



Dialogue

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Consumer Spotlight

Board Member Kim Vuong Leads By Example

Ask Kim Vuong what her motto is, and she'll tell you: "If you don't want people to treat you differently, you don't treat them differently."

The 31-year-old, who has cerebral palsy, feels strongly that people shouldn't focus on their differences. "I want people to know that I have a normal life," she says. But she is passionate about making a difference in her community.

Those who attend RCOC board meetings no doubt recognize Kim. She is now serving her second term as a member of the board of directors. This isn't her first experience in a leadership role. She served on the board for Westside Regional Center before moving to Orange County eight years ago.

Kim emphasizes that affordable housing and housing options are her big issues, because they are so important to maintaining independence.

"When I came here, I knew I wanted to do something to be an advocate for consumers," she says. Kim emphasizes that affordable housing and housing options are her big issues, because they are so important to maintaining independence.

"I have been independent since the age of 18, when I moved out and began living on my own with regional center help," she says.

"Kim is a great asset to the Board for many reasons, but especially because of her personal experiences," says Steve Sherman, RCOC's board chairman. "She has been successful in confronting challenges ranging from employment to housing to transportation, and is an active participant in board meetings and activities, sharing her insights with fellow board members and with RCOC staff."

Kim also volunteers one day a week at the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center, where she does Internet research to help families locate resources. Martha Gallegos, a parent liaison with Comfort Connection, says Kim is a cheerful and energetic volunteer, and easy to get along with.



Kim Vuong (right) and her boyfriend Brian Cruise (left) enjoy a day at the beach in Long Island, New York.

2006 Spotlight Awards Preview

Mark your calendar! The 2006 Regional Center of Orange County Spotlight Awards gala is set for **Friday, September 8, 2006** at the Irvine Marriot Hotel. If you know someone who deserves a Spotlight Award, get started early to make sure your nomination is postmarked by the **July 7, 2006** deadline. A complete nomination package is included with this issue of Dialogue.

Note for consumers: If you would like help filling out the nomination form, please contact your RCOC service coordinator.

See **Kim Vuong** page 8

Dialogue

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Dialogue can also be read online at RCOCC's Web site: www.rcocdd.com.
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Contributors To This Issue:

Bill Bowman, *RCOC CEO*
Jay Connor, *Board Member*
Tresa Oliveri, *Board Member*
John Abernatha, *Human Resources Director*
Brenda Ives, *Executive Assistant to the CEO*
Jacqui Kerze, *Comfort Connection FRC*
Larry Landauer, *Consumer/Community Resources Director*
Doug Miller, *Outcomes Director*

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2006 Board Meetings

July 6 • September 7 • November 2

The public is invited to attend. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at 801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana.

RCOC Administration

Bill Bowman, *Chief Executive Officer*
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Amy Williams, *South Area Manager*

RCOC Legislative Update

RCOC Families Have a Lot 'Riding' on Measure M

By Tresa Oliveri, RCOCC Board of Directors

A solid public transportation system is one of the things that makes Orange County

a good place to live for many

people with developmental disabilities.

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), through both ACCESS vans

and the regular bus system, helps to enable greater independence for the people RCOCC serves. The collaboration between OCTA and RCOCC to provide discounted bus fares for people with disabilities also allows RCOCC to operate more efficiently, making the most of the financial allocation our center receives from the State of California.

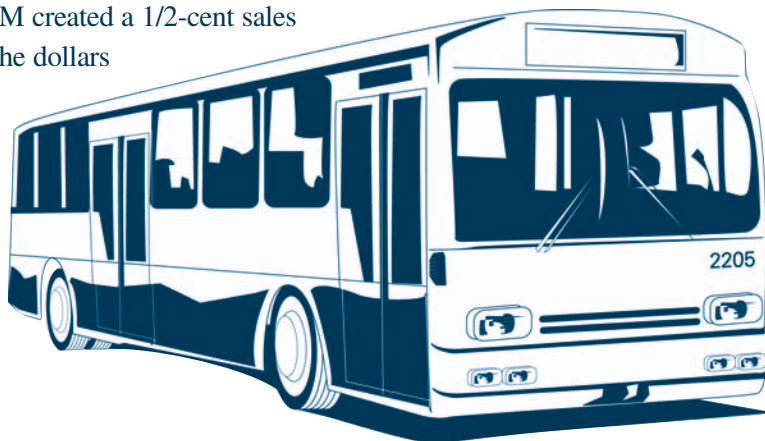
Much of this is possible because voters approved Measure M in 1990. Measure M created a 1/2-cent sales tax, and the dollars



