

IN ORDER TO ASSIST ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN REACHING THEIR INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INDEPENDENCE, THE MISSION OF COMMUNITY INTERFACE SERVICES IS TO PROVIDE QUALITY, INDIVIDUALIZED, COMMUNITY BASED SUPPORT AND TRAINING IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, COMMUNITY LIVING, AND OTHER RELATED SERVICES.

a publication of community interface services

Community Focus

fall 2005

to our stakeholders

Court Rules Against Persons With Disabilities

In a shocking decision that disappointed persons with disabilities and their service providers throughout California and across the nation, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on August 2, 2005, that persons with disabilities cannot sue the state to enforce equal-access and quality-of-care standards set by Congress in federal law. The decision was handed down by a three-judge panel in the Sanchez vs. Johnson lawsuit, which was filed in May 2000 by a group of California residents with developmental disabilities and agencies which provide services to those with developmental disabilities.

Essentially, the Sanchez suit claimed that by providing inadequate funding for community-based services, California subjected persons with developmental disabilities to unnecessary institutionalization. According to the suit, inadequate state reimbursement rates for community-based care compared to institutional care have led to extreme pay differentials, with community staff being paid 54% less than employees at state institutions. The low pay has led to staffing shortages and high staff turnover in community-based Medi-Cal funded programs, and has ultimately resulted in limited access to living options in the community for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The judges in this case decided that when Congress approved the Home and Community Based Services Waiver Program, which allows for a variety of noninstitutional services for persons who would otherwise be eligible for institutional care, it was not intended for the law to be enforceable by individuals. The judges found that the language in the law is not specific enough to put states on notice that they may be liable for not following the provisions of the law.

This ruling sidestepped the much larger, and potentially very expensive, issue of underfunding community services such that individuals with developmental disabilities have no choice but to continue to live in institutions. Rather than address that thorny issue, the judges ruled on a technicality of the law, saying that even though the state of California

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New San Diego Office Opens!

Community Interface Services is pleased to announce the opening of a satellite office in the Hillcrest area of San Diego. The new office provides work and meeting space for staff and service recipients in the San Diego area. Community Interface Services has partnered with Deaf Community Services to acquire the new office at 3930 Fourth Avenue, Suite 300, San Diego.

The office will not be staffed full-time, so customers should still consider Community Interface's main office in Carlsbad as the point of contact (see contact information in margin to left). Arrangements can be made for Community Interface employees to meet service recipients, other service providers and Regional Center staff at the San Diego office as needed. Community Interface Services is happy to have formed this partnership with another community-minded nonprofit, and looks forward to working with its new "roommate." Thanks to Deaf Community Services for making this space available.

YOU CAN REACH COMMUNITY INTERFACE SERVICES AT:

2621 ROOSEVELT STREET
CARLSBAD, CA 92008
VOICE (760) 729-3866
TOLL FREE (888) 676-3786
TDD (760) 729-7155
FAX (760) 729-8526
JOBLINE (760) 729-4295
info@communityinterfaceservices.org

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT:

www.communityinterfaceservices.org



Community Focus

Editors

Rojane Jackson

Kim Larsen

Bruce Willbrant

We want to make sure that the news and information in Community Focus is as accessible as possible to everyone in the community.

We are glad to provide a reading service to individuals who need it.

Reading service for Community Focus can be provided in our office or over the phone. Please call (760) 729-3866 to make arrangements.



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of San Diego County

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COMMUNITY INTERFACE SERVICES
IS A NONPROFIT CORPORATION
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may be illegally denying rights to persons with developmental disabilities, there is nothing those individuals can do to enforce the law.

The decision is a major blow to individuals with severe disabilities who seek to live in community settings like everyone else. But the case is not over. The lawyers for the plaintiffs are currently exploring options and may ask for a hearing before a larger panel of circuit judges or the U.S. Supreme Court. Community Interface Services, along with other service providers throughout the state, will continue to advocate for people with developmental disabilities to live in the community and will continue to report any new developments in this newsletter.

supported employment

Hard Work and Support Contributes to Job Success

Community Interface Services' Supported Employment program helps adults with developmental disabilities become more independent in the community through competitive paid employment. The program tailors support to the specific needs of each individual and employer. Johnny Malauulu, a service recipient in Supported Employment, began his career at Wal-Mart in 1994 working part-time as a greeter. Back then, Johnny was supported by another agency, but then he decided to go it on his own.



