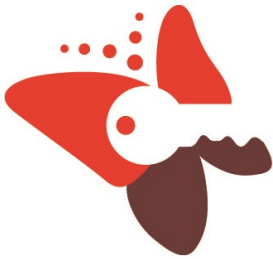


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DRC: Disabled Resources Center

The Key to Independence



Independent Living Center

Winter 2023



Dear Reader,

With the holidays fast approaching, the **Disabled Resources Center, Inc. (DRC)** team marks the festive season, even as we reflect on our achievements of the past year. To share the joy, we invite you to join us in two of our seasonal traditions: the annual **Toy Drive** and the **Holiday Giving program**.

Every year, via the **Toy Drive**, we collect new, unwrapped toys, which are given to the **Friends of Long Beach Firefighters' Spark of Love Toy Program**. Please bring your donations to **DRC**, so we can

help provide gifts to children and youth who would have gone without presents at the holidays. Items specifically for teens are also welcomed and much needed.

Since **DRC** switched to digital newsletters, instead of printed copies, to free more funds for direct consumer services, we provide a link rather than a paper envelope for your much appreciated donations. For more information, and the Donation Link, please see the **DONATE** link below.

[Donate](#)

As we mark the holidays, we also recall some highlights of the year, such as:

Our **47th Annual Awards Recognition Event, "Endless Possibilities,"** raised the second highest amount of money in the history of the Center. We honored disability leaders, volunteers and students in the company of over 150 enthusiastic diners. **Jennifer Kumiyama** served as Event Chair. See Awardees Picture below.



For our **Staff Retreat**, we took **Long Beach Transit** busses, from the Center to downtown Seal Beach and return. We explored Main Street and the Municipal Pier, lunched at **The Hangout**, and got to know each other better outside of the office. See the Staff's Retreat Reports and Pictures below.

Along with all of our hard work, helping to make lives better for our consumers, we had fun dressing up in Halloween costumes.



At the **Lutheran Social Services of Southern California's Gala, "Color of Hope,"** I had the honor of accepting the 2023 H.O.P.E. **Award for DRC.** The event took place at the Mission Inn in Riverside.

We welcomed three new **Board Members: Henry Broadbent, DRC volunteer and former Board Officer; Bryan Root, Disabled American Veterans Service Officer; and Dr. Margaret Vento-Wilson, Assistant Professor, Speech-Language Pathology Department, CSULB.** Please see full list of Board Officers and Members below.

DRC will be closed on the following holidays: Christmas Eve Day (observed), 12/22/2023; Christmas Day, 12/25/2023; New Year's Day, 1/1/2024; Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, 1/15/2024; President's Day, 2/19/2024. See DRC Calendar below.

May the holidays bring peace, love, and joy to your family this season.

Dolores Nason
Executive Director

VIRTUAL HOLIDAY GIVING ENVELOPE! Again, this year, to prioritize our funds for direct consumer support, we are opting for a Virtual Holiday Giving Envelope instead of a paper envelope. To make a donation, [please click HERE](#). If you need help in making your Virtual Donation, please call DRC at 562-427-1000 and we will gladly assist you.

Donate

Staff Retreat

On Friday, October 13, 2023, the Staff participated in the annual DRC Staff Retreat. The Center was closed for the day, so that everyone could go on the Staff Retreat. Our Staff Retreat focused on practical experience with Travel Training and Mobility Management. We took Long Beach Transit public transportation from the Center to downtown Seal Beach and return. Our transportation program at the Center offers all-day Long Beach Transit bus passes, which the staff were able to use for the Retreat.

The trip involved taking two buses in each direction, using regularly scheduled fixed route service. Starting at 9:00 a.m., we took the Long Beach Transit number 131 bus from Spring and Temple to Pacific Coast Highway and Redondo, and there transferred to the Long Beach Transit number 171 bus, which took us the rest of the way to Main and Electric in Seal Beach. Everyone walked and rolled down Main Street, enjoying the fine weather and the shop windows. All but three staff continued on out to the end of the Municipal Pier.

We ate lunch at The Hangout, 901 Ocean Avenue, and savored the delicious food and the companionship of our coworkers. After lunch, we continued our exploration of the sights and shops of Main Street, until it was time to catch the westbound Long Beach Transit number 171 bus and start our trip back to the Center.

As a follow-up, the staff were each asked to submit a written report on their personal observations and experiences during the bus trip, and associated comments. We all agreed that the Staff Retreat was both educational and fun.



