



Health & Wellness

Summertime Safety is all About Prevention

As the old saying goes – an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure – and there is no one time of the year when that saying holds truer than in the summertime. Summer is the time of year when many of us spend time out in the sun at the beach, by the pool, in the yard, camping and participating in almost any other outdoor activity imaginable. Sunny Southern California isn't called that for just any reason, it's really sunny and warm here during the summer, but along with all that sun and the ability to spend lots of time out of doors comes the need to be responsible and to practice summertime safety. Prevention is the key to staying cool and



healthy in the summertime. Following are some tips for practicing water safety, sun safety and hot weather safety along with some of the consequences of not being careful.

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“little man” Vividly Portrays the Heartache and Struggle Families of Children who are Born Prematurely Face



Nicholas Baba-Conn celebrated his third birthday this past March.

“Little man,” a film by Nicole Conn, is a feature documentary based on her son's premature birth and subsequent five-month hospital stay in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Conn and her partner of 10 years, political activist Gwen Baba, already had a daughter, Gabrielle, then two years old, when Nicholas Baba-Conn was born on March 15, 2002, 100 days too early. A micro-preemie, weighing only 1 pound, Nicholas spent 158 days in the NICU and underwent medical procedure after medical procedure.

The film not only documents Nicholas' struggle for life, but also Conn and Baba's struggle keeping their family from disintegrating under the unrelenting stress and chaos of hospitals and emergency medical

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Give Kids a SmileSM is a Shining Success

See story on page 7

Children and parents alike learn proper toothbrushing techniques at the Give Kids a SmileSM event.



FATHERS' CORNER: Oh the Lessons You Learn

By Phillip Hain

I must admit that I don't remember the exact date – and I hope that's not a bad thing. But I do remember it had been a bad day at work. Little did I know that it was not going to get any better. And I do remember that the traffic was really bad because there was an accident on the freeway and I was late to the appointment. But I remember the words very clearly as the therapist first said them, “Andrew has Asperger's Syndrome.” And the first reaction that went through my mind was, “Well at least it's not autism.” Gee, wasn't I naïve. A few months later, the next diagnosis was autism. And so was the third. My wife and I weren't in denial. We just needed to understand what was happening with our son, and what we could do about it.

Even before that day, I remember my first suspicions came when I compared Andrew to other kids I noticed in airports when I traveled. They did simple things that he didn't. More words. More activity. More interaction. More conversation. Something was different, but we didn't know what. Everything could be explained away so easily.

When Andrew wasn't interested in circle time at Gymboree, another parent said, “It took so long for my kid to want to sit and participate. Don't worry, he'll grow into it.” If only it had been that easy. His love of constantly bouncing on the trampoline was no indication at that point. Wanting to turn every page in the TV Guide should have been an easy giveaway. Being able to keep himself amused and not needing attention was nice since it gave us time to relax. Oh, the things we learn. And what we've learned over the past nine years. And how it's changed our lives.

One of the first significant events started the day my parents and my wife's parents said they wanted to talk to us. It was the day after Thanksgiving and they wanted to come over and visit. Wasn't that odd since we all had just spent the holiday together? I didn't know exactly what they wanted to discuss, but I had a strong suspicion that it had to be about Andrew. How do you gently tell your children

that you think there's a problem with their child – who is also your grandchild? I have to thank them for having that courage, since you don't know how parents will react, and denial is sometimes very strong. But they didn't know what it was, only that he wasn't playing with his cousins and seemed to ignore them. Next challenge – how to get your 3-year-old kid into a preschool when he's not potty trained? That certainly limited our options.

When the therapist handed us a piece of paper with names of agencies and resources, I clearly remember seeing the name Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center and thought, “What is that?” What is a Regional Center? Yes, we have learned a lot.

When Andrew was diagnosed with autism, I remember talking to a friend who was going through some marital problems. Her husband disappeared, leaving her to raise their daughter. I said to her, “Life has thrown both of us a major curveball that we never could have expected. We have no choice but to deal with it. It probably won't be easy, but that's what we have to do.” It hasn't been easy, but it has changed me. It has caused me to become a more involved father, and find inner strength that I never knew I had.

It's difficult to speculate what our lives would be like if Andrew had not been diagnosed with

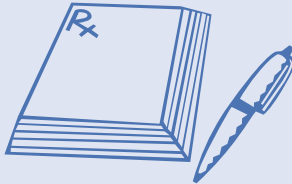


Andrew and Phillip Hain on a trip to Idyllwild with Andrew's Boy Scout troop this past February.

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The New Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit: Its Effect on Regional Center Clients

You may have heard or read that the federal government has passed a law expanding the Medicare program to include a prescription drug benefit, called Medicare Part D. The new benefit will take effect on January 1, 2006 and it will affect Regional Center clients who receive health coverage under both the Medicare and Medi-Cal programs. These clients are called “dual-eligible.” The main change is that their prescription medications will be paid for by Medicare rather than Medi-Cal.



There are several things that our dual-eligible clients, their families and service providers should know about the changes that are coming.

LOW-INCOME SUBSIDY

For people who are covered by Medicare only, there will be fairly substantial co-payments and other costs associated with this new drug benefit. People who are dual-eligible, however, will receive a low-income subsidy that will pay a large portion of these costs. In other words, Regional Center clients receiving Medi-Cal and Medicare will receive this low-income subsidy to help them pay the costs that Medicare-only beneficiaries must pay for prescription drugs. These clients will still be required to make co-payments, but the amounts of these co-payments will be small. For example, co-payments for our clients will most likely be \$1 or \$3 for a prescription. In addition, this new benefit may not cover all of the medicines that a person is taking. (See below for more information)

LETTER OF NOTIFICATION

Anyone on Medicare can apply to receive the low-income subsidy, but people who are dual-eligible don’t have to apply. The government has already decided that these people will receive the subsidy. So, during the month of June, Regional Center clients who are dual-eligible should have received letters from Medicare telling them that they will be getting the low-income subsidy. Clients and families should be sure to watch the mail for a letter from Medicare. *If you receive such a letter of notification you do not have to reply to it.* Regional Center clients should, however, notify their service coordinators that they received this letter.

PICKING A PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

The Medicare prescription drug benefit will be provided through a series of “plans,” and each beneficiary must choose which plan they want to be covered by. These plans will differ from one another in the drugs that they cover. So, while one plan may cover all of the drugs a person takes, another plan might not. *For this reason it is very important that a person try to find a plan that covers all of the drugs that they take.* Clients and families should be assured, however, that the Regional Center will help ensure that clients have access to all of the medications they need.

In the fall of 2005, all eligible beneficiaries will receive a letter inviting them to choose the prescription drug plan that they want to join. If a person does not choose a plan by December 31, 2005, the government will select one for them so that they can begin receiving the benefit on January 1, 2006. Clients and their families should be sure to make a choice so they will be enrolled in the plan that best meets their needs.

At the moment we have no information about what prescription drug plans will be available to Regional Center dual-eligible clients or what will be covered by these plans. As we move closer to the fall, however, we will be receiving more information. We will then be able to help clients and their families evaluate the various plans to decide which one is the best choice for them.

Parents of Children with Special Needs can Benefit from the New Paid Family Leave Law

Article courtesy of the Paid Family Leave Collaborative (www.paidfamilyleave.org)

Do you need to take time off work to care for your child with special needs? Are you worried about whether you can afford to take time off, or whether you will get your job back?

California has a new law to benefit working parents who need to take time off to care for a child with a serious health condition. If you have a child with special needs, his or her condition may be considered a serious health condition, and you may be eligible for Paid Family Leave benefits.

What are Paid Family Leave Benefits?

Paid Family Leave benefits are partial wages paid by the Employment Development Department (EDD). Like short-term disability or pregnancy disability, the payments are approximately 55 percent of the employee’s wages. Employees can receive the benefits for up to six weeks each year, either intermittently or all at once, if they have to miss work to care for a child, spouse, registered domestic partner or parent with a serious health condition.

Who is eligible to receive Paid Family Leave?

Everyone who works and participates in the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program is eligible, whether they work full-time or part-time, and regardless of the size of the employer or how long they have worked there. Most California employees pay into SDI. (State, school district and some local government employees do not.) Check your paystub for an SDI deduction. To receive benefits, you must be taking time off work to bond with a new child (birth, adopted or foster) or to care for a parent, spouse, partner or child with a serious health condition.

Does your child have a “serious health condition?”

Under the new law, several common physical and mental impairments are considered serious health conditions. Some examples are asthma, epilepsy, cerebral palsy and spina bifida. Generally, a serious health condition is one which:

- requires a hospital stay; or
- prevents an individual from participating in normal activities for three days or more, for example, a child’s inability to attend school; or
- requires multiple treatments to prevent incapacitating the individual; or
- is a chronic serious health condition; or
- is an incurable illness.

Paid Leave Information

Employment Development Department:
877.BE.THERE (English)
800.563.2441 (TTY)
866.658.8846 (Spanish)
www.edd.ca.gov

Legal Hotlines

The Legal Aid Society –
Employment Law Center: 800.880.8047
Asian Law Caucus: 415.896.1701
Equal Rights Advocates: 800.839.4372
California Women’s Law Center: 213.637.9900

To find out if your child’s condition meets the legal requirements, ask your health care practitioner or call the Paid Family Leave Collaborative numbers listed to the left.

What if you need to take your child to appointments one day each week?

Paid Family Leave benefits are available whether you take days off consecutively or intermittently. If you regularly miss work to take your child to appointments for therapy or treatments, you may receive benefits to compensate you for missed work time.

Must the employer allow an employee to take leave?

All employees covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) have the right to take leave and return to their job. You are covered by FMLA if you have worked for your employer for one year and 1,250 hours in that year, and your employer has 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius.

Even if you are not covered by FMLA, you may still receive Paid Family Leave benefits if you have been paying into the system. Talk to your employer about getting permission to take time off work. Parents with legal questions about their employment and Paid Family Leave should call the hotlines listed above.

How to Apply for Paid Leave Benefits

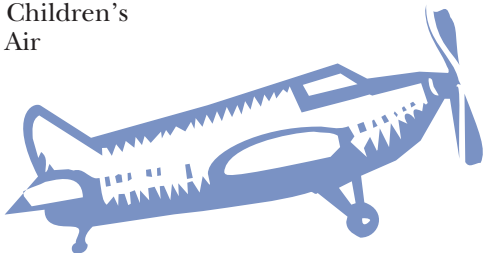
File a claim form with the Employment Development Department. Claim forms are available from your medical practitioner or from EDD. You will be asked to provide a medical certificate signed by a health practitioner stating that you are needed to care for the child. There is a seven-day waiting period before benefits are paid.

This article is intended to provide accurate, general information about Paid Family Leave. Because laws and legal procedures are subject to frequent change and differing interpretations, the Paid Family Leave Collaborative cannot ensure that the information in this article is current, nor be responsible for any use to which it is put. Do not rely on this information without consulting an attorney or the appropriate agency about your rights.

Online Resources for Airline Travel for Medical Needs: Association of Cancer Online Resources (ACOR)

www.acor.org/ped-onc/resources/airlineflights.html

The organizations listed on this site provide airline flights for patients that need to travel for medical reasons. Listings include a description of the type of air service offered and contact information. Some of the organizations included in this listing are Air Care Alliance, Air LifeLine, Angel Flight, Children’s Flight of Hope, Corporate Angel Network, Delta Air Sky Wish at United Way, Dreamline, LifeLine Pilots, Mercy Medical Airlift, Miracle Flights for Kids, National Patient Air Travel HELPLINE, Northwest Airlines Kid Cares program, Operation Liftoff, American Airlines Advantage Miles for Kids in Need, and Wings of Freedom.



The Director's VIEWPOINT

Rekindling the Spirit of Volunteerism

The dictionary defines a volunteer as someone who undertakes a service of his or her own free will. Over the years, that willing and generous spirit has been an important part of regional centers.

In fact, you could say that the regional center system itself was created by volunteers – committed parents and professionals who gave freely of their time and resources to craft a new way of serving people with developmental disabilities and their families. As we approach the 40th anniversary of their efforts, I am struck again by the key role that volunteerism has played in our vision of fully included lives for persons with developmental disabilities.

Individual contributions – whether of time, talent or financial resources – are the foundation of our future, as well as our past. In this new era of heightened demand and diminished funding, we must find ever more creative ways to engage our community. We have learned in the last few years that there are limits to government funding, and while it is crucial to have the safety net of the Lanterman Act entitlement, we can no longer – nor should we – rely on that alone. It is vital that regional center communities do as much as possible for themselves.

We must rekindle the spirit of volunteerism.

This issue of “Viewpoint” features several stories describing the impact of volunteers. One of them is Linda Landry. Nearly everyone who is affiliated with early intervention knows about her. I first met Linda on a visit to a legislator’s office to discuss the importance of early intervention services. She arrived with her infant daughter, and that began an association that has continued for more than 20 years. In that time, Linda has been tireless in her efforts on behalf of families with children who have disabilities and other special needs. The article lists her impressive accomplishments and awards. But even more important, I have seen her commitment to volunteerism not only help other people, but also transform her into a strong and resourceful citizen leader who continues to make a difference in the lives of parents and children with developmental disabilities.

“As we approach the 40th anniversary of their efforts [regional center founders], I am struck again by the key role that volunteerism has played in our vision of fully included lives for persons with developmental disabilities.”

– Diane Anand

programs in Los Angeles later this year. Of course, recruiting volunteers was first on the agenda.

