



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

SUMMER 2006

LONG BEACH ASSEMBLYMEMBER BETTY KARNETTE JOINS FAMILY CAUCUS TO STRENGTHEN SERVICES FOR REGIONAL CENTER CLIENTS



*ARC-Long Beach
Director Harry
Van Loon,
HRC Information
Director Nancy
Spiegel, and HRC
Information
Specialist and
parent Kerry
Ryerson thank
Assemblymember
Karnette for
her support.*

Assemblymember Betty Karnette, representative for the Harbor Regional Center area, was one of four members of the Assembly who formed a Family Caucus in the legislature this year, and made an unprecedented achievement on behalf of people with developmental disabilities in California. All four members of the Family Caucus, which was led by Barbara Matthews (Stockton), and also includes Russ Bogh (Beaumont), and Fran Payley (Agoura Hills), have family members who have developmental disabilities, and who are engaged in meaningful work activities as a result of regional center programs.

They began their crusade in the Fall of 2005, to urge support for increased budget funding from their colleagues.

They met with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and later provided him with a letter signed by 69 members of the Assembly and Senate. In their

SAVE THE DATE! Join Us For the Get Fit! Games and Family Fun Walk

The Get Fit! Games and the Family Fun Walk are coming to the Home Depot Center on Saturday, November 4, 2006!

The Get Fit! Games, endorsed by the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, will be a sports competition between Harbor Regional Center and Lanterman Regional Center clients that have been involved with the Get Fit! Project. Through a Wellness Grant from the State of California Department of Developmental Services, our two regional centers have been conducting a multi-faceted program for improving the overall health of our adult clients. Since last November, clients in the program have been working hard, learning how to eat right and participate in fitness activities. HRC has provided all of our client participants with a Get Fit! pedometer to help track their daily activity, and a Get Fit! waist pack that holds a water bottle.

The Get Fit! participants are excited and very proud of their dedication and success in becoming healthier. Karen Rauch, a client at SVS Long Beach boasts "I lost 46 pounds. It took a long time to do it. I walk with the SVS people and my group home. I only drink soda once a week. My mom and dad are proud of me!" Another SVS Long Beach client, Jodi Sanders, says "I have really enjoyed this program. I have been walking every day so I have lost some weight. I have been eating smaller amounts of food every day."

The event will not only be a celebration of all their hard work, but will be open to all HRC clients, families, service providers

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*Save the Date! Join Us For the Get Fit!
Games and Family Fun Walk
(continued from page 1)*



*The HRC Team
gets a workout in
preparation for the
Get Fit! Games.*

and friends, to join in the festivities. You won't want to miss the Opening Ceremonies for the Get Fit! Games which will begin at 9:00. The competitions will start by 10:00. The participants will compete in walking and running races and relays, basketball, tennis and volleyball. They would love to have you come and cheer them on!

The Family Fun Walk, from 10:00 – 12:00, will be another opportunity for our guests of all ages to join in the fun, and will include a mixture of entertainment, fun and educational activities, and a health and fitness fair to enjoy as you walk among the various sports events. Radio Disney will be on hand to provide games, contests and prizes. Refreshments will be

available for purchase from Home Depot Center food carts.

The day will be capped off with an awards ceremony, in which all of the Get Fit! clients will receive medals for the events that they compete in.

We thank the Home Depot Center for giving us use of the world class venue for free. We also thank Subway Restaurants for their donation of lunches for our athletes and volunteers and the City of Torrance Community Services staff for their assistance in coordinating the track events.

Speaking of Volunteers and sponsors, we can still use your support for both the Get Fit! Games and the Family Fun Walk. If you would like to volunteer for the Games or the Walk, or could sponsor a portion of the festivities (e.g. prizes, refreshments, tee shirts, entertainment, etc.), please contact Kerry Ryerson at (310) 543-0686 or by e-mail at kerry.ryerson@harborrc.org ■



GET FIT! WEB SITE

Everyone can now try out some health and fitness tips and tools, by visiting our new Get Fit! Web site. The new site can be accessed from a link on the Harbor Regional Center's Web site.

The Web site has a Fitness Challenge that you can join that will enable you to monitor your fitness activities on your own monthly Fitness Calendar. There are great sections that will provide you with Fitness Tips, Nutrition Tips and healthy Recipes from the Get Fit! Cookbook. The pictures on the Web site highlight the many participants that are in the Get Fit! project!

A link for the Get Fit! Web site will eventually go to all 21 Regional Centers throughout California. As a part of her Wellness project presentation, project manager Kerry Ryerson will be showcasing the Web site at the State's Department of Developmental Services Wellness Forum in San Diego on September 28, 2006.

To access the Get Fit! site through the HRC Web site, go to www.harborrc.org, Resource Center section, and click on the Get Fit! link. The development of the site was done by Chris Bolen of Integrated Pixels and HRC's Get Fit! project manager Kerry Ryerson.

For more information, please call Kerry Ryerson at (310) 543-0686 or e-mail her at kerry.ryerson@harborrc.org ■

Long Beach Assemblymember Betty Karnette Joins Family Caucus To Strengthen Services for Regional Center Clients (continued from page 1)

letter, they reflected upon the leadership which California had shown to the nation years ago, when the Lanterman Act first became law. In contrast, they noted that California had fallen below the national average in funding support for services to citizens with developmental disabilities, despite having among the highest costs of living. As a result of their efforts, the new state budget passed with millions of dollars in new funds to support regional center services to people with developmental disabilities, reversing a years-long pattern of rate freezes and budget reductions.

