

**Advocacy Report  
July 2019 - December 2019**

*All names have been changed to preserve confidentiality.*

**ADA**

**Lupita's Sidewalk is Now Safe.**

Lupita attends her day program five days per week. Last year, Lupita fell on the uneven sidewalk while running from her front door to the day program's van and received 15 stitches. Lupita's brother contacted OCRA to ask for help with getting the sidewalk repaired. He had contacted the city several times, and was told the request was added to a long list of local projects. Lupita's brother felt strongly that the city should make the sidewalk repair a priority. OCRA believed that Lupita had a strong reasonable accommodation request to make. OCRA offered to negotiate with the city to accomplish the repair. OCRA contacted the city attorney and explained Lupita's story and her rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In less than two weeks, Lupita's brother reported to OCRA that the city had completed the sidewalk repair.

**BENEFITS – IHSS**

**Tonya Prepares for Hearing with OCRA's Support.**

Tonya's mother applied for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), but after a 20-minute interview, Tonya's application was denied. The county found Tonya to be self-directing, which disqualified her for protective supervision. OCRA helped the family understand their appeal rights and went over her self-assessment worksheet carefully. Tonya's mother filed for a hearing. OCRA helped Tonya's family prepare for hearing by recommending certain documents to take to hearing and explaining the difference between self-directing and non-self-directing behavior. Tonya's family submitted new evidence to the county. After reviewing the evidence, the day before the hearing, the county offered to approve Tonya for 228 hours per month of IHSS if the family agreed to withdraw their appeal. Tonya will receive back-dated IHSS hours, amounting to over \$12,000 in back-payments to her provider.

### **IHSS Restores Peter and Andrew's Protective Supervision Hours.**

Peter and Andrew are twin brothers, each receiving IHSS protective supervision hours for the past 20 years. Just before their annual reassessments, they received notice that the county planned to terminate all of their protective supervision hours. The county said that to qualify for protective supervision, Peter and Andrew had to be wheelchair users, bedridden, or have severe dementia. OCRA reviewed the IHSS notices and advised Peter and Andrew's conservator, Sally of their rights to appeal the county's decision, and the qualifying criteria for protective supervision. OCRA also prepared Sally to advocate for Peter and Andrew at the IHSS in-home reassessment and to file for a hearing. Sally advocated effectively at the in-home reassessment and the county restored all of Peter and Andrew's protective supervision hours.

### **BENEFITS – MEDI-CAL**

#### **Samuel Is Found Eligible for Zero Share-of-Cost Medi-Cal.**

Samuel has autism and an intellectual disability. He received Social Security SSI benefits and no share-of-cost Medi-Cal for years. In 2007, Samuel's father became eligible for Social Security benefits and as a result, Samuel's SSI benefits changed to Disabled Adult Child (DAC) benefits. In 2018, the county redetermined Samuel's Medi-Cal eligibility and charged him with a large monthly share-of-cost. Samuel filed an appeal. OCRA represented Samuel at a hearing, arguing he was eligible for zero share-of-cost Medi-Cal under a special Medi-Cal program for people receiving DAC benefits. After considering the evidence, the administrative law judge found in Samuel's favor and found him eligible for zero share-of-cost Medi-Cal, retroactive to 2017.

#### **Gordon's No Share-of-Cost Medi-Cal Was Reinstated and All Past-Due Medicare Premiums Were Paid.**

Gordon started receiving invoices for Medicare premiums in April 2019. He had never received these before and didn't know why he was getting them. OCRA contacted the County Medi-Cal Analyst who said Gordon had not had Medi-Cal since 2011. OCRA then spoke with Gordon's representative payee and found that Gordon had been receiving SSI and Disabled Adult Child (DAC) benefits until his earnings made him ineligible for SSI in 2011.

