



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

FALL 2014

YEAR OF THE *Community*

A Resolution introduced by California State Senator DeLeon proclaims the year of 2014 as the "Year of the Community," and declares that the Legislature will actively promote the rights of persons with developmental disabilities and their full inclusion into community life. Numerous co-authors signed on to this Resolution, including HRC area legislators Ian Calderon, Cristina Garcia, Bonnie Lowenthal, Al Muratsuchi, and Anthony Rendon. The Resolution was chaptered by the Secretary of State on June 14, 2014.

Whereas, Forty-five years ago, the State of California enacted the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, a bold new direction in public-private partnership that fundamentally changed and dramatically improved the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families and that would become a model for the nation; and

Whereas, The vision to enable people with developmental disabilities to live full, productive, and satisfying lives as active members of their communities was embodied in a statewide network of community-based services and supports with regional centers playing the role of the coordinating hub; and

Whereas, California's first pilot regional centers for delivering services and supports to persons with developmental disabilities, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and San Francisco Aid for Retarded Children, were established in 1966, marking the beginning of the regional center system; and

Whereas, By their achievements, the pilot centers proved the merit of the regional center concept and led to the introduction of Assembly Bill No. 225 in 1969, which enacted the Lanterman Mental Retardation Services Act of 1969, which is currently known as the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (hereafter Lanterman Act), and which established the statewide system of services for persons with developmental disabilities; and

Whereas, The statewide system was designed to be organized at the regional level and to produce a dynamic network of local services and supports; and

Whereas, The increased availability of services and supports in the community precipitated the state's shift from nearly total reliance on large state institutions to a regional service system in which more than 99 percent of children and adults with developmental disabilities receive all of their needed services and supports in the community; and

Whereas, The regional center system was intended to provide individuals with developmental disabilities with services and supports that are innovative and cost effective, that result in growth and development, that improve the quality of life, and that support inclusion into community life; and

(continued on page 2)

Whereas, During the decades following the passage of the Lanterman Act, the service system's evolution was enabled by advances in knowledge and technology and by the increasing recognition of the right of people with disabilities to choice and full participation in society, including the rights of children to live at home with their families; and

Whereas, The 21 regional centers in California continue to expand and diversify their services while serving over 265,000 persons with developmental disabilities and their families; and

Whereas, The service system has grown increasingly complex, requirements for service providers have grown in sophistication, and expectations for services have become more rigorous due to advances in knowledge and technology; and

Whereas, The 45th anniversary of the signing of the Lanterman Act is an appropriate time to reaffirm our commitment to the act, and renew our investment in the community system; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby proclaims the year of 2014 as the "Year of the Community" and the beginning of a decade of renewed commitment to both the vision of the Lanterman Act and the investments needed to ensure a sustainable future for California's community service system; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature will actively promote the rights of people with developmental disabilities and their full inclusion into community life in California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.



ARTURO GUZMAN CELEBRATES 25 YEARS As Loyal TRW and Northrop Grumman Employee

Arturo, or “Artie” to his friends and family, lives with his parents. He has grown up together with Harbor Regional Center, becoming a client as a young child the same year that Harbor Regional Center came into existence.

In 1989, while he was still in high school, Arturo began a part-time vocational placement in a very unique position, doing data entry at the TRW Corporation. During that time, work in a corporate setting was very rare for people with autism and other developmental disabilities. He proved himself to the TRW supervisors, and after he completed his on-the-job training, he was hired as an employee. He is still a valued employee there 25 years later – though the company is now Northrop Grumman.

He has not only succeeded in maintaining this impressive position, he has excelled, becoming part of the workplace culture, embraced by his coworkers and getting high ratings on his employee evaluations. His supported employment job coach from Social Vocational Services is there to provide on-the-job support when he needs it, and has been an important ingredient in his success.

“I feel so good. I love my work.”

Arturo Guzman

Arturo’s family has also been a vital support system for him. They credit the services and supports that they and HRC have provided to him, encouraging him to become as independent as he can at home and in the community. Artie is very accomplished at riding the bus to his job and other regular destinations around the community.