raised have been used to support funding of a full range of improvements to Orange County's transportation system, including the discounted fares for people with disabilities and seniors. For Orange County residents to continue to enjoy the benefits of Measure M, the 1/2-cent sales tax must be re-approved by voters later this year. Otherwise, Measure M will expire.

During the past year and a half, OCTA has worked with the community to develop a plan for the continuation of Measure M. That plan, the Renewed Measure M, will appear on the November 2006 ballot. Along with major new freeway and street projects, the Renewed Measure M will continue to subsidize the ACCESS service and discounted fares, while expanding both rail and bus services. Importantly, it also includes the same types of taxpayer safeguards and fiscal oversight that have helped make the original Measure M such a great success.

RCOCC's Board of Directors supports the Renewed Measure M, and encourages voters to learn more about it and to vote YES in November. For more information, visit the OCTA Web site at www.octa.net or call (714) 560-5066.



CEO's Corner

A Focus on Building Community

By Bill Bowman, Chief Executive Officer

Listening to the people we serve is essential to RCOC fulfilling our commitment to being responsive to people with developmental disabilities and their families. Whether you provide us with feedback by completing surveys or by telling us what you think during a planning meeting, we want you to know that your input is heard and it is taken seriously.



Like anyone else, we appreciate compliments – mostly because it tells us what we're doing right. However, guidance on areas where you would like to see changes is also essential to ensure that our regional center stays at the forefront of meeting the evolving needs of families with diverse backgrounds and living in diverse circumstances.

One of the major over-arching themes we see is a desire for broader "connected-ness."

One of the primary means through which we obtain your thoughts and opinions is the National Core

Indicators (NCI) Project. The NCI is a nationally-recognized research project that measures RCOC's performance alongside that of similar organizations across the United States. It provides us with objective information about consumer needs, as well as consumer satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of services and supports that people receive through RCOC.

As we delve into the most recent NCI data, one of the major over-arching themes we see is a desire for broader "connected-ness." We are hearing this across-the-board, from adult consumers to parents of young children in Early Start.

For example, many of the adult consumers we serve express strong desires for deeper involvement in the community. For some, this might mean engagement in civic activities or faith communities; for others, it's about building friendships and forming more satisfying personal relationships. For families with school-age children, there is a pressing need for quality child care and enriching after-school activities. That is reflective of a need shared by society at-large, but with an added dimension: the component of social skills development that many children with disabilities need to help them live a full life in the community. Families with very young children in Early Start also tell us they see a need for more and different behavioral programs that can help their children cope and connect with others and the world.

As we assimilate this and other feedback from the NCI, RCOC is exploring many new avenues to meet

evolving needs. In addition to encouraging our vendor partners to innovate new services and creative program models, RCOC is reaching out to established organizations that are known for serving the community at-large, but may not have considered the potential for assisting people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Though only in the preliminary stages, the initial responses from many of these organizations has been enthusiastic and encouraging. In some cases, simple accommodations may be made to include RCOC consumers in existing programs. In others, more specialized expertise may need to be developed, perhaps in concert with some of our current vendor partners. The bottom line, though, is that we are seeing a blossoming interest in opening new doors for RCOC consumers.

We are seeing a blossoming interest in opening new doors for RCOC consumers.

We fully expect to see significant new opportunities for adults and children in the very near future. This bodes well for Orange County's ability to continue to meet changing needs in ways that advance the Lanterman Act's vision of inclusion, while staying true to its mandates for quality, effectiveness and fiscal responsibility.

If we are successful, we will be helping to create "community" in the truest and highest sense of the word.

