SCLARC Consumer Advisory Committee Newsletter

CAC News & Views

NOVEMBER 2016

SCLARC’s CAC Presented Relationship Awareness Workshops

In July, the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) hosted its first Relationship Awareness Workshop at South Central Los Angeles Regional Center to inform consumers on the importance of developing healthy relationships. Approximately 50 SCLARC consumers participated in workshops developed by the CAC on various topics including “How Overprotection Can Be Harmful to Your Child” which was presented by keynote speaker Diana Ugalde.

Alyssa Jackson and Norrice Hearron were the presenters for the “How to Establish Healthy Friendships” workshop and Lanterman Regional Center consumers Julie and Rigo Gano wowed the crowd with “Marriage, What Does It Look Like?” Karen Washington, from South Central Los Angeles Regional Center assisted on presentation as well. SCLARC’s very own Consumer Advocate by Desiree Boykin delivered remarks on the “What Did Your Relationship with Your Siblings Look Like As You Grew Up?” All the presenters did an excellent job in sharing their information.

Coming 2017

SCLARC Consumer Advisory Committee has decided that next year’s annual training event will be a Self-Advocacy Training. This training will help consumers advocate for themselves in various areas of their lives such as school, work, in the community, and with their service providers.
What did many medical practitioners suggest to parents of developmentally disabled children 50 years ago? “Place them in state hospitals,” doctors urged. After placements were done, many parents soon found conditions and treatment of their loved ones in state hospitals were exceptionally poor. They organized an effort for resources to be developed so they could keep their children at home. They voiced their concerns to California legislators and began to fight for services in the community.

Assembly Bill 691 was signed in 1965 by California Governor Edmond G. (Pat) Brown, father of the state’s current governor. The bill ultimately led to the formation of today’s regional center. Initially, two pilot regional centers were authorized for persons with intellectual disabilities. The supervising agency was the Department of Public Health.

In 1969, Assemblyman Frank D. Lanterman introduced AB255 to order to create regional centers statewide. On September 20, 2016 South Central Los Angeles Regional Center celebrated 50 years of the Lanterman Act. The speakers for this event were Mireya Romero, SCLARC’s Parent Navigator, who presented remarks from a parent’s viewpoint. Illona Hendricks, a long-time residential provider, and John Menchaca, President and CEO of El ARCA, talked about what conditions were like for people with special needs and their families before the Lanterman Act was passed. Ascary Navarro, Secretary of the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC), spoke on what the Lanterman Act means to him as a person who receives services and South Central Los Angeles Regional Center Executive Director Dexter Henderson gave closing remarks.

SCLARC & USC’s Best Buddies Team Up!

Anthony K. Shriver, son of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founded the Best Buddies program in 1989. It is designed for high school and college students to be paired with young adults who have an intellectual or developmental disability so they have the opportunity to develop friendships. In August 2015, SCLARC’s Consumer Advisory Committee began a partnership with the USC’s Best Buddies program.

Last winter, a Christmas party was held with the two groups. In Spring, there was a basketball tournament. This Fall, we held a Meet & Greet for a new group of CAC members to be matched with USC buddies. For more information about the program, please give USC Best Buddies Chapter President Kaveon Brasfield at call (714) 225-5669.

Community Outreach Events

SCLARC Consumer Advocate Desiree Boykin and Community Advocate Specialist Ebony Montgomery have conducted several outreach events with partner agencies including the Westside Independent Living Center, Job Corps, Fiesta Educativa, and several adult day programs located in SCLARC catchment area. By engaging in community outreach, the advocates hope to provide information directly to consumers and individuals in the community who may know someone with a disability. Community outreach also allows SCLARC to build strong connections with those we serve.
**Supported Life Conference**

Two Supported Life Conferences were held in May and October of this year. The Supported Life conference offers educational and training opportunities to assist individuals and organizations working to improve the quality of life for people who have been diagnosed with a disability. SCLARC sponsors officers on the Consumer Advisory Committee to attend each year so they can gain more insight and knowledge about self advocacy. The officers then provide this information to fellow CAC members, SCLARC’s Board of Directors, and peers advocating for themselves. By giving consumers the opportunity to learn more about self-advocacy, it inspires them to grow, make their own choices, and pursue their desires and dreams. The conference covers various areas such as supported employment, post secondary education, supported living, legal resources and emergency preparedness. In a world that is constantly changing, it is so important to have access to the informational workshops offered at the Supported Life Conferences. Supported Life helps keep our community updated on new legislation in California and across the country. It also provides resources and a forum in which people with special needs can voice their opinions in a safe environment that is free of judgment.

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**Consumers Rock The Vote**

Consumers Rock the Vote event was sponsored to help adult consumers register to vote in the upcoming presidential election and help educate them on the California propositions as well. It’s very important to make sure our consumers are aware of their voting rights and can exercise their right to vote. Below are three important facts consumers need to know about the voting process and registering.

1. In California, the deadline to register to vote for any election is 15 days before Election Day. Be sure to register early to avoid delays.

2. On Election Day, you can get help with voting at your polling place. If you face any difficulties contact Disability Rights California (1-888-569-7055).

3. You get to decide how to Vote! People can help you with the process but no one can tell you how you should vote.
Consumer Advisory Committee Meeting

SCLARC hosts its Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting every month. The purpose of the CAC is to help consumers, staff and community members become more aware of the issues that affect persons with developmental disabilities. The CAC members are comprised of SCLARC consumers. We identify topics that are important to us and invite speakers to our meetings to address these topics. The President of the CAC, currently Alan McDowell, then shares this information with the SCLARC Board of Directors at their bi-monthly meeting. The CAC meets every fourth Monday from 10am-12pm on the 4th floor of the Legacy Building. For consumers who are unable to make that time, please attend our CAC Club meetings on the fourth Monday of every month at our selected meeting locations out in the community and we will set aside time to discuss CAC meeting information and business.

Consumer Advisory Club

The Consumer Advisory Club was created for those consumers who want to experience club membership centered around fun, food and social activities so that they get to know other people, create connections, develop friendships and enjoy doing activities in and about the community. The CAC Club does not have officers and there is no expected productivity. The CAC Club offers outings in the community on which club members vote. These club outings are paid for by the CAC member participants. It is up to the consumer to set up their own transportation to and from the outings and to make sure they have enough money to pay for their meals AND taxes. The CAC Club also sets aside time for members who would like to attend the traditional CAC Meetings, but are unable to do so. During our CAC Club meetings, we review the regular CAC Meetings’ agendas, information, and updates. The CAC Club meets every fourth Monday in the month from 1:30 p.m.- 4 p.m. The next CAC Club meeting will be November 21, 2016 at Vegas Seafood Buffet which is located at 3525 W. Carson St. Torrance, CA 90503. For more information call, Desiree Boykin at (213) 743-3071.