OCRA told the Medi-Cal Analyst that under 1619(b), Gordon's loss of SSI in 2011 should not have resulted in losing Medi-Cal eligibility, and that as a DAC recipient, he should have Medi-Cal without a share of cost. Although the Analyst could not explain how Gordon's Medicare premiums were paid which Medi-Cal should have only paid if he indeed had Medi-Cal, he reinstated Gordon's Medi-Cal under the proper aid code for DAC. As a result, Medi-Cal paid Gordon's past-due Medicare premiums and he again has both Medi-Cal and Medicare with no share of cost.

### **BENEFITS – SSDI**

#### **Larry's SSDI Benefits are Reinstated and His Overpayment Cleared.**

Larry was laid off from the job he had through a vocational program when he faced health challenges, and was unable to pursue new employment. Larry's sister contacted OCRA because he received a Notice of Disability Cessation and a Notice of Overpayment from Social Security for \$18,472. Larry's sister previously helped him appeal and request a hearing, but almost a year later, they still had received no response. OCRA met with Larry and his sister, reviewed documents, and contacted a Social Security representative to explain Larry's case. OCRA learned that Larry had not submitted necessary paperwork to Social Security and then assisted Larry and his sister with completing the required forms and advised them to submit proof of Larry's wages. Larry received a Notice of Revised Decision, which stated he completed his trial work period and the work he was doing was not substantial gainful activity. As a result, Larry's SSDI benefits will continue and he no longer has an overpayment.

### **BENEFITS – SSI**

#### **Justin Maintains his SSI Benefit.**

Justin's mother contacted OCRA for help when Social Security sent a notice of overpayment for Justin, a minor, because he was over the SSI resource limit. The notice said his monthly SSI benefit would be reduced until he repaid the overpayment. OCRA assisted his mother with filing an appeal within 10 days, so Justin could receive aid paid pending and continue to receive his full benefit. To assist his mother with the appeal, OCRA reviewed SSI notices and bank account records and learned that although both of their bank accounts were over the SSI resource limit, the funds were exempt from being counted as a resource. His mother had an

income tax refund in her account, which should not be counted. Justin had money from an SSI underpayment in his account, which also should not be counted. Justin's mother went to the reconsideration appeal meeting and provided information from OCRA about the money and exemptions. Following the meeting, Social Security determined Justin did not have an overpayment because the funds in both accounts were exempt as resources.

### **Client Can Spend Money from SSI Dedicated Account.**

After years of appeals, Daniel, a minor, became eligible for SSI benefits. He was entitled to retroactive benefits from the date he applied for SSI. The SSI rules say the retroactive benefits for a minor must be put into an account that is separate from the monthly SSI benefit account. The separate account is called a "dedicated account." The rules are very specific about how money in a dedicated account may be spent and the local Social Security office must approve the expenses. Daniel's retroactive benefits were put in his dedicated account. Daniel needed money for a trumpet for band, a bed and dresser for his bedroom, and an iPad with apps to help with communication and schoolwork. His parents submitted multiple requests to the local Social Security office and did not receive a response. Because they are not native English speakers, they had difficulty communicating directly with the SSA representative. OCRA contacted the local Social Security office and learned that Social Security had approved the request to spend funds from the dedicated account, but the family never received the letter. Social Security sent the letter that stated the family can spend money on the items they requested. Daniel's family is happy to be able to purchase these items so Daniel can use his iPad and practice trumpet at home. Daniel will also have his own bed and his clothes will be in a dresser instead of in boxes.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **Julie Returns to Work and Received Back Pay**

Julie has a job with an employment services program. Julie's apartment got bed bugs and Julie worked with her regional center service coordinator to hire a pest extermination company to kill the bugs. Julie had to stay home from her job because of the bed bugs but anticipated returning to work once the exterminators visited and she got a doctor's note. However,

Julie's work would not allow her back until the pest control service confirmed her home was free of bed bugs. The pest control service would not provide a 100% guarantee that the bugs were eradicated, Julie contacted OCRA to advocate for her return to work. OCRA investigated the employment service policies and found no substantial reason to prevent Julie from returning to work. OCRA spoke with Julie's employer and explained she had done everything she was supposed to do, and they should let her come back to work. Julie returned to work and received back-pay for 6 weeks of lost wages the employer refused to allow her to return.