Finally, Lanterman Regional Center participated in the Achievable Foundation’s Reach for the Stars Fourth Annual 5K Walk, Run, Wheel and Woof in Century City. Staff, clients, families, service providers, and Lanterman friends and pets all banded together to make the event a huge success, proving that volunteers come in all sizes and ages. One hundred percent of the \$25,192 in donations that Team Lanterman collected was returned to the Center to fund Camperships, the Roberta Happe Memorial Internship and various Koch ♦ Young Resource Center projects.

The importance of volunteers cannot be underestimated. Individual contributions of whatever kind are critical to the continued vitality of the Regional Center community. From a mother turning her own challenges into an opportunity to help others, to a successful attorney who can have national impact, to families and pets walking to raise money for those less fortunate, the rewards of volunteerism enhance our community and strengthen our self-reliance.

I want to offer my personal thanks to the legions of volunteers who have given so unselfishly of their time, energy and financial resources, and extend my invitation to each member of our community to find the place where he or she can offer service.

Each of us can make a difference – and together there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

For more information about volunteer opportunities available with Lanterman visit www.lanterman.org and click on “Volunteer” at the top right of the screen, or call 800.546.3676.



Executive Director Diane Anand

THE BUDGET UPDATE: We've Got a Budget!

As this “Viewpoint” went to press we got word that the Governor and Legislature had agreed on a budget for 2005-06. These are some of the major provisions directly affecting regional centers:

- The State will continue the freeze on rate increases for service providers. This means we will continue to have difficulty not only attracting new service providers, but also keeping existing providers who may not be able to afford to meet service standards. For example, residential service providers have not had a rate increase since the late 1980s.
- There will be no startup funds for developing new programs, except those necessary to serve people moving out of state developmental centers.
- Regional centers will receive additional operations funds to meet the federal requirements associated with the Medicaid Waiver program, although the amount is approximately one-quarter of what centers estimate is needed. This additional money, approximately \$300,000 for Lanterman, will partially offset the half-million dollars that was taken from our Operations budget last year.
- We will continue to operate with prior years unallocated reductions to Purchase of Services and Operations funding.

Two additional changes will not directly affect regional centers, but will have a significant impact on our clients:

- Beginning January 1, 2006, there will be an \$1,800 dollar annual cap on dental Medi-Cal expenditures.
- The State will suspend the state cost of living adjustment for people receiving the state supplement (SSP) to their SSI benefit. The suspension will be for two years, beginning in January 2006. Additional changes will result in delaying the federal cost of living adjustments for SSI recipients for three months in both 2006 and 2007. During each of these years, the adjustment will take effect April 1 rather than January 1.

The good news is that the Governor withdrew his proposal to roll back the wages of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers to minimum wage.

There is an additional major change proposed that will affect some regional center clients. This is the implementation of a new program referred to as Self-Directed Services. We will provide information on this program in a future issue of “Viewpoint.” The implementation of this program is contingent upon the approval of the federal government.

Disability Resources Expo to be Held at L.A. County Fair on September 15

Do you want to learn more about physical and developmental disabilities, and the various services, resources and supports available? Then the “Abilities Resource Expo” being held at the L.A. County Fair at the Fairplex in Pomona on Thursday, September 15, 2005 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. is your one-stop source for a variety of disability-specific information. Representatives from California’s regional centers, Early Start and other infant and young children programs, programs for school-age children, vocational/employment programs, adult programs, and family support organizations will be on hand to answer questions and raise awareness about disabilities, provide information and connect people with disabilities and their families with services, resources and supports that promote choice, empowerment, independence and full integration into community life for people with disabilities. The “Abilities Resource Expo” is the only way to become educated about disability issues and resources, and eat cotton candy, learn how to milk a cow and hear great music all in one day. For more information about the “Abilities Resource Expo” visit www.sgprc.org. For more information about the L.A. County Fair visit www.fairplex.com/2005/homepage.asp.



Linda Landry Receives Parent Leadership Award from California's Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention

Nearly everyone who is affiliated with California's early intervention and Early Start communities knows or has heard about Linda Joy Landry. In recognition of her many years of leadership and collaboration in working with and on behalf of families with children who have special needs, California's Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) on Early Intervention awarded Landry the annual California ICC Parent Leadership Award at their meeting on February 25, 2005.

A longtime parent of Lanterman Regional Center, and an experienced and committed volunteer, Landry has assumed an active role in numerous local, regional and statewide organizations. Dr. Marie Poulsen, Childrens Hospital Los Angeles, says, "Linda is a woman of integrity, dedication and enthusiasm in all that she does. She is a true leader and an inspiration to parents and professionals throughout California."

Landry has participated on various local advisory, policy and program development committees, including the University of Southern California's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District's Modified Consent Decree Parent's Council, Lanterman's board of directors, and the Koch ♦ Young Resource Center advisory committee. She is



Linda Joy Landry receives Parent Leadership Award from ICC.

member with special needs and for all individuals with developmental disabilities within the many systems they encounter.

On a statewide level, Landry assumed one of the primary leadership roles in organizing the Family Resource Center Network of California (FRCNCA). FRCNCA, is a statewide coalition of 47 family resource centers funded through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Infants and Toddlers Part C, that is a collaborative effort to ensure coordination of family services and support activities. In Los Angeles County she participated in the establishment of the Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County (FRCNLAC), a network of 12 family resource centers, and was

also a regular presenter at Lanterman's Navigating the Special Needs System training, which helps Lanterman families, professionals and the community learn how to better advocate for their family

their first chair in 1993. She also participates as a community representative to the California ICC, has served as a board president of Protection and Advocacy, Inc., and as a member of the Early Start Workgroup.

The following is a compilation of statements given by various ICC representatives regarding Landry's work, "Linda has worked tirelessly to understand and enhance the state and local systems' ability to meet the needs of her daughter and family; to ensure that the needs of California's children with special needs and their families are understood and acknowledged; and to ensure that policies, services and supports are in place to address those needs. She has made a significant difference in the lives of individuals with special needs and their families throughout California. Linda is committed to ensuring that families are acknowledged as equal partners, and are supported by a system that addresses their concerns and needs."

Landry shares, "I have been fortunate all these years to have the opportunity to partner with wonderful parents and professionals. For me, it is a joy and a responsibility to be involved and to volunteer. The joy from the dedicated wonderful people you meet, the responsibility in that there is no other way to have our issues heard and understood if we do not take advantage of opportunities to become involved."

Service Coordinator Mercedes Shamlo Focuses on Lanterman's Aging Population

Just under six years ago in November 1999, Mercedes Shamlo joined Lanterman as a service coordinator. With dual master's degrees in gerontology and healthcare administration, along with bachelor's degrees in gerontology and psychology, Shamlo was a perfect match for the Los Angeles-Wilshire/Aging Unit, or as she prefers the Aging/Los Angeles-Wilshire unit.

Shamlo's caseload is primarily composed of aging and elderly Lanterman clients, as well as clients in residential homes who have health issues. Much of Shamlo's time is spent arranging residential placement options for aging clients and addressing their psychosocial and medical needs, as well as working with nursing homes and hospitals.

Some of the issues that she helps her clients work through include transitioning from a family residence to community living, losing family members, retirement, changing health care needs, and changes in their level of independence. As she puts it, aging is not just chronological for individuals with developmental disabilities. Many of the above issues start happening as early as 40 to 45 years of age.

Shamlo says, "My role as a service coordinator is to empower aging clients so they can still advocate for themselves and their services, and to help them live as independent lives as they choose to live. Even though they may be becoming more dependent on some level, by making sure that the proper services and supports are in place, aging individuals with developmental disabilities don't have to be completely dependent."

In addition to her responsibilities as a service coordinator, Shamlo has been actively involved as a presenter at Lanterman's New Service Coordinator Orientation. The key area of her presentation focuses on documentation and consents. Shamlo also reviews presentations given by other Lanterman staff and pulls together the material from the service coordinator perspective. Shamlo attributes part of her success as a service coordinator to having had a good mentor when she first started, and has in turn made herself readily available to help new service coordinators learn and develop in their new role.

Some words of wisdom from Shamlo are that "half of any job is psychological, and that if you tell yourself you can't do it, then you won't be able to do it. Don't be hard on yourself since it's a learning process and the job is dynamic and forever changing, even if it may seem at times that we have to do the same thing over and over, there is always something that is different. It's crucial to be flexible and open minded."

Shamlo has also been very involved in projects with Lanterman's Clinical Services unit. A recent project Shamlo participated in involved the initial planning and development stages of an aging project in partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles. Last year she was asked to present a case example as part of an inter-regional center project on nursing management. The case involved a client who was living at home with her aging parent who was very ill. Rather than placing the client in a nursing home, Shamlo arranged the supports and helped the client transition away from being dependent on her mother to becoming more independent, which enabled her to continue to live in the same home she had been in for the last 56 years. Shamlo also represented Lanterman as part of a pilot project established to create best case management practices.

Shamlo explains, "As we go through life, we are provided opportunities to participate in projects that are meaningful, and my approach has been to take them on. I'm always involved in something. I also enjoy starting my own projects, especially ones related to health and aging." An area where Shamlo would like to focus her efforts in the future is the relationship between the needs that are addressed with school-age and young adult clients and the needs of aging clients that can be addressed earlier in life. "If caregivers help a client learn to become more independent as a teenager while they are still living in the home, rather than waiting until they are older to teach them independence skills, it will help prevent an inappropriate placement later on in life," adds Shamlo.

When asked about what she feels are the biggest challenges of her job, Shamlo replied, "One of the biggest challenges I've experienced is finding a happy medium for



Service Coordinator Mercedes Shamlo

all parties involved, which can include families, the Regional Center, the client, the client's friends, etc. There are a lot of interested parties that want to make decisions for a client, who may or may not be able to cognitively make decisions for himself or herself, but it's important to figure out what the client wants and needs. Another challenge I've seen is learning what hat to wear at what moment since the role of a service coordinator can change from someone who coordinates services to negotiator."

Meeting the needs of her clients and their support systems, including family and care providers is just one of the many rewards Shamlo's job offers her. She also enjoys being part of a professional organization. "Lanterman is like a family. This type of workplace is what the majority of individuals seek," shares Shamlo.

Shamlo lives by the idea that it's never too late to learn. She attends conferences and seminars whenever possible, and is an active member of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) and the American Society of Aging. This year, she is volunteering her time to assist the GSA with public relations efforts associated with the organization's yearly international conference. An important lesson that Shamlo learned as a gerontologist is that aging starts when you are young, and in order to be prepared for the future, one can't wait until the last minute to plan!

Shamlo, who was born and raised in Germany, is an avid cyclist, and has been a musician for 15 years. She has been cycling for seven years and has competed in

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Lanterman Receives 2005 Public Service Non-Profit Spirit Award from Southern California Broadcasters Association

In Los Angeles, the best way to reach the populace and get the word out about your organization is through media outlets – newspaper, television, radio and online. But, it's not easy to get coverage for your organization with the many hundreds of organizations vying for limited air time and print space.

For many years, Lanterman Regional Center has been a member of the Southern California Broadcasters Association (SCBA) and the Print Interactive Radio and Television Educational Society, better known as PIRATES. Lanterman has attended media mixers sponsored by PIRATES, the Annual Public Service Media Conference sponsored by SCBA and educational seminars, along the way learning tips about how to market our Center to the media, and hopefully obtain media coverage to raise awareness in the general public about developmental disabilities, and promote inclusion and acceptance.

On April 21, 2005, at their Annual Public Service Media Conference, SCBA and PIRATES honored Lanterman with the 2005 Public Service Non-Profit Spirit Award. This award honors a non-profit organization that has made outstanding contributions to the Southern California community.

Executive Director Diane Anand says, "Lanterman Regional Center is truly honored to be recognized with this award. Community involvement is core to our mission to enable children and adults with developmental disabilities to live full, productive, satisfying lives as active members of their communities. We applaud the efforts of the Southern California Broadcasters Association and PIRATES to assist non-profit community organizations in getting their messages out to the general public and the communities that they serve. As we enter our 40th year of service we look forward to partnering with SCBA and PIRATES."

In addition to honoring Lanterman Regional Center, SCBA recognized the work of KZLA-FM On Air Host Shawn Parr on behalf of many non-profit organizations, including The John Tracy Clinic, and Victoria Rowell founder of Rowell Foster Children's Positive Plan, during the Golden Anniversary celebration of PIRATES.



Perspectives Festival Director Marielle Farnan, Director of Family Support Services Patricia Herrera, SCBA Director of Community Affairs LaFern Watkins, SCBA President Mary Beth Garber, Executive Director Diane Anand, Director of Training and Development Maureen Wilson, and Information and Resource Specialist Vinita Anand at the Golden Anniversary celebration of PIRATES, during which the Spirit Award was presented to Lanterman.

PIRATES, an organization "Where the Community Meets the Media" is the only Los Angeles area association offering non-profit organizations regular opportunities to network with community resources, communications professionals and working members of the media. For more information on PIRATES and SCBA visit www.piratesla.org and www.scba.com respectively.

Ready for Tomorrow's Jobs Today is the Theme of 2005 Disability Employment Awareness Month

At the end of June, Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao announced the official theme for October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month – "Workers with Disabilities: Ready for Tomorrow's Jobs Today."

"This year's theme emphasizes that people with disabilities are a vital part of America's workforce – they are important to our country's future economic success!" said Chao. "The President's New Freedom Initiative recognizes the tremendous contributions and potential of persons with disabilities and promotes greater job opportunities in high growth sectors of the economy, such as healthcare and advanced manufacturing."

The theme will be used by the private sector, federal, state and local governments, and advocacy organizations to plan events and programs that showcase the abilities and skills of job candidates who have disabilities.

