

The Independent

Spring Issue 2009

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(Left) WRDC Co-Chair/FSU student, Jennifer Stoddard, CIL, Executive Director Bob Hand, Tony Sauer Director of Department of Rehabilitation, (Right) Olegario 'Ollie' Cantos VII, Justice Department in Washington D.C.

An award - winning night

Center for Independent Living celebrated 32 years of excellence by recognizing consumers and top executives who have championed the rights of people with disabilities.

CIL and California State University, Fresno solidified its relationship by working together to develop the first Western Regional Disability Conference (WRDC) in conjunction with the CIL Dinner. This was a first in

Fresno. This partnership has given FSU students an opportunity to experience real-world issues with consumers.

The night kicked off the Rehabilitation Institute and marked the beginning of a tradition. Consumers receive awards from our California legislators and governor. The event was a great success and the next conference and dinner is being planned.

For more information on the event please call: 1-800-244-2274.



Susan Edington

When Susan Edington speaks, employers listen. Her smooth and calming voice is coated with determination. Don't let her elegant mannerism fool you. She is tenacious when it comes to job placements! She has placed about 20 of her clients in jobs throughout the city of Fresno.

Susan is not alone! She has a team of go-getters! Carl Noone and Carissa Harvey in Fresno! And Mariela Gomez in Merced! They are in the grid iron of job placement!

Susan said, "When the clients get a job, I feel like I got one too! I have 21 jobs 20 with my clients and the one I have! It's so rewarding to see the client's self-esteem and confidence grow!"



CIL Executive Director
Bob Hand

The word for “crisis” in Chinese is made up of the words “d a n g e r” and “opportunity”. Nothing could better describe the times we are in. With the problems at both the federal and state level, there is the continuing possibil-

ity for grave danger for CIL, and especially for those we serve.

There is also, however, the possibility of opportunities that can propel the independent living movement forward. The federal government has put stimulus funds in for independent living. These are one-time funds, but if our state spends them correctly, they could set up systems that could be self-sustaining.

There is also the need, in these difficult financial times, for government agencies and businesses to operate as effectively as possible. Some of them have found that by contracting with us, they can address issues more effec-

tively and efficiently. CIL-Fresno is an invaluable resource to the community, and more and more people and organizations are recognizing this.

So, although there are unquestionably difficult times ahead for all of us, I feel very optimistic. I am sure that our community of people with disabilities, working with the staff and volunteers of CIL-Fresno, will create the opportunities for fuller participation and a higher quality of life for all people with disabilities in the Central Valley. CIL is partnering with numerous nonprofit service organizations and government agencies to make this vision come true.

Peer Support Meetings

**1st & 3rd
Wednesday
2:00pm - 3:30pm**

**Call Bonnie
Rusko'**

276-6777

Center for Independent Living - Fresno

Executive Director - Bob Hand
Office Manager - Tony Ko
Benefits Specialist - Anne Marie Rennells
IL Specialist - Barney Morris
IL Specialist - Vidal Medina
IL Specialist - Reyes Sandoval
Director of Program Services - Jimmie Soto
BRIDGES Counselors - Suzanna Gamez & Martha Guzman
BRIDGES Counselor/SOAR Liaison - Ileana Perez
A.T. Advocate - Camille Gaston - Natalie Hardy
Community Advocate - Lillian Fillpot
Receptionist - Nachi Silpachai & Ellissa Anaya
Staff Interpreter - Robin Shaw
CAP Advocate - Suzanne Ames
Job Placement - Susan Edington
Center Coordinator - Tommy Monreal

System Change Advocate

Lillian Fillpot brings her wealth of knowledge to CIL and continues to develop a path of advocacy for all people



CIL-Fresno has employed a Systems Change Advocate, Lillian Fillpot, M.A., Ed.S., C.R.C. as of January 16, 2009. She comes to us from Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health and was the Clinical Supervisor of the Supported Employment and Education Program (SEES) for thirteen years. She is a part-time lecturer for

