

December Outreach Newsletter 2018



LATINX DEAF SYMPOSIUM

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Photo Cover: Tho Vinh Banh, vendors from CSUN, SoCal Gas, CTAP, DOR, CHIRLA, CARECEN, Christian Abasto, GLAAD, Callie Frye and Leilani Pfeifer

Outreach Unit

Latinx Deaf Symposium

On September 21, 2018, people from across the Deaf Latinx communities came together to attend Disability Rights California’s (DRC’s) daylong Symposium to learn about their legal rights. Planning and publicity for the Symposium was a true team effort. DRC Multicultural Affairs Outreach staff, Callie Frye, Katie Castro, Leilani Pfeifer and Eric Gonzalez joined forces with Roberto Sandoval, Board member of California Manos del Corazon, a well-respected organization in the Deaf Latinx community that empowers their members through social justice awareness, self-advocacy and education, and Irma



Sanchez, founder of Deaf Latinos y Familias, an organization that promotes and advocates for the Latino and Deaf culture, to help spread the word about the event. Mr Sandoval additionally produced a vlog and posted the event on California Manos del



Corazon's website and Facebook to extend the reach. Thoughtful efforts in the planning process resulted in an inclusive event that effectively served the diverse Deaf Latinx community. All trainings were provided in Spanish and ASL. DRC also provided Tactile, Pro-tactile, Certified Deaf Interpreters and Trilingual interpreters who were fluent in ASL, English and Spanish!

to ensure the trainings were culturally appropriate and accessible to the seventy-five participants who attended the Symposium. Christian Abasto, Senior Managing Attorney and Supervising Attorney Tho Vinh Banh welcomed everyone in attendance. Outreach staff Vanessa Ochoa trained attendees on special education rights and with staff attorney Pilar Gonzalez provided a training on rights related to regional center services. Multicultural Affairs Advocate Callie Frye provided a training on ADA and with CAP Advocate Mary Rios, trained the audience on rights related to Department of Rehabilitation services. The Los Angeles Legal Advocacy Unit staff, Rosa Alas, Beatriz Garcia, Mayra Arreguin and Karen Valenzuela, assisted throughout the day with registration and logistics, while Intake and Referral Unit Suzi Bernais and Rose Gomez provided intake assistance to over ten individuals who needed direct assistance with their legal questions.

Participants were appreciative of the fact that they were able to visit vendors from Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHILA), California Telephone Assistance Program (CTAP), SoCal Gas, California State University, Northridge – National Center on Deafness (CSUN-NCOD), Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, Inc. (GLAD), Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) and Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). It was a wonderful experience for the Outreach Unit to be able to coordinate an event that helped this often overlooked and undeserved community!

Thank you SoCalGas for your sponsorship and making this event possible.

Top photos: DRC staff Rosa Alas, Karen Valenzuela, Mayra Arreguin, Beatriz Garcia and Participants.



Top photos: DRC staff Vanessa Ochoa, Callie Frye, and Pilar Gonzales. Bottom photos: Eric Gonzalez, Callie Frye, and Mary Rios. OCRA staff Marlene Ramirez and vendors.

Disability Rights California Presents to Galt Police Department

People with disabilities from communities of color encounter law enforcement at a disproportionately high rate, sometimes with tragic results. They face higher rates of arrest, incarceration and use of force. It is in this context that DRC was very excited when a Galt city official approached MCA Outreach staff Vanessa Ochoa for a training to their first responders, police officers and dispatchers on disability issues and etiquette.

Vanessa collaborated with staff across different units and practice groups—including Tifanei-Ressl-Moyer (Mental Health PG) Jung Pham (Investigation Unit), Brittnee Gillespie (Office of Clients Rights Advocacy), Leslie Napper (Peer Self Advocacy Unit) and Callie Frye (Outreach Unit)-- to coordinate a dynamic, multiple day training held on July 12 and August 9, 2018.



Photo: Galt Police Officers with DRC staff Vanessa Ochoa, Brittnee Gillespie, Leslie Napper, Callie Frye, Tifanei Ressler-Moyer, and Jung Pham (not in picture)

Tifanei Ressler-Moyer presented the legal framework of law enforcement's interactions with people with disabilities, specifically people with serious mental illness and people with diabetes. The legal presentation was followed by a presentation of real examples that have made their way into the courtroom.

