

**REPORT FROM: TANIA MORAWIEC
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OPERATIONS, REPORT RANGE NOVEMBER & JANUARY
COUNCIL MEETING PERIODS**

Activity & Impact

SCDD staff have been focused on technical assistance, community events, and training this reporting period, Federal Fiscal Year 2025.

- SCDD staff conducted 115 trainings.
- Provided 154 Self Advocate technical assistance services.
- Provided 194 Family Advocate technical assistance services.
- Provided 250 technical assistance services to “other” individuals like professional service providers or educators.

SCDD Work Featured at the Disability in Government Conference

In September of 2024, the first of its kind Disability in Government Conference occurred in Ventura, CA. SCDD held a major role with Executive Director, Aaron Caruthers participating on a panel and Regional Office Manager, Yolanda Cruz, presenting on Crisis Intervention Training. Additional staff members attended to explore best practice and innovation in transportation, emergency services, and ADA/accommodations.



The SCDD Style of Advocacy; A Model Worth Repeating

Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy (SALA, which coincidentally means “living room” in Spanish), is a weekly, two-hour session training cohort designed by the LA team. This model is making a big splash and creating big impacts as the following feedback demonstrates.

A group of participants indicated that a few things that distinguished SCDD from other agencies was:

- We teach a style of advocacy consistent with the above (they were present when this one mom shared the story above)
- We ACTUALLY listen to people and change what we do in response.
- We admit when mistakes are made, take responsibility, make plans how to avoid them in the future, and then commit to not repeating them (in ALAS this has come up once or twice in how we taught something or examples that were used). They saw this as not only cool and attractive, but a model for how they can run and participate in their own groups.
- We are not “professional” in the sense of putting up walls to hearing them, refusing to change what we do in response to their input, or failing to acknowledge their strengths and giving the opportunity to learn from them and each other.
- We are more informed than others and explain things on a deeper level, so they can make their own decisions and stay in the driver’s seat (avoiding that trap of saying “trust me” and then they have to do what they were told with blind faith).

PARTICIPANT IMPACT STATEMENT

The SCDD trainer spoke with a mother who said she was taught a style of advocacy that encouraged confrontation, conflict, and to emphasized her point she used the gesture of making to fists and hitting them together at her knuckles, like a clash.

She stated she had five fair hearings with the regional center.

Then she started attending our trainings, and DRC’s. She learned a style of advocacy that was completely new to her and had never been presented to

her before. She changed her advocacy style significantly because this style made more sense to her and figured it couldn't make things any worse.

She had a meeting with the executive director of the RC to resolve these five fair hearings. She was asked by the ED, "What happened to you? I notice your style is so different now." She told them she was trained by SCDD and DRC. She then added that she was able to resolve all five hearings informally with the ED, and she attributed this to the specific training SCDD provided her.

She then capped the conversation by stating that two months later the ED called her simply to check in and see if she was happy. (!!!)

STAFF RECOGNITION

The San Andreas Regional Center celebrated community excellence at its best by recognizing individuals and organizations who are going Above & Beyond in serving the developmental disability community. **TWO** SCDD staff members were recognized at this event. David Grady, the Central Coast Regional Office Manager and Jennifer Lucas, the Community Support Specialist received awards.

Recognition of Merit Recipients & SCDD Manager Updates

Two SCDD managers who have dedicated over 20 years of service have retired! David Grady from Central Coast and Mary Ellen Stives from San Diego leave behind a legacy of change, dedication, and inspiration. We are deeply grateful for their work. SCDD is in the process of filling these positions as well as the LA manager position which became vacant when Chris Arroyo accepted his promotion to Deputy Director of Policy.





GETTING OUT THE VOTE:

SCDD does much work on helping people understand their voting rights and the power of civic engagement. Our team consults on access issues and helps people connect with plain language resources on local and national elections. In this example of community messaging, a RAC member makes her voice heard and gets the word out on voting rights.

Below is a photo of Tricia Kokesm in front of San Jose City Hall. Tricia is the chair of Central Coast's Regional Advisory Committee, she works with Jennifer Lucas, CPSII at the SCDD Central Coast Office on Voting Awareness. Tricia is also a Board member of the local Silicon Valley Independent Living Center. She has been doing voting awareness outreach with ILC of Tri-Counties.