Please see Lillian, page 7

The philosophy of independent living is the belief that each person with a disability is unique and has the same civil rights as people who do not have a disability. IL advocates place emphasis on:

- People with disabilities should be able to live, work, shop and play where they choose within the community.
- In order for people with disabilities to live in the community instead of a hospital environment the community has a responsibility to be accessible.
- Expecting equal access to social, economic and political opportunities for people with disabilities can be compared to expecting equal access for ethnic minorities.
- People with disabilities are not sick. A person with a disability may become ill, but being disabled is not considered an illness.
- People with disabilities should not be in a institutionalized environment unless they are sick and in need of acute medical care.
- People with disabilities have the same aspirations as people who do not have disabilities.
- People with disabilities do not wish to be described as "very brave" when they are successful, nor do they seek pity in the manner of the "poster child" image.

People with disabilities know best what their barriers to independence are and what they need in order to live independently and should have a say in what happens in their community that affects them.

Therefore, people with disabilities are in the best position to guide, direct, and control programs for people with disabilities.

AT Question Highlight:

User: Chris Anderson
Product: Dragon Naturally
Speaking (DNS)

Q: How has DNS benefited
you?

A: "Well it helps me when I'm
trying to type and I can just say
the words. Because of my
speech...it's easier just to say
what I want and have it typed
on the computer."

Q: What's your favorite thing
about DNS?

A: "It's just easy to use. I like
having the opportunity to get on
the computer and go on web-
sites using Dragon. The lab...
"is a place where I get to get on
the computer and explore
a little."

Q: Would you recommend oth-
ers to use DNS?

A: "Yes, I would."

Navigating a
computer these
days can be
tough. Nobody
knows this better than
Chris Anderson, who took
on the task of learning how
assistive technology could
allow him to use the com-
puter in the AT lab at the
Center for Independent Liv-
ing.

Camille Gaston, CIL's offi-
cial Dragon Tamer, worked

Chris and the Dragon Tamer:



Chris has found the light at the end of a tunnel. He has learned to use Dragon Naturally Speaking a computer software that opened the world of computer and communication by speaking to the computer.

with Chris to learn Dragon Naturally Speaking, a voice recognition program which allows Chris to use the computer with his voice instead of a mouse.

Chris has learned to use Dragon Naturally Speaking in applications like Microsoft word, to create word documents and with Internet Explorer, to browse the web.

According to Chris, "At first I thought it might be difficult for me, but now I can use

the lab like anyone else!" For many, an opportunity to use a computer doesn't come often. Camille thought it was a cool concept to use her voice to control the computer. CIL has helped to show that computers can become your best friend.

For more information on the computer lab and assistive Technology services please call:

1-800-244-2274

RESULTS FROM ILC STATEWIDE CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY QUESTIONS

Center for Independent Living—Fresno Fiscal Year 2007– 2008

1. The concerns that brought me to the center were adequately addressed by the center staff.

	Total	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	62%
Tend to agree	17	23%
Tend to disagree	5	7%
Strongly disagree	6	8%

2. What type of services did you receive from the center?

Information/referral	40	-
Assistive Technology	4	-
Housing services	24	-
Personal Assistance Services	22	-
ADA Technical Assistance	4	-
Systems Advocacy	3	-
Independent Living Skills	8	-
Benefits Counseling	12	-
Peer Support Group	27	-
BRIDGES Program	5	-
Youth Transition Services	6	-
Other: Please specify:		
Homeowners & Renters Assistance	1	-
Form Assistance	2	-
Client Assistance Program	2	-
Work Incentive Planning and Assistance	1	-

3. After making your first request for services, to what degree were you included in the development of your Independent Living Plan setting goals and outcomes or objectives?