## **HOUSING**

### **Ronnie Successfully Presents His Case for a Closer Parking Space.**

Ronnie has cerebral palsy that prevents him from walking more than a block or two without difficulty. Ronnie's Homeowner's Association (HOA) recently instituted a street parking rule where everyone – even someone with a disabled placard displayed – will be towed if that vehicle does not also display an HOA parking pass. Ronnie lives with his mother and stepfather, who have the only street parking pass. After working all day, Ronnie would often have to walk several blocks or more to find parking near his condo. Ronnie and his mother had previously requested another parking pass from the HOA as a reasonable accommodation. The HOA denied their request, stating they do not have to provide reasonable accommodations. OCRA helped Ronnie rephrase the request to the HOA for another parking pass and provided legal citations to help Ronnie demonstrate that state and federal disability discrimination housing laws apply to HOAs. At the next HOA meeting, Ronnie presented his case and won. The HOA gave Ronnie a street parking pass to use for his vehicle so he could park outside his family's condo.

## **OUTREACH AND TRAINING**

### **OCRA Presents at an Early Childhood Mental Health Conference.**

In September 2019, OCRA presented at the 10th Annual Early Childhood Mental Health Conference in San Diego. OCRA's breakout session had 100 attendees, including parents, educators, regional center program managers, and other professionals. OCRA presented information about the supports and services available to students experiencing educational,

social/emotional, and behavioral issues at home and/or at school. The primary focus of the conference was on mental health issues related to trauma. Attendees learned how to access services for children and their families through Early Start, Prevention Resource and Referral Service, Medi-Cal's Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic Treatment benefit, Educationally-Related Mental Health Services, Extra Services for Foster Youth, and Specialty Mental Health Services. The presentation and question and answer sessions were a great success and OCRA was invited to present again.

## **PERSONAL AUTONOMY**

### **OCRA Helps Stop Petition for Conservatorship.**

Michelle lives in a home through a family home agency and attends a community-based day program. She uses a communication device to let people know what she needs. Michelle's care provider called OCRA after a family member filed a petition to conserve Michelle. The family member wanted to control Michelle's money. OCRA met with Michelle and asked her if she wanted to be conserved. Through her communication device, Michelle clearly indicated she did not want to be conserved. OCRA helped Michelle contact the public defender's office, who represented her in the conservatorship proceedings. OCRA told Michelle's public defender she did not want to be conserved and provided information about the support she gets from the regional center to be independent. With OCRA's help, the public defender succeeded in getting the conservatorship petition dropped. Michelle is happy to continue making her own decisions living independently in the community.

### **William Makes His Own Medical Decisions.**

William lives with his partner and utilizes supported living services. William learned that his medical condition was preventing him from getting sufficient nutrients, and he needed surgery. William was afraid and did not want to have surgery. Without the surgery, his life was in danger. The surgeon would not perform the surgery unless William changed his mind and presented a letter from a professional that he consented to the surgery. William's service coordinator explained his right to refuse, but that the consequences would be that he could die without it and also made a referral to OCRA to help William understand his rights and the potential

danger of choosing not to have the surgery. OCRA met with William and his team to talk about his choices. William expressed his fear of the surgery with OCRA and his team. OCRA explained what his options were and asked if he wanted more time to think about his decision. William agreed to have another meeting with OCRA, his team, and his partner. Meanwhile, William saw his doctor and got some answers about the surgery that made him less afraid of moving forward. William signed the consent form and had a successful procedure.

