



California's protection & advocacy system
Serving Consumers of Valley Mountain Regional Center

Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Katie Hornberger, Director

FROM: Jazmin Romero, Outreach Coordinator South
Christine Hager, Outreach Coordinator North

RE: Annual OCRA Outreach Report for July 2016 – June 2017

DATE: August 9, 2017

OCRA's commitment to networking, building, and strengthening relationships with both new and established target communities is demonstrated by the increase in both the number of people reached and the number of trainings. During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, OCRA completed 556 outreach presentations, reaching approximately 17,753 consumers, families, service providers, and community members. This number represents a 13.94% increase in trainings from the previous outreach year and a 10.69% increase in the number of people attending presentations. This year, OCRA was completing the second year of a two-year Outreach Plan. Each plan had goals and objectives in the areas of Self-Advocacy, Target, and General outreach trainings. OCRA is committed to educating communities, achieving long-lasting relationships of trust, and developing mutual connections with the people we serve by providing trainings.

Self-Advocacy Trainings

Each OCRA office has a goal to provide at least one self-advocacy outreach presentation per year. The purpose of self-advocacy outreach is

to educate and empower consumers about their individual rights in areas such as fair hearings, emergency preparedness, clients' rights, voting rights, money management, and community living options. OCRA has maintained a commitment to self-advocacy with a staff peer-advocate available to collaborate with OCRA staff and assist with outreach. During this outreach plan year, OCRA provided 67 self-advocacy presentations. This is a 59.52% increase in the number of self-advocacy presentations provided during this year as compared to last year. The Fall election resulted in a significant number of Voting Rights Trainings being given to educate consumers about their rights. Below is a description of a self-advocacy presentation provided by OCRA.

Seniors Prepare to Vote.

Members of the United Cerebral Palsy of the North Bay Senior Adult Program in Sonoma County asked OCRA for a training on voting rights. The Senior Adult program serves older adults who are retired and would like to participate in leisure activities. They participate in outings such as the county fair, baseball games, nature walks, and bowling. At the program, they can take classes such as self-esteem building, astronomy, cooking, and current events. The program also offers other activities such as chair yoga, meditation, painting, and making jewelry. Their favorite activity is Bingo.

Yulahlia Hernandez, Clients' Rights Advocate and Annie Breuer, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate for consumers of North Bay Regional Center provided the voting rights training on September 27, 2016. During the training, people expressed concern about how an election can affect their transportation, housing, medical care, SSI, and ability to participate in fun activities. OCRA provided information about voting as a way to have a voice in the services people receive or would like to receive.

Participants learned that they can vote even if they live in a group home. They also learned they did not need to vote on everything on a ballot if they chose not to vote on certain issues. Many in the group had voted in the past, but are not sure if they are still registered. Some people had never voted. OCRA registered individuals to vote after the training. Most chose to vote by mail so they can have more time to understand how to vote. This group is now better equipped to participate in the voting process.

Statewide Outreach Presentations (General Outreach)

General outreach included 148 outreach presentations that impacted 5,470 audience members. General outreach provided to the regional center community can be introductory or substantive and helps OCRA to establish a network of referral sources and contributes to the development and maintenance of our community contacts. Below are four examples of general outreach.

OCRA Connects with Families and Informs Them of Available Resources.

OCRA recently presented to members of Possibilities Unlimited International (PUI). PUI is a non-profit dedicated to inspiring individuals with physical, developmental, or emotional challenges to empower themselves to develop their full potential through the study and practice of martial arts and other adapted practices. OCRA presented two outreach topics - "What is OCRA?" and "What is the Self Determination Program?" Aimee Delgado, Clients' Rights Advocate, connected with individuals and family members in the program and explained available resources from both OCRA and other units of Disability Rights California. Aimee then presented on the Self Determination Program. After going through the background and purpose of the program, families shared that they were excited about the possibilities under Self Determination, such as obtaining services that had been suspended. Some participants shared that they were already interested in becoming an Independent Facilitator for families participating in the Self Determination program and were eager for the program to start.



30 Years of CHOICES for Self-Advocates.

The CHOICES Institute celebrated 30 years of providing education through annual conferences and training seminars for people with developmental disabilities, their families, professionals, volunteers, services providers, regional center staff, and others. Beverley Legault, micro-business owner of Bev's Bracelets & More, shared her story about her life and building her business. James Royall, former yard maintenance micro-business owner shared his story about housing programs in the foothills. Pictured here is speaker Lily Calavan and

her service dog, "Tully." Lily shared her story as a Peer Consultant and her path to moving out on her own for the first time. OCRA was honored to have a booth with publications and information for participants!

Photo: Lily Calavan, Self-Advocate and CHOICES 2017 keynote speaker, Tully, Lily's service dog, and Jamie Florez, Self-Advocate and Consultant to Self Advocacy Council 6

Agencies Unite to Improve the Lives of People with Disabilities.