"People with disabilities are and will continue to be an important part of the nation's labor pool, and this year's theme reflects that fact," said Roy Grizzard, assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) is the nation's first assistant secretary-level office specifically addressing policies that impact the employment of people with disabilities. Collaborating with other Labor Department agencies – the Employment and Training Administration and the Civil Rights Center – ODEP has developed methods, including a disability checklist, to make the 3,500 One-Stop Career Centers nationwide better serve people with disabilities.

Public Law 176, enacted by Congress in 1945, designated the first week in October as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." President Harry S. Truman designated the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to carry out the law. Congress changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" in 1988. The responsibility for leading the nationwide recognition was transferred to ODEP in 2001.

Source: <http://dol.gov/opa/media/press/odep/odep20051102.htm>

Mercede Shamlo

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women's mountain biking events in Big Bear, CA. Shamlo's instrument of choice is the viola, which she plays in both orchestras and as part of a trio. Shamlo is a firm believer in balancing one's life between work, physical activity and mental activity, such as art and music. "I took a philosophy class in high school and both Plato and Socrates stressed that life was balanced with four areas – art, education, work and exercise. With life being as hectic as it is, we have to take time for ourselves and achieve that balance," says Shamlo.

A Different Kind of Hero

On July 5th, 2002 I was told I was a diabetic and that I would have to do insulin shots for the rest of my life. This was the day my life changed forever.

I was doing my dinner time insulin shot and figured out that at 365 days in a year, and I do 4-5 shots a day this means that right now I just did shot number 5,200. I prick my finger and have to test my blood sugar 10-12 times a day. This means I have pricked my finger 12,480 times.

I've had lots of grownups and class mates tell me how amazing I am, that at the age of 8 I took control of testing my blood sugar, learning about counting carbs and measuring and doing my own insulin shots. That they could never give themselves shots or have to watch what types of foods they eat. They ask me how I do it. The truth is I hate being a diabetic but I don't have a choice but to do it. And, if you saw my mom or dad stab a needle into an orange to practice doing shots, you'd want to do your own shots too!

There are days when I would like to eat whenever and whatever I want, not test my blood sugar, not have to prick my finger and do shots, not worry about my blood sugar going too low or too high, but until they find a cure for diabetes that will never happen.

Every 3 months I go to Children's Hospital for my checkups. I see kids in the hallways, some in wheelchairs because they can't walk, some without hair because they have cancer, some with large heads, short arms and a short body that have some type of growth problem.

These kids are my heroes. When I look at them I ask myself how they do it. How do they go on day after day? I can't imagine what it must be like not to be able to get out of bed and walk, to be stuck in a wheelchair, to have people staring at you because you look different. I know that they would trade their illnesses and differences for just having to prick their finger and do insulin shots.

There are so many of my heroes out there and when I'm feeling sad, mad, and just plain sick of dealing with my diabetes day after day, I try to think of them. I know they would give anything to trade places with me.

I hate being diabetic and I wonder why me, it's not fair. But I know through my Different Kinds of Heroes that if they can go on day after day then I can too.

–Kristina King

Every year the Glendale Council PTA of the Glendale Unified School District (GUSD) hosts "Reflections." The theme of this year's "Reflections" contest was "A Different Kind of Hero..." This was the first time Kristina King, a fifth grader who attends school at one of the GUSD campuses, participated in the contest.

Sibling Relationships Receive Starring Role on the Big Screen in “Riding the Bus with My Sister”

Support is as crucial for siblings of individuals with developmental disabilities as it is for parents and other family members, yet is an area that is often unintentionally overlooked by families with children with special needs as they juggle daily schedules.

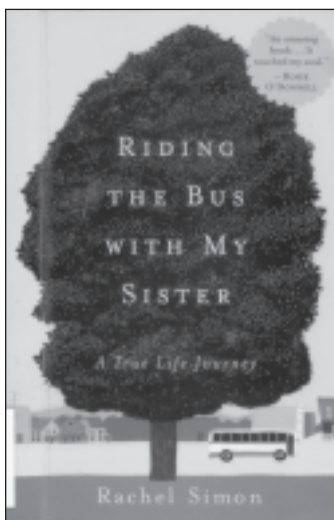
While in Los Angeles for the premiere screening of the Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation of “Riding the Bus with My Sister” on April 26, sibling support expert Donald Meyer, director of the Sibling Support Project of the Arc of the United States, was the key presenter at a Lanterman workshop designed for parents and professionals. The workshop explored sibling issues and support, as well as how to design and implement sibling support groups, that are structured after the Sibshops model.

Several years ago, Meyer held a similar workshop at Lanterman and was instrumental in helping Lanterman re-establish its own Sibshops program. Lanterman’s Sibshops program is designed for siblings of children with special needs between 6 and 12 years of age as a place where they can meet other brothers and sisters of children with special needs and

participate in a lively mixture of activities, games and discussion, and hear the occasional guest speaker.

Sibshops participants talk about their brothers and sisters with others who really know what it’s like to have a sibling with a disability, make new friends, learn more about disabilities and the services that people with disabilities receive, and just have fun.

“Riding the Bus with My Sister,” a film about the relationship that develops between two siblings over the course of a year they spent riding the bus together, aired on Sunday, May 1 on CBS. The film is inspired by the true story of Rachel Simon and her sister. It stars Rosie O’Donnell,



Above: (left to right) Lanterman parent Kelly Vencill-Sanchez, Marielle Farnan, Patricia Herrera, Actor Richard T. Jones, Author Rachel Simon and Olivia Hinojosa.

At right: Marielle Farnan and Olivia Hinojosa chat with Director Anjelica Huston about sibling relationships and issues.

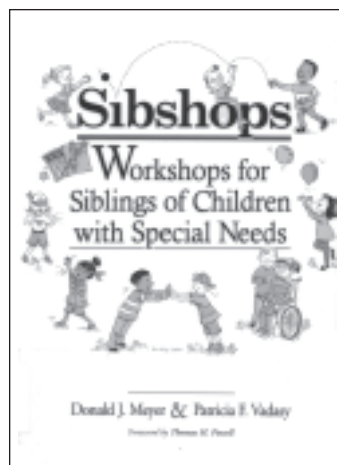
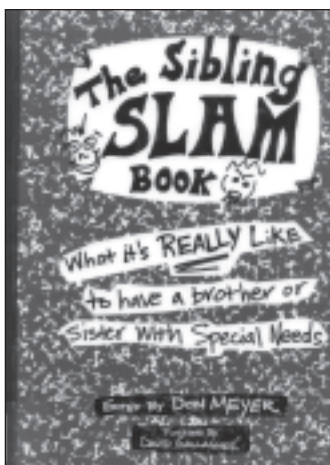
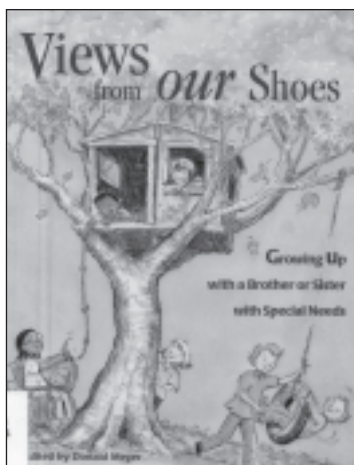


Andie MacDowell, Richard T. Jones, and D.W. Moffett, and was directed by Anjelica Huston. “The film plays a very crucial role in raising awareness about the importance of sibling support. It’s not every day that well-known individuals in the film industry bring developmental disabilities and related issues to the big screen and into the homes of everyday Americans,” shares Olivia Hinojosa, family support specialist.

Lanterman’s Sibshops programs are on hiatus for the summer, but will resume in September. There will be some changes to the program, including day, time and location. Check the Lanterman Web site closer to September for more information at www.lanterman.org/support/supportgroups/sibshops.asp, or call 213.383.1300, x. 730 or toll-free at 800.546.3676, or e-mail kyrc@lanterman.org.



Above: (left to right) Perspectives Festival Director Marielle Farnan, Lanterman Board Member Kristin Conder, Actress Andie MacDowell, Family Support Specialist Olivia Hinojosa and Director of Family Support Services Patricia Herrera at the screening of “Riding the Bus with My Sister.”

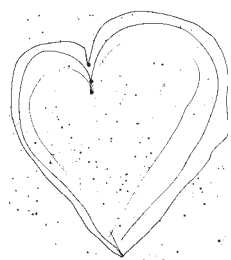


At left: A sampling of sibling-related resources available through the Koch♦Young Resource Center for siblings of all ages, parents and professionals who work with siblings of children and adults with special needs.

What I Like About Sibshops...



Ana Sancho, a Lanterman Sibshops participant, shares what she likes about the program.



what I like about sibshop
is : what we play and
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and funny . but when
they don't come back
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that's why I'm
excited when I go
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Give Kids a SmileSM is a Shining Success

“A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he cannot get along without it and none is so poor that he cannot be made rich by it. Yet a smile cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.”

— AUTHOR UNKNOWN

When you think about how much a smile conveys and what an impression such a simple gesture can make, you realize the importance of comprehensive oral health care.

“Lanterman Regional Center has long placed a high value on the importance of oral health. Participating in Give Kids a SmileSM was a way to help educate the parents and families of our early intervention and school-age clients about the impact that poor oral health can have on a child’s overall health, and to link caregivers to the appropriate community-based resources,” says Gwen Jordan, director of Clinical Services.

This was Lanterman’s first year participating in Give Kids a SmileSM, which is the centerpiece of National Children’s Dental Health Month celebrated every February. The intent of this nationwide project is to highlight for lawmakers and policymakers the on-going challenges that disadvantaged children and children with disabilities face in accessing dental care, and raise their awareness that even though close to one million children are provided with dental education, screening, treatment and products during the daylong efforts on Friday, February 4, 2005 that this high level of charitable care will not alone solve the problem of untreated dental disease.

“In just over four hours, we were able to reach out to over 300 Lanterman families and provide screenings for approximately 90 Lanterman clients and 45 of their siblings,” shares Leticia Reyes, Lanterman’s dental coordinator. For clients and their siblings who needed additional dental care, Reyes coordinated matching them with appropriate oral health care providers in the weeks following the event based on the severity indicated by the dentists and hygienists.

Along with dental screenings, the dental health event also offered hands-on demonstrations

teaching appropriate brushing techniques, a children’s activity table, dental-related give away bags, and product samples. “All of the activities promoted prevention on the level for children and their parents to be able to learn and apply on a daily basis,” explains Reyes.

“This was the first time that any regional center in California participated in the Give Kids a SmileSM initiative, and we were really delighted with the overwhelming response that we received from our community,” adds Jordan. “This event would not have been possible without Leticia Reyes and Silvia Flores who were the driving force behind it and worked very long hours to make it our event a shining success.”

We’d like to give thanks to the following community-based individuals and organizations who donated their time and resources to help educate the Lanterman community about the importance of early and preventative oral health care, and assisted in connecting our families with the proper community-based dental health resources: Antonia Esparza, Gina Padilla and Andrea Soriano, Health Promotoras – St. John’s clinics part of the St. John’s Well Child and Family Center; Hollie Johnson, Omni (oral pharmaceuticals); Aurora Salazar, Eisner Pediatric and Family Medical Center; Joanna Lyman and Kenneth Mitchell, First 5 LA Connect; and Tammy Matison, Laclede Company (manufacturers of Biotine).

We’d also like to acknowledge the following dentists, hygienists and other oral health care practitioners that made the educational demonstrations and screenings possible: Dr. Karen Borland (DDS), Dr. Virginia Castelo (DDS), Dr. Diana Grob (DDS), Dr. Liz Pak (DDS) and Dr. Seong Lee (DDS), as well as Takisha Allums, RDH; Amber Clavijo, RDH; Patty Feske, RDH; Joanne Fine, RDH; Mayella Francisco, RDH; Courtney Jang, RDH; Karla Morales, RDH; Orly Mottavasel, RDH; Joy



Children enjoy dental-related activities, which included making crowns out of paper teeth and coloring.

Ogami, RDH; and Nasrin Sarafin, RDH from West Los Angeles College Dental Hygiene Program.

In addition, we’d like to extend a big thank you to all of the Lanterman staff and family members who staffed the various demonstration, information, activity and registration tables. Thanks to the following staff: Ardis Adrian, Anita Arcilla-Gutierrez, Mary Bakchakyan, Zena Begin, Jessye Davis, Nefertiti de Silva, Abraham Estrada, Silvia Flores, Mary Flynn, Jesse Gomez, Patricia Guzman, Gwen Jordan, Madeline Lara, Kimberly Lee, Jeanette Orlando, Roxana Ortiz, Irma Padilla, Rowena Pangan, Gloria Perez, Migdalia Sanchez, Mercedes Shamlo, Lourdes Tabullo, Maria Tapia-Montes and Cecile Williams. Thanks to the following family members: Martha Barrera, Irma Cruz and Lucy Landeros.

Also, special thanks to Dr. Greg Kaplan from Children’s Dental World who donated 200 children’s t-shirts and to Crest who donated all of the dental items for the kits, including toothpaste, battery operated toothbrushes, stickers and informational pamphlets.

Look for more information on upcoming oral health-related training, events and health fairs in “Viewpoint” or on Lanterman’s Web site at www.lanterman.org. If you are interested in a one-on-one dental screening, contact your service coordinator for more information.

Bits & Bytes Performs at Dr. Music to Get a Beat Going for Mentors & Technology Program

The beginning of March, Bits & Bytes officially launched the volunteer recruitment phase of the Assistive Technology Project’s Mentors & Technology (MAT) program with a benefit concert at Dr. Music in Eagle Rock. Initially developed through a grant from Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation, the program is now entering its implementation stage with funding from the Weingart Foundation. The MAT program will match TechMentors with TechUsers, who are persons with developmental disabilities who are just beginning to learn how to access technology as a developmental support.