Harry Van Loon, Executive Director of ARC-Long Beach, observed, "This represents a dramatic change in how community services for persons with developmental disabilities are now perceived by the Legislature and the Administration. For the first time in over twenty years, the Governor acknowledged our needs at the outset of budget discussions and negotiations, rather than waiting for advocates to exhaust themselves for months trying to get an increase."

Talking with Betty Karnette in her Long Beach office now that the budget is in place, she is quick to credit Barbara Matthews for bringing the family caucus together. She also notes that having both Democratic and Republican representation in the caucus was extremely helpful. Each member of this bipartisan group focused on a specific issue related to their own family member. "The real resources that we have are our people," insists Karnette. And so they talked to

Schwarzenegger and their fellow legislators about individual clients' accomplishments as a result of the services they have received, and the challenges they face as the result of budget reductions, lower wages, higher turnover, and programs in danger of closing down. Karnette personally emphasized her concerns as the parent of an adult, that there be secure services to support disabled adults when their parents are gone. All of the caucus members stressed that services that involve disabled adults in their community and in productive work change lives for the better, and benefit the community at the same time.

Three members of the Family Caucus will be leaving the legislature due to term limits. Karnette, who is currently running for reelection, reflects, "Getting organized was our greatest accomplishment. We need to continue this with new legislators." She also notes that the contributions of parents and family members in the community, who write, call, or visit with the legislators to remind them of our issues, should continue to do so. "The more people we have involved in services, the more we need to encourage our representatives that they have a place in society."

Patricia Del Monico, Executive Director of Harbor Regional Center, commented "We are all so very grateful to Assemblymember Karnette and her legislative colleagues for taking this initiative and for insisting that people with developmental disabilities must have the support of our public policy leaders. We look forward to continued support to bring California back into the forefront of quality services and supports for our most vulnerable citizens." ■

WHAT DOES THE STATE BUDGET INCLUDE FOR REGIONAL CENTERS IN 2006-2007?

When Governor Schwarzenegger initially proposed his Governor's Budget for fiscal year 2006-2007 this past January, we were pleased to see that his proposal included increases for services to people with developmental disabilities. On June 30th, the eve of the new budget year, the Governor signed the budget of \$131 billion – the largest of any state budget in the nation – approving nearly all of the major funding increases added by the legislature for programs for people with disabilities.

The budget includes \$68.4 million to fund a much-needed 3% cost-of-living increase for community service providers that have been under a rate freeze for the past several years, including adult day activity services, respite care, licensed homes, supported living, and transportation services. The freeze on the base rate for these services will continue through the coming year, however. In other words, rates for programs do not yet fully reflect the true cost of doing business, including competitive wages, rent, energy, insurance, etc.

The budget also includes \$180 million for providers of employment-related services for clients of Regional Centers and the Department of Rehabilitation. Many providers of these services have experienced not only rate freezes, but rate reductions in recent years. To assist adults with developmental disabilities to engage in meaningful, inclusive activities and find gainful employment, this budget will provide significant increases that come as the result of some special advocacy efforts by a unique group of legislators who are also parents. (See *article, page 1*). \$15.9 million

will increase supported employment service rates for on-the-job training, placement, and job coaching, and \$19.1 million will provide additional wage incentives for adult programs that provide inclusive and meaningful activities in the community. A limited amount of start-up funds have been allocated statewide, to help Regional Centers promote development of inclusive day activities.

\$2.6 million is provided to continue California's Autistic Spectrum Disorder Initiative, for training of clinicians, development of best practice guidelines for treatment and intervention, and provision of information, guidance and resources for families through the Regional Centers.

Regional Centers' statewide budget for 2006-07 includes an 11.5% increase above the 2005-06 budget to support a statewide population of 212,000 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families – 8,400 more clients over the regional centers' population last year. The purchase of service portion of the Regional Center budget will increase 12.5% to \$2.7 billion, and our budget for direct services and operations will increase by 6.9% to \$485 million, to accommodate this growth in our population. At the same time, however, reductions made in the early 90's have not yet been restored, and Regional Centers will now enter their 18th year without receiving a cost-of-living increase for their staff or operating expenses.

We are thankful for the increases provided for developmental services this year, and we know that our service providers will welcome the long-awaited relief. Additional support will be needed for our service system, in the long run, to meet operating costs, provide reasonable wages, retain quality staff, develop new programs and affordable housing, and provide the quality services we all expect for our clients. ■

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, PRESCHOOLER

Over the years Harbor Regional Center has been active in the movement to provide services to individuals with disabilities in the most natural, inclusive settings possible. Early efforts included HRC development grants to provide specialized training to hundreds of child care programs and caregivers by child development and behavioral experts. Then in 1998, Harbor Regional Center staff members created a committee to reach out to area preschools, and explore their receptiveness to the idea of inclusion.

The committee's first step was to identify HRC infants and toddlers with developmental delays who were already receiving individualized early childhood development services and supports within typical preschool sites, and the factors which led to successful inclusion at those sites. The committee then visited and observed 60 selected preschools looking for indicators that would predict similar success.

