Adam Sroujieh Finds a Close Companion in His Dog, Shana

Every child wants a dog, and just before the holiday season last year, Adam Sroujieh’s wish came true. Adam’s parents were hesitant to bring a dog into the family because of the added responsibility, but another family that has a dog from Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) finally convinced them to sign up. “We started the application process for a Skilled Companion three years ago. We received a phone call about a year and a half later, however, we were not ready to start the training and matching process, and postponed for another year,” explains Brigitte Sroujieh, Adam’s mother.

In November 2003, Adam, who is 9 years old, and his mother made the trip down to Oceanside, Calif., for the two-week intensive training program. In the Sroujiehs’ training program, there were five other teams and nine dogs. “The dogs for this class were all lined up in crates, and when Adam got to the crate with Shana, he said, ‘Shana, my dog,’ however, as part of the matching process, each team had to work with all nine dogs to determine the best match. Every time someone else would work with Shana, Adam would say, ‘No, my dog.’ The whole time I told him that we probably wouldn’t be getting this dog, but in the end he was matched with Shana,” shares Sroujieh.

Over two years are invested in raising and training a CCI dog, before the dog is ready for the Team Training program. It all starts with the puppies that CCI breeds from its pedigreed breeding stock that reside in the homes of volunteers. Breeding dogs are carefully selected for their health, temperament and intelligence. After eight weeks, the puppies are placed with volunteer puppy raisers who tend to their food and veterinary needs, take them to puppy training classes and expose them to public places. At one year of age, the dogs are returned to CCI for six to nine months of advanced training. Linda Valliant of CCI adds, “Only 50 percent of dogs graduate from advanced training, but those that do are really solid ‘bomb proof’ dogs. They are exposed to all kinds of situations, including traffic, planes, boats, elevators and lots of kids. We want the dog to help, not limit independence.”

Shana, who is a Labrador/Golden Retriever mix, received extra help from the trainers, ultimately graduating from the Advanced Training Program to become a Skilled Companion. A Skilled Companion team includes a person with a physical, developmental or emotional/cognitive disability or emotional/cognitive need. A Skilled Companion team training program to become a Skilled Companion is designed to help, not limit independence. This whole opportunity was too much of a coincidence not to have been meant to be, for everyone.”

Half a World Away, Pyunic is Striving to Create an Armenia Where People with Disabilities are Fully Included

Out of the tragedy of the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, an organization called Pyunic was created to provide programs and services to the children who were disabled in the earthquake. As time progressed, and the children grew older, their needs as individuals with disabilities changed, and so did the work of Pyunic.

Two Couples Move Into Too Cute, Two-Bedroom Home in Glendale

Just as the weather was heating up in Glendale, so too was the excitement for two longtime couples – Denise Stump and Douglas “Troy” Crippin, and Cindy Pollie Hanks and David Binkier. The couples were moving out of a large residential facility of about 80 beds, into Mountain View Guest Home, a two-bedroom home with a yard, a cat, and lots of freedom and independence.

As it turns out, about the same time the two couples needed to move from the facility, Mountain View Guest Home was close to receiving final approval from Community Care Licensing to open. Ken Abbott, Lanterman resource developer, recalls, “Everything came together at the same time. I had just finished a follow-up visit to Mountain View Guest Home, when discussions turned back to which clients still needed an option to move from the large facility. The accommodations of the home just seemed like a good fit for these individuals. This whole opportunity was too much of a coincidence not to have been meant to be, for everyone.”

Stump, Crippin, Hanks and Binkier are all friends, and when the idea of living together in a small home was presented to them, they were a little hesitant at first, but agreed to go and see the house. They fell in love with it. “Their families let them make the choice of whether they wanted to live in a house versus a facility, and were very supportive of the change,” comments Mercedes Shamlo, service coordinator.

Mountain View Guest Home is owned and operated by Adrian Rebollo. Rebollo has worked in the field of developmental disabilities since 1995, including as a job coach at CLIMB (Center for Living Independence for the Multi-Handicapped Blind), and at Arroyo Developmental Services and People’s Care. “I really enjoyed working in this field, but I was at a point in my life where I wanted to try something new. This is when I decided that I would like to open a home, since it seemed like a natural progression of what I had been doing,” notes Rebollo.

After two and one-half years of preparation and hard work, Rebollo opened Mountain View Guest Home. Rebollo completed

Continued on page

Participants at Pyunic’s 2003 Summer Camp in Armenia.
Best Buddies Fosters Friendships and Finds Employment for People with Developmental Disabilities

Ralph Bingener and Paul Hanon are buddies in the truest sense of the word. Their companionship and their most certainly are friends. Bingener and Hanon were first introduced in August 2000 through the Best Buddies Citizens program. They share a love for the fine arts and a passion for travel. “We have seen so many art galleries and museums in and around Los Angeles County,” comments Ralph. “It has been quite exciting to be a part of this, and it’s hard for me to find the words to share the adventures of friendship I have through a best buddy.”

Recently, Bingener and Hanon spoke at the Best Buddies Twelfth Annual Los Angeles Gala about their friendship and how it’s changed them. They received a standing ovation from the over 500 guests in attendance. “We are both so different, yet that makes it so great…we just really enjoy our time together and have fun. So for me it’s kind of hard to pinpoint my favorite memory with Ralph. We both get so much from each other, and it’s just great to spend time with him,” shares Hanon. They both hope to see many more potential matches between Best Buddies Citizens.

Best Buddies was started by Anthony K. Shriver, who recognized the tremendous volunteer potential of college students while he was in school, and inspired his peers to participate in a project that would enhance the opportunities available to people with developmental disabilities. Established in 1989, Best Buddies has grown into a leading not-for-profit organization that coordinates approximately 50,000 volunteers and impacts the lives of over 250,000 individuals with developmental disabilities. Best Buddies operates in all 50 states in the U.S. and in many other countries throughout the world.

“Our mission is to enhance the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment,” shares Kerri Hazama, who works with the Best Buddies Citizens program in Los Angeles. “One of our primary goals is to break down the stereotypes with others who have similar equipment by typing their messages back and forth.

What do you do if you want to communicate with a TTY user, but don’t have TTY? The answer is three digits – 711. This number provides access to telecommunications relay services, also known as TRS. Users have two options when using a telephone relay service including voice carry-over (VCO) and hearing carry-over (HCO). VCO allows a person with a hearing impairment to speak directly to the other party and then relay the response typed by a communications assistant (CA). HCO allows a person with a speech impairment to hear the other party and then relay the conversation to a voice caller.

All conversations are private and confidential, and everything that the CA hears will be relayed in its entirety. There is no censorship. Callers can use TRS as often as they want and the California service operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is no charge to TRS users for any of the services offered, however, regular phone charges apply.

For additional information on TRS visit the FCC Web site at www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html. To learn more about TRS in your area visit www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trspophonelink.html. For information on prepaid phone cards visit the FCC’s TRS Prepaid card program.

Buddies Jobs opens another avenue to inclusion by assisting individuals with developmental disabilities to locate and maintain jobs of their own choosing, such as working at a law firm, luxury hotel or retail store, by providing ongoing support and training. “Our focus is on developing competitive, integrated jobs, which allow individuals to earn an income, pay taxes and work alongside others in the community,” notes Hazama. “We have a reputation for finding jobs that the people we serve really want to do and that are equal to their abilities.”

A new twist on pen pals, e-Buddies helps people with intellectual disabilities connect with others through e-mail. Participants e-mail each other at least once a week, however many conversations on a daily basis. Individuals are matched based on similar interests, geographic location, schedules and gender. “Typically, participants go on two outings per month,” says Hazama.

Best Buddies has six distinct programs including Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges, Citizens, Jobs and e-Buddies. “The program that Ralph and Paul are part of, Best Buddies Citizens, pairs people with developmental disabilities in one-to-one friendships with other individuals in the corporate and civic communities,” explains Hazama. The Citizens program is for people 18 years and older, and people are matched based on similar interests, geographic location, schedules and gender. “Typically, participants get matched with one or two other individuals and meet on a weekly or bi-weekly basis,” says Hazama.

At a Best Buddies event monthly. We encourage each participant to get to know their new partner and make yourself available to take advantage of all of the free and low-cost events available in Los Angeles so that you can make friends in joining Best Buddies,” adds Hazama.

Ralph Bingener, client support assistant at Lanterman (left) and his buddy, Paul Hanon, hiked in the Santa Monica Mountains this past May as part of the Best Buddies Citizens program’s monthly events.

Three Simple Digits – 711 – Make Telecommunication Accessible
THE QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE:
Cutting Into Muscle and Bone –
The 2004-05 Budget

Nearly a month behind schedule, the California state budget for 2004-05 was enacted by the Legislature and signed by the governor during the last week in July. The budget reflects the continuing tough economic times in the state.

The budget for regional center direct services and operations (intake and assessment, service coordination, family support, program development, and service monitoring and quality assurance) has been signed at $132 million, $12 million below the governor’s request and $13 million below the budget enacted by the Legislature in the previous year. Additionally, the budget enacts an overall cut of $43 million in the regional center operating budget state-wide. Among other impacts, this has resulted in an increase in the number of clients served by the regional center system this year. This will bring the total number of individuals with developmental disabilities served by regional centers to approximately 200,000. The net increase in the regional center operations budget statewide is only $1 million on an overall budget of more than $400 million. For Lanterman, that amounts to about $50,000, or about half the cost of a year’s salary and benefits for a single service coordinator.

“When you consider that there has been no cost of living adjustment for the regional centers for the past 14 years, coupled with fourteen years of increases in the cost of running the Center, such as insurance, energy and communications, this budget cuts into muscle and bone.”

- Diane Anand, executive director

Despite these reductions, regional centers have been given two new responsibilities. The Habilitation Services Program, which until this year was a part of the state Department of Rehabilitation, was recently transferred to regional centers. (see related story on page 4)

The program requires regional centers to coordinate work-related services for clients without any additional funding for staff.

