

ALTA CONNECTIONS

The Quarterly Client, Service Provider, and Staff Update Newsletter



More on our featured artist
Lindsey Watkins pg. 10

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Executive Director Lori Banales

Community Inclusion and Engagement embraces opportunities to participate in community-based activities that support education, resource development and service access. Engaging with community partners to share information about our service system builds and strengthens our relationships with our partners which in turn, increase opportunities and connections for the individuals we serve, as well as those who will join our regional center in the future. Outreach is critical in supporting our agencies Vision and Mission.

Community Inclusion and Engagement also represents Focus Area 4 in the ACRC 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. ACRC is out in the community and has participated in forty-six outreach events since January of this year, with an additional thirty-six the previous six months. Some of the places we have visited include: Sacramento County Social Services, NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, El Dorado County Sheriff Department, Placer and Sacramento County IHSS, City of Davis Adaptive Recreation and Inclusion, Setting the Stage for Inclusion in Yolo County, Hmong film premier, Punjabi American History Day in Yuba City, Sacramento LGBTQ Center, and Chapa De Indian Health.

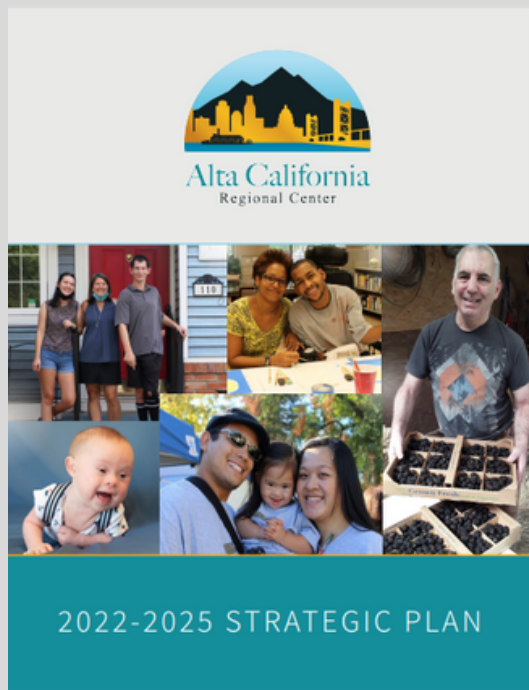
WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- MESSAGE FROM ED
- STRATEGIC PLAN: COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT
- STAFF PROFILE
- CAC MEET AND GREET
- INTAKE AND CLINICAL TEAM
- DSP COLLABORATIVE
- CULTURAL DIVERSITY SPECIALIST
- PRIDE PARADE
- CLIENT SPOTLIGHT
- ACRC BY THE NUMBERS
- FEATURED ARTIST PROFILE
- SIERRA COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP PRESS RELEASE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - CONT.

Executive Director - Lori Banales

Every engagement focuses on outreach and education, and several include a focus on recruitment for both regional center staff and Direct Support Professionals (DSP) who support our vendored community. ACRC is proud to share that we have created a Diversity Outreach Workgroup (DOW). This group represents staff from all positions who have the interest to represent ACRC and to increase our foot print in the community. They are led by our Cultural Diversity Specialist, Shamir Griffin. You will find a feature article highlighting Shamir, as you read on. It is the intent of this workgroup to ensure that our agency is represented across all ten counties and throughout the diversity that represents our center. To further support our commitment in this area, our agency will look forward to participating in a comprehensive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training series that will launch in November. Building professional capacity to support our staff, who in turn support our community, remains a priority.



STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREA : COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND ENGAGEMENT

Focus Area Definition:

ACRC provides information about eligibility, services, and supports to clients, families, and community partners. ACRC also seeks collaborative opportunities to learn and educate about the changing needs of the community.

Community Input:

- People want to access regional center Information in their preferred languages and in their communities.
- The community wants the regional center to continue to collaborate with more agencies to learn from each other and educate the community about different resources.

Goal 1:
Create a bigger presence in the community to build relationships and share resources with members of the community. Prioritize having meetings at community locations, increasing the outreach team, and continuing to make connections with more community agencies.

Goal 2:
Educate community partners about what the regional center is and what services are provided.