He prepares simple meals and helps out at home, goes shopping and to the bank, and manages his earnings with some help from his parents. As his mother, Mercedes Guzman, has said, “He is a joy to be around.”



Executive Director Pat Del Monico has had the pleasure of knowing Arturo Guzman since he was a young boy.

All those years ago, we knew that Artie had great potential. Today, he has exceeded all of our greatest expectations. Arturo serves as an inspiration for all of our young clients newly and eagerly entering the workforce. ■

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS ENJOYED BY ALL

(right) President Karen Kinnebrew welcomes guests.

(below) Congressman Alan Lowenthal congratulates Pat Del Monico.



The 2013-2014 year marked 40 years of service for HRC. Our board and staff welcomed clients, parents, service providers, and many distinguished partners to join in anniversary celebrations that took place at the culmination of our 40th year – The Family and Friends Festival at HRC, and Celebrating Our Partners at the Long Beach Museum of Art.

We were pleased to recognize and honor these special partners for exemplary and pioneering contributions:

Business Partners: City National Bank, and Kaiser Permanente South Bay

Education Partner: Los Angeles Unified School District and Long Beach City College

Service Provider Partners: California MENTOR and InJOY Life Resources, Inc.

Parents: Robert Irlen and Karen Kinnebrew

Staff: Sri Moedjono, M.D. and Mercedes Lowery

Clients: Arturo Guzman and David Gauthier



Thank You to these generous sponsors for making our anniversary celebration possible!

Ambitions; Brown & Brown Insurance Services of California, Inc.; Cambrian Homecare; City National Bank; California MENTOR; Christine Chatterton & Associates, Inc.; The Columbus Organization; Del Harbor Foundation; Dungarvin; Easter Seals Southern California; Ideal Transportation; Life Steps Foundation, Inc.; SoCal Adult Services; National Financial Realty; Round Trip Transportation, Inc.; Social Vocational Services, Inc.; Windes; WEB & IT Services

Service Provider Honoree Mary Grace Lagasca and her guests from InJOY Life Resources.





(above) Folklorico dancers perform.
(right) Young dancers from Long Beach Ondo Group



(right) Toby takes on the obstacle course.



(far right) The Bounce House was a big hit.



(below) Families enjoyed games, crafts, and resource booths.



MEET OUR BOARD: HRC Honors Parent and Client Board Members



HRC Parent, and President of the Board of Trustees, Karen Kinnebrew.

During our recent celebration of Harbor Regional Center's 40th anniversary, we were extremely pleased to honor two members of our Board of Trustees, as well as a Board advisor, for their many contributions over the years.

Karen Kinnebrew is a busy woman. As the mother of Paul, who has autism, she made the decision long ago to find time, despite the demands of career and family, to become as knowledgeable as she could about autism and the services that might impact his life in the future. She was inspired to do what she could to make a difference in her community, not just for Paul, but also for others with developmental disabilities. Karen has somehow made the time to serve her community in a governance capacity, on behalf of people with developmental disabilities and their families, joining the HRC Board of Trustees in 2000. During this period she has served multiple terms as a member, officer, and president. After a brief hiatus, she has returned and currently holds the position of President of the HRC Board. She provides incisive insight, excellent advice, and guidance for our organization that comes from a compassionate understanding of the challenges that our families experience.

also chaired committees and held the office of President. Most recently, as a Board Advisor he has been a mentor for incoming and veteran board members alike. Bob has provided leadership at the state level, with an understanding and appreciation for our services, and a commitment to promoting the viability of our service delivery system over the long term that comes from being a parent himself. He has ably represented the Harbor Regional Center community in Sacramento, at statewide meetings of the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), and in visits with state legislators.

HRC Client David Gauthier joined the HRC Board in 2009, and has always enthusiastically embraced his mission of being a voice on behalf of our clients with developmental disabilities. Although he worked in a challenging job in the Mayor's Office, David has agreed to take on special assignments whenever possible, attending leadership forums or traveling to Sacramento to meet with our elected representatives to help forge a sustainable future for developmental services. David says, "It's all about putting a face on the regional center. They need to see the faces and hear the stories of the actual people that are involved. That's what they will remember." And David never fails to make a memorable impression.