The committee did experience some difficulty in recruiting the preschools. Many that met our high standards of service were the most in-demand schools, with waiting lists. For many of the preschools, inclusion of children with special needs was still a new concept, presenting extra challenges. But several excellent preschools did agree to come on board. HRC provided grants to organizations such as The Children's Therapy Center, to assist these preschools, and provide trainings and support during the school day to the school staff and the kids.

Over the years, the options have expanded in many positive ways. Hundreds of children have received early childhood services and supports in typical preschools and daycares, whether in schools funded by Harbor Regional Center, or in schools selected and paid

for by parents themselves. An array of generic community service providers, such as Early Head Start and Volunteers of America, offer typical preschools which now routinely serve many of our clients. Other more traditionally specialized service providers like Pediatric Therapy Network have created programs like their Leaping Out Program, to provide services and supports in typical, inclusive settings.

One of the preschools that became involved with HRC early in this journey is Tuvia School, at the Temple Menorah in Redondo Beach. The staff at Tuvia School attended HRC trainings, and learned to look for and address special developmental issues in kids with developmental disabilities. They now recognize early signs of possible delays, and have referred new families to HRC for assessment and services. Stacy Schafer, HRC Provider Relations Specialist, said that the staff at Tuvia School "really embraced the idea of fully including our kids." Stacy also commented on the parents of the typical children at Tuvia, who have expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to have their children in school with children that have a developmental disability.

The concept of serving infants and toddlers with special needs is no longer foreign to many of our area preschools, and HRC staff continues to work with early childhood service providers in our community. Together we will continue to expand inclusive opportunities for our infants and toddlers.

You can find a list of resources for infants and toddlers on the Harbor Regional Center Web site at www.harborrc.org – click on Resource Center, then Resource Directories/Services and Supports to find this and many other resource directories. ■

TIPS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS: Including Children with Special Needs

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The following suggestions may help include children with disabilities and other special needs in child care. Remember that a child is a child first, and each child is different, regardless of whether he or she has a disability or not. Also take into account the severity of the disability and the child's age and developmental level, when considering adaptations.

Developmental Delays

- Give clear directions, speaking slowly and clearly and using only a few words.
- Move the child physically through the task, so he can feel what to do.
- Stand or sit close to the child so you can help when needed.
- Help the child organize her world by providing structure and consistency (e.g., labeling things with pictures and words).
- Avoid changing activities abruptly. Allow time for adjustment.
- Teach in small steps.

Speech and Language

- Be a good listener.
- Give directions simply and in complete sentences.
- Talk about what you or the child is doing while you are doing it.
- Have the child talk about what he is doing, asking specific questions.
- Repeat what the child says and add missing words, or ask the child to repeat what you are saying.
- Build on what the child says by adding new information.

Visual Disabilities

- Give specific directions. Avoid the use of words such as this, that, over there.
- Call children by their names. Address them directly, not through someone else.
- Increase or decrease the room light to avoid glare.

- Use simple, clear, uncluttered pictures that are easy to see.
- Avoid standing with your back toward windows; the glare may make you look like a silhouette.
- Encourage hands-on experiences. Touching, holding, and exploring are necessary.
- Ask first if the person needs assistance; do not assume you should help.

Physical/Neurological Disabilities

- Know the child's strengths and needs so that independence is realistically encouraged and supported.
- Assist the child with activities she may not be able to do alone (e.g., kicking a ball).
- Be aware of proper positioning techniques.
- Learn how to use and care for any special equipment.
- Do not be afraid to handle the child – he won't break!
- Help other children understand why "Billy can't walk" and include what Billy can do.
- Try to experience the disability yourself so that you can better understand the child's perspective.
- Work closely with other agencies and personnel who provide special services (therapists, psychologists, etc.).

Deaf or Hearing Impaired

- Know the degree of hearing loss and what that means for the child.
- Learn how to use and care for the hearing aid or other special equipment.
- Support the child socially.
- Be sure to have the child's attention before giving instructions.
- Speak in complete sentences at normal speed while facing the child, and smile.
- Use visual cues, such as pictures or gestures, as you talk.
- Encourage the child to let you know when she does not understand by using a special signal.
- If the child does not understand at first, rephrase your comment rather than repeat it. Learn sign language.
- Provide opportunities for the child to talk.

Social Behavioral and Development of Emotions

- Do not change activities abruptly. Warn the child of any changes in schedule ahead of time.
- Establish routines and provide structure for the child. Use items such as timers, bells, or lights to signal the start or end of an activity.
- Allow the child time to practice new activities away from the group, or allow withdrawn children to watch new activities first.
- Seat the child close to you. Give occasional physical and verbal reassurances.
- Let the child bring a familiar object with him when entering a new situation or beginning a new activity.
- Help the child make choices by limiting the options.
- Allow the child to have a safe emotional outlet for anger or fear.

Techniques for Managing Behavior

- Respect the child's feelings.
- Manage your own behavior. Model the kind of behavior you want to see.
- Prevent problems when possible. Look at the schedule, structure and physical space to see where modifications might help prevent difficulties.
- Focus on what the child can do, and accentuate the positive.
- Follow through with realistic consequences.
- Help the child to verbalize, act, and understand. Clarify statements and feelings.
- Teach the child the "appropriate" behavior.
- Give the child reasonable choices.
- Ignore negative behavior whenever you can.
- Provide developmentally appropriate activities in a safe, nurturing environment.
- Ensure consistency with the family in handling behaviors and consequences.

