



Dialogue

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Spring 2011

Spotlight Award Honorees

The Regional Center of Orange County Spotlight Awards recognize and honor people and organizations for excellence in their service to people with developmental disabilities in Orange County. This year, the awards were presented in March at a dinner-dance at the Crowne Plaza Anaheim Hotel. Attended by 530 people, the dinner-dance was organized by the non-profit Integrity House which was awarded the contract to co-sponsor the event. The evening was fully funded by ticket sales and sponsorships, with no tax dollars being used for the event.

This approach to the Spotlight Awards ensured that no tax dollars were spent on the event.

“This approach to the Spotlight Awards ensured that no tax dollars were spent on the event, which was important in light of the difficult fiscal challenges California faces,” said RCOC’s Board Chair Tresa Oliveri. “I’m proud that we are able to preserve our commitment to good stewardship, while coming together to honor outstanding role models.”

Here are brief snapshots about the 12 honorees.



(L-R) Tresa Oliveri, Michael Bailey and Larry Landauer

Consumer/Client Award: Michael Bailey

Michael Bailey was honored with the Consumer award because he is a role model for others, and because his example increases awareness about the gifts and talents of people with developmental disabilities. Michael has served as a volunteer and advocate, especially in the areas of transportation and employment, on many community advisory boards, including committees for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. He is a member of People First of Orange County and the local Area Board XI. In addition to his many volunteer efforts, he works at the Mission Viejo Library.



Polly Musch (center) with daughter Kathryn (L) and husband Bill Musch (right)

Volunteer: Polly Musch

Polly Musch was honored for decades of leadership and creativity in expanding opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. She helped develop a transition class for people with disabilities leaving school and starting work, and worked to

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Dialogue

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2011 Board Meetings

June 2 • July 7 • September 1
October 6 • November 3

The public is invited to attend. Meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at RCOC's new headquarters in the Tustin Centre Tower complex, located at 1525 North Tustin Avenue in Santa Ana.

RCOC Administration

Larry Landauer, *Executive Director*
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Budget Update

State Enacts Cost-Savings Measures for Regional Centers

In March, Governor Brown signed several bills passed by the Legislature to help address California's budget deficit. One of those bills, SB 74, details changes that will be made to regional center services.

A key section of the law that affects consumers and families relates to "best practices." While the Governor had originally proposed implementing POS Standards, SB 74 instead requires the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to develop "best practices" for the management of regional centers and for centers to use when purchasing services. DDS created workgroups to help draft the best practices, for submission to the Legislature in mid-May. The Legislature will decide whether or not to enact them.

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SB 74 also calls for the 4.25% cut in payments to service providers and regional centers to continue through June 30, 2012. This cut has been imposed for the current fiscal year and was scheduled to end June 30. Its extension will be extremely challenging for service providers.

The legislation also makes regional centers and service providers subject to a variety of new transparency and accountability measures. Administrative costs will be capped, audits will be increased, and more information will be posted on regional centers' Web sites. While RCOC already posts much of what is required, we will soon be adding new elements to our site.

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It is important to remember that SB 74 and the other bills signed by the governor in March do not fully address California's budget deficit. The governor had proposed extending certain tax increases that are set to expire on June 30, 2011, but that requires voter approval and the Legislature has not agreed to place the tax extension question on a ballot. There could be an effort to get a ballot initiative on extending these taxes. However, even if this happens and voters approve the taxes, it will not fully cover the remaining deficit so there could be additional cuts to state-funded services.

There are still many unknowns about how the state will address the remaining budget deficit. The governor will submit his revised budget proposal in May – the so-called "May Revise" – and that could provide more insight into his plans for balancing the budget for fiscal year 2011-2012.

For more information and a link to SB 74, go to RCOC's Web site (www.rcocdd.com) and click on "Latest Budget News."