Consumer Advisory Team Update

Good Ideas for Consumers Who Ride the Bus

By Jay Connor, CAT Chairman

The Consumer Advisory Team (CAT) meetings this year have been fun and interesting. In January, we had a presentation on establishing credit. Our February speaker talked about animals, and even brought a live possum with her!

Since a lot of RCOC consumers ride buses as their main form of transportation, someone from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) also attends our meetings and provides monthly updates to us on their services. Here are some of the things we learned in March:

- The bus drivers are trained to be sensitive to people with disabilities. If you need a little extra time, be sure to tell the driver.



- When you are on a bus, if you are approached by someone who makes you feel uncomfortable, tell the bus driver about it.
- Sometimes a consumer who uses a wheelchair will be at a bus stop and a bus will go by without stopping. This might happen because only some of the buses can carry wheelchairs and sometimes they get full. When that happens, the bus driver calls in to report the situation. So, if an OCTA bus passes you by, they say you should wait because another bus should be coming soon to pick you up.
- If consumers have a complaint about OCTA, we should call Customer Service at (714) 636-7433. We are also invited to call and tell them about the things we like about the job they are doing.

As you can see, consumers get a lot of helpful information when they attend CAT meetings. We have more exciting topics planned for the coming months, and hope to see you there!

Upcoming 2006 CAT Meeting Dates

June 21

July 19

August 16

CAT meetings are from 10 a.m. to noon at RCOC's Santa Ana office, 801 Civic Center Drive West. Call Betty Bath at (714) 796-5263 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.

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.

Let's Talk Earthquake Safety

Hi Everyone! In this edition of Safety Stu's Corner, Beary Safe and I want to talk to you about Earthquake Safety.

Have you ever wondered what you're supposed to do when an earthquake happens? Well, when the shaking starts – whether you're at home, at school, or at work – we want you to remember to: **DROP, COVER and HOLD ON!**

To practice it at home, talk to your parents or your roommates about the safest place in every room in your house. Once you know the best place in each room, it's easy:

1. **DROP** under a sturdy desk or table,
2. **COVER** your eyes by pressing your face against your arm, and

3. **HOLD ON** to the desk or table until the shaking stops.

If there's no sturdy table or desk nearby, look for a place on the floor against an inside wall, sit against it and cover your head and eyes. Be sure you are not by windows that might break, or by bookcases, tall furniture, refrigerators, heavy mirrors or



hanging plants that might fall on you. And don't go outside until the shaking has stopped.

If you are in a wheelchair when an earthquake happens, stay in your chair. Move to an inside wall away from windows and things that could fall on you, and then lock your wheels, if you can. Close your eyes and protect your head with your arms.

If you are outdoors when an earthquake happens, the safest place to be is an open space that is away from trees that might fall down. Once you're in a clear area, like a big lawn, then **DROP** and **COVER** until the shaking stops.

After a big earthquake happens, there are often a lot of smaller earthquakes. These are called aftershocks. Each time you feel one, you do the same thing: **DROP, COVER and HOLD ON!**

*Until next time
Safety Friends,
Safety Stu, the GET SAFE™
team, and Beary Safe*



Check Out The Riot! Online

The Riot! is an e-newsletter produced by self-advocates, for self-advocates, through the Human Services Research Institute's Self Advocate Leadership Network. People from all over the United States help to come up with story ideas and write the stories. Issues come out in January, April, July and October. And, it's FREE!

If you're somebody who has a disability and speaks up for yourself, then you are a "self advocate" and this newsletter may be for you. Check it out online at www.hsri.org/leaders/theriot.

Emergency Readiness: Easy Tips to Help You Prepare

By Doug Miller, Outcomes Director and John Abernatha, Human Resources Director

Anyone who has lived in California for very long knows that earthquakes are a fact of life here. In fact, this year is the 100th anniversary of the great San Francisco earthquake and the 12th anniversary of the Northridge earthquake. As we remember those events, it is a good time to revisit our own emergency readiness plans.

There is no substitute for each family taking steps to prepare.

RCOC has an emergency preparedness plan, with staff prepared to implement it if an earthquake or other disaster happens. We also are working with service providers to help increase their readiness. However, there is no substitute for each family taking steps to prepare.

