

DISPATCH



Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
A Resource Center for People with Disabilities

Summer 2009



SVILC Consumers rally against California state budget cuts in San Francisco.

So much has been going on at SVILC it's hard to keep up. Here is a brief recap of what's been making news the last six months:

No consumer fees- SVILC is thrilled to offer all consumer programs and services free of charge. From requests for services to trainings and workshops, consumers are no longer charged for any services.

Recreation outings/trips and transitional housing room rental are available at cost.

The SVILC board of directors is growing- Over the last six months the board of directors has grown to include 11 highly-skilled members, two thirds of whom are persons with disabilities from Santa Clara County. We welcome Heidi Cartan as the new board president.

Strategic planning- SVILC is creating a new five-year strategic plan with the help of Bruckner Consultants, professionals with disabilities, who have extensive experience working with and in ILCs.

An upcoming move- By next July, SVILC plans

to move to a *new, more accessible* location. We are currently looking for a space that will meet the organization's expansion plans and the needs of all consumers. Call Nayana Shah at 408.894.9041 ext. 214 or TTY at 866.945.2205 if you know of a suitable location.

Advocacy in action- In addition to a strong presence at events and rallies, SVILC is helping to keep the community informed about issues central to the civil rights of people with disabilities through news and media outreach and our website.

June 22, 2009 marked the tenth anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision. The ruling affirmed the right of individuals with disabilities to live in their community of choice, but California's proposed budget cuts threaten the essence of the decision. SVILC is also moving towards the introduction of a deinstitutionalization program that will help individuals in nursing homes and other facilities move out and live independently in communities of their choosing.

To stay informed about advocacy issues, log onto www.svilc.org.

Save the date!



Presented by Silicon Valley
Independent Living Center

**Americans with Disabilities Act
20th Anniversary Celebration**

July 19-24, 2010

Mark your calendars for a week designed to remember and celebrate the signing of the ADA in 1990. More specific event information to be announced soon!

Tips for communicating with deaf and hard-of-hearing people

Deaf and hard-of-hearing people communicate in different ways depending on several factors such as age at which deafness began, type of deafness, language skills and speech abilities. A person may communicate using only speech or a combination of sign language, speech reading (commonly known as “lip-reading”), finger-spelling, and speech or writing. When communicating with a deaf or hard-of-hearing person, simply ask what he/she prefers.

The following are some tips for brief communication with deaf and hard-of-hearing people:

- Get the person’s attention before speaking.
- Be aware of the noise level in the room.
- Identify who you are by showing your name badge or business card.
- Avoid standing in front of a light source, such as a window or bright light. The glare and shadows

created on the face make it almost impossible for the person to speech read.

- Look directly at the person when speaking and maintain eye contact.
- Speak slowly and clearly, but do not yell, exaggerate, or over-pronounce. Exaggeration and overemphasis of words distorts lip movements, making speech reading more difficult.
- Do not place anything in your mouth when speaking.
- Use visual supplements whenever possible. Use pantomime, body language, and facial expression to help supplement your communication.
- If you do not understand something, do not pretend that you do. Ask the person to repeat what was said, and then repeat it back.

Information courtesy of San Francisco State University’s Disability Programs and Resource Center.

Announcements

Join SVILC’s peer counselor training program

Guided by the theme of “Support, yes. Therapy, no.” SVILC’s counseling department will begin its second session of peer counselor training at the end of August. The nine-week training is for people who, through a group setting, want to serve as peer counselors and help others who may be having difficulties in managing their lives or facing challenges, based on their own experiences.

“We are a very diverse group,” says supervisor Ruth White. “No matter what your gender, ethnicity or disability is, you are welcome.”

Peer counseling training is provided by SVILC staff and emphasizes listening skills, empathy, and ethics. Learn effective listening techniques and help fellow consumers feel that they are free to talk and be listened to.

This free, on-going training program is open to all

consumers. For more information, please contact Ruth White, at 408.894.9041 ext. 207 or TTY at 866.945.2205.

Energy cost savings through PG&E

During these budget-tightening economic times, every little bit of savings can help. PG&E customers can save on their monthly bills through a couple of different programs. One is the CARE (California Alternative Rates for Energy) program which provides a monthly discount on the energy bills of income-qualified households and housing facilities. The other is the Medical Baseline Allowance that provides savings to any customer who requires the use of electricity for medical purposes, such as assistive respiratory machines or wheel-chair battery chargers. SVILC can help provide you with more information on these programs, as well as assist you in your application for them. For more information call SVILC at 408.894.9041 or TTY at 866.945.2205.

South County News

Employment specialist now available to meet with consumers onsite in Gilroy

SVILC is pleased to announce that employment specialist Barbara Sena will now be available to meet with consumers every Wednesday at the South County Branch Office in Gilroy. Working with the Department of Rehabilitation, Barbara will assist SVILC consumers with employment training and support. For more information, contact Barbara at 408.894.9041 ext. 221 or TTY at 866.945.2205.

In addition to monthly housing workshops, SVILC extended its outreach efforts in southern Santa Clara County at two different events in the spring. In April, SVILC participated in the Morgan Hill Health and Wellness Fair where at least 200 informational fliers were distributed. Then, in May, SVILC made a concentrated outreach to the Latino community at the Arteagas Fruit and Veggies Fest in Gilroy. Ninety-five percent of the materials distributed were in Spanish.



SVILC staff at a community housing event in South County.

Upcoming South County events that SVILC will be a part of include Celebracion Del Campo on August 29 in San Martin, and the Gavilan College Health Fair in Gilroy on October 7.

For more information, please call 408.846.1480 or TTY at 866.945.2205.

ADVERTISEMENT

Guidance is available for homeowners in financial distress

Q: *I am behind on my mortgage payments, what are my options?*

A: Your options are: loan modification- takes your existing loan and creates a long-term solution to

enable you to meet the terms in times of hardship; short sale- sells your home for what it is currently valued at, not what you paid (the bank takes the loss); or foreclosure- turns ownership of your property over to the bank.

I am your Loan Modification Consultant. With a staff specifically trained in negotiation with lenders, I can help you modify your loan or sell your home in a short sale. I will help you explore your options and make the best decision.



Pardeep Grewal
Loan Modification Specialist/Loan Consultant

Back on Trak
700 Gale Street
Campbell, CA 95008
408.309.4834

Pardeepgrewal1@gmail.com
www.backontrak.com



Q: *Who needs a loan modification?*

A: Anyone who is unable to make their loan payments due to financial setbacks or temporary problems such as high interest rates, loss of income, or a reduction in hours at work.

Q: *Where can I learn more?*

A: This information was provided by Pardeep Grewal, Loan Modification Specialist. For more information, please call 408.309.4834.

Upon request, this publication is available in accessible formats.

www.svilc.org
Phone: 408.894.9050
TTY: 866.945.2205
Fax: 408.894.9050

Board President
Heidi Cartan

Executive Director
Sarah Triano



Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
2306 Zanker Road
San Jose, California 95131

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Take Note!

Over the next several months, **SVILC** will be expanding its **electronic communications** efforts, including distribution of a new e-newsletter.

If you would like to join the mailing list or have any feedback, please contact Michelle Aramburu at: michellea@svilc.org or call 408.894.9041 ext. 211 or TTY at 866.945.2205. You can also provide your email address via our website at www.svilc.org.

More information, less paper!