



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

WINTER 2005/06

COMMUNITY JOINS HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER IN SUPPORTING FAMILIES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Once again, the tremendous generosity of our community has made it possible for Harbor Regional Center to provide extra support to children and adults with developmental disabilities during the holidays. With the assistance of our community partners, we were able to offer clients and families in need with tangible support through our Adopt-a-Family program, food baskets, toys, and holiday gift certificates, all supported entirely by donations. Families received the support and reassurance which comes from knowing that others care about them. Here are some of the ways that our community joined with HRC in our holiday giving programs, to provide support for children, adults and families.



HRC Volunteers come in all ages: Justine and Leticia Mendoza

The program got off to a great start for Thanksgiving. We delivered generous food baskets and turkeys graciously contributed by local businesses, service clubs and

some very thoughtful individuals. The Carson Gardena Rotary Club led the way, providing 25 turkeys and food baskets for HRC families.

Next, HRC was privileged to host 150 children for a holiday party. Our guests included children with developmental

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE – What You Need to Know in the New Year.

If you are covered by Medi-Cal & Medicare, sometimes referred to as being dual eligible, or simply Medicare only, you probably have received mountains of mail discussing Medicare's Part D Prescription Drug coverage.

With so many official letters telling you different things – what is most important? First, remember the DATES.

- Beginning on **January 1st, 2006** the primary agency covering prescription drugs for dual eligible beneficiaries changed from Medi-Cal to Medicare. In most cases, Medicare will now pay for your prescription drugs, with Medi-Cal paying for excluded classes during 2006.
- Beginning on **January 1st, 2006** a dual eligible beneficiary can change prescription drug plans every **30 days**. This ability to change plans every 30 days is only granted to those individuals who are dual eligible. Individuals who are Medicare only have restrictions placed upon them, depending on the prescription drug plan chosen.
- Individuals with Medicare only health insurance (Part A and/or Part B) have until **May 15th, 2006** to select a prescription drug plan, otherwise known as a Medicare Part D plan. If a person with Medicare only health coverage elects to choose a plan after **May 15th, 2006** a monthly fee may be imposed.

Here are a few other points to remember:

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*Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage –
What You Need to Know in the New Year.
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Read your rights! All prescription drug plans are required to have an appeals process. These appeal rights are usually listed in a thick document called “Summary of Benefits.” If you do not have a summary from your Medicare Part D plan, simply call the plan’s customer service number to acquire one.

Get to know your pharmacist. Each prescription drug plan permits the collection of a co-payment amount by the pharmacy. In some cases, local pharmacies have indicated they will waive some co-payments for individuals with limited income. It doesn’t hurt to ask.

Bring both cards. When you go to the pharmacy, take both Medicare and Medi-

Cal cards. In some cases, Medi-Cal will pay for drugs that are excluded from Medicare coverage.

Read all Health Plan change notices. All Medicare Part D prescription drug plans have the ability to change their drug formulary (list of drugs that are covered) with a 60-day advance notice. By simply throwing out Health Plan material, you could find yourself on the losing end of knowing what is coming down the road.

Call your friendly HRC Counselor. We understand that many of the Medicare Part D prescription drug plan changes are complicated and we’re here to help. Call your Counselor if you need assistance with understanding your drug plan coverage, need replacement documents, or perhaps need information on possible financial assistance to help defray medication expenses. ■

*Community Joins Harbor Regional Center In
Supporting Families For the Holidays
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disabilities and their siblings, who played games, created crafts, visited Santa, and had a blast with terrific entertainment – all provided by generous volunteers and community contributions.

Renowned children’s musician Dave Kinnoin joined in the fun, while Tony Whitfield, Ambassador for Song Wizard Records, passed out CDs. Caricature artist Nathan Fowkes, clown and balloon artists Bernie Slotnick and friends, and a very jolly old Santa (Brian Benoit) also contributed their expert services. HRC employees, board members, service providers, and parents helped to sponsor this event by raising funds at marathons and walkathons this year. Several HRC service providers also provided sponsorships, and we send our special thanks to Cambrian Homecare, Diversified Paratransit Inc., Autism Spectrum Therapies, Easter Seals Society, AbilityFirst, and Lourdes Homes.



HRC employee and family volunteers made a jolly group of Santa’s elves.

Invitations were sent to families that had faced unusual challenges, or made exceptional contributions in volunteerism or leadership during the past year. Enthusiastic staff members from Cambrian Homecare and Easter Seals Southern California joined HRC employees and their families to provide volunteer staff for the event.

The Mattel Children’s Foundation and Sav-On Drugs helped out with toy donations this year. In addition, some energetic schools, scout troops and service providers sponsored toy drives especially for the clients of Harbor Regional Center, who would not otherwise have had a very happy holiday. The staff, children and families of Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool donated over 100 toys to HRC clients! HRC staff and volunteers were busy making deliveries to the children most in need, right up until the holidays.

The HRC Adopt-a-Family program paired individuals or groups with needy families. This holiday season, HRC matched more than 100 families with their special benefactors, who delivered very gener-

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*Community Joins Harbor Regional Center
In Supporting Families For the Holidays
(continued from page 2)*

ous care packages of gifts and other needed items selected especially for each family.

We want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to ALL the organizations and individuals that contributed in so many ways to HRC Holiday Giving programs.