Supplies for the Home

Every family should have an emergency kit for their home. A large, brightly-colored nylon athletic bag is an ideal container, because it will be easy to spot and reasonably portable.

Inside, you'll need enough water and non-perishable food, like canned goods, to last at least three days – seven days is preferable. You will need either pull-top canned goods, or a hand-operated can opener, as electricity may be out. Stored water and food should be replaced every six months so it stays fresh.

Stored water and food should be replaced every six months so it stays fresh.

It's also important to have a well-stocked first aid kit and a first aid guide (the American Red Cross First Aid Handbook is a good one), along with extra eyeglasses – an old pair can do. Your kit should include flashlights with plenty of extra batteries. And don't forget sanitary supplies; having a portable toilet, like the type used for camping, and a supply of toilet tissue and trash bags is a great idea.



Be sure that emergency information is accessible, including copies of prescriptions and other medical information, as well as copies of drivers' licenses or other photo identification of each family member in case you are separated. In addition, you should include phone numbers for police, fire, and family members in your kit. RCOC's emergency contact number, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, is (714) 796-5100. Since ATM

machines may not be working, and stores may not be able to accept ATM or credit cards, it is wise to tuck some extra cash into your kit. A portable battery-powered radio may be your best source of current information in an emergency, so make sure you have one handy and that you have extra batteries.

A tool box can also be very helpful if there is damage to your home. Plastic sheeting or tarps and garbage bags will be good to have on hand, as well as masking tape and work gloves.

Family Action Plan

Every member of the family should know the emergency exit out of your home. Agree on a place where all of you will meet outside and near your home. Check with your son's or daughter's school or day program to learn about their plans for emergency contact, and establish a plan for picking up your children when appropriate. Identify an out-of-town telephone contact that each of you will call in the event of an emergency. Many times during a disaster, it will be easier to call out of state than across the street.

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You also need to think about safety-proofing your home. Keep a fire extinguisher on hand and make sure

your smoke detectors are working. Make sure the water heater and tall bookcases are secured with straps, and move larger heavy objects down to lower shelves.

Special Needs to Consider

Disability-related supplies and specialized equipment will need extra planning and consideration.

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If a member of your family uses disposable items, such as diapers, be sure to have extras on hand

and a safe way to dispose of used supplies. Also remember that some specialized items, such as batteries for hearing aids or communication devices, may be hard to get in an emergency so keep spares.

Keep extra batteries fresh for when you need them in an emergency by rotating them regularly into your everyday supply.

Since your children may need to be helped by emergency personnel, make sure they can recognize police

officers and firefighters, for example. And, as local phone lines may be down, be sure that your child's identification information also lists your family's out-of-town contact number. For family members with special needs or medical conditions who may not be able to communicate with others, a medical alert is a must.

Some families may consider purchasing a power generator that can be used if electricity is out for several days. If you plan to get one, be sure that it can be connected to the existing wiring system of your house or the equipment you intend to use with it. Remember, flammable fuel must be stored safely and a generator must be operated outdoors for proper ventilation.



For the Car

If a major quake happens while you're driving, you'll be

glad to have an athletic bag or backpack with a "mini" supply kit with: a spare pair of tennis shoes, a light jacket, map, first aid supplies, water and snacks. It is also good to have work gloves, basic tools, and a flashlight with extra batteries. A pad and pencil or pen for writing may also come in handy, along with a spare blanket or plastic tarp.

What Else Might be Helpful?

While you are organizing things around your home, think about the types of documents and information you'll need after the immediate emergency has passed. It is a good idea to have a secure, fireproof and waterproof container for storing: lists of bank accounts and credit cards; social security information; marriage and birth certificates; copies of deeds to property; photographs of important property (for insurance claims); and pictures of your loved ones.

You might think about keeping an extra propane tank for your outdoor grill or invest in a table top barbecue for cooking, as gas and electrical power may be out for a number of days.

RESOURCES

The tips in this article are a general guide. Make sure that you assemble an emergency kit and devise a family plan that works for your family and individual circumstances.

