

# The Independent

Summer Issue 2010

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## Join us in Celebrating 20 Years of the ADA!

This summer, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act's signing ceremony at the White House on July 26, 1990, which was held under the leadership of President George H. W. Bush. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities within the areas of employment, public accommodations, and services. The ADA has allowed change within the disabled community, which includes how they are viewed by society.

People are more aware of their abilities as opposed to only focusing on their limitations due to their disability. It is true that there is much that needs to be improved among the attitudes toward people with disabilities, but the ADA has only improved this awareness and sensitivity. Resources for Independence, Central Valley (RICV) organized an ADA Forum on July 30, 2010 at the Piccadilly Inn University, where many legislative representatives, councilmembers, and others from the City of Fresno attended to commemorate



the Americans with Disabilities Act, and also discuss improvements and other concerns that involve accessibility within our community. All in all, after 20 years, the ADA has certainly made an impact on people with disabilities in the Central Valley.

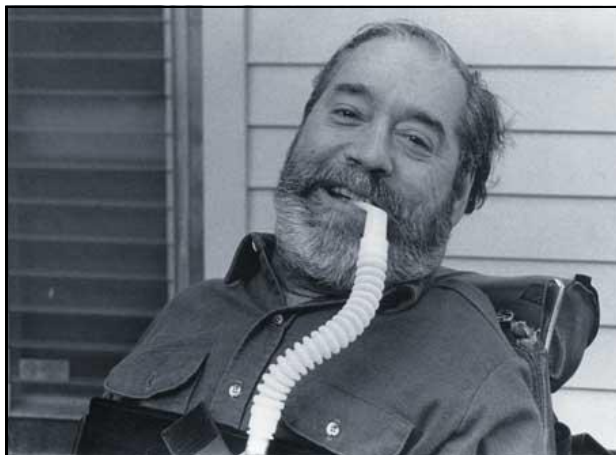


Picture taken at the ADA Forum: Kellie Longo-Albarran, Gayle Holman (Rep for Asm. Villines), Sarah Ditrich (Rep for Congressman Radanovich), and Shannon Major (Rep for Sen. Cogdill)

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## Ed Roberts Day on January 23



Ed Roberts, The “Father of Independent Living” and co-founder of the World Institute on Disability

On July 19, 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger signed a bill to recognize Roberts and his efforts for people with disabilities. Ed Roberts Day will be designated as having a special significance in public schools and educational institutions, and would encourage those entities to conduct suitable commemorative exercises on that date, re-

membering his life, recognizing his accomplishments, as well as the accomplishments of other Californians with disabilities. Like other state “Day of Significance,” the day not be a state holiday for state employees. Our Systems Change Advocate, Kellie Longo-Albarran, was instrumental in shining the light on the importance of recognizing this great figure.

## Resources for Independence Staff

### Fresno Office

Executive Director - Bob Hand  
Director of Program Services - Jimmie Soto  
Office Manager - Tony Ko  
Systems Change Advocate - Kellie Longo-Albarran  
Comm. Work Incentive Coordinator - Anne Marie Rennells  
IL Specialists - Barney Morris & Reyes Sandoval  
IL Specialists - Vidal Medina & Jennifer Kungu  
CAP Advocate - Suzanne Ames  
AT Advocates - Camille Gaston & Maria Olivarez  
Staff Interpreter - Robin Shaw  
Job Development Coordinator - Susan Edington  
Lead Job Developer - Carissa Miller  
Assistant Job Developers - Carl Noone & Chandra Woods  
Assistant Job Developers - Elizabeth Steele & Lisa Star  
BRIDGES Counselors - Suzanna Gamez & Martha Guzman  
BRIDGES Counselor/SOAR Liaison - Ileana Perez  
Community Resource Developer - Darcy Lien  
Program Assistant/Receptionist - Nori Nadzri-Romero  
Administrative Assistant - Anuradha Gajaraj  
Bookkeeper - Patrick Atkins  
Assistant Bookkeeper - Jennifer Coke  
Special Projects Coordinator - Tamala Fields  
Homelessness Prevention Specialist - Ellissa Anaya

Transportation Specialist - Florean Foster  
CCT Coordinator - Vanessa Luna

### Madera - North Valley Office

IL Specialist - Raymond Perry

### Merced - North Valley Office

IL Specialist - Lynornces Downum-Hanzal  
IL Specialist/CAP Advocate - Loronda Norah  
Job Developer - Marina Fisher  
Comm. Work Incentive Coordinator - Anthony Bovis