## **REGIONAL CENTER – COMMUNITY INTEGRATION**

### **Chuck Moves to the Community After 30 Years in Restrictive Settings.**

Chuck has mild intellectual disability and mental health disabilities. He has spent most of his life in restrictive settings, including the past five years in a locked acute psychiatric hospital. For several years, OCRA supported and advocated for Chuck to live in a less restrictive placement and advocated for his rights. OCRA coordinated with Chuck's new regional center service coordinator to locate a group home placement for Chuck. Chuck was finally placed at a step-down group home for people with his specific needs. OCRA participated by phone in Chuck's 30-day review meeting at which Chuck stated he loved his new home.

### **Fernando Has the Right to Receive Rehabilitation Services in the Least Restrictive Environment.**

Local courthouse staff contacted OCRA to assist Fernando in securing services and supports to stay in the community. Fernando had just become an adult. He was living with his father, who worked, and a sibling. His father could not help Fernando with his behavioral challenges. The family's neighbor called the police and Fernando was issued a restraining order to stay away from his father and neighbor. As a result, Fernando could not go back home. OCRA met with Fernando at the local courthouse awaiting his court hearing. He wanted to go back home with his father and see his infant daughter. OCRA wrote a letter to the judge explaining Fernando's rights to services and supports in the least restrictive environment. The judge immediately released Fernando to his father while the regional center promptly secured services and supports to assist with his behaviors. Fernando, his father, regional center, public defender, and OCRA are working together to secure the services and supports he needs

to succeed in the community. Fernando is currently living in the community and his behaviors are improving.

### **Client Moves from Skilled Nursing Facility to Community Placement.**

OCRA collaborated with the regional center to ensure clients living in skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) had the opportunity to move back to the community. The regional center told OCRA about Jose, who had lived at a local SNF for many years after sustaining an injury. Although Jose needed skilled care after the injury, he no longer needed to live at a SNF and could be served at a group home in the community. OCRA met with Jose, who said he wanted to move, and requested an IPP meeting with the regional center. At the meeting, OCRA advocated for Jose to move back into the community. Though Jose's family was opposed to him leaving the SNF, Jose still wanted to move. After many months, the regional center found a community placement at a group home for Jose. The group home is brand new and has only three other residents, as opposed to the SNF which had over 50 other residents. Jose moved into the group home and now has more individualized support and goes on community outings, such as to the mall which he enjoys.

### **Evan Finds Successful Community Placement.**

Evan was in a locked area at a developmental center for nearly four years. OCRA learned about Evan through the regional center's developmental center liaison. Evan's team initially identified a community home but the District Attorney argued that Evan needed a home with delayed egress features, which are physical features that delay a resident from leaving the house. Because an opening in this type of home was not yet available, this requirement would delay Evan's chance to leave the institution. OCRA provided technical assistance to Evan's Public Defender. At the court hearing, the District Attorney continued to argue that Evan needed a home with delayed egress features, despite Evan's entire team explaining it was unnecessary. The judge agreed with the Public Defenders and OCRA's reasoning and found that Evan's community placement did not require delayed egress and upon discharge and Evan moved into a beautiful home near his hometown. OCRA attended Evan's 30-day IPP meeting in person, where Evan expressed that he liked the home very much.



### **Elizabeth Exercises Her Privacy Rights and Secures Community Placement.**

Elizabeth was committed to an IMD since May 2018. She began a romantic relationship with another peer on the unit. Due to the layout of the IMD, the couple found there was no place for them to privately be intimate. They spoke with the unit supervisor and requested access to a private room. Rather than accommodating the couple, the IMD staff insisted that the relationship was not consensual, threatened the peer with arrest, and procured a letter from Elizabeth's doctor prohibiting sexual relationships. OCRA submitted a 4731 complaint with the regional center, who was funding her placement at the IMD, saying that the IMD's actions violated Elizabeth's right to privacy under federal and state law. Elizabeth's regional center agreed to coordinate a training on privacy for the IMD staff and schedule an IPP meeting to discuss services to support Elizabeth's future relationships.

