California’s First Lady Maria Shriver Continues to Advocate on Behalf of Individuals Diagnosed with Developmental Disabilities

The WE Include program is a groundbreaking movement created out of the belief that individuals with developmental disabilities should be given the opportunity to live a meaningful and purpose-filled life. Under the leadership of California First Lady Maria Shriver, WE Include aims to open the door to opportunities and raise awareness of resources that address the needs of the developmentally disabled community. The program’s main focus is employment and key components include educational, extracurricular and service opportunities; information on independent and healthy living; crime prevention and disaster preparedness.

“... I have made a commitment in California through our WE Include Initiative to give individuals with developmental disabilities a chance to excel in jobs that give them satisfaction and purpose. Many people often believe that those with developmental disabilities can’t work, but they do – and that is why here in California, WE Include,” the First Lady states on the WE Include website.

Last September, Mayors throughout California inspired by the WE Include movement...
Special Needs Network Launches Joe Patton Academy Camp to Provide South Los Angeles Youth With Summer Fun

On Monday, August 2, 2010, Special Needs Network (SNN) unveiled its inaugural summer inclusion program—Joe Patton Academy Camp (Camp JPAC). SNN is a non-profit, community-based organization founded to respond to the needs of low-income families raising a child or adult with developmental disabilities, particularly as it relates to autism. Donna Ross Jones, CEO of Transition Music and Areva D. Martin, Esq., Managing Partner of Martin & Martin, LLP co-founded the organization after their respective sons were diagnosed with autism. Ms. Martin serves as President and Chair of the Board of Directors of the organization. She welcomed and thanked all those that helped the opening day of camp, “an amazing day for the kids.”

As a part of its mission, SNN is dedicated to raising awareness of the impact of autism on underserved communities amongst policy, business and community leaders in order to increase available research dollars, programs, familial support, diagnostic and intervention services, employment and housing opportunities for those living with the disorder and other developmental, emotional and behavioral disabilities.

Among SNN’s honored guests, the Honorable LA County 2nd District Supervisor, Mark Ridley-Thomas representatives from the Estate of Joe Patton, the HollyRod Foundation, and Hollywood Director, Wyck Godfrey. Supervisor Ridley-Thomas stated he was delighted and honored to participate in such a monumental event for South Los Angeles Families. “This is not a camp that is exclusive for fun, but an opportunity. It launches today, but that it is here for the future until everyone knows about special needs. This is what makes this camp special,” stated the Supervisor.

Ms. Antonia Routt spoke on behalf of the family and estate of Joe Patton. “What a delight and privilege it is to speak to you on this day. My friend Joe was devoted to his community and had a compassion and love for children. He knew what you know and that is when children are nurtured they succeed,” she shared.

Camp JPAC will offer 200 children (60 percent of those participating will have special needs and 40 percent will be typically functioning youths) from ages 5 to 16 from under-served communities. The opportunity to participate in this unique camp setting will provide campers with language-rich programs including theater, music, arts and crafts, sports, dance and other activities. Campers will also be able to visit local attractions and enjoy a delicious lunch in an environment where they can learn, share, laugh and grow.

For more information on Camp JPAC, visit Special Needs Network at www.specialneedsnetwork.org
WE Include Initiative

Include program, joined efforts to provide work opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. WE Include represents the commitment of both the First Lady and the Governor to open the door to opportunities that enable individuals with developmental disabilities to live fulfilling, purpose-filled and inclusive lives. It raises awareness and connects people to resources related to employment, education and tools for financial empowerment.

Since launching the WE Include program in 2007, Shriver has been instrumental in the hiring of individuals with developmental disabilities throughout California, including the Governor’s Office in Sacramento and the Governor’s Los Angeles Field Office. Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster, the first mayor in California to join WE Include, said, “Maria’s commitment to individuals with developmental disabilities through her WE Include program inspired me to hire David in my office and I am delighted to continue my partnership with her. He has been with us for nearly a year and I am thrilled with his work. David brings a real terrific energy to work every day.”

To learn more, go to WEInclude.ca.gov, a website offering individuals with developmental disabilities a chance to excel in jobs that give them satisfaction and purpose. The WE Include web site includes the “Top Ten Reasons to Hire an Individual with Developmental Disabilities,” which details the win-win situation for businesses and potential employees when they work together.