	46	62%
Very included	14	19%
Moderately included	4	5%
Moderately excluded	2	3%
Very excluded	8	11%
Not needed/applicable		

**Please continue on
 next page** ---->

4. Were services and informational material you received presented to you in an accessible, understandable and respectful manner?

Yes	70	96%
No	3	4%

5. Have you benefited from the services you received?

Yes	58	82%
No	13	18%

6. Overall, how would you describe the quality of services that you received from the center staff?

Excellent	45	61%
Good	17	23%
Moderate/Fair	5	7%
Poor	7	9%

7. Are there any services that would improve your independence that are not available in your community? (Please list)

Provide referrals regarding medical information - Food pantry information

Establish a CIL in Reedley for the consumers- More Independent Living Services

Employment for consumers and follow up related to consumer's daily living - More counselors to assist consumers - Forms assistance for all forms not only Social Security issues ADA Assessments for business for consumer accessibility - Bus Training education public on people with disabilities - Computer classes for consumers - Resources to all services providers in the valley Better Housing information regarding Section 8 - Public Housing - System Change: traffic signals that are not in sync with the time a person with a disability has to cross the street Safety issues while people with disabilities who are out in public.

Center for Independent Living would like to thank all the consumers who participated in this survey. CIL - Fresno is dedicated to providing and improving services to its consumers.

Class Lesson: describe Anger



The BRIDGES Program has provided services to many teens. This month a new topic was introduced, anger management and coping skills. In Sanger High School a student shared a poem he wrote describing his experience with anger.

Anger

Anger looks like a bright red apple.

Anger feels like someone else is inside of you.

Anger sounds like a train coming out of your head.

Anger smells like fire burning everything in its path.

Anger tastes like a volcano erupting in your mouth.

Anger is darkness falling over you.

Anger is a demon you can't control.

By: Michael Rico

The students related to the words in the poem and were able to see and discuss what anger looked like to them. The poem was used as a learning tool in the class. Certain words were highlighted and the students were asked what those words meant to them. At the end of the class, students talked about their feelings which related to other students. The teens realized they all were experiencing the same feelings.

Some of the questions that were asked and answers students expressed:

What makes you reach volcano mad?

Animal abuse & people screaming

How do you calm down?

Count to ten, walk away or talk to a friend.

Continue from page 3, Lillian

CSU-Fresno Rehabilitation Counseling Program and teaches Medical Aspects of Psychiatric Disabilities and another class on Ethics and Values of the helping professions. For thirteen years she has been a member of the Central Valley Mayors' Committee for the Partnership and Advocacy for Disabilities (CVMC). Lillian was the Chair of the CVMC in 2001 and 2008. She most recently has been appointed by the City of Fresno as a Commissioner of the Disability Awareness Committee (DAC) and is the Co-Chair. Lillian continues to pursue her doctorate degree in Psychology at Alliant University in Organizational Development. Her passion is in believing that all people have special value and that people with disabilities bring additional knowledge in their skills and talents to the workplace. Lillian said, "I am a true advocate for teaching the community that persons with disabilities have a right to self-determination. I want to reduce the stigma of people with disabilities in the community in a collaborative manner."

THE INDEPENDENT

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If you would like to be placed on
the mailing list please call
Center for Independent Living
Fresno
1-800-244-2274.



Center for Independent Living is
Partially Funded by
The United Way of Fresno

CAP Advocacy

- Are you a client of the Department of Rehabilitation?
- Have you encountered problems with the services provided by DOR?
- Then you may request assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
- A CAP advocate can provide you with information, advice & representation, including assistance in, administrative or other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of your rights.
- CIL-Fresno at (800) 244-2274

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Make a difference by donating to Center for Independent Living – Fresno.

CIL is dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with disabilities. CIL partners with individuals and the community to encourage people with disabilities to be in control of their lives and to live more independently through a diverse range of choices and opportunities.

Send your donation to:
CIL- Fresno 3008
N. Fresno Street,
Fresno, CA 93703
1-800-244-2274