Over the course of a one-year commitment, TechMentors will assist persons with developmental disabilities to become more comfortable and efficient in using computer and assistive technology to enhance the quality of their daily lives. Throughout the course of the one-year commitment, a mentor’s involvement will vary depending upon time availability, as well as the needs of the person they will be supporting. MAT is designed to create volunteer opportunities within a less



Bits & Bytes rocks out at Dr. Music in Eagle Rock during a benefit concert for the Assistive Technology Project’s Mentors & Technology (MAT) program.

structured context, and in essence can even be a virtual volunteer opportunity for individuals who cannot participate in a more traditional volunteer program.

“We quickly realized that while many of our students achieve a level of success in class, outside they often face a series of road blocks when trying to apply their technology skills at home, work or in the community,” notes Martin Sweeney, director of the Assistive Technology

Project. “For many students and families, a TechMentorship could potentially provide that little extra support that can make all the difference. The MAT project will attempt to help the beginner user develop a set of practical troubleshooting skills to help make using technology a more productive and meaningful experience.”

More than 100 people attended the benefit concert, which was held on a Sunday evening, many of them Lanterman clients who participate in the Los Angeles Unified School District Division of Adult and Career Education computer classes. The musical group Bits & Bytes is an eclectic group of musicians led by Kevin Termunde, LAUSD instructor, and includes Sweeney along with Jason Berge,

Danny Nguyen, May Raquedan, Jason Watson, Robert Abiog and Melissa Mylinh Hoang. The evening was designed to promote MAT among students, Lanterman families, and local businesses and organizations who have expressed interest in supporting the project.

Sponsors of the MAT benefit included Dr. Music, American Legion Post 276, Rick Hyman, Trader Joe’s, Chado Tea Room, Jones Coffee Roasters and Designer Framing. Event volunteers included Wally Cardona, Gordon Cardona, Danny Dumont, Mary Flynn, Garik Gyuloglyan, Catalina Herrera, Marcia Landeros, Sandy Riancho and Anna Weir.

For more information about the MAT program, contact the Assistive Technology Project at **213.383.1300, x. 722** or atp@lanterman.org.



Participants in the adult computer classes at Lanterman joined Bits & Bytes on stage to help get the beat going about MAT.

Get Fit! Not Fat! PROJECT UPDATE

Get Fit! Not Fat! is a program aimed at improving the health status of adult clients of Frank D. Lanterman and Harbor Regional Centers by focusing on nutrition and exercise. It is being funded by a \$300,000 Wellness Initiative grant from the Department of Developmental Services. The program is a multi-faceted approach to improving health and will emphasize the importance of equipping staff and clients with knowledge and strategies to start and maintain positive behaviors related to exercise and good eating. Each regional center will have a dedicated project manager. Margarita Blanco will be Lanterman's project manager and Kerry Ryerson will be Harbor's project manager. Ryerson and Blanco will be working closely together to roll out the Get Fit! Not Fat! project over the next 18 months.



Meet Lanterman Regional Center Project Manager Margarita Blanco

Margarita Blanco has found her way to the position of project manager at Lanterman Regional Center via Harbor Regional Center where she worked as a service coordinator for almost five years. Blanco comments, "As I got to know my clients, service providers and families, I saw the need for nutritional and physical fitness programming."



Margartia Blanco

Most of the adult clients that were on my caseload have serious weight and/or chronic health issues, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, and they lead very sedentary lifestyles."

Almost a lifelong resident of Los Angeles, Blanco spent a few years away living in the Bay Area. She obtained her bachelor's degree in human biodynamics (formerly physical education) from the University of California, Berkeley. She has always led a very active lifestyle. In high school, Blanco played

volleyball, soccer and softball. While in college she participated in intramural sports, coached a girl's middle school volleyball team, and later went on to coach a high school volleyball club team. She has participated in volleyball and softball leagues, and has entered in numerous 5Ks and 10Ks, as well as two Los Angeles marathons. "It was one of my major life goals to run a marathon, and I felt a great sense of accomplishment," Blanco notes.

"I think running is my favorite physical activity. It's my outlet to relieve stress and I do some of my best thinking when I run, however, running, especially the marathons, has taken a toll on my knees so I've been exploring alternatives – swimming and walking," shares Blanco. She never learned how to "swim" as a child, but recently started taking swimming lessons. She admits, "I haven't been real good about practicing so I still consider myself a novice swimmer. My current personal goal is to complete a triathlon and become a better swimmer in the process."

"I am very honored to be a project manager for the Get Fit! Not Fat! program, and I'm looking forward to working with the clients, families, service providers and staff of Lanterman Regional Center," says Blanco. "I know it won't be all fun and games, but I think it's the ideal job for me since it blends both my education

and work experience with my own personal interests and lifestyle." Blanco hopes that she can help get Lanterman's adult clients motivated and inspire them to take more control of their lives. She adds, "It's just amazing how exercise/sports/physical activity can add to the quality of one's life – it has for me. I really believe in this and I want to make it happen."

For Blanco, the key to success is good nutrition, engaging in activities you enjoy, surrounding yourself with support and encouragement, and making a commitment to a lifelong goal. She's excited and looking forward to becoming involved with Lanterman's community, exploring its resources, and sharing her enthusiasm and enjoyment for exercise/sports/physical activity.

Blanco, who is turning 30 in August, considers herself to be very down to earth, easy-going and approachable. She says, "I'm a very 'hands on' kind of person and I'm used to working directly with the clients. I can't imagine being project manager for a program like this and not participating alongside the clients in physical activities." In addition to running and organized sports activities, Blanco also enjoys doing arts and crafts with her nieces and nephew, loves to "fiddle with flowers and floral design," and likes bike riding, traveling and playing with her dog Roxy, who is a Boxer.

Meet Harbor Regional Center Project Manager Kerry Ryerson

Kerry Ryerson comes to the project manager position with a considerable amount of experience in developmental disabilities. Her son, Sean, who is 19, has Down syndrome. In 1990, approximately four years after her son was born, Ryerson, started working in the field of developmental disabilities.

Ryerson obtained her bachelor's degree in speech and language pathology, while raising her children as a single mother and working in the school system as a special education aide. She later worked as a speech and language specialist and as a special day class teacher. For the last three years, Ryerson was the program director at Easter Seals in Redondo Beach where she ran an adult day program and a supported employment program. "I cannot imagine doing any other kind of work," she notes.

Ryerson says, "I am confident that my previous experience as a program director will be very beneficial in my new position since I ran two adult programs and managed up to 18 staff. In addition, since Easter Seals is a service provider of Harbor Regional Center, I am very familiar with the components of HRC's Individual Program Plans, as well as the three yearly individual client reports that Easter Seals generated." Ryerson is also familiar with the process associated with the request for and the funding of appropriate services for clients, and knows many of the other service providers in Harbor's service area. She adds, "My eyes and my mind are always taking in information because I need to constantly learn as much as possible. Remember, I have a vested interest in the 'business' – my son."

In addition to her professional experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities, Ryerson has also dedicated much of her free time to volunteering with Special Olympics. "Eleven years ago, when my son was old enough to compete in various sports, I started volunteering, and my enthusiasm, as well as my commitment and involvement have grown with every passing year," shares Ryerson.

Throughout the course of the calendar year, Ryerson coaches snowshoeing, softball,

soccer, power lifting, and athletics (track and field). In the past she has coached basketball and tennis. Currently she has obtained coaching certification in snowshoeing, athletics, softball and basketball.

As the classes/trainings become available, she will become certified in the other sports. Ryerson recalls, "A highlight from one of my certification courses was when I was given the opportunity to train and certify in softball at the Olympic Training Camp in Chula Vista. I was awe-struck by the beautiful facility and the Olympic athletes that I saw while there." Ryerson is confident that her coaching skills will be very valuable in helping her guide the Get Fit! Not Fat! participants appropriately in physical activities.

For the past several years, Ryerson has been the South Bay area's chairperson for the Community and School Committee. On invitation from the Special Olympics area director, Ryerson also attends the yearly Area Director meeting and the yearly Leadership Committee meeting. She also initiated and continues to coordinate the Redondo Beach Tip-A-Cop, and arranges athlete greeters for the three yearly Tip-A-Cop fundraisers.

Through training offered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education six years ago, Ryerson became a Special Education Mediator and remains on the Alternative Dispute Resolution Design Team for Los Angeles County. Ryerson is also an active board member for the Southwest Special Education Local Planning Area's Community Advisory Committee. She was the chair four years ago and continues to represent the Southwest area every year in Sacramento when lobbying for special education funding with the other board members.



Kerry Ryerson

Ryerson is ecstatic about working on the Get Fit! Not Fat! project and can't wait to get started. "When I first found out about this project, I envisioned the terrific results that could be achieved. I know how desperately this type of nutritional and fitness information needs to be incorporated into the lives of people with developmental disabilities," she says. "I think that the combination of my personal, educational and professional experience have given me a great knowledge base along with my understanding of what it is like to live day-to-day with a person with a developmental disability."

When asked about what she would like to see accomplished with this project, Ryerson shared that she would like to see the participants make even the slightest change to their daily nutrition and their level of fitness and maintain it. She adds, "I will draw on my experience of when I trained for the 2002 Napa Valley Marathon, and how wonderful it felt to make a personal goal, train for it and achieve it. I had a running buddy four days a week and a marathon coach one day a week. We created a written plan that worked beautifully. That same type of support and encouragement can only lead to success for our participants and will improve the lives of everyone involved in the project."

In addition to her son, Ryerson also has a daughter, Ajda, who just turned 21 and is a junior at California State University, Long Beach where she is majoring in business. Ryerson will be celebrating her 50th birthday on November 1. "I love birthdays, even when closing in on the half century mark," exclaims Ryerson. The family also has a dog and a cat. Tony, a female, floppy-eared Doberman, is still a rambunctious "pup" at 3½ years. Wilson is a Calico that they found at Wilson Park 1½ years ago. In addition to her family, coaching for Special Olympics and her volunteer work related to special education, Ryerson enjoys tap dancing. She regularly takes classes and also has a "dance studio" in her garage. Ryerson proudly displays the various plaques that she has received in recognition of her volunteer work and service to the community on her "ego wall."

Walking for a Good Cause: Lanterman Raises Over \$25,000 Through Achievable Walk

Lanterman Regional Center participated in the Achievable Foundation’s Reach for the Stars Fourth Annual 5K Walk, Run, Wheel and Woof in Century City as “Team Lanterman” on Sunday, April 3, 2005. One hundred percent of the \$25,192 in donations that Team Lanterman collected was returned to the Center to fund Camperships, the Roberta Happe Memorial Internship and various Koch ♦ Young Resource Center projects.

- The category breakdown is:
- \$12,068 Camperships
 - \$8,577 Roberta Happe Memorial Internship Fund
 - \$1,792 Koch ♦ Young Resource Center Projects
 - \$2,755 Unallocated

The top three units who raised the most money were the Koch ♦ Young Resource Center, Administrative Services and the Los Angeles School-Age unit. Special thanks go to Soonthree Keaotamai who raised the second highest amount of money by any one individual in the entire Achievable Walk (\$5,390). Other Lanterman staff that raised over \$1,000 include Anita Castillo and Rita Chen-Brown.

“The support provided to Team Lanterman by our community was unbelievable. We were able to send everyone who applied for camp this year and would not have been able to do that without the generous support of our employees, clients, families, service providers and Lanterman friends,” shares Jackie Ashman, director of Human Resources and coordinator of Lanterman’s Achievable Walk efforts.

Thanks to everyone who sponsored Team Lanterman in the walk. A special thanks to our corporate sponsors who donated \$250 or more.



Team Lanterman gears up as the 5K prepares to get underway.



Team Lanterman members (left to right) Madeline Lara, Yadira Navarro and Ronna Kajikawa.



Rigoberto Gaona, a Lanterman client, received second place in the wheelchair competition.



Team Lanterman members from the Foothill School-Age and Glendale units get ready to start the 5K walk. (Left to right) Service Coordinators Enrique Roman, Abraham Estrada, and Cheryl Francisco, Associate Director of Consumer and Family Services Melinda Sullivan, Regional Manager Candice LaMere, and Service Coordinator Michele Johnson.



Executive Director Diane Anand, with her grandson, Wyatt, and Past Board President Robert Wedemeyer.

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Find a Buddy and Get Ready to Start Walking

The Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles' 11th Annual Buddy Walk will be here before you know it. On Sunday, November 13, 2005 DSALA friends and families will again be at Santa Anita Race Track in order to raise awareness and promote understanding about Down syndrome. The Buddy Walk features a fundraising walk and information faire. There will also be entertainment.



So find a buddy and get ready to start walking. For more information about the 2005 Buddy Walk, visit www.dsala.org/buddy_walk.htm or call DSALA at 818.242.7871.