Executive Director's Report

Technology Helps RCOC Do More with Less

By Larry Landauer, Executive Director

Like many of the consumers and families we serve, RCOC is always looking for ways to do more with less money. This perspective has long been part of our community's commitment to good stewardship, but it is especially important now as California continues to face serious budget challenges.

Innovation with the technology we use is one of the key strategies that RCOC has found to get the most value from every dollar entrusted to us. In April, we rolled out a major advance in our Virtual Chart software that will build on the efficiencies and productivity gains this system has enabled us to make in recent years.

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The new version of Virtual Chart integrates a large amount of information that used to be stored separately — in the consumer's IPP (Individual Program Plan), in the details about the services and supports RCOC purchases for them,



and in the CDER (Client Developmental and Evaluation Report) that is required for those whose services are partially funded by the federal government. (NOTE: The work to integrate the data in IFSPs (Individual Family Service Plan) is currently underway.) Integrating all of these sources of information into a single system has many benefits.

Saving Time

Before this version of Virtual Chart was available, a service coordinator would typically need several hours to document an

IPP or IFSP visit and complete the paperwork required by the regional center, the State of California, and the federal government. The new version of Virtual Chart is expected to help them get this work done in significantly less time.

That is good news because reducing the time that service coordinators need to do paperwork increases the time available for things that matter most to the people we serve. This would include, for example, more time to listen and learn about consumer needs, more time to understand family circumstances and suggest helpful resources, and more time for unannounced visits to monitor the quality of programs and residential facilities.

Maximizing Federal Funding

Another major advantage of the new system is that it is improving the consistency and accuracy of the

information kept by RCOC. This is crucial because close to half of the people served by RCOC qualify for some type of federal funding that helps California pay for their services and supports. This includes, among others, approximately 5,000 RCOC consumers who qualify under the federal government's "Medicaid waiver" for California and around 2,700 infants served by RCOC's Early Start program.

This federal funding is vital for preserving services, and it comes with very strict reporting requirements.

On a regular basis, the federal government "audits" regional centers to verify that all of the forms and other records the centers keep confirm that the consumer and the services he or she receives meet eligibility criteria. The improved Virtual Chart system is set up to alert the service coordinator to possible errors and inconsistencies among all of these records and forms that might inadvertently disqualify a consumer and cause the state to lose federal dollars.

Enhancing Transparency

Looking to the future, we believe that continued innovations to Virtual Chart technology will pave the way for even more improvements at RCOC. The creative new ways we use technology enable us to meet taxpayer and legislator expectations for transparency and accountability, while staying focused on our core mission — meeting the needs of the individuals and families who rely on us for critical services and supports.

Consumer Advisory Team Update

Making Our Voices Heard by Elected Officials

By Jay Connor, CAT Chairman

In March, we had a special guest speaker at our CAT meeting. Martin Paine, District Director for State Senator Mimi Walters, delivered a very interesting presentation that helped the group understand a lot more about how our state government works. He gave us an update on the status of the state budget, and he also explained about how a bill becomes a law.

Martin talked about how California's State Legislature is made up of two "houses,"

or groups, of elected officials: the Assembly has 80 members and the Senate has 40 members. Senators and Assembly members can both create bills, but for a bill to become law, it has to be passed by both "houses" and then signed by the Governor.

When the legislators are deciding whether to vote "yes" or "no" on a bill, they try to think about what the people in their district would want them to do.

Martin also talked about how important it is for all citizens to participate in our government. He said that we can do that by registering to vote, and then voting in elections. He also said that the people we elect want to hear our views about bills and issues we care about.

Upcoming CAT Meeting Dates

May 18
June 15
July 20
August 17
September 21

CAT meetings are from 10 a.m. to noon at RCOV's new office in Santa Ana, 1525 North Tustin Avenue. Call Nancy Mata at (714) 796-5206 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.

The best way to let them know what we think is to write them a letter, but you can also contact their offices by phone.

