

Consumer Spotlight

BECAUSE OUR CONSUMERS ARE AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

NEWSLETTER ISSUE N°2

Friends of SCLARC Hosts 1st Consumer Golf Tournament

By MARIA FIGUEROA

SCLARC Community Relations Specialist

Friday, August 31, 2012 marked an important date in the history of Friends of SCLARC. Along with it being the support organization's 7th Annual Golf Tournament, Friends of SCLARC presented its inaugural Friends of SCLARC Consumer Golf Tournament. Over the years, Friends has involved SCLARC consumers so that they have had opportunities to participate during the golf fundraiser so what better way than having our consumers actually play.

This year, FoS incorporated a half course tournament in which 14 SCLARC consumers played, laughed, and had a blast over nine holes of golf.

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CAC Member

Trevone Gordon

Laid Back, Calm & Quietly Pursuing His Dreams

BY DESIRE BOYKIN SCLARC CONSUMER ADVOCATE

By his own description, Trevone Gordon is extremely laid-back, calm and quiet. He has the love and support of his mother Sherrie, as well as that of his maternal grandparents, Johnnie and Mary as long as he can remember. That support has propelled him to perform at his best and to take advantage of a wide range of opportunities open to him. In fact, while he attended Fairfax High School in 2001, it was his mother who encouraged Trevone to participate in the Los Angeles Urban League Workforce program.

Trevone graduated from Fairfax in 2004 and in 2006, he was hired by the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood. It was Trevone's first job. He worked the concession stand. In 2007, he moved on to the Staple Center where he is presently a Guest Services Usher. He loves his job.

"I like the atmosphere; it's great," he stated. "My beloved Los Angeles Lakers and Los Angeles Kings play their games there; the fans are so nice," Trevone added.

An industrious person, Trevone has a second job at Goodwill at the Los Angeles Air Base in El Segundo. He is a janitor and enjoys the bond he

shares with his co-workers. "We joke around sometimes, but we always get the task done."

---☆ Pursue your dreams. Follow your heart, regardless of your disability."
--Trevone Gordon

His janitorial duties include cleaning the restrooms, vacuuming the floors, and taking out the trash. He values his job and is motivated to do well because he has a very strong work ethic.

"I get up at 4:30 a.m. and prepare myself to look presentable for work," Trevone said. "I am there on time and ready to complete my tasks for the day."

Trevone became a South Central Los Angeles Regional Center consumer in 2009 and enjoys the help he receives from his Independent Living Service (ILS) program. He credits Michele McBurnie, his ILS worker, for her assistance in helping him to develop daily living skills.

"Michele helps to make sure that I pay my bills on time, keep my doctors' appointments, and eat the right foods." He added that, sometimes, Michele even plays basketball with him.

Trevone, having lived on his own for almost a year now, is flourishing in his new experience. Willing to grow and to live life at its apex, Trevone says he wants to become more self-empowered and assertive. In striving to fulfill that goal, he is becoming more self-confident and more self-sufficient. Recently, he attended his first Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting at South Central Los Angeles Regional Center.

This is just a first step to fulfilling the dreams that he has. His future goals are to learn the process of filmmaking, writing, directing, and producing. He would also like to design his own video games, similar to the popular 1980s Super Mario Brothers and Street Fighter. He believes that triumphing over one's disability will only make the person stronger.

"Pursue your dreams. Follow your heart, regardless of your disability," he says.

Jesus Zavala

Determined and Successful in His Goals

☆ BY DESIRE BOYKIN SCLARC CONSUMER ADVOCATE

“Wrestling teaches you nothing comes easy. Nothing in life comes easy, so you have to work at it.”

— Mike Sullivan, American professional wrestler.

Ever since his middle school years, Jesus Zavala has liked wrestling. Among his favorites are Mick Foley, Jake the Snake Roberts, and the Undertaker. Their different looks and styles of performance intrigue Jesus. During high school, Jesus began to dream of becoming a wrestler. A 2005 graduate of John C. Fremont High School, he began wrestling competitively after graduating.

He did have a challenge though, Jesus weighed 350 pounds. To compete, Jesus had to lose weight. Using technology, he looked up diet and exercise videos. He eliminated most of the carbohydrates from his diet, not an easy feat for a bread lover. He cut back on his visits at fast food restaurants. He developed exercise routine—lifting weights, running, and daily visits to LA Fitness. After a lot of hard work, Jesus has lost 60 pounds.