The second added responsibility is the implementation of the family cost of living adjustment program beginning in January 2005. This will require regional centers to collect data from families who receive respite, day care and camping services for their minor children. Families who earn in excess of 40 percent of the Federal poverty level, who have children living at home between the ages of 3 and 17, and whose child is not eligible for Medi-Cal, will be required to share the cost of specific services.

For the portion of the budget designated for purchase of services from community service providers, the funding has increased by $200 million for this year. There continues to be a freeze on rate increases and funds for developing new programs.

Anand adds, “The regional center budget is very tight for this year, with virtually no increase for operating expenses and a modest increase in purchase of services. It is our hope that these funds will be sufficient to carry us through the year we are in. We will continue to use the cost saving strategies we developed over the past two years as part of our expenditure plan.”

The 2004-05 Budget

Although the overall budget was enacted early a month behind schedule, the governor signed it in the midst of what many believe to be perhaps the worst budget crisis in the state’s history, faced with serious problems that will not go away quickly nor be easily solved. Once again, we are being asked to do significantly more with significantly less, and the fallout will impact all of us in the regional center community.

Most recently, the governor released the report of the California Performance Review, an effort to streamline state government so that it can be more responsive to better and more cost-effectively serve the people. This is certainly a significant endeavor, not dependent on the details and scope of its eventual implementation – it contains both the potential to make things better and the possibility of making things worse.

The 2500-page report contains 1200 recommendations that touch on every aspect of the state’s bureaucracy. While regional centers are not mentioned individually, the proposed re-structuring of state government that it can be more responsive to better and more cost-effectively serve the people. This is certainly a significant endeavor, and can point to remarkable progress in the developmental disabilities community is heard.

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The Mixer to Raise Awareness

A vast ye mateys! Lisa Levin, Koko Young Resource Center information and resource specialist (left) and Ronna Kawai, executive assistant in Training and Development (right) attend a P.I.R.A.T.E.S mixer. The Print, Interactive, Radio and Television Education Society event was held at Gower Studios, home of CBS Radio. P.I.R.A.T.E.S., known as the organization “where the community meets the media,” offers networking opportunities in Southern California that enable members from media and non-profit to interact. “This is just another avenue that we have available to us to improve the quality of life for the people we serve by promoting the inclusion and understanding of people with developmental disabilities and also working towards sensitive and accurate portrayals by the media,” explains Levin who is also pictured with Jolisa Jones-Cory, director of Community Relations and Human Resources at KTTV Fox 11 and KOUP UPN 13. For more information about P.I.R.A.T.E.S. visit www.piratesla.org

The Director’s
VIEWPOINT

The Challenge of Interesting Times

There is an old Chinese saying, “May you live in interesting times.” It often refers to, shall we say, a challenging future. When we look at the climate in which the regional centers are currently operating, “interesting times” is an understatement – and the sense of a challenging future is definitely present.

On the one hand, we are fast approaching our 40th anniversary as a service delivery system, and can point to remarkable progress in terms of improving the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Our efforts at prevention, early intervention and ongoing lifelong support have made a tangible difference for the people we serve.

Today, people with developmental disabilities are living meaningful lives as active and included members of their communities, with more opportunity and choice than ever before. In so many substantive ways, we are delivering on the promise of the Lanterman Act and the dream of the early pioneers who made it a reality.

On the other hand, we are in the midst of perhaps the worst budget crisis in the state’s history, faced with serious problems that will not go away quickly nor be easily solved. Once again, we are being asked to do significantly more with significantly less, and the fallout will impact all of us in the regional center community.

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Questions we must ask ourselves are: Will the proposals improve access to services and the quality of delivery, as well as produce positive outcomes for our clients? Will they enhance program efficiency? Will they promote more effective coordination of programs and services? In short, will they make life better for those we serve? That is the bottom line we must never forget.

For nearly four decades we’ve lived through many interesting times and consistently shown an ability to adapt and change our operating model for the betterment of our community. Together, we will once again meet the challenge.

Editor’s note: Those interested can view the entire CPR Report online at www.cpr.ca.gov

Lanterman Staff Attend P.I.R.A.T.E.S.
Mixer to Raise Awareness

Executive Director Diane Anand

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From School to Work – Video Provides Information to Ensure a Successful Transition

For many people, leaving school and moving into the working world can be particularly unnerving. This transition elicits feelings of trepidation, anxiety, anticipation and excitement – which when rolled into one sensation is often described as “butterflies in my stomach.” Individuals with disabilities often face additional unique challenges during these transitions.

“Success at Work: Transitions to Employment” is just one of the many videos in the award-winning “Troubleshooting Your Curricula” series for students and young adults with learning differences. Created by the Eaton Coull Learning Group, which was founded in 1997 by two special education teachers and diagnosticians, Howard Eaton and Leslie Coull, this curriculum and videotape will help young adults gain self-confidence and develop good self-advocacy skills, assuring viewers that learning differences need not get in the way of future career successes.

“Success at Work” is suitable for graduates, as well as students in grades 10 through 12, who are exploring career options, and planning their transition into the workplace. The video can also be used as part of a vocational rehabilitation program.

The program’s interviewees are real-life graduates and students representing a range of learning differences who are successfully pursuing their career goals as mechanics, hairdressers, entrepreneurs, nurses and a variety of other jobs. The interviewees are open and frank about their struggles and achievements, and share important messages about the power of acceptance and the importance of self-advocacy.

A discussion guide accompanies the video. Facilitators can use this guide to stimulate discussion with students about transition-related issues. The guide also has exercises that reinforce the key concepts from the video and a summary of research that demonstrates the importance of self-advocacy to successful transitions into employment.

Visit the Koch Young Resource Center to borrow a copy of “Success at Work: Transitions to Employment.” To browse other employment-related videos, as well as books, stop by the Resource Center in person or access the library collection online at http://library.lanterman.org.

Two Couples

Continued from page 1

Lanterman’s residential service provider orientation in fall 2003 and submitted his licensing application the end of last year. “When the decision by the two couples to move from the facility to Mountain View Guest Home was finalized, the timing of the move became quite urgent. Christy Simpson and Jeanine Batres at Licensing were great in assisting and collaborating with us to get the home approved quickly,” adds Abbott.

Mountain View Guest Home is a bungalow-style house that features a back yard, detached recreation space, barbecue pit, and fruit and vegetable garden. A large park is located across the street from the home and the Glendale Galleria is only blocks away. On June 25, Stump, Crippin, Hanks and Binkier moved into their new home. “They have so many more opportunities available to them living in Glendale,” says George Davis, service coordinator. “Troy takes Adrian’s two dogs for a walk in the park, and Polie helps out cooking dinner in the evening. Both activities were never even an option when they lived at the large facility. Here they have much greater freedom to come and go on their own.”

Binkier shares, “I love it a lot here and I get to feed the cat in the morning.” Crippin, who

works at Goudy Honda washing cars says, “I like walking to 7Eleven for a drink, riding my bike in the park and going to the mall.” Stump, who was able to bring her pet bird, Precious, adds, “It’s cool. Very different. We have more freedom. It was limiting before. We like this house better.”

Rebello, who also coordinates daily activities for Mountain View Guest Home residents, plans to teach all four of them to use the Glendale Beeline to get around the city, encouraging them to walk to the library and mall, and every evening they all go for a walk in the park before dinner. He adds, “They buy a lot of junk food at work, so I’m encouraging them to make healthier food choices, such as buying salads instead.” On the weekends they go on trips to Griffith Park.

“Mountain View Guest Home is setting an example as the first residence in the Lanterman area that is home to only couples,” shares Harriet Dickens, service coordinator. “This move also ties in with the Lanterman mission to enable people with developmental disabilities to live full, productive and satisfying lives as active members of their communities.” Everyone involved in the move from the families to the regional center staff and most importantly the clients are happy with their new “too cute,” two-bedroom home in Glendale.
A New Kind of Performance Contract to be Implemented by Lanterman

In 1993, the state put in place a requirement that each regional center work with its community to develop a performance plan that contained goals and objectives for nine different areas, such as community living options, language and education, and lifelong learning. Each center’s plan was also supposed to describe the things that the center would do to work toward achieving the goals and objectives. Once a plan was developed, it became the basis for a “contract” between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and that regional center. The performance contract requirement was phased in to the 21 regional centers over a five-year period beginning in 1993. Lanterman implemented its first performance plan in 1998. Our current plan can be found on our Web site – www.lanterman.org – under “Organization.”

Creating the New Model

In the year 2000, DDS undertook the development of a new model of performance contract. It was intended to retain the contract requirement but allow the Department to do two additional things. The first was to enable comparisons of performance across regional centers. This required DDS to create a standardized set of outcomes that all centers would adopt. The second thing they wanted, was a set of indicators that reflected both system and individual client outcomes.

This new model, using standardized outcomes, was first implemented in 2001 as a pilot in five volunteer regional centers. The pilot was to continue for five years – until 2006 – at which time all centers would be required to adopt the model in place of the original performance plan. Since 2001, any center wishing to do so has been allowed to join the pilot rather than waiting until 2006. As of June of this year, 15 centers have joined. At its July 28 meeting, based on a recommendation from the Strategic Planning Committee, Lanterman’s board of directors approved the Center’s entry into the pilot in January 2005.

Requirements of the New Model

Under this new model, DDS has defined a set of 25 outcomes on which each regional center will be measured. A majority of the outcomes are “public policy” outcomes, intended to encourage development of the types of services that reflect the values of the Lanterman Act – i.e., services and supports that enable persons with developmental disabilities to approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people without disabilities of the same age. For example, we will be judged on our success in moving people from the developmental center into the community, ensuring that our clients have access to appropriate medical care, helping our adult clients obtain meaningful employment, and ensuring that adult clients live in homelike settings. The remaining outcomes reflect “compliance,” primarily with legal and regulatory requirements.

Under this new performance contract model, regional centers are only required to be accountable for these 25 outcomes. At the same time, however, each regional center may work with its community and develop additional local outcomes to supplement its performance plan. If a regional center does this, it will be required to report to DDS on these additional outcomes.

