



Dialogue

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Eighth Annual Spotlight Awards Were a Hit

The ballroom was full at the Irvine Marriott Hotel on September 10 as those attending the 2004 Spotlight Awards enjoyed a festive dinner accompanied by the jazz stylings of George Gilliam & Friends as they awaited the announcement of the Spotlight Awards recipients. The audience listened quickly as fast-talking Master of Ceremonies John Moschitta, Jr. read

the names and many moving accounts that demonstrated why those particular people and organizations had been chosen from the group of 74 nominees. Find out who won and read the stories of the 13 Spotlight Award recipients beginning here and continuing on pages 6-10. Mark your 2005 calendars for Friday, September 16, when the ninth annual Spotlight Awards event will be held.

Inside This Issue

- Legislative Update 2
- RCOC Needs Your Feedback .. 2
- From the CEO 3
- Consumer Advisory Team 4
- Comfort Connection Update ... 5
- Spotlight Award Recipients 6
- CalOPTIMA Update 11
- Important Things to Know 11



2004 Spotlight Award Recipients



Consumer: Kyle Minnis

As a result of having cerebral palsy, Kyle is a quadriplegic and depends on others for assistance with daily living activities. He doesn't, however, let his physical challenges limit his lifestyle or keep him from having fun and helping others. Using a power wheelchair, he has attended Cal State Fullerton, traveled around the Western United States by himself to play in poker tournaments, and volunteered his time at several organizations. He works full time at the Bicycle Club Casino in Bell Gardens as a house card player. He also serves on the Orange County Transportation Authority's Citizens Advisory Committee and advocates for improved public transportation. Kyle volunteered at RCOC from 1995-99 and

worked from 1999 to 2000 as RCOC's first Consumer Advocate. He worked at the Dayle McIntosh Center as a field coordinator from 2000-01.

Kyle accepts the risks and responsibilities that go along with his independence. His example encourages other people with disabilities to pursue their dreams. When they see his accomplishments, they often think, "If he can do it, so can I." Kyle's aspirations include winning a major poker tournament and playing on the world poker tour. His goals also include advocating for The CenterLine (light-rail transportation) in Orange County as well as advocating for increasing the resource limit for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients.



Kyle Minnis lives life to the fullest and has a wide range of interests and relationships. It's not unusual to see him on the streets of Orange County headed somewhere in his power wheelchair. In the words of his nominator, "He is a son, a brother, an uncle, a friend, a sports fanatic, a music enthusiast, a movie buff, a practical joker, a professional gambler, and an advocate for others."

RCOC Legislative Update

Please Vote On November 2!

By Tresa Oliveri, RCOC Board of Directors

Both the Democratic and Republican presidential conventions are over and the election in



November is before us. There are many important issues that will be decided in the months after our votes are cast. Perhaps you vote a straight party ticket, or maybe you make your decision on a single issue. Unfortunately, many citizens do not take advantage of the opportunity to participate in the electoral process. No matter your political persuasion, one thing is certain: **It is important to vote.**

Recently, RCOC's Consumer Advisory Team held an information session about using the new electronic voting machines. It's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the new machines, and I find it helpful to make a list of what my selections will be before I arrive at the polling place. Another useful option is to use an

absentee ballot. That way you can mail in your ballot ahead of time, and you don't have to go to the polling place on election day. Absentee ballots are available as early as 29 days before an election.

The deadline to register to vote in the November 2 election is October 18 and the absentee request deadline October 26. If you don't know if you are registered to vote, you can find out by calling the Registrar of Voters at (714) 567-7600. If you are not registered, it's a good idea to register now, even though it may be too late for this election; that way you will be ready for the next election.

Legislation

Some interesting bills were passed by the state Legislature before the August 30 deadline, and as Dialogue went to press we learned that the governor vetoed some and signed some.