Goal 3:
Produce a series of short videos of information about the regional center, in multiple languages

STAFF PROFILE - EARLY START SERVICE COORDINATOR KAYLA OLSEN

Kayla Olsen accepted an internship at ACRC from 2013-2014 while in her undergraduate program at California State University Sacramento. Later in 2017, Kayla graduated with her Master's Degree from the University of Washington and learned that ACRC was hiring. She knew she wanted to work as an Early Start Service Coordinator (SC) and was hired on July 3, 2017. Kayla loves working with babies and new parents. She finds value in being the person that parents trust and confide in, and is honored to be the person to give parents something they need in the moment. Kayla values the relationships she has developed at ACRC and the flexibility, support, and understanding of her colleagues.



On July 3, 2023, Kayla will begin her new role as Client Services Manager, exactly 6 years after starting her career as a SC. Since becoming a parent, Kayla recognizes that her perspective has shifted. She knows that parents find comfort in knowing that they are not alone in their awareness and concerns of their children's development. She is keenly aware of her own children's development and is parenting 2 ½ year old twins, Emmett and Amelia who are the joys of her life. She is training them to be 49er fans! Her twins are fun and loving and are her brightest light at the end of a hard day. Kayla loves to cook, to try different foods, to travel and learn about difference cultures. She is excited to step into her new role.

CLIENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MEET AND GREET SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 - 12:30PM - 2:00PM



On September 12, 2023, ACRC's Client Advisory Committee (CAC) will host a meet and greet prior to their September monthly meeting. Please come to ACRC's Harvard Office to socialize, enjoy refreshments, and learn more about the CAC activities. The meet and greet is from 12:30pm - 2:00pm. We hope regional center clients that attend the meet and greet will attend the CAC meeting that begins at 2:00pm.

ACRC INTAKE AND CLINICAL TEAM

Lanterman Act Intake (3 years old +)

Over the past several years, ACRC has seen an uptick in the number of applicants applying for services. We have participated in many outreach events which we are happy to share have contributed to this increase. We are also keenly aware of the delays in meeting our intake timelines. This article is written to share with our community the strategies and efforts we are employing to complete the intake process as quickly as we can. Prior to sharing those strategies, we would like to share the data: In 2020 ACRC averaged 97 applicants per month; in 2023, we are averaging 197 applicants per month, representing a 100% increase.

Some strategies we have implemented include, but are not limited to, are:

- hiring additional staff to support Intake
- providing overtime opportunities for our intake and clinical staff to assist in completing eligibility reviews
- approval of the AB 637 public process to waive the median rates set by the state to support funding vendored clinicians at the market rate
- offering increased psychological evaluation appointments given by our vendored clinicians

We have a wonderfully collaborative and dedicated Intake and Clinical Team. They work together to support applicants by providing quality social assessment reports that assist our clinicians in the eligibility review process. Our staff psychologists conduct psychological evaluations and are working feverishly with our medical doctors to complete the high number of eligibility reviews in collaboration with the Intake Specialists. It truly takes a partnership of dedicated folks who desire to serve in excellence and see that applicants are thoroughly assessed to determine if they meet eligibility criteria for regional center services.

The Intake units overseen by managers, Jyoti Sharma and Tim Kuwazaki gain additional support provided by Lead Intake Specialists. They support the managers and the teams by providing training as needed. Special recognition is given to Hillary Santiago and Brandy Stewart who, through their dedication and passion for our clientele and the mission of our agency, continue to do a wonderful job every day.



Hillary Santiago
Lead Intake Specialist



Brandy Stewart
Lead Intake Specialist

cont.

ACRC INTAKE AND CLINICAL TEAM

cont.



Dr. Cynthia Root
Lead Psychologist

Additionally, we are grateful for the support the Lead Psychologist, Cynthia Root, PhD is providing the clinical team; training the Intake Specialists; consulting with our contracted psychologists; and much more.

We would like to also recognize Catarina Juan-Fishman, PsyD and Sindhu Philip, PsyD as the additional clinicians who set the bar high and are an invaluable support to our Intake and Clinical team

We are ever grateful for our medical doctors who work cohesively with the Eligibility Review team providing their individual and collective expertise to the process. Special recognition goes to Barbara Friedman, MD and Kate Milroy, MD.

As we continue to grow as an agency, we will continue to assess, troubleshoot and implement strategies that support a timely intake process for our applicants, so that they can access services and supports through lifelong planning as a means to achieve healthy and productive lives in their own communities.

Dr. Kate Milroy



ACRC HOSTS ANOTHER MICROENTERPRISE FAIR

On June 22, 2023 ACRC hosted another opportunity for clients to sell their crafts, foods, and one-of-a-kind items.