DO-IT Online (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology)

www.washington.edu/doit

DO-IT serves to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers. It promotes the use of computer and networking technologies to increase independence, productivity and participation in education and employment. DO-IT has received national and regional awards. DO-IT is for people with disabilities of all ages. The following are key players on the DO-IT team: DO-IT Scholars (college-capable high school students with disabilities who have leadership potential), DO-IT Pals (teens with disabilities who participate in an electronic community to support their academic and career goals), DO-IT Ambassadors (DO-IT Scholar high school graduates who continue to support DO-IT), DO-IT Campers (participants in selected summer camps for children and youth with disabilities), DO-IT Mentors (college students, faculty and professionals in a wide variety of career fields, many of whom have disabilities themselves), and DO-IT Staff, Interns and Volunteers. DO-IT has a wide variety of resources available to individuals with disabilities. DO-IT resources on the Internet facilitate communication and provide access to information. Web site topics focus on access issues for people with disabilities, including access to adaptive technology, science, mathematics, engineering, technology, postsecondary education and careers. Most of DO-IT's printed publications, as well as a useful set of links to other Internet resources, are available at this site. DO-IT also has low-cost videotapes that cover a wide range of topics, as well as comprehensive presentation and program development materials. DO-IT is a collaboration of Computing and Communications, and the Colleges of Engineering and Education at the University of Washington.

Be the First to Know and Help Us Save Money – Join Lanterman's E-mail List

Thirty-seven cents may not seem like a lot of money, but multiply that by 6,000, the approximate number of people Lanterman Regional Center serves, and that's \$2,200 for one mailing. While all mailings are not as large, Lanterman sends tens of thousands of pieces of mail via the United States Postal Service every year, and this adds up to a lot of money.

There's something you can do to help us save money – join Lanterman's e-mail list! Instead of waiting for "snail mail" to get important information about events, the budget or trainings, you could be the first to know with e-mail.

To join, send an e-mail to Vinita Anand at vinita.anand@lanterman.org. Please include in the message your name, the client's name and age, and the city you reside in, to help us target our e-mail messages more effectively.



Lanterman Service Providers Prepare to Help Clients Return to the Community from Developmental Centers



The first graduating class of the Community Placement Plan Provider Training Program.

In November 2004, 21 service providers started the Community Placement Plan (CPP) Provider Training Program, which was created to help them better understand the needs of clients who are currently living in developmental centers, but are preparing to move into the community through the state-funded Community Placement Plan. The training, which took place over a seven-month period and consisted of 100 hours, taught providers new techniques to support their clients, as well as how to establish personnel systems that will help them recruit, train and retain quality staff.

Dr. Tom Pomeranz, founder of Universal Lifestyles was the key presenter. The training was attended by both direct care staff and administrators from one independent living services agency, two adult day programs and 10 homes. Universal Lifestyles is a unique training program that helps providers identify universal enhancements that are guaranteed to help people with developmental disabilities "get a life." In addition to classroom training, Pomeranz visited each of the homes or programs to observe the staff in action and provide feedback to the administrators.

Pomeranz reported that he was impressed with the care and commitment he observed from the staff at the programs. He also commented on the positive interaction between the clients and staff, noting that he sensed a genuine affection for each other.

Katina Jones, owner/administrator of Dare 2 Care group home said, "The CPP training challenges us to enhance the way we treat and care for persons with developmental disabilities." Lorraine Carr added, "CPP training is motivational and inspiring. It teaches you to encourage others to have a better life."

There were also sessions on pharmacology, budgets and environmental enhancements. Participants were asked to look at their program and answer the question, "Would I want to live/work here?" If the answer was no, then why should the clients be there? Participants learned that by putting the client's needs first, they will be able to help them get the life that we all want. "I learned that our residents can be embarrassed, too. You can talk to them quietly to ask or tell them something and get the same results. They like their privacy and respect," commented Connie Coffey.

The CPP Provider Training Program was made possible by special CPP funding from the Department of Developmental Services. Additional funds have been requested to offer the program again. The next training session will be expanded to include providers from other regional centers in the Greater Los Angeles area. Lanterman service providers who would like to be notified of the next session are encouraged to contact Karen Ingram, director of Community Services at **213.383.1300, x. 617** or karen.ingram@lanterman.org.

AbilityFirst's Work Center Offers Services for Pasadena's Business Community and Employment for Lanterman Clients

AbilityFirst's Work Center in Pasadena outgrew its old space and on April 14, 2005, celebrated the opening of the Work Center's new location at 2570 East Foothill Boulevard. A number of community representatives attended the celebration held at the new Work Center location. The Work Center offers a number of services for businesses in the Pasadena and Foothill areas, including mailing, assembly, packaging, shredding, shrink wrap, collating and sorting. For more information about Work Center business services contact Work Center Director Marlene Otto at **626.449.5661, x. 111**.



In attendance at the celebration were (left to right) Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Tonjia Barnes; Ambassador Maraea Johnson; AbilityFirst CEO Lori Gangemi; Pasadena Work Center Director Marlene Otto; Becky Tschirgi, AbilityFirst, VP, Programs; Bob DeKruif, Ahmanson Foundation; Patricia Vick, AbilityFirst, Chair; Pasadena Vice Mayor Sid Tyler; and Ambassadors Joe Flores and Mary Salcedo.

Precise Care Pasadena Empowers Clients to Get Healthy and Control Their Diabetes

One day, Rose Young got on a bus to Lanterman Regional Center, not because she had an appointment or to inquire about a service, but because she was so excited about her success at controlling her diabetes that she couldn't wait to share her story with us. With lots of hard work and determination, as well as a healthful diet and exercise, Young was able to control her diabetes and no longer needed to self-administer her insulin injections.

"It's an amazing accomplishment that Rose has been able to achieve. At the time that Rose moved into Precise Care Pasadena, the beginning of this year, her blood sugar levels measured around 300. Today, her diabetes is controlled without insulin injections," says Charlotte Heim, owner/administrator of Precise Care Pasadena. Heim, who is a registered nurse with 15 years of experience, much of it in critical care, specifically designed Precise Care Pasadena for clients that have either insulin or non-insulin dependent diabetes.

Young lives at Precise Care Pasadena along with Vincent Pennington who also has diabetes. "The reason that Vincent and Rose have been successful is that they were ready to be more independent and take an active role in their diet and their life, and we were ready to give them the knowledge they needed to reach their goals," adds Heim.

Heim and her staff worked with Young and Pennington to identify what types of food they liked, and to help them learn how to prepare their meals in a healthy way. The staff at Precise Care Pasadena help the residents weigh and measure every piece of food, prepare their own meals, and have taught them how to perform a food exchange. Each week, the clients come up with a menu plan.

"The key is to understand what it means to be on a diabetic diet. We all cheat when it comes to being on a diet, so it's important for Vincent and Rose to understand how to use the diet exchange menu. Rose and Vincent both enjoy a piece of chocolate occasionally, but they also recognize they have to evaluate their diet wisely. The clients and staff alike have begun to appreciate that the focus on

living healthy with diabetes must include a good 'diabetic diet' which monitors caloric intake, not just the glucose consumption, along with daily exercise and proper medical management. The success of this program is truly due to the residents'



Vincent Pennington has lost over 40 pounds and has been able to simplify his treatment since he's been at Precise Care Pasadena.

desire to live healthy and independent lives," notes Heim.

Every afternoon, the residents of Precise Care Pasadena go for a walk. The routine varies depending on what each person's blood sugar levels are. They also have access to exercise equipment on the premises. Precise Care Pasadena staff also work closely with Dr. Cary Manoogian, an endocrinologist at Huntington Medical Foundation.

Manoogian shared the following information in a letter to Lanterman:

"I have had the opportunity to care for several patients from Precise Care Pasadena. The program that they have established to care for their diabetic patients has proven to be excellent. The patients' care has improved dramatically since they have been at Precise Care Pasadena.



Precise Care Pasadena resident Rose Young has been able to control her diabetes without insulin injections.

Mr. Vincent Pennington is one of their residents, and he has done remarkably well due to dietary and exercise programs that they have established with him. He has lost over 40 pounds and is continuing to lose weight. His medical treatment has also been simplified

due to the care he has been getting. Vincent has been thrilled with his profound weight loss and is feeling much more energetic.

The second patient that comes to mind is Rose Young. She was on insulin therapy prior to coming to me, and with her dietary and exercise program has gone off the therapy. She is doing extremely well overall and has begun to lose weight as well.

The care of the staff and counseling on an ongoing basis seems to be what promotes this adherence to their program. I have not had this type of experience with other homes and I am pleasantly pleased that we have a residence in the Pasadena area that cares for diabetic patients in this fashion."

Heim reminds Young and Pennington that they are totally in control of their destiny because their success is based on their behavior, and encourages them to maintain their diet and exercise habits to keep control and to stay compliant, so that diabetes won't interfere with their lives. Just in the last four months or so, Heim has noticed how proud Young and Pennington are of themselves and that each of the clients has a more positive self-image. Young added, "Exercise is the pill that keeps me off the needle (insulin)," and Pennington shared that, "I know I can do anything I put my mind to."

Lanterman Client Joanna Ellis Assists Billy Hall to Attend OCRA-related Activities



Joanna Ellis and Billy Hall, both clients of the regional center, became friends in a Lanterman computer class. The two have since partnered up to ensure that adults with developmental disabilities are represented in state activities.

In 2003, Billy Hall was invited to become a member of the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) Advisory Committee. Hall, who has some physical limitations which were exacerbated by an injury at work, was in need of some additional assistance to be able to attend Committee meetings, as well as conferences and other events.

In February, Hall started pondering who he might ask to help him and realized that a perfect candidate for the job was Joanna Ellis. Hall met Ellis and her mother for the first time in September 2004 at the start of the fall semester of the Los Angeles Unified School District Division of Adult Education computer classes held at Lanterman and they quickly hit it off and have since become good friends.

In his excitement, Hall immediately called Protection and Advocacy, Inc. to get things going, forgetting to call Ellis and her mother to see if she was even interested. Ellis, who works part-time at El Pollo Loco and also as a child care provider at her church, wasn't sure she would have the time to participate. She eventually did decide to sign on as an on-call consultant to be Hall's facilitator/personal care attendant.

Ellis provides assistance to Hall so he can attend quarterly Advisory Committee meetings, and facilitation services so he can attend various conferences and events such as the Supported Life Conference, People First and/or Respectability conferences. Ellis helps Hall with everything from reading documents and training materials to guiding him when he is on his scooter through crowds, and with traveling, such as directions at the airport and luggage, as well as registration at hotels.

Thus far, Ellis has assisted Hall to attend a rally on the steps of the Capitol in California this past May and a conference in Sacramento in June. In addition to serving on the Advisory Committee, Hall works at Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.

Closing the Gap

www.closingthegap.com

Closing the Gap, Inc. is an organization that focuses on computer technology for people with special needs through its bi-monthly newspaper, annual international conference and extensive Web site. The organization publishes a yearly Resource Directory, which is an extensive product guide developed to assist parents and professionals in the selection of computer-related products and services for children and adults with special needs. It is a major resource in the field of assistive technology. An online version of the Resource Directory with enhanced capabilities and tools is available as part of Closing the Gap Solutions. The site also features Closing The Gap Forums, which is a discussion board exploring the many ways that technology is being used to enhance the lives of people with special needs.

SAVE THE DATE!

New and Innovative Approaches to Phenylketonuria

Thursday, August 11, 2005

Speakers: Multiple

California PKU Late Treatment Project presents "New and Innovative Approaches to Phenylketonuria" on Thursday, August 11, 2005 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles Saban Research Institute Auditorium located at 4661 Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. This CME/CEU event is being sponsored by Childrens Hospital Los Angeles in cooperation with Lanterman Regional Center. Upon completion of this conference, participants should be able to define the history, etiology and diagnosis of PKU, and describe treatment and outcomes for individuals with PKU; describe dietary treatment using large neutral amino acids to severely affected individuals diagnosed with PKU acquired prior to the implementation of newborn screening; identify barriers to treatment and the cost/benefits of treatment; and describe the most recent developments in the treatment of individuals with PKU. For more information about the event and to access the registration form visit www.lanterman.org/training/ExternalConferencesSeminars.asp and download the brochure. Additional information can also be obtained by calling 323.644.8620.

Meet the People Behind the Titles: Barry Londer

Keeping Lanterman Fiscally Sound

As Lanterman Regional Center’s controller, Barry Londer is an integral member of our leadership team. We feel it’s important for everyone in our community to have a better idea of the person behind the title and his responsibilities, so “Viewpoint” recently met with him and asked about projects in the works, as well as the biggest challenges and most rewarding aspects of his job.

BACKGROUND

Londer attended the University of California, Los Angeles, where he obtained his bachelor’s degree in psychology followed by his master’s of business administration from the Anderson School of Management. While pursuing his undergraduate degree, he worked as a clerk/receptionist at the Thaliens Community Mental Health Center of Cedars Sinai Medical Center. He was later promoted to psychiatric intake worker upon his graduation. After finishing his graduate degree, Londer went on to work at Touche Ross, and obtained his Certified Public Accountant (C.P.A.) credential. In November 1993, Londer joined Lanterman Regional Center as the Center’s controller. “Working as controller at Lanterman enabled me to marry my social services background with my business background, and incorporate aspects of both,” explains Londer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Londer oversees Lanterman’s accounting team, which handles the payment of purchase of services claims, payroll and operations expenses, and maintains the Center’s general ledger. Londer prepares monthly financial statements and assists the associate director with preparing the Center’s annual budget. He also facilitates Lanterman’s banking relationship with City National Bank. “One of my biggest responsibilities is to safeguard the Center’s assets,” shares Londer. One major advance he recalls was the advent of positive pay, which is a system where the Regional Center notifies the bank of its outgoing checks, which allows the Center to detect potentially fraudulent activity. A memorable training Londer attended was given by Frank Abagnale, a world-renowned fraud expert, where he learned how easy it was for an individual to commit fraud and strategies organizations can employ to protect against it.

Londer and his staff also work with an independent auditor to prepare for the annual audit. The staff accountant prepares work schedules, account analyses and provides bank reconciliations, and all accounting staff assist in gathering necessary information.