Of particular interest, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 1365, which had to do with preventing unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities. It would have created an Olmstead Advisory Council to provide advice and recommendations for the placement of people in non-institutional settings. However, the governor counteracted his veto by issuing Executive Order S-18-04,

which directs the California Health and Human Services Agency to do a number of things to enable as many people with disabilities as possible to live in their local communities and avoid unnecessary institutionalization. It also establishes an Olmstead Advisory Committee within the agency that will include family members and advocates.

A noteworthy bill that the governor signed into law is Assembly Bill 2100, which provides expanded and more secure community living options for people with developmental disabilities, particularly those leaving Agnews Developmental Center. It authorizes the Department of Developmental Services to approve proposals by certain regional centers to provide for payment of leases for housing for people with developmental disabilities. It also encourages the development of family home residential settings. It is thought that this new method will be used as future Developmental Center closures are planned. It represents a historic departure from service systems which combine both the provision of services and facilities, and creates an opportunity for these individuals to control their own homes and living environments, while receiving supports from another agency.

RCOC Needs Your Feedback for the National Core Indicators

It's almost time again for the National Core Indicators (NCI) satisfaction surveys. Starting in January, family members will receive questionnaires in the mail that cover a variety of topics. About 600 adult consumers served by RCOC and selected randomly will be asked to participate in face-to-face interviews. The interviews will be coordinated by Project Independence again this year and conducted by trained profes-

sionals, other consumers and family members. We at RCOC encourage everyone to respond to the survey as that is the most effective way to get an accurate picture of the quality of services in Orange County.

You may recall that RCOC started participating in this nationwide initiative three years ago. It's a research tool that assesses the quality of services delivered to people with developmental disabilities. Wendel Starkey



Wendel Starkey answers questions in an interview.

See 'NCI,' page 5

CEO's Corner

Statewide and Local Developments

By Bill Bowman, Chief Executive Officer

Family Cost Participation Program

January 1 is quickly approaching and signals the beginning of the Family Cost Participation Program, otherwise known as parental share of cost for certain regional center services. The specifics of how the program will be administered are not entirely clear. Draft regulations have been written by the Department of Developmental Services, but the Department is still gathering public input and adjusting the regulations. We do know that the share of cost will apply to families with income above 400 percent of the federal poverty level that have children ages 3 to 17 living at home and receiving regional center services and not eligible for Medi-Cal. The program will affect only three services: respite, day care and camp. We know that this program could be a significant burden for some families. It will also mean a big adjustment for staff at the regional center, particularly the changing role of the service coordinators, with the added responsibility of gathering financial information from families. Our first priority will be to maintain the relationship of trust between parents and their service coordinator. As soon as we can get more definitive information about the program, we will notify families. In the meantime, you can check the DDS Web site at www.dds.ca.gov and click on "What's New" to view the proposed regulations and submit your comments. If you have ques-



tions about the regulations, please call Larry Lipsmeyer at DDS at (916) 654-3355.

State Budget Status

The regional center system was fortunate this year, considering the state's multi-billion dollar budget deficit that needed to be addressed. The Purchase of Service budget reduction was much less than we had anticipated, about \$7 million statewide, and did not include Purchase of Service Standards, which would have limited regional centers' ability to tailor services to local community needs. We expect that the reduction will not adversely affect services. The Operations, or administrative, side of our allocation, however, presents more of a difficulty this year. That's what funds service coordination, accounting and supports. We will be challenged to maintain required staffing levels and balance our expenses.

Organizational Effectiveness

As I've reported to you occasionally for the past three years, RCOC has been involved since 2001 in a nationwide research initiative called National Core Indicators (NCI). The purpose of this research tool is to get a picture of the quality of services by surveying people with developmental disabilities, as well as their family members and service providers. LeeAnn Christian, Ph.D., has been helping us, on a part time basis, to analyze the data and modify the study as needed. LeeAnn is an expert in social science research methods and has extensive experience working in the field of developmental disabilities services. The data gathered in the study has statistical significance, which means that the responses from those of you who are survey participants give us a pretty

reliable indication of how satisfied people are with the services provided. We intend to use your feedback to make our organization more responsive to areas of need. For that reason, we've hired LeeAnn to be our director of organizational effectiveness. She will now be working at RCOC full time, and coordinating her work on NCI with evaluating the processes that make RCOC run, with the goal of increasing the efficiency of our organization.

