

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Katie Hornberger, Director  
FROM: Paula Sandoval, OCRA Outreach Coordinator (South)  
Christine Hager, OCRA Outreach Coordinator (North)  
RE: Semi-Annual OCRA Outreach Report July – December 2018  
DATE: January 16, 2019

This report provides information on the outreach presentations completed between July 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018. During this review period, OCRA staff conducted 291 outreach trainings. These presentations were provided to 9,582 attendees. These numbers have increased from the same reporting period of 2017 because OCRA advocates have been involved in community events, parent support groups, and meetings at client-based programs. We are excited about the increase in the number of outreach activities and trainings and the number of people impacted. Below are examples of the different types of outreach each office provides including self-advocacy, general, and target.

### **Self-Advocacy Trainings**

Each OCRA office conducts at least one self-advocacy training per contract year. Self-Advocacy topics include emergency preparedness, self-advocacy, client's rights, rights to money management, voting rights, community living options, and employment rights and options. Here are some examples.

#### **Far Northern Consumers Learn About Their Rights.**

OCRA led a Clients' Rights Bingo game at the Feather River Opportunity Center. Clients at the Opportunity Center make unique, handcrafted gifts to sell. It is an intermediary step between vocational training and the

individual placement program. Therapy dog, Jasper, accompanied Associate Clients' Rights Advocate, Lorie Atamian. Jasper garnered much interest from the group and was a catalyst for getting to meet and interact individually with many of the clients. Participants were a passionate group of about 40 who asked many questions about their rights. Staff from the Opportunity Center supported those who needed assistance. The Bingo game gives participants a fun way to learn about their rights under the Lanterman Act. The discussion about rights emphasized what to do if someone's rights are violated. Participants played the game until everyone got a Bingo and chose a prize.

### **Ideal Vocational Program Members Prepare to Vote on November 6.**

On October 2018, OCRA shared the importance of voter registration and voting rights to 25 trainees of Ideal Program. The training began with an overview of voter registration requirements and questions to engage the audience on their voting rights. OCRA asked, "When is election day?", "How old do you have to be in order to register to vote?", and "Is voting done by computer?" OCRA explained the role of different elected officials like the governor, mayor, president, and senators. The trainees also vocalized their thoughts on the ballot propositions. By the end of the training, the participants were very knowledgeable about their voting rights and understood the importance of their vote. OCRA handed out prizes, which encouraged participation. The environment allowed for a

comfortable setting for trainees to share their thoughts.



OCRA left the training confident knowing Ideal Program consumers had the tools and the knowledge to cast their ballots on November 6.

Photo: Scott Barron, Peer Advocate and Nubyaan Scott, Clients' Rights Advocate and members of Ideal Program.

## General Outreach

### **OCRA Provides Vital Training on Alternatives to Conservatorship for Spanish-Speaking Regional Center Community Members.**

On a crisp November morning in Ukiah, ten people gathered to learn about their rights concerning conservatorships. The room, alive with the anticipation of learning, listened intently as Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate, Mariana Molina Nava, spoke. Mariana outlined the basic powers and responsibilities of a conservator, the rights of conservatees, and the process to become a conservator.

Recognizing that alternatives to conservatorships are preferable for many people and families, Mariana equipped the group with information about supported living services, local self-advocacy organizations, assistance making health care decisions, and financial resources such as



representative payees. As the day wound down, the group relayed their gratitude to OCRA for the helpful information provided. It was a day that reflected OCRA's core values of self-empowerment.

Photo: Mariana Molina Nava, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate, Redwood Coast Regional Center

## **OCRA Provides IHSS Training to Rural Parent Support Group.**

On November 28, 2018, the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) traveled out to the Coachella Valley to present an interactive IHSS training. The Coachella Valley Autism Society hosts regular meetings, but has a hard time finding speakers because of their location. But things quickly took off! Parents spoke up to ask questions, share their stories, and even provide one another with personalized advice. Many parents and consumers shared their own experiences and nodded along in agreement. Stephanie Veniez, Clients' Rights Advocate from OCRA, was pleased to answer questions and make sure everyone's concerns were being heard. Although the OCRA presentation went through the finer points of IHSS, most of the two hours was spent catering to consumers' questions about their own care. OCRA also spent time discussing problems specific to the Coachella Valley, such as addressing lack of resources in rural areas. Parents expressed their gratitude for OCRA's flexibility, helpfulness, and willingness to travel. The support group asked when OCRA would be able to return, so OCRA plans to develop a specialized training for its next event.