FOOD BASKETS

Bird & Bird, A Law Corporation
Carson-Gardena Rotary Club
DeLeon Homes
The McConville Trust Fund
Mira Catalina Elementary School,
Third Grade Class
Sandpipers Foundation
Westwind Retrievers

**CHILDREN'S
HOLIDAY PARTY**

Gold Sponsors

Boeing California Employees
Community Fund
Cambrian Home Care
Diversified Paratransit, Inc.
HRC Team – Walk for the Stars
Walkathon
Northop Grumman
Corporation
Randy Waggoner

Silver Sponsors

Autism Spectrum Therapies
AbilityFirst
Brian Benoit
Costco Store, Torrance
Easter Seals Southern California
Nathan Fowkes
Girl Scout Troop #265
HRC Employees & Families
Dave Kinnoin and Tony Whitfield,
Song Wizard Records
Lourdes Homes
Jennifer Lynn Photography
Bernie Slotnick & Friends
Torrance Fire Department

TOY & GIFT DRIVE

AbilityFirst, Long Beach
Cole Vocational Services
clients and staff
Cole Senior Integration Program

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*Volunteers Bernie Slotnick & Friends,
Cambrian Home Care, Dave Kinnoin,
the Torrance Fire Dept. and Easter
Seals entertained our special guests.*



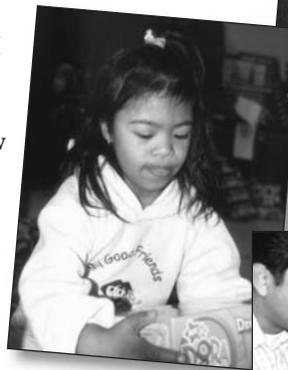
*The children of Rolling
Hills United Methodist
Church Preschool brought
toys for Santa to deliver to
HRC children in need.*

Community Joins Harbor Regional Center In Supporting Families For the Holidays (continued from pg. 3)

Cub Scout Pack #968
 Cub Scout Pack #970
 Kapinos Family
 Los Angeles Dodgers
 Madrona Middle School
 Mattel Children's Foundation
 Oxford Services
 Rolling Hills United Methodist Church Preschool
 Sandpipers Foundation
 Sav-On Drugs
 Sports Chalet

ADOPT-A-FAMILY PROGRAM

AbilityFirst of Long Beach
 Alamitos Yacht Club
 Artiano, Guzman & Toomey Law Offices
 Baby Steps Health Services
 Bird & Bird, A Law Corporation
 Brownie Troop #975
 CSULB Speech and Hearing Club
 Carson Gardena Rotary Club
 Choice Pointe Services
 City of Carson Employees
 Cub Scout Troop #970
 Davis Partners
 DeLeon Homes
 Fluor Corporation, Long Beach
 Girl Scout Troop #674
 Girl Scout Troop #856
 Harbor Regional Center Employees
 Inclusive Education & Community Partnership
 Michael and Sue Koval
 Lisa Leevey
 Madrona Middle School, Youth Act
 The McConville Trust Fund
 Merit Moving Systems
 Northrop Grumman Employees
 Northrop Grumman Friends and Family
 The Pellerito Family
 Private Funding Foundation
 Ralphs Grocery Store – Compton
 Southbay Credit Union
 Valero Wilmington Refinery Employees. ■



Top to Bottom: Merit Moving Systems, Fluor Corporation, Cub Scout Pack 968, HRC Board VP George Bird, Bird & Bird Law Corporation, and Northrop Grumman Employees were among the many Adopt-a-Family sponsors who brought holiday joy.

HRC Counselor Ed Swan delivered holiday dinners, gifts, and smiles.



Client *focus*

FOR THE LOVE OF JOEL

by Lisa Saathoff, HRC Parent

Joel Saathoff's smile has touched the hearts of many who know him. His life represents the belief in miracles and love beyond compare. Joel is the oldest of three children and was born with glaucoma, cerebral palsy and agenesis of the corpus colosum. He has been in and out of the hospital for most of his 10 years of life. Even with all the health concerns that have challenged Joel he is always smiling and seldom complains. At this time, he is in need of a double lung and liver transplant. After being turned down several times for the needed transplants, our family continues to have hope that our advanced and capable medical system will be able to offer Joel the full and happy life that he deserves.

Sometimes it is extremely difficult to keep our spirits up, but we are delighted with the response we have received from the community. In September, the Peninsula Center Farmer's Market, friends from Starbucks, Ruby's and many local Palos Verde companies raised over \$4000.00 to assist with medical costs. Our family has also offered support and love during this time. Joel's aunt Susan Delio raised \$250.00 at a handcrafted jewelry show. I'm overwhelmed by the caring hearts in our community. We are optimistic and inspired by the response of others on Joel's behalf. Hoping to reach even more people, we have created a Web site that lists Joel's progress along with any fundraising events that are planned.

As community giving continues, Joel's strength and courage amaze all who are in his presence. Joel smiles as he recalls, "I don't like going to the doctor, but I know I have to so I can get better. I do like it when my teacher comes to my house and when Vicki (Oxford respite worker) is here and she plays with me." Our respite worker has become part of the family and we are thankful to HRC for this support. Our entire family has had to endure so much over the years it's nice to know that people in our community really care. So many people are in our corner and we really need all the support we can get.



Because of his health Joel requires constant supervision and relies on his family and caregivers for his every need. He is on oxygen 24 hours a day. He plays with his brother and sister and his black and white kitten. "I love my cat and she loves me," he says.

We as parents are always searching for how we can uplift our children. In Joel's case we are searching for a way to save his life and we won't give up because we truly believe in miracles.

For more information please visit www.fortheloveofjoel.com ■

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER PERFORMANCE PLAN 2006

Harbor Regional Center will have a new Performance Plan beginning in January 2006, in a new format devised by The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) for all regional centers in California. This format compares Harbor Regional Center's performance to the statewide average for all 21 regional centers in outcome areas selected by DDS. These desired outcomes reflect the state's public policy direction for developmental services in the community. Regional Centers are considered to have successfully achieved their objectives when their performance improves over previous years, exceeds the statewide average, or equals a standard set by DDS. Following a period of public input, Harbor Regional Center has identified the actions we will take to maintain our performance measures at the high level reflected by our current (baseline) performance data.