Have fun. ■

HRC CLIENTS COOKED UP FUN!

The HRC Get Fit! Project and the HRC Resource Center Computer Lab teamed up to offer Cookin' Up Fun classes for HRC adult clients throughout the month of August. The clients learned about healthy eating and how to easily incorporate these good habits into their life.

The class instruction included teaching the clients how to look up recipes on the Internet, make recipe cards, make a grocery shopping list, and how to follow a recipe. The clients developed their own goals to help them focus on what types of foods and recipes to research and prepare in order to eat healthier meals and maybe even lose a pound or two if desired!

The clients were some of the first to have access to the new Get Fit! Cookbook. This cookbook was developed specifically for the clients in the Get Fit! Project at Harbor and Lanterman Regional Centers, through a Wellness Grant to our two centers from the Department of Developmental Services. HRC Project participants have been selecting, preparing and enjoying recipes from the Get Fit! Cookbook since January of this year. The Computer Lab's Cookin' Up Fun Class was a great opportunity for us to show even more HRC clients how tasty and easy healthy cooking (and eating) can be. In between recipes, they even got some exercise!

The Cookin' Up Fun participants wrapped up their eight-week course by preparing a recipe of their choice in the HRC Kitchen. It was a very tasty celebration! ■



(top) Erin Pawlowski listens intently during class. She wants to eventually cook for her friends. (bottom) Erin Rice and Faren Griffin treated the class to their favorite recipes.

CLIENTS GIVE BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITY AND THEIR WORLD

Volunteerism is alive and well among our clients with developmental disabilities. One of the many ways that HRC's adult clients with developmental disabilities are building social and vocational skills, and enriching their quality of life, is by contributing their time to worthy causes. Many of our area adult activity service providers are helping them to do so.

The clients at the Canyon Verde adult activity program in Redondo Beach once again helped others by participating in Annual "Make a Difference Day." This year they chose to become involved in the Read to Feed program that benefits a program called Heifer International. Heifer International strives to help impoverished families in countries throughout the world to lift themselves out of poverty and achieve self-reliance. The program provides the needy families with a "living loan" animal, from which the family will get milk, wool, eggs, etc. Through this process, the families, the environment and the community are transformed.

By using the Read to Feed program through Heifer International, Canyon Verde's clients were encouraged not only to reach out and help fight hunger, but also to read as many books as possible. For each book they read, they were given incentives such as bookmarks and stickers. They were also given a ticket that represented their choice of animal to donate. In order to provide all of the clients an opportunity to participate, Canyon Verde's program manager adapt-

ed the materials so that all 48 clients could compete. Along with the reading program, the clients became involved in making bulletin boards and posters with their animals on them. To raise additional money for their donation, they sold arts and crafts and baked goods at the Holiday Open House.

Due to the success of the open house, Canyon Verde was able to donate enough money for the animals of the winners' choice. According to the program manager, the best part of the program was that "It encouraged a love of reading and of giving to others."

Of the 45 clients attending the Unlimited Quest program in Signal Hill, six of them regularly volunteer at the Long Beach Rescue Mission's Samaritan House three days a week. Unlimited Quest clients have been volunteering there for four years. The Rescue Mission provides breakfast, lunch and dinner to many people every day and the clients are instrumental in the lunch set-up three days per week.

While the clients are at the Rescue Mission, they are responsible for a variety of duties such as setting the tables for lunch, putting food on the plates and making the sandwiches. The clients enjoy their volunteer work at the Samaritan House and are very much appreciated there for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Whether working individually, or as part of a group, the above examples are just two of the many ways our clients are giving to their community. And every day, our community is learning what a contribution they are capable of making! ■

FAMILY *matters*

STOMPIN' AT THE SAVOY

On most summer mornings in July, Los Alamitos High School is generally a quiet setting unless you venture back to the band room. For four weeks every summer, Chuck Wackerman holds Jazz Band Camp for middle school students. The 26 students appear to be like all typical middle school-aged kids, generally very involved in their music and a slight bit antsy when it's not their turn. They sounded great together when they played the "Theme From Spiderman," "Funky Cha-Cha" and "Stompin' At The Savoy."

One student in particular, a good-looking 13-year-old named James, was very focused on playing his drums, and it was obvious that he has real talent. The music seemed to come from within him, and indeed it should since James' father is Chad Wackerman, a world famous drummer, and his grandfather is the talented band instructor. James has also attracted attention during the regular school year as a member of the band at DeMille Middle School, in Long Beach.

