



# Dialogue

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Spring 2014

## Spotlight Award Honorees

More than 600 consumers, family members, service providers and other community members attended the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Spotlight Awards Dinner-Dance on Friday, March 7 at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove. Since 1997, RCOC has hosted the event to honor those who go above and beyond to advance the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.

For the third consecutive year, the event was organized by members and volunteers from Integrity House, a non-profit clubhouse for people with disabilities.

“Integrity House did a wonderful job of organizing the event,” said



RCOC’s Board Chair Alan Martin. “We’re proud that their hard work enabled us to again host a festive and fun event that consumers and others in our community look forward to all year long.”

Costs for the gala were covered by individual ticket sales and by service providers and others who purchased tables. These included: BHW Cares, Coyne and Associates, Easter Seals of Southern California, Goodwill of Orange County, Independent Options, Integrity Cottages, Mayfair Adult Day Care, MENTOR, Mercedes Diaz Homes, OM Foundation, Westview and Work Creation Program.

Here are brief snapshots of the ten honorees.



Larry Landauer and Sylvia Delgado

### **Self-Advocate: Sylvia Delgado**

Sylvia Delgado is a role model for others, and her example increases awareness about the gifts and talents of people with developmental disabilities. A member of RCOC’s Board of Directors, where she serves as secretary, Sylvia also serves on the National Core Indicators Community Advisory Council. As chair of the Consumer Advisory Team (CAT), she helps to keep consumers involved and educated, and she has visited with several elected officials to give them the consumer perspective on

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## Dialogue

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

*Dialogue* can also be read online at RCOC's Web site: [www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com).

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### Upcoming 2014 Board Meetings

June 5 • July 10  
August 7 • September 4

The public is invited to attend RCOC board meetings. They begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the Regional Center Board Room at RCOC's 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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Bette Baber, *Chief Financial Officer*  
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## Support Companies that Employ RCOC Consumers

Businesses, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and others that include adults with developmental disabilities in their workforce deserve positive recognition for making it possible for consumers to participate more fully in community life.

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*There are more than 150 employers that currently have RCOC consumers on their payrolls.*

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One of the ways that RCOC recognizes businesses and organizations that are making a difference in broadening opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities is with the "Employer" Spotlight Award. The TJ Maxx stores in Orange County that received the award this year are terrific role models, but there are actually more than 150 employers that currently have RCOC consumers on their payrolls.

In support of the Board of Directors' recently-adopted "Employment First" policy, RCOC has launched an effort to bring greater recognition to those who provide integrated competitive employment for adults with developmental disabilities.

The regional center has posted a list of these employers on its website, and is encouraging those it serves and does business with – from consumers and families to service providers and professional colleagues – to support these employers.

There are a lot of ways to show your support. For-profit businesses will be delighted to have you shop at their stores and restaurants, visit their hotels or attractions, and buy their products. Nonprofit organizations will welcome your contributions and volunteer efforts. Government agencies and all the employers will appreciate your taking the time to write letters to their leaders and executives expressing your approval for what they're doing to promote inclusion for those with developmental disabilities.

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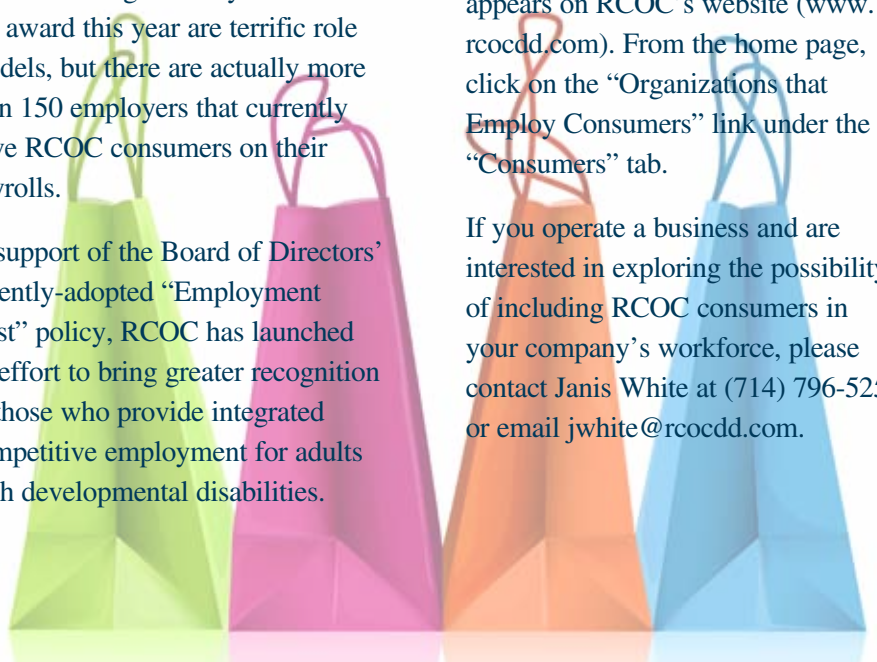
*There are a lot of ways to show your support.*