Brittnee Gillespie presented on what it means to be a regional center client. She gave descriptions of common behaviors of autistic individuals and spoke about how to safely and effectively interact with someone who has intellectual/developmental disabilities. Vanessa provided real life stories of her experience with security and law enforcement officers related to her own child with Autism. She also went over disability friendly communication methods.

Leslie Napper presented peer self-advocacy best practices for engaging with mental health consumers. She shared her personal story that touched several attendees on a personal note. Leslie provided an interactive activity that attendees really enjoyed and learned a lot.

Callie Fry presented on requirements for effective communication when interacting with Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals. It included practical suggestions for communicating effectively and the situations that require an interpreter. She also taught 20 basic ASL signs. The officers really enjoyed learning ASL signs with Callie and asked that she email the signs to them to use in real life situations.

At the conclusion of the event, the attendees thanked all of the presenters and stayed after to ask questions and requested additional resources and information. The training coordinator for the Galt Police Department shared that the first responders, dispatchers and police officers learned a lot, enjoyed the training, and were very happy that we were able to provide this important and informative training.

The Cambodian New Year

The Stockton Cambodian community celebrated the Cambodian New Year at the Wat Dhammarama Buddhist Temple. Asian Pacific Islander (API) Outreach staff Lena Vang had the honor of attending the event by connecting with Sothea Ung, Program Director of Asian Pacific Self-Development and Residential Association (APASARA).

This organization provides leadership for a community of 200 Cambodian refugee families including promoting social and economic opportunities.



Over 100 people attended the event on April 14, 2018. Lena offered our agency brochures, and general information, and also provided a presentation about Disability Rights California's services. The Cambodian community were pleasantly surprised by the array of services available to them. They were grateful for the information and invited Lena to be present at their future events and gathering as well.

Top photo: stage for individuals to ask for blessing and prayer

Santa Rosa Pow Wow



Pow Wows are gatherings held yearly by different Native American communities as a time to meet, socialize, dance and sing, and share and honor their cultures. On September 25, 2018 DRC Native American Outreach

staff, Jesse Lara attended the Santa Rosa Pow Wow. DRC received great

feedback from the Native American communities with over 100 participants stopping by the DRC booth. Those who were familiar with DRC were thankful for our services. Several who were prior DRC clients came to the booth to share their gratitude. Pow Wows are great ways to learn and experience cultural celebrations. DRC's connection with hard to reach populations including Native communities allow us to provide them with our resources and information.

Top photos: Tribal dance and customs at Santa Rosa Pow Wow

Youth and Civil Rights PG

Special Education and Accommodations for Higher Education Training to Vietnamese Parent Group



On April 21, 2018, different units at Disability Rights California joined forces to provide a training and clinic to the parents of the Vietnamese Parents with Disabled Children Association (VPDCA).

With the help of a Vietnamese interpreter, Disability Rights California staff Attorneys Robert Borrelle (Youth PG) and Sri Panchalam (Civil Rights PG) presented on the rights of people with disabilities in primary, secondary and higher education. Sri and Robert explained the Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Transition Plan (ITP), Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE), and rights to reasonable accommodations in higher education.

Intake Advocate Stephanie Veniez conducted a clinic that provided assistance to many families in attendance. DRC Outreach staff Tho Vinh Banh, Leilani Pfeifer and Raymond Kwong provided coordination to ensure a successful training and clinic event.



Educational rights for people with disabilities can be complicated for everyone. On top of all the rules and procedures, many educational entities only provide English-language materials. DRC staff helped the Vietnamese families overcome language barriers by providing the training in Vietnamese and providing materials in Vietnamese. This is but one example of the many ways that DRC respects the diversity of the people we serve.

Top photos: Panchalam Srividya, Vietnamese Interpreter, Robert Borrelle and Vietnamese-speaking families.

Civil Rights PG

Training on How to Empower and Communicate with Consumers About Their Legal Rights

Jeff Lubman, Department of Rehabilitation's Program Coordinator of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) Section, reached out to DRC's Callie Frye to provide training to the over 100 Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and their team managers at their annual training.