Public Policy Outcomes

Public Policy Measures	Statewide Average % 2005	HRC Baseline as of Dec., 2005	Planned Activities
Percent of clients in State Developmental Center (lower % is better)	1.49%	1.50% 141 individuals	Implement the 2005-06 Community Placement Plan, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting developmental center residents to move into the community. Coordinating development of 5 homes to open in the region by 2007, through a Regional Project.
Percent of minors living with families (includes own family, foster family, and guardian) (higher % is better)	97.65%	98.75% 4829 children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide family support such as respite services, consultation in behavior management, toilet training and adaptive skill development. Continue to provide coordination & technical assistance for the ongoing operation of support groups for parents, siblings, and other family members. Continue to operate a comprehensive, multi-media Resource Center, including library, assistive technology lab, adaptive computer lab, lap reading program, and developmental toy program. Develop a Foster Family Agency to provide homes for children who do not live with their families.
Percent of adults living in home settings (independent & supported living, and with parent). (higher % is better)	70.03%	72.34% 2855 adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to coordinate with HOPE program for the development of affordable housing options. Continue to provide training for supported living service providers to promote client health and safety. Continue to provide training for parents of adults and young adults in transition regarding service and support options.
Percent of minors living in licensed homes serving greater than 6 (lower % is better)	0.22%	0.04% 2 children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of homes for four or fewer children, including children with special health needs. Assess children living in settings serving greater than 6, and identify less restrictive living options whenever possible. Continue to provide training and information for families of minors regarding available living options.
Percent of adults living in licensed homes serving greater than 6 (lower % is better)	5.76%	4.46% 179 adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of homes for four or fewer adults, including adults with special health needs. Assess adults living in settings serving greater than 6, and identify less restrictive living options whenever possible. Continue to provide training and information for families of adults regarding available living options.

Local Policy Outcomes

Local Policy Measures	Baseline	Planned Activities
Assist clients, families, and service providers to be well-informed, active and successful participants in client/family-centered services	HRC has developed over 30 informative videos, booklets, newsletters, Web site, CDROM, and a semi-annual training calendar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop HRC Web site, newsletter, booklets, and videos as a source of comprehensive, user-friendly information regarding resources, challenges, and examples of client, family & service successes in our community. Continue to offer an array of training opportunities for clients, families, and service providers throughout the year.

Public Policy Outcomes for which Statewide Measurement Methodology is Under Development

Measures	Statewide Measures	Planned Activities
Adults with earned income and average wage	Measurement Methodology Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with service providers in development of a reporting system for earned income and wage information.
Number and percent of adults in supported employment and competitive employment	Measurement Methodology Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue coordination with supported employment service providers to promote development of supported employment opportunities. Continue coordination with school districts and families to promote student participation in work experience programs such as Workability, and successful transition to inclusive adult service options. Continue to provide training for parents of adults and young adults in transition, regarding service and support options. Continue to operate a comprehensive multi-media Resource Center, including library, assistive technology lab, and adaptive computer lab.
Access to medical services	Measurement Methodology Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to assist clients and families to access medical support resources such as MediCal, PRUCOL, Institutional Deeming, etc. Continue to provide individual assessments of client's health needs and coordinate follow-up as needed. Continue to provide dental assessment, referral to local dentists, and training for clients, parents and service providers. Provide Get Fit! Not Fat! Program to promote healthy exercise and nutrition habits among adult clients. Continue to provide training and information for clients, families and service providers to promote client health, wellness, and access to health resources in the community.
Number of clients per 1000 who are victims of abuse	Measurement Methodology Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer training for clients and families to increase awareness, promote safety, and prevent exploitation and abuse of clients. Continue to provide information for service providers to increase awareness, promote safety, and prevent exploitation and abuse of clients.

Compliance Measures

Compliance Measures	Statewide Measures	HRC Baseline	Planned Activities
Unqualified independent audit with no material findings	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue generally accepted accounting principles. Maintain good business practices.
Substantial compliance with Department of Developmental Services fiscal audit	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue generally accepted accounting principles. Maintain good business practices.
Accuracy percent of fiscal projections for Purchase of Services (POS) expenditures	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain accuracy of POS fiscal projections based on history and ongoing utilization review.
Operates within Operations Budget	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue operations budget planning, ongoing utilization review, and periodic adjustments as needed.
Certified to participate in Medicaid Waiver	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain compliance with Medicaid Waiver requirements.
Compliance with vendor audit requirements per contract with Dept. of Developmental Services	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain compliance with state contract.
Individuals with current Client Development Evaluation Report (CDER) or Early Start Report (ESR)	94.90%	94.21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor timely completion of CDER/ESR.
Compliance with intake/assessment and IFSP timelines, 0-3 years of age	Measurement Methodology Under Development	Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide timely completion of intake/assessment for clients under 3 years of age.
Compliance with intake/assessment and IFSP timelines, age 3 and above	92.36% 142 days or less 5.55% 142-240 days 2.10% over 240 days	100% 120 days or less 0% over 121 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide timely completion of intake/assessment for clients 3 years of age and above.
Development of Individual Plan: Compliance w/Welfare and Institutions Code requirements	Measurement Methodology Under Development	Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to comply with all requirements of the Welfare and Institutions Code for timely completion of individual plans for clients receiving services under the Lanterman Act.
Development of Individual/Family Services Plan (IFSP): Compliance w/Title 17 requirements	Measurement Methodology Under Development	Under Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to comply with all requirements of Title 17 for timely completion of IFSPs for clients receiving early intervention services.

FAMILY *matters*

HRC PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES FACING TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Every parent has made the observation, “Kids grow up so fast!” Parents of adolescents become even more acutely aware of this as life after high school approaches. HRC Children’s Unit Program Manager Brian Lockhart reminds us that our adolescent clients with developmental disabilities are also moving towards adulthood. “Change happens quickly, and before you know it, school is ending.” Fellow Program Manager LaWanna Blair advises parents to “get your child involved with you as soon as possible in thinking about their future, and about becoming an adult.”

Together they host HRC courses to help parents focus on these issues, and become informed about options and resources available. The titles of their classes say it all. In the fall, they offer an introductory class especially for families whose children are in early to mid-adolescence, *Getting There: Exploring New Paths. The First Steps in Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood*; and in the spring they offer a more comprehensive course for families whose children are close to completing high school, *Anticipating the Future for Your Adolescent: The Transition Years. From Home to Community and From School to Work*.