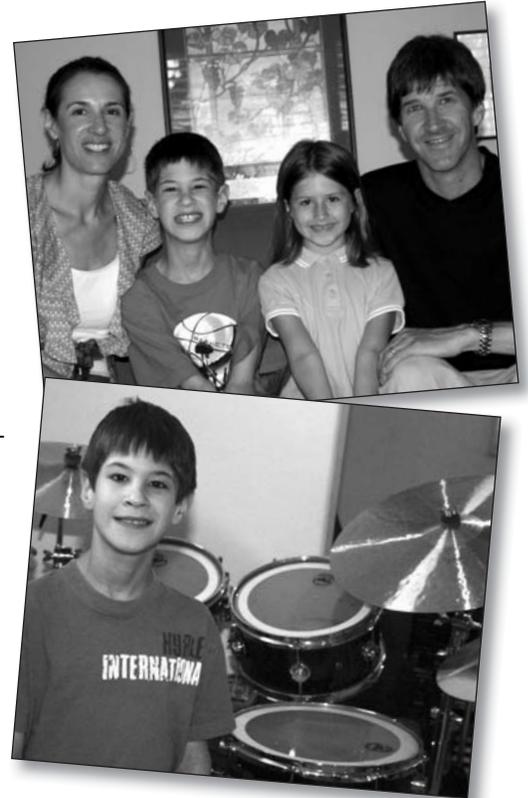
What makes this situation unique is that James has Fragile X syndrome (FXS). Fragile X is the most common inherited cause of mental impairment worldwide. It is the second leading cause of mental retardation after Down syndrome. It affects approximately 1 in 3,800 males and 1 in 4,000 females worldwide. It is estimated that 1 in 809 males and 1 in 129 females carry the permutation.

As parents, Chad and Naomi realize the benefit for early diagnosis. When the family was living in Australia, James was diagnosed with developmental delay at 18 months, and received early intervention services from the age of two. But tests did not confirm Fragile X until he reached the age of four, after his younger

cousin was diagnosed. World-renowned Fragile X syndrome expert Dr. Randi Hagerman, of the M.I.N.D. Institute at UC Davis explains: "Although there is no cure for FXS, being diagnosed with Fragile X changes the treatment of the child and indicates further investigation of the family tree. Anybody with mental retardation or autism with an unknown cause should be tested for Fragile X."

After deciding to return to the United States, the Wackerman family talked with other families in the area, and made Long Beach their home. At De Mille Middle School, James is fully included in regular classes for about 40% of his school day. He is in the school's Concert Band and Jazz Band. He also attends art class. The school has a Best Buddies club that James belongs to and through that he has been included in several social activities. Chad and Naomi also speak very highly of the support that they have been given and the trainings that they have taken through HRC. They have appreciated the respite care that they receive, and James has benefited from HRC's social skills training.

In an attempt to continue to educate themselves and help promote public awareness of Fragile X syndrome, the Wackermans became involved in their local Fragile X group. Naomi became a Board Member and now is President. For more information, you can visit the Fragile X Association's Web site at: www.fraxsocial.org ■



(top) At their home in Long Beach are Naomi, James, Sophia and Chad Wackerman. (bottom) James smiles ever so proudly next to his drums.

GIVE MY PARENTS A BREAK!

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER CHILDREN'S CONTEST

Children and teens who are clients of HRC, their brothers or their sisters, are invited to enter:

- Tell us why you think your parent/parents need a break, and should win a weekend getaway, with a poster, story, or comic.
- The prize is a \$500 vacation gift certificate for your parents to use at the weekend getaway of their choice.
- Drop off or mail in your contest entry to the HRC Resource Center by October 13, 2006.
- The winner will be notified by November 10th, and featured in the next HRC Harbor Happenings newsletter.

GOOD LUCK!

This contest was funded by a grant to Harbor Regional Center's Harbor Help Fund by the Horton Charitable Gift Fund. For information on how you can support the Harbor Help Fund, contact (310) 543-0686.

¡DARLES UN DESCANSO A MIS PADRES!

CONCURSO PARA JÓVENES DEL CENTRO REGIONAL DE HARBOR

Se invita a todos los niños y a los jóvenes que son clientes del centro regional a entrar a este concurso.

El concurso consiste en lo siguiente:

- En un cartel de presentación, en una caricatura o en una historia díganos por qué usted piensa que sus padres merecen un descanso el fin de semana.
- El premio será una vacación en valor de \$500.00 dólares al lugar de vacaciones que sus padres escojan.
- Entregue o mande su entrada o participación por correo al centro de recursos del Centro Regional antes del 13 de octubre.
- El ganador será notificado antes del 10 de noviembre y será anunciado en el siguiente boletín de noticias (Harbor Happenings) del Centro Regional

BUENA SUERTE!

Client *focus*

WALK BY FAITH...

by Tina Konieczny

I have faced daunting obstacles most of my life. Not only was I born physically-challenged with a rare, progressive, neuro-muscular condition, my family's situation worsened making it difficult for them to take care of me. I was brought to a residential school called the CA School for the Blind. There, I learned to better cope with my increasing blindness.

At the age of 9, I was unable to walk and became totally dependent on a wheelchair. Because of my disability, I had experienced being left out and discriminated by others. I visited many doctors and some of them focused on my worsening condition. I was given different life expectancies, but I am now 25 years old and still going strong!

At Mills High School, I was awarded by my teachers and the San Mateo County as one of the students who had graduated in spite of extraordinary hardships. Senator Jackie Speier and members of the Legislature presented me with certificates of recognition. I also received a cash prize from the Automobile Club and an invitation to an exclusive financial planning conference conducted by Washington Mutual Bank.

In order to reach my full potential, I decided to live on my own. With the help of a wonderful teacher and compassionate, hard-working social workers, I was able to move to a nice group home. But, my goals did not stop there. I journeyed onwards.