Johnny on the job.

However, over time Johnny's job became more difficult and stressful, and he decided he could use some assistance again. In March 2004, he chose to work with Community Interface Services and has had a job coach helping him on the job since that time.

Johnny has worked in just about every department at Wal-Mart over the past 11 years, helping out in Health and Beauty, Garden, Maintenance, Toys, Food, Men's Wear, Pharmacy, and currently in Customer Service and Returns. When Johnny worked in the Food department, he found a wonderful mentor who taught him about the value of doing a good job and taking pride in his work. He has hung on to this work ethic over the years, and it has served him well.

Recently, Johnny had an opportunity to return to his old high school, Oceanside's El Camino High, to talk to students in a Special Education class. The students were very curious about how he was able to maintain a job for 11 years. Johnny responded, "Hard work, dedication, and support from family, friends, and my job coach."

Supported Employment Encourages Advocacy

In the ideal job, an employee gets far more than just a paycheck. Such is the case with Daniel Reyes, who also receives support through Community Interface Services' Supported Employment program. Since June 2003, Daniel has been employed by Job Options, Inc., as a dining room attendant at "The Scullery" on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

Daniel likes his job and his coworkers, and his job coach has encouraged him to advocate for himself at work. Daniel has taken to self-advocacy like a fish to water, and lived out a dream when he was selected by his employer—for the second year in a row—to participate in the Grassroots Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C. last summer. The Conference was sponsored by NISH, a national nonprofit agency whose mission is to create employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities by securing federal work contracts for a network of community-based nonprofit agencies.

At the conference, Daniel attended workshops on how to present himself when meeting with elected officials. There he had the privilege of meeting Congressman Bob Filner, Congresswoman Mary Bono, and Senator Dianne Feinstein. Daniel learned that people in Congress live for a real-life story from the frontlines and that is exactly what he gave them. As a registered voter, Daniel encourages everyone to vote and to communicate with their elected officials. He has a favorite quote, the words of Woodrow Wilson: "You are here to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, and with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world."



Daniel (second from left) meets Congressman Bob Filner (center).



Daniel (second from left) meets Senator Dianne Feinstein (center).

In addition to advocating for persons with disabilities, Daniel also found some time to see the sites in D.C. He took a tour of the city, and visited the Lincoln Memorial, the National Air and Space Museum, Union Station, and The Pavillion at the Old Post Office. The experience was especially exciting for Daniel, since one of his long-term goals is to eventually work in Washington as an intern and later to get a position where he can stand up for the rights of persons with disabilities. Good for you, Daniel—looks like you are well on your way!

Attending a Supported Living orientation is required for service recipients or families that are interested in securing Regional Center funded Supported Living services. The orientation provides an excellent opportunity to learn more about Supported Living services, as well as to meet various Supported Living service providers.

All orientations are held 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the San Diego Regional Center Board Room at 4355 Ruffin Rd., Suite 100, San Diego. The next orientations are:

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2006

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2006

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2006

To register for an upcoming session, please call the SDRC Training Line at (858) 576-2805, or contact your service coordinator for more information.

If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, your service coordinator can arrange an individual orientation for you at your convenience.

LOCAL HOUSING AGENCIES

To request Section 8 rental assistance information, an application, or to update your existing application, please contact the housing authority office for the area in which you live.

CARLSBAD (includes La Costa)
CARLSBAD HOUSING AGENCY
2965 ROOSEVELT STREET, SUITE B
CARLSBAD, CA 92008
(760) 434-2934

WWW.CI.CARLSBAD.CA.US/CSERV/HOUSING.HTML

Due to federal cuts in Section 8 funding, Carlsbad's Section 8 waiting list was closed effective 10/1/05.