The San Gabriel Valley Disabilities Collaborative (SGVDC) was founded by Dr. Lee Nattress, former executive director of Service Center for Independent Life (SCIL) in order to bring together people from all different fields to discuss ways to improve the lives of people with disabilities and seniors. Although Dr. Nattress passed away years ago, SCIL kept the Collaborative alive in his honor. SCIL's mission statement is, "Encouraging organizations to build relationships and improve services for people with

disabilities and seniors.” Its staff would like it to become a hub for disability resources and networking. On February 9, 2017, Scott Barron, Peer Advocate, presented to the Collaborative on, “What is OCRA?” at the South El Monte City Hall. During OCRA’s presentation, the energy was high as the audience craved to learn more. One audience member asked OCRA to give an example of the type of cases that OCRA staff handle and another asked if OCRA only works with adults. The twenty individuals from various organizations were captivated by the information they were learning about OCRA and continued to ask questions throughout. Everyone was eager to share the information they had learned.



Photo: Scott Barron, Peer Advocate, with members of the Collaborative.

OCRA Attends The Down Syndrome Quarterly Meeting.

The Down Syndrome Pizza Night is a quarterly event for people with Down Syndrome and their family members who live in Grass Valley, CA. The Pizza Night is a fun opportunity for families to meet and greet over a slice. Attendees included independent self-advocates, infants and children with Down syndrome, parents, and siblings. The self-advocates and parents discussed issues with accessing in-home services in their rural town, such as IHSS and behavioral services, while the children played games in the arcade room. Everyone looks forward to Pizza Night because it gives them the chance to enjoy and connect with others who share their experiences.

Brittnee Gillespie and Jessica Tellez, CRA and ACRA for Alta California Regional Center clients, gave a brief presentation about how OCRA supports and advocates for their clients. Several people took the opportunity to get information about their legal rights. The families were pleased to learn of a free resource that could help them advocate for their own or their children's needs.

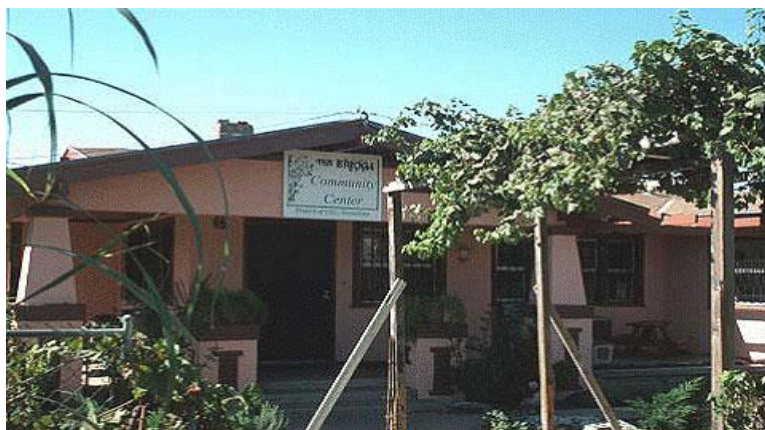
Target Outreach

OCRA directs target outreach toward underserved communities identified by each office's outreach plan. These communities include; Latino, Asian including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hmong, Filipino and Polynesian, African-American, and Native American. Target outreach is expected to inform and educate people from underserved communities with developmental disabilities and their families about their rights and the availability of services from OCRA. This year, OCRA conducted 341 target outreach presentations, a 105% increase from the previous outreach year. Below are two examples of target outreach presentations.

OCRA Conducts an SSI Eligibility Training for Families at The Bridge.

A team of three OCRA staff, including a supervisor, went to The Bridge Community Center to share eligibility information about SSI benefits. The Bridge serves Southeast Asian refugee families in the Valley Mountain Regional Center area. Present were Hmong, Laotian, and Cambodian families. The presentation was simultaneously translated into all three languages. OCRA provided basic eligibility information, answered questions, and scheduled follow up intake appointments at the local OCRA office. Connecting with these families and sharing resources continues to help develop strong relationships and a network of services in our community.

Photo: The Bridge
Community Center



It's the Chinese New Year in Stockton!

On March 5, 2017, OCRA and DRC participated in the 38th Annual Stockton Chinese New Year Celebration, "Year of the Rooster" in downtown Stockton. The celebration featured Lion dances, performances of choir and opera, martial arts, Taiko drumming, hula dancing, bamboo flute and violin performances, Chinese Folk dancing and a delicious food court featuring Asian cuisine. OCRA enjoyed the artistic displays of Asian culture and celebration while meeting attendees and sharing disability resources.



Photo: Raymond Kwong, Leilani Pfeifer, Multi-Cultural Affairs Advocates, Mayor Michael Tubbs of Stockton, Leinani Walter, Clients' Rights Advocate and Christine Hager, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate

Conclusion

As an organization, we are proud to report that OCRA continues to reach more people and educate underserved target communities. It is exciting to see OCRA offices continue to exceed outreach goals and collaborate with their communities. We look forward to building many new relationships within our new target communities in the 2017-2018 outreach year.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist OCRA in the important work of outreach.