Conference to Empower Self-Advocacy in Youth

Several hundred youth with disabilities, community leaders, and interested stakeholders will gather in Fresno on Thursday, April 2nd for the Self-Advocacy Conference, an annual event designed to empower youth to be their own advocates and to take control of their choices and life path.

The conference will feature several topics and speakers, including a session on bullying put on by the CFILC, and a presentation on the power of networking by Shannon Mulhall, the ADA Coordinator for the City of Fresno.

According to RICV Program Manager, Sarah Harris, the primary goal of the event is to assist youth in being the next leaders by giving them the skills needed to lead them to more self-determined lives, and strong community engagement.

Inclusion and involvement are important components of the conference. In fact, youth with disabilities provided vital input regarding the development of the conference. Harris said a focus group of approximately 45 youth helped to steer aspects of the planning.

“One of the big obstacles for youth with disabilities is not realizing they have the right to make choices about their own lives,” explained Harris. “I worry because everything has become so system driven, and that does not leave the youth with a lot room for freedom of choice.”

With a strong message of “Charting Your Own Course,” the event will take place at the DoubleTree Hotel at the Fresno Convention Center from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The cost of $15 per participant includes lunch.

The conference is a collaborative effort by the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Central Valley Regional Center, EPU Children’s Center, and Resources for Independence Central Valley. For more information or to register, visit www.ricv.org.

Sarah Harris, RICV Program Manager
Celebrate RICV’s new location on March 5

Join us as we celebrate our new location, our new look, and our new leadership.

The RICV Team and Leadership is pleased to invite our stakeholders, consumers, social benefit partners, friends, and the community to join us on Thursday, March 5th at 3636 N. First Street, Suite 101, for our new Fresno location’s Open House. To accommodate busy schedules, we will present our Open House from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and again from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served, and a drawing for fabulous prizes will also be held. RSVP to tbeckham@ricv.org, or call Tracy at 559-221-2330.

Meet RICV’s Community Outreach Specialist

RICV has a new Community Outreach Specialist. Christina Tran joined the RICV Team in early February, and will be out and about in the Central Valley representing and promoting RICV. She will be focused on spreading information about the 2020 Census and Emergency Preparation.

If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?
I’d love to live in France for a year. I have family there and when I visited I couldn’t help but notice how much diversity there is everywhere you go, along with amazing landmarks to check out. Plus, all the countries in Europe are ridiculously close to travel to, so who wouldn’t want to live somewhere that’s only a couple hours drive to several other countries?

What’s the weirdest food you’ve ever eaten?
The weirdest food I’ve ever eaten would probably be hot Cheetos wrapped in a fruit rollup. It was a popular fad all my classmates were into when I was in middle school. A strange mix of something crunchy/salty with something chewy/sweet. I never thought it tasted good but, everyone was doing it, so I just joined in.

If you could be in a reality TV show, which one would you choose and why?
Coincidentally enough, I’d like to be on a TV show like The Office, or Parks and Recreation. Both are set in an office, but being able to have regular relationships with my coworkers where I can have fun and feel like I’m accomplishing a goal is pretty neat to live my everyday life. Working in a cubicle is also kind of satisfying to have my own little space to myself. It may be a bit boring, but there sure is some happiness I get from the simplicity of repetition and familiarity.
All RICV Locations Providing Assistance Filling Out Census

The census only happens every 10 years and we need your help to get everyone counted in 2020. The data collected from the U.S. Census Bureau helps determine how more than $675 billion in federal funds are distributed. These numbers can potentially affect federal funding for vital programs. This is why RICV is engaged in 2020 Census outreach, and why each RICV office is serving as a Questionnaire Assistance Center, (QAC), where persons can receive census information, and needed assistance completing the census questionnaire.

WHY THE CENSUS IS IMPORTANT TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY:

While the census only comes around once every 10 years, census data play a vital role in the lives of people with disabilities every day. The United States Constitution requires the census to ensure fair representation. Community leaders and elected officials rely on accurate census data to make funding decisions and other community allocations. It is important to get the numbers right.

Everyone—including people with disabilities—must be counted.

Each RICV office is serving as a Questionnaire Assistance Center where persons can receive census information, and needed assistance completing the census questionnaire.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON’T FILL IT OUT?

If you chose not to fill out your census questionnaire by April, expect a Census Bureau employee to follow up with you. If they are unable to reach you at your home, staff will have to rely on public data available to them. This information might be outdated and perhaps not represent the current number of people living in your household. Without an accurate count of households, the government is unable to verify the needed resources and services your community needs.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENSURE YOUR COMMUNITY IS COUNTED?

Encourage your friends and family members to fill out their Census questionnaire. If they are unsure, remind them why it’s important, what’s at stake, and that all responses are confidential.

We are here to help. Visit your nearest RICV location.
Assistive Technology is available.
Your 2020 Census data is safe, protected and confidential.
New Classes at RICV Bring Wellness Benefits on a Weekly Basis

Chi, Art is a certified Senior Trainer, an accomplished Yang, Sun and Chen-style Tai Chi player, and also a Karate blackbelt. His Tai Chi classes have not only helped improve the health of students, but have also helped to build community.

The classes offer low-impact, safe and gentle movement. Participants are encouraged to wear loose comfortable clothing, and comfortable flat shoes.

For more information, please call us at 559-221-2330.

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