Terri Delgadillo, Director of the California Department of Developmental Services said, “Maria has electrified the community; everybody’s talking about job opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Everywhere I go across the state, people are excited and want to talk about WE Include.”

Shriver has worked diligently to foster understanding and increase opportunities for employment and friendship for individuals with developmental disabilities. She is an active member of the International Board of Special Olympics, the organization her mother founded in 1968, and is also on the advisory board of Best Buddies International, founded by Anthony Kennedy Shriver in 1989.
From the Desk of the Executive Director

September 2010

Dear SCLARC Stakeholders,

Once again, the Regional Center System finds itself in an unstable situation as we await a budget from California Legislators. As in years past, our state representatives have failed to meet the deadline and some policymakers in Sacramento are saying there may not be a budget in place until after the elections in November. With that said, SCLARC is hoping to give our clients, families and service providers time to prepare for the possible consequences resulting from this budget crisis.

In an effort to keep you informed of the latest developments as it relates to your fiscal relationship with South Central L.A. Regional Center, we have prepared this letter in order to inform you of our fiscal situation. Our most recent cash position indicates that SCLARC will be able to pay its vendors through the month of November for services provided in October.

But beginning in December, SCLARC will be unable to pay for services rendered in November due to the lack of an available balance on our credit line. Please note that SCLARC will be unable to pay its vendors only in the event the State does not reach an agreement and pass the 2010-11 FY budget before the end of October. If we should reach that juncture, SCLARC is asking our providers to please continue to provide services to our consumers and families. Once the budget is signed, you will be paid when SCLARC receives its 2010-11 FY allocation. But, if you find that you are unable to continue services during the current fiscal impasse, we are asking you to contact us immediately so that we might look for other alternatives for our consumers and families as soon as possible.

In past years when the State was unable to pay regional centers, it has issued Registered Warrants or IOU’s instead of the normal payments. We have not had any indication that that will be the case this year. And although we are currently in negotiations with our bank (US Bank) to see if they will extend SCLARC a second line of credit, we have no definite agreements in place. Therefore, we strongly encourage our service providers to begin looking for resources and capital that will sustain your businesses, which in turn will allow you to maintain SCLARC consumers, until a budget is passed.

As always, SCLARC suggests all its stakeholders—service providers, consumers, their families and other agencies—join us in advocating for a sound state budget as well as policies that realistically address the fiscal needs of regional centers in their effort to provide the highest quality of services to developmentally disabled individuals residing throughout the state. Please let your voices be heard by writing to our legislators and urging them to take action in a timely manner. And we will continue to keep you informed as information becomes available.

As with past fiscal storms that SCLARC and our stakeholder community have weathered, we will make every effort to get through this current impasse, like we always have—together!

Sincerely,

Dexter A. Henderson
Executive Director, South Central L.A. Regional Center
Friends of SCLARC Holds 5th Annual Tournament

On Friday, August 21, 2010, 150 Friends of SCLARC gathered once again for a wonderful day of golf, fun and fundraising at the beautiful Downey's Rio Hondo Golf Club.

The 5th Annual Golf Tournament marked a milestone for Friends of SCLARC. It was the first year that not one, not two, but seven SCLARC consumer golf teams played on the greens. Consumers from P.A.L.S.Inc, Giant Steps, Progressive Behavior Therapy, and Ideal Program Services all participated. Additionally, SCLARC staff members took the day off in order to join in the fundraiser by golfing and volunteering. As you can see from the pictures, the smiles and excitement on our consumers’ and employees’ faces tell the story of a fun filled day.

Friends of SCLARC Board President Malcolm Bennett said it best when he stated, “Friends of SCLARC is a safety net in times of crisis faced by regional center consumers and families. It's in these times that SCLARC consumers know who their ‘friends’ are. They are all of you who participated in this morning’s golf clinic and played in the tournament.”

Beautiful trophies and plaques were presented to the tournament winners and sponsors. But the biggest winners were SCLARC’s consumers for whom $85,000 was raised. Friends is committed to making a difference in the lives of developmentally disabled individuals through outreach, education, and emergency support. The support agency was created to provide dollars where regional center funding ends, especially in times of emergency.

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CAC mentor group ... continued from page 4

- Mentoring a young adult or adolescent consumer to ensure that they create positive life goals.