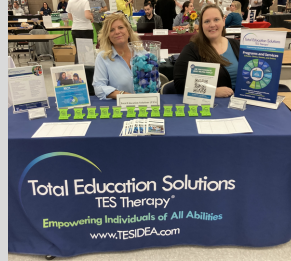


DSP COLLABORATIVE - DISABILITY INDUSTRY CAREER EXPOS

ACRC & VMRC

DSP Collaborative hosts
Disability Industry Career
Expos in Sacramento and
Lodi.

<https://dspcollaborative.org/>



DISABILITY INDUSTRY CAREER EXPO



CULTURAL DIVERSITY SPECIALIST - SHAMIR GRIFFIN



To introduce myself at present would be the need to acknowledge the path that my family has walked for generations, for we as individuals are the culmination of prayers, misfortune, and hope for an opportunity that our forefathers, foremothers, and trancers walked before her. My late mother was a teacher, minister, and volunteered to help many of those in need while walking the medicine path that her mother and grandmother walked before her. My father has held many jobs across my lifetime and like his father he was deft with his hands and has a strong sense of work ethic and responsibility. Though we were poor and my parents separated when I was young they made sure I learned both of these things, while also facing the ugliness of the reality we live in. My mom would frequently take my nephew and I to volunteer at abused women's shelters and halfway homes. My father would take us to build fences, or have us help with minor landscaping while we were in elementary school. These lessons coupled with the loss of their acceptance of me when I came out as being a member of the LGBTQIA community, led to me learning to see the struggles in others and advocate for them and myself.

Fueled by anger, neglect, forlorn, and hopelessness I was able to work more intimately with kids with Give Every Child a Chance for 3-years, The San Joaquin County Pride Center and the at risk LGBTQIA population for a year and a half, with my advanced needs clients as a behavioral therapist for 5-years. I later went on to work for a local family resource center; La Familia Counseling Center Inc where I was able to learn more about other historically underserved communities for a year as the Family Resource Center Coordinator. All of these experiences allowed me to hear the many stories of communities I belonged to, as well as those I was only then learning about. A mind is a garden that can flourish and provide abundant fruit of wisdom when nourished appropriately, and the culminative experiences of working with these agencies and my own philanthropy work has led me to produce a curative herb for those in need with Alta California Regional Center, be it as a service coordinator or in my current role as The Cultural Diversity Specialist. Understanding that comes from pain is only medicinal if applied to the wounds of those who are still aching, who have not had their voices heard, and those who have had their voices stolen. Regardless of your position within the world, we have the choice to try and change things, but we must also be responsible for the consequences that follow even if they were unattended.

I am a cancer survivor, two-time award winning author of poetry, a student of language, a grass dancer, and in the social service field and everyday I make mistakes and try to learn from them or teach others how not to, by meeting them where they are and not where I believe they should be.

ACRC PARTICIPATES IN SACRAMENTO PRIDE PARADE

On June 11, 2023, ACRC staff marched in the Sacramento Pride Parade! We were happy to walk with our community and spread the message that love is love.



Pride



HAPPY
Pride
MONTH

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT - GREG CARR - CHESS AND BACKGAMMON CLUB

Greg has had an interest in chess and backgammon since he was a child. He received his first backgammon board from his grandmother on his 16th birthday and has cherished the board ever since. When his mother passed away in 2021, Greg sought solace and found playing these classic games provided him distraction, fun, and connection with his community. His love for playing these games would lead him to create his own Chess Club and Backgammon Club.



Greg participated in a different backgammon club but didn't like how it was run or the lack of organization. Seeing the problem, he found a solution and created his own Backgammon Club, with the first meeting held in June 2023. In addition to backgammon, Greg held the first Chess Club meeting in May 2023.

Both clubs are held once a month from 11:30 am – 4:00 pm with Backgammon being held the first Saturday of the month and Chess Club held the second Saturday of the month. The clubs are in person at Round Table Pizza located at 7943 Greenback Ln, Citrus Heights, CA 95610. Everyone is welcome regardless of age, gender, disability, or experience. If an attendee is unfamiliar with the games, Greg will personally provide them knowledge on how to play during the club meetings.

As the clubs continue to develop, Greg hopes to hold tournaments and get the Backgammon Club listed on the [US Backgammon Federation website](#). If you are interested in attending, sign up for [Chess Club](#) or [Backgammon Club](#).