If you are not sure which Senator and Assembly member represent you, contact the Orange County Registrar of Voters. You can call (714) 567-7586 and give them your home address, and they will tell you what districts you live in. Or, you can visit their Web site at www.ocvote.com.



Martin Paine, District Director for State Senator Mimi Walters (pictured top row), with CAT members (L-R) Jay Connor, Sylvia Delgado and Fernando Peña.

Behavior Management Workshops for Parents

Regional Center of Orange County offers these workshops at no cost to parents. To gain the most value from them, parents are encouraged to attend all sessions in a series. The Behavior Management workshop covers essential principles of positive behavior management, with a practical focus on helping parents of children with developmental disabilities change their own behavior and that of their children. The Social Skills Training workshop is focused on helping parents nurture social skills among children.

In all of the workshops, parents are actively involved, and invited to discuss the specific behavioral challenges they are confronting. Advance reservations are required and group size is typically limited to 40-45 families.

Contact your service coordinator or Thelma Day at (714) 796-5223 for additional information regarding dates, times and locations, and to register.

NOTE: Child care is not provided, so please do not bring children to the workshops.

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in English: by Michael Messina, Psy.D., BCBA-D (Melissa Sweitzer, Ph.D., Inc.)

When: Thursday mornings – June 9, June 16, June 23, June 30 and July 7
(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)

Time: 9:30 a.m. – Noon

Location: RCOC Santa Ana Office
1525 N. Tustin Avenue
Parking is located in the structure across from the RCOC office building

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in English: by Kim Enloe and Dr. April Worsdell (Coyne & Associates)

When: Tuesday evenings – August 2, August 9, August 16, August 23 and August 30
(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)

Time: 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Santa Ana Office
1525 N. Tustin Avenue
Parking is located in the structure across from the RCOC office building

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in Spanish: by Eva Urena, M.A., BCBA, Rossirene Li, B.S., and Juliana Menchaca, B.S. (Footprints)

When: Thursday evenings – August 18, August 25, Sept. 1, Sept. 8 and Sept. 15
(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)

Time: 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Orange Office
3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in Vietnamese

When: Thursday evenings – Sept. 15, Sept. 22, Sept. 29, Oct. 6 and Oct. 13
(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)

Time: 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Westminster Office
5555 Garden Grove Boulevard, Suite 100

Social Skills Training Workshop – Focus on Ages 12 through 18 years (6 sessions)

Presented in English: by Erin Davis, M.A., Parent Training Consultant

When: Tuesday evenings – Sept. 13, Sept. 20, Sept. 27, Oct. 4, Oct. 11 and Oct. 18

Time: 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Orange Office
3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150

Behavior Management Workshop with Toilet Training (5 sessions)

Presented in English: by Dr. Joyce Tu, Ed.D., BCBA (Center for Behavioral Sciences)

When: Thursday evenings – Sept. 29, Oct. 6, Oct. 13, Oct. 20 and Oct. 27
(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)

Time: 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Location: RCOC Santa Ana Office
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Parking is located in the structure across from the RCOC office building

Spotlight Awards Honorees
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ensure Americans with Disabilities Act compliance at the OCTA. For many years a board member and president of Area Board XI, she is also active in identifying accessible housing needs and resources in the community.

**Elected Official:
Senator Lou
Correa**

State Senator Lou Correa was honored for his long-time commitment to the well-being of people with developmental disabilities and their families, including his efforts on the Senate Select Committee on Autism and a bill he recently authored to improve and streamline assessments for young children with or at risk for developmental disabilities.



Senator Lou Correa

**Community
Partnership:
Acacia Housing**

Acacia Housing, under the leadership of Gary Frazier, was honored for its efforts to create affordable housing for adults with developmental disabilities. Over a four-year period, the organization bought a 48-unit motel in Anaheim, and then renovated and converted it into studio apartments for individuals with disabilities.