The Process of Developing the Plan

As we did with the old performance contract, we will be holding public meetings to discuss our proposed plan and ask members of the Lanterman Community for comments and suggestions. We have scheduled four meetings for this purpose – one each in English, Spanish, Korean and Armenian. You can find more information about the time and place for these meetings in the box at right. We encourage all clients and families to come hear about and give us feedback on this new plan that is scheduled to take effect in January.

Measures to Be Used in New Performance Contract

Public Policy Measures

- Number and percent of regional center clients living in the developmental center
- Number and percent of minors residing with families
- Number and percent of minors living in facilities serving more than six residents
- Number and percent of adults residing in home settings
  - Number and percent of adults residing in independent living
  - Number and percent of adults residing in supported living
  - Number and percent of adults residing in adult Foster Home Agency homes
  - Number and percent of adults residing in family homes with parent or guardian
- Number and percent of adults living in facilities serving more than six residents
- Number and percent of adults with earned income; average wage of these clients
  - Number and percent of adults in supported employment
  - Number and percent of adults in competitive employment
- Clients’ access to medical services
- Number of clients (rate per thousand) who are victims of abuse

Compliance Measures

- Regional center has unqualified independent audit with no material findings
- Regional center is in substantial compliance with DDS fiscal audit
- Regional center projects purchase of service spending within a certain percent of accuracy
- Regional center operates within its Operations budget
- Regional center is certified to participate in the Medicaid Waiver program
- Regional center auditors are reviewed by Article III, Section 10 of its contract with DDS
- Regional center is current with the development of CDERs and Early Start Reports
- Regional center meets timelines for intake/assessment and IFSP creation for clients age 0-3
- Regional center meets timelines for Intake/assessment for clients age 3 and above

The regional center’s IFSPs satisfy the criteria listed in the Welfare and Institutions Code.

The regional center’s IFSPs satisfy the criteria listed in Title 17.

SAVE THE DATE!
Community Meetings Being Held in September

The individuals with developmental disabilities the Lanterman serves, their families and our service providers are key partners with the Center. This partnership can only be successful when all parties involved have an opportunity to provide feedback on the future direction and long-term goals of the Center.

One avenue utilized by the Center to ensure that all persons interested in participating have an opportunity to provide feedback and comments is our annual community meetings. This year’s meetings will focus on five key areas:

- Budget overview
- Expenditure plan
- Accomplishments from the past year
- Changes to the performance plan (see story at left)
- Continuation of our alternative service coordination model

This is your opportunity to comment on plans for the future. Your input is very important, and we look forward to seeing you at one of these meetings.

Meeting Schedule

Armenian – Tuesday, September 7 at 7 p.m. Saint Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church 500 South Central Avenue, Glendale

Korean – Wednesday, September 8 at 7 p.m. Lanterman Regional Center 3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles (Berdengo Room on seventh floor)

Spanish – Monday, September 13 at 7 p.m. Lanterman Regional Center 3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles (second floor)

English – Wednesday, September 22 at 7 p.m. Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center 3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles (second floor)

If you have additional questions, or want more information, contact the Koch Young Resource Center at 500 South Central Avenue, Glendale, and ask for Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center (second floor).

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 numerous correspondences 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 footer your name, the client’s name and age, and the city you reside in, to help us target our e-mail messages more efficiently.

Help Us Save Money – Join Lanterman’s E-mail List
Meet the People Behind the Titles: Patricia Herrera

A director of Family Support Services at Lanterman Regional Center, Patricia Herrera 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 woman behind the title and her responsibilities, so Viewpoint recently met with her and asked about projects in the works, as well as the biggest challenges and most rewarding aspects of her job.

Where did you grow up and where do you live?
I was born in Bogotá, Colombia, South America and raised in New York. My parents immigrated to New York when I was 4 years old. We lived in Malvern, Long Island. I moved back to Bogotá, Colombia when I was 14 years old and lived in Colombia most of my adolescent years and early adulthood. I returned to the United States in my early twenties and settled in Los Angeles. Currently I live in the Hastings Ranch area of Pasadena.

When did you join Lanterman?
My plan when I returned to Los Angeles was to pursue a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles, but the thing led to another, and I ended up applying for a job at Lanterman Regional Center instead. I started at Lanterman Community in November 1987. I was only planning on staying at Lanterman for two years, mind you, while I went through the process of entering a full-time graduate program.

Were you ever able to complete a graduate program?
I attended a six-year undergraduate program in clinical psychology and educational psychology at the University of the Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. In 1995, I obtained a master's degree in educational and organizational psychology at the University of Southern California State University, Northridge.

What positions have you held since you have been at Lanterman?
Service Coordinator – School-Age Unit (November 1987 – 1990)
Family Support Coordinator – Consumer and Family Services Division (1990-1992)
Director, Family Support Services – Executive Management (1993 to present)

How does your schooling relate to your current position?
My schooling has been invaluable to my current position. My psychology and counseling background has provided me with the knowledge to develop and design informational, educational and support programs essential to the Koch Young Resource Center (KYRC) and to the Family Support Services unit. The educational development I have received while at Lanterman, such as continuing education courses in fundraising, public relations, marketing, leadership development and management has also been invaluable. I encourage everyone to take advantage of all the educational opportunities the Center offers. I truly appreciate the strong emphasis that Lanterman places on the professional and educational growth of its employees.

How do the other positions you worked in benefit you in your current role?
The three years of hands-on experience as a service coordinator benefit me greatly in my current position as director of Family Support Services. As a school-age service coordinator I learned to advocate on behalf of children and families at Individual Education Plan meetings for appropriate school placement and services. As an active member of the Los Angeles County Integration Program, I spearheaded back in the early nineties by Dr. Mary Favel and sponsored by Area Board 10, I became a very strong advocate for the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities into regular education classes. As a service coordinator I learned much about the service system and about community resources. My years as Family Support Coordinator were invaluable for the development of family support programs, like the Peer Support Program, the Service Coordination and Advocacy Training for families, and the development of support groups in the Lanterman community.

What are the responsibilities of your current position as director of Family Support Services?
I am responsible for directing the KYRC, as well as specific family support activities, such as information and referral, education, training for families, and peer support. The Resource Center includes a specialized library collection in the field of developmental disabilities that contains approximately 5,700 resources, and an Informational and Referral Help Line averaging 900 calls quarterly. I oversee the production of Viewpoint, Lanterman’s quarterly newsletter. The development and maintenance of the Web site, and the production of major educational and promotional publications of the Center. I direct special projects of the Center including the Assistive Technology Project, the Roberta Happe Internship and the First 5 LA Grant for the Touchpoints18 Special Needs Training Project. I am also involved in grant writing, fundraising, public relations and marketing activities related to the Center.

What are the biggest challenges of your job?
The biggest challenge in my job is finding additional funds to provide long-term sustainability to the special projects I direct that are not funded by the Department of Developmental Services. I guess the next biggest challenge is finding enough hours in the day to accomplish all the things I would like to do.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?
The most rewarding part of my job is the amazing and talented people I get to directly work with. The Family Support Services unit is made up of a team of very talented and dedicated individuals with unique and diverse backgrounds. I feel extremely privileged to be in the position to support a team that is passionate about what they do and that is truly dedicated to their work. I also find the opportunities I have to work with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families very rewarding, and treasure the long-term relationships that have developed over the last 17 years as valuable professional relationships.

Lanterman community. Another aspect of my job that I truly enjoy is building new relationships with individuals and networking in the community.

What are some of your accomplishments, i.e. programs, projects, trainings, etc... that you have worked on?
• Received recognition from the Los Angeles Police Department for contributions made to the Los Angeles Abuse Council for eight consecutive years as a Volunteer (Chairperson of the Council (1992).
• Organized the first Spanish language “Inclusion Conference” for the Los Angeles Integration Consortium at California State University, Los Angeles for 500 participants (1985).
• Inauguration of the KYRC (1994).
• Spear-headed the planning committee for Lanterman’s 30th Anniversary Leadership Forum “A Community In Action” (1996).
• Organized the first Summer Leadership Institute with the Center for Non-Profit Management (1994).
• California State University, Northridge – Center on Disabilities - Leadership and Technology Management Program (1997) – Developed a proposal that led to the funding of the Assistive Technology Project.
• Inauguration of the Assistive Technology Project (1999).
• Touchpoints Community Level Training in Boston (2002).
• First 5 LA Grant ($700,000) for the Touchpoints18 Special Needs Training Project (2002).

Where do you see the unit heading in the next several years including future projects and initiatives?
The KYRC is an investment toward greater empowerment and self-determination for all individuals affiliated with the Center. I envision the KYRC becoming the best source of disability-related resources for the community at large, and a place that will foster partnerships and leadership amongst all its members.

Are you married? Do you have any children?
My husband’s name is Jonathan Nieto, and we have one son, David, a delightful strong-willed 3-year-old. I have enjoyed motherhood tremendously and continue to learn so much from being David’s mother.

Any take home lessons or important life lessons learned that you would like to share with readers?
When I started out in my career, I probably had a simplistic or naïve view of what constituted success or failure. With experience, I’ve come to understand that low points and high points can be one and the same, and that interruptions in pursuit of cherished goals can still be opportunities.
What Software Program Should I Get to Help My Child?

By Martin Sweeney, director of Assistive Technology Project

For nearly twenty years, I have been tracking software development and titles specifically designed to improve the lives of children and adults with special needs. Laureate’s multimedia programs combine instructional design with digital speech, engaging graphics and animation. For more information about Laureate visit their Web site at www.lyssy.com.

We’ve just received these titles and I am now working my way through each one. It takes time to fully explore a program when considering the needs of a person with a developmental disability. What works for one person will not necessarily work for another. It is this depth of consideration one must apply to answer that earlier question: “What software program should I get to help my child?”

Come join me in the lab and let’s see if we can answer that question together.