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If you'd like to participate in this effort, you can download the list that appears on RCOC's website ([www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)). From the home page, click on the "Organizations that Employ Consumers" link under the "Consumers" tab.

If you operate a business and are interested in exploring the possibility of including RCOC consumers in your company's workforce, please contact Janis White at (714) 796-5256 or email [jwhite@rcocdd.com](mailto:jwhite@rcocdd.com).



## Executive Director's Report

### RCOC Adopts "Employment First" Policy

By Larry Landauer, Executive Director

“**E**mployment First” is a national movement that has emerged in recent years. Basically, what it means is that for those who serve people with developmental disabilities, the most favored option for young adults transitioning out of school is competitive, integrated employment in the community.

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*Young adults with developmental disabilities and their families often choose competitive, integrated employment when they are contemplating life after graduation.*

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Already, 26 states have passed Employment First legislation or have policy directives to that effect. California's own law (AB 1041) went into effect on January 1, and states that are not moving in the Employment First direction are facing consequences. The U.S. Department of Justice is actually suing Oregon and Delaware, because those states are increasing the number of consumers in sheltered workshops.

Most importantly, though, young adults with developmental disabilities and their families often choose

competitive, integrated employment when they are contemplating life after graduation. In fact, we have featured a number of these consumers on the cover of *Dialogue* over the years. Most recently, our Summer 2013 issue profiled Breanna Little. Breanna is a



young woman with a passion for cooking, who has succeeded at her job in the food service program at Irvine's Hyatt Hotel with only natural supports.

In response to consumers, who surveys tell us want to work, along with the requirements of AB 1041, RCOC's Board of Directors formally adopted an Employment First policy at their March 2014 meeting. Quite simply, the policy states that "integrated competitive employment will be the first option considered by planning teams for every working age adult we serve."

The policy will benefit all working age consumers, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, though it is clear that some consumers will need more support than others in the workplace. And it will also be RCOC's responsibility to proactively address parent concerns about a range of issues, such as the effect of competitive employment on a consumer's other public benefits and their socialization opportunities.

However, I'm extremely proud that this new policy already has the strong support of our service provider community, including Vocational Visions, Goodwill, Elwyn and the Orange County Adult Achievement Center. These four have pioneered service innovations in the past, and

I'm confident that their leaders share our commitment to collaborating with our Orange County school districts and the business community to make Employment First a reality.

That collaboration and long-term commitment are essential, because Employment First is about more than simply changing how services and supports for people with developmental disabilities are provided. It reflects a fundamental cultural shift by virtually everyone in the developmental services community (policymakers, elected officials, regional centers, service providers, employers and consumers) toward viewing people with developmental disabilities as full participants in the economic mainstream, working side-by-side with their fellow citizens.

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*I'm extremely proud that this new policy already has the strong support of our service provider community.*

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It is important, though, to remember that the policy we're implementing is called Employment First, not Employment Only. Though our perspective at RCOC is that everyone deserves a chance to pursue competitive employment, we also recognize that employment is not the best choice for everyone. Consumers and families can rest assured that with this policy, as with every other, we will continue to uphold the individualized approach to services and supports we have always taken – ensuring that the person with disabilities and his or her needs are our top priority, at the center of everything we do.

## Consumer Advisory Team Update

### Good News from “The Way Forward” Conference

By Sylvia Delgado, CAT Chair

In early April, I was happy to join my fellow RCOC Board Member Bob Costello and several RCOC staff members at a conference called “The Way Forward: Charting a Course for the Future.”

There were people from all over California and other states sharing ideas about how we can ensure that consumers get the services and supports they need to live full and meaningful lives in the community.