### **Manny Keeps His Right to Visit with Family During Treatment.**

When Manny entered a dual diagnosis treatment facility, his providers told him to not have visitors until he is stable and adjusted. Manny loves his family and did not want his visits with them to be restricted. He agreed with the team because they introduced it to him as a necessary course of action, rather than a simple suggestion. Manny's family contacted OCRA because they were concerned about his well-being and his ability to have family support during this time. OCRA informed the facility that denying a clients' rights to have visitors must be for good cause, which the facility did not have. After OCRA's contact, the facility staff welcomed Manny's family to visit him whenever possible. Manny was excited to visit with his family. The positive impact of these visits became part of his monthly progress reports to the team.

## **REGIONAL CENTER – ELIGIBILITY**

### **Kyle, Becomes Eligible for Regional Center Eligibility.**

Kyle, a Chinese-American man, was diagnosed with autism only 5 days before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. During Kyle's school years, his parents were hesitant and did not agree to have the school district assess him. They acknowledged that the family's cultural background significantly affected

their decision to forgo special education services and other evaluations. When the family first tried to apply for regional center services, the regional center denied Kyle's eligibility. Kyle's parents applied a second time and asked for OCRA's help with the application. After OCRA reviewed Kyle's records and held multiple conversations with Kyle's parents, OCRA connected the family with an independent expert to get a comprehensive evaluation. OCRA then helped them withdraw their request for a fair hearing while the independent expert conducted Kyle's evaluation. When the expert completed the assessment, which confirmed Kyle's diagnosis of autism, OCRA submitted this report to the regional center. The regional center denied eligibility again, so OCRA agreed to represent Kyle at his fair hearing. The lack of special education records, late diagnosis of autism, and the presence of a psychiatric diagnosis were the barriers to eligibility. OCRA gathered and reviewed more records and interviewed more witnesses. Kyle's mother, who is an excellent historian, also provided information to make up for the lack of records before age 18. After a two-day hearing, the judge ruled that Kyle is eligible for regional center services. OCRA attended Kyle's initial IPP meeting. Kyle wants to attend a day program and his service coordinator is looking into other supports and services for him and his family.

## **REGIONAL CENTER – SERVICES**

### **Jorge Obtains Services to Increase his Independence.**

OCRA staff represented Jorge at his IPP meeting to discuss services to help him increase his independence. Although Jorge was quiet at first and he deferred to his mother before speaking when the team discussed services like independent living services (ILS), behavioral and education supports and transportation Jorge became a more active participant. Jorge attends a local college and wants to get support on campus and transportation to and from the campus. The team discussed additional services such as funding a Tap transportation card so Jorge can access his community when ILS staff are not available. He also is interested in obtaining his driver's license and his service coordinator agreed to look into driving school. OCRA encouraged Jorge to write down qualities he wants in his ILS staff so he can prepare for the upcoming ILS assessment. After the meeting, the service coordinator agreed to look into eight separate services that will help support Jorge's independence and provide Jorge and his family with an update.

### **Brittany Gets to Attend a Day Program.**

Brittany dropped out of high school at age 20 and was spending her days in the family home with her father and siblings. Brittany's father, who is the family's caregiver, is undergoing cancer treatment which makes supervising Brittany and caring for her other siblings with developmental disabilities difficult. Brittany became overwhelmed and got into a violent interaction with a family member. This resulted in Brittany being admitted to a psychiatric hospital for two weeks. Brittany's hospital social worker called OCRA asking for assistance in finding a day program for Brittany, so she could have a better opportunity for community integration once she returned home. OCRA agreed to help get a new IPP and services in place. The regional center service coordinator explained that the regional center was not sure if, under the law, they could offer a day program without Brittany having either a certificate of completion or a high school diploma. OCRA provided information about an exemption to the diploma/certificate requirement, and explained why Brittany met the exemption. Brittany was released from the hospital and the regional center agreed to fund a day program for her to attend. She will now have the opportunity to develop peer relationships in the community. Brittany's father will also have more time during the day to recover from his medical treatment.