For more information and to arrange a visit to the computer lab contact Martin Sweeney at 213.383.1300 #722 or martin.sweeney@lanterman.org

Pyunic

Continued from page 1

While continuing to provide services to the children and adults from the earthquake, Pyunic continues to provide assistance to children and adults with all types of disabilities including those disabled through the Karabakh war, by diseases and accidents, and those born with both physical and developmental disabilities.

“The goal of Pyunic is simple – to improve the earthquake, and also spent a year in Armenia in 1995, providing him the opportunity to see first hand how people with disabilities are treated. “In the recent past, the majority of families would place their children with disabilities in state-run developmental centers and orphanages,” comments Ghazarian, “but Pyunic is trying to change that mindset of the culture, and educate families that children with disabilities are not an embarrassment, and can be cared for at home or placed in a small group home located in a neighborhood setting.”

More than 50 volunteers and four staff members in Armenia offer year-round services and programs to people with disabilities, including many more volunteers in the United States work to raise funds and supplies for the organization. These resources are used to provide social services, including clothing and food, as well as advocacy for social and educational needs; to organize sports activities and camps, such as swimming, sailing, weightlifting, archery, basketball, tennis and skiing; to implement public education and disability rights protection projects, such as the Disabled Rights and Information Center of Armenia started in 1996, the Human Rights and Disabled Persons program started in 1997 with funding from the U.S. Embassy, and Support Armenia’s Disabled Public Education and Awareness Building another program also started in 1997, to develop and organize vocational training, including efforts like the creation of the Computer Training Center for the Disabled in 1996 with funding from the Canadian Embassy; and for the provision of prosthetic services.

Lori Silvazian (center), a Pyunic volunteer and employee of the Exceptional Children’s Foundation (ECF) to implement an early intervention program in Armenia that will provide services to young children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental disabilities. “This program will be very similar to the one Lori directs at ECF,” adds Ghazarian, “and will provide the necessary assistance parents need to be able to keep their children with disabilities at home.”

Shortly before Pyunic celebrated its 10th anniversary, the government of Armenia donated a 32,000 square foot, four-story building in Yerevan to serve as a new center, in recognition of their proven record of providing services to people with disabilities and in addition to services provided on site, Pyunic is also hoping to translate a variety of films that focus on individuals with disabilities and disability issues into Armenian so they can be shown on national television. They are also pursuing a long-term goal of theirs, which is to develop post high school educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

“We’re trying to jump start Armenia 50 years ahead in time of where it’s at now,” notes Ghazarian, “and enable caregivers with disabilities to develop to their fullest potential and in turn help Armenia grow and develop as well.” For more information about Pyunic visit www.pyunic.org. If you are interested in making a donation of money or various supplies such as wheelchairs, crates, computers and software, or equipment for the early intervention program such as therapy balls and toys contact Sarkis Ghazarian at 818.785.3468 or sarkis@glendale.edu.

Ghazarian, who has a disability, visited Armenia about 10 times shortly after the earthquake, and also spent a year in Armenia in 1995, providing him the opportunity to see first hand how people with disabilities are treated. “In the recent past, the majority of families would place their children with disabilities in state-run developmental centers and orphanages,” comments Ghazarian, “but Pyunic is trying to change

This is a great way to test drive a program so you get a feel for whether it might be appropriate for your child.

Another way is to familiarize yourself with some of the software programs we have here in Lanterneman’s computer lab. Some of the programs can be borrowed through the Koch Young Resource Center library, while others can be used onsite by appointment. We have a large sampling of software titles.

Most recently, the Regional Center purchased the complete special needs software solutions package from Laureate Learning Systems. Designed for students whose disabilities range from severe/profound to mild, the collection of titles covers cause and effect, vocabulary development, categorization, syntax mastery, concept development, auditory processing and reading instruction. The collection – over 40 titles – is rooted in a linguistic hierarchy that builds through seven stages of language development, from interpreted communication all the way through complete generative grammar.

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Two Remarkable People are Honored for Their Years of Dedicated Service to Lanterman

At the July board meeting, Lanterman’s outgoing board president, Bob health Wedemeyer, presented Silvia Davis with an award recognizing her six years of service on the board. (see photo at right) Davis, the president of UNIDAS, advocates for Latin American women, and has helped many women in the Lanterman community learn the skills they need to cope with the challenges of everyday life in this country, including their health, personal and professional development, and community involvement. She chaired the board of director’s nominating committee, and held two offices – secretary and first vice president. During her tenure, she represented the board at many Lanterman community events and was always willing to accept assignments on behalf of the board.

This was also Wedemeyer’s last board meeting as president. In a time-honored tradition, Wedemeyer passed the gavel to Jeff Richards, who was elected president. Wedemeyer is also completing six years of service on the board. He has been a member of the Lanterman community for 14 years, first serving on administrative affairs committee and later as a board member, treasurer and ultimately as board president. Wedemeyer will still be a presence in the Lanterman community, continuing his work with administrative affairs, and will also serve the board in an advisor role as immediate past president. In keeping with the tradition of presenting a piece of art to the outgoing board president, Wedemeyer received a painting by Artist David Foster from the ECP Art Center. (see photo at left)

Homecare Registry Helps Make the Match Between IHSS Consumers and Providers

Whether it’s romantic relationships or business ones, there are services that help bring people together. For the approximately 137,000 In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) clients and 106,000 providers in Los Angeles County, Personal Assistance Services Council (PASC), the Public Authority for Los Angeles County’s IHSS program, provides this service.

PASC has a fully operational Homecare Registry for IHSS consumers and applicant providers. The registry offers a free process through which IHSS consumers and providers can be referred to each other and later decide themselves whether to establish an employment relationship.

Registry services are provided via telephone with the aid of an automated database system that documents, searches, sorts and generates listings of possible referrals. Referral criteria includes the consumer’s needs for particular services and skills in relation to the provider’s skills and capabilities; geographical proximity of consumers and available providers; and the consumer’s scheduling requirement and provider’s availability.

The consumer is responsible for determining the compatibility of the provider and likewise for the provider. The registry does not select, train, vouch for, supervise or warrant the quality of either consumers or providers. Consumers and providers must make their own decisions regarding one another’s skills, character and compatibility. The consumer has the exclusive right to select, hire, assign hours and duties, direct the work, supervise and terminate the provider, and the provider retains the right to resign from any employment. Use of the registry is voluntary and non-exclusive.

Registry users must be current IHSS consumers in Los Angeles County, provide accurate personal information, and submit a completed registry application form and participant’s rights, responsibilities and release agreement. Providers must attend at least one orientation meeting; present valid photo identification; complete and sign a registry application form and participant’s rights, responsibilities and release agreement; and must submit information on employment history for the past five years, including three personal references. Providers must also clear a criminal background investigation as administered by the State Department of Justice.

To access the PASC Homecare Registry call 877.565.4477 (toll-free), 818.206.7000 or 818.206.7015 (TTY). For more information on Personal Assistance Services Council of Los Angeles County visit www.pascla.org.

For more information on IHSS visit www.ladpss.org/dpss/ihss/ihss_title_page.cfm.

Looking for New Blood... with experience

As a multi-million dollar corporation, Lanterman is always interested in recruiting board and committee members who have backgrounds in finance, personnel and related areas. Should you or someone you know be interested in volunteering in such a capacity, please contact Patrick Aulicino at 213.383.1300 x690 or patrick.aulicino@lanterman.org.

Board Welcomes Your Attendance at its Meetings

Please be aware that anyone in the community is welcome to attend Lanterman’s board of directors meeting, which is conducted on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. Meetings are held at Lanterman Regional Center. Please contact Frank Lara in advance at 213.383.1300 x665 or frank.lara@lanterman.org so you can be placed on the list of attendees. We look forward to your visit.

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The leader is someone who:

- Shows the way to others
- Goes before or along with others
- Guides others
- Marks the way for others
- Begins something
- Influences others to a course of action
- All of the above

A leader is someone who does all of the above. Very few people are born leaders. Most everyone who is a great leader has to find and develop these skills, and that’s where the Lanterman Leadership Institute comes in.

Leadership is a core value for Lanterman. As we define it, "Leadership is an act of service to the community as a whole. As an organization, and as individuals, we strive to be in the forefront – pioneering new ways to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities, their families and the community we share. We want to inspire the Center to reach its full potential and lead the way for others." The cornerstone of our vision is, "A leader in service, learning and quality – always striving for excellence and pioneering new ways to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities, their families and the communities we share."

During the Team Training program, the Sroujiehs learned to manage Shana’s behavior using commands such as sit, down, roll over and play. They also learned to command Shana to retrieve objects, and open and close drawers and doors. Most importantly, they learned to maintain her health and well-being.

"We groom Shana daily, including brushing her coat and her teeth. We also take her for a walk every day. She gets a bath every other week, and we clip her nails regularly. We also walk every day. She gets a bath every other week, and we clip her nails regularly. We also walk every day."

"The information was both interesting and understandable for people with disabilities, inspiring me to get involved and give back."

- LLI Graduate 1995

"Creative, committed and effective leaders in all areas of the Lanterman community are the key to successfully fulfilling our mission and making our vision for the future a reality," explains Maureen Wilson, director of Training and Development. "That’s why we created the Lanterman Leadership Institute a decade ago.

The Lanterman Leadership Institute is a two-day program that takes participants through modules that focus on creating and communicating a shared vision, embracing diversity, action planning, team performance, and defining personal leadership goals and opportunities. This is the perfect program for individuals interested in co-leading a parent support group, or serving on a task force, advisory committee or governing board of the regional center to develop their leadership skills.

Information featured during the training includes an overview providing a historical perspective on the developmental services system, and legislation that affects individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Lessons and activities are also conducted to develop leadership skills, and teach participants about working effectively in a team, how boards/committees function, and how to make good use of meeting time.

“Our commitment is to invest in our most valuable resource, our members – clients, families, service providers, community members and staff – and help them realize their leadership potential,” adds Wilson.