Both Lockhart and Blair explain, “There are many misconceptions about what’s available. HRC Counselors try to support

their families with longer-term as well as more immediate planning, but many families may be just beginning to feel ready to think about this stage of life, and are still not sure what kinds of services HRC has to offer after a child becomes an adult. Some may even have gained mistaken impressions elsewhere that formal training opportunities end after high school.”

HRC Training Classes offer another important way for us to reach out and inform our clients and families about what’s really available, and what may be of benefit to young adults and their families. In our classes, parents can contemplate what might be the best educational focus for the adolescent in transition, depending upon the future direction they may take. If their educational program includes practical skills for daily living, mobility, work activities, money management, community safety, etc., they will be better prepared for these aspects of life after they graduate. Changes in the educational system have created new requirements and alternatives, such as the High School Exit Exam or Certification, along with more traditional graduation. Learning about these options, as well as resources for transition training between the ages of 18 and 22, can help families make informed decisions. The class also provides information about available benefits and why they are useful, and about the rights of an adult child with a developmental disability once they reach age 18.

By coming together in these courses, parents can learn not only from HRC staff, but also have the opportunity to learn from each other. One parent may share valuable information provided by

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*HRC Provides Support For Families
Facing Transition to Adulthood
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their school, another may have attended a particularly useful transition planning meeting with teachers and their HRC Counselor, and still another may have information gained through independent research. Their children may have been involved in different extra-curricular activities which have been helpful in

preparing them for greater independence. Observes Brian, "They gain all sorts of information from talking to other parents."

Most importantly, parents leave the class feeling more hopeful, knowing there is life after high school. Offering our families support, information, choices and hope for the future are what we want HRC services to be all about. ■

SAVE THE DATES! HRC Courses for Parents Dealing With Adolescent Transition and Adulthood

Transitioning from High School

Friday, March 24, 2006, 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Millikan High School Library, 2800 Snowden Ave., Long Beach

What will your son/daughter do after they leave the public school system? Harbor Regional Center and Long Beach Unified School District host. Come for information on supported employment, adult day activity services, supported living services, the Department of Rehabilitation, and many more community services. For more information contact Kristin Martin (310) 543-0611.

Anticipating the Future for Your Adolescent

The Transition Years: Home to Community & School to Work
Wednesdays, April 5, 19, & 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Presented at Harbor Regional Center, Torrance, Building A, First Floor, Room A2

This workshop provides parents an opportunity to explore what to expect as your family member prepares to exit the regular school program to a job, community living, or further education opportunities, and to help you get the most out of your teenager's last years of schooling. Cost: \$15.00 to cover materials. Scholarships are available for anyone with financial need. Please contact your HRC Counselor if a scholarship is needed. For more information, please contact Brian Lockhart at (310) 543-0605, or by e-mail at brian.lockhart@harborrc.org.

And if adulthood has already arrived...Make the Rest of Your Life the Best of Your Life

May 4 and 11, 2006, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Presented at Harbor Regional Center, Long Beach Training Center,
1155 E. San Antonio Drive, Suite B, Long Beach

Designed for the families of adult clients, this informative series will look at identifying future needs and issues, making choices about living arrangements, securing support resources in the community, finding opportunities for social relationships, and options for estate planning and conservatorships. Cost: \$10.00 to cover materials. Scholarships are available for anyone with financial need. Please contact your Counselor if a scholarship is needed. For more information, please contact Gunnar Swanson at (310) 543-0673, or by e-mail at gunnar.swanson@harborrc.org.

Check out the HRC Training and Events Catalog for many more training opportunities – available in the HRC Resource Center and on our Web site at www.harborrc.org (See Trainings & Meetings/Training & Events Catalog section). ■

TIPS FOR EASING THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

- **Help build your son's or daughter's self-determination and self-advocacy skills.**

All young people should have a strong sense of their strengths, abilities and interests, and how they can use their strengths in the future, with supports if needed, in work, at home, and in their community.

- **Help develop your child's social outlets.**

Social relationships are important tools that help tie people into their community and provide a wider network of support. Transition planning that includes opportunities for developing positive social relationships and recreation can build a bridge to success.

- **Expand your network and explore community supports.**

Start early to develop helpful networks for your child which can provide a foundation for the future. Other members of your family, your social group, professional contacts, religious community, etc. might help to provide social, recreational, work or volunteer opportunities to broaden your child's base of successful experiences. Learn about the supports used by adults in your community who have the same disability.

- **Investigate benefit programs which can provide needed support.**

Many people with developmental disabilities are beneficiaries of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a federal program for people with disabilities that can provide monthly financial support for living expenses. Plans for Achieving Self Support (PASS) under SSI allow young adults to receive benefits, and set aside income and resources as they work towards goals such as obtaining supported employment. Individuals found eligible for SSI can also receive important related ben-

efits such as Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). These provide an important foundation for supporting young adults to increase their independence.

- **Make sure your son registers with Selective Service at age 18.**

All males – including those with disabilities – are required to register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Failure to do so can affect a person's ability to receive federal and state benefits such as student loans, job training, and government jobs. Learn more at www.sss.gov.

- **Encourage your child to build work experience through volunteering.**

Volunteering is a great way for all young adults, including those with developmental disabilities, to gain skills and demonstrate to future employers their initiative and dedication to work. Volunteering can also help develop additional social skills, especially if done along with a parent, friend, mentor, or group of peers. Ask your school district about Workability programs and other opportunities to build work and volunteer experiences.

- **Help your child learn "soft" employment skills.**

In addition to work skills, people also need skills which will help them to be as successful as possible in a variety of work and community settings – such as being able to accept direction, ask for help, deal with conflict, engage in interpersonal communication, be prompt, have good hygiene, and dress properly for the workplace. An employer is more likely to be patient with an employee learning the technical aspects of a job if soft skills are in place. You can help your young adult develop these skills by practicing them at home and in the community.

- **Register for an HRC Training Course.**

Learn more about all these issues at one of our training courses designed especially for parents of adolescents

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or adults. See accompanying articles (“For Families Facing Transition” and “SAVE THE DATE”) for information on upcoming courses. Check out our semi-annual HRC Training and Events Catalog for many more training opportunities – such as computer skills – available in the HRC Resource Center and on our Web site at www.harborrc.org (See Trainings & Meetings/Training & Events Catalog section).