At present, I am living my dreams and courageously reaching for the stars...

my place in the sky. I reside in a bachelorette apartment with my best friend Marina, a nursing student. One day, I hope to own my home. With support and assistance from Chuck Durham, my Harbor Regional Center counselor, I have been attending school at Long Beach City College. My goal is to become a legislator/ambassador promoting, advocating and improving the lives of all people. Chuck has also provided assistance in the areas of health, personal care, supported living, financial aid, transportation and wheelchair repairs. Through Chuck, this is how Harbor Regional Center has significantly improved my life. Thank God for Chuck and HRC!

My fun side would be karate, swimming, friends and coffee shops, traveling, chatting online and getting involved in community activities like Harbor Regional Center's Client Advisory Committee and CA Pools of Hope fundraising campaigns. I was recently honored as one of the top fundraisers for the therapy pools.

Although it is very difficult having a disability, it is a blessing to know that there are those who are willing to help people like me. They are my angels, my heroes.

I Tina, walk by faith and not by sight... ■



Tina has faith that despite obstacles, she can achieve her goals and make a contribution to the lives of others.

"Tina's emotional strength, sense of humor and the personal courage she displayed in our first meeting simply inspired me to advocate for her goals. Often we are blessed by what we learn from our clients and Tina has truly been a valuable teacher to me. I consider it an honor to be her Counselor and encourage her in her continued quest to reach her highest star."

Chuck Durham, HRC Counselor

resource center

REFLECTIONS FROM THEIR OWN JOURNEY: HRC Clients Share Experiences and Insight with Parents and Professionals

*By Kristin Martin,
HRC Resource Center*

On Saturday, August 5th, Harbor Regional Center's Resource Center hosted a special

event for families. The discussion and book-signing was inspired by the book "Reflections from a Different Journey: What Adults with Disabilities Wish All Parents Knew," which is a collection of essays by adults with disabilities. In the essays, adults share their experience about growing up with a disability as they provide candid advice on subjects ranging from responsibility to inclusion.

The event featured long-time disability advocate Stanley Klein, Ph.D., who also happens to be the editor of "Reflections..."

Four of Harbor Regional Center's clients offered some of their own "reflections" during the second half of the event, and then fielded questions.

Asked how and when they learned about their own disability, some said that it was their doctors who gave them the most information, one panelist noted that "when my parents talked about my disability it was hard for them to say it, but I think it is better to talk about it, that

way I know where I got my disability and how to overcome it."

The panelists were asked what their parents did for them that helped them the most. For Pha Prum, it was active participation in his own IEP: "I liked having choices in my school classes." Becky Smitha said that by "having responsibilities at home it helped me to learn what it means to be a responsible person – now I live independently, go to school, volunteer." Rita Teodoro noted that her parents helped her by "supporting me in my decision to get married and have children."

When asked about being teased as a child Pha noted that "when some kids teased me, some of the other kids helped out and made them stop. I would tell kids [today] that they are special and unique in their own way. I think that if kids tell someone it helps them to learn how to stick up for themselves and be good advocates for themselves."

The four panelists were each asked to offer one piece of advice to parents who are raising a disabled child. Gary Galosic said that parents should "have their children exposed to both disabled and non-disabled people." Becky recommended that parents should "get [their children] involved in school – anything they're interested in," while Pha added that it was important that parents "give [their children] a chance to be exposed to the things that a non-disabled person would." Rita thought that it was important to treat siblings equally, including giving all children responsibilities, equal gifts, etc.

A member of the audience, whose child shares a diagnosis with one of the panelists, said she was leaving with a greater understanding of her child's needs. Based on appreciative feedback from the rest of the audience, many left inspired and hopeful about their own children's future. ■



Author Stanley Klein (top) was joined by HRC client panel members (bottom left to right) Pha Prum, Rita Teodoro, Becky Smitha, and Gary Galosic, to share their insight with parents.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE HRC CLIENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

What is the Client Advisory Committee?

The Client Advisory Committee (CAC) is a group of HRC clients who provide input to the Harbor Regional Center Board of Trustees. The CAC meets six times each year to discuss issues that are important to all clients of HRC.

The CAC is created by and for HRC clients to advocate, promote, educate, and influence positive change to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their local community.

Upcoming Events

The CAC is preparing for two special events! On Saturday, September 16, 2006, they will sponsor the HRC Self-Advocacy Conference. The conference will address various issues related to clients' rights, self-advocacy, and ways to empower ourselves. A Client Dance will take place on Friday, November 10, 2006, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., at the Sims Recreation Center

in Bellflower. Invitations to these events will be mailed to HRC adult clients.

What's New?

Members of the committee also get the chance to develop leadership skills, and run for "leadership" positions every year during the CAC elections. In May, the CAC elected new officers:

President – Pha Prum
Vice-President – Wesley Dale
Treasurer – Bonnie Rios
Sergeant At Arms – Mead Duley

The CAC is always looking for new members! If you are an HRC adult client and interested in visiting one of their meetings or becoming a member, please contact our CAC President, Pha Prum, at the HRC Resource Center, at (310) 792-4762.

How Can You Help?

If you would like to donate prizes or volunteer for the CAC Conference or Dance, please contact Kent Yamashiro, in the HRC Department of Community Services, at (310) 543-0687. ■

*(from left to right)
Connie Leuck, Eric Soe, Mead Duley, Gary Galosic, Becky Smitha, David Oster, and Pha Prum, are just a few of the client leaders who make up the CAC.*



DON'T MISS THESE POPULAR TRAINING SESSIONS!

These much-requested trainings are for parents, family members and caregivers of individuals with special needs.