Accounting staff also work with Department of Developmental Services auditors who come to the Center to audit for approximately four to six weeks every two years or so.

Another key area that Londer focuses on is making sure that the agency is fiscally responsible. Along with Patrick Aulicino, the associate director of Administrative Services, he serves on the Administrative Affairs Committee, which is a committee of the board of directors that reviews the financial

“It’s important to have a good work environment and work with a spirited group of people, so you want to get up and go to work.”

– Barry Londer

status, activities and policies of the Regional Center. The Committee reviews the annual budget and monthly financial statements, and also makes recommendations to the board on such key matters as investment policy.

The accounting team is very much the financial hub of the Center and works closely with Lanterman staff and service providers. Londer adds, “We are continually trying to implement best practices. I remember when I first started working at Lanterman, some providers used to come to the Center on the 15th of the month and stand in long lines to pick up their checks. Now, provided we receive invoices on a timely basis, we pay by the 10th of the month or the first business day after, and only in a real emergency can providers come the day after the check runs to pick up their check.”

REWARDS AND CHALLENGES

When asked what the most rewarding part of his job is, Londer replied: “It’s important to have a good work environment and work with a spirited group of people, so you want to get up and go to work. We’ve achieved numerous accomplishments over the years and I’m proud of how hard everyone works. The agency is filled with so many committed people who don’t work here for the financial rewards, but rather for the internal satisfaction they have working for an organization they believe in and care about. It’s great to work for an organization that is not just stuck on a profit motive. While we have to be accountable and make our budget, our focus is on offering quality services, allocating our resources properly and living within our means.”

When asked about the biggest challenges of his job, Londer responded: “The biggest challenge not just for me, but for the Regional Center is being able to operate in an entitlement system with a limited budget – the two ideas don’t go together. The Center tries to spend its resources on needed quality services, but also needs to do so in a cost-effective manner. Another, almost yearly challenge has been the budget impasse that can carry on for several months into a new fiscal year. We are fortunate to have



Controller Barry Londer

a strong credit line, in case we need to draw upon it to continue to provide services until a new budget is signed.”

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Londer indicates he is very proud of the employees who work within the accounting unit. In the almost 12 years since he joined Lanterman, the unit has never missed paying providers on the 10th or first business day after. “We have created our own internal safeguards by reviewing audit reports and rotating accounting assignments periodically. This provides a fresh pair of eyes to detect errors and gain perspective on our accounting processes,” comments Londer. Additional accomplishments for the accounting team include the

conversion from parent vouchered respite to a modified agency respite program, as well as the assumption of new responsibilities for billing and paying habilitation providers.

LOOKING FORWARD

Londer shares, “There are big changes coming which will impact the way we authorize and pay for services, as well as how we conduct our business.” Targeted for rollout in May 2006, is the California Developmental Disabilities Information System Project (CADDIS). Under CADDIS, more accounting functions will be automated, including electronic billing and payments. Funding authorizations will also be submitted and reviewed online. “Accounting associates will review the information and monitor its accuracy,” adds Londer. “Electronic payments which will go directly into the bank accounts of many of our providers will be a much welcomed service.”

HELPFUL TIPS ABOUT ACCOUNTING

A helpful bit of advice when interacting with the accounting team is to keep in mind the payment crunch that takes place prior to the 10th of the month, and if possible, try to conduct your business well before, or preferably after the 10th. “In accounting, we recognize we are part of the total package of the Regional Center and we really strive to understand and have compassion for service providers and clients, to improve our services, and participate in anything that can enhance our perspectives,” says Londer.

PERSONAL TIDBITS

Family

Londer, a California native who grew up in Culver City and now lives in Northridge, is celebrating his 25th anniversary with his wife Sarah. Sarah manages real estate property and is active in several community activities. They have three children – Rachel, Nesa and Jonathan. Rachel is 22 and is a senior fashion design student at the Otis College of Art and Design, where she recently received an award for her design work. Nesa is 19 and is attending the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she is focusing on environmental studies. Jonathan, who is 18, recently got his driver’s license and will be attending the California School of Culinary Arts.

Activities and Hobbies

“I am a real Dodgers fan, and besides Dodgers games, I enjoy going to plays and concerts as well,” shares Londer. “I also love to plan trips and to negotiate the best prices.” Londer and his wife are going on a cruise to Alaska this summer to celebrate their special anniversary.

GIVING BACK

“There are trade-offs that we make in life, between our family and our work, and we always need to evaluate what’s important to us and what we value. I feel very fortunate to have a wonderful family and to work for the Regional Center,” shares Londer. Barry and Sarah Londer also enjoy giving back to their community. As part of “Mitzvah Day” they work with their Temple congregation to provide turkey baskets for deserving Lanterman families at Thanksgiving. Londer also acknowledges the accounting unit who played a significant role in recent fundraising efforts as part of the Achievable Foundation’s annual walk for camperships for Regional Center clients, Koch ♦ Young Resource Center projects, and the Roberta Happe Memorial Internship Fund.

Join Administrative Affairs

The Administrative Affairs committee welcomes new members, and is particularly looking for business professionals with a variety of backgrounds. If you are interested in potentially serving on the Administrative Affairs Committee or would like more information, contact Patrick Aulicino at 213.383.1300, x. 690 or patrick.aulicino@lanterman.org.

Summertime Safety

Continued from page 1

WATER SAFETY

To enjoy the water, here are some general water safety tips from the American Red Cross:

- ◆ Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone. The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter at www.redcross.org.
- ◆ Swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard.
- ◆ Read and obey all rules and posted signs.
- ◆ Children or inexperienced swimmers should take precautions, such as wearing a United States Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) when around the water.
- ◆ Watch out for the dangerous “too’s” – too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.
- ◆ Set water safety rules for the whole family based on swimming abilities. For example, inexperienced swimmers should stay in water less than chest deep.
- ◆ Be knowledgeable of the water environment you are in and its potential hazards, such as deep and shallow areas, currents, depth changes, obstructions, and where the entry and exit points are located. The more informed you are, the more aware you will be of hazards and safe practices.
- ◆ Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.
- ◆ Use a feet-first entry when entering the water.
- ◆ Enter headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.
- ◆ Do not mix alcohol with swimming, diving or boating. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body’s ability to stay warm.
- ◆ Know how to prevent, recognize and respond to emergencies.

For tips specific to different types of aquatic activities such as home pool safety, and beach and ocean safety visit

www.redcross.org/services/hss/tips/healthtips/safetywater.html.

Not practicing water safety can have devastating consequences:

- ◆ According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, for every child who drowns, three receive emergency department care for non-fatal submersion injuries. More than 40 percent of these children require hospitalization. Nonfatal incidents can cause brain damage that results in long-term disabilities ranging from memory problems and learning disabilities to the permanent loss of basic functioning.
- ◆ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2000, there were 3,281 unintentional drownings in the United States, an average of nine people per day. This does not include drownings in boating-related incidents. In 2001, 859 children ages birth to 14 years died from drowning. While drowning rates have slowly declined, drowning remains the second-leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 1 to 14 years.
- ◆ Children under age 1 most often drown in bathtubs, buckets or toilets. Among children ages 1 to 4 years, most drownings occur in residential swimming pools.

What to do in the event of a near-drowning emergency:

In a near-drowning emergency, the sooner the rescue and first aid, the greater the victim’s chance of survival. To learn more about rescue options to reach drowning victims and first aid treatment options contact your local Red Cross chapter. To find your local chapter visit www.redcross.com. In any drowning situation, always call 9-1-1.



SUN SAFETY

To help you enjoy the sun safely:

- ⚙ Limit sun exposure during the hours when the sun’s rays are the strongest, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. To the extent possible, people should limit their exposure to the sun during these hours and practice all of the sun protective behaviors. Your shadow is an indicator of the sun’s intensity. If your shadow is shorter than you are, the sun is at its highest intensity. The American Academy of Dermatology has established the Shadow Rule: No Shadow – SEEK SHADE.
- ⚙ Refer to the daily UV Index when planning outdoor events. The UV Index is a daily forecast of the intensity of the sun’s UV rays. The Index indicates the risk of overexposure to skin-damaging UV radiation and can be used to help plan outdoor activities to minimize overexposure.
- ⚙ Seek shade whenever possible. Shade structures such as trees and umbrellas provide year-round protection. Although trees do not offer complete sun protection, they provide about 60 percent blockage from the sun’s rays.
- ⚙ Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and long-sleeved, tightly woven clothing. Clothing can physically block out the sun’s harmful rays and should be one of the first lines of defense against sun exposure. Sunglasses should block out 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation to protect the eyes from damage. Hats are the best way to minimize UV radiation exposure to the face, head, ears and neck.
- ⚙ Use broad-spectrum sunscreens whose active ingredients block UVA and UVB rays. The Sun Protective Factor (SPF) should be a minimum of 30. For increased protection, make sure the sunscreen contains Parsol 1789 (avobenzone), zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. Sunscreens should be used every day, including cloudy days. The type of sunscreen, whether gel, cream, stick or spray-on is a matter of personal preference, however, they should all be applied liberally and evenly a half-hour before going out into the sun, and should be reapplied regularly, especially after swimming.



Waterproof sunscreen only provides 80 minutes of protection in the water and needs to be reapplied. Sweatproof and rubproof sunscreens are

also available, but need to be reapplied as well. Don’t forget to protect ears, noses, lips and the tops of feet which often go unprotected, and remember, sunscreen only reduces damage from UV radiation, it doesn’t eliminate it.

- ⚙ Avoid tanning salons. Artificial UV radiation is just as bad for your skin as sunlight. Most tanning devices use UVA rays which have been shown to go deeper into the skin and contribute to premature wrinkling and skin cancer.
- ⚙ Limit exposure to the reflective surfaces like snow and water. UV rays can be reflected off of sand, tile, water, snow and buildings. It is important to practice all the sun protective behaviors even when you are in the shade.

There’s no other way to say it – tanned skin is damaged skin. Some of the consequences of too much sun include:

- ⚙ Skin cancer such as the treatable basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas, as well as malignant melanoma, which can be deadly if it goes undetected and untreated in early stages.
- ⚙ Premature aging of the skin, including wrinkles, sagging, leathery appearance and brown spots.
- ⚙ Impaired vision from sun damage to the retina, lens and cornea, as well as cataracts.
- ⚙ Weakened immune system caused by tanning-induced suppression of certain components leading to increased vulnerability to infection.
- ⚙ Vulnerability to bruises caused by tanning-induced thinning of the walls of the vessels

that supply blood to the skin, which results in easy bruising.

For more information about sun safety visit the National Safety Council’s “Sun Safety” Web page at www.nsc.org/ehc/sunsafer.htm.

Care suggestions in the event of a sunburn:

Home care starts before a sunburn happens. If you are prepared before going out in the sun, you probably won’t need these tips and techniques for treating a sunburn.

- ⚙ Immediate self-care is aimed at stopping the UV radiation.
 - ▶ Get out of the sun
 - ▶ Cover exposed skin
 - ▶ Get out of the tanning bed
- ⚙ Relief of the discomfort becomes important.
 - ▶ Medications such as aspirin, ibuprofen and naproxen are useful, especially when started early.
 - ▶ For mild sunburn, cool compresses with equal parts of milk and water may suffice. You may also use cold compresses with Burow solution, which can be purchased at a drug store. Soak gauze or a soft clean cloth in solution. Gently wring out the cloth and apply to the sunburned area for 15 to 20 minutes. Change or refresh the cloth and solution every two to three hours.
 - ▶ Aloe-based lotions are another option, and there are many commercially available types. Tearing apart your aloe plant in the yard and applying the cool jellylike substance inside the leaves is no longer necessary.
 - ▶ Cool (not ice cold) baths may help. Avoid bath salts, oils, and perfumes because these may produce sensitivity reactions. Avoid scrubbing the skin or shaving the skin. Use soft towels to gently dry yourself. Don’t rub. Use a light, fragrance-free skin moisturizer.
 - ▶ Avoid lotions that contain topical anesthetic medications because you can become sensitized and then allergic to that medicine.
 - ▶ Obviously, stay out of the sun while you are sunburned.

Severe sunburns require medical attention and professionally monitored treatment.

Long-term skin care suggestions:

To prevent long-term complications from overexposure to the sun and sunburns, a yearly screening is recommended. Volunteer dermatologists provide free skin cancer screenings in their communities as part of the American Academy of Dermatology’s Skin Cancer Screening program. To find a free screening in your area visit www.aad.org/public/SkinCancerScreenings/skincancerscreen.htm.

HOT WEATHER SAFETY

To help you stay cool in hot weather:

- ⚙ Dress for the heat. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun’s energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella.
- ⚙ Drink water. Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine which dehydrate the body.
- ⚙ Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
- ⚙ Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- ⚙ Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.
- ⚙ Stay indoors when possible.



Some of the consequences of not using precaution in hot weather include:

- ⚙ **Heat cramps:** Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles

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KEEN on Athletic Programs for Youth with Developmental Disabilities in Los Angeles

For many children with developmental disabilities participating in traditional physical fitness opportunities is not always possible. In Los Angeles, in particular, there is a shortage of specialized recreational programs, but all that is about to change. Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) is launching a Los Angeles program later this year. Although KEEN LA hopes to offer weekly programs in the near future, KEEN LA programs will initially be available every other Sunday afternoon.

KEEN is an international, non-profit tax-exempt organization started in the United States in 1992 that is dedicated to providing specialized athletic programs for school-aged children and young adults with significant developmental disabilities. KEEN LA is one of two new programs starting this year, the other being St. Louis, Missouri, and will complement already existing programs in the Washington, D.C., Chicago and Kansas City metropolitan communities, as well as programs in England.