ENCINITAS (includes Leucadia, Cardiff, and Olivehain)
ENCINITAS HOUSING DEPARTMENT
505 S. VULCAN AVENUE
ENCINITAS, CA 92024
(760) 633-2723

WWW.CI.ENCINITAS.CA.US

OCEANSIDE
OCEANSIDE HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
321 N. NEVADA STREET
OCEANSIDE, CA 92054
(760) 435-3360
WWW.CI.OCEANSIDE.CA.US/HOUSING/DEFAULT.ASP

SAN DIEGO CITY
SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION
1625 NEWTON AVENUE
SAN DIEGO, CA 92113
(619) 578-7305
BY MAIL: P.O. BOX 129017
SAN DIEGO, CA 92112-9017
WWW.SDHC.NET/HARENTASSIST1.SHTML

Program Evaluation Measures Excellence

The annual evaluation of Community Interface's programs provides the agency a great opportunity to review each program's objectives and results. For example, this year's evaluation of the Supported Employment program was the most extensive yet, going into even greater detail to meet the requirements of CARF, the agency responsible for accrediting supported employment programs in California. The evaluation results show the program has continued to produce excellent results while meeting the challenges posed by significant growth.

Supported Employment actually provides two distinct services, Individual Placements which provide one-on-one job coaching, and Group Placements which provide job coaching to small groups of four to eight individuals all working at the same jobsite. During the 2004–2005 fiscal year, 107 individuals were served in Individual Placements, an increase of 15 from last year. Twenty-nine individuals were served in Group Placements, an increase of one from the previous year.

The key to the excellence from both services is quality staff. The education levels of the Supported Employment staff ranged from 12–18 years, with an average of 15 years. Supported Employment staff also had a high level of experience, ranging from one to 23 years, with an average of eight years. Another component critical to excellent services is the employers—Supported Employment really could not exist without supportive employers! Over the past year, employers included:

**Albertsons • Area Board XIII
Bally Total Fitness • Big Lots
Boys and Girls Club • Job Options
Carl's Jr. • Carlsbad Library
CinemaStar Movie Theaters • Fry's Electronics
GAP • Invitrogen • Jag's Diner
Kmart • Kohl's • Long's Drugs
Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton
Marriott's Brighton Gardens • Marshalls • McDonald's
Mr. Charlie's Chinese Restaurant
Noah's Arc • North County Health Systems
PetsMart • Pizza Hut
RAE Autobody • Ross
Shadowridge Veterinary Hospital
Sports Services • Staples • Stater Brothers
Taco Bell • Target • Toys-R-Us
Ultra Star Theaters
Veteran's Administration Hospital
Vons • Wal-Mart • The Wild Animal Park
Wendy's • 3-E Company**

An important part of Program Evaluation is the analysis of service recipient and customer satisfaction. Throughout the year, especially at planning team meetings, staff distribute satisfaction surveys to service recipients, family members, employers, and other service providers. The surveys provide a way for customers to give feedback on individual services, what's going great, and what could be improved. A summary of the results indicates 97% of service recipients reported overall satisfaction, while 99% of general stakeholders (family members, other service providers, etc.) and employers reported overall satisfaction. Here are some of the highlights from service recipient surveys:

100% said they are happy with the services they are receiving.

100% said they are learning to advocate for themselves and make their own decisions.

87% said they were satisfied with their job search and that they liked where they worked.

100% said they are happy with their Community Interface support team and they would not change the services they are receiving.

And here are a few comments from other customers, including employers, families, and service providers:

“Good quality services, provided by caring staff.”

“The staff is very pleasant to work with.”

“You all never fail to amaze me with your creativity and support.”

“I feel that staff really try to make situations work despite challenges.”

“Everyone listens and responds in a timely fashion.”

While satisfaction with services is very important, the Program Evaluation also takes a close look at effectiveness and efficiency of services. In the Group Placement evaluation, all effectiveness and efficiency measures were exceeded. Especially noteworthy were the length of time on the job (average of 25.17 months) and average wage (\$8.90/hour). In Individual Placements, an average of 4.3 months was needed to find jobs, and individuals had been employed at their jobs for an average of 22 months with an average wage of \$7.64 per hour.