### Visalia - South Valley Office

Center Coordinator - Nachi Kinsel  
IL Specialist - Gina Molina  
Comm. Work Incentive Coordinator - Jeraldine McCoy  
Rural Job Developer - Amado Martinez  
Homelessness Prevention Specialist - Nalor See

### Volunteers

Americorps Volunteer - Lisa Rivera

## Meet the Systems Change Advocate

Systems change advocacy is an effort to change policies, rules or laws which determine how services are provided. RICV's System Change Advocate, Kellie Longo-Albarran, does this with policies pertaining to people with disabilities. In lieu of the 20th anniversary of the ADA passing, this newsletter will highlight her efforts. Kellie has been an advocate since January 2010 and has been busy ever since. She is a recent graduate of the Rehabilitation Counseling Graduate



Kellie Longo-Albarran and Mayor Ashley Swearengin

Program at Fresno State, and has been involved in planning the annual Western Region Disability Con-

ference, as well as other events that promote disability awareness.

## Update on Capitol Action Day

May 26, 2010, RICV System Change Advocate, Kellie Longo-Albarran and 40 participants including RICV consumers and staff attending the annual Disability Capitol Action Day in Sacramento, CA, which addressed issues the impact the well-being of people with disabilities. This year, some of the issues that were addressed included implementing Disability History Week in

schools and other institutions to promote disability awareness. Other issues addressed included In-Home Supportive Services and Olmstead Act implementation. Our RICV reps met with Senator Codgill's office, Senator Ashburn, Senator Denham (who signed off on Disability History Week), and Senator Florez.

### PEER SUPPORT GROUP

1st and 3rd  
Wednesday of the  
Month

from  
2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Everyone is welcome  
and encouraged to  
come.

For more Information  
Call 221-2330

## Success Story: Creative Careers

When one thinks of an entrepreneur, a person such as Lupe Aguilar-Oftedal comes to mind. This is a woman with tenacity and she fights to get what she wants. She was referred to Creative Careers for employment placement services by the California State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, but it became apparent that this woman was no ordinary consumer. She had a drive that we have rarely seen in our organization. Lupe always saw herself as starting her own business. This is a process that doesn't happen very often in vocational rehab, but Lupe is tenacious and

would not take no for an answer. Lupe often moved ahead of the bureaucratic system as she worked tirelessly to create a boutique in the Tower District that would be unique, a great value for the customers, and just a classy and fun place to hang out.

Lupe succeeded when she opened Be Be O's. While her shop features some gently used items as well new things, it is always a treasure hunt to go into the shop to find what treat she may have waiting for her customers each day. Her drive and personality fit into the Tower District so perfectly! She doesn't stop at the

tired old 10:00-5:00 shop hours either. If you get on her mailing list, you will be kept up to date on all the extra events she has going on. The fashion shows are especially fun as you are able to join in the night life of that part of town and get some fun shopping in too. Keep your eyes open for upcoming events such as a possible wine tasting in the near future.

With all the innovative ideas and hard work that Lupe has put into creating this business, we are sure to see her around as a business owner for years to come. WAY TO GO LUPE! We are all



**Be Be O's**  
1050 North Fulton Street  
Fresno, CA 93728

Store Hours:  
Mon thru Sat 12pm to 7pm  
Closed on Sundays

Owner:  
Lupe Aguilar-Oftedal  
559-283-0873  
bebe2Lupe@aol.com



## Central Valley Coalition for Human Services (CVCHS)



RICV's Executive Director, Bob Hand, founded a group called The Central Valley Coalition for Human Services (CVCHS), a group of private, nonprofit, governmental and educational organizations that have come together to provide more effective human services in the Central Valley. The group is cooperating on capacity building, grant writing, staff training, marketing and joint purchasing agreement. For more information, call the RICV office at 221-2330, or check out the website [www.centralvalleychs.org](http://www.centralvalleychs.org).