Participating children and youth are paired with a volunteer coach for a variety of age-appropriate recreational activities, including soccer, tennis, track and field, basketball, swimming, aerobics, bowling and other various adaptive activities. The sessions generally last for two hours and are expected to be offered up to four times per month in the near future. KEEN provides an open, unstructured environment for people with any type of disability, including those with significant needs. In many cases, the KEEN program frequently constitutes the only recreational and social activity for some athletes who are unable to participate in other programs.

Prior to making the decision to establish a program in Los Angeles, KEEN sponsored a community meeting in downtown Los Angeles, which included representatives from many of the largest non-profit entities and government agencies that provide services to children and youth with developmental disabilities. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the need in the Los Angeles area for specialized recreational programs serving this segment of the population. KEEN representatives also met with several elected officials and conducted a preliminary community needs assessment to determine the

need for KEEN-type recreational programs in the Los Angeles area.

Lanterman Executive Director Diane Anand, who attended the community meeting, states, "We are delighted to assist KEEN LA in the development of this much needed resource for economically disadvantaged children and young adults with developmental disabilities in the Central Health District of Los Angeles."

Based on the results of its preliminary survey and the input received from the community representatives at the town hall meeting, KEEN has elected to move forward with planning for the launch of KEEN programs in Los Angeles later this year.

Currently, a task force comprised of volunteers from the community meeting and other interested individuals is being developed. Startup funding for KEEN LA is through a special grant received from Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP, a national law firm with an office located in downtown Los Angeles.

Elliott Portnoy, the founder of KEEN stated that "KEEN is thrilled that Los Angeles recognizes a need for the specialized programs developed and offered by the KEEN affiliates." Portnoy further emphasized that "community participation in the development of KEEN LA is critical to assure that KEEN LA provides services which are supplemental to, and not in competition with, existing service offerings." Ed Reeser, the head of KEEN LA and the managing partner of Sonnenschein's Los Angeles office, also noted that "the development of KEEN LA would

constitute an important addition to our firm's commitment to supporting community service in Los Angeles, which includes support of selected education programs and our community service placement of young attorneys in causes that match up to their individual passions." Marjorie Heller, former Lanterman board member, is assisting Reeser in launching KEEN LA.

Anand adds, "Sonnenschein's two-year commitment to launching KEEN LA demonstrates that the spirit of volunteerism and charitable contribution is alive and well in the Downtown business community."

KEEN is currently recruiting volunteers to help with launching KEEN LA, including program planning, media outreach, program marketing and volunteer recruitment, as well as volunteers who are interested in being



KEEN athletes and volunteer coaches participate in a variety of recreational activities, including various adaptive activities.

paired with young people with disabilities on Sunday afternoons to experience sports and have fun. Volunteer coaches come from all walks of life and include working adults, corporate and community groups, college or high school students, retirees and families. Volunteers are not required to make any commitment of time, and no previous experience working with young people with developmental disabilities is required as training will be provided. Minimum age for volunteers is 15 years old.

KEEN offers fun in a safe and supervised setting while offering families valuable respite opportunities, and helps young athletes develop friendships with other athletes and volunteers, self-esteem and confidence, social and teamwork skills, athletic skills and talents, and a sense of belonging. KEEN LA programs will be taking place at the Elysian Park Therapeutic Recreational Facility.

For additional information on the operations of KEEN LA contact Jack Gilbertson or Rebecca Keating Edelstein, KEEN LA coordinators, at [213.892.2935](tel:213.892.2935) or KEEN@sonnenschein.com. Information about KEEN is also available at www.keenusa.org. The KEEN LA Web site is currently under construction. Look for more information in the coming months as the program develops.



KEEN offers youth with special needs who may not be able to participate in traditional physical fitness opportunities specialized recreational opportunities.



KEEN helps young athletes develop friendships with other athletes. The program also boosts self-esteem and confidence, helps develop social and teamwork skills, and offers young athletes with special needs a sense of belonging.

Summertime Safety

Continued from page 13

or the legs. It is generally thought that the loss of water and salt from heavy sweating causes the cramps.

- ✱ **Heat exhaustion:** Heat exhaustion is less dangerous than heat stroke. It typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Fluid loss causes blood flow to decrease in the vital organs, resulting in a form of shock. With heat exhaustion, sweat does not evaporate as it should, possibly because of high humidity or too many layers of clothing. As a result, the body is not cooled properly. Signals include cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.
- ✱ **Heat stroke:** Also known as sunstroke, heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's

temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red and dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high – sometimes as high as 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

General care for heat-related emergencies includes:

- ✱ Cooling the body
- ✱ Giving fluids
- ✱ Minimizing shock

Specific care suggestions for treating:

- ✱ **Heat cramps/heat exhaustion**

Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not let him or her drink too quickly. Do not give liquids with alcohol or

caffeine in them, as they can make conditions worse. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths such as towels or wet sheets.

- ✱ **Heat stroke**

Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation! Help is needed fast. Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency medical services (EMS) number. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. If you have ice packs or cold packs, place them on each of the victim's wrists and ankles, in the armpits and on the neck to cool the large blood vessels. (Do not use rubbing alcohol because it closes the skin's pores and prevents heat loss.) Watch for signals of breathing problems and make sure the airway is clear. Keep the person lying down.

So remember, a little precaution before a crisis occurs is preferable to a lot of fixing up afterward.

Save the Date!

Through the Roof Summit - Equipping for Disability, Ministry and Outreach

Friday, September 30 and Saturday, October 1, 2005

Key Note Speaker: Joni Eareckson Tada

Joni and Friends along with In His Image, Special Needs Ministry at Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene, present the first annual Southern California "Through the Roof Summit - Equipping for Disability, Ministry and Outreach" on Friday, September 30 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, October 1 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene located at 3700 East Sierra Madre in Pasadena. The key note speaker will be Joni Eareckson Tada. Topics/workshops will include how to start a disability ministry in your church; practical ways to outreach to families affected by disability; inclusion in the classroom and the special needs classroom; successful behavior management in your disability program; autism, learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, behavior disorders; recruiting, training and maintaining volunteers; partnering with community organizations to reach individuals and families; and much more. The Summit is for church leaders, including pastoral staff, ministry leaders, workers, Sunday school teachers and volunteers, as well as persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers, and professionals in disability-related fields, such as educators, ministry leaders, inclusion specialists, workers and advocates. For more information, visit www.lanterman.org/training/ExternalConferencesSeminars.asp and download the flyer or contact James Rene, manager of Church Relations for Joni and Friends at 818.574.1714 or jrene@joniandfriends.org.

Help Stamp Out Autism

For everyone who has a child or knows someone with a child with autism, you now have a chance to make a difference with a phone call to the United States Postal Service.

You might be asking yourself, "How can calling the USPS help?", and the answer is simple - USPS has a fundraising program where individuals can purchase 45-cent fundraising or "semi-postal" stamps. The price of a semi-postal pays for the first class single-piece postage rate plus an amount to fund causes that the Postal Service has determined to be in the national public interest.

For example, the Breast Cancer Research stamp since its introduction on July 29, 1998, has raised more than \$37 million for breast cancer research. By law, 70 percent of the net amount raised is given to the National Institutes of Health and 30 percent is given to the Medical Research Program at the Department of Defense. Revenue from sales of semi-postal stamps is transferred to a selected executive agency or agencies. Other fundraising stamps include the Heroes of 2001 stamp and the Stop Family Violence stamp.

Take a few minutes out of your hectic schedule and call 1.800.ASK.USPS (1.800.275.8777) to help in the fight against autism. Use prompts 1, then 7, then 3 to be connected to a Post Office customer service representative. Say, "I would like to make a suggestion for the next fundraising stamp to be autism."

If a semi-postal stamp is issued to help in the fight against autism, not only will it help raise funds, but it will also help raise awareness about autism.

Second Mother's Day Celebration for Early Intervention Parents is a Day at the Park



The Grupo de Apoyo para Familias de Intervención Temprana (Early Intervention Support Group) along with staff liaisons, Edward Perez and Monica Mauriz, hosted a Mother's Day celebration on Wednesday, May 11 at Pan Pacific Park for members of their support group. In attendance were 20 mothers, two fathers and 12 children. "It was a wonderful experience, and like always, our support group participated by bringing food to share with everybody," says Perez. The group had a picnic feast of posole, rice, fruit, chicken salad, and cake. "The mothers enjoyed the day at the park with music, playing with their children at the playground and a piñata. They also shared with the group the importance of being a mother, how rewarding it can be, but also the struggles they go through having a child with special needs," adds Perez. The mothers were also honored with flowers and a certificate of appreciation. This was the group's first social event outside of their regular meeting space at Lanterman, and was well received by everyone in attendance. The Grupo de Apoyo para Familias de Intervención Temprana meets the second Wednesday of the month at Lanterman Regional Center from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. For more information contact Augustina Mellin at 213.427.6298, Edward Perez at 213.383.1300, x. 674, or Monica Mauriz at x. 698.

Lanterman Regional Center Presents Staff with Service Awards



Service award recipients (left to right) Tammy Simmons, Madeline Lara and Yadira Maldonado-Ornelas. Not pictured: Migdalia Sanchez

In a job marketplace where companies often see relatively high turnover of their employees, it becomes important to acknowledge those individuals that have stayed on five, 10, 15 or even 20 plus years. Many years ago at Lanterman, the board of directors implemented service awards, to recognize the service and commitment of these employees to the Center and the Lanterman community. Service awards are presented to employees during the month in which they reach their milestone year of service - five, 10, 15, 20 and more years.

"Lanterman staff that reach these milestones do so by embodying the Center's commitment to delivering a high quality of service. Regional Center work is very challenging and staff often find themselves working with limited resources and high expectations to achieve results. It takes a special kind of person to succeed," says Diane Anand, executive director.

During the last quarter, four individuals received service awards. Yadira Maldonado for five years of service, and Migdalia Sanchez, Madeline Lara and Tammy Simmons for 10 years of service to Lanterman Regional Center and the community.

MyPyramid Plan

www.mypyramid.gov

The site is home to MyPyramid Plan, which can help you choose the foods and amounts that are right for you. The site features the MyPyramid Plan box that provides a quick estimate of what and how much you need to eat based on your age, sex and activity level. The site also offers a detailed assessment of your food intake and physical activity level through MyPyramid Tracker. The site features a "tips of the week" section along with other valuable resources, and a section created specifically for professionals that has resources and information for use in developing educational materials to assist in understanding federal food guidance. The final section is called Inside the Pyramid and offers advice on how to make smart choices from every food group, find balance between food and physical activity, and get the most nutrition out of your calories.



MyPyramid.gov
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

Chaka Kahn and Andrew Hain Entertain at WALK NOW



Each year, Lanterman Regional Center has a booth at the WALK NOW event to raise awareness about the regional center system among friends and family members of individuals with autism, professionals working in the field, and other organizations that provide services to individuals with autism.



Cure Autism Now WALK NOW

For the second year in a row, Andrew Hain, who is now 12, sang with Grammy award-winning singer Chaka Kahn at the Cure Autism Now WALK NOW event. The 2005 event was held in April at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. The 5K walk and resource fair drew 6,000 attendees and raised over \$900,000 for autism research. For more information about Cure Autism Now and the WALK NOW event visit www.cureautismnow.org.

Save the Date for Cure Autism Now 2005 RIDE NOW Los Angeles



On Sunday, September 18, 2005 the Los Angeles Chapter of the Cure Autism Now Foundation will host its first annual RIDE NOW Los Angeles.

RIDE NOW is a rally, ride and shindig benefiting Cure Autism Now. It's a celebration of motorcycles, metal and music. This year, RIDE NOW will be cruising through four cities – Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle – raising much-needed funding for biomedical research in autism and awareness for a disorder that was virtually ignored for more than 40 years.

Check-in will begin at 10 a.m. at Glendale Harley-Davidson located at 3717 San Fernando Road in Glendale. The ride will begin at 11:30 a.m. The ride will end at Sagebrush Cantina located at 23527 Calabasas Road in Calabasas, where riders and other supporters will enjoy a post-ride party. The party is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. Sagebrush Cantina will supply the food and entertainment, and sponsors will be raffling away prizes, including a 2005 Harley-Davidson Black Sportster.

So come RIDE NOW on September 18. Help celebrate something special and raise money to find the causes, effective treatments and a cure for autism. For more information visit www.canridenow.org.

Fathers' Corner

Continued from page 1

autism. I think that my son would have gone to school and I would have attended Back to School Night and Open House. My wife might still be working full-time outside the home. Our involvement with the school, the district and the educational system would have been very limited. But when you have a child with special needs and learn the terminology, acronyms and challenges that face parents who deal with special education, circumstances take you down another path. Most dads don't know what the letters "IEP" mean. I became an active member of the Community Advisory Committee in my school district and learned the inner workings of the system.

It is appropriate that I'm writing part of this on Father's Day as I sit and watch my son playing pinball on the computer. Part of me says that he should be interacting with another person and not playing on the computer. But the other part of me watches him play the game and marvel at his progress. What is different being the father of a child with a disability? We have different levels of accomplishment that we celebrate. Most of our kids are not going to finish at the top of their class or be elected class president. They probably aren't going to be the most popular or have the largest group of friends. But Andrew was selected "Student of the Month" twice during his years in elementary school. And sometimes our kids have to work harder.