### **OCRA Helps Selena Get Regional Center Services to Remain at Home.**

Selena's in-home behaviorist referred her family to OCRA after they unsuccessfully tried to get the regional center to provide services. Selena's family struggled to provide 24-hour care for Selena, since she could not attend a day program due to her challenging behaviors. The family was also in dire need of respite. OCRA requested an IPP meeting with the regional center and advocated for additional services for Selena and her family at the meeting. OCRA asked the regional center to fund a one-to-one aide at a day program and to get permission to pay a higher rate for respite services. The regional center agreed. Selena and her family now feel like they are on a brighter path to stability.

### **Frida Will Continue to Be an Active Member in Her Community.**

Shortly after what was perceived as a positive and productive IPP meeting, the regional center told Frida and her mother, who is also her conservator that it would no longer fund her community-based program because she

lived in a nursing facility and the facility provided comparable activities during the day. Frida loves her program because it enables her to engage with her community through volunteer work and delivery of meals to seniors and military veterans. However, Frida and her mother felt strongly that the activities were not comparable, and explained this to the regional center. The regional center later changed its reason, stating that due to her limited mobility, Frida could not “fully participate” in the day program activities. Frida had a recent injury, but her prognosis was positive and her mobility was anticipated to improve. OCRA helped Frida’s mother prepare for a follow-up meeting, where she successfully advocated for the regional center to continue funding the program. Frida will continue her community outings and volunteer work while she recovers from her injury.

### **Regional Center Funds Transportation for Rita to Safely Access the Community.**

Rita’s mother wanted help to challenge the regional center’s refusal to allow her adaptive skills provider to transport Rita in the community. The regional center agreed that Rita required individualized transportation to remain safe while in the community but explained that the law only permits transportation by providers who are vendored under specific service codes. For approximately seven months, Rita had limited access to community activities she enjoyed, due to the lack of transportation. OCRA agreed to represent Rita at an administrative hearing. Before hearing, the regional center approved the vendor’s application to provide community integration services. As a result, the hearing was no longer necessary. Rita is now working toward her goal to become competitively employed.

### **OCRA Helps Catherine Obtain More Personal Assistance Services.**

Catherine has been exhibiting very significant behaviors, including physical and verbal aggression. Because of these behavioral challenges, Catherine is receiving special education services at home. While Catherine is being taught at home, Catherine’s mother requested an increase in personal assistance services from the regional center. The regional center denied this request. OCRA contacted the service coordinator’s supervisor and explained the reasons Catherine requires more personal assistance services. Because of OCRA’s advocacy, the regional center increased her personal assistance services from 66 hours to 166 hours per month.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **OCRA Negotiates Safer, Closer Bus Routes for Students.**

Five parents who live in apartments in the same neighborhood contacted OCRA because the students' school district changed the school bus pick-up and drop-off location from their homes to a location three blocks away. The parents were concerned because many students use wheelchairs and the new location was on a very busy street where the parents had observed drug use near the pick-up location. OCRA negotiated a closer and safer pickup and drop-off location for all five students.

### **Marybeth Obtains an Aide to Keep Her Safe at School.**

Marybeth's mother contacted OCRA for help with getting support for Marybeth in school. Marybeth was injuring herself at school, and her behavioral challenges prevented her from learning or participating in class. Her mother's repeated requests for an aide were denied because Marybeth's classroom already had 3 aides. OCRA reviewed Marybeth's school records and agreed to provide direct representation at an IEP meeting. At the meeting, OCRA requested an aide because Marybeth was injuring herself and her behaviors prevented her from learning skills to be more independent. The IEP team agreed. The team determined Marybeth required a non-public agency behavior aide with BCBA oversight to keep her safe and teach her appropriate behaviors in school.

