

My family tradition of Hanukkah is for my family and me to gather at my parent's house. We eat a delicious dinner of latkes (potato pancakes), apple sauce, sour cream, and whatever else my stepfather, Frank, decides to cook.

After the dishes are done and in the dish drainer, we gather in the dining room and say candle blessings. Starting with lighting the candle on the first night and adding one for each of the eight nights of Hanukkah.

Then we open eight presents – one for each night of Hanukkah!



SCDD Supported Self-Advocate Zoom Meetings

Tuesday

11:00 a.m.

Cooking Prep & Health and Wellness

Wednesday

4:00 p.m.

Afternoon at the Movies

4th Thursday of the Month

11:00 a.m.

I SPEAK Newsletter

3rd Friday of the Month

2:00 p.m.

San Diego People First (SDPF)

4th Friday of the Month

1:00 p.m.

SDPF Conference Planning Meeting

Zoom link for all meetings

Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975

Passcode: 123763

Disaster Preparedness

4-week session

Call or email Debbie Marshall for dates, times, and registration information.

Additional trainings will be scheduled. Flyers will be sent out via email to let you know about them.

If meeting times or dates change, an email notification will be sent.

If you have questions or suggestions for future trainings or would like to be added to the email list, contact

Debbie.Marshall@scdd.ca.gov

or call (619) 913-8232

My Favorite Holiday Tradition

Singing holiday songs with a group.

– Marie Kairuz –

Opening presents on Christmas Day and spending time with family on Christmas Eve.

– Zach Hill –

On Christmas Eve we open presents and play a dice game together.

– Natalie Jackson –

**Baking holiday treats.
My favorite is the cookies.**

– Demra Henderson –

Spending time with family and going to my grandmother's house for a feast and opening presents.

– Cali Williams –

In my family, we celebrate "Las Posadas" by going to other neighbors' houses. We celebrate on the final stop with a party.

– Peter Salgado –

Celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving with my family.

– Clark Gurley –

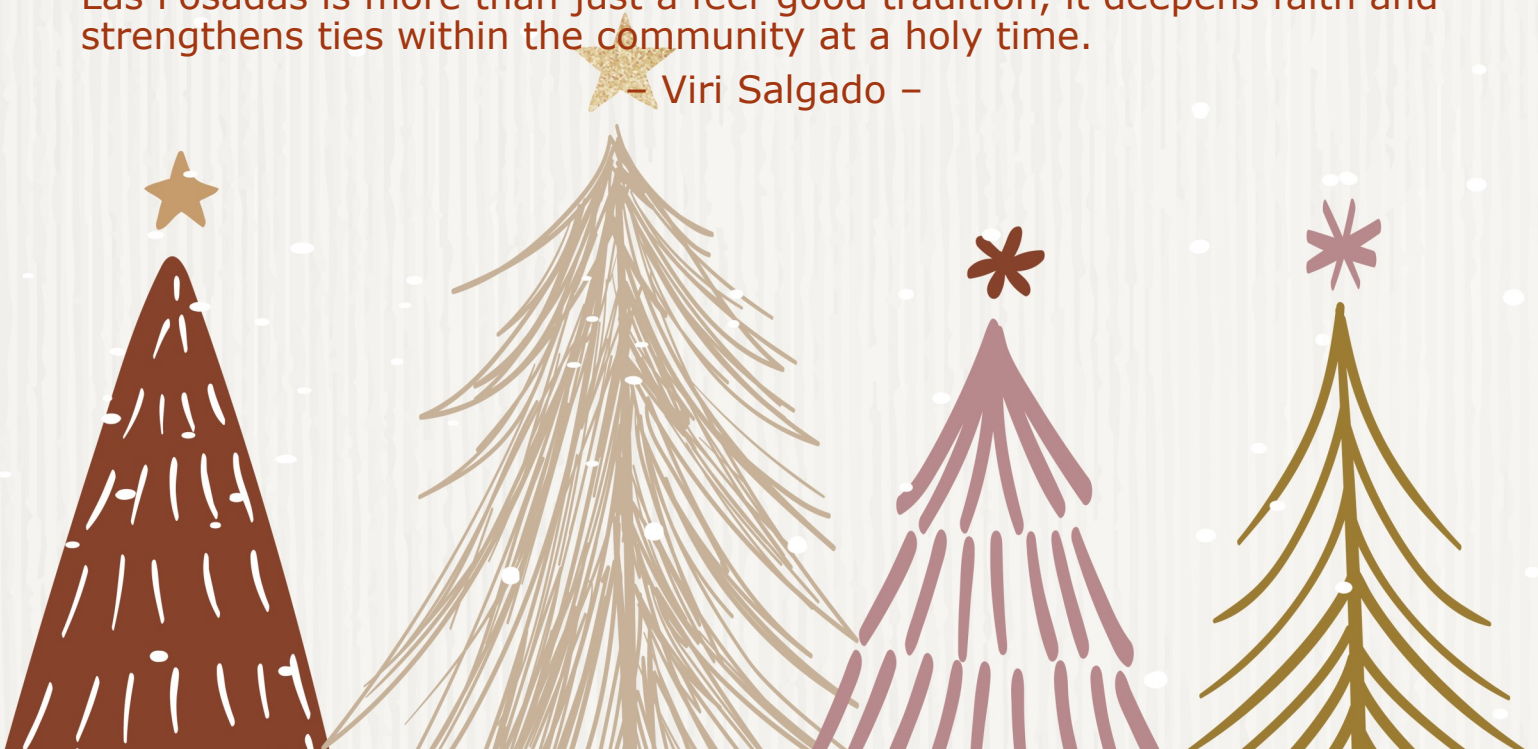
One of my favorite and most traditional Christmas gatherings is called "Las Posadas."