Court Case

We've been following closely a lawsuit against another regional center, the outcome of which would have serious consequences for all 21 regional centers. It has to do with whether or not regional centers can be held liable for the irresponsible or criminal actions of vendors that provide services to people with developmental disabilities, particularly if the vendor doesn't have liability insurance. It appears that the California Supreme Court is going to overturn a lower court judgment that did hold regional centers responsible for vendor actions. The justices were surprised, as some of you might be, to learn that there is no law requiring vendors to have liability insurance. We at RCOC believe that it is the service providers' responsibility to maintain adequate and appropriate insurance, and we are gratified to see such good business practices being supported by the state's highest court.

I covered a lot of ground in this column in the hopes of keeping you informed of some of the things happening behind the scenes that ultimately affect services to the children and adults with disabilities that we serve. Thanks for reading.



Consumer Advisory Team (CAT) Update

CAT Members Discuss Important Issues

By Michael Bailey, Chairman

The Consumer Advisory Team (CAT) is a group of consumers that meets once a month.

The group discusses issues that are important to RCOC consumers, like advocacy and independence. The CAT chairman advises the RCOC board of directors about the group's concerns.



People from the Registrar of Voters office came to the CAT meeting in August. They told the members how to register to vote. They brought the forms so members could register right there. They also brought voting machines and showed the members how to use them. There are special attachments for people who have trouble reading or using their hands. Consumers who have a hard time getting to their voting place can request absentee ballots. That way they can vote by mail. November 2 is voting day to elect the president of the United States. The deadline

to register for that election is October 18. To be able to vote, people must be United States citizens and at least 18 years old by Election Day. If you have questions about voting, call the Registrar of Voters at (714) 567-7600.

At the July CAT meeting, Adam Gottdank gave a detailed presentation about the quality assurance (QA) process at RCOC. Adam is director of the Outcomes work group at RCOC. The group checks on service providers to make sure they are providing the services that consumers need. Adam said that the QA team investigates every time there is a report of abuse, neglect or rights violation of consumers. QA coordinators also follow up after an investigation to make sure that the problem has been corrected.

Larry Landauer is RCOC's director of Consumer and Community Resources. At the July meeting, he told the CAT members about the 2005 Performance Contract and asked for their input. The Performance Contract is made up of items that RCOC tells the Department of Developmental Services it will do during the year. The team members had some ideas about housing and group

homes. They said they would like to have more people live in their own place with the support of independent living or supported living services instead of in group homes.

At the July meeting the CAT members also talked about problems that people sometimes have with the bus system. Larry said that OCTA wants to be told right away of any bus problems that happen. Consumers can report problems to OCTA at (714) 636-7433. Consumers need to tell OCTA the date, time, place and bus number when they make reports. If another rider is making a problem on the bus, it's important for consumers to tell the bus driver about it. The driver will contact OCTA from a phone on the bus.

All consumers are welcome to come to Consumer Advisory Team meetings. They are held on the third Wednesday of the month. The meeting time is 10:00 a.m. to noon. The meeting place is usually the RCOC East/Central office at 801 Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana. Support staff are also welcome. Transportation is not provided by RCOC. Please call Betty Bath at (714) 796-5263 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.



Please note: Safety Stu's column will return in the Winter 2005 issue of Dialogue.

Change of Leadership at the FRC

Change is inevitable everywhere it seems, and Comfort Connection Family Resource Center (FRC) is no exception. Sadly, Hedy Hansen bid adieu to her role as FRC supervisor in July. Happily, though, Jacqui Kerze was available to step in and take her place, which made for a smooth transition.