■ **Check out materials in our HRC Resource Center.**

Harbor Regional Center’s Resource Center has many useful and informative books, DVDs and tapes on the subject of transition to adulthood. HRC

has also published several informative booklets which can assist you during the transition stage. Booklets available in the HRC Resource Center and on our website at www.harborrc.org (See Publications/booklets online section) include: Facing Transition; It’s All About Options – Living Alternatives for Adults With Developmental Disabilities; Living On Your Own – A Guide To Supported Living Services; Supplemental Security Benefits (SSI); and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).

- Talk to your HRC Counselor about all of these opportunities.

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RECOGNIZING EXTRA EFFORT!

HRC is dedicated to providing support, information and choices to our clients and their families. Our staff, from the receptionists to our psychologists, strive to demonstrate our core values through their interactions with you.

You can help us recognize those individuals who have provided you with outstanding care and service. When you see an HRC staff member who is demonstrating respect by treating people considerately, working collaboratively, looking for ways to be helpful, responding quickly and explaining any delays, listening, sharing information, or any other assistance you found helpful, simply fill in this form and mail it to: Office of Information and Development, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 or by e-mail at cheryl.perez@harborrc.org

We will make sure that the HRC Counselor, support staff, clinical staff, Resource Center staff or other members of the HRC team receive your note along with our special recognition.

Name of person you wish to recognize:

Your name: _____

How that person demonstrated outstanding service or fulfillment of our core values: _____

We appreciate your support in helping us acknowledge these outstanding individuals.

resource center

HRC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY LAB

*Elissa Nadel
converses with HRC
A.T. Specialist
Elizabeth Green,
with the help of
technology.*

Harbor Regional Center is pleased to announce that the Assistive Technology (AT) Lab is now available to conduct evaluations and consultations. During the Fall of 2005 the AT Lab was reorganized, new equipment was purchased, and new staff were added.



Elizabeth Green, Assistive Technology Specialist, recently joined the AT Lab team. She will partner with Maureen Fondevilla, Speech Language Pathologist, to provide assistive technology services to Harbor clients.



*HRC Specialist Maureen Fondevilla
and Marco Burstein demonstrate the
use of toys for language development.*

Assistive technology is generally defined as "...any item, piece of equipment or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase, maintain or improve the capabilities of a [person] with a disability." The use of assistive technology can greatly increase the level of inde-

pendence and quality of life of a person with a disability. Since there is a wide range of AT devices and services, an evaluation is conducted to determine which device or service best matches the individual's needs.

For a first-time user, an assistive technology evaluation may determine a need for a device or system which is relatively simple or low-tech, such as a picture or symbol communication system. As the user becomes familiar with the system and adept in its use, a higher tech device such as a voice output device may be introduced. Another objective of an assistive technology evaluation is to determine how a person can best access a computer. Use of equipment such as a trackball, touch screen, switch, or head pointer may be the result.

Once a device or system is recommended, the AT Lab staff will train the client, family members, and caregivers in the use and care of the device. In addition, periodic follow-up sessions are scheduled to determine if the device or system is still appropriate or if the client needs to move to the next level.

Referrals for AT evaluations and consultations are made by the HRC Counselor who works with the client. HRC clients who may have difficulties in the area of communication, or those with difficulties with motor skills such as writing, might be good candidates for an AT evaluation. The primary goal of an AT evaluation for an adult is to assist in those skills needed to succeed in the work environment. ■

HRC SUPPORT GROUPS MEET MANY NEEDS

When people who share a common concern gather together, it's amazing how problems are transformed into more manageable challenges, with possible solutions. Support groups help families feel less alone as they work through their problems while exchanging social support, information and resources.

Harbor Regional Center is proud to offer a variety of support groups to meet the needs of our families including groups in both English and Spanish, and meeting locations at both the HRC office in Torrance, and the HRC Training Center in Long Beach. Participation is easy, since most groups meet in the early evening and offer childcare. Listed below are the groups we currently offer. For more information about a particular meeting please contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691, or the group facilitator indicated below.

AUTISM, SOUTH BAY: for parents who are raising a child with autism
2nd Tuesday, 6:30-8:30, A2, HRC Torrance
Contact: Arwen Davis (310) 792-4508 or Butch Gooden (310) 792-4533

AUTISM AND SCHOOLS, LONG BEACH: for parents with school-aged children with autism
2nd Thursday, 6:30-8:30, HRC, Long Beach
Contact: Brian Lockhart (310) 543-0605

DOWN SYNDROME: for parents who are raising a child with Down syndrome
2nd Thursday, 6:30-8:30, A2, HRC Torrance
Contact: Kerry Ryerson (310) 792-4712, Ofra Obejas (310) 540-1711 or Marcia Good (310) 375-6050, #2

NEW! A FEW FRIENDS: for parents who are raising children who have a rare disorder or low incidence condition
4th Thursday, 6:30-8:30, A2, HRC Torrance
Contact: LeAnn Taylor (310) 792-4530, Niima Radford (310) 792-4588, Olga Sanchez-Farah (310) 543-0691 or Rebekah Wiltz (310) 540-1711

UNIDAD Y FUERZA: meetings are held in Spanish with topics focusing on developmental disabilities, 4th Wednesday, 6:30-8:30, Long Beach Memorial Resource Center
Contact: Pablo Ibanez (310) 792-4558 or Robert Romero (310) 792-4753

NEW! SINGLE PARENTS: for single parents who are raising a child with a developmental disability
1st Thursday, 6:30-8:30, HRC Long Beach
Contact: Ed Swan (310) 792-4547 or Betsy Jennings (310) 792-4529

NEW! ADULT SIBLINGS: for adults who are caregivers of their disabled sibling
4th Thursday, 6:30-8:30, HRC Torrance
Contact: Kent Yamashiro (310) 543-0687, Audrey Clurfeld, (310) 543-0616

