

ALTA CONNECTIONS

The Quarterly Client, Service Provider, and Staff Update Newsletter



More on our **featured artist**
Jeff Fong pg.8

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Executive Director Lori Banales

“Spring is the time of plans and projects.”
~Leo Tolstoy

March was Disability Awareness month. There were two Resolutions passed in our local area to recognize and honor individuals with Developmental disabilities. The first was by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors and the second was by the California State Assembly. Our regional center was proud to participate in both celebrations. Promoting inclusion, acceptance, and the contributions of individuals with disabilities is what we do every day, and it is gratifying when others join in!

On the heels of Disability Awareness month, we enter April with the promotion of Autism Awareness, a month to promote acceptance and community connections. ACRC supports nearly 13,500 individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from Early Start through adulthood. We are focused on enhancing our early intervention support as well as developing post-secondary education, employment and housing options that are as diverse as those we serve. If you're looking for activities to attend this month, visit <https://www.altaregional.org/events-calendar>.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

**ACRC IS HOSTING QUARTERLY VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETINGS
SAVE THE DATES MAY 1ST, AUGUST 7TH, AND NOVEMBER 6TH - 11AM-12PM
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT [HTTPS://WWW.ALTAREGIONAL.ORG/CALENDAR](https://www.altaregional.org/calendar) TO GET THE LINK. NO
REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - CONT.

Executive Director - Lori Banales

As the number of eligible individuals grows, so does the number of staff needed to support them. Last year, the budget supported a reduction in caseload size (from 1:62 to 1:40) for children 0-5 years old. Reducing the number of children on a caseload creates more time for families to learn about the regional center system, generic resources and to transition to education. Through this increased availability and connection with families, relationships develop. ACRC has added two additional units to our Early Start program to achieve the 1:40 ratios and anticipate following those numbers by the end of Spring. We have created Early Childhood Units to serve our 3–5-year-olds. We will have hired two Client Services Managers to begin building their teams and as they populate with service coordinators, the ratios in our children's units will begin reducing as they transition these children to the new units. Sara Burton and Karen Delgadillo are both spotlighted in this edition to share a little about themselves.

Over the next two and a half months, regional centers, providers, clients, families, and advocates will be showing up at budget hearings to testify and to provide public comment about the priorities that are important to supporting our system. The state budget deficit is greater than what was anticipated in January when the Governor released the January budget proposal. Hard decisions will need to be made to balance next fiscal year's budget. We stand strong together sharing personal impact statements and stories that will help inform the legislature as they make cuts. We are hopeful that our voices will help correct the delay in rate reform so that the individuals we support will receive the services they are entitled to. Grassroots Days is Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at the Capitol. Our regional center staff and Association will be joined by clients and families to share their stories and budget priorities with legislative members and their staff. Banding together will pull us through. Regardless of where the budget lands, I am confident that we will find a way to move forward. We always do.

FEAT TO HOLD WALK & CARNIVAL IN ROSEVILLE



Families for Early Autism Treatment will hold their Walk and Carnival on April 13, 2024, at Maidu Park in Roseville. Visit <https://featwalk.feat.org/> for more information.

ACRC PARTICIPATES IN RESOLUTIONS DECLARING MARCH AS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

On March 12, 2024, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors invited Alta California Regional Center, In-Home Supportive Services, California Children’s Services, the Yolo County Public Guardian’s Office, and family group Team Davis to receive the resolution, put forth by Supervisor Jim Provenza, declaring March Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. See the full text of the resolution attached to this edition.



Additionally, as the California State Assembly recognized March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, ACRC staff were invited to the State Capitol on March 21, 2024, to receive a Certificate of Recognition. ACRC is happy to recognize and support these celebrations.



CLIENT ADVOCATE REYVA JOHNSON GIVES KEYNOTE AT SIERRA COLLEGE TRANSITION SYMPOSIUM

Reyva Johnson, employed as one of ACRC’s Client Advocates was honored to give the keynote address at the Northern California Transition to Adulthood Symposium at Sierra College on March 21st. Reyva shared her invaluable lived experience as both an individual and as a parent of a child served. She spoke about the critical “transition markers” and milestones in our lives. Reyva shared her own, and those of her 17-year-old daughter. She provided relatable examples and tips on how to get involved, discussed the importance of putting oneself at the forefront, and connecting and networking with others.



EMBRACING NEURODIVERSITY: SHIFTING FROM AUTISM AWARENESS TO AUTISM ACCEPTANCE

BY MARY RETTINHOUSE, ASD CLINICAL SPECIALIST



Autism Awareness Month, traditionally observed in April, is an opportunity to shift the narrative towards acceptance of the neurodivergent perspective. Instead of solely focusing on raising awareness about autism, the emphasis should be on fostering understanding and embracing neurodiversity.

Individuals on the autism spectrum often face stigma and misconceptions due to a lack of understanding. By promoting acceptance, we can create a more inclusive society where everyone, regardless of their neurology, feels valued and respected.