We are also happy to report that Hedy is continuing in her passion to support families through her involvement in the SEE PAC training series that was featured in the last issue of *Dialogue*. The FRC received a grant from the Department of Developmental Services to fund SEE PAC, which stands for Supporting, Empowering, Educating Parents of Autistic Chil-



Jacqui Kerze will continue to serve families in her new role as FRC supervisor.

dren. It is a 10-week training series for parents of children with autism.

Jacqui Kerze has been with RCOC for six-and-a-half years, previously wearing many hats as family support coordinator. She has organized and facilitated several support groups for families of children with special needs, including the Single Parent Support Group. She has responded to innumerable requests for information from family members, service coordinators, people with developmental disabilities, and outside professionals. She is, literally, a walking encyclopedia of resources for families of people (children and adults) with developmental disabilities. As if

that weren't enough, Jacqui also chairs the planning committee of RCOC's annual Spotlight Awards event.

Jacqui is excited about her new role as FRC supervisor. She said, "I am very much looking forward to the CCFRC providing the support and activities that meet the needs of the families and consumers we serve from birth through the rest of their lives."

As are all of the staff members of the FRC, Jacqui is also the mom of a child with a developmental disability. Her son, Michael, is 10 years old and has Down syndrome and autism. Jacqui sees the FRC staff as a valuable team that works together to provide support for one another as well as the families that call or visit the center.

Please feel free to call the FRC at (714) 558-5400 or stop by Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana.

NCI (from page 2)

receives Regional Center services and agreed to be interviewed for the NCI project a couple of years ago. Wendel has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. Although he feels that a couple of the subject areas on the NCI survey did not apply to his situation, he said that most of the questions were relevant to his life. He thinks that just by conducting the survey, RCOC is helping to make sure that consumers understand their rights and that they have choices in the services they receive.

Wendel said, "Hopefully, by conducting these interviews, by asking questions about people's home life and how they're feeling about the

services they receive, the project will be able to assess not just how services are helping now, but areas where there might be new, unmet needs."

Two people came to Wendel's home to conduct the interview with him, and one was also a person with a developmental disability.

Wendel commented, "They made it seem comfortable and easy to open up. I think it would be valuable to all consumers involved."

Wendel also sees the NCI interview as a self-advocacy tool. He said, "Not everyone is able to stick up for themselves or advocate easily for

themselves. I think that it's important to understand this was independent from the services at RCOC so people don't think they might be impacted or affected negatively. The willingness to explain the questions and make clear what they were looking for was good. The interview was done well and appropriately."

The results of previous years' surveys can be found at www.hsri.org. Last year's survey results will be made available in the near future. If you have questions about the NCI study process or the surveys, please contact LeeAnn Christian at (714) 796-5254.

Lifetime Achievement: Gail Nunn

Gail Nunn's career at Goodwill Industries of Orange County spanned 13 years. She started as a job coach at Project SCOP (Successful Community Opportunity Program) and ended as manager of the program for the past six years. Her life and service to people with disabilities was tragically cut short when she passed away last June after a short but valiant battle with cancer. Gail demonstrated her dedication to people with developmental disabilities as she continued to work until two weeks before her passing, and did not widely disclose her condition for fear of disrupting services. She never complained when she was in pain, but focused on the daily responsibilities of managing the day program and achieving as much as she could with her remaining time.

Gail left a legacy of commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities. She was instrumental in the development and implementation of many new employment opportunities and countless community integration activities. She expanded Goodwill's community-based program to include creative arts, computer literacy, adult education classes, and performing arts. She touched the lives of more than 200 people with developmental disabilities and hundreds of staff members during her years of service. One of her first assignments as a job coach was at Cox Cable in Rancho Santa Margarita, a site that now serves as a model for integrating people with developmental disabilities into large corporations. Gail worked tirelessly with consumers, families, Goodwill

staff, care providers, RCOC, and schools to ensure that consumers had a strong circle of support.