NEW! FAMILIAS AMIGAS: for families of children who are at risk and/or have a developmental disability
Now in development
Contact: Olga Sanchez-Farah (310) 543-0691

NEW! DADS: for dads raising a child with a developmental disability
Now in development
Contact: Gunnar Swanson (310) 543-0673 or Winfred Nahr (310) 792-4734

Limited Childcare Available by Advance Reservation: Gail Parker (310) 543-0643. ■

GENETICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS PROGRAM (GHPP)

*by Lewiette Wilkins
RN, HRC Nurse*

The Genetically Handicapped Persons Program (GHPP) was established in 1975 by the California legislature to provide medical care for individuals with specific handicapping genetic conditions who would not otherwise have health care coverage for their genetic conditions, so that individuals with these conditions can become employed, and live productive lives. The GHPP program is a source of funding for adults with the following genetic conditions:

- Hemophilia and other genetic bleeding disorders
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hemoglobinopathies with anemia, including sickle-cell disease and thalassemia
- Huntington's disease, Joseph's disease, Friedreich's ataxia and other neurologic diseases
- Phenylketonuria (PKU), Wilson's disease, galactosemia and other metabolic diseases, von Hippel-Lindau syndrome

For those eligible, the GHPP can provide funding for a wide range of medical and support services (such as inpatient and outpatient services, prescription medications and supplies related to their condition, equipment, therapies, etc.). These services are prescribed by state-approved Genetic Centers, also known

as Special Care Centers; In the HRC area, Genetic Centers are located at Harbor-UCLA and UCLA Medical Centers. GHPP refers clients to appropriate medical specialists and other health care providers in the client's community to provide services recommended by the Genetic Center. GHPP can pay for medical care in case of loss of private health insurance or Medi-Cal, due to change in employment or income; often pays for services not fully covered by other plans; makes it possible for self-employed and part-time workers without private health insurance coverage to work and continue to receive essential medical care; and assists families at times of unusually heavy medical expenses.

Anyone with an eligible GHPP condition who is a resident of California may apply. Those under 21 may be eligible to receive care through the California Children Services (CCS) Program. Clients with incomes above a certain level are required to pay enrollment fees, determined by a sliding scale based upon income and number of family members. If clients have private health insurance, Medi-Cal or Medicare, their medical providers must bill those health plans for payment first.

If you believe you may have one of the above eligible conditions, and are not currently being followed by a Genetic Center, speak to your primary physician to confirm whether you have an eligible diagnosis and regarding referral to GHPP. You may also speak with your HRC Counselor regarding consultation by HRC's physician.

TO APPLY: Write or Telephone
**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Genetically Handicapped Persons
Program
P.O. Box 942732
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320
(916) 327-0470
1-800-639-0597 ■**

If you are the parent or caregiver of a child with a rare disorder or low-incidence condition, Harbor Regional Center would like to invite you to participate in one of our newest family support groups, "A Few Friends." Meetings are held at Harbor Regional Center every 4th Thursday of the month, from 6:30-8:30 P.M. For more information please contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691.

MEET OUR BOARD: JOHN REA

We'd like to introduce you to yet another very dedicated, talented, knowledgeable and inspirational member of Harbor Regional Center's Board of Trustees.

William J. (John) Rea, Jr. brings to HRC the unique wisdom which comes from having a broad range of valuable life experiences, many of which he gained as the parent of a young son with autism. A practicing lawyer specializing in civil litigation for 27 years, his professional career has included serving as a clerk for the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court, and as a research attorney for the Los Angeles Superior Court.

John and his wife Meredith, a former executive chef for L'Hermitage Restaurant, have been married for 19 years and have two sons. They became a part of the HRC community when their oldest son Matthew, now 16 years of age, was diagnosed with autism at the age of 2 1/2. HRC began providing early intervention and therapy services through what is now the Pediatric Therapy Network, and supported them at school district transition meetings where they were active participants in developing Matthew's Individual Education Program. As John recalls, "We were on the cutting edge, getting occupational therapy services provided by the school district when that hadn't been the norm. It kind of opened doors for the school to provide this."

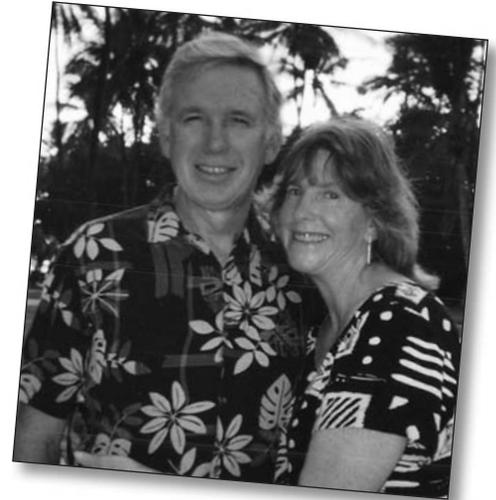
John agreed to join HRC's Board of Trustees in 2002, after being recruited by fellow parents and Board members, Dr. Ken Moses and Mr. Bob Bethel. "We had gone through some rough times in the past," John reflected. "Harbor Regional Center had always been there for us." Looking back now, with the knowledge and perspective he has gained as an HRC Board member, John feels that the regional center system "worked for our family just the way it was designed to. And I believe in giving back." John feels that the opportunity to provide input and to see it

have an impact has made his service on the HRC Board of Trustees very rewarding. "People listen... All of the people I have met who work at Harbor Regional Center, the clients I have met, the staff at the HRC Resource Center, and the people who provide services in the community...have such warmth and such caring attitudes. It's very impressive."

He is continuing an important legacy he learned from his own parents, to get involved and contribute his valuable time and expertise as a volunteer in his community. "It's kind of in the blood," John explains. John has also volunteered on the Planning Commission for Palos Verdes Estates, and is Past President of the Palos Verdes Tennis Club. His mother, Kathy Rea, is a former President of the Assistance League and worked on behalf of the Braille Institute, the Freedom Foundation, and the ARCS Foundation. When her grandson Matthew was young, Kathy Rea took on the organization of a very successful fundraiser for the Sensory Integration Institute. John's father, the Honorable William J. Rea, was a prominent and highly-respected federal court judge who received countless awards and accolades for his contributions as a public servant, and still found time to serve on men's auxiliaries to these charities.