These members of our Board of Trustees have very active lives, but are generous in making time to work on behalf of our clients and families. Harbor Regional Center is so fortunate that their inspiration and dedication brought these three to us. We hope that in paying tribute to them on the occasion of our 40th anniversary, we were able to express our gratitude. We thank them most sincerely for the valued support they continue to provide. ■



Robert Irlen, HRC Parent and Board Advisor.

For all of us at Harbor Regional Center, it seems as though Robert Irlen has always been there. And for most of our 40 years, he has. As the parent of a young son with a developmental disability, Bob Irlen first became involved as a Harbor Regional Center volunteer when he joined the Board of Trustees in 1982. His son David is now an adult, and throughout these years Bob has continued to give selflessly of his time and expertise, as an invaluable advisor and advocate. He has served HRC in nearly every capacity, giving generously of his time, energy, and experience in the interest of others. He served multiple terms as a board member, where he



David Gauthier addressed the guests at HRC's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

FAMILY *matters*

JOURNEY TO FRAGILE X

By Paula Paez, HRC Parent

Christian was almost 3 years old when I got a call from the staff at his early intervention program that he may have had a seizure. They said they weren't sure because it wasn't a grand mal seizure, he just seemed absent for a few seconds and then he snapped out of it. They recommended that we take him to see a neurologist. We made an appointment right away and scheduled an EEG. Unfortunately, the EEG didn't go so well. I knew my son would not tolerate any kind of probes glued to his head and as much as we tried to get him to sleep through it, he woke up in the middle of the exam and pulled everything off. I remember thinking that it wasn't a big deal, since I was not convinced he actually had a seizure and that we were just going through the motions of being responsible parents.



Sofia, Alex and Christian having a great time at the Zoo.

Even when the neurologist asked me if Christian had ever gotten genetic testing, I brushed it off. I thought why would we ever consider a genetic test? After all, there was nothing wrong with my baby boy and there was no history of developmental delays in the family. To be honest, I didn't even know what kind of genetic conditions we would be looking for, but we decided to do it anyway since it was a simple blood test. The first time, the test came back negative for four of the five things they were looking for. The fifth item, which tested for Fragile X Syndrome (FXS), was inconclusive and the lab asked that we do another blood draw to be sure. So a few weeks later, we drew blood again and that sample was tainted so it could not be used. By the time we made it back to the lab to do the third test, four months had gone by and I was pregnant with our third baby, unplanned of course, just like our other two. I was so sure that the genetic testing would be negative that I didn't panic with the news of having a new baby.

However, a few days before the results were due for the third test, I decided to finally go online and look up Fragile X. I read the description, reviewed the symptoms, saw pictures and was absolutely devastated. I actually believe that my entire life changed that day. When the call came from the neurologist, it simply confirmed what I already knew. We then went through a series of testing, including my younger son, my unborn daughter, and me. We found out that I'm a carrier for FXS, my younger son Alex has a full mutation like his older brother, and my daughter is unaffected.

Fragile X, according to the National Fragile X Foundation (NFXF), is the most common cause of inherited intellectual disability and the most common known genetic cause of autism or autism spectrum disorders. Symptoms of FXS include a range from learning disabilities to more severe cognitive or intellectual disabilities. It is called Fragile X, not because it causes those affected to be physically fragile, but because the X chromosome of a person with a full mutation appears broken or "fragile" under a microscope.

I look back at our journey since we received the diagnosis in 2005 and I am amazed that we have come this far. For a number of years we were in shock and busy with

(continued on page 8)

a whirlwind of activities and therapies. Thanks to the support we received from the Harbor Regional Center, we were able to get the necessary services for our children. The parent training classes and the home-based behavior support program really have made a difference in our lives. I know that the boys would not have made the gains that they have made without the behavior services we received.

Recently, the Fragile X Association of Southern California, which is part of the National Fragile X Foundation's Community Support Network, along with the Fragile X Center of San Diego, hosted the 14th International Fragile X Conference in Orange, California. We had over 800 participants, families and researchers, come together. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had since starting my journey. I felt that I could finally speak openly about my own experiences and help families get through theirs. I know we still have a lot more ahead of us, but I am more hopeful than ever before.