Community Interface Services is proud of the quality work done by its staff and service recipients in the Supported Employment program, and their commitment to excellence is reflected in these reports. If you would like your own copy of the Program Evaluations, please contact the agency at (760) 729-3866 or toll free at (888) 676-3786.

feedback

Tell Us What You Think!

Inside this newsletter, you'll find a copy of our Customer Satisfaction Survey, and we'd really appreciate hearing from you. Feedback from all customers—service recipients, family members, other service providers, and employers—is essential in order for Community Interface Services to deliver the highest quality services. Survey results are reviewed and acted upon throughout the year by agency administrative staff, and then tabulated in the end of year Program Evaluations and Annual Reports. Completed surveys can be mailed or faxed back, or given to any Community Interface Services staff member.

MORE LOCAL HOUSING AGENCIES

SAN DIEGO COUNTY (includes Chula Vista, Coronado, Del Mar, El Cajon, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Poway, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, Vista, and the unincorporated areas of the county)

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
3989 RUFFIN ROAD
SAN DIEGO, CA 92123-1890
(877) 478-5478
WWW.CO.SAN-DIEGO.CA.US/SDHCD/INDEX_RENTER.HTML

NATIONAL CITY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
140 E. 12TH STREET, SUITE B
NATIONAL CITY, CA 91950-3312
(619) 336-4250
WWW.CI.NATIONAL-CITY.CA.US

Just Ask Us...

Community Interface Services welcomes inquiries from the public regarding agency services. If you have questions about what we do, how we do it, or suggestions about how we could do things better, please reach us using the contact information on the front page.

The San Diego Housing Commission and the County of San Diego Department of Housing and Community Development have published a great resource on affordable housing in San Diego County. In one book, 2004-2005 AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES, gathers together information on Section 8 rental assistance, public housing, shared housing, homeownership assistance, and property repair and rehabilitation. The publication covers all of San Diego County, and is a great starting point for persons looking for affordable housing in the area. A link to this great new resource can be found online at www.communityhousingpartnership.org.

staff news

End of an Era in Independent Living

Anybody who has worked with Community Interface Services' Independent Living program is no doubt familiar with Darcy Dahlen, who has served as a supervisor of the program since May 1996. For almost ten years, Darcy has been synonymous with Independent Living. She started with the agency in November 1994 and worked as an Independent Living Resource Counselor for a year and a half before being promoted to supervisor. Her unflinching positive attitude, compassion, and dedication have made her a great asset to the agency, loved by service recipients, coworkers, and other service providers alike.

Well, all good things must come to an end...but sometimes that leads to other good things. Darcy is moving on to another stage in her life—she and her husband are expecting their first “bundle of joy” in April, and she has decided to stop working full-time so she can stay at home to raise her child. While her coworkers were happy for her, there was also concern about finding someone who could possibly fill her shoes.

But sometimes, amazingly, all things work out. Community Interface Services is truly lucky to be welcoming back Michelle Flores to take over for Darcy. Michelle worked as one of Darcy's Resource Counselors from January 2001 through July 2005, when she left to work for her growing family business. During her time as a Resource Counselor, Michelle was a stellar employee in all respects, earning her a place as one of the agency's Top Ten employees of all time. It was a big loss to the agency when she left, but fortunately, by the time Darcy announced her plans, Michelle's situation had changed and she was eager and able to come back (she missed us!)

Even while finishing a Masters degree in Business Administration, Michelle has jumped right into her new job like a pro, benefitting from her years of direct service experience, her degree in psychology, and from Darcy's training and support during the transition period. Darcy will be sorely missed, but with Michelle stepping in and the ongoing support of longtime supervisor Judy Jamell, there is no doubt the Independent Living service recipients and staff will be in excellent hands. Darcy will be here full-time through March 2006—helping out in Independent Living, Supported Living, or wherever needed. After that time she will only be working part-time to help with new employee orientation and other special projects, so be sure to give her a call and wish her well!



Michelle Flores

Accolades to Recent Employees of the Quarter...