ESTATE PLANNING AND SPECIAL NEEDS TRUSTS

Thursday, September 28, 2006 – 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
HRC, Long Beach Training Center

Learn about the laws governing inheritance, what they will mean in terms of entitlements, what the differences are between wills and trusts, and how to choose between them.

CONSERVATORSHIP AND GUARDIANSHIP

Tuesday, October 10, 2006 – 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
HRC Long Beach Training Center

This presentation covers the laws governing conservatorship and guardianship, what each will mean in terms of decision-making, whether they are necessary, and how to choose the right guardian or conservator.

Both sessions will be presented by Richard Schwartz, Attorney at Law. For further information, contact Hiram Bond at (310) 543-0649.

Jewish Free Loan Association

Children with Special Needs Loan Fund

This fund was established so families of all faiths have help available with expenses when caring for a child with special needs. Whether expenses are due to challenges in learning or specific healthcare costs not covered by insurance or government assistance, JFLA can assist you through an *interest-free* loan.



We can make the puzzle fit.

The *Children with Special Needs Loan Fund* can assist with *interest-free* loans of up to \$10,000 per family for:

- Diagnostic Expenses
 - Funding to purchase specialized vehicles
 - Home improvement expenses for medical necessity
- Assistive Technology and Durable Medical Equipment Needs
- Funding for behavioral supports, shadows and/or inclusion specialists

Qualifications for a JFLA loan:

Borrowers must reside in the Greater Los Angeles area.

One or two co-signers are required based on the amount of the loan request.

Borrowers must have the ability to repay the loan.

How to Apply:

Call the JFLA office at (323) 761-8830 to schedule an appointment with a Loan Analyst to receive help with a one-page application and a promissory note.

Take your application to your local co-signer(s) to sign a guarantee for the loan.

Return the completed application to be reviewed by a Loan Committee.

City Location:

6505 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 715
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(323) 761-8830
Fax (323) 761-8841

www.jfla.org

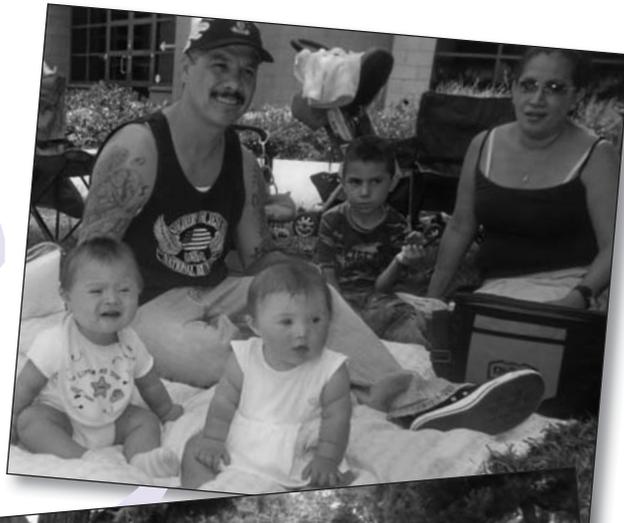
Valley Location:

22622 Vanowen Street
West Hills, CA 91307
(818) 464-3331
Fax (818) 464-3374

HRC'S DOWN SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP First Annual Family Picnic in the Park

The HRC Down Syndrome Support Group hosted their First Annual Family Picnic on Saturday, July 22nd, at Wilson Park in Torrance. Six families spent the morning and early afternoon relaxing and socializing under the trees. Most of the families chose to purchase their lunches while browsing through the Farmers' Market. One family brought out the portable hibachi and prepared a great lunch for anyone who wanted it! Co-facilitators Marcy Good and Kerry Ryerson brought home-made cookies and brownies for everyone.

The Down Syndrome Support Group is a very friendly, social group that is interested in continuing to learn about positive ways to improve the lives of all people with Down syndrome. The group meets every second Thursday of the month from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. The meetings are held at HRC Torrance in Conference Room A2. For more information, please call Kerry Ryerson at (310) 543-0686 or e-mail her at kerry.ryerson@harborrc.org ■



(top) 8-month-old Isaac Godoy makes a new friend, 6-month-old Holly Dempsey, as Patrick, Anita and Esteban Godoy relax in the shade. Steven Vilorio and mom Renee made it a day out for their dog, too!

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER PARENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

Come and enjoy informative presentations and lively discussions.
Share resources and information. Enlarge your circle of support. Come join us!!!

Autism, South Bay: for parents who are raising a child with autism

2nd Tuesday, 6:30-8:30; A2, HRC Torrance
Arwen Davis (310) 792-4508, Kristina Kilmer (310) 792-4509

Autism and Schools, Long Beach: for parents with school-aged children with autism

2nd Thursday, 6:30-8:30; HRC Long Beach
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
Kerry Ryerson (310) 543-0686

A Few Friends: for parents who are raising children who have a rare genetic disorder

4th Thursday, 6:30-8:30; A2, HRC Torrance
LeAnn Taylor (310) 792-4530, Niima Radford (310) 792-4588

Unidad y Fuerza: meetings are held in Spanish with topics focusing on developmental disabilities

4th Wednesday, 6:30-8:30; Miller Children's' Hospital Resource Center
Pablo Ibanez (310) 792-4558, William Martinez (310) 543-0627

Single Parents: for single parents who are raising a child with a developmental disability

1st Thursday, 6:30-8:30; HRC Long Beach
Ed Swan (310) 792-4547

Adult Siblings: for siblings who are caregivers of a disabled person

4th Thursday, 6:30-8:30; A1, HRC Torrance
Kent Yamashiro (310) 543-0687, Audrey Clurfeld (310) 543-0616

Dads: for dads raising a child with a developmental disability

1st meeting Sunday, September 17, 6:30-8:30; A2, HRC Torrance
Pablo Ibanez (310) 792-4558

Sibling Club: for siblings, ages 6-16, of HRC clients

For more information, please contact your HRC Counselor.