### **Donald's School Transportation is Restored.**

Donald and his family moved to a new school district at the beginning of the school year. Donald, who was in 8th grade, attended school in his prior school district." His parents wanted Donald to stay at this school so he could graduate with his friends. Keeping Donald in the same school would lessen his anxiety about changing his daily routine. His prior school district agreed to serve Donald through the end of 8th grade, but declined to provide transportation. His new school district also declined to provide transportation. Donald's mother called OCRA in distress because his parents both work full-time. They have one car and nine children who all go to school. OCRA saw that transportation services were listed in Donald's IEP. Donald is not capable of safely crossing streets, so transportation is needed to keep him safe. OCRA advised Donald's mother

to request a meeting with the Director of Special Education at his prior district to resolve the transportation problem. On the day she requested the meeting, she received a call from the new district which agreed to transport Donald to and from school using a transportation services. On the first day of school, the transportation service showed up at the house. Donald was expecting a school bus to pick him up, so he refused to get in the car with the driver. The next morning, the same driver showed up. Donald got in the car and went to school with no problem.

### **Nancy Is Allowed to Stay in School.**

Nancy contacted OCRA after her school district unexpectedly told her she would be graduating and receiving a diploma. 18-year-old Nancy could not read or write. By law, she may remain in school and receive educational services until she is 22 years old. OCRA contacted Nancy's school district and asked them to provide her with an educational program until she turns 22. OCRA also asked the district to provide Nancy with mental health support since her private services ended. After two meetings, the school district agreed Nancy could attend a transition program and be assessed for counseling services.

### **Roman Gets Feeding Support.**

Roman's disability caused him to need special attention and support in order to eat. He was not getting the support he needed to eat at school. As a result, Roman lost weight and became malnourished. OCRA attended an IEP meeting with Roman's parents. The school district agreed to implement a detailed feeding plan and provide two-on-one support to Roman. Roman is now healthy and getting support when he eats lunch at school.

### **School Agrees to Provide Anton with a Nurse.**

Anton is 7 years old. While he has been eligible for special education services since the age of 3, he had never attended school. The school told his parents it did not have to provide the nurse Anton needed to attend school. His parents reluctantly kept him home. OCRA helped Anton's parents contact the school and request an IEP meeting. Through OCRA's advocacy with the school and at several team meetings, the school agreed it did have the duty to provide a nurse for Anton during transportation to

and from school and throughout the school day. Today, Anton is happily attending school, learning and interacting with his peers.

### **Joey is Granted a Reasonable Accommodation to Protect His Privacy.**

Joey requires accommodations to support him in school. Joey's mother called OCRA because she had concerns about Joey starting middle school. Joey has a history of being bullied, specifically because he wears diapers. His mother was worried that because the middle school requires students to change into their physical education uniforms in the locker room, students would tease Joey if they saw he wears a diaper. OCRA advocated for Joey at his IEP meeting and requested that Joey use a private restroom by the nurse's office. The school agreed to the accommodation. Joey can change into his physical education uniform privately and his mother shared that he is happy and looking forward to going to school each day.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Betty's Transportation Keeps Rolling.**

42-year-old Betty loves going to her day program. Since the program is so close to her home, it takes her only 15 minutes to get there. Unfortunately, with no notice, her transportation provider changed her scheduled pick-up time. Betty has had the same routine for many years. She did not like this sudden change and that she had to spend almost two hours to get to her day program. Now that Betty is older, she takes much longer to get ready each time she needs to leave her home. With this change to an earlier pick-up time, Betty did not have as much time to get ready. Instead, her family was rushing her to get up earlier to be picked up. With help from OCRA, her family negotiated a new pick-up time that worked for both Betty and the transportation provider.

### **Samantha Receives Tram Services at Local College.**

Samantha had been attending classes at her local community college. Lately though, her ability to do so had become more challenging. Her health needs had changed. She needed to use the tram on campus, but had been unsuccessful in obtaining approval from the college. OCRA assisted Samantha with the application process, obtained medical records

showing the need for the tram services, and represented Samantha at a meeting with college administrators. Shortly after the meeting, Samantha was granted approval to use the tram.