For more ideas and suggestions, visit:

- Orange County Sheriff's Department Web site, www.ocsd.org
- California Office of Emergency Services Web site, www.oes.ca.gov

Kim Vuong (continued from page 1)

“She’s a go-getter,” says Martha. “And capable of doing anything she decides she wants to do, because she’s really strong-willed and has the determination not to give up.”

Her volunteer work, however, is just the beginning. For the past two years, Kim has been employed by Goodwill’s Assistive Technology Exchange Center (ATEC), working there two days a week. Kim, herself, uses a machine called an augmentative alternative communication device (see related story “Assistive Technology” on page 9) and sometimes does presentations to professional groups on using assistive technology.

With so many work and volunteer activities, how does Kim find time for a social life? She makes the most of every day, and every opportunity.

Kim and her boyfriend, Brian, enjoy going to baseball games together.



Fans of the Boston Red Sox baseball team, Kim and boyfriend Brian sometimes attend the team’s home games. Here they are pictured during a game at Fenway Park in Boston.



Kim’s computer skills are put to good use when she volunteers at the Comfort Connection Family Resource Center.

Their favorite team is the Boston Red Sox. They’re such big fans, they have even traveled to Boston several times to watch their team play at Fenway Park.

In fact, Kim has traveled extensively with her boyfriend, visiting exotic places like Belize and Hawaii. Brian’s family lives in New York, and they have also traveled there several times. They plan to return for another visit this August. Her favorite place to travel, though, is Boston – and not just because of the Red Sox games!

“I like it because of all the history there,” she says.

The couple enjoys doing fun things closer to home, too, including going to movies. “But not the scary ones,” she laughs. Like many other stylish young women, Kim loves to shop. She also enjoys doing yoga, and says that yoga, along with physical therapy, helped in her rehabilitation after she had major surgery on her neck a year

ago. At home in Garden Grove, Kim enjoys cooking. Italian food is her specialty. And she and Brian have a deal: when she cooks, he does the dishes.

It’s hard to imagine fitting yet more activities into Kim’s busy life, but somehow she does it. She also goes to school part-time, taking computer science classes at Cypress College where she hopes to earn an Associate’s Degree.

And there’s more. Kim has big plans for the future. She wants to get married someday, and to have children. Kim, who was born in Vietnam and came to the U.S. with her parents when she was six, also would like to do some work in Asia. Drawing from her own life experience, she wants to help educate parents who have children with disabilities.

“You should recognize that your child has a lot of potential. Look for that, and help them to achieve that, help them to grow.”

“You should recognize that your child has a lot of potential. Look for that, and help them to achieve that,” she says. “Help them to grow.”

When asked about her goals, Kim says “I want to be a good role model.” After learning just a little bit about the kind of person she is, and the way she lives her life, most people would say that’s a goal she’s already achieved!

Assistive Technology Helps Many RCOC Consumers

In its broadest sense, the term “assistive technology” means anything that helps a person increase or enhance a life function. This could include everything from walkers and hearing aids, to ramps in place of stairs, Velcro on clothing and a multitude of other products in everyday use. Usually, though, when people talk about assistive technology (AT) for those with developmental disabilities, they have in mind things like:

- Voice output devices for those who are without speech or who have significant speech impairments;
- Adaptations to wheelchairs, including custom controls for the hand, head or mouth to maneuver the wheelchair; and
- Computer adaptations, such as an adaptive computer mouse, a modified keyboard, or a head pointer for those with severe mobility impairments.

According to RCOC Consumer/Community Resources Director Larry Landauer, these and other types of assistive technology can open the doors of education and paid employment for many, as well as better health and greater independence.



“For some adults with developmental disabilities, assistive technology may make it possible for the dream of a career to become a reality,” says Larry, citing the example of an RCOC consumer with cerebral palsy whose computer adaptations enable him to work and make a living as a professional Web designer. He also noted that a

number of RCOC consumers attend college classes and go on to earn college degrees in fields ranging from psychology to engineering to social work.

“Because a lot of assistive technology facilitates communication, it can enable a person to explore a much broader universe of work and social opportunities,” he says.

Kim Vuong, the RCOC board member and consumer profiled in this issue (see page 1), uses a voice output device that “speaks” words she types into it. Called an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device, the machine is about the size of a small toaster. The portable machine easily slips on and off a rack attached to the walker Kim uses, so it can go with her anywhere.

