The sunflower is known as the happy flower. They symbolize adoration, loyalty, and longevity, which is the perfect example of "DRC’s Executive Director and her staff, who all share those qualities." (Quote taken from staff member) The word, “strong,” should have been added, because “Stronger Together” proved to be true at DRC’s 43rd Annual Awards Dinner on May 16th. See the article and pictures on Page 2. I’m sure sunflowers are also stronger together!

We started 2019 with enhancing our longstanding collaboration with Southern California Edison (SCE), where we already provide the Energy Assistance Program (EAP), by applying for and receiving a grant to present customer education regarding electricity rate options as a Community-Based Organization. The EAP lifeline assists individuals and families experiencing difficulty in meeting their electric utility bills with a one-time, once-annual payment directly to their accounts. However, customer education on factors affecting electricity needs and rates provides long-term knowledge and options that not only can help reduce consumers’ utility bills, but also give them the keys to independence that stem from the power of choice.

In March 2019, DRC was selected to partner with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) to engage the community for the Vote Center Placement Project (VCPP), as part of the Voting Solutions for All People (VSAP) Initiative. For this project, DRC facilitates community meetings in Long Beach, Lakewood, Signal Hill, and Wilmington, to encourage public participation in identifying the most suitable locations for vote centers to be implemented in 2020. See picture of DRC’s presentation at McBride Park on Page 3.

Through the Center’s newly received CalFresh Expansion Grant, DRC and the other ILCs will conduct pre-screening with current consumers, including SSI/SSP recipients, to determine their eligibility for CalFresh benefits, in partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS).

With all that said, the foregoing events of the past year have helped make us what we are today, in a great financial position, and thus able to provide high quality, caring, and enhanced programs and services to persons with all disabilities, free of charge. As we become truly “Stronger Together,” let us gather to raise our voices in concert, to enhance and increase the crucial cause of equality and independence for persons with all disabilities, not only in our community, but across all boundaries. See picture on page 3 of DRC Advocates with others across the state, meeting at the Capitol and raising their voices.

We thank every one of our partners, advocates, collaborators, contributors, funders, donors, supporters, volunteers, and Board of Directors for all of the help rendered to DRC and our consumers in the past year. Please see the enclosed Goldenrod insert for a list of our awesome Dinner Sponsors and Supporters, as well as Contributors throughout the year. These names are also on DRC’s website, along with DRC’s Annual Report, a recap of the year 2018-2019. We are proud of what we have accomplished, but to build on that legacy of success, we need to continue our fruitful collaboration with all of you who have been helping us realize our Mission.

In solidarity, Dolores

Dolores Nason, Executive Director
DRC’s 43rd Annual Awards Dinner “Stronger Together” was a huge success, and our best! Executive Director, Dolores Nason, is often heard saying, “It only took us 43 years to get it right!”

DRC’s Dinner on May 16, 2019 at the Grand, resulted in a record number of attendees, and the most money raised in the history of the Annual Awards Dinner. Thanks to YOU (our readers), DRC’s Board of Directors, Staff, Volunteers, Sponsors, Donors, Attendees, and our theme “Stronger Together” really came true. Aida Berduo Berry was our Awards Dinner Chair, and guests were welcomed by DRC’s Board of Director’s President Gail Morrison. Attendees were encouraged to support DRC’s theme by wearing red, black, or white. The Executive Director, Dolores Nason, introduced the dignitaries and special guests, who overflowed the ballroom. We loved seeing children in attendance such as, Councilwoman Jeannine Pearce with her little girl, and Board Member Robert Graves with his 5-year-old son.

The Awards Dinner included fabulous Silent Auction items, and highlighted this year’s Awardee Nominees. David Sanfilippo was Master of Ceremonies (MC), and did a fabulous job of inserting his own humor and witty commentary throughout the evening. Opportunity Tickets were randomly drawn and announced as well. DRC’s volunteer Mina Escobeda was elated when she won 2 round-trip tickets on JetBlue Airways; she can now fulfill her dream of visiting her brother in Florida.

The Civic Leadership Award was awarded to Supervisor Janice Hahn, 4th District, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The award was accepted on behalf of Supervisor Hahn, by Herlinda Chico, Field Deputy. DRC’s Community Service Award included co-nominees Delano Wesley, Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Department of Rehabilitation, Long Beach District Office, and Tony Banash, Metro Citizens Advisory Council (CAC). Each awardee gave a heartfelt speech as the room listened with appreciation.

Del Wesley expressed his gratitude to DRC and stated, “I truly believe that we can all rise together. There is a place for everyone at the table.” Tony Banash, a well-known community leader shared his appreciation when he accepted the Community Service Award for his work in the community. DRC’s Jerry Stein Independent Living Award was awarded to the Moges siblings, both professors with the American Sign Language (ASL) Program at California State University, Long Beach. DRC’s Sign Language Interpreter, Zaid Moges was honored to voice as she interpreted for her siblings who are Deaf. As each awardee gave their speech, the audience was so enthralled that one could have heard a pin drop in the room. “Say yes to your dreams,” stated her brother Awet Tsegay Moges. He went onto to say, “Others will say no, so you have to be strong enough to say yes to your dreams.” Rezet Tsegay Moges-Riedel declared in her speech, “Diversity includes people with disabilities, so everyone should be included in the workplace. Who is ready to join the fight.” The room suddenly exploded with cheers. Upon completion of their speeches, in a touching gesture from the audience, they appropriately raised their hands and shouted loudly by waving and shaking their hands in the air with excitement for the awardees (A common gesture for people with hearing loss).