The criteria for eligibility for the mentor program has been established and mentees must exhibit positive behaviors, have the ability to communicate wants and needs, and have no medical conditions that would preclude their participation. A referral form is being developed to allow Service Coordinators to refer appropriate consumers. The CAC will meet with the referring Services Coordinators prior to meeting the consumers after which the Consumer Advisory Committee will have an "Ice Breaker" Meet and Greet before starting the formal mentor process. The formal start date is still being determined, but information will be forwarded to all regional center stakeholders as soon as a date is decided.
golf tournament  ... continued from page 5

Specifically, monies raised by Friends provide SCLARC consumers with emergency shelter or placement; replacement medical equipment and prevents the disruption of utilities. In some instances, funds help replace personal incidentals such as clothing and toiletries in extenuating circumstances. Funds also help with groceries on a one-time basis in the form of gift cards and help to purchase Thanksgiving turkeys during the holiday season. The proceeds from the tournament will go a long way in helping SCLARC consumers and their families.

“In recent months, $384 million has been cut from the regional center system; deeply impacting all 21 regional centers and the 270,000 individuals diagnosed with developmental disabilities that they serve. Now, more than ever, we need the support of corporate and community partners to help keep the most vulnerable in our community from falling through the cracks,” states Bennett, summing up Friends’ mission.

to learn more about becoming a friend of sclarc’s  please go to www.friendsofsclarc.org
sclarc is seeking volunteers for board membership

South Central Los Angeles Regional Center is a private, non-profit organization contracting with the State of California, specifically with the Department of Developmental Services, to provide diagnosis, evaluation, case management and life-long planning to individuals who are developmentally disabled. The agency serves more than 10,000 individuals who have been diagnosed as having mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and/or autism. SCLARC is currently looking for candidates to serve on our Board of Directors.

Serving South Central Los Angeles since 1974, SCLARC gives assistance to its consumers and their families in a service area that includes the cities of Paramount, Cudahy, Downey, Bell Gardens, Huntington Park, South Gate, Compton and Carson, as well as the Los Angeles communities of Watts, the Crenshaw District, Leimert Park, View Park and Baldwin Hills. SCLARC is one of 21 Regional Centers in the State of California providing services to persons with developmental disabilities. In accordance with the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, our mission is to provide assessment, information and referrals, advocacy, prevention services and coordination of case management services to people who are developmentally disabled (consumers) as well as to those who are at-risk for of developing a developmental disability.

Board member responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- **Setting policy.** The board’s primary function is to create polices that ensure the organization is run effectively, legally and ethically.

- **Supporting the executive director.** Without the executive director’s day-to-day management skills, the policies and plans adopted by the board would have little impact. The board and the executive director work together to realize the mission and vision goals of the organization.

- **Guiding long-range planning and development.** The board gives direction to the organization through long-range goals and strategic planning. During the planning process, you’ll be asked to assess the present and future needs of the community in order to determine how SCLARC fits into that picture.

- **Attendance & Representation.** The Board of Directors meets the 4th Tuesday of every other month at 7:00 p.m. Board members are also called on to represent the Board at other meetings and agency functions as needed.

Presently, there are several vacancies on SCLARC’s board. If you, or someone you know, are interested in an application for board membership, please contact Marsha D. Mitchell, Director of Community Services & Family Supports at (213) 743-3061.
Seasons Beautiful New Housing Complex Breaks Ground

What would happen if senior citizens and adults with developmental disabilities lived together in a sustainable, beautiful community? LINC Housing believes such a community would foster an environment of cooperation and support. SEASONS at Compton, an 84-unit affordable rental community currently in construction, will blend limited-income seniors, adults with developmental disabilities, and seniors who care for dependents with developmental disabilities.

The new community in Compton will incorporate Universal and Sustainable Design principles as top priorities to provide a beautiful, highly functional environment for its residents, while also emphasizing access for handicapped individuals, energy efficiency, use of natural light and ventilation, and reducing the property’s carbon footprint. Environmental features will include a solar hot water system, low-flow water fixtures, and environmentally friendly landscaping. For the 32 SCLARC consumers who will be residents in the new building, accessibility will be enhanced with wider doorways and hallways, adjustable height counters, lower light switches, ramps, and elevators.

LINC also plans to bring three areas of services to the community: senior health and well being programs; independent living skills training; and special services for residents with developmental disabilities.

At right, Consumer Support Director Reuben Lee (second from the left) helps to break ground on the new Seasons @ Compton complex.

south central

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