Approximately 250 individuals have attended the Lanterman Leadership Institute that has been held annually for the last 10 years. Survey results indicate 25 percent goal attainment by participants. The next Lanterman Leadership Institute will be held in February 2005. If you are interested in more information about the program contact Maureen Wilson at 213.383.1390 x719 or maureen.wilson@lanterman.org.

"Only 50 percent of dogs graduate from advanced training, but those that do are really solid ‘bomb proof’ dogs."

- Linda Valliant, CCI

If you are interested in getting your own canine companion, contact CCI for a preliminary application. "The application process is extensive, since we need to be sure that people understand all of the ramifications of having an assistance dog,” explains Valliant. "The process includes a written justification, telephone interview, visit to a CCI regional center and pre-training class. CCI is also seeking puppy raisers. For more information visit their Web site at www.cci.org.

"This training was an inside out look at myself, using fun learning activities… and it helped me recognize my leadership abilities…"

- LLI Graduate, 1998
The second annual Perspectives International Film Festival and Forum took place on June 4–6, 2004 at the ArcLight Cinemas in Hollywood. The festival featured an exciting and diverse program of domestic and international features, documentaries and short films that explored the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Each screening was followed by a lively and thought-provoking discussion between the filmmaker, a disabilities expert and the audience.

Perspectives opened with the Scottish film “Afterlife.” Producer Ros Borland and Actor Paula Sage, who has Down syndrome, traveled from Scotland to attend the event, talk with the audience and participate in the festivities. “To Kill a Mockingbird” closed the festival and Mary Badham, who played Scout, introduced the film and answered questions. Badham’s comments carried particular significance since she has a son with special needs. Actor Gary Cole (“Dodgeball,” “The West Wing”) offered some final remarks about the importance of Perspectives from his vantage point of working in the industry and being the father of a daughter with autism.

The Media Forum was a dynamic and informative event that offered insight into the current issues surrounding representations of people with developmental disabilities, and strategies for increasing the visibility of people with developmental disabilities in film and television. Following the panel, Comedienne Kathy Buckley presented the Perspectives Media Award to the Media Access Office of the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities for their tremendous efforts in advancing the cause of understanding and social acceptance by promoting the hiring of actors and filmmakers with disabilities.

Perspectives 2004 drew people from across Los Angeles and beyond, providing insight into the lives of people with developmental disabilities and inspiring conversations that continued well beyond the theater exit.

(See photo captions on page 12)
“We should be realistic about what ‘Hollywood’ really represents and what the greater film community represents, and in that I think there is great hope.”

— Barry Morrow, screenwriter

“Festivals like Perspectives harness the power of the media to speak to people, and to effect a genuine change of perception.”

— Gary Cole, actor

“There is not one role, one seat, one person who can really make this a reality in terms of changing the perceptions of the media. I think it begins early on, I think we need to be talking to educators, we need to be talking to all facets, all the transition points for youth with disabilities that they encounter throughout their lives, so that opportunities to be engaged as writers, directors, producers or whatever their dream may be in the arts isn’t just an adult phenomena.”

— Olivia Raynor, co-director of UCLAs Tarjan Center for Developmental Disabilities and director of the National Arts and Disability Center

“As filmmakers, as artists, I think that we have a responsibility to the rest of the people who watch what we produce, what we make, what we write…to aggressively go after that gulf.”

— David Streit, producer and filmmaker in residence at AFI Conservatory
Perspectives 2004 Media Award Recognizes California's Media Access Office

Have you ever wondered why actors with disabilities are hardly ever cast in leading roles that depict characters with disabilities? It is because films about disability need a "big name" star to draw moviegoers? Is it because actors with disabilities are not able capable of doing these roles? What are the reasons actors with disabilities are not cast and what are the solutions?

Nearly one in five people in the United States has some type of disability, but only a fraction thereof is represented in television and movies. Title I and V of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), prohibit employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in the private sector, and in state and local governments. The reasons vary as to why only a small number of people with disabilities are employed in the media. At Perspectives, feedback from directors, producers and others in the industry indicate very positive experiences in working with actors with disabilities. So perhaps the lack of opportunity is based on uninformed stereotypes and misconceptions.

Actors with disabilities have repeatedly shared that the roles they seek do not necessarily focus on disability, but rather on "typical" characters. Films cast people with disabilities don't have to be serious; they can be comedies, action flicks and love stories. Clearly the ratio of individuals with disabilities working in the entertainment industry is not similar to the ratio of individuals with disabilities living in the general community, but there is one organization diligently working to change all of this – the Media Access Office of the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

Since 1980, the Media Access Office, a partnership of the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and the California Employment Development Department, has worked to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas of the entertainment industry – and to bring recognition to those directors and producers who hire actors with disabilities. Over the year, the office has offered individual assistance to hundreds of adults and children seeking roles on television or in film, acting in newscasts or commercials – but at no charge. Currently the Media Access Office has about 800 adult clients and 150 young clients.

The office’s main focus is to encourage the industry’s decision-makers to use its clients both on screen, and behind the camera, as well as to give people with disabilities the opportunity to perform in mainstream roles – and not simply in parts where disability is a plot point.

“When we first began envisioning a film festival and forum focused on understanding and social acceptance of people with developmental disabilities, we decided that we would publicly recognize individuals and organizations that embodied the goals – both to honor their work and to show the larger community living examples of what we're trying to accomplish with Perspectives. And so, the Perspectives Media Award was born,” comments Diane Anand, executive director. “This year, we're very pleased to honor the Media Access Office for all of their outstanding work on behalf of people with disabilities.”

“It's clear that the goals of the Media Access Office and Perspectives are remarkably aligned. And I can personally vouch for their ongoing and extraordinary work in providing opportunities for performers with disabilities in all areas of the entertainment media. They never stop pushing the envelope – and it’s making a difference,” says actor/comedian Kathy Buckley, America’s First Hearing Impaired Comedienne, and four-time American Comedy Award Nominee as Best Stand-Up Female Comedienne, before she presented the Perspectives 2004 Media Award to Gloria Castañeda of the Media Access Office and Dr. Paul K. Miller of the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

For more information about the Media Access Office and Perspectives visit www.perspectives-iff.org. For more information about Perspectives and the Perspectives Media Award visit www.perspectives-iff.org/med_acc.htm.
Movies play an important role in shaping the ways in which Americans think about their world—and especially, aspects of life about which they have little first-hand knowledge. Certainly, one should look at the ways in which audiences of the time interpreted films. But as scholars, and not just movie critics, it seems to me that our job is also to look at the collective impact of films.

—Steve Ross, historian

Attitudes and expectations of the public, in part, determine the degree to which children and adults with disabilities are able to school to work alongside peers without disabilities. With federal and state legislation requiring schools, employers, cultural and recreational programs to move beyond old concepts of “special” and segregated settings for people with disabilities, to a policy of inclusion that ensures people with disabilities have the same opportunities as others without disabilities in the community, negative attitudes and stereotypes need to be changed.

A Special Olympics report in 2003 said, “Negative attitudes about individuals with disabilities are perpetuated by the media as perceived as a major obstacle to inclusion.” Nearly 100 percent of American households have access to television and the typical person watches 2,100 hours per year. “The images we see shape our individual and collective perceptions of whom and what we value as a society, including how we view those who are different,” notes Oliva Raynor, co-director of the Tarjan Center for Developmental Disabilities and director of the National Organization for Disability and Disability Center. “Consequently, the images and lessons learned via television substitute with greater regularity vicarious experiences for actual ones, and these images may serve as a primary contact between viewers and people with disabilities.”

The question is, “How do you change these negative attitudes into positive ones and eliminate the walls of isolation, marginalization and segregation?”

UCLAs National Arts and Disability Center (NADC), and its collaborators, Lanterman Regional Center, are collaborating on a special project, Changing Perceptions in the Media. “The National Arts and Disability Center and Lanterman Regional Center share a common mission and vision, advocating for the full participation of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of society,” explains Diane Anand, executive director. “Adding this partnership in keeping with the vision and goals of the Perspectives Film Festival to promote realistic and relevant perceptions of people with developmental disabilities in the media.”

“The promise of engaging people with disabilities in all aspects of public life is challenged by the communities and stereotypes portrayed in film and television,” comments Raynor. “This project offers the opportunity to change the perceptions of mediamakers about the lives of people with disabilities, and to increase the likelihood that relevant issues will be addressed sensitively and accurately in the media, by offering an alternative vision to mediamakers about the lives of people with disabilities.”

As part of the project, three workshops will be held to educate and inform mediamakers, including television and film writers, producers, and directors, about issues critical to the lives of individuals with disabilities. The workshops will include presentations by disability experts who will address topics and themes such as school, work, play, family, romance and sexuality. In addition, filmmakers whose work exemplifies artistic quality, cultural diversity and relevance to the lives of people with disabilities will discuss their films. There will also be opportunities for direct interaction and dialogue with individuals with disabilities.

“These workshops offer a rare opportunity to advance social acceptance—the first in the short-term, by exposing film makers to information and resources in the longer term, by increasing the likelihood that the film and television shows they produce will engage new perspectives on people with disabilities,” shares Raynor.

“An influential agents of change and powerful molders of public opinion, the media have a major impact on our view of those who are different. Perceptions of capabilities make all the difference in how people perceive individuals with disabilities should learn, work and live,” says Anand. “This project enhances the capacity of Lanterman to respond to the needs of its community members—understanding that leads to inclusion—and we see the workshops as an important opportunity to advance social acceptance throughout the media.”

As part of the project, the National Arts and Disability Center will also publish an online Los Angeles Disability Resource Directory featuring experts who will provide consultation regarding story content. When completed this site will be accessible on the NADC Web site at www.perspectives-iff.org, and from the Perspectives Film Festival Web site at www.perspectivesiff.org. It will also be announced to various entertainment industry guilds to inform their members of its availability. Transcripts from the workshop presentations will also be made available on the NADC Web site.