More information on Fragile X can be found on the website: www.fraxsocal.org ■

COMMUNITY PROVIDES GRANTS IN SUPPORT OF HRC CLIENTS

The South Bay Sunrise Rotary, Boeing Employees Community Fund, and More Opportunities for Developmentally Disabled were among community organizations that extended valuable support in the past year for our clients with developmental disabilities. Their contributions to the Harbor Help Fund make it possible for us to provide help through programs such as Holidays are For Sharing.

Each fall, The South Bay Sunrise Rotary hosts their very popular fundraiser, the RAT Beach Charity Bike Ride, along the South Bay coastline. Harbor Regional Center received a generous donation of \$4,500 for the Harbor Help Fund, from the proceeds of the 2013 event, and we are honored to have been selected once again as a charity of the 2014 race. Our volunteers very much enjoy participating in this event together with the hardworking members of the Rotary, and we greatly appreciate the support that it provides for our clients in need.

The Boeing Employees Community Fund (ECF) has also graciously granted \$4,000 to support our clients with developmental disabilities and their families, who are experiencing great financial hardship. These grant funds will be used to provide for basic needs, such as food, clothing or simple gifts during the holiday season.

More Opportunities for Developmentally Disabled (M.O.D.D.) very generously granted \$10,000 to the Harbor Help Fund. We understand that this came about due to the need to dissolve the organization after decades of providing social support for adults with developmental disabilities. We are extremely honored to have this opportunity to continue the legacy of M.O.D.D., and the many parents, clients, and volunteers who kept this program going in support of people with developmental disabilities for so many years.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the South Bay Sunrise Rotary, Boeing Employees Community Fund, and More Opportunities for Developmentally Disabled for their very generous grants. The Harbor Help Fund is used to provide help for our clients in ways that we cannot otherwise provide with state funds. Visit our website at <http://www.harborrc.org/get-involved/support> to learn more about the Harbor Help Fund and to make a contribution. No amount is too small, and every contribution helps make a difference in the life of an individual with a developmental disability. ■

By Kathie Sarles, Early Childhood Specialist

As an adult looking at a child painting at an easel, you see the physical attributes of the child standing at that space putting color onto paper. You may also note other specifics, like the color being used, whether the strokes are circular or straight or how much of the paper the child is using. Adults often also “see” a representation, something you think the child might have created. It is the perspective of someone who has experienced this activity many times.

But when the toddler is painting at the easel, she is experiencing how much pressure it takes to make a mark, how it looks to put the colors together, how it smells as it goes on the paper and Oh! What the paint looks like on his fingers! The finished picture is almost inconsequential to the child at first, it is what they are experiencing, not what they have created that matters. It is not the product but the process that is important to a toddler’s learning.

It is the same with blocks or a sand box or “dress ups.” Toddlers need to experience the activity using their senses and allowing themselves to fully engage, in order to learn.

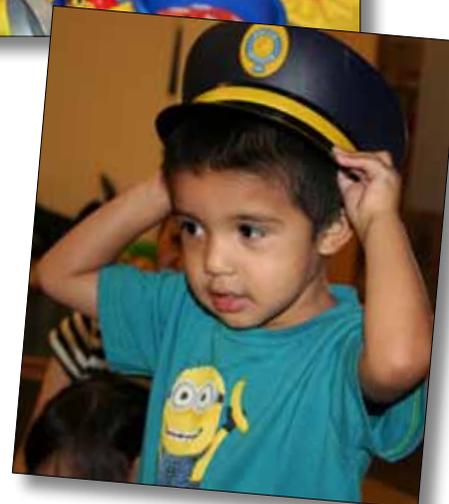
When building with wooden blocks, it is the weight of the block or the smooth feeling in their hands or the loud sound when the blocks crash that is noticeable and appealing to the child. (Of course the purpose for building is knocking it down!) When exploring with sand, beans, popcorn or rice in a bucket, it is the feeling in his hands and the sound of it cascading that makes him smile. All our senses are in use during these activities and it is active engagement and imagination that drives the child to continue to play. With “dress ups” and kitchen play, delayed imitation is at work. Pretending to be mom or dad and using the props as a representation of what they have experienced in their own life



is essential. The child leads the play and we are only an added prop for their use.