But we have other reasons to celebrate. I remember when Andrew first played pinball on the computer that the ball kept going down the center and his scores were very low. Now I marvel at his high score and am amazed at how his hand/eye coordination has improved. It makes me think of his progress on his softball team. When he started he could barely swing the bat and connect with the ball. Then he held the bat better and hit the ball off the "T" stand. That was improvement. Now he's hitting a ball pitched to him and getting to first base. In the final game of the season he fielded a ground ball and threw it to a teammate. It's all about progress, just measured on a different scale.

Having a child with a special need has taken me on a journey I never imagined. I don't know if it has made me a "better" person, but I wouldn't be the same without Andrew having autism. I've learned to become more of a fighter. When Andrew was first diagnosed,

someone said that my wife and I would have to learn how to advocate for him and make sure he got what he needed. At the time I had no idea what that meant. Now I look back and realize what I was being told. It's made me appreciate the teachers, social skills group leaders, case workers and other parents who have helped give Andrew what he needs.

Being the parent of a child with a disability, you learn even more to expect the unexpected. Everyone wonders what will happen to their kids and what will they be when they grow up, but those concerns are magnified so much more. It's not whether your kid will be a doctor, teacher or firefighter. It's whether he will be able to get a job and live on his own. My

"Being the parent of a child with a disability, you learn even more to expect the unexpected. Everyone wonders what will happen to their kids and what will they be when they grow up, but those concerns are magnified so much more."

– Phillip Hain

wife and I wonder, "Will he be able to survive when we're not around?" Most parents of typically developing children have never heard of a Special Needs Trust.

Sometimes when I hear Andrew talk, the clarity in his thoughts seems to be unreal. I wonder what is going on inside his brain. And I have to snicker to myself, thinking back eight years to the psychiatrist who suspected mental retardation and never said the word "autism." It takes restraint to not walk back into his office and show him Andrew's test scores in math and spelling. The things he says are so vivid, but disconnected to his surroundings. Part of me is amazed at how bright he is and how his mind works. And I wonder and worry how this will serve him as an adult.

Andrew knows the most obscure facts about television game shows. Andrew remembers the name of the street where we stayed in a hotel in Canada while vacationing there five years ago. He can tell us the date we went to a taping of "Wheel of Fortune" and what the answer was to the bonus round puzzle. There are times when he's watching that show at home and yelling the answer at the television set, while the contestant on the screen is struggling.

I feel fortunate that he has an engaging personality and that people like him. But will these traits that make him likeable at 12 help him when he's 22? I just read an article about how difficult it is for kids like him when they start middle school. They are much more likely to be teased and bullied. Just when you overcome one hurdle, another one is not far behind.

I've become involved in different non-profit organizations and discovered another side of life. I've met fantastic parents, many of whose challenges are far more difficult than mine, and it makes me appreciate their struggles and sacrifices. Our children have become friends.

Joining the daDA Fathers' Support Group has given me the opportunity to meet other dads in similar situations, seek their advice and share with the group. I've met some great guys and we all learn from one another. I enjoy helping others who are just starting on their journey. I tell them that sometimes it seems to get easier and then other times you feel like you're starting over again. But there is always something more to learn. So, you pick yourself up and keep going because your child needs you – and that's what gives you strength.

Phillip Hain currently serves as president of the Los Angeles Chapter of Cure Autism Now, but the job that pays the bills is his position as a marketing manager for a paint company. He lives in Glendale with his wife and son.

The daDA Fathers' Support Group meets on the second Monday of every month from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Denny's at 3060 San Fernando Road in Los Angeles (off Fletcher Street, exit off I-5 or near the Glendale Freeway). For more information, contact Aaron Hinojosa at 626.296.1556 or Germán Barrero at 626.840.9842.

Fathers' Corner is a regular "Viewpoint" feature. If you are a father and would like to write for Fathers' Corner in an upcoming "Viewpoint," please contact Vinita Anand at 213.383.1300, x. 753 or vinita.anand@lanterman.org.

“little man”

Continued from page 1

crisis. “little man” addresses the difficulties that can arise from opposing belief systems and differing attitudes towards the ability of science and medicine to keep a fetus alive, providing greater insight into the questions of “At what price do we hold onto life? and “When does caring become cruelty?”

When asked what inspired her to make the film “little man” Conn shared the following story, “I actually had begun to work on a documentary about surrogacy, and had literally purchased my professional camera two days before Nicholas was born thinking we had three months to go. After he was born and we discovered how bad the health of the surrogate had been, we documented everything by taping many of his daily procedures, such as surgeries and life in the NICU.”

A few months later, once Nicholas was out of the most immediate danger, Conn and Baba viewed some of the footage and realized that they had the most incredible documentary on their hands. “Since I’m a filmmaker it was a natural fit to make this film, and when I got into the process further, I realized that people really needed to understand the ramifications of saving babies this early – the good, the bad, the whole story – and to pose to the viewer, just because science can save these babies, should we? Knowing full well, as a mother, I had only one decision I could make – and it would be the same if I had to do it all over



Filmmaker Nicole Conn introduces “little man” at the July 9 screening at LA Outfest Film Festival.

again – for me, I wanted Nicholas to have his opportunity to be here,” Conn says.

In a situation that mirrors the experiences of many Lanterman families, we watch as Conn and Baba work to balance Nicholas’ medical needs while maintaining something of a life that resembles normal for their daughter, preserving their marriage, and all the while wondering if their son will make it against all odds. Conn is obsessed by her son’s need to be here. Baba is terrified that long hospital stays and the mini-hospital in their own home will erode the family to a place of no return.

Based on her personal experience, Conn’s advice to other families in similar situations is

“to be as honest and patient with your spouse as possible. It’s okay to admit this is hard work, to own the struggle, the sacrifices and the resentments.” She also adds, “I have also gone to medical appointments and seen other children and families who have a much harder struggle, and so I would say, always try to keep things in perspective as well. Nicholas has taught me so many lessons, one of which is, it’s pretty darn hard to feel sorry for myself when I see what he has endured. The other is his absolute love of life and being. He teaches me every day how to stay in the moment and just be. Finally, give yourself a break – literally and figuratively. Be human and accept it... and go see a movie once in a while!”

In a way that not many films do, “little man” explores the core of the human spirit as a family realizes that they are capable of enduring what they never thought possible. Through dedication, love and commitment to the sheer force that is family, the miracle of life extends its hand to all of us.

The film is the winner of Best Documentary at New York Newfest and HBO Best Feature at Miami Film Festival. It has also received Official Selection at LA Outfest Film Festival, London Film Festival, San Francisco Film Festival, Philadelphia Film Festival, Dallas Film Festival and Melbourne Film Festival, as well as Audience Award for Best Documentary at LA Outfest.

For more information about “little man” and to find out where the film is screening next, visit www.littlemanthemovie.com.

Perspectives has a New Look

In the upcoming months, you may notice that the *Perspectives* logo is very different. General Working Group, an internationally known design firm, took on the project of giving *Perspectives* a new brand identity for a generously discounted rate. The colors have been significantly brightened to give the festival a more energetic and celebratory feel. Festival Director Marielle Farnan says, “We have introduced a kaleidoscope theme to symbolize the many potential perspectives on developmental disabilities and we’re very excited about the new look.”

The next *Perspectives* Film Festival is scheduled for March 17 to 19, 2006, so mark your calendars now. Visit www.perspectives-iff.org for more information.



Disabled Online

www.disabledonline.com

Created by Jay Cohen, Disabled Online is a one-stop resource for individuals with disabilities. The Web site is dedicated to providing beneficial resources for the disabled community, and their families and friends. It offers something for everyone, including news stories, message boards and chat rooms. Pull-down menus exist for the following categories: arts and entertainment, education, employment, government, home and living, legal, medical, organizations, recreation, shopping, travel, chat and forum.

Filmmakers Dominique and Monique Beltran are Making Films and Exploring Perceptions

About three years ago, Monique and Dominique Beltran, siblings and Lanterman clients, started attending the FSS after-school program at the Tom Bradley Community Center on Pico Boulevard in Los Angeles. The program is low-cost and provides children and young adults with the opportunity to be exposed to technology.

“Based on their interests, the program’s instructor worked with Dominique and Monique to introduce them to filmmaking equipment and technology,” says Elizabeth Beltran, Dominique and Monique’s mother. Over the course of several years, Monique and Dominique worked on their films after school and on the weekends.

Monique’s film, “Monster,” an experimental narrative, explores the issues that teenagers with special needs encounter, such as society’s misconceptions and stereotypes about people with disabilities. The plot of the 2½-minute film is a girl looking for her friend instead thinks she comes across a monster. Monique is a prolific writer of poetry, much of which explores the pain she experiences, her desire to have friends to talk to, what her life is like, and what she thinks other people feel about her being different.

Dominique’s film, “Dumb Luck President” is about a 16-year-old who imagines himself as a television anchorman who interviews President Bush. “For the past several years, Dominique has been trying to understand politics, the

world and why we are at war, all the while hating the fact that we are because money for his services are being slashed. He’s coming of age, and in maturing, is realizing how politics has affected us and even them,” adds Beltran. “Since he has difficulty expressing himself, making this film has given him a way to express how he feels about the situation.”

Both Dominique and Monique’s films were screened at the Second Annual Chaminade Film Festival on Friday, April 30, 2005, and at the Echo Park Film Center First Annual International Youth Film Festival held May 20 to 22, 2005. Monique’s films were well received at both festivals. Dominique’s film was well received at the festival in Echo Park, but was not as well received at the more conservative festival at Chaminade, due to the focus of its subject – Bush.

In addition to filmmaking, Monique likes writing scripts and Dominique likes acting. Both have been participants in The Entertainment Experience, a program started by Director and Producer Joey Travolta to expose children to every facet of the entertainment industry. Monique has also worked as a gopher on a production set and on editing a film project that Travolta was working on. Dominique has also participated in Actors for Autism. “Both Monique’s and Dominique’s social skills, focus and personal presentation have improved dramatically through participating in the various filmmaking and acting programs,” notes Beltran.



Monique (left) and Dominique Beltran’s films were screened at two film festivals in the Los Angeles area.

“Both Monique’s and Dominique’s social skills, focus and personal presentation have improved dramatically through participating in the various filmmaking and acting programs.”

– Elizabeth Beltran

Olivia Hinojosa Says Farewell to Lanterman as She Opens a New Chapter in Life

Among Lanterman’s families, Olivia Hinojosa is one of the most well known and highly regarded individuals. She has been involved in the coordination and facilitation of many of the education and training programs offered to Lanterman families, including the Navigating the Special Needs System training formerly known as Service Coordination and Advocacy Training, the various behavior management workshops, and parenting classes. Hinojosa has provided untold hours of technical support to the various support groups at Lanterman, from helping willing participants get a support group established to recruiting Lanterman professionals to partner with parent facilitators, and recruiting speakers and arranging meeting locations.



Olivia Hinojosa

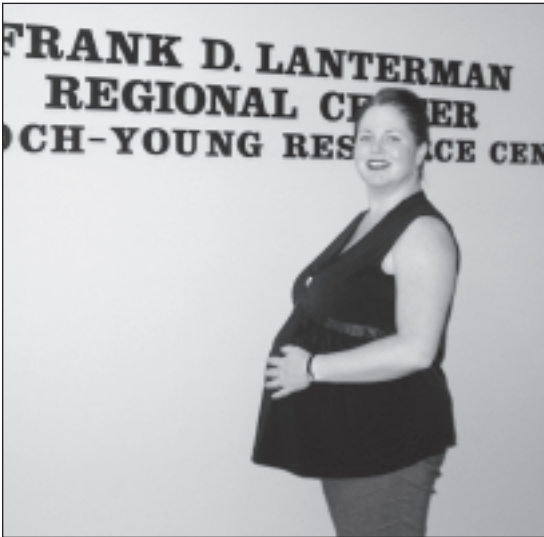
In addition, she managed the Peer Support Partner Program at Lanterman, which matches families and caregivers in need of assistance with a peer support partner who offers one-to-one emotional and informational support. The partner shares the experience of having a family member with a developmental disability, and is able to provide a unique form of support that only a person who has “been there” can.

For many years, Hinojosa represented the Koch♦Young Resource Center at the Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County meetings, facilitated the Center’s relationship with Family Voices, and coordinated numerous outreach and public awareness events. She was also a parent

coordinator of the Down Syndrome Parent Resource Network, the San Gabriel Valley Sub-group of the Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles (DSALA) for nearly 15 years.

Linda Landry, a longtime Lanterman parent, past board member and peer support partner, shares, “Olivia provides the quality of support every parent should have the joy of receiving. She is generous and caring, for example she taught herself enough Spanish to be able to be an immediate resource to families. Our Olivia has contributed to not only the Lanterman community, but Los Angeles County and California. To dear Olivia, wishing you ‘una vida feliz.’”

We wish Hinojosa, her husband, Aaron, and daughter, Sarah, all the best as they embark on a new journey in life with the upcoming arrival of a baby. Hinojosa shares from her heart, “I feel blessed to have had families share their lives with me and to develop so many special relationships with families and professionals alike over the last nine years. While I will no longer officially be at Lanterman, by virtue of being ‘Sarah’s mom,’ I will always be connected and involved in this field. I know this is not farewell, but until we meet again.” Who knows, maybe she’ll even be a guest presenter at the Navigating the Special Needs System training.



Hinojosa, at eight months, is counting down the days until the birth of her baby.

“I feel blessed to have had families share their lives with me and to develop so many special relationships with families and professionals alike over the last nine years.”

– Olivia Hinojosa

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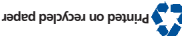
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“Viewpoint” can be viewed online at www.lanterman.org. To contact “Viewpoint” editors, send an e-mail to vinita.anand@lanterman.org or call 213.383.1300, x. 753.



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