Outstanding Volunteer Service Award included co-nominees Shela Ellard, and Greg Kozlowski, over 20 year longtime volunteers at DRC. The awardees conveyed their appreciation to the Executive Director, Dolores Nason, and their gratitude for being able to volunteer at the Center, which they say has changed their lives. Lastly, the Outstanding Military Veteran Scholarship award was given to Cesar Rocha, who indicated to attendees, “Remember to take time to thank those who have served.”

The Awards Dinner ended with attendees joyfully meeting awardees, their families, and mingling with other guests. “Thank you to everyone who made our 43rd Annual Awards Dinner so very successful this year! Together, we are stronger,” exclaimed Executive Director, Dolores Nason.
Welcome New Faces at DRC

Please join us in welcoming our three new Board of Directors Members: Robert Graves, Director of Operations, Department of California, Disabled American Veterans; Kellie Irving, Regulatory Compliance and Civil Rights Officer, Long Beach Transit; and Mary Zendejas, Long Beach Transit Board of Directors, and Executive Director and Founder, Professional Abilities Association of America.

We welcome our newest staff member, Guadalupe “Lupe” Gracian. Lupe is DRC’s new, friendly, and bilingual Receptionist.

We graduated five interns, and welcome two new interns, who will be serving during the Summer Session: Jennifer Solorzano and Sara Rosas.

DRC and LA County presenting a VSAP presentation

DRC Staff and the LA County RR/CC Office partner together to present a Voting Solutions for All People presentation at McBride Park. In 2020 the voting system will change. There will be no more Polling Places. Now there will only be Voting Centers that will allow you to vote up to 10 days earlier. You will also be able to vote at any Voting Center in your area. Also, you will also be able to register and vote on the same day.

Disability & Aging Capital Action Day in Sacramento

Disabled Resources Center, Inc., staff and volunteers met with Assemblymember Patrick O’Donnell’s Legislative Aide, Christine Aurre, at the State Capital Office in Sacramento. Aurre said that Assemblymember O’Donnell supports us and the Disabled Community.
Calendar of Events

ONGOING EVENTS
*WEEKLY GROUP ORIENTATION for new consumers - Every THURSDAY @ 9:00 AM
HOUSING WORKSHOP EVERY FRIDAY @ 9:00 am
SMART DEVICES WORKSHOP EVERY 3RD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 1:00 pm
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES JOB SEARCH EVERY 2ND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 9:00 am
*WEEKLY SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULES:
MEN’S, WOMEN’S, AND CO-ED SUPPORT GROUPS - Every WEDNESDAY FROM 1:00PM-4:00PM
COMPUTER CLASSES ARE ON WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY FROM 9:30 AM-11:00 AM OR 1:30PM-3:00PM

June 2019
3rd—PASC Board Meeting @ Hall of Admin @ 1:00pm
4th—Electon Day (Go out and Vote)
5th—Homeless Coalition Meeting @ Goodwill @ 9:00am
6th—GO LBC Transitional Youth Program @ Tucker
8th—Toastmasters Gavel Club @ DRC @ 10:00 am-11:30 am
11th—Measure M Policy Advisory Committee@1:30pm@Metro
13th—GO LBC Transitional Youth Program @ Tucker School
14th—DRC Advocacy Group Meeting @ Neighborhood Resource Center @ 2:30pm-4:00pm
17th—Access Services Board Meeting @ LA Metro
19th—Monthly Smart Devices Workshop @ 1:00 pm
20th—Supervisor Janice Hahn Commissioners Reception @ Hall of Administrations @ 5:00pm
28th—DRC Volunteer BBQ Luncheon @ 11:30am

July 2019
1st—PASC Board Meeting @ Hall of Admin @ 1:00pm
1st —Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class every Monday @ 10:00am-11:30am for 8 weeks
3rd—Homeless Coalition Meeting @ Goodwill
4th—Independence Day (Center Closed)
8th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class every Monday @ 10:00am-11:30am for 8 weeks
11th—GO LBC Transitional Youth Summer Program @ Tucker School
12th—DRC Advocacy Group Meeting @ Neighborhood Resource Center @ 2:30pm-4:00pm
13th—Toastmasters Gavel Club @ DRC @ 10:00 am-11:30 am
15th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class
15th—Board of Directors Access Services Meeting @ El Monte
17th & 19th—Monthly Job Club @ 8:30 am
18th—GO LBC Transitional Youth Summer Program @ Tucker School
22nd—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class
25th—DRC Board of Directors Monthly Meeting @ 5:30 pm

August 2019
5th—PASC Board Meeting @ Hall of Admin @ 1:00pm
7th—Homeless Coalition Meeting @ Goodwill @ 9:00am
9th—DRC Advocacy Group Meeting @ Neighborhood Resource Center @ 2:30pm-4:00pm
10th—Toastmasters Gavel Club @ DRC @ 10:00 am-11:30 am
12th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class
13th—Measure M Policy Advisory Committee@1:30pm @Metro
19th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class
19th—Board of Directors Access Services Meeting @ El Monte
20th—Monthly Smart Devices Workshop @ 1:00 pm
21st & 23rd— Monthly Job Club @ 8:30 am
22nd—DRC Board of Directors Monthly Meeting @ 5:30 pm
26th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class
30th—Peer Counseling/Stepping Stones to Employment Class

DRC Mission Statement

"To empower people with disabilities to live independently in the community, to make their own decisions about their lives and advocate on their own behalf."
The Board of Directors and Staff of DRC would like to thank the contributors and supporters of the 43rd Annual Awards Dinner.

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Mu Zhang, Encore Awards
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