In our newest Together from the Start Class, Imagination Station, there are five stations, (activity areas), that offer activities that excite the senses and offer the opportunity to engage individually and creatively. The toddlers explore paint, blocks, sensory table, dress ups and a kitchen area and learn how to transition from one to another. Parents learn about letting the exploration happen and children learn that it is OK to leave one activity and go to another. And of course we always demonstrate that things have a beginning, a middle and an end; so this class ends with bubbles, a great way to bring everyone back together.

Imagination Station is now being offered to toddlers 24-36 months on the third Tuesday of the month in Torrance. Call Kathie at (310) 792-4597 for more information or to register. ■



(above) Shayera and Cylon enjoy a pretend snack with mom.

(below) Ryan has fun playing dress up with a police hat.

Client focus

NO LIMITS

By Karen F. Holsey, Educational Coach, College To Career, Long Beach City College



Sean enjoyed walking through the ancient gardens.

For most the college experience may be described as a memorable time filled with social activities, late-night cramming, and a phase of personal and career exploration. For Sean Kite, it has been more than that. In just two years of participating in the College to Career Program (C2C), Sean has exemplified what can be achieved when passion and self-determination meet a great support team. There are no limits.

In fact, during this spring semester, Sean was given an opportunity of a lifetime. Sean Kite was selected and sponsored by the Horticulture Department at Long Beach City College to attend the 2014 International Horticulture Expo in China. He was joined by the Dean, professor and one other student to travel alongside the Long Beach Qingdao Sister City Organization and officials from the Port of Long Beach.

The trip allowed Sean to explore five days in Shanghai and five days in Qingdao. Sean explained how this time was an amazing opportunity to absorb the culture, observe the different aspects of horticulture, and engage with horticulturists from around the world. There was a glow of enthusiasm in his eyes as Sean shared a list of his favorite sights during the trip, including the “arboretum with beautiful gardens and colorful indoor greenhouse, gardens [that are] thousands of years old with dragon head architecture, and the feeling of going through mountains as you walk through bridges and go over steps through the Koi ponds.” Sean has been recognized in various articles, such as the Long Beach Grunion Gazette, the LBCC Viking and PCC Newsletter for his participation in this trip to China.

In addition to having this distinguished honor to be a delegate in China, Sean recently received two scholarships from LBCC. Sean has completely immersed himself in college life. He’s taken a leadership role as the Treasurer for the Horticulture Club, he has facilitated study groups, and participated in campus activities and community trips with C2C.

(continued on page 11)

No Limits (continued from page 10)

It is no coincidence that Sean has met success at LBCC. In contrast to his previous college experience, Sean explained, "I've found something I'm passionate about, and for the first time I'm succeeding in college because I now have the tools and resources to accomplish my goals." Sean acknowledges the inspiration from his family, values the knowledgeable professors of the Horticulture Department, and appreciates the phenomenal Educational Coaches from the C2C Program and the Supportive Living Staff (SLS) from California Mentor. Sean aspires to one day become a landscape designer for domestic and

international projects and to continue his family legacy. Sean would also like to someday be an advocate for others. He gave this advice to potential C2C students: "This is a great program, but you have to take advantage of all the resources offered. Work with your Ed Coaches and SLS's and you will be able to grow as a student and an independent individual." The greatest challenge that Sean has had to face was the transition of living on his own, and the responsibilities of being self-sufficient at home and at school. When asked how he was able to deal with this challenge, Sean exclaims, "I use the crock pot a lot!" ■

AMERICA'S FAVORITE PASTIME!