Callie Frye, with Andy Berk, (staff attorney liaison for Civil Rights PG and Outreach Unit, collaborated to create a training on employment rights for individuals with disabilities in job seeking, job placement, hiring process, and in the workplace.

On October 2nd, Callie introduced DRC and our services to the attendees and provided information about employment rights and the relevant federal and state laws. She also outlined accommodations and the importance and the role of the interactive process. After the training, Andy assisted by taking questions from the engaged audience members.

Many in the audience were excited with Callie's training and rushed after the training to speak to her. They also asked for her business cards and DRC brochures so they can refer individuals to DRC for assistance in the future. Callie's hard work and outreach will ensure that many in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community will know about DRC and our services.

Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities PG

Educate Japanese Speaking Parents Association of Children with Challenges (JSPACC) in Los Angeles about the Exciting Self Determination Program

On September 9, 2018, Debra Marcia, Clients Rights Advocate for Westside Regional Center and Tho Vinh Banh, Supervising Attorney of the Outreach Unit, and Hikari Mano, parent leader of JSPACC joined forces to ensure that 17 Japanese-speaking families learned about the exciting Self Determination Program. Under Self Determination, the person with the disability and their family, if a minor, has greater freedom to determine what services they would like to purchase and who they want to purchase the services from.



Under Self Determination, families have the freedom to purchase services that they would not be able to purchase under the traditional service delivery system such as social recreational services. With the assistance of a Japanese interpreter, Tho Vinh explained the background and the importance of Self Determination and how it's different philosophically from the traditional regional center service model. Debra Marcia provided detailed information about how the program would work and who can assist families and consumers including explaining the role of the Independent Facilitator and the Financial Management Service provider. Hikari, along with Debra, sits on Westside Regional Center's Self Determination Local Advisory Committee. Together, they answered questions parents' had about the Self Determination program.

After the training, 14 families from five different regional centers decided to sign up for the program including. This includes families from: Regional Center of Orange County, Westside Regional Center, Harbor Regional Center, Inland Regional Center, and San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center.

Photo: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy staff Debra Marcia, DRC Outreach Unit, Tho Vinh Banh (not in photo) and JSPACC Leader Hikari Mano and Japanese families

Health HCBS PG

In Home Supportive Services Training at Down Syndrome Association of Orange County

Parenting is a full time job, especially if the child has a disability and requires extra care. Parents need time to rest and recharge. That is why one of the most common questions from parents is, “How can I get more hours from In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)?”



On Thursday July 12, 2018, Disability Rights California Associate Managing Attorney Maria Iriarte and Outreach staff Raymond Kwong provided a training to parents at the Down Syndrome Association of Orange County. Raymond provided an overview on DRC services, while Maria presented on how to apply for IHSS, its requirements, and how to calculate and advocate for more hours. Maria also showed parents where to find additional resources and provided examples from past cases. The training was a hit. The 20 parents attending the training found it to be informative, were engaged and eagerly asked questions. The group coordinator was delighted that DRC was able to provide the training and wanted additional trainings on topics such as special education to her Spanish-speaking parent group.

Top photo: DRC staff Maria Iriarte and parents at training

Pathways to Work

ABLE Account Presented to Spanish-speaking Down Syndrome Support Group

For years, people on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) could not keep this benefit if they had more than a small amount of savings. In 2014, Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts improved lives by allowing people on SSI to save for future disability-related expenses. Disability Rights California wants everyone to know about



ABLE accounts, including those who speak languages other than English. On July 30, 2018, DRC staff members Vanessa Ochoa and Michael Thomas trained a Spanish-speaking Down Syndrome support group for parents with children or young adults. Margarita Contreras, community leader and head of the group, said that Michael's presentation was wonderful and the families were previously unaware of the ABLE account. An excited audience of 15 individuals asked many questions and shared their concerns. Michael and Vanessa's information about ABLE account will help Spanish-speaking parents with disabled children.