Meetings are for parents and caregivers of Harbor Regional Center clients. All meetings are free. For more information about a particular meeting please contact the facilitator indicated.

Limited childcare is available by calling Gail Parker at (310) 543-0643. For information about other area support groups please contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691. ■

RESOURCE CENTER ANNEX

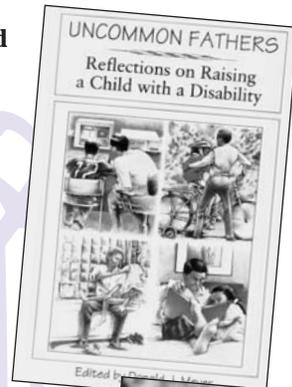
The Harbor Regional Center Resource Center is pleased to announce the opening in September of our new Annex. The Annex will be inside the Harbor Regional Center Training Center located at 1155 E. San Antonio Drive, Suite B in Long Beach.

A large selection of materials, videos and toys will be available for check-out at the new Annex. In addition, patrons may search the Resource Center catalog online and then contact us to ask for a specific item to be brought to the Long Beach Annex for them to check out.

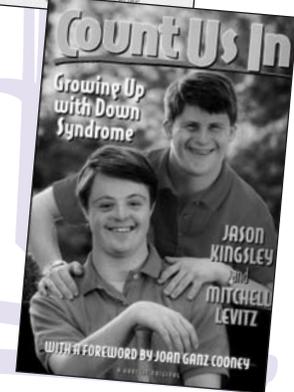
The Long Beach Annex will be open one day per week for select hours. Please call the Resource Center at (310) 543-0691 for further information. ■

MATERIALS FEATURED AT THE NEW ANNEX

Uncommon Fathers: Reflections on Raising a Child with a Disability is a collection of essays by fathers who were asked to reflect and write about the life-altering experience of having a child with a disability. Nineteen fathers offer their thoughts and perspectives on raising children with special needs in this easy to read book.



Count Us In: Growing Up with Down Syndrome has been called "A celebration of triumph over expectations." In this book two young men with Down syndrome share their thoughts, feelings, hopes and dreams about what matters most in their lives. Their thoughts are similar to most young people as they approach adulthood but they also reflect the special challenges of growing up with a disability. ■



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.



Several gold medals were won by the South Bay Special Olympics team at the State Games. Participants above included: Erin Rice, Pam Masuda, Jennifer Bleidistel, Stephanie Mooney, Amanda Gonzalez, Janette Johnson, Coach Jack Beaudelaire, Katrina Gonzalez, Stephanie Stoltz, Sean Tamer, Jason Martinez, Area Director Phil Duthie, Christin Martinez, Vanessa Knight, Coach Melody Davis and Amanda Cassanova.

Jewish Free Loan Association

Fondo para niños con necesidades especiales

Este fondo fue establecido para que familias de todas religiones puedan tener ayuda con los gastos asociados con un niño que tiene necesidades especiales.

JFLA puede ayudarle con un préstamo **sin intereses** para los gastos debido a desafíos en aprendizaje o los gastos para la salud no pagados por los seguros ni el gobierno.



Podemos ayudar.

El fondo para niños con necesidades especiales puede ayudar con préstamos sin intereses hasta \$10,000 a cada familia para:

- Gastos Diagnósticos
- Fondos para comprar un vehículo especializado
- Aumentos de casa para necesidades medicales
- Tecnológica especializada y durable equipo medical
- Fondos para apoya conductual, ayudantes y especialistas de inclusión

Los requisitos para un préstamo de JFLA:

Tiene que vivir en la región de Los Angeles.

Es necesario tener una o dos co-signers según el préstamo pedido.

Tiene que tener la capacidad de devolver el dinero con un pago mensual.

Para pedir un préstamo:

Llame a la oficina de JFLA (323) 761-8830 para hacer una cita con una analista y recibir ayuda con una aplicación de una página.

Lleve su aplicación a sus co-signers para que ellos puedan firmar una garantía para el préstamo.

Devuelve la aplicación completa para ser revisada por el comité.

City Location:

6505 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 715
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(323) 761-8830
Fax (323) 761-8841

www.jfla.org

Valley Location:

22622 Vanowen Street
West Hills, CA 91307
(818) 464-3331
Fax (818) 464-3374

No hablan Español en esta oficina. Favor de contretarlos teniendo asistencia en Inglés.

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- Patricia Del Monico
Executive Director

BOARD MEETINGS

September 19, 2006 – 8:00 am
 October 17, 2006 – 6:30 pm
 November 21, 2006 – 8:00 am
 No Meeting in December

The Board of Trustees of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc. meets regularly 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.

EditorsNancy Spiegel
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HARBOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOUNDATION, INC.
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