It was exciting to me because several of the speakers were really focused on helping consumers become more independent, instead of just talking about ways to get more money for more services. I do think we need more money for regional centers, but I also agree with what Sheli Reynolds,



Director of Individual Advocacy and Family Support at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, had to say about how some people focus more

on maximizing financial benefits than on meeting a person’s true needs.

Sheli gave an example of a high school

student with behavior challenges. Some people might say the student should have a full-time aide to help him at school. But while the aide might help the student, as an adult she might also unintentionally isolate the student from his typical peers. As a consumer myself, I would rather see if that student’s needs could be met with peer-to-peer support that could teach him proper behaviors while encouraging interaction with other students. That would be a way to meet the student’s real needs and also help him become more independent, so maybe he won’t need so much help in the future.

### Upcoming CAT Meeting Dates

May 21

June 18

No meeting in July

August 20

September 17

CAT meetings are from 10 a.m. to noon at RCOC’s Santa Ana office, located at 1525 North Tustin Avenue. Call Jennifer Casteel at (714) 796-4048 ahead of time to let her know you will be there.

Attending the conference made me proud of how RCOC operates. Our planning teams have always advocated for consumers and families to get services that encourage independence and that enable people with disabilities to live as normally as possible. The behavior management and social skills workshops RCOC offers to parents are a good example of how regional centers can sometimes be most helpful by providing family support rather than simply more services.

## Behavior Management Workshops for Parents

**R**egional 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 Tracy Vaughan 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.*

### **Social Skills Training – Focus on Ages 5 through 11 Years (6 sessions)**

*Presented in English by Footprints*

**When:** Tuesday evenings – May 6, May 13, May 20, May 27, June 3 & June 10

**Time:** 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

**Location:** RCOC Orange Office  
3111 N. Tustin St., Ste. 150

### **Behavior Management Workshop (5 sessions)**

*Presented in Spanish by Center for Behavioral Sciences*

**When:** Tuesday evenings – June 3, June 10, June 17, June 24 & July 1

*(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)*

**Time:** 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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

### **Behavior Management Workshop (5 sessions)**

*Presented in English by Behavioral Support Partnership*

**When:** Friday mornings – July 11, July 18, July 25, August 1, & August 8

*(NOTE: Toilet training is the focus of the last session of this workshop)*

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – Noon

**Location:** RCOC Westminster Office  
5555 Garden Grove Blvd., Ste. 100

### **Social Skills Training – Focus on Ages 12 through 18 Years (6 sessions)**

*Presented in English by Behavioral Support Partnership*

**When:** Monday evenings – Sept. 8, Sept. 15, Sept. 22, Sept. 29, Oct. 6 & Oct. 13

**Time:** 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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

## Save the Date for Summer Blast! Saturday, June 21

**B**e sure to mark your calendar and plan to attend Summer Blast! Filled with games, entertainment and dancing, food and good times with friends and family, Summer Blast will take place on **Sat., June 21 from 2-7 p.m.** at KiwanisLand in Garden Grove.

As with the past years' Summer Blast events, a major event sponsor will underwrite most of the event costs, ensuring that ticket prices are low enough to allow virtually all RCOC consumers and families to join in the fun. For ticket information, visit RCOC's website ([www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)). Those who do not have Internet access can contact their RCOC service coordinator for more information.

See you there!



## Spotlight Award Honorees (continued from page 1)

potential legislation. Sylvia is a familiar face to readers of *Dialogue*, who see her regular “CAT Update” column in each issue. Currently working as a teacher’s aide at the child care center at RIO Orange, she is continuing her education in hopes of becoming a substitute teacher. Living independently in her own apartment, Sylvia is also very involved in her community and her church. She teaches Sunday school and volunteers with the Young Life Ministry, working with teenagers and young adults with disabilities.

### Lifetime Achievement: Elliot Skolnick

Currently administrator of the Special Abilities Cluster (SAC) program at Huntington Beach’s Edison High School, Elliot Skolnick has been in the special education field since 1987. As the SAC administrator, he has made inclusion a priority, finding creative ways to include his students in classes and activities with typical peers. His efforts have had a lasting influence at Edison, where the inclusive environment has led many of the school’s graduates to pursue careers serving people with developmental disabilities.



Elliot Skolnick

### Special Recognition: Terri Delgadillo

Former Director of the Department of Developmental Services Terri Delgadillo, who retired this past December, was honored for her tireless advocacy for the rights and lives of the more than 265,000 people served by the regional center system. Having served in various roles in both state and federal government, Terri brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to her eight-year tenure as DDS Director. Leading the department during the Great Recession, she succeeded in finding ways to achieve necessary budget reductions while preserving the Lanterman Act. Unfortunately, Terri was unable to attend the Spotlight Awards, so we do not have a photo of her.