Top photo: DRC Staff Michael Thomas and Vanessa Ochoa

Mental Health and Peer-Self Advocacy Unit

Disability Rights California at South County Mental Health Fair

Societal stigma is a barrier to people with mental health disabilities getting the supports and services they need to live independently. Disability Rights California strives to remove this stigma. On May 19, 2018, DRC Outreach staff, Raymond Kwong and Peer Self-Advocacy Coordinator Linda Naranjo teamed up at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center's 3rd Annual South County Mental Health Fair in San Diego. The event's goal was to provide the mental health community with information, resources and supports to



recovery. Raymond and Linda provided resources and information to attendees. For example, a mother approached the team to ask about services for her son, who is having trouble finding support after he was in an accident. She said her son wanted to help in order to find employment. Raymond and Linda sprang to action, and

provided her with information on the Department of Rehabilitation services in the area.

Photo: DRC staff Linda Naranjo and Raymond Kwong

Peer Self-Advocacy Program

Outreach Unit Teams with Peer Self Advocacy Unit to Provide Transportation Training

Outreach and PSA Unit teamed up again to provide a training about transportation rights for people with disabilities. DRC staff members Andrew Berk, with the assistance Beverly Familiar, laid out the fundamentals of transportation rights for PSA Coordinator Barbara Acosta's self-advocacy group on January 23, 2018. The training went over the amazing and powerful tool of requesting reasonable accommodations from transit agencies. This knowledge served a dual purpose, as the law for requesting reasonable accommodations from transit agencies also applies to all levels of state, local, and federal government. The best part of this training is that it will not be the last. The group enjoyed the training so much that they asked DRC staff to return.

California Memorial Project Remembrance Day at Russian River Cemetery, Ukiah

If a person with a disability dies unmemorialized and unrecognized, everyone should care. For this reason, DRC and People First of California organized the California Memorial Project, which restores dignity and honor to people with disabilities who died at a California state hospital or developmental center.

The California Memorial Project has held remembrance ceremonies for the past 16 years. Mendocino state hospital was one of several state hospitals

and developmental centers that buried individuals in unmarked graves when no one claimed the individual's body. When the hospital closed in 1972, 1200 cremains and 400 individuals' bones that were buried were moved from hospital grounds to the Russian River cemetery. Neither site had a grave marker. Through the California Memorial Project, markers were placed at both sites.

On September 17th, 51 participants gathered at these markers to pay respect and honor to the individuals laid to rest who lived and died at Mendocino State Hospital. The day was sunny, bright and cool with beautiful blue skies. Mendocino County Supervisor John McCown read a proclamation honoring the California Memorial Project and spoke from his heart about mental health stigma and how that had to do with people being unclaimed at the death. Granny, a former resident at Mendocino State Hospital, spoke about her experience as a young patient. Her message was clear: no one deserves to leave this earth without a marker to remember them. A singing group called The Ragging Grannies sang four songs about having names remembered, to live for today, and other songs of hope. Several participants spoke about their friend who recently died. Participants placed flowers at both gravesites and went to the park for a light lunch sponsored by NAMI.

Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

OCRA Attends Chinese New Year Celebration

Chinatown Revitalization Inc., which empowers the Fresno Chinatown community, held the 18th Annual Chinese New Year Parade and Festival on March 3, 2018. This festival was a lively family-oriented event to celebrate Chinese culture and traditions. Food, music, traditional costumes, and colorful parade were part of the day's entertainment. DRC Outreach staff, Jesse Lara and Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy Assistant Maricruz Magdaleno provided resources to hundreds of participants who attended the celebration. Together, they introduced Disability Rights California's services to the Fresno Chinese community. Jesse and Maricruz had the



pleasure of meeting many families and providing general information and resources about legal services, public benefits, special education, and regional center services. Families enjoyed a beautiful outdoor day with all the entertainment available and leaned about resources in their community.

Photo: DRC staff Jesse Lara and Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) staff Maricruz Magdaleno

Family Day at the North Land Village Apartments

It was a sunny day and the doors to the North Land Village community room were wide open. Dozens of children, ages 5-11, rushed inside, eager to enjoy the hotdogs and cupcakes. Their parents and family members followed close behind to see what festivities were in store for them during this quarter's "Family Day." Jessica Tellez, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate with OCRA, greeted the families enthusiastically. The majority of the attendees were refugees with limited English skills. One little girl asked if grape-flavored Tylenol could heal a disability like arthritis. Jessica gently explained to children and families that disability needs no cure. She also explained how OCRA can help make sure people with disabilities receive the services and benefits they need. Many residents were thrilled to discover free advocacy services for their loved ones. This Family Day was a great success!

Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy Presentation to Autism Parent Support Group is a Success

On June 26, 2018, parents joined together to obtain better supports and services for their children with autism. These parents were members of Support for Families San Francisco, which offers information, education, and parent-to-parent support to families who have with children with disabilities free of charge. On the day, Clients' Rights Advocate Karis Daggs



and Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate Gloria Delgadillo-Martinez gave a training called, "What is the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA)" in both English and Spanish. Karis and Gloria taught families about OCRA's many areas of legal practice, and what services they provide.

Although the training's main focus was to provide an overview of OCRA, Karis and Gloria touched upon many topics of interest to the audience, including special education rights and Lanterman Act entitlements. Parents were eager to learn about how to request Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Individual Program Plan (IPP) Meetings. Participants engaged in a lively discussion about many barriers families face when trying to advocate for their loved ones. Karis and Gloria explained how they can assist clients with some of these situations. When the event ended, families expressed how great it was to learn about the tools and the resources available to them.

Photo: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) staff Gloria Delgado-Martinez

Latino Families Obtain Advocacy Information at Napa Down Syndrome Awareness Luncheon

English and Spanish-speaking families gathered for a day of celebration, community and shared experiences at ParentsCAN's Down Syndrome awareness event in Napa in March 2018.

ParentsCAN is an organization that partners with and guides parents who have children with disabilities. Clients' Rights Advocate Yulahlia Hernandez and Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate Annie Breuer provided information and advocacy resources to roughly 200 individuals who gathered to



celebrate International Down Syndrome Day. Together with other service providers for people with developmental disabilities, such as North Bay Regional Center and Napa Valley Support Services, Yulahlia and Annie provided information about In-Home Supportive Services, special education, and regional center services.

A number of families visiting OCRA's booth shared experiences of advocating for their child who has Down Syndrome. One mother shared how her daughter was denied access to the swimming portion of her physical education class at her junior high school because of her disabilities. She successfully advocated for her daughter to be fully included in physical education classes. Throughout the day, Yulahlia and

Annie heard numerous stories like this, highlighting the resiliency of these families. After the resource fair, a lunch was provided for attendees. Speakers shared stories of how Down Syndrome influenced their lives. The event was a wonderful celebration of International Down Syndrome Day and showed the strong community of self-advocates and families in Napa.

Photo: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) staff Yulahlia Hernandez and Annie Breuer and participants.

Backpacks for Children in the Vietnamese Community

Just in time for school, a Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) vendor donated backpacks filled with school supplies for children in the Vietnamese community. Clients' Rights Advocate (CRA) Jacqueline Miller from the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) also provided Vietnamese children and their families' information about their legal rights. She met many individuals served by RCOC, and provide brochures about OCRA services. Jacqueline also provided Disability Rights California publication, *18 Tips for Getting Quality Special Education Services For Your Child in Vietnamese or English*, based on the attendee's preference. This was a great opportunity for the CRA to talk with families about education services, In-Home Supportive Services, SSI, and Medi-cal. Families were thankful for the backpacks and learning how OCRA can help families get the services their loved ones need to live more independent lives.

IHSS Self Advocacy Training

Friends of Children of Special Needs (FCSN) is group where Chinese-American families support each other in obtaining services from regional centers in the San Francisco Bay area. The Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) has close ties with these families. FCSN asked OCRA to speak to a new group of families about how to advocate for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). OCRA was happy to continue its support of CVSNS by providing a training to new group members.

On September 22, 2018, OCRA gave a training on IHSS in front of a lively group of parents in Fremont. Clients' Rights Advocate Arthur Lipscomb presented information about the IHSS program and how to advocate for enough in-home services hours to live independently. OCRA believes providing materials available in the community's language is an important part of outreach. Arthur also had materials on IHSS available in English, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Korean. The participants' appreciation for

materials in their own language was clear by the happy looks on their faces.



Photo: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) staff Arthur Lipscomb and participants at training.