A group of family members are assigned to carry a figure representing Baby Jesus all around the nearby houses of the neighborhood. They knock from door to door singing a pilgrim song to ask for shelter and food. They continue to do this until they reach a house that welcomes them and Baby Jesus in to stay for the night.

Then all friends and family celebrate together with music, food, drinks, and a piñata filled with candy.

Las Posadas is more than just a feel-good tradition, it deepens faith and strengthens ties within the community at a holy time.

– Viri Salgado –



Feeling like Ariel and Wanting to Explore the Surface

by Megan Christian

Sometimes I feel like Ariel from Disney's "The Little Mermaid"

She wanted to be human

Sometimes I feel like I want to be a person without autism

Why you might ask?

Because my life would look different

Yes, different

Perhaps I wouldn't struggle so much

And with autism I struggle with a lot

I struggle with not fitting in

I struggle with not knowing what to say or not say

I struggle with social cues

I struggle with Math

I struggle with visual and auditory processing challenges

I struggle with OCD and letting things go

Yes, Sometimes I feel like Ariel from Disney's "The Little Mermaid"

And I think of all the things I struggle with

But then in some rare incidents

I am also reminded of my various strengths

I believe in my dreams

I keep going

I never give up

So maybe, in retrospect,

Being a person/individual with autism

Isn't all that bad after all

And maybe, just maybe,

But who really knows?

Maybe if I wasn't a person/individual with autism

Maybe I wouldn't have all those amazing strengths

And maybe, just maybe

But who really knows?

Maybe, just maybe

I wouldn't truly appreciate having them

And maybe, just maybe,

I actually decided to come to this life as a person/individual with autism

To show others that our differences are what make us beautiful

Help Save A Life!

Join us for a FREE Hands-Only CPR Training

The 2nd Friday of every month
Starting in January of 2023
Register for **one** class only
(Non-certified training)
Limited to (30) people

Date	Time
January 13 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am
February 10 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am
March 10 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am
April 14 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am
May 12 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am
June 9 th	9:00 am – 10:30 am

2 STEPS TO SAVE A LIFE



Participants will learn:

- How to do hands-only CPR
- When to call 9-1-1

In Preparation for Practicing Hands-Only CPR...

Find one of the following in your home:



Empty disposable
water bottle with cap



Rolled up yoga
mat



Toilet paper roll!



Foam stress toy

Or... something that you can compress about 2" and it pushes back!

Registration Zoom Link:

https://bit.ly/ARCPProjectSAFE_CPRTraining

Habr  interpretaci n en Espa ol disponible.

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

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

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

In collaboration with:



American
Red Cross





“Collaborating for Effective Services”

A One-Day Educational Event hosted by DDPN and SDRC

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Town and Country Conference Center

500 Hotel Circle N, San Diego, CA 92108

This year’s theme is **“Community Access & Inclusion.”**

Session topics will include:

- ✦ Jay’s Program – The County of San Diego Internship Program
- ✦ Person-Driven Planning & Hard Goals
- ✦ Regional Center Services: Participant Directed Services, Tailored Day Services, Self-Determination, etc.
- ✦ Modifications and Home & Community Based Services
- ✦ START: Mental Health Supports
- ✦ Emergency Preparedness
- ✦ Consumer/Family Rights and Advocacy
- ✦ VocFit Presentation and hands-on clinic
- ✦ And more...

Who should attend? Individuals with IDD, family members, service providers, agency directors and support staff, Regional Center and Department of Rehabilitation staff, transition program staff and students.

General Admission is \$25 and includes a continental breakfast, tea, coffee, and lunch. Garage parking is included with registration.

[REGISTER AND PAY ONLINE ON EVENTBRITE](#)

Gifts That Give Back

to San Diego's Disability Community

ShopAble

Holiday Gift Guide

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE FOUNDATION OF SAN DIEGO



Support business owners with disabilities
by purchasing products from **ShopAble** businesses.

Delight friends, family, employees and your customers with hand-crafted gifts that inspire inclusion. **ShopAble** brings deep meaning to your holiday gift-giving season. Your purchases provide income to people with disabilities who create one-of-a-kind gift items.

Purchasing a gift from **ShopAble** helps these individuals achieve independence and self-reliance and encourages an inclusive community. The more "able" we see people with different abilities, the more common hiring them becomes.

Shop online for delicious homemade toffee, organic soaps, ceramic goods, beautiful tote bags, original paintings, one-of-a-kind jewelry - and more!

THANK YOU TO THE FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND SAN DIEGO FAMILY MAGAZINE FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT OF THE SHOPABLE PROGRAM.

SPECIAL NEEDS
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Developmental Disabilities

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www.SNRFSD.org