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Joe Perales’ Personal Accomplishments
Enhance His Ability to Deliver Quality Services

For the better part of 20 years, Joe Perales has worked to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities. During this time, he’s worn many hats from assistant program director at UCP, supervisor of a direct-care facility and rehabilitation counselor, to continuing education teacher with the Los Angeles Unified School District and ultimate service coordinator specialist with Lanterman Regional Center.

Each of his previous experiences has enabled Perales to provide exemplary service on behalf of Lanterman Regional Center to the families and individuals on his caseload. Perales primarily works with individuals in the Glendale, Pasadena, Burbank, La Cañada and La Crescenta areas that are 14 years of age and older. “The largest group of people I work with are adults who live independently in the community. I also have some clients that live in residential facilities, and I work with families whose young adults are transitioning from school,” explains Perales.

Some of Perales’ day-to-day responsibilities include writing reports, conducting quarterly and annual reviews at clients’ school IEPs, day programs and facilities, as well as performing crisis intervention, and providing referrals to Department of Rehabilitation counselors for vocational services and supported employment. “The highlight of my day is seeing the smile on my clients’ faces when I’m able to ensure that they receive the services they need,” notes Perales.

In addition to his ongoing responsibilities, Perales also works to raise awareness about developmental disabilities and Lanterman Regional Center. He volunteered his time on the Prospective Media Committee, which was established to promote the event and fundraiser. He sits on the planning committee for the Media Access Awards, attends Hollywood Networking Breakfasts, and facilitates events with the Latino community, including promoting the Center’s services to various Spanish-speaking groups. He’s also helped organize public events for the Hollywood, Glendale, and Pasadena communities, and has facilitated support groups in the Hollywood area for parents and other family members. In his spare time, Perales pursued his master in business administration from Woodbury University in Burbank and graduated this past June.

Perales has also acted as a liaison representing Lanterman Regional Center in advocating and recommending changes in budget legislation; participating in a forensic task force that advocates and represents high-profile clients with a criminal history; facilitated investigations dealing with adult and juvenile clients involved in the criminal justice system; represented clients in formal and informal hearings, court, social welfare, mediations and litigation; and carried out announced and unannounced facility monitoring. He has also represented Lanterman at joint committees with other regional centers working to organize symposiums, forums and conferences for the general community, as well as clients and their families.

In his nine and one-half years at Lanterman, Perales accredits much of his success to “working towards building and maintaining strong work relationships, having a positive attitude, and fostering teamwork.” He shares, “I view the regional center like a family and feel that there is good sense of commitment by everyone to promote our mission.” In his opinion, one of the benefits families served by Lanterman Regional Center receive is “having a service coordinator who has received extensive and ongoing training about the regional center system that provides them with the skills and knowledge to effectively serve the individuals and families on their caseload.”

The Season of Sharing is (Almost) Upon Us

“Wealth is something you acquire so you can share it, not keep it.”
— Unknown

Take a moment to think about what the holidays would be like without the seasonally unwrapping of gifts or the stack of holiday dinner dishes piled high in the sink. Think about how lonely the holidays would be without friends and family to share in the holiday cheer. For some people, the holidays aren’t filled with hope and cheer, but rather with worry and fear. They fear they won’t be able to pay their rent or feed their family, and worry about how they will explain why there are no holiday presents for the children at home. The Holidays are for Sharing campaign has two objectives, one to help make holiday celebrations possible through donations of food and gifts, and also to raise money for the “Help Fund” – the fund that gives all year long by providing assistance with emergency food, clothing, shelter and other necessities. Last year alone, $32,000 was raised for the “Help Fund.”

Over the years, Holidays are for Sharing has made a significant difference in the lives of our community and there are several ways that you can help:
- Send a tax-deductible contribution in the form of cash, check, or money order.
- Donate a new gift, art supplies, personal care items, baby products, or a food gift certificate.
- Adopt-a-Family and provide them with food and gifts for the holidays.
- Give through your company’s United Way plan.
- Participate in “Matching Dollars” if your company has a matching fund program.
- Publicize our program through your business, club, church or service organization.

Checks should be made payable to “FDLRC Holidays are for Sharing” and mailed to Holidays are for Sharing; c/o Lanterman Regional Center, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 700; Los Angeles, CA 90010. Gifts should be delivered unwrapped to Lanterman Regional Center. For more information, please contact Jackie Ashman at 213.383.1300 x884 or jackie.ashman@lanterman.org.
Abel Castillo Shares in the Traditions of His Faith During First Communion

For many individuals, religion and spirituality can be critical means of support for themselves and their families. A religious or spiritual association can also provide a sense of personal balance as well as a connection to the community at large. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities are no different, having spiritual and religious interests, needs and gifts. However, all too often they do not have the opportunity to express these parts of their lives.

For many reasons, people with developmental disabilities who have religious interests do not become involved in religious congregations or other spiritual activities. Some caregivers may overlook the importance of spirituality for people with developmental disabilities, and congregations of many religions fail to welcome and include people with developmental disabilities in their worship services and programs. Thankfully, these scenarios are changing as caregivers recognize the need for religious inclusion, and congregations open their doors.

Romy and Joaquin Castillo both go to church regularly, and their religion and its traditions are important to them. First Communion is an important milestone for all children in the Catholic faith, and Romy and Joaquin were not sure they would ever see the day when Abel, their 9-year-old son who has autism, would receive his First Communion. They originally signed Abel up for the necessary classes to prepare him for his Communion. “We quickly realized that three hours of classes every Saturday for two years in addition to Abel’s multiple therapies and school was too tough for him,” comments Joaquin. “We wanted Abel to enjoy his experience and instead we viewed it as school and was upset.”

In rethinking how they might help Abel to receive his First Communion, Romy and Joaquin thought of an acquaintance, who is a priest at a Catholic church in East Los Angeles, who had also been to their house a few times and was familiar with Abel’s situation. They approached Father Eamonn with their dilemma, and asked him if he would perform the Communion and what options they had for Abel’s preparation.

“Father Eamonn told us that we could prepare Abel at home and that when Abel was ready he would meet with Abel and give him a test to ensure that he was prepared for his First Communion,” explains Joaquin. “My wife spent 15 minutes a day with Abel reading the Bible and memorizing the passages, and he was ready in less than two months.”

When Father Eamonn determined that Abel was ready to receive Communion, a date was set for March of this year. Along with Abel, approximately 100 other children were scheduled to receive their Communion. Knowing that Abel didn’t do well in large crowds, Romy and Joaquin spoke with Father Eamonn, who held a special rehearsal for Abel, the week before the actual Communion, to walk him through all the steps, including where he was going to walk and sit. Two seats towards the front were reserved, one for Abel and the other for his mother to sit with him during the whole ceremony.

“Abel was supposed to be one of the first children to walk up to receive the bread and wine, however, the order was reversed and he started to panic,” shares Joaquin. “It was the only time during the whole event where Abel panicked, and Father Eamonn who was keeping an eye on him as well, noticed this and called him up out of order.”

“We were worried for a while when Abel started to dislike religion because of the classes, and we were afraid that he would never receive his First Communion,” notes Joaquin. “First Communion is an important milestone for us and we highly recommend that parents who would like their child to receive Communion approach their priest about it. Father Eamonn was 100 percent behind Abel receiving his. Even though it can be a challenge for the child, it is such an incredible experience for both the parent and the child.”

After the ceremony, Father Eamonn took the family to a small courtyard that he had specially prepared for the family to take photos away from the crowd. Joaquin remembers, “He told us that Abel was a very special kid and that we were lucky to have him. It brought tears to our eyes.” Romy and Joaquin couldn’t be more proud of Abel’s accomplishment. Joaquin added that Abel enjoyed himself and is also proud of what he achieved.

The National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), the voice of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, continues its work to implement the 1978 Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on People with Disabilities. The statement calls for full inclusion of all persons with disabilities in the church and in society. With efforts like these in place, we hope to hear more stories like the Castillo family’s. Visit the NCPD Web site at www.ncpd.org/ for more information on their mission.

In addition to this site specifically devoted to the Catholic faith, there is a wealth of information that focuses on the different aspects of including people with all kinds of disabilities in many religions. For a list of resources visit the worship section on the Family Village Web site at www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/worship.htm and the religious and spirituality division on the American Association on Mental Retardation Web site at http://aamr.org/Groups/div/RG/about/index.php.

New Television Programs for Pre-Kindergarten Caregivers Premiere in September on KCET

On September 13, the much-anticipated educational television series for caregivers of pre-kindergarten aged children, “A Place of Our Own” and its Spanish-language series companion, “Los Niños en Su Casa,” will air on KCET/Hollywood, the West Coast flagship station of PBS. The two shows specifically target non-professional caregivers, such as parents, grandparents, other family members, friends and neighborhood babysitters, helping them provide young children with a head start on learning. These shows are also a valuable resource for professional caregivers. “A Place of Our Own” and “Los Niños en Su Casa” are produced in talkshow format, are interactive, and offer viewers advice and "howto’s" on topics such as nutrition, safety, discipline and literacy. Some of the segments will focus on developmental issues and feature information about regional centers. Visit KCET’s Web site at www.kcet.org/index.php for more information.
FATHERS’ CORNER: 1+1 does = 4

Also known as “How come you don’t smoke, chug coffee, and rant like a type “A” lunatic.”

By Steve Harris

Kay, one day a week back, one of my friends said to me, “How can you be a single father, deal with two boys with autism in their teens, and not be going crazy? I have two ‘normal’ kids and my problems are phenomenally minor.” I was dumbfounded to four times as difficult with their challenges.

To which I replied, “My boys problems may be different, but they are no more difficult than raising ‘normal’ children.” When you look at the basics, I don’t have to worry about my boys driving, spend the money on insurance to cover their driving, deal with the stress of SAT exams and the expense of college, or respond to constant questions of “Dad, why can’t I borrow the car to take my girlfriend to lover’s lane?” with any number of reasons why I believe it is a bad idea.

The basic difference between my friend and I is that the challenges my sons present me are different from the ones parents of typically developing children have to deal with. There are non-typical people that I know who are in my particular situation, nor are there many off-the-shelf resources to consult for advice. Even though their challenges are different, the bottom line is that I would not change my boys for the world.