Thinking of Autism Awareness Month also as Autism Acceptance Month signifies a shift towards celebrating the unique strengths and perspectives of individuals with autism. It encourages us to move beyond mere awareness and actively work towards creating a world that accommodates and appreciates neurodiversity in all its forms.

Embracing acceptance means recognizing that autism may come with characteristics that do not necessarily need to be fixed or cured but are a fundamental aspect of an individual's identity. It is about creating a supportive environment where individuals with autism can thrive and contribute their unique talents to society.

This April, let us come together to promote Autism Acceptance and pave the way for a more inclusive and understanding future for all individuals on the autism spectrum.

ACRC OUT IN THE COMMUNITY



ACRC frequently participates in events in our local communities.

To find out about upcoming events, please visit <https://www.altaregional.org/events-calendar>.

To learn more about ACRC Clients, Families and Staff, visit <https://www.altaregional.org/our-stories>.

CAC CORNER

A CLIENT'S GUIDE TO MY INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLAN

Over the course a many months during last year an ad hoc group of Alta's Client Advisory Committee (CAC) met with Alta staff to develop A Client's Guide to My Individual Program Plan (IPP). CAC members included Amy Lampe, Michelle Rewerts and Karen Young. The idea was to create a resource to accompany client's IPPs that offered an explanations of terms, concepts and available resources provided from the perspective and voice of the client. Regional centers have heard from National Core Indicator (NCI) survey results and public meetings that information is not always presented in a way that is easy to understand. Alta is committed to working with clients, families and community partners to ensure information is accessible and understandable. In undertaking this task the goal was to create something similar to the USC University Affiliated Program for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) publication A Consumer's Guide to the Lanterman Act which is available among other resources online at Consumer-Friendly Publications - CA Department of Developmental Services. Amy, Michelle and Karen met on multiple occasions to go through Alta's IPP process and documentation and discussed what each content area meant to them. They shared how they might describe the information if explaining it to a peer. Their input was captured and reviewed with them for accuracy. Once the content of the resource was curated Alta had the document translated into Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, Hmong, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese and added it to Alta's Publications & Brochures website post. The resource is available in both hard copy and electronic, with many hyperlinks to additional information and resources embedded in the electronic version. We hope you enjoy checking out the finished product.

Additionally, several members of the CAC are continuing to work on developing training for Supported Decision-Making in partnership with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) and ACRC's Legal Services Manager, Robin Black. Supported Decision-Making training is expected to roll out in the Spring to ACRC staff and community.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT - INTAKE SPECIALIST LINDA SAVAGE MITCHELL

Linda Savage Mitchell, Intake Specialist, continues to show unwavering dedication and commitment to her work at ACRC. No matter the situation, she always rises to the occasion. She brings a “can-do” attitude and positive energy to the ACRC team every day.

Linda has worked at ACRC for 16 years: 12 years as a service coordinator, and 4 years as an intake specialist. She was a teacher for K through sixth grade for many years as well as a supervisor/manager for Head Start and private preschool programs. She enjoys helping families and loves what she does at ACRC. Over the years in Intake, Linda has received several compliments from families, and a couple are mentioned below:



Linda was our intake specialist and primary Alta contact...from the time we applied through having our case transferred to a service provider. Throughout this time, she was incredibly responsive, honest, and professional. Even if she had to share something we did not want to hear, she was open and respectful. She presented in a caring and understanding manner, which made it easy to talk with her. Her approach helped us to be patient and understand the process. She is a wonderful first contact and representative of Alta. Give her a vacation and a raise. 😊 - Parent, K.B.

I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for your help during our appointment on Wednesday morning. Your generosity in providing us with valuable resources and information that we were not aware of is genuinely appreciated. I cannot express how grateful my husband and I are for your assistance...Your kindness has left me in tears of joy, and I would like to pay it forward...Thank you again for your invaluable help and support. – Parent, B.J.

DSP COLLABORATIVE ANNOUNCES NEXT JOB FAIR - YUBA CITY

The DSP Collaborative will host a job fair for regional center service providers on April 23, 2024 at Boyd Hall in Yuba City. Please visit dspcollaborative.org for more information.



COME AND JOIN WITH US

DISABILITY INDUSTRY CAREER EXPO 2024

BROUGHT TO YOU BY DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS COLLABORATIVE.
Joining forces to grow our diverse workforce supporting people with intellectual or developmental disabilities. dspcollaborative.org

DSP COLLABORATIVE
Direct Support Professionals

Want to make a Real Difference in people's lives?

Come to the disability industry's Premier Employment Event for job seekers.
More than 30 Business Owners Looking to hire!

- Management positions available
- Full time, Part Time, Daytime, Nighttime
- Work with infants, Children, and Adults with Developmental Disabilities

DATE
April 23, 2024

TIME
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

SUTTER ONE STOP
Boyd Hall
895 Lassen Blvd., Yuba City, California, 95993

REGISTER HERE

MEET THE MANAGERS OF ACRC'S NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD UNITS

The transition for families with young children exiting Early Start at age 3 is a busy one! Families find themselves learning to navigate new systems, experiencing service delivery changes, and learning to access new resources. The adjustment to the school district and to children's services requires special care. ACRC is developing Early Childhood Units where Service Coordinators (SCs) will have a caseload ratio of 1:40, serving children ages 3 through their 6th birthday. SCs in these units will specialize in assisting families through this important transition. With a reduced caseload, SCs will have more time to assist families in implementing services and supports for their young child.

