



# ALTA CONNECTIONS

The Quarterly Client, Service Provider, and Staff Update Newsletter



More on our featured artist  
**Lindsay Platz** pg.7

## EMBRACING A FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITIES

*Executive Director Lori Banales*

Here's to the new year and to new beginnings! We are embracing 2022 with optimism and a continued commitment to collaborate with our ACRC community of clients, families, providers, staff and affiliated organizations. All of these partners add to the diversity of perspectives and experiences that make our regional center unique. To underscore our desire to stay connected, I am pleased to introduce and present to you the first edition of the Alta Connections quarterly newsletter. This newsletter is another way for our regional center to broadly share information, spotlight client accomplishments and ACRC staff contributions, share upcoming community input opportunities, provide updates on initiatives, directives and regulations as well as to promote an ACRC client artist and their affiliated program. This publication will be in both English and Spanish with the intent to broaden publication across locally identified threshold languages as we move through the year. It is important to ensure that our newsletter is formatted in ways that support community inclusion and language access.

### WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *Message from ED*
- *Staff Spotlight*
- *Client Spotlight*
- *Clinical Corner*
- *Updates on ACRC Initiatives*
- *Resource Development*
- *DDS/ACRC Updates*
- *ACRC by the Numbers*
- *Featured Artist Profile*
- *Attachments - EVV FAQ's & Mirasol Village - Low Income Housing Opportunity*

Continued pg. 2

# EMBRACING A FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITIES

Executive Director - Lori Banales - continued

While these past two years have left an indelible imprint on our service system and changed the way that our clients are served, there have also been moments of innovation and opportunity to connect in different ways. We are building on those areas and look forward to expanding resources over this next year. We are additionally committed to collaborating with our service providers to increase in person opportunities for our clients that balance safety with the importance of being together. Our community is strong and resilient! On behalf of all of the staff at ACRC, I extend to you wishes for a happy and healthy new year!

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Ryan Salsberry is a long timer of ACRC and has worked here for 16 years. One of the things Ryan enjoys at work is the interactions he has across all departments of the agency. Besides the great benefits, Ryan has remained with the agency primarily due to the relationships and interactions he has had with other staff at ACRC over the years.

During Ryan’s free time, he enjoys playing basketball and watching sports – mainly basketball and football. His favorite basketball team is the Kings and his football team is the 49ers. Ryan also enjoys the outdoors and spends time hiking when he can. One of the hiking areas he enjoys is the Sundial Bridge in Redding. An interesting thing people may be surprised to learn about Ryan is that he has two children, both boys that are ages 25 and 18. Ryan also coached basketball for about 8 years when his boys were younger. Ryan is well known for his positive greetings to others and his upbeat attitude.



## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT



**Lisa**



**David**



**Adair**

The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices certified three People Planning Together (PPT) Trainers. Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) is proud to announce Lisa Cooley, David Lopez and Adair Savoia, all of whom receive ACRC services, earned their certification to provide PPT from Support Development Associates, LLC. PPT is a type of Person-Centered Planning that enables individuals who receive support to have positive control over their life.

## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

*continued*

Lisa, David and Adair worked with a mentor to complete the 10-month certification process. They committed 40+ hours of studying and delivered two trainings to 15 participants.

Lisa enjoyed the experience. She commented, “Even though it was challenging for me because of technology, I learned that it is ok to accept help professionally and personally. I will add the PPT certification on my resume and use it to help me get permanent employment.”

David, who is also employed by ACRC as a Client Advocate commented, “My experience with PPT help me look at myself. Creating a plan opens up so many opportunities for clients.”

Adair enjoyed the experience too. She stated, “I learned how to work with people on a project where you had to work around others’ schedules. I learned how to stand up for myself when something was not working, such as not being able to see my notes when I was presenting. I am hoping to obtain a paid position doing presentations.”

As certified PPT Trainers, Lisa, David and Adair are equipped to train their peers on how to work in partnership with the service system to develop meaningful plans that focus on the person.



## CLINICAL CORNER

We are excited to partner once again with the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California (CCCC). In 2007 Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) worked with CCCC to support our clients with education in advance care planning. The Thinking Ahead workbook was developed through a wellness grant with the Department of Developmental Services. The workbook is a tool using plain language, symbols and pictures to assist with serious illness and end-of-life discussions, and includes an advance health care directive. Our staff physician and client advocate contributed greatly to the process, as we worked alongside a few sister regional centers.

Expanding on the previous initiative, ACRC will continue to partner with CCCC, as they have now attained a grant through the WITH Foundation, which promotes the empowerment of adults with developmental disabilities with regard to their care and treatment wishes.

An advisory group comprised of ACRC clinical and case management staff, clients and client advocate has been formed in order to seek input directly from clients regarding what they feel is helpful for advance care planning conversations and training material development today.

As serious illness and end-of-life discussions can be uncomfortable and tricky to navigate, we will be developing tools and resources that help service coordinators with the advance care planning discussions; therefore, taking a proactive approach to the end-of-life topic. We, along with another regional center will test pilot the new training tools once developed. We are currently in the “gathering input” stage from all involved, and will provide updates as we roll out this important initiative.