### Community Partner: Bonner Paddock

Though diagnosed with cerebral palsy as a child, Bonner Paddock has never allowed his diagnosis to limit his ability to live out his dreams. Through the One Man One Mission Foundation (OM Foundation) he established in 2009, and his accomplishments – such as climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro unassisted and completing the Kona Ironman – he increases awareness of issues related to developmental disabilities and helps to eliminate barriers to full community participation for others with disabilities.



Alan Martin and Bonner Paddock

### Direct Support Professional: Arthur Kendrick

This award recognizes a person who provides direct services to people with disabilities in Orange County. A staff specialist with Costa Mesa-based service provider Project Independence, Arthur Kendrick demonstrates extraordinary patience, understanding, imagination and kindness with those he serves. Routinely going above and beyond what is required in his professional capacity, he works to provide enriching and meaningful opportunities for people with disabilities to interact with others and be seen as respected members of the community.



Arthur Kendrick

## Healthcare Professional: Dr. Richard Mungo

A pediatric dentist, Dr. Richard Mungo has a heart for children with developmental disabilities. For example, he welcomes children into his waiting room to play with the toys weeks before their appointment so they begin feeling comfortable going to the dentist. One of 11 pediatric dentists on the Children's Hospital of



Dr. Richard Mungo

Orange County medical staff, Dr. Mungo is founding board member and medical director for the clinical practice of Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County. He has also volunteered his services in developing countries and talks to groups about dental care for children with special needs, encouraging dental students to think about working with those with disabilities.

## Employer: TJ Maxx

Guadalupe (Lupe) Barraza, district manager for the TJ Maxx store in the Fountain Valley Promenade, accepted the Spotlight award on behalf of her employer. The nationwide retailer was honored for its exceptional efforts



Alan Martin and Guadalupe (Lupe) Barraza

in Orange County to provide integrated job opportunities to workers with disabilities. Setting an outstanding example for others, TJ Maxx employs 48 individuals with developmental disabilities at ten of its Orange County stores. Community integration in these stores is excellent, as the workers with disabilities work directly on the sales floor with other sales staff.

## Service Provider: Gilbert Singh

Before becoming a regional center service provider, Gilbert Singh worked in the special education field for 15 years. Honored for his extraordinary commitment to high-quality, person-centered services, Gilbert currently operates two care homes for people with developmental disabilities. He has a "no limits" philosophy and has helped several of those he's served graduate into living independently in their own apartments. He's also organized trips for consumers to diverse locations, including Alaska and Hawaii, and even helped one consumer earn a Bachelor's degree from Cal State Fullerton. Unfortunately, Gilbert was unable to attend the Spotlight Awards, so we do not have a photo of him.

## RCOC Achievement: Lorrie Guetterman

This award recognizes outstanding performance by an RCOC employee. A service coordinator for the past nine years, Lorrie regularly goes above and beyond as an advocate, mentor and friend to the families she serves. She puts her knowledge of RCOC and community services to work helping families navigate through various service delivery systems, making sure they receive the services and supports they need. Performing her job with exceptional integrity, she works collaboratively with other entities to benefit people with developmental disabilities and their families.



Larry Landauer and Lorrie Guetterman

Spotlight Award Honorees continued on back

Dialogue Newsletter

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**Regional Center of Orange County Locations**

Santa Ana Office

1525 N. Tustin Avenue  
 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-5100

Orange Office

3111 N. Tustin, Suite 150  
 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-3700

Westminster Office

5555 Garden Grove Blvd., Suite 100  
 24-hr Phone: (714) 796-2900

**Spotlight Award Honorees** (continued from page 7)

**Family Members: Kathy Kline and Sheri Carroll**

Sheri Carroll and Kathy Kline are partners who formed a family with Niki, a young woman with developmental disabilities, when her mother passed away unexpectedly right before Niki’s 18th birthday. Niki’s only other living relative is an aunt living in Florida, so Sheri and Kathy became Niki’s co-conservators. Though not family by birth, they are family in every other sense of the word. Kathy and Sheri both work in special education in West Orange County, and every day they touch the lives of numerous students with special needs.



(L-R) Sheri Carroll, Niki, Alan Martin and Kathy Kline