Gail Nunn is shown here with Gerard D'Anna, one of the people with developmental disabilities that she worked with at Goodwill.

Community Partnership: Corey Elementary School

The motto of Corey School became, "Special education is a service, not a place," when the staff made the commitment to fully include special education students in general education classrooms. They set out on a year-long planning process, enlisting the support of a mentor professor from California State University, Fullerton, visiting model full inclusion programs, and training teachers and other staff members. Currently, Corey School has 11 full inclusion classes serving 29 special education students. Parent involvement is also a high priority at the school.

The common vision at the school is "Success for all," and is demonstrated by a teacher changing her classroom two weeks into the school

year to accommodate a little girl with a seizure disorder who needs to be closer to the restroom. Co-teachers, one general education and one special education, make full inclusion reality by working together to modify a lesson so that special education students can learn and still feel they belong in the class. The real measure

of success, however, can be seen on the playground, where special education students cannot be distinguished from the rest of the students because all the kids play together. A mother of a special needs first-grader told her son's teacher, "Cole was just invited to his first birthday party. That's what [full inclusion] is all about!"



(Front, left to right) Catalina Sanchez, assistant principal; Kay Santos, special day class teacher; Angela Taylor, principal; fourth grade student Christian Valdez; Lisa Smith, full inclusion teacher. (Back, left to right) Linda Albertson, speech teacher; Kristin Hale, second grade teacher; and Bill Bowman, RCOC CEO.

Employer: Mission Viejo City Library

Nearly half of Mission Viejo City Library's paid pages are people with developmental disabilities (five out of thirteen), and another of the pages is a former nurse who has experience caring for babies and children with developmental disabilities. The library also provides the opportunity for the pages with developmental disabilities to apply for promotion to the lead supervisory page position. The library also grooms its many volunteers with developmental disabilities for paid page positions.

The library has more paid staff with developmental disabilities than any other city agency. The employees with disabilities are accepted by the

(Left to right) Kathy Kelton, circulation manager; Michael Bailey, library page and RCOC board member who nominated the library for the award; Valerie McGinnis, director of library services; and Steve Sherman, RCOC board chairperson.



other staff members and well regarded by the public who use the library. Mission Viejo Library also has an outreach program to people with developmental disabilities in group homes and brings them into the library on field trips, where they can use the computers and check out books and tapes.

Healthcare Professional: Michael T. Mumford, M.D.

Dr. Mumford has been a primary care physician for Regional Center consumers for many years. He goes out of his way to make sure that his patients with developmental disabilities receive excellent care. One way he does this is by personally calling a Regional Center nurse or physician when consents are needed for special procedures.



Dr. Arleen Downing, RCOC's director of health resources, said, "Dr. Mumford has been successful in finding specialists who will see and

treat his patients with disabilities when needed."

Dr. Mumford also attends planning team meetings at the homes of his patients with developmental disabilities, which is a very unusual practice for a physician.

He involves the patient in the decision-making process whenever possible. His patients with developmental disabilities have said that he listens to what they say. They know and trust him. Dr. Mumford treats his patients who have developmental disabilities with the respect that all people deserve.

RCOC physician Dr. Peter Hember said, "By helping his patients with developmental disabilities stay as healthy as possible, Dr. Mumford helps them reach their full potential."

Frontline: Jerry Scovel

Jerry has worked directly with people with developmental disabilities at Hy-lond Home in Garden Grove for



the past 27 years and also at Enriching, Inc. since 1995. He teaches and supports people with developmental disabilities in Hy-lond's community mobility and safety training programs. He also teaches them purchasing skills while in the community. Additionally, Jerry trains other staff members in safe lifting techniques and behavior intervention. He assisted in designing a back awareness and safe lifting program for Hy-lond. Through his years of experience, Jerry has learned first-hand what techniques are and are not effective, and has been able to assist with developing best practices in the care of the residents. Jerry even assists Hy-lond's physical therapy consultant with performing repairs on wheelchairs so that the consumers can attend their programs without interruption.