Currently serving as Treasurer and as Chairperson of the Board Planning Committee, John is anxious to help shape services, not just for his own son, but for others who share similar challenges. He's excited to see the options that are available, and hopes to make an impact on continuing to expand and improve on these. "I'm optimistic. Seeing how proactive Harbor Regional Center has been, there is hope for the future."

We couldn't be happier that he has chosen to make a difference for the clients, families, staff and community of Harbor Regional Center. ■



*HRC Board
Treasurer John Rea,
and wife Meredith*

FREE INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND THEIR PARENTS

Who is eligible?

- Children ages six and under
- Who have previously received a diagnosis of autism
- And who use no or very few spoken words

What are the benefits of participating?

- Participation in this project is free of charge.
- Your child will receive free developmental assessments.
- Your child's developmental progress will be monitored over a period of 18 months.
- We will assist you in developing a comprehensive treatment plan for your child.
- About half of the children and their mothers will also be invited to participate in 12 sessions of an experimental parent training. These sessions will be held in the natural context of your home.

How will we evaluate your child's developmental progress?

We will test your child's cognitive, interpersonal, social communication, and language skills at three times over a period of 18 months. We will track growth in all of these domains and generate two comprehensive progress reports.

How will we help you develop a treatment plan?

In California, Regional Center and School District Representatives meet with parents of young children with autism periodically

to develop individualized service and education plans (ISP/IPP, IEP). We will help you prepare for these meetings. Based on the results of our assessments, as well as comprehensive interviews about your child's developmental needs, we will help you to develop realistic goals and formulate reasonable requests for intervention services.

What is the nature of the parent training intervention?

Most children with autism find it very difficult to include their parents when playing with toys. This is troublesome because successful play interactions provide virtually endless opportunities for learning – particularly about social relationships and communication. During the parent training intervention, we will take a close look at your child's behavior and find out what you can do to make play interactions more successful and gratifying.

Together we will find ways to help your child:

- To take interest in a variety of different toys.
- To be responsive to new suggestions.
- To include you when playing with toys.
- To communicate with you about the toys.
- To learn that playing with other people can be fun.



UCLA CART

Center for Autism Research and Treatment
Autism Intervention Project

Phone (310) 825-8866

E-mail intervention@autism.ucla.edu

COBERTURA DE MEDICARE PARA LOS MEDICAMENTOS BAJO RECETA – QUÉ DEBE SABER ESTE AÑO NUEVO

Si tiene cobertura de Medi-Cal y Medicare, a veces conocido como doble derecho, o simplemente cobertura de Medicare, probablemente habrá recibido montañas de cartas exponiendo la Cobertura de Medicare Parte D para los medicamentos bajo receta médica.

Con tantas cartas oficiales diciéndole diferentes cosas - ¿qué es lo más importante? Primero, recuerde las FECHAS.

- A partir del **1º de enero, 2006** la entidad que principalmente cubrirá los medicamentos bajo receta para las personas con doble derecho ha cambiado de Medi-Cal a Medicare. En la mayoría de los casos, ahora Medicare pagará sus medicamentos bajo receta, y Medi-Cal pagará las clases de medicamentos excluidos en 2006.
- A partir del **1º de enero, 2006** un beneficiario con doble derecho podrá cambiar el plan de los medicamentos bajo receta cada 30 días. Sólo se otorga esta opción de cambiar de plan cada **30 días** a aquellas personas con doble derecho. Las personas que solamente tengan derecho a Medicare tendrán restricciones, según el plan que escojan para sus medicamentos bajo receta.
- Las personas que solamente estén cubiertas por Medicare como seguro para la salud (Parte A y/o Parte B) tendrán hasta el **15 de mayo, 2006** para elegir un plan para los medicamentos bajo receta médica, conocido también como Plan de Medicare Parte D. Si una persona que solamente tuviera cobertura de Medicare para su salud decidiera escoger un plan después del **15 de mayo, 2006** se le podrá cobrar un cargo mensual.

A continuación, algunos puntos para recordar:

¡Lea cuáles son sus derechos! A todos los planes para los medicamentos bajo receta se les requiere establecer un proceso de apelación. Estos derechos de apelación usualmente están enumerados en un gran documento llamado “Síntesis de los Beneficios.” Si su plan Medicare Parte D no le proporcionara este documento, simplemente llame al número de servicios al cliente de su plan para conseguir uno.

Conozca a su farmacéutico. Cada plan para medicamentos bajo receta permitirá a la farmacia cobrar un monto como pago compartido (co-payment). En algunas instancias, las farmacias locales han indicado que renunciarán a los pagos compartidos en los casos de personas con ingresos limitados. Vale la pena preguntar.

Lleve ambas tarjetas. Cuando vaya a la farmacia, lleve las dos tarjetas: la de Medicare y la de Medi-Cal. En algunos casos, Medi-Cal pagará los medicamentos que estén excluidos en la cobertura de Medicare.

Lea todas las notificaciones sobre los cambios en el Plan de Salud. Todos los planes de Medicare Parte D para los medicamentos bajo receta tendrán la capacidad de cambiar su formulario de medicamentos (lista de medicamentos cubiertos) si envían una notificación con 60 días de anticipo. Si simplemente se deshace de la información sobre su Plan de Salud, se podría encontrar en desventaja ya que no sabrá lo que va a pasar más adelante.

Llame a su amable consejero del centro regional HRC. Entendemos que muchos de los cambios del plan de Medicare Parte D para medicamentos bajo receta son complicados y estamos aquí para ayudar. Llame a su consejero cuando necesite ayuda para entender su plan de cobertura de los medicamentos bajo receta, cuando necesite reemplazar documentos o si quizás necesita información sobre la posibilidad de que le proporcionen ayuda económica para costear los gastos de los medicamentos. ■

CONSEJOS PARA FACILITAR LA TRANSICIÓN A LA VIDA ADULTA

■ Ayude a que su hijo(a) incremente sus aptitudes en la autodeterminación y la defensa propia.