“For some adults with developmental disabilities, assistive technology may make it possible for the dream of a career to become a reality.”

“It helps me to talk,” she says. In addition to helping her communicate with co-workers on the job at ATEC (Assistive Technology Exchange Center) in Santa Ana, the device also makes it easier for her to use a computer because the two pieces of equipment can be connected.

“assistive technology... can enable a person to explore a much broader universe of work and social opportunities.”

Often, when there is a need for AT, it arises during a child’s school years when the school district’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shows it is necessary for education. For example, a child with cerebral palsy who is able to communicate effectively with family at home might need assistive technology at school in order to communicate with teachers, and to take tests.

If you think that you, or a member of your family, might benefit from assistive technology, be sure to talk about it with your RCOC service coordinator. As with all services and supports, matching consumers with appropriate assistive technology is a highly-individualized process and there are RCOC Purchase of Service Guidelines relating to this type of equipment. Your service coordinator can help guide you through the process and guidelines.



Early Start Families Are Key to Our Community's Future

By Jacqui Kerze



While attending a recent conference for people involved with family resource centers, I was pleased to be around so many parents who are committed to helping other families with children who have special needs. I thought to myself: it is because of women and men like these that we have the Lanterman Act, regional center services, the family resource center network and so many other community resources for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

When you remember that just a few decades ago almost none of these resources existed, it is clear that involved parents – serving as advocates and as volunteers helping one another – are a powerful force. This is an important message for all parents, but especially those with very young children in Early Start who may not yet recognize the impact that sharing their experiences can have on others.

Having a child with special needs can make anyone feel overwhelmed at times, so it's easy for a young parent to think they don't have much "left" to share. But each of us has something valuable to offer. We share many similar experiences and emotions. We understand one another. That's the

rationale for Parent Connection. We don't have to have the answers for someone else to make a difference. All by itself, listening can be a tremendous gift. By being someone a fellow parent can talk to, we can help that person think through their challenges and, in doing so, help them make their own well-thought-out decisions.

In addition to becoming a local Parent Connection volunteer, Early Start parents can help influence the resources and types of assistance available to them by applying to serve on various councils and boards of directors. The California Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (see sidebar) both include parent representatives, as does RCOC's own board of directors.

Involved parents – serving as advocates and as volunteers helping one another – are a powerful force.

Parents can also have a significant, positive impact on behalf of children with developmental disabilities and their families by providing feedback about their needs and the resources they employ. For example, by taking the time to complete surveys you receive from RCOC, or by following pending legislation and letting state lawmakers know your opinion on key issues, you can help shape services and supports in Orange County – and throughout California – now and in the future.

Involvement Opportunities

If you are interested in becoming involved, here are some options to explore:

- **Parent Connection** volunteers share their experiences with other Orange County mothers and fathers of children with disabilities of all ages. For more information on how you can become part of this parent-to-parent support network, contact Naomi Hall at (714) 558-5402.
- **California Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) on Early Intervention** includes parent representatives who meet four times a year to advise the Department of Developmental Services regarding early intervention services. For information and an application, visit www.dds.ca.gov and click on "ICC Members and Community Representative Applications" or call (916) 654-3722.
- **State Council on Developmental Disabilities'** regional offices, formerly known as "Area Boards," advocate for legal and civil rights for Californians with developmental disabilities. For details and application information, visit www.scdd.ca.gov or call (916) 322-8481; for TDD service, call (916) 324-8420. To contact the Orange County office (Region 11), call (714) 558-4404.

Behavior Management Workshops for Parents

Regional Center of Orange County will be offering free Behavior Management Workshops for Parents. Three workshops will be offered in June, July and August 2006. These four- or five-session workshops will cover the basic principles of positive behavior management with a practical focus on helping parents of children with developmental disabilities to change their own behavior and that of their children. Parents will be actively involved in this workshop and will be invited to discuss the specific behavioral challenges they are confronting. When a fifth session is offered, the focus of the fifth session is toilet training. Advance reservations are required and group size is typically limited to 40-45 families. Please contact your service coordinator for additional information and to register.