Richard Hernandez, Systems Change Advocate

I thought that the trip went very good. The bus driver was very kind and ask if I wanted a seat belt after he tied my wheelchair down. Sometimes I was having trouble positioning my wheelchair and the driver was very helpful he did not pressure me or got upset. He allowed me to take my time and do things right. My wheelchair was really secured and I did not move throughout the trip. I was in a new place, so I did not know the area and I could not see the street names very good while seating. It would have help me if the bus driver would have said the names of the streets at the main bus stops. When we transfer to the second bus, we had to wait a long time for the second bus. I do not mind waiting but I would have like some shade because it

Samantha Mam, Operations Manager

The first bus on Spring St. and Temple Ave that we take was on time, 2 wheelchairs were available, although we have 3 staff that uses wheelchair, but one staff was able to remove her wheels of her chair and was able to find a secure place the wheels. The bus driver was very kind to assist the wheelchair users and secured them nicely and safely and he showed all of us how to scan our day pass. The second connection, we had to wait for 34 minutes because we arrived at the bus stop on Redondo and PCH early. The bus driver on that bus was nice and kind to assist the staff that use wheelchairs and secured them nicely but a little rude to customer who does not know how to scan the day pass. We arrived at our destination early than we

the first bus, the bus stop was very narrow. I had to get on the grass to board the bus. Wheelchairs are very hard to push on grass. Bus stops should be free from grass or rocks, so people can get on the bus safely. Besides all that, it was a positive and great experience for me.

Mario Rodriguez, Assistant Director

Seal Beach Bus Trip. Buses are 100% for wheelchair users. The bus driver was friendly. The bus driver follows the instructions to strap wheelchairs properly. Easy access for wheelchair users to enter and exit the bus.

Gino Elliot, Independent Living Skills / Peer Support / Transitional Youth Coordinator

As I boarded the bus, I felt a sense of satisfaction knowing that I was contributing to the well-being of the planet. This realization added another layer of appreciation to my excellent bus ride experience. Compared to other modes of transportation, riding the bus offered me a cost-effective means of travel. The fare was affordable, allowing me to explore the city without straining my budget. I could

was a little crowded due to Cal State Long Beach students take the same bus. On our way back, the first bus driver was very rude to the passengers but overall, taking the bus was really quick and all the bus was on schedule. Our trip was very successful and had a great time!

Vincent Johnson, Assistive Technology Coordinator

As you know I'm a wheelchair user, and the bus driver did a great job securing my wheelchair and assisting me. The bus drivers were very courteous, they asked where my drop off. The busses were clean, I felt safe getting in and out of the busses. I like Sightseeing let's do it again.

Gail S. Thomas, Administrative Assistant

The busman's holiday of our Staff Retreat this year underlined my longtime conviction that public transit is the way to go. Riding the bus is not only economically and environmentally friendly, but also a great way to sightsee enroute to one's destination. Long Beach Transit's air-conditioned, clean buses took DRC's staff on a Staff Retreat to Seal Beach. The various bus drivers seemed to take care when they secured the chairs of our staff members who are wheelchair users. Arriving at

advantage of bus travel made it an even more appealing option for both locals and tourists alike. My experience riding the bus was nothing short of excellent. From the comfort and convenience, it provided to the scenic views and cultural exchanges, every aspect of the journey contributed to its overall appeal. The bus ride allowed me to explore the city effortlessly while fostering a sense of environmental responsibility. As I disembarked from the bus, I took away unforgettable memories, a broader perspective, and a renewed appreciation for the role of public transportation in connecting people and places.

know each other better outside of the office. The weather was fine and the ocean air invigorating. Let's do this again some other time!

Khanny Ou, Personal Assistant Services

The retreat trip on the bus was great. The bus was on time, clean and the air condition was great.

Adrienne Crew, Job Developer/Benefits Advocate

As a hearing impaired person, I was happy to see that the electronic display stating the name of each stop when we neared the stop's location or intersection.



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Disabled Resources Center Inc.

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Blindness Support Services Arrives at DRC

By: Adrienne Crew

In October, DRC launched a new program providing free services for older adults with visual impairments. Partnering with Blindness Support Services, Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Riverside, California, DRC now offers adults over the age of 55 who live in Los Angeles County with services that empower them to become more independent as they adapt to challenges living with low vision or blindness. As Program Coordinator, I teach visually impaired seniors skills on how to perform daily activities with more independence. For example, I can provide eligible seniors with assistive technology devices such as adaptive cooking items, magnifiers, canes, large print checks and planners, and mobility devices. Other services we offer include basic Braille for labeling purposes, adjustment counseling/peer support services, telephone training, handwriting guides, and referrals to other social service agencies. Recently, I provided a legally blind individual with a white cane and taught her the basics of orientation. She was pleased to receive the cane and used it immediately on her journey home after our meeting. Call me at 562 427-1000 x 111 if you have any questions. I can do an Intake with you over the phone and assess what your needs are.

See What Emergency Preparedness Looks Like



DRC Flex Vote Center

We would like to inform everyone that Disabled Resources Center, Inc. (DRC) is going to be a Flex Vote Center next year for both the Primary Election in March and the General Election in November. We will be collaborating with the Los Angeles County Registrar/Recorder's Office to be able to have DRC as a Voting Center.