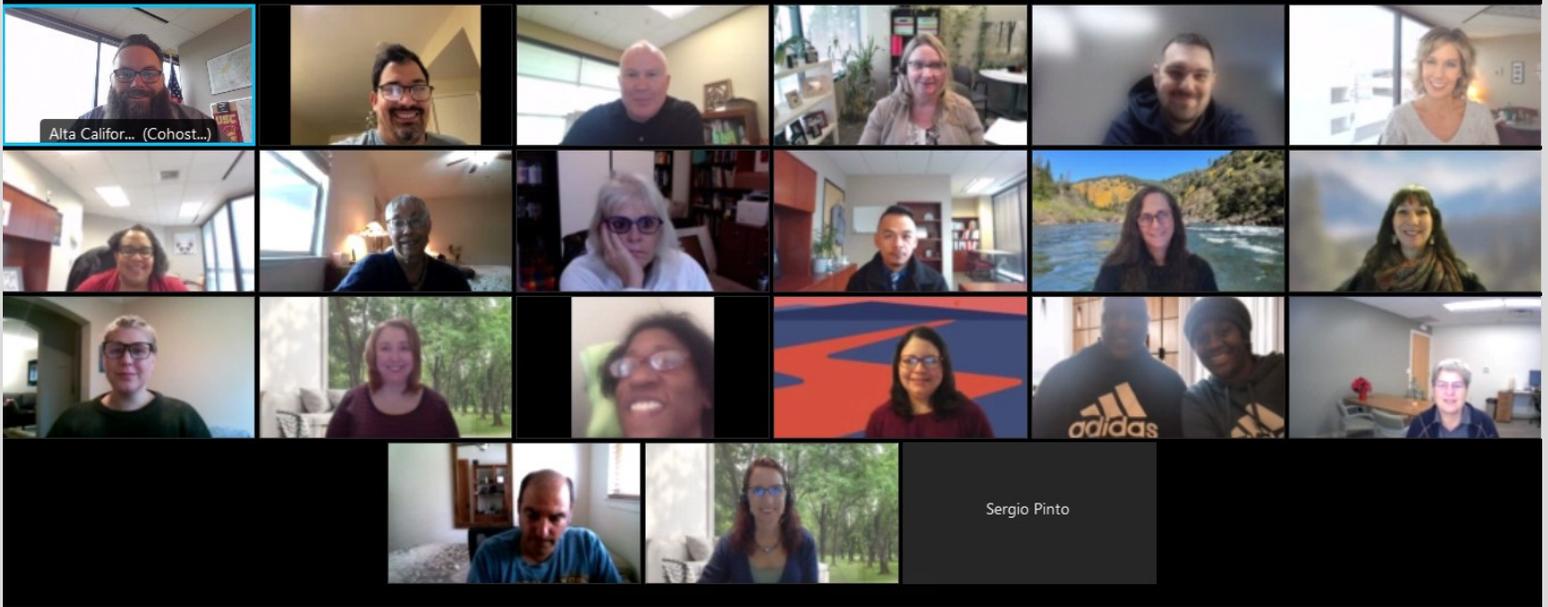
# UPDATES ON ACRC INITIATIVES

## Coordinated Future Planning

This initiative, launched in September 2021, seeks to address the housing needs of regional center clients living with older caregivers. It is the regional center's desire that future Individual Program Plan documents for clients living with aged caregivers will include a caregiver succession plan and documentation of a discussion of a range of living options, to include: residing with family members, legal guardian, foster home, group home, independent living, supported living, residential care, and/or family home agencies as appropriate based on client age and needs.

We've convened a task force of clients, family members, service providers, advocates and regional center staff that meets multiple times a month to develop training materials and identify tools service coordinators can bring to IPP meetings to talk about future planning. Thus far we have created learning objectives for the trainings and service coordinators have begun asking planning teams if caregiver succession plans. Trainings for service coordinators are slated for Fall 2022.

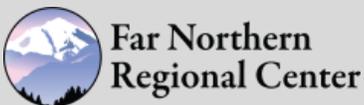
December 2021 - CFP Task Force Meeting



## Roadmap to Competitive Integrated Employment



The Roadmap to CIE was published by DDS in 2021. To kickoff activities, ACRC hosted two trainings by Tom Pomeranz. Coming in 2022, the Department of Rehabilitation, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Far Northern Regional Center and Alta California Regional Center have partnered to deliver a training series on employment. For additional information about ACRC's upcoming activities to promote CIE, please visit our website: <https://www.altaregional.org/post/competitive-integrated-employment-cie>



# RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Resource changes over the last quarter

## New Service Providers

### Community Integration Program

- *Aim Higher, Inc.*
- *PRIDE Industries - Auburn*
- *PRIDE Industries - Grass Valley*

### El Vision Services

- *Cherrytree Vision Services*

### Speech Services

- *Pathways Speech Language & Cognitive Therapy*
- *Speech360*

### Psychological/ Specialized Assessments

- *Lighted Path Solutions*
- *Anthony Benigno, PsyD*

### Supported Living Services

- *Rays SLS*

### In-Home Respite Services

- *Cambrian Homecare*

### Residential Services

- *Silvana Senior Care 3*
- *Hopeful Tomorrow Homes*
- *CG Tinsley Home*
- *Irene's Care Home Inc. #2*
- *Palm Valley Care I*
- *Machico Place (ownership change)*
- *Warner Family Cottage*
- *Vineyard Home*
- *Mason's Home*

## New Service Spotlