

## April Outreach Newsletter 2016

---



ASIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS WITH DISABILITIES CONFERENCE  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[WWW.DISABILITYRIGHTSCA.ORG](http://WWW.DISABILITYRIGHTSCA.ORG)

[WWW.DISABILITYRIGHTSCA.ORG/ESPANOL](http://WWW.DISABILITYRIGHTSCA.ORG/ESPANOL)

# IN THIS ISSUE

## Table of Contents

Los Angeles Regional Office .....	3
San Diego Regional Office .....	5
Fresno Satellite Office .....	5
Bay Area Regional Office .....	6
Sacramento Regional Office.....	7
Peer Self-Advocacy Program .....	8
Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy.....	9

# Los Angeles Regional Office

## Asians and Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California (APIDC) Statewide Conference 2016

Asians and Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California (APIDC) held its 5<sup>th</sup> statewide conference at the Westin Pasadena Hotel on March 18-19, 2016. The two-day conference was packed with trainings for consumers, family members, and professionals who work with individuals with disabilities.

Jackie Dai, Clients' Rights Advocate with the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy, and Lisa Navarro, Multicultural Affairs Advocate from the Los Angeles Regional Office, were part of the planning committee. Asian-Pacific Islander (API) communities from



across the state gathered at the conference to receive information related to advocacy and their rights under the law. There were panels on special education, assistive technology, civil rights, self-advocacy, mental health, college supportive services, and financial wellness. This conference was well attended, with 400 participants, and was covered by the local Channel 7 news.

Jackie Dai moderated a session called “Legal and Financial Options” for attorneys from both the private and public sectors who specialize in estate planning. Sheryl Hayashida from the Law Offices of Sheryl Hayashida, and Yolande Erickson from Bet Tzedek, provided detailed explanation about



alternatives to conservatorships. They also touched on common questions that family members and consumers have such as “Do I need a conservatorship?” “What is a conservatorship?” and “What are alternatives to conservatorship?” The session provided information about the legal and financial options available to individuals with disabilities who are turning 18 years old.

In addition, Raymond Kwong, co-founder of Survive or Thrive (SOT) who is now a DRC Multicultural Affairs Advocate in the San Diego Regional Office, spoke on a panel about SOT. The program empowers and educates high school students to transition from educational settings to work. He spoke about self-advocacy and explained that the program is an experienced-based support group that promotes education, independence, and employment to students with disabilities. As a result of the support received through the program, two of SOT’s members are now attending UC Berkeley.

Finally, DRC provided valuable legal information to all those who sought information at DRC’s information table. DRC was among the 33 exhibitors. DRC staff from the Los Angeles Regional Office, Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA), and Peer Self Advocacy (PSA) programs united to provide assistance to all attendees in a comprehensive and well-rounded approach.



# San Diego Regional Office

Consumers at Rolling Start Learn About Services from the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

Ivan Guillen, Client Assistance Program (CAP) Advocate from DRC's Ontario satellite office, provided a training to consumers and staff members at Rolling Start, an Independent Living Service (ILS) Agency. The March 24<sup>th</sup> training included tips on how to access DOR and its eligibility process. Ivan also explained to the audience how DRC can provide counsel and advice, technical assistance, and direct representation to consumers of both DOR and Rolling Start. Some of the consumers were clients of DOR and were able to share their experiences and frustrations. Ivan encouraged the participants at Rolling Start to contact DRC if they have questions about disability related legal issues. The attendees were very grateful for Ivan's presentation and shared that they would contact DRC if they had any further questions related to DOR services.



# Fresno Satellite Office

Working While Receiving Social Security Benefits



Sixteen Spanish-speaking individuals attended a Social Security training held at the Westside Family Preservation Service Network in Huron. Westside Family Preservation Services Network is a community based social service agency that provides assistance to residents of rural southwest Fresno County.

Amparo Yebra, a community leader for these Spanish speaking families, invited DRC to participate in the event to help address many questions that the families had. On March 25, 2016, Michael Thomas, Senior Advocate and Leilani Pfeifer, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator both from the Sacramento Regional Office with interpretative assistance of Teresa Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant from the Fresno Office, presented on issues related to Social Security benefits and employment services. The training let members know about the rules under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program. Michael also talked about services through the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and how members could be assisted in finding employment once they become eligible for the program. He explained how they can work and keep their benefits through the work incentive programs. Many of the members were unaware of the services available to them and how they could work without losing their benefits. The members wanted to know more about their legal rights and have asked DRC to come back to provide additional trainings.

## Bay Area Regional Office

Enough is Enough Collaboration for Change

Kim Swain, Managing Attorney, with staff from the Bay Area Regional Office, collaborated with Bay Area agencies that provide services to the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, and Late-Deafened (DDBHLD) communities to hold the “Enough is Enough Collaboration for Change” conference. This two-Part conference was held at the Ed Roberts Campus on October 23 and the Deaf Community Center on



November 6 and reached 126 individuals. The two sessions were titled, “Captioning: Your Rights and Advocacy” and “Video Remote Interpreting: Your Rights and Advocacy.” The training provided information to advocates and consumers from the sensory disability communities. Each session consisted of a panel of presenters and sessions for small group discussion.



The conference allowed Disability Rights California an opportunity to provide advocacy and legal information to the sensory disability community. As a result of the conference, DRC’s Bay Area Regional Office has received requests for legal assistance.

## Sacramento Regional Office



### Parents and Advocates Gets Informed

Disability Rights California staff members were invited to present at the Yurok Tribe Head Start Program in Del Norte on March 3, 2016. The Tribe’s Head Start Program aims to prepare Native children for the transition to public school. Michael Thomas, Senior Advocate, and Leilani Pfeifer, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator, both from the Sacramento Regional Office, provided information on how the school system and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) can work together to assist students in their future career. Michael explained how students can obtain pre-employment training through DOR, while Leilani addressed how these services can be discussed during the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting.

Staff explained the process and how the two programs can support and prepare students in their future career once they graduate from school. The tribal advocates were enthusiastic to learn about the services that were available to them and the families they serve. DRC was asked to schedule future trainings with the Yurok Tribe on resources and services that are available to their children with disabilities.

## Peer Self-Advocacy Program

Second Annual Anniversary Information Fair at Los Angeles County and University of Southern CA

Senobia Pichardo, staff member of the Peer Self-Advocacy (PSA) Program from the Los Angeles Regional Office, staffed a resource table at the Wellness Center on March 19, 2016. This is the second annual event for the Los Angeles County and the University of Southern California's (LAC+USC).

Over ten other health-related organizations also had booths at this event, which approximately 300 people attended. Senobia provided information

and resources about DRC and PSA services. Over 115 people approached asking questions about our services, the majority of whom were monolingual Spanish-speakers.

Speaking with attendees, Senobia learned that many participants did not know that they had rights when receiving mental health services. She gave them materials on topics such as patients' rights, conservatorship, housing rights, and service and emotional support animals.



Attendees were mostly clients and families, but some clinicians from the USC General Hospital also came looking for resources. A clinician from the Psychiatric Unit of the hospital received information about the PSA's self-advocacy group called, "Antoon," at the Wellness Center for Spanish speakers. Clients were referred to the group so they could participate and continue to receive services. As a result of the outreach, Senobia was

invited to present patients' rights issues at the East Los Angeles Women's Center and The Wall-Las Memorias serving the Spanish-speaking and LGBTQI communities.

## Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

### OCRA Does a Series of Trainings for Asian-American Family Support Group

After several years of successfully targeting Spanish-speaking parent groups, the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) that serves Regional Center of the East Bay consumers focused its outreach efforts on the Asian-American community. OCRA set out with a goal to work with a local parent support group called Friends of Children with Special Needs (FCSN) to do three different trainings within a three month



period. Although the Asian-American community was a new target group for the East Bay OCRA office, Arthur Lipscomb, Clients' Rights Advocate, had already established a relationship with FCSN, having done several trainings for the group in the past.

First Arthur, joined by DRC staff member William Leiner, met with the group to give a training on the frequently-requested topic of special education. They also discussed OCRA services and self-determination. Arthur and Will brought handouts on all topics in both English and Chinese. It was a potpourri of topics and the audience was lively and engaged throughout. The second training covered transition services and brought many new attendees. For the final training, Arthur covered multiple subjects including the DD Waiver and the Affordable Care Act. To show their appreciation for the trainings, FCSN made two separate donations to OCRA.

## Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

### Stigma and Discrimination Training: The Power of a Flower

On the unusually warm morning of November 12, 2015, OCRA was ready to conduct a training to consumers of Westside Center for Independent Living. The topic discussed was “Understanding the Power of Communication to Reduce Stigma and Discrimination.” Scott Barron, Peer Advocate from the Office of Clients’ Rights Advocacy, was introduced and everyone in attendance was asked to introduce themselves and say something positive that happened to them that morning. One individual stood up and described how she stopped to smell a flower before she got to the bus. She



ended her story by reminding us to take time to appreciate the little things in life. That was an excellent way to start off a discussion on the sensitive topic of stigma and discrimination. Attendees took a few minutes to view a poster depicting stigma and discrimination images and reflect on individual squares in the poster and what those images meant to them. After a series of questions, the group opened up and began to share stories about their life struggles as persons with disabilities and began to relate to others who had gone through similar experiences. Throughout the training, the group gained confidence and found a stronger voice. After some tears and laughter, the group described their experience from the training as empowering and a great reminder of what advocacy work means.