Consumers will be able to come and vote in person on the new Voting Machines. They are very accessible and easy to use. You will also be able to drop off your absentee ballot if you choose to, or surrender it and vote on the Voting Machine. But wait, you say that you did not register to vote. No problem, you will be able to register and Vote on the same day. As the Primary gets closer, we will have more information regarding the exact date and time.

Legislative Update

On the State Level

The California Legislature ended its 2023 session wrapping a nine-month period during which state lawmakers debated and passed bills. This session was the first for a wave of new lawmakers and saw changes in top leadership: A new Speaker,

Senate Bill 799 — would extend unemployment benefits to workers who go on strike for more than two weeks.

Senate Bill 616 — would increase the amount of paid sick leave from 3 to 5 days, was passed by lawmakers. Supporters argued the pandemic showed the current minimum was not enough, especially since COVID-19 takes 5-10 days to clear from the system.

Senate Bill 4 — Known as the “Yes In God’s Backyard” bill, or YIGBY, provides a streamlined process for churches, faith institutions and nonprofit colleges to build affordable housing on their land. The bill would open up approximately 171,000 acres of land to affordable housing, according to a recent report.

Assembly Bill 665 — Ensures that mental health access is available to all young people by finally including Medi-Cal recipients to an existing ten-year old policy that has only been available to those with private insurance.

On the Federal Level

The House of Representatives and the Senate were able to pass the Federal Budget. We were able to avoid a Government shutdown. However, this was only a one-month extension. The Republicans and Democrats in Congress need to work together and pass the Federal Budget or there will be a Government shutdown. This will hurt the Disabled Community, Seniors, Children and Veterans.

WHAT’S HAPPENING

ONGOING EVENTS:

*Weekly GROUP ORIENTATION for new consumers

Every WEDNESDAY @ 9:30 a.m.

*HOUSING WORKSHOP every FRIDAY @ 9:00 a.m.

*BENEFITS WORKSHOP every 2nd Monday of the month @ 10:00 a.m.

*SMART DEVICES WORKSHOP every 3rd WEDNESDAY of each MONTH @ 1:p.m.

*EMPLOYMENT SERVICES JOB SEARCH Every 2nd MONDAY of each MONTH @ 9:00 a.m.

***MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP** for Staff and Consumers bi-weekly beginning WEDNESDAY, 11/22 @ 1:30 p.m.

DECEMBER:

12/4—LA Access Services Board of Directors Meeting

12/4—Anthem Medicare Experience Outreach @ Long Beach Masonic Center

12/7—DRC Board of Directors Meeting (in person)

12/8—Mental Health, Long Beach School for Adults

12/8—DRC Advocacy Group Zoom Meeting

12/14—Deadline for Holiday Toy Drive Donations

12/14—LA County Emerging Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Core Partner Meeting

12/14—Deadline for Holiday Toy Drive Donations

12/15—DRC Staff Holiday Luncheon

12/18—LA Access Board Operations Committee Meeting

12/22—Christmas Eve Day (observed) (DRC closed)

12/25—Christmas Day Legal Holiday (DRC closed)

JANUARY:

1/1—New Year's Day Legal Holiday (DRC closed)

1/8—Personal Assistance Service Council (PASC) Board Meeting

1/12—DRC Advocacy Group Zoom Meeting

1/15—Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Legal Holiday (DRC closed)

1/17—Fair Housing Foundation Board Meeting

1/18/2024—LA County Emerging ADRC Core Partner Meeting

1/25/2024—DRC Board of Directors Meeting (virtual)

FEBRUARY:

2/5—PASC Board Meeting

2/9—DRC Advocacy Group Zoom Meeting

2/14—Valentine's Day

2/19—Presidents Day Legal Holiday (DRC closed)

2/22—DRC Board of Directors Meeting (virtual)

2/22—LA County Emerging ADRC Core Partner Meeting

Mission Statement

To empower people with disabilities to live independent in the community, to make their own decisions about their lives and advocate in their own behalf.

Donations

Your gift today helps DRC to continue to help its consumers toward independent living.

DISABLED RESOURCES CENTER, Inc. BOARD OFFICERS 2023

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Heather Schmoll *Secretary and
Immediate Past President*

Chaka Garbutt *Treasurer*

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Mario Rodriguez *Assistant Director*

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Gino Elliot *Peer Support Services /
Transitional Youth Program*

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Richard Hernandez *Systems
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Vincent Johnson *Assistive
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Bryan Root *Member*

Margaret Vento-Wilson *Member*

Mary Zendejas *Member*

Mugi Miyazaki *Assistive Technology Lending Program*

Zaid Moges *Employment Services Coordinator / Sign Language Interpreter / Emergency Preparedness Program*

Khanny Ou *Personal Assistant / Mobility Training*

Susan Pearson *Accountant*

Gail Thomas *Administrative Assistant / Gavel Club / Ticket to Work Specialist / Covered California*



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