**Check out our newsletter flyers including information on our upcoming annual dinner in October and information on whooping cough prevention from the Madera County Public Health Department!!!**

## Ready To Get Involved? Join an Advocacy Team

You can join RICV by volunteering and getting involved in local and statewide policy related to people with disabilities by joining our advocacy team. An advocacy team is a group of people with different types of disabilities that work together towards systems change on disability issues. These teams will be working on legislative visits, event planning, transportation and housing, issues affecting students with disabilities, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and whatever is important to YOU as a consumer.

If you want more information and would like to join our monthly advocacy meetings, contact our System Change Advocate by calling 559-221-2330 or email at [klongo@ricv.org](mailto:klongo@ricv.org).

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## CCT Program

Are you currently living in a nursing home or assisted living facility? Do you want to live in the community in your own place of residence? The *California Community Transitions (CCT) Program* can help you with this.

Call the office to speak with our CCT Coordinator, Vanessa Luna, or an IL Specialist to see if you meet the eligibility requirements and receive help with finding affordable and accessible housing.



## FAX Programs

*Travel Training* is available for people using FAX's paratransit, Handy Ride, and would like to use FAX's fixed route. This program provides an opportunity for you to become more independent in using public transportation.

We are also promoting safety on FAX's fixed route with our *Mobility Device Marking & Tethering Strap Program*. This is a free, voluntary program designed by FAX to ensure that best efforts are made to properly secure mobility devices used by passengers traveling on FAX buses.

If you're interested in these two programs, please call our Transportation Specialist, Florean Foster at 559-221-2330.

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## Recycle AT

The Assistive Technology (AT) Program has two programs geared toward loaning and recycling durable medical equipment used for independent mobility.



### AT Loan & Recycling Program

If you, a family member, or loved one are in need of a durable medical equipment, the AT Program has a number of walkers, walker commodes, and bath chairs that can be donated to you. If you have any questions, please contact one of our AT Advocates (Camille Gaston or Maria Olivarez) by calling 559-221-2330.

### Repair & Share Program

AT Advocates are still accepting donations for power wheelchairs for our *Repair & Share Program*. These chairs will be used to aid people with disabilities, maximizing their independence by loaning the chairs on a temporary basis while they find the means of getting a power wheelchair of their own.

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# New Programs

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## Community Leadership Academy

Another program was launched by, yet again, RICV Systems Change Advocate, Kellie Longo-Albarran, called the Community Leadership Academy, where 15 people with disabilities came together to enhance their leadership skills. Particularly, the participants met once a week for 4 weeks in June at the RICV Conference Room, where they were trained in becoming a member of a board of a non-profit or-

ganization involved in the disabled community. Kellie recently reported that 2 of the 15 graduates of the program have submitted an application in hopes of serving as a board member of an agency supporting people with disabilities. One of the graduates, Anthony Gracian, says "this Community Leadership Academy has given me the opportunity to become a better leader in my community. I was really excited

about this opportunity that I was given. Thank you RICV and thank you guest speakers...you did an excellent job." Guest speakers who have graced this event included Bob Hand, Elizabeth Kunz, Jackie Ryle, Kelli Furtado, Jeffery Snyder, Lyne Ashbeck, and Russell Ryan. For more information on the Community Leadership Academy, contact Kellie at 221-2330.



The Graduates with instructors Executive Director, Bob Hand, and Systems Change Advocate, Kellie Longo-Albarran.

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## THE INDEPENDENT

Resources for Independence, Central Valley  
3008 North Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93703

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

(559) 221-2330 VOICE  
(800) 244-2274 TOLL FREE  
(559) 221-2340 FAX  
(559) 221-2342 TTY

If you would like to be placed on the mailing list, please call Resources for Independence at 1-800-244-2274.

### Missed our last newsletter issue?

Check out our newsletter archives at our new website:

[www.ricv.org](http://www.ricv.org)

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FRESNO, CA 93706

### Client Assistance Program (CAP)

This program informs persons with disabilities about procedures and services, and assists them in resolving difficulties that may arise while receiving Rehabilitation Act funded services.

If you need assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP), call 1-800-244-2274.

### Board of Directors

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Carol Rankin  
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Gayle Black  
*Board Member*

Anthony Gracian  
*Treasurer*

Carlos Duarte  
*Board Member*

Bonnie Rusko  
*Board Member*

### Make a difference by donating to Resources for Independence, Central Valley

We are dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with disabilities. We partner 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:  
Resources for Independence, Central Valley  
3008 North Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93703  
1-800-244-2274