Jesus was motivated by the death of his friend Kevin Fredrick, a fellow student at East Los Angeles College. Kevin, who weighed 400 pounds, became an inspiration to Jesus.

“He would tell me, ‘I am very proud of you, Jesus. Don’t let your disability define you.’”

Kevin died in 2008 as a result of complications caused by his obesity.

“Kevin is the reason I put forth my best efforts in wrestling,” Jesus says.

Besides Southern California, Kevin has wrestled in Nevada, Arizona, and Northern California. To improve his skills, Jesus attends wrestling camps. His trainer pushes him to refine his skills so that he can become more competitive. But his mother Lourdes Ocampo also stands behind Jesus’ accomplishments. When she found out that Jesus had an interest in wrestling, she paid for camps and attended his matches.

Ms. Ocampo says Jesus is her role model. “Jesus is really focused. When he chooses a goal, he sticks to it,” she says.

For the past five years, Jesus has been employed as a security guard at Complimentary Services Corporation. He enjoys his work even as he pursues his long-term goal of wrestling. In addition to wrestling, he also hopes to become a fiction writer. As he continues in his journey to be successful at staying fit and becoming a professional wrestler, Jesus says his secret has been simple, “I have always tried to do the right thing at the right time.”





Alyssa Jackson: The Sky Is the Limit for Her

BY DESIRE BOYKIN

SCLARC CONSUMER ADVOCATE

Since the age of five, Alyssa Jackson has been a consumer of SCLARC. A 2009 graduate of Carson High School, Ms. Jackson enrolled at El Camino College where she is majoring in business. She hopes to complete her associate of arts degree and then transfer to the Cal State system.

“My passion is dealing with numbers,” she stated.

Ms. Jackson credits Peter Griego, her service coordinator, for always helping her with resources. He encouraged her to become a part of the Quality of Life Program, where she is assigned an ILS worker. After all, it is Ms. Jackson’s goal to live independently one day. Alyssa has Asperger’s Syndrome, a disorder which interferes with socializing and communicating with others. Monthly, she meets with her Asperger’s group.

“I am not ashamed. I am not going to let people put me down,” she says.

She has had great support from Glenn and Ella Jackson, her parents. “My mom never gives up on me; she never stops supporting and helping me.”

Alyssa enjoys cooking. She likes to make tacos, chicken fettuccine, fried chicken, hamburgers, and rice. In fact, according to her Dad, Ms. Jackson cooks the best rice ever.. Not only does Ms. Jackson enjoy cooking; she enjoys dining out as well. She also finds joy in exploring the community. Among her favorite restaurants are M & M Soul Food and La Louisanne. She likes both the environment and the energy of these eateries.

One of her favorite annual events is the Kingdom Day Parade. She likes the unity in the community on parade day, especially since Dr. King sought to bring people together.

“The atmosphere of the parade is great! In addition to the bands, the floats, the politicians, and the many other groups, the parade also draws a number of celebrities,” says the community oriented Jackson.

Ms. Jackson says she was especially pleased to see actor/singer Tyrese appear in this year’s parade.

As you can see by her beautiful smile, Alyssa Jackson is truly enjoying her life and lives by the motto “the sky is the limit.” And for her, it seems there is no limit to what she will accomplish.

CONSUMER GOLF TOURNAMENT A BIG HIT!

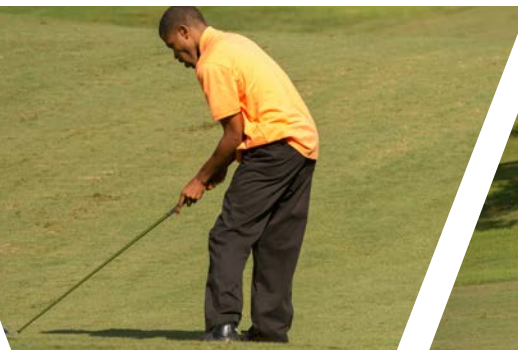


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The players represented the following programs, The ARC of Los Angeles and Orange Counties, Ideal Program Services, Inc., Partnerships for Independent Livings, and Progressive Behavioral Therapy and were coached and sponsored by their service providers. Avid golfer and CEO of We are Family Saadite Green also volunteered his time to give extra tips and pointers to our consumer golfers. The tournament itself was sponsored by the Rio Hondo Golf Club which allowed us to use the course free of charge. FOS couldn't be more thankful to the staff at Rio Hondo Golf Club for their generosity. And the Rio Hondo Golf Club pro shop

staff simply said, "what you guys do is awesome". Friends of SCLARC looks forward to the years to come to continue to do "awesome work" and to put many more smiles in the faces of SCLARC consumers.