What I find most interesting at this point in my own life is that now that my younger son is 18 months and Dan at 6, is how much information is now available for me to reference. I can’t help but wonder who came before me and blazed a trail to make that information available for all people in our situation. Now a new father can pick up a peer-to-peer mentor and by providing information to others in support groups or online chats.

You might ask, “Was I always this great wealth of information?” The answer would be a flat “No!” When the boys were still diagnosed with autism, Joe at 18 months and Dan at 6 months, I knew nothing. It was by the grace of God that the pre-school my boys attended also had a pre-school for children with special needs. A member of the special needs program, who understood the importance of early diagnosis, would routinely visit the regular pre-school to evaluate all of the children for developmental milestones. Her visit was the first inkling for us that there was something seriously wrong with Joe. Until then, my wife and I just thought he was a slow learner.

Once I passed through the five stages of grief that we all experience with a major change in our lives, as I was a child diagnosed with autism, I learned very quickly that I had to be the resident expert on my first son’s life and then my second son’s life when he was diagnosed, and to be their advocate. I also learned over time that the expectations I had, needed to change, since the boys were not going to fit the mold I had created in my mind. I learned that having two children with disabilities is not a bad thing, but offers a different way of looking at things. I vowed to be the best advocate I could be for them because I felt if I was not one as good. After their diagnosis, I immediately joined support groups and started research into their unique situations.

Since my boys were first diagnosed, I have maintained a log of some of the interesting experiences I have had over the years. I have changed jobs seven times, moved six times, dealt with six different school systems, participated in at least 55 different IEP, ITP meetings, had more doctors/therapists for the boys than I can even count, been subjects in at least a dozen case studies, filled out reams of paperwork, coordinated with three regional centers, worked with eight other agencies who were neither medical or school related but still somehow provided services for the boys, been involved with three different support groups, gone through a slew of nurses/respite care workers, two dogs, placing one son into a group home, two conservatorship hearings, and one divorce. And yet, I am still a calm, non-addicted, social-drinker, non-smoking, responsible father; move over Superman, you have company!

All of the items in the statistics above, I think the hardest decision I had to make was to place my oldest, and most severely disabled son into a group home 10 years ago. It became apparent that my younger son was starting to exhibit behaviors after my older son, and that if they both were going to grow to their own full potential, they were going to need to be separated on a daily basis. Tough a decision as it was, I am sure it was the right one. Now placing your child into a group home does not mean that you are disconnecting yourself from your child. I have always brought my older son home on the weekends and have spent hours listening to the boys acting out the “Best & Ernie” show from their bedroom when they were supposed to be asleep.

Also, like most other parents, my weekends are spent plugging car drivers and shuttling the young men between all of their activities. Needless to say, we enjoy the events together. We attend the BCR Social Dances in Burbank on a monthly basis, Dodge games as often as possible, Special Olympics, Best Buddies events, movies, the Los Angeles Live Steamers trains in Griffith Park (where we have our train stored and give rides on Sundays), the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Concerts at the Hollywood Bowl, family events at the Masonic Lodge where I am an officer, and of course, weekly services at the synagogue where the guys are full participants. Suffice to say that there was not a dry eye in the synagogue at either of my son’s Bar Mitzvahs, and I was one extremely proud father!

Placement is not an easy choice because it has both emotional and financial considerations. You have to find the right level of home that provides the least restrictive environment for your child, and one in which you feel comfortable that the staff will take good care of your child. This is a very emotional process because you find yourself asking, “Am I a bad parent because I can’t take care of my child full time?” The answer of course is “No,” and in reality, just the opposite is true. As a parent you recognize that a family has limits and in certain situations, staff in rotating shifts can provide the best support for your child on a day-to-day basis. Also, good parents know that as much as we would like to shelter our children and have them stay at home for all their lives, at some point, we must cut the apron strings. But true for our special children as well as normal children. If we keep our kids at home all their lives, when we pass on, they will be devastated and unprepared to live on their own. The goal for every parent should be to make his or her child as independent as possible.

Financially, when a child under 18 is placed in a fulltime living arrangement, the state of California assesses a “program development fee” to help develop new programs for individuals with disabilities. This is a fair share program, and since you are not paying for the room and board of your child in the group home, the state has a right to ask you for a portion of the money you would have spent on the care of your child if they had stayed at home. What you really need to know is that you can reduce the amount you pay the state by keeping good records of what you expend for your child. Annually, you will be asked to fill out a confidential income and expense report for the state to determine your fair share assessment on. If you can show how much you spent for clothing, personal and incidentals, travel, medical, etc. for your child when you had them out of the facility, you can decrease the amount assessed. My experience was that the fair share cost was always reasonable.

Overall, I feel my sons are continuing to rise to their full potential. They are very happy young men who remind me every day that even the simplest of things around us, can give us great delight in life.

Steve Harris, lives in Burbank, and is a Senior Financial Analyst currently in between jobs. Joe Harris attends the world famous Hollywood Bowl, and spends the month of July as a summer camp counselor. Dan Harris attends the world famous Hollywood Bowl, and shares the house with his dad.

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 Aunand at 213.383.1300 x753 or vinita.aunand@ltneman.org

The daDA Fathers’ Support Group meets on the second Monday of every month from 7pm. to 9pm. at the Denny’s at 30th St & Fern Avenue in Los Angeles (off Fletcher Street, east of 15 or near the Glendora Freeway). For more information, contact Aaron Hinson at 626.296.1556 or Germaine Lewis at 626.296.1556 or Germaine Lewis at 626.296.1556.
Making Bullying a Thing of the Past

When we think of bullying, many of us think of Ralphie in the movie “A Christmas Story,” who is repeatedly tormented by the school bully, only to finally crack and take a stand. While bullying can be as overt as one child physically abusing another child, bullying also can take many other subterfuge forms.

Considered to be a serious public health problem in the United States, between 15 and 25 percent of students are bullied with some frequency, and 15 to 20 percent of students bully others with some frequency. Bullying is defined as aggressive behavior that is intentionally and repeatedly over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. It can take a variety of forms including:

• Physical bullying, such as hitting or punching;

• Verbal bullying, such as teasing or name-calling;

• Nonverbal or emotional bullying, such as intimidating someone through gestures or social exclusion; and

• Cyber bullying, by sending insulting messages through e-mail.

Furthermore, children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to be depressed, lonely, anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell and think about suicide. Bullying causes as many as 160,000 students to stay home on any given day because they are afraid of being bullied. Young people who bully are more likely than those who don’t to skip school and drop out of school. They are also more likely to smoke, drink alcohol, get into fights, vandalize property and drop out of school.

In order to combat this problem, Health Resources and Services Administration’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau launched a national bullying prevention campaign – Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now! One of the key components of this campaign is the campaign website that can be viewed at www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp. The Web site features both a youth site and an adult site.

The youth site is divided into three sections: “What bullying is,” “What you can do,” and “Cool stuff.”

The “What bullying is” section is further divided into sections that focus on the topics of “Why do kids bully?” “Signs that you bully others,” which features a quiz, and the “Effects of bullying.” "What you can do" section provides information and solutions for children who are being bullied, bullying others, and bullying both. The final section, “Cool stuff,” features profiles of the 25 characters created for the site as well as games and Webisodes that star several of the characters and provide an example of bullying and how it can be handled. Each Webisode is also followed by a questionnaire about the episode.

Studies show that adults are often unaware of bullying problems. In one study, 70 percent of teachers believed they intervene “almost always” in bullying situations where as only 25 percent of students agreed with this assessment. As an adult, one of the best ways to help stop or prevent bullying is to be educated about, and sensitive to, the problem. One never knows who they are concerned parents, educators or school employees, health and safety professionals, or others who work with children, is the adult portion of the Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now! Web site. The site features information about bullying, children who are bullied and children who bully, and the things that you as an adult can do to put a stop to bullying. An important tool also featured on the Web site is the comprehensive kit of bullying prevention materials.

In the interest of the future generations of America, let’s all take a stand, lend a hand, stop bullying now, and make it a thing of the past.
**Training and Events Page Will No Longer be Printed in Viewpoint**

The Training and Development unit provides information on training opportunities that focus on developmental disabilities and related topics. The unit staff coordinates training events that are conducted by Lanterman Regional Center faculty, staff, board members, and service providers in the Lanterman community to attend external educational events of special interest.

**Family Training**

**Behavior Management Workshop for Parents**
This six-session course offered in English, Spanish, and Korean introduces the basic principles, concepts, and practical applications of behavior management. The classes focus on managing and controlling challenging behaviors, and using positive reinforcement to replace inappropriate behaviors. All families should touch base with their service coordinator to determine whether this course will meet your needs. Contact the Koch Young Resource Center at 213.383.1300 x730, toll-free at 800.546.3676 or kyr@lanterman.org for additional information and to register.

**Behavior Management Special Workshop: Toilet Training**
This unique three half-day course offers a step-by-step approach for toilet training with specific toilet training strategies for children of all ages and special needs. Class sessions are designed to provide support to parents as they practice and develop behavior techniques between sessions. All families should touch base with their service coordinator to determine whether this course will meet your needs. Contact the Koch Young Resource Center at 213.383.1300 x730, toll-free at 800.546.3676 or kyr@lanterman.org for additional information and to register.

**IEP Training: Transition to Preschool**
For families with children 2 to 3 years of age. Trainings are offered in both English and Spanish. Presenter: LAUSD
For more information and dates call 213.383.1300 x730.

**Parenting the Child with Special Needs**
This is an exciting five-week course that addresses issues faced by families who have children from birth to age 6 with special needs. Topics covered include developmental stages and milestones, intervention and therapy that support child development in the family, planning and setting goals for your child, appropriate expectations and boundaries in behavior management, advocating for your child, and making connections with resources and support. A specialized training on autism is also available. “General” refers to any diagnosis other than Autism. For more information and registration and additional dates call 213.383.1300 x730.