EARLY START JOB FAIR - AUGUST 9, 2023 10AM -2PM SACRAMENTO OFFICE

Alta California Regional Center is proud to sponsor a job fair for early intervention service providers. Our American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Part C Initiative is focused on enhancing and expanding service provider availability and developing culturally and linguistically sensitive services.

Our goal is to connect employers and job seeking professionals at all levels. If you are interested in a job working with infants and toddlers in Early Start, please join us! There are many jobs available with providers serving families and children birth to age 3 who are experiencing developmental delays. [ACRC](#) serves the following 10 Counties: Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. This job fair will host several vendors who provide speech and language, physical and occupational, and behavior therapy. You can talk with them directly about their job openings, how to apply, and see if you believe their agency is a good fit for you. We look forward to meeting you!

ACRC BY THE NUMBERS

Did you know that ACRC is growing by approximately 1000 clients annually?

Here is who we serve as of June 22, 2023:

Early Start - 2587

Lanterman Clients - 26,292

Total = 28,879

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Resource changes over the last quarter

New Service Providers

Adult Day Health Center

Yolo Adult Day Health Center - Dignity Health

Supported Living Services

Maisie's Placer Family Support Solutions

Education Services/ Independent Living Services/

Community Activity Support Services

UC Davis Redwood SEED Scholars

Residential Care Home

Northstar Carehome, Inc.

Chidike Care Home LLC

MC Home Care Inc.

Pharmaceutical Services

Pacific West Pharmacy

Independent Living Services

Inspirational Independent Living Skills Program

Speech Pathology

Developmental Occupational Therapy

Silver Linings Speech & Language

Transportation Company

Youngs Transportation Services

Closed Services Providers

Independent Living Services

Marvin Buchmiller Agency

Inspirational Independent Living Skills Program

Residential Care Home

S&C Care Home

FEATURED ARTIST PROFILE - LINDSEY WATKINS

My name is Lindsey Nicole Watkins. I live on the South side of Yuba City with my parents and my younger brother. I have two older sisters; one lives in Sacramento and the other in Modesto.

I am currently enrolled at the Creative Arts Center in Yuba City, where I work on a variety of art mediums. I have participated in this program since 2006. During my time at CRS, I have worked on Mosaic, Sculpture, Painting and Gourd Designs. I have enjoyed working on these different mediums, but Mosaic and Painting have been my favorite. I find my inspiration in Asian design and Minimalist Landscapes. I like using different shades of pink and blue in my creations. I like working at the Arts Center and enjoy spending time with my friends.

My art can be purchased at the Creative Arts Center located at 732 Plumas Street in Yuba City. Inquiries can be sent to teresacrquest@gmail.com





LEARNING INDEPENDENCE FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT (LIFE) PROJECT



Sierra College and Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) receives funding from the California Department of Developmental Services for the Learning Independence for Future Employment (LIFE) Project.

Sierra College and Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) are excited to work in collaboration on the Learning Independence for Future Employment (LIFE) project through the California Department of Developmental Services Employment Grant. The LIFE project is a Service Model Transformation Project to develop a new and expanded role for the California Community Colleges (CCCs) in the preparation; placement and the implementation of innovative strategies and practices to increase Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This new model will initially be based on individuals served by the Alta California Regional Center who reside in either Placer, Nevada or Sacramento County but will provide findings and recommendations that can be scaled, replicated, and sustained throughout the State. Sierra College will serve as the hub that convenes a multidisciplinary group of consumers, stakeholders & subject matter experts to evaluate and analyze present employment-related services.

The project shall provide recommendations and provide a plan for organizational transformation to ensure that vocational trainings such as Workability services, Paid Internships Programs and other programs (i.e. College2Careers) are linked to real opportunities for CIE. The project will focus on modifications that improve the coordination of services and integration of supports for CIE and include findings by which the statewide CCCs system can be effective in improving the infrastructure and programs that lead to successful CIE.

About Sierra College

Sierra College District is rising to the needs of our community. Sierra College serves 3,200 square miles of Northern California with campuses in Roseville, Rocklin, Grass Valley, and Truckee. With approximately 125 degree and certificate programs, Sierra College is ranked first in Northern California (Sacramento north) for transfers to four-year universities, offers career/technical training, and classes for upgrading job skills. Sierra graduates can be found in businesses and industries throughout the region. More information a www.sierracollege.edu.