Illiana Keenan

Illiana Keenan came to Community Interface Services about two years ago, starting out as a vocational resource counselor and transferring after a year to independent living. She has a BA in psychology and previously worked as a job coach. Illiana is very dedicated, working long hours including a lot of overtime, subbing for coworkers, and basically doing whatever needs to be done to cover cases. Her communication with service recipients, family members, and service coordinators is top-notch, and she manages to stay on top of her paperwork and quickly adapt to any changes, all while keeping a positive attitude.

Shannon Foster joined the agency about two and a half years ago as a vocational RC, helping a group of three individuals with developmental disabilities to build community and work skills. She keeps her group actively involved in the community, helping them find both volunteer and paid work. Her service recipients have made great progress with her patient support—she has a gentle encouraging way that really helps bring out the best in those she works with. Shannon is very flexible and willing to help out with other vocational groups or picking up service recipients, or working extra hours when needed—always with a smile and never complaining. She can always be counted on, a true asset to Vocational Services and Community Interface!



Shannon Foster

...and to the Best of the Best!

Community Interface Services recognizes exceptional employees (like Shannon and Iliana, see above) on a quarterly basis. But occasionally an employee is just so good that the agency must recognize him or her as “the best of the best.” The agency’s administrative team takes many factors into consideration, looking at an individual’s attitude, skills, excellence in service delivery, teamwork, flexibility, etc. Recently, Community Interface Services named two more employees to its Top Ten list.

Betty Barney started as a job coach in the Supported Employment program about two and a half years ago, and despite having no direct prior experience in the field, she has developed into an extremely solid and efficient worker. She quietly does an exceptional job, never missing a beat and always willing to help out with those last minute emergencies. Betty is a great communicator and very patient, which really serves her well working with all the employers and families to smooth over whatever difficult situations come up. Her paperwork is flawless, and she is a great team player and communicator, a wonderful role model for new staff.

Jessica Brittsan joined the Community Interface team as a resource counselor in the Independent Living program almost five years ago. From day one, she has radiated enthusiasm, and quickly grew into a strong, hard-working professional. Jessica is one of those rare people who always seems to be smiling and laughing, and her attitude is a great positive influence on those around her. She works long hours helping her service recipients resolve many difficult situations, but is always eager to help out her coworkers in any way possible.



Jessica Brittsan

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 2006
 SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2006
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2006
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2006
 SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2006
 SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2006
 SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2006
 SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2006
 SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2006
 SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2006
 SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006
 SATURDAY, JULY 8, 2006
 SATURDAY, JULY 22, 2006
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2006
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2006
 SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2006
 SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2006
 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2006
 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2006
 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2006
 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2006

All classes are open to the public and are held at the Community Interface Services office. All CPR classes start at 10:00 a.m., first aid classes start at 12:00 p.m. Call Lenore at (760) 729-3866 to register.

*The cost with preregistration is:
 CPR \$17,
 First Aid \$17,
 combined CPR/First Aid class \$30.*

*The cost without preregistration is:
 CPR \$20,
 First Aid \$20,
 combined CPR/First Aid class \$35.*



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Carlsbad, CA 92008-1660

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Community Interface Services

directory of services

Detailed information on services may be obtained by calling the service contact person at (760) 729-3866 or by visiting our web site at www.communityinterfaceservices.org.

Vocational and Transitional Services *info@communityinterfaceservices.org*

Community Integration Training—

Vocational and community integration skills training in community based settings.

Contact: Cheryl Harris

Supported Employment—

One-on-one or group job development and coaching support in competitive paid employment.

Contact: Christine Barry

Community Housing Partnership *housing@communityinterfaceservices.org* *www.communityhousingpartnership.org*

Assistance accessing Section 8 waitlists and individual home ownership; available to all Regional Center service recipients.

Contact: Bruce Willbrant

Community Living *info@communityinterfaceservices.org*

Individually tailored support arrangements with a commitment to service recipient empowerment and choice. Services assist people with developmental disabilities to have lifestyles and living situations like those without disabilities.

Independent Living—

Skills training typically ranging from 2 to 65 hours per month.

Contact: Judy Jamell

Supported Living—

Support for individuals with comprehensive needs not typically met through independent living services.

Contact: Chris Lubinski

Fiscal Management Service

For individuals participating in Self-Determination for assistance with bill paying and employer of record services.

Contact: Kim Larsen