By Kerry Ryerson, Public Information Specialist

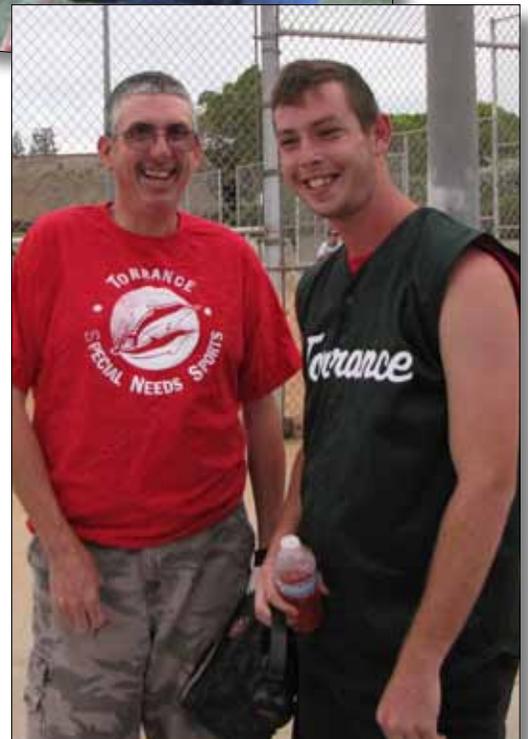
Just before sunset on a cool July evening, two coed City League softball teams were preparing to square off at El Nido Park in Torrance. One of the teams, the Torrance Bombers, is a group of Harbor Regional Center clients along with their family members and friends who love to play softball – and are good at it! The other team, Perfect Season, is a group of Harbor Regional Center staff and friends who also love playing the game! Individuals from these two teams would more typically meet with each other in a conference room at HRC, or in the home, to discuss services and supports. This beautiful summer evening they met on the softball field in friendly competition!

After the teams had warmed up, it was time to play ball! An exciting first inning was played and as the game continued, thrilling plays were made by both teams. The HRC clients stood out during the game because of their abilities on the field and their skills at hitting the ball and running the bases – all the way home!

Anxiety started brewing in the Perfect Season dugout, because a win over the Torrance Bombers would ruin their projected 0-10 "Perfect Season" of losing each game! Perfect Season did win this game but that didn't crush the Torrance Bombers' spirit. They knew they had played a great game and that was what mattered. Both teams will be back to play in the fall where they will meet again on the field as fierce but friendly competitors!

Batter up for the next season! ■

*(above) Mead is ready to move if the ball comes his way.
(below) Michael and Jonathan share some laughs before the game.*



JAKE AND HIS LUCKY DOG

By Jill Wilke, HRC Parent



*“SQUIRREL!”
Jasmine politely
points out on her
walk with Jake.*

Seven weeks after my son Jake was born on May 31, 1991, he was diagnosed with Tuberous Sclerosis. Tuberous sclerosis is a rare, multi-system genetic disease that causes benign tumors to grow in the brain and on other vital organs such as the kidneys, heart, eyes, lungs, and skin. It usually affects the central nervous system and can result in a combination of symptoms including seizures, developmental delay, behavioral problems, skin abnormalities, and kidney disease. Jake had uncontrollable

seizures and was on several different seizure medications for many years. Most of the medications helped for a short period of time but eventually he would have a “breakthrough” and end up in the hospital. Jake would have up to 60 or more seizures a day and spent the better part of his life from birth to age six in the hospital. When we moved to California in 2002 the FDA finally approved the use of the Vagus Nerve Stimulator (VNS) for children under the age of 18. Once Jake was implanted with this device his seizures decreased and have continued to decrease over the past several years. Jake still has seizures, but they are much less severe and less frequent.

Jake did not have much interest in socialization and he preferred to stay in his room and watch movies. It was a struggle to get him out of the house for ANYTHING and his behaviors escalated. He kicked holes in walls, kicked a window out of my car and took screens off our

doors. Eventually I needed to make the heartbreaking decision of having Jake receive care in a group home. Jake worked hard for the reward of coming home on weekends, but spent many weekends NOT coming home.

When Jake would come home for the weekends we would spend most of the time going to his sports practices and competitions. Jake started participating in several sports through Special Olympics South Bay and the City of Torrance Special Needs Sports and Recreation program. Through these opportunities he started making friends and began learning that his good behavior earned him some “fun” time. Jake always looks forward to seeing his friends at sports practices and at the dances that he attends through the Exceptional Kids Parents Teachers Organization (EKPTO). His sister Ryann takes him to the dances and spends many weekends with him.