Todos los jóvenes deberían conocer con firmeza cuáles son sus aspectos de dominio, sus capacidades e intereses y cómo podrán hacer uso de sus aspectos más dominantes en el futuro, con el apoyo que fuera necesario, en el trabajo, en el hogar y en su comunidad.

■ Ayude a que su hijo(a) cultive un escape social.

Las relaciones sociales son una importante herramienta para que las personas se conecten con su comunidad, y les ofrece una red de apoyo más amplia. La planificación de la transición donde se incluyan oportunidades para desarrollar las relaciones sociales y la recreación positivas crearán un puente hacia el éxito.

■ Amplíe sus horizontes e investigue qué medios de apoyo ofrece la comunidad.

Comience temprano a conectarse con una red de ayuda que le ofrezca a su hijo(a) una base para el futuro. Otros miembros de su familia, su grupo social, sus contactos profesionales, su comunidad religiosa, etc. podrían ofrecer oportunidades sociales, de recreación, de trabajo o como voluntario para ampliar la base de las experiencias de éxito para su hijo(a). Entérese qué tipos de apoyo emplean en la misma comunidad los adultos que tengan la misma discapacidad.

■ Investigue los programas de beneficios que podrían ofrecerle el apoyo necesario.

Muchas personas con incapacidades en el desarrollo son beneficiarios de los Ingresos Suplementarios del Seguro Social (SSI, por sus siglas en inglés), un

programa federal de beneficios para las personas discapacitadas que puede proporcionarles apoyo económico mensual para los gastos de la vida diaria; el Plan para Llegar a Mantenerse a sí Mismo (PASS, por sus siglas en inglés) del SSI les permite a los jóvenes adultos recibir beneficios y asignarles ingresos y recursos mientras tratan de alcanzar metas como obtener empleo con apoyo. Las personas que califiquen para SSI también recibirán importantes beneficios relacionados como MediCal y Servicios de Apoyo en el Hogar (IHSS, por sus siglas en inglés). Estos proporcionan una importante base para apoyar a los jóvenes adultos con el fin de que aumenten su independencia.

■ Asegúrese de que su hijo se inscriba en el Servicio Militar Obligatorio a los 18 años de edad.

Se requiere que todos los varones – incluso los que tengan una discapacidad – se inscriban en el Servicio Militar Obligatorio dentro de los 30 días desde su 18º cumpleaños. Si no lo hiciera, podrán verse afectados sus derechos para recibir beneficios federales y estatales como préstamos estudiantiles, capacitación laboral y trabajos en el gobierno. Obtenga más información en www.sss.gov.

■ Recomiende a su hijo(a) que adquiera experiencia de trabajo a través de los trabajos voluntarios.

El trabajo voluntario es una manera maravillosa para que todos los jóvenes adultos, incluso aquellos con incapacidades en el desarrollo, aprendan nuevas aptitudes y les demuestren a los futuros empleadores su iniciativa y dedicación en el trabajo. Con el trabajo voluntario también desarrollarán aptitudes sociales, especialmente si lo hacen junto con uno de los padres, un amigo, o con un grupo de compañeros. Pregunte en su distrito escolar sobre los programas de Aptitudes Laborales y otras oportunidades para aumentar sus experiencias de trabajo y como voluntarios.

■ **Ayude a que su hijo(a) aprenda las aptitudes “adicionales” que son necesarias para trabajar.**

Además de las aptitudes para trabajar, las personas también necesitan otras aptitudes que les ayudarán a tener el mayor éxito posible en diferentes trabajos y ambientes de la comunidad – como poder aceptar las indicaciones, pedir ayuda, solucionar un conflicto, y comunicarse personalmente con los demás, llegar temprano, buena higiene y vestirse adecuadamente para el entorno laboral. Es más probable que los empleadores tengan más paciencia con los empleados que estén aprendiendo los aspectos técnicos de un trabajo si el empleado ya tiene estas aptitudes “adicionales”. Podrá ayudar a sus jóvenes adultos para que desarrollen estas aptitudes practicando en el hogar y en la comunidad.

■ **¡Inscríbese en un curso de capacitación del centro regional HRC!**

Aprenda más sobre todos estos temas en uno de nuestros cursos de capacitación creados especialmente para los padres de adolescentes o adultos, (los 5, 19 y 26 de Abril, 2006, 7:00 – 9:00 pm). Favor de llamar a William Martinez, (310) 543-0627 para información.

■ **¡Tome prestados los materiales de nuestro centro de recursos de HRC!**

El Centro de Recursos del centro regional Harbor Regional Center tiene muchos libros, DVD y cintas con información sobre el tema de la transición a la vida adulta. El HRC también ha publicado varios folletos informativos que le podrán ayudar durante la etapa de transición. Los folletos están disponibles en el Centro de Recursos del centro regional HRC y en nuestro sitio Web www.harborrc.org (Consultar la sección En Español/ Publicaciones) incluye: Enfrente Transición; Las Opciones Son Importantes– Alternativas de Vida Para los Adultos; Información Importante Sobre Servicios de Apoyo Residencial; Beneficios de los Ingresos Suplementarios del Seguro Social (SSI); y Servicios de Apoyo en el Hogar (IHSS).

■ **Hable con su consejero del centro regional HRC sobre todas las oportunidades descritas anteriormente.**

*Adaptado con autorización de la revista PACESETTER, Centro PACER, Inc.
www.pacer.org. ■*

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BOARD MEETINGS

No Meeting in February
 March 21, 2006 - 8:00 am
 April 18, 2006 - 6:30 pm

The Board of Trustees of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc. meets regularly once a month on the THIRD Tuesday of the month.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome to attend both morning and evening meetings of the Board. The meetings are held in Conference Room A1 & A2 at Harbor Regional Center. ■

Harbor Happenings is a publication of Harbor Regional Center, a program of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc.

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