ACRC is proud to introduce our first two Client Services Managers overseeing our Early Childhood Teams.



Please meet Karen Delgadillo, Client Services Manager, Early Childhood, serving Placer and Nevada Counties

My career at Alta California Regional Center began in 2013 as a bilingual Service Coordinator at the Sacramento office. In May 2023, I accepted the position of Lead Service Coordinator at the Roseville office, and I am now transitioning to a Client Service Manager for the Early Childhood Unit. The most rewarding aspect of my job is to share my experiences with others to better serve our clients and their families.

I was born and raised in Northern California and earned my bachelor's degree at the University of California, Irvine where I met my husband of 10 years. We have a 9-year-old daughter, a 2-year-old son and our youngest son is 9 months old. In 2020, I earned my master's degree in special education with a specialization in Autism.

I am a diehard 49er faithful and an avid football fan. During my free time, I enjoy watching our daughter's soccer games and spending time with our extended family.

Continued pg. 8

MEET THE MANAGERS OF ACRC'S NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD UNITS - CONT.



Please meet Sarah Burton, Client Services Manager, Early Childhood, serving Sacramento County:

Sarah joined the Alta California Regional Center team in February 2024. Prior to relocating to Sacramento, she was an Early Childhood Program Manager with the San Diego Regional Center for 5.5 years. Sarah has worked in the field of Early Childhood for over 25 years and has a passion for supporting children and families. She received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in special education. While Sarah loves her career in case management, her favorite role is mother to her spunky and smart 7-year-old daughter. When she isn't supporting her team and the families she enjoys snowboarding, going to concerts, hiking, traveling, and spending time with family and their two goldendoodle pups.

FEATURED ARTIST PROFILE - JEFF FONG



He has attended Work of Art -Southside for the past year, for 3 days per week. He is an emerging artist that creates digital illustrations, fantastical drawings, and screen prints. Jeff is a Godzilla enthusiast and has a vast knowledge of its monster universe. He has created new creatures such as Santazilla, Snake Fang, Diablosaurus Rex, & King Ghidorah, just to name a few.



Jeff has made screen print t-shirts for each of his family members with their Lunar New Year symbol on the front. (You can see Jeff in his Snake t-shirt in the image provided) He has made stickers as well as stamps too! Besides art, Jeff enjoys playing basketball for the Special Olympics and has also been involved in swimming for the Special Olympics in the past. Jeff is currently attending Work of Art – Southside for 2 days per week, now, to be able to work with his ILS worker to obtain his driver's license, which he was very excited to share. Jeff is a very kind a courteous young man with a wonderfully vivid imagination that he brings to life through his art. Good luck to you in your future endeavors, Jeff! To purchase Jeff's art visit: <https://www.woastudios.com/countryclub>



Yolo County
Board of Supervisors
Resolution No. 24-26

Declaring March 2024 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

WHEREAS, March is recognized nationwide as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, bringing attention to the challenges faced by those living with disabilities and honoring their presence in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the theme of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month 2024 is “A World of Opportunities” which seeks to celebrate collaboration in communities aimed at removing obstacles for those who live with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, every member of our Yolo County Community should be given the chance to succeed and thrive in their lives without any barrier due to disability; and

WHEREAS, there are over an estimated 3,500 people in Yolo County living with a developmental disability and over 600,000 people across the State of California; and

WHEREAS, there are a number of organizations in Yolo County doing important work to assist those with developmental disabilities, including the Developmental Disability Future Planning Group of Yolo County, the Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance, Alta California Regional Center, United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), Team Davis, and more. These organizations provide critical information, services, and resources to those in need within our community; and

WHEREAS, the Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult services will be holding town halls over the next few months in every city in the county to provide information and support to caregivers of those living with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the County of Yolo will continue looking for opportunities to support those in our community who have developmental disabilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Yolo County Board of Supervisors hereby declares March 2024 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and encourages residents in Yolo County to give full support to empowering members of the community with developmental disabilities and giving them the opportunity to thrive.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of March 2024 by the following vote:

AYES: Vixie Sandy, Provenza, Barajas, Villegas, Frerichs.

Lucas Frerichs, Chair
Yolo County Board of Supervisors

COME AND JOIN WITH US

DISABILITY INDUSTRY CAREER EXPO 2024

BROUGHT TO YOU BY DIRECT SUPPORT
PROFESSIONALS COLLABORATIVE:

Joining forces to grow our diverse workforce
supporting people with intellectual or
developmental disabilities. dspcollaborative.org



Want to find
Caring & Qualified
individuals to work with
people with
developmental and
Intellectual disabilities?

Come to the disability
industry's **Premier**
Employment Event for job
seekers.



DATE

April 23, 2024



TIME

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM



Sutter OneStop

Boyd Hall

895 Lassen Blvd., Yuba
City, California, 95993

Register Here