Jerry's enthusiasm for his work and his years of experience enable him to provide other direct service professionals with a better understanding of supporting people with developmental disabilities from birth through adulthood. He enjoys participating in events at Hy-lond Home and encourages relationship-building between consumers and their families and the staff members. The residents of Hy-lond Home have been able to be more independent and have a better quality of life because of the care, support and teaching that Jerry has provided.

Parent: Karen Templeton

Karen Templeton has been a foster mother to sixty children in the past nineteen years, many of whom have had developmental disabilities. Currently she has six foster children with special needs such as autism, Down syndrome and mental retardation. When the children in her care return to their biological families, Karen educates the parents about their child's disability and the resources available to them. If a child is eligible for adoption, she gets in-



involved in the process of selecting the most appropriate adoptive home. She wants every child to have the opportunity to be part of a "forever family" and works with the adoption agency to find a loving, caring family. She also trains hundreds of new foster parents each year.

Karen advocates for these children through involvement at the Department of Social Services, the school district, and with healthcare professionals. Karen's goal in all her activities is to provide a loving environment for neglected and disabled children and help them reach their full potential.

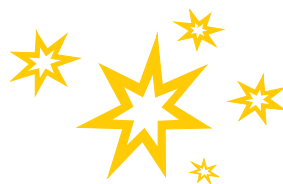
Professional Achievement: Stephanie Peterson

In her work at Adult Protective Services, Stephanie Peterson investigates reports of abuse or neglect of people with developmental disabilities. She often goes beyond her job description to ensure the safety of the people involved. In one case, after substantiating an allegation of neglect, she provided one-to-one emergency care for a consumer with self-destructive and aggressive behaviors. She waited patiently with the consumer until a crisis service provider could take over. She followed up the case by pursuing avenues that would make certain that the person had proper care in the future.



While investigating a case of alleged rape, Stephanie became aware that the victim was a Regional Center consumer, so she got the person's service coordinator involved so that they could coordinate needed services to support the consumer. Stephanie also managed all of the legal steps in that case by getting a restraining order, pressing charges and contacting the district attorney.

Stephanie uses her knowledge of the Regional Center and legal systems to obtain needed services and legal remedies in order to protect people from future abuse and neglect.



RCOC Achievement: Rosalinda Lopez

As East/Central Area Manager, Rosalinda Lopez leads, encourages and inspires her staff members that coordinate services for people with developmental disabilities. In her twenty-three years at the Regional Center, she has advocated for people with disabilities, listening to everyone involved in a situation, then seeking the best solution to the challenge at hand. She works tirelessly and always displays a cheerful attitude.



She is especially sensitive to the concerns of Latino families, always seeking to overcome the language and cultural barriers that sometimes hinder access to services. She is involved in the annual Fiesta Educativa conference for Spanish-speaking families, an educational opportunity for parents of children with disabilities. Rosalinda also supports and attends Las Posadas, a special Christmas celebration organized by the parents of Latino children with disabilities.

Although she works long hours at the Regional Center, Rosalinda also makes time in her schedule to serve others through her involvement with Catholic Charities and the Soroptimist International service organization.

Rosalinda demonstrates that she truly knows how to create win-win situations as she seeks first to understand, then to be understood.

Living Options Vendor: Resurrección Home II

The most important thing about a group home is that it be comfortable for the people that live there. It should feel like home to them. Ariel Resurrección has achieved that by providing a warm, family-like setting in his group homes. They are clean and well-decorated. They provide the care and support needed while giving the residents a variety of choices in their living activities. Families are encouraged to visit. Staff members receive frequent training opportunities.

One nominator wrote, “My sister loves staying at the home, where in the past she begged to be with her family for frequent visits. Now she likes to see us, but prefers to be in her own room at her home at night.