Jake continued to make progress over the next several years as he matured cognitively, and his behaviors continued to improve. He started spending more time at home and in December of last year Jake moved home full time with me!

Jake attends the Social Vocational Services Inclusion Center in Redondo Beach which he enjoys, and his future goal is to find a job. He has developed great social skills, is very outgoing and he loves to talk with everyone he meets! He is a confident young man and very proud of his accomplishments.

Jake’s most recent accomplishment was working with animal trainer Brandon McMillan from the CBS Saturday morning TV show “Lucky Dog” in his attempt to get his own therapy dog. On this show, Brandon McMillan rescues untrained and unadoptable dogs from the animal shelter, and then works his magic to create perfect matches of the lucky dogs with lucky families.

We started the process by being invited to the Lucky Dog Ranch to meet with Brandon and the producers of the “Lucky Dog” show. After sharing

(continued on page 13)

information about Jake, his desire to have his own dog and a discussion of how a trained therapy dog would benefit his life, Jake was selected for the process!

The next step was for Brandon to select a rescue dog that he could train for basic commands and for Jake's specific needs. Brandon found the perfect dog to train for Jake, a smart and gentle German Short-Haired Pointer. After Brandon worked with the dog for a while and trained her on the basic commands, it was time to introduce her to Jake, the family and our home. Jake named her "Princess Jasmine" and started his own training with Brandon on how to work with Jasmine. Brandon took time to work with Jake on all of the commands that he'd taught Jasmine, getting her to

listen to Jake and follow the commands when Jake initiated them. The training was a success and after a few more sessions along with gradually introducing Jasmine to her new home, Jake had his own well-trained rescue dog! We are very appreciative of everyone involved with the "Lucky Dog" show and particularly to Brandon!

Jasmine recently received her official Therapy Vest so now she can accompany Jake just about everywhere! Jake takes his responsibility for his new dog very seriously and it shows in the many ways that he cares for her! He loves Jasmine very much, and she is making a positive impact not only on Jake's continued progress, but his whole attitude on life. ■

COMING SOON: Holidays Are For Sharing!

The holiday season will be here before we know it and preparations for Harbor Regional Center's Holidays Are For Sharing programs will be starting up soon. We would sincerely appreciate your support in helping us get ready to bring the giving spirit of the Holidays to our needy clients and their families! There are many ways to help! One way you can help is by making a tax-deductible monetary donation to the Harbor Help Fund (which can be done throughout the year), which we will use for the purchase of food and gift cards. Many of our families can barely scrape together a modest dinner, so for the holiday season coming up, a grocery gift card or food basket with some hearty holiday meal staples would truly be a blessing. Donations can be made online or by mail. The online link is: <http://www.harborrc.org/get-involved/support> Select the Category: Harbor Help Fund: Holidays Are For Sharing.

Donations can be mailed to: Harbor Regional Center, Office of Information and Development, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503

We also have the excitement of the Adopt-A-Family program! This program gives people an opportunity to help a child or adult with a developmental disability during the holiday season. We match the sponsoring individuals and groups with a person or a family in need. Sponsors' contributions can include food, new toys, clothes, and other gifts. We provide the sponsors with the family's holiday wish list and contact information. They will have an opportunity to deliver the gifts themselves, or HRC can help.

For more information, please contact Kerry Ryerson at (310) 543-0686 or by e-mail at Kerry.Ryerson@harborrc.org ■



A generous group of Xerox employees shop, wrap and deliver gifts for a needy HRC family.

resource *center*

CELEBRATING FATHERS SEMINAR

By Barbara del Monico

Director, HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center

The Harbor Early Start Partnership resource centers (Harbor Resource Center, Carolyn Kordich Resource Center, Southeast Resource Center, and Miller Children's Hospital Resource Center) hosted a Celebrating Fathers seminar on Saturday, June 7. Richard Cohen, Ph.D., Director of Project ABC, Family Wellness Network, Children's Institute, Inc. was the featured speaker. Fathers of children who receive services from Harbor Regional Center took this unique opportunity to share their concerns with each other and Dr. Cohen.