Behavior Management Workshop for Parents (4 Sessions)

Presented in English by Jose Rios, MS, BCBA

When: Wednesday Evenings – June 7, June 14, June 21 and June 28

Time: 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Location: Regional Center of Orange County East/Central Office –
First Floor
801 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana

Behavior Management Workshop for Parents with Toilet Training (5 Sessions)

Presented in English by Paul Coyne, PhD

When: Tuesday Evenings – July 11, July 18, July 25,
August 1 and August 8

Time: 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Location: Regional Center of Orange County South Office
26311 Junipero Serra Road, Suite 180, San Juan Capistrano

Behavior Management Workshop for Parents with Toilet Training (5 Sessions)

Presented in English by Joyce Tu, EdD, BCBA

When: Tuesday Evenings – August 8, August 15, August 22,
August 29 and September 5

Time: 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Location: Regional Center of Orange County West Office
13950 Milton Avenue, Suite 200, Westminster

A Primer on Service Coordination

RCOC will be offering a specialized training course for consumers, parents and other interested community members. Called **Service Coordination and the Regional Center of Orange County**, this course is a great opportunity to learn more about the regional center system and the role of the service coordinator. RCOC staff will offer information on a variety of topics for consumers and parents who want to make the most of their partnership with regional center service coordinators. The course includes in-depth exploration of the process for developing and implementing an Individual Program Plan (IPP).

The course includes three sessions, taking place from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 14, 21 and 28. The class will meet in the first floor boardroom of RCOC's Santa Ana office, located at 801 Civic Center Drive West. Space is limited and registration is required, so be sure to call Jan Draper at (714) 796-5270 if you are interested in attending.



RCOC Board Honors Fullerton Police Officers for Heroism

On behalf of the RCOC Board of Directors, Chairman Steve Sherman presented Fullerton Police Officers Chris Bradley, Jay Cicinelli and Hugo Garcia with a commendation for their heroism in saving the life of a 13-year-old RCOC consumer who has autism. The officers found the child, who had been reported missing, walking on train tracks. With a train coming, the officers guided the child to safety. The presentation took place at a Fullerton City Council meeting.

Pictured L-R are: RCOC Board Chairman Steve Sherman, Officers Hugo Garcia and Jay Cicinelli, and Captain Geoff Spaulding who accepted the commendation on behalf of Officer Bradley, who was unable to attend.

Regional Center of Orange County Locations

Santa Ana Office	Orange Office	San Juan Capistrano Office	Westminster Office
801 Civic Center Dr. West 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-5100	3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150 24-hr Phone: (714) 685-5555	26311 Junipero Serra Rd., Ste. 180 24-hr Phone: (949) 234-8800	13950 Milton Ave., Suite 200 24-hr Phone: (714) 889-7200

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Dialogue Newsletter

Regional Center of Orange County
P.O. Box 22010
Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010



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2006 SPOTLIGHT AWARDS
Official Nomination Form



The Regional Center of Orange County and its Board of Directors are pleased to announce the **10th annual RCOC Spotlight Awards**. This year's Spotlight Awards dinner and dance will take place on Friday, September 8th from 6:00 p.m. to midnight at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. Formal invitations will be sent in July.

The Spotlight Awards event is always a festive and inspirational evening, but this year's event has special significance: 2006 marks a decade for our community coming together to honor the contributions of those who excelled in their service to individuals with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

Nominations for Spotlight Awards are now being accepted. You are invited to nominate an individual or organization in one or more of the following categories: Community Partnership, Consumer, Employer, Frontline Award, Healthcare Professional, Lifetime Achievement, Living Options (Residential) Vendor, Parent/Family Member, Professional Achievement, RCOC Achievement, Support Services Vendor, and Volunteer. Entries must be postmarked by Friday, July 7th, 2006.

Nominations will be judged by a panel representing the Orange County community. Winners will be announced, and awards presented, at the Spotlight Awards dinner. All nominees will be recognized in the event program.

Please mark your calendar for Friday, September 8th, and take some time to nominate a deserving individual or organization. Additional nomination forms are available from the RCOC office. The forms can also be downloaded from our web site: www.rcocdd.com.