She attends church which she loves. We asked but no other homes provided her this opportunity. Ariel and his staff are amazing. They run the home so efficiently, yet in such a

caring, loving way.”

Meeting the needs and respecting the rights of the residents are of utmost importance in the Resurrección homes.



From Resurrección Home II: (Left to right) Cynthia Oskins, Rosalyn Regular, Ma. Theresa Resurrección, RCOC CEO Bill Bowman, Brian Ubl, and Lisa LaJeunesse.

Support Services Vendor: Rainbow Kids Achievement Center

Rainbow Kids Achievement Center provides early intervention services in south Orange County to children under age three who have developmental delays or disabilities. The center offers comprehensive therapy services such as developmental evaluations, feeding and swallowing therapy, as well as speech, occupational and physical therapy to help babies and toddlers develop to their age level. Speech therapist Patti Hill opened Rainbow Kids in 1990 when she recognized the need for a center-based program that could serve children ready to transition from in-home services. Since that time, Patti and her staff of 40 therapists have developed many innovative activities that include play time with typically developing children, workshops and open houses.

Community-based inclusive programs include infant massage, Babies on the Move, and Kindermuzik. Three years ago the Peer Intervention Program was developed to offer families additional choices for educational services

when their children turned three.

The parent who nominated Rainbow Kids testified, “Patti’s staff of more than 40 outstanding therapists offer the absolute best in therapy services and are committed to each client.”



(Left to right) Jan Stack (back), Karissa Benoit, Lisa Cummings, Patricia Hill, RCOC Board Chairperson Steve Sherman, Vivian Ortega-Ward, Karsti Schelin, and Beth Hayter.

Volunteer: Paul and Marilyn Harvey

“Paul and Marilyn Harvey have used their vision, dedication, knowledge, and perseverance to create and shape a host of life-enhancing activities for Orange County residents with developmental disabilities,” reads the nomination of this couple. From sports activities to foreign exchange student programs to etiquette classes and employment opportunities, this couple’s influence has been wide-ranging and beneficial to those with developmental disabilities.

Paul started a Challenger Baseball team in Irvine in 1989, and it has grown to three teams. He also initiated an exchange program that allowed four high school students with developmental disabilities along with two teachers to travel from



Irvine to Taiwan. Marilyn created and teaches social and business manners classes for young adults with developmental disabilities. She was also instrumental in developing the Irvine Unified School District Adult Transition Program at Irvine Valley College that provides workplace training and life skills education for students 18 to 22 years old. Paul piloted a program

at Nissan North America that has 20 people with developmental disabilities working full-time in the mailroom, fitness center, car detailing center, and parts centers. Paul has also helped get similar programs started at other major corporations.

Paul and Marilyn Harvey have been involved in many social/recreational, educational and vocational activities for people with developmental disabilities. They have expanded their influence by recruiting others to take over many programs they started. In addition to the initiative and leadership they show, Marilyn and Paul always have time to offer kind words, smiles and hugs to the people with disabilities for whom they do all these things.

E. Kurt Yeager Servant Leadership: Holly Nogales

With her warm and easy-going personality, Holly Nogales has a way of making positive things happen in a seemingly effortless manner. Over the past several years, Holly has combined her experience as a parent of a special needs child with her congenial leadership style to act as a liaison between parents and various public agencies in Orange County.



In addition to serving on Regional Center’s board of directors for several terms and as president of the board, she has participated on many collaborative committees affecting Early Start and education services. She worked with CRIBS, a network of agencies that coordinate services for young children, to implement the Early Start program in Orange County. She was involved in the creation of Comfort Connection Family Resource Center and served as chairwoman of its board of directors. Working for the South Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) as a parent representative, she helped other parents make

their way through the intricacies of the education system. She has provided a parent’s perspective on many advisory committees and at education conferences.