Gary Frazier

**E. Kurt Yeager
Servant Leadership
Award: Christian
Dubia**

Christian Dubia was honored for the nearly three decades that he has served the community, including serving as President of the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Orange County's board, and as a member of the South Coast Community Clinic/Camino Health Center board. During his ten years on RCOC's board, the last two as Chairman, he made significant improvements to the organization's board governance policies.



Christian Dubia

Parent or Family Member: Erika Hall

The mother of three children, two of whom have autism, Erika Hall was honored for being a role model for other parents of children with special needs. She was also lauded for her many volunteer activities on behalf of other families, including participation in Parent Connection, serving as chair of a Community Advisory Committee for the Placentia-Yorba Linda school district helping other parents advocate for their children's education needs, and working to raise awareness about autism. *(Unfortunately Erika was not able to attend the event, so we do not have a photo.)*

**Employer:
The Yard House**

The Yard House, which has been a leader in employing people with developmental disabilities in Orange County for the past six years, was honored for providing integrated job opportunities to workers with disabilities and setting an outstanding example for others in Orange County.



Jeni Nikoletich, Manager,
Yard House Irvine
restaurant

**Professional Achievement:
Kim Costello**

Kim Costello is Director of Nurses at Hy-Lond Home. She was honored for her leadership in a number of areas, including a pain management program that meets the needs of both verbal and non-verbal residents, and programs that have decreased the risk of infections and reduced hospitalizations.



Kim Costello

**Living Options Vendor:
Gilbert Care Homes**

Gilbert Care Homes, which has operated community care homes for people with developmental disabilities for more than a decade, was



Noel (left) and Arlyn Villegas, owners of Gilbert Care Homes

honored for the excellence of the staff and management who attend to the unique talents and needs of the individuals who reside in their homes.

Frontline: Emma Prax Lodge

Emma Prax Lodge works with children with autism and other developmental disorders, along with their parents, to help the children develop appropriate behavioral skills. She was honored both for the excellent service she provides and for her dedication to families.



Emma Prax Lodge

**RCOC Achievement:
Marisa Patterson**

An RCOC service coordinator, Marisa Patterson was honored for her professionalism, knowledge and dedication to helping families make good choices about the services and supports they need to help their children with developmental disabilities be as independent as possible.



Marisa Patterson

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**SAVE THE DATE FOR SUMMER BLAST!
Saturday, June 18**

Be sure to mark your calendar and make plans to attend Summer Blast on **Sat., June 18 from 2-7 p.m.** Taking place at KiwanisLand in Garden Grove, Summer Blast offers a day of fun, food and good times with friends and family!

Organized by Integrity House, with support from RCOC, the event will feature traditional picnic activities like sack races, softball, face painting, water balloons, and a cake walk, as well as entertainment and dancing.

For tickets and more information, contact Integrity House at 714-542-0855.



Spotlight Awards Honorees
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**Lifetime Achievement:
Pethuru Lourthu**

The Orange County Operations Director for Westview Vocational Services, Pethuru Lourthu started his career as a job coach 23 years ago. Honored for his commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities reach their highest potential, he serves as a member of Orange County Transportation Authority’s (OCTA) special needs advisory committee, is very involved with the National Alliance on Mental Illness and is active in RCOC’s Vendor Advisory Committee.



Pethuru Lourthu (front row center) with his wife Ann (front row left) and Westview Services colleagues: Carole Cooper (front row right) and (back row, L-R) Richard Jennings, Judy McBride, Maryam Toubak, Maureen Sullivan-Starnes, CEO Gregg Gann, Shahmaz Arora and Linda Callaghan.

Regional Center of Orange County Locations

Santa Ana Office	Orange Office	Irvine Office	Westminster Office
1525 N. Tustin Avenue 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-5100	3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-3700	46 Discovery, Suite 200 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-4060	5555 Garden Grove Blvd., Suite 100 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-2900

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Dialogue Newsletter

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