For more information about the nomination process, or if you would like to consider becoming an event sponsor, contact Jacqui Kerze, Spotlight Awards Chairperson, at 714-796-5299.

*Mail completed nominations postmarked by July 7, 2006 to: Jacqui Kerze, Regional Center of Orange County,
P.O. Box 22010, Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010*

or deliver to:

801 Civic Center Drive West, Suite 100, Santa Ana, CA

If you have any questions about this packet, please contact Jacqui Kerze at 714-796-5299.

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Nomination Rules:

A developmental disability is a substantially handicapping condition beginning before age 18, is expected to be lifelong and is attributed to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or conditions similar to mental retardation.

- Use one nomination form for each nominee in each award category.
- Complete front and back of this form.
- Do not submit photos, videotapes, or any other material with the Official Nomination Form.
- You may photocopy this form if you are nominating more than one person. Additional forms can also be downloaded from the RCOC web site at www.rcocdd.com.
- No individual or organization may receive an award more than once in five years.
- Judges and their immediate families are not eligible.
- All nominators will be contacted for confirmation of nomination.
- Nominations are judged on the information about the nominee and not the quantity of nominations received.

Consumers who would like assistance completing the nomination form should contact their RCOC service coordinator.

Please indicate category:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Living Options Vendor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Achievement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frontline Award | <input type="checkbox"/> RCOC Achievement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Support Services Vendor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer |

Nominee Information

Name of Individual, Organization or Business: _____

Address: Home Work

_____ Street City Zip Code

Daytime Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____
(Area Code)

Your Information (Nominator):

Name: _____

Address: _____
Street City Zip Code

Daytime Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____
(Area Code)

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- *Please type or clearly print your answers below.*
- *Please give specific examples that address the criteria listed in the selected category.*

1. Describe what the nominee has done to deserve an award in the category you have selected.

2. Describe how this person or organization has had a positive effect on people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2006.

2006 SPOTLIGHT AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Community Partnership. An organization or individual that demonstrates exceptional leadership and creativity in expanding meaningful opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to become full participants in community life.

Consumer. An individual who has a developmental disability whose personal example and achievements inspire others and advance awareness about the capabilities and talents of people with disabilities in Orange County.

Employer. A business that demonstrates exceptional leadership and creativity in expanding integrated employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Frontline Award. An individual whose direct service to people with developmental disabilities has demonstrated exceptional ability to enhance the life of one or more RCOC consumers. For example, nominees might include (but are not limited to) instructional assistants, in-home caregivers, job coaches, and personal assistants.

Healthcare Professional. A healthcare professional who has demonstrated exceptional care, compassion and understanding to individuals with a developmental disability and their families. Examples of healthcare professionals include physicians, nurses, dentists, as well as physical, occupational and speech therapists.

Lifetime Achievement. An individual whose personal, professional or volunteer activities, **over a long period of time**, have made **exceptional contributions** toward enhancing the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

Living Options (Residential) Vendor. A **residential service provider** that demonstrates excellence in support to people with developmental disabilities through the development and/or operation of living options that are responsive to the developmentally disabled individual's choice, dignity and quality of life.

Parent/Family Member. A parent or other family member committed to improving the quality of life for his/her family member, as well as others with developmental disabilities, through support, compassion and advocacy.

Professional Achievement. An individual employee in an organization, other than a regional center, serving people with developmental disabilities whose professional achievement demonstrates exceptional contributions that reflect the best practice in the field of developmental disabilities services.

RCOC Achievement. An RCOC employee whose professional contribution, while an employee of the Regional Center of Orange County, demonstrates exceptional accomplishments toward fulfilling the Mission and Guiding Principles of the organization on behalf of people with developmental disabilities.

Support Services Vendor. A support services provider that demonstrates excellence in support to people with developmental disabilities through the development and/or provision of support services, **other than residential**, that are responsive to the developmentally disabled individual's choice, dignity and quality of life.

Volunteer. An individual with the demonstrated willingness and commitment to voluntarily act on behalf of people with developmental disabilities, and whose volunteer activities bring about a quality of life that are characterized by enhanced community acceptance, participation and personal self-sufficiency.