As president of RCOC’s board, Holly always listened with respect to people with developmental disabilities who addressed the board. She encouraged board members with disabilities to voice their concerns and helped set policies that implemented their suggestions. Holly is always ready to listen and understand, and she has the boldness to speak up and advocate for the needs of families and people with developmental disabilities.

From 'Polypharmacy' to 'Prior Authorization'

By Chanté White,
CalOptima
Liaison



Do you know what “polypharmacy” means? Polypharmacy is

when you take too many different medications together. By taking many different medications, you may make yourself sicker instead of healthier. If you take eight or more medications together, they may work against each other. Taking herbs and vitamins with your medications can also cause health problems. **Here is how you can reduce your risk of polypharmacy:**

- Ask your doctor to review all the

medicines you take to make sure you are only taking the medicines you need.

- Try to get all your prescriptions from the same doctor, or tell your doctor all the medicines you are taking.
- Make a list of all your medications and show the list to your doctor(s).
- Go to only one pharmacy to fill all of your prescriptions. This will help your pharmacist keep track of all the medications you take.

You May Need Prior Authorization

Some medical services need to be approved by your health network or CalOptima before you get them. This approval is called “prior authorization.” You may need prior authorization to get a referral to a specialist, to get medical supplies or durable medical equipment, or to be admitted to a hospital. If you and your doctor think you need any services that require prior authorization, your doctor will ask your health

network for approval. Your doctor will be told if the service is authorized or not. If the service is denied, postponed, or a change was made to what your doctor requested, you will get a letter explaining the reason.

You do **not** need prior authorization to get family planning, mental health, vision, or emergency services. Women may also see an obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) without prior authorization.

The time frame for prior authorization is:

- Five calendar days for routine services,
- One calendar day for urgent services.

If you have any questions, ask your doctor to call your health network or you can call CalOptima at (888) 587-8088, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. As always, if you have questions about this information or need assistance with CalOptima services, feel free to call me at (714) 796-5213.

Important Things to Know...

Buddy Walk ... Join the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) and the Down Syndrome Association of Orange County (DSAOC), formerly known as PROUD, on Sunday, November 14 at Angel Stadium for the annual Buddy Walk. DSAOC and NDSS strive to enhance the quality of life for people with Down syndrome and their families through educational, social and support programs and to promote the acceptance of people with Down syndrome in all aspects of community life. In addition to raising awareness, the Buddy Walk also raises funds that enable DSAOC to provide services free of charge to families in and around Orange County. It also helps fund NDSS research and advocacy. Regis-

tration fee after October 17 is \$20. You can register at the event from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Volunteers at the event are also needed. Learn more by calling (714) 547-2895 or visiting the online Walk Center at www.dsaoc.org.

Speakers Bureau ... The Irvine Residents with Disabilities Advisory Board (IRDAB) has a speakers bureau available to the public. The primary goal of the service is to educate the public about issues and challenges that affect individuals with disabilities. The speakers bureau is made up of members of IRDAB, many of whom have a disability or have a family member with a disability. The service is free and

presentations are tailored to meet the host group’s interests and needs. Possible topics include:

- A personal perspective on living with a disability,
- Disability etiquette – how to interact with a person who has a disability,
- The benefits of hiring employees with disabilities, and
- Disability-related services offered through the City of Irvine.

If you, your group or your business is interested in organizing a presentation from the IRDAB speakers bureau, please contact the City of Irvine Disabilities Services Office at (949) 724-6633 or fill out an online form at www.irvinedisabilitiesservices.org.

Regional Center of Orange County is a nonprofit, private agency that contracts with the California Department of Developmental Services to coordinate services for approximately 13,500 children and adults with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

Dialogue is published four times per year by the Regional Center of Orange County for people with developmental disabilities, their families, service providers, and members of the community.

Dialogue can be read online at RCOC's Web site: www.rcocdd.com.

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Meetings start at 6:00 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana. The public is welcome.

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Dialogue Newsletter

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