**English**
October 7 – November 4, 2004
Five consecutive Thursdays
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Exempt October 28 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Glendale Unified School District
230 North Jackson Street
Glendale, CA 91206
Presenters: SCAT faculty

**Spanish – General**
October 2 – November 30, 2004
Cinco sabados consecutivos
11:30 a.m. a 1:30 p.m.
Shriners Hospital
3160 Genebra Street
Los Angeles, CA 90020

**Spanish – Autumn**
February 5 – March 5, 2005
Cinco miercoles consecutivos
11:30 a.m. a 1:30 p.m.
Shriners Hospital
3160 Genebra Street
Los Angeles, CA 90020

**Service Coordination and Autism Training**
This training is a 10-hour course for Lanterman families to better understand how to advocate for and assist their family member with a disability. Topics covered include an overview of the regional center system, service coordination, overview of development, behavior management, intervention and support, advocacy and legal issues. For more information, registration and additional dates call 213.383.1300 x730.

**English**
September 8 – October 6, 2004
Cinco miercoles consecutivos
9:30 a.m. a 11:30 a.m.
Center for Education Frank D. Lanterman
Presenters: SCAT faculty

**Spanish**
September 9 – October 6, 2004
Cinco miercoles consecutivos
9:30 a.m. a 11:30 a.m.
Center for Education Frank D. Lanterman
Presenters: SCAT faculty

**Learn Sign Language**
Lanterman Regional Center is looking to offer a sign language course for interested parents this coming fall. If you are interested in attending classes, please contact the Koch Young Resource Center at 213.383.1300 x730, toll-free at 800.546.3676 or kyr@lanterman.org for more information.

**Training and Events and Someone Cares Pages Will No Longer be Printed in Viewpoint**

This is the last edition of Viewpoint that will feature the “Training and Events” and “Someone Cares” pages. Going forward, these two pages will no longer be printed in the newsletter. Information featured in these sections will be available on Lanterman’s Web site at www.lanterman.org. To access training information, select the “training” button. Content is divided into several main categories including client, family, and service provider training, as well as external training. There are many trainings held outside of the regional center system that families may be interested in, however, due to timing issues as well as space limitations in the newsletter, we are unable to include information about them.” Shares Vinita Anand, Viewpoint editor. To access the support groups and information featured on the “Someone Cares” page, select the “support” button. This section has a list of all the support groups, as well as peer support partner information and self-advocacy information. “The Web site and Viewpoint are designed to complement each other. There are numerous opportunities available in the Lanterman community that are not announced in this newsletter. They may also take place in between Viewpoint. Lanterman’s Web site is a dynamic resource that features current information about the majority of these opportunities,” adds Anand. If you do not have a computer at home, visit your local library to use their computers or stop by the Koch Young Resource Center to browse the Lanterman Web site. Training and event information is also accessible through the Training Hotline at 213.383.1300, press 8.
ADULT SIBLING SUPPORT GROUP
Call for dates, location and details.
Contact: Olivia Hinojosa, 213.383.1300 x705

ARMENIAN PARENT GROUP
Quarterly meetings – Glendale area
Call for dates, location and details
Contact: Rima Shashian, 818.548.4149
Sopi Topjian, 213.383.1300 x468

ARMENIAN PARENT SUPPORT GROUP
Monthly meetings at group members’ homes in the Glendale area
Monthly – Last Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Contact: Rima Shashian, 818.548.4149
Sopi Topjian, 213.383.1300 x468

AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA
San Gabriel Valley Chapter Support Group
1176 North Reeder Avenue; Covina
Monthly – First Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Contact: Patricia Kryszinski, 626.647.3452

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SUPPORT NETWORK
(Participated by a behavior therapist)
AbilityFirst
40 North Alhambra Drive; Pasadena
Monthly – Second Tuesday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Olivia Hinojosa, 213.383.1300 x705
dada FATHERS REGIONAL SUPPORT NETWORK
Denny’s Restaurant
3860 San Fernando Road; Los Angeles
Monthly – Second Monday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Aaron Hinojosa, 626.296.1556
Gorman Barros, 626.640.9842

DE MI FAMILIA A SU FAMILIA
(Grupo para familias con niños con autismo)
Lanterman Regional Center
Primer mercoles de cada mes 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Rom Castilla, 323.463.3678

DOWN SYNDROME PARENT RESOURCE NETWORK
Church of the Brethren
1041 North Alhambra Drive; Pasadena
Monthly – Second Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Rhonda Firth, 323.255.0037
Olivia Hinojosa, 213.383.1300 x705

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
St. Domini’s Community Center
2002 Meriton Avenue; Eagle Rock
Monthly – First Friday, 7:30 p.m.
Contact: Emma Guiania, 323.259.8332
Sandy Nanchen, 323.344.9355

FOOTBALL ALLIANCE — NETWORK RESOURCE MEETINGS
Pasadena Child Development Associates
620 North Lake Avenue; Pasadena
Monthly – Second Wednesday, 7:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
Contact: Sue Brooks, 818.66.AUTISM (818.662.8847)

FRAGILE X PARENT SUPPORT GROUP
Call for dates, location and details.
Monthly – 7 p.m.
Contact: 818.754.4237 (voicemail)

GLendale/BUrBANK/FOOTILL PARENT SUPPORT COOPERATIVE
Burbank First United Methodist Church
700 North Glenoaks Boulevard; Burbank
Monthly – First Wednesday, 10 a.m.
Contact: Cheryl Alسيد, 213.383.1300 x310
Carmen Aliyat, 818.662.1025

GRUPO DE APOYO PARA EL MANEJO DE LA CONDUCTA
(Dirigido por un terапista de comportamiento)
Shirner’s Hospital
3160 Geneva Street (Virgil and Third); Los Angeles
Ultimo martes de cada mes 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Alfredo Kerteran, 714.528.6974

GRUPO PARA FAMILIAS CON NIÑOS CON PRADER-WILLI
Shirner’s Hospital
3160 Geneva Street (Virgil and Third); Los Angeles
Llama para fecha y mas information
Contact: Angelys y Jesus Lopez, 323.644.3191

INCLUSION IN REGULAR CLASSES SUPPORT NETWORK
Dates, locations and times vary each month.
Contact: Jon next meeting
Contact: Sam Saad, 213.383.1300 x939

JAPANESE-SPEAKING PARENTS ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGES
Little Tokoyo Service Center
231 East Third Street, Suite G-104; Los Angeles
Monthly – Third Saturday, 9:30 a.m.
Contact: Mariko Magami, 818.249.1726
Michiko Wulkan, 818.557.0728

KOREAN PARENT SUPPORT GROUP
Asian Advocate for Special People
Lanterman Regional Center
Monthly – Second Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Contact: Boop Sul Kim, 213.383.1300 x387
Suki Chang, 213.383.1300 x507
Christine Yuh, 213.383.1300 x503

LA ESPERANZA
(Grupo semanal en Español)
Lanterman Regional Center
Monthly – Second Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Contact: Carmen Alabat, 213.383.1300 x526

LA CONDUCTA
Grup de Apoyo para el Manejo de la Conducta
(Grupo semanal en Español)
Shirner’s Hospital
3160 Geneva Street (Virgil and Third); Los Angeles
Ultimo martes de cada mes 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Alfredo Kerteran, 714.528.6974

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND INTERVENTION
Lanterman Regional Center
Monthly – First Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Contact: Mary Smith, 714.528.6974

MOMMY & DADDY & ME — EARLY INTERVENTION PARENT SUPPORT GROUP
Call for details.
Contact: Olivia Hinojosa, 213.383.1300 x705

PADRES UNIDOS LANTERMAN
(Grupo en Español)
Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles (Vermont and Sunset)
Conference Room “D”
Segundos martes de cada mes 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Contact: Irma Cruz, 323.461.9307
Yesila Bautista, 323.461.9307

RETT SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP
Quarterly meetings – Pasadena area
Call for dates, location and details
Contact: Marie Hyland, 426.700.4636
Pep Stenberg, 626.355.5324

SIBSHOPS
For siblings ages 6 to 12
Los Angeles and Pasadena areas
Monthly – Third Friday, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Contact: Olivia Hinojosa, 213.383.1300 x705

TEATRO ILUSION
(Grupo semanal en Español)
Shirner’s Hospital
3160 Geneva Street (Virgil and Third); Los Angeles
Cada viernes, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Contact: Yolanda Hernandez, 562.928.324

NEW GROUPS
TOUCHPONTS NEW PATHS SUPPORT GROUP
These support groups offer parents an opportunity to meet in a small group facilitated by a counseling professional specifically trained in the areas of grief and disabilities. Topics discussed include the role of grief in your life, missed milestones, the impact on family rituals, redefining perfection and other topics to help families deal constructively with normal feelings of stress and grief.
For more information and dates call Tina Chinakarn at 213.383.1300 x715

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT – OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK
For families with children birth to 6
Webster Elementary School
2101 East Washington Boulevard; Pasadena
Monthly – Second Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Contact: Bailey Jackson, 626.998.8333

Lanterman Self-Advocacy Groups
MID-WILSHIRE SELF-ADVOCACY GROUP
Lanterman Regional Center
Monthly – First Monday, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Contact: Armen Frundzhyan, 323.462.7300 or afrundzhyan@netzero.net

THE ACHIEVERS
1200 East Colorado Street; Glendale
Monthly – Third Monday, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Contact: Kevin Smith, 818.243.5485 or ksmith241@charter.net

WOMEN’S ADVOCACY GROUP (WAG)
Lanterman Regional Center
Monthly – Third Tuesday, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Contact: Mary Flynn, 213.383.1300 x759 or mary.flynn@lanterman.org

The address for Lanterman Regional Center is:
3303 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 700;
Los Angeles, CA 90010

If you are interested in joining a support group, but don’t know how to take the first step, call The Koch Young Resource Center for information at 800.546.3676
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**VOYAGE**

Pack a Picnic, Dine Under the Stars and Watch..."To Kill a Mockingbird"

FRANK D. LANTERMAN REGIONAL CENTER
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