Golfing Fun Was Had By All Participants



Making A Difference

Lizbeth Gutierrez

BY DESIREE BOYKIN SCLARC CONSUMER ADVOCATE

“Faith is courage; it is creative while despair is always destructive.”

--David S. Muzzey

This quote speaks to the heart and spirit of Lizbeth Gutierrez. It is her belief in her Catholic faith that motivates Ms. Gutierrez.

“Even when I am not at my best, I can always get up and help others do better,” she says.

Lizbeth is a highly spiritual person. She states, “Before I make a decision, I pray to God, asking for guidance. I am not here to judge anybody, but I do want others, as I try to do, to make the best decision possible.” This belief holds true for Gutierrez, regardless of the challenges she may face.

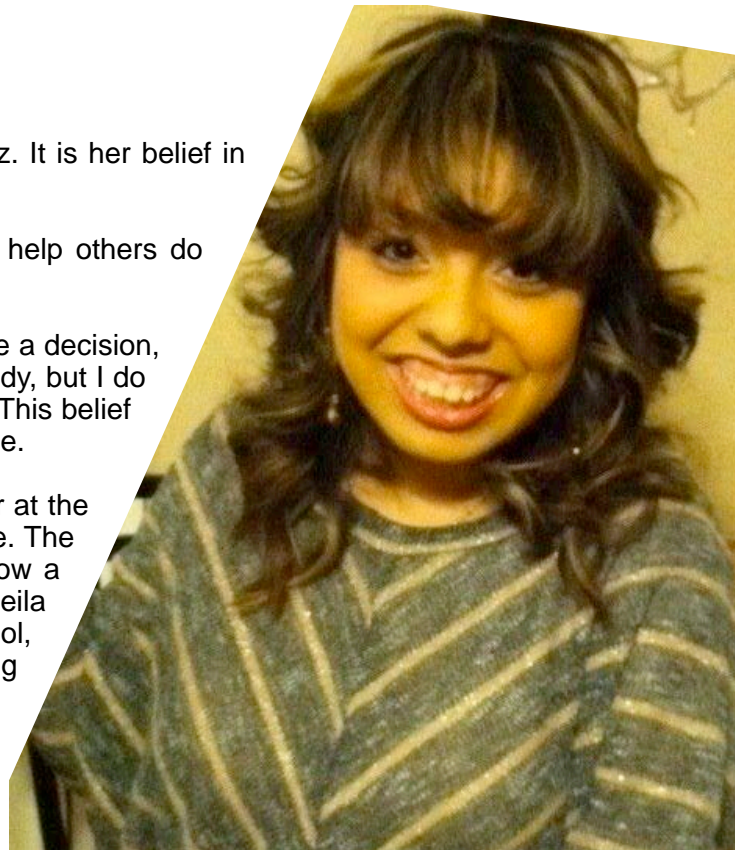
Born with cerebral palsy, Ms. Gutierrez has been a consumer at the South Central Los Angeles Regional Center (SCLARC) all her life. The oldest of two children, Lizbeth has always found her brother--now a college sophomore--just as supportive of her as her mother, Ceila Gutierrez, has been. A 2007 alumna of Silverado High School, Gutierrez enrolled in East Los Angeles City College in the Spring of 2008.

Her major is communications and she hopes to transfer to USC. In the future, Ms. Gutierrez plans to write an autobiography about growing up with cerebral palsy. After all, she wants others to know that, despite being born with this disability, a person can still accomplish great goals.

During the past two years, Gutierrez has been a volunteer at the Center of Hope as a pro-life advocate. Her role is wide ranging; when prospective mothers question keeping their babies, Ms. Gutierrez prays with them. She reminds them that the decision is ultimately theirs, and makes it clear that she is available to listen. She represents the Center of Hope at various functions. In fact, she recently, spoke at the Catholic Guadalupe Radio Station about the pro-life movement. She has also spoken at the online radio station 87.7fm.com. Additionally, she solicits donations for baby cribs and strollers for the center.

Her work as a volunteer at the Center of Hope brings her great satisfaction. “I really love what I do, especially when I can inspire others.” For recreation, Gutierrez enjoys going to the park and to the movies. The movies, of course, are a treat she enjoys with her mom. A fan of Spiderman, she looks forward to viewing the most recent movie in this series.

SCLARC salutes Lizbeth Gutierrez for making a difference in the lives of others.



MORE GOLF TOURNAMENT FUN!



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