## **Target Outreach**

OCRA's target communities include the Latino community, the Asian community including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hmong, Filipino, and Polynesian, the African-American community, and the Native American community.

## **OCRA Celebrates Culture and Diversity.**



Colorful costumes and festive music greeted participants and visitors at Valley Mountain Regional Center's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cultural Connection Community Fair in October 2018 in Modesto. There were sightings of Ironman, Captain America,

Photo: Parking lot vendor booth. Sandra Graham, Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate, with people in costumes.



Spiderman, and more Marvel Heroes. The event celebrated a myriad of cultures with participating vendors from the Latin and Asian communities. About 500 participants enjoyed community resources, free haircuts, dental care, and displays of traditional dances and dress. The Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) shared information about voting rights, transportation services, rights to accessing employment and community services with 42 guests at the event. People who stopped by the OCRA table were thankful for the information. Assistant Clients' Rights Advocate, Sandra Graham, even got some pointers on how to be a super hero from her new friends!

### **OCRA Participates in Hmong New Year.**



In collaboration with Valley Mountain Regional Center, Clients' Rights Advocate, Christine Hager, participated in the annual Hmong New Year celebration in Stockton on November 10, 2018. Traditional dancing and music were the featured entertainment.

Photo: Stage. Hmong youth dressed in traditional dance costumes posing with hands together. A banner says, "Welcome to Stockton Hmong New Year."

Other activities included competitions in sports, dancing, and singing. This year's celebration hosted over 5,000 people. OCRA had the pleasure of sharing information in both English and Hmong languages about OCRA and regional center services with many people. OCRA enjoyed learning more about this deep and rich culture. OCRA is looking forward to celebrating the Hmong New Year again in 2019!

**OCRA Does Outreach at the Hmong New Year Celebration.**



OCRA held an informational booth on December 27 and 28, 2018 at the Hmong New Year celebration located in Fresno, California. People in the Hmong community, among other Southeast Asians, came from all over California to join in this annual celebration, with some dressed in their traditional clothing. OCRA directly engaged with folks in Hmong and also provided various publications and brochures in both English and Hmong.

Photo: Maitria Moua, Clients' Rights Advocate, with a Hmong New Year patron.

**OCRA Collaborates with Learning Rights Law Center to Prepare Clients for Life After High School.**

On November 20, 2018, Spanish-speaking parents filled a Los Angeles conference room. Parents eagerly awaited to hear how regional centers could help their children, particularly those transitioning into life after high school. Natalie Klasky, Clients' Rights Advocate for Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center consumers, used to volunteer with Learning Rights Law Center (LRLC). LRLC is a local special education non-profit law firm that

primarily serves students in Los Angeles County. When Natalie started her new position as the Clients' Rights Advocate for Lanterman Regional Center consumers, she reached out to LRLC to see how she could help their clients with Spanish-speaking parents. LRLC said their Spanish-speaking parents, particularly those of transition-age students, repeatedly asked about how regional center could assist their children.



Natalie developed a presentation specifically tailored to meet the needs of LRLC's Spanish-speaking parents. Alejandro Gastelum, a floating Clients' Rights Advocate

Photo: Natalie Klasky, Clients' Rights Advocate, presenting to a conference room of parents.

who also serves Lanterman Regional Center clients, gave a "What is OCRA" presentation in Spanish. LRLC provided a translator for Natalie, who explained the IPP process and regional center services, with specific emphasis on services to help students transition into life after high school. LRLC fueled their parent support group with plenty of snacks and drinks. Parents were very grateful for the information. OCRA and LRLC now look forward to more collaborations in the future.

### **Conclusion**

OCRA continues to build relationships within the community by networking and providing trainings to persons served by the regional center system. OCRA strives to connect with target communities to close the gap in disparity. As we enter the last six months of our outreach plan, we are excited to begin planning the next two years of outreach.

Thank you for the opportunity to coordinate outreach presentations and trainings statewide for OCRA.