Attendees had a very positive response to this presentation. One father stated in his evaluation of the session that he would like an opportunity to meet with other fathers on a regular basis. Another father said that Richard was "fantastic, very enthusiastic, and knowledgeable." ■

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Kristina Zerhusen

Assistant Manager, HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center

John So began as a volunteer in the Resource Center in 2012. John learned about what volunteering at HRC was all about from his older sister who volunteered during her last two years of high school. When John applied to be a volunteer his answer to the question, 'How did you hear about HRC?' John wrote: "My older sister told me how wonderful and fun it was to volunteer at HRC."

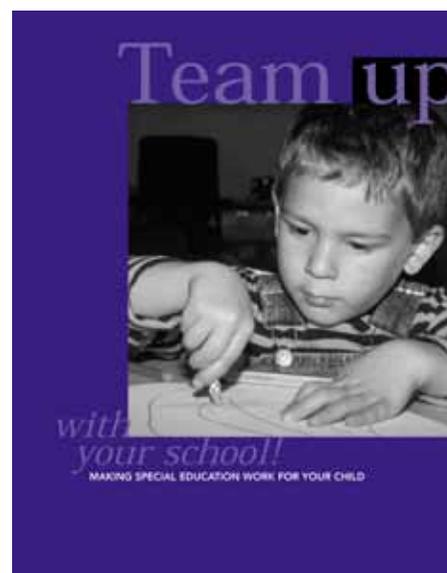
John attends South High School in Torrance. He comes in once a week as his schedule allows. John seems to take pride in maintaining the professional look of the Resource Center. He makes sure the books and DVDs are placed neatly on the shelves in the correct location. John has provided assistance to HOPE in preparation for special events.

We are so grateful for John's help. ■

*By Dominique DeBorba
HRC Parent, Resource and Assistive Technology Center*

Happy Fall from the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center!! One of the journals in the Resource Center recently featured a list of 10 ways parents can advocate for their child with a disability. What exactly is an advocate? An advocate is someone who speaks up for someone else, or who acts on behalf of another person – something we do every day. To refresh ourselves during the start of the school year I'd like to share excerpts from it with all of you to remind ourselves and to share with our families:

1. **Realize from the beginning that advocating for your child takes a lot of time.** Advocating involves a great deal of research, meeting time, and communication.
2. **Be Informed.** The more you know about what is going on with your child, the more comfortable you will be in helping others understand him.
3. **Become familiar with the rules and regulations that apply to your child's special education program.** Request copies of the regulations from your local school district office or from your state department of education.
4. **Work together closely with the professionals who work with your child.** This should be done in a positive, cohesive way in order for your child to gain the maximum benefit.
5. **Keep track of the paperwork that is given to you at IEP and IFSP meetings.** This is valuable information that should be kept in an organized place so that you can refer to it easily.
6. **Don't be afraid to communicate with the professionals.** Be prepared when you go to meetings, and don't be afraid to calmly and assertively state your views.
7. **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** The field of special education is as complex as your child's needs. Asking questions demonstrates that you're interested in your child's education.
8. **Keep the lines of communication open with your child.** Talk with him about his life both in and outside of school.
9. **Know your child's strengths and weakness and share them with the professionals.** Children with disabilities, although they have weaker areas, have many strong areas.
10. **Help your child learn to advocate for himself as early as possible.** As time goes on, and your child has heard you advocate for him, he will be able to understand how to advocate for himself. ■



*The HRC booklet *Team Up With Your School* was created to help you work together with your school district.*



HARBOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOUNDATION, INC.

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IN THIS ISSUE

"Year of the Community"	1
Arturo Guzman Celebrates 25 Years As Loyal TRW and Northrop Grumman Employee	3
Anniversary Celebrations Enjoyed by All	4
Meet Our Board: HRC Honors Parent and Client Board Members	6
Family Matters.....	7
Client Focus	10
Resource Center.....	14

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BOARD MEETINGS

September 16, 2014 - 6:30 p.m.

December 2, 2014 - 6:30 p.m.

The Board of Trustees of Harbor Regional Center meets on the Third Tuesday of the month, in January, March, May, July, and September, and on the first Tuesday of December.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The meetings are typically held in Conference Room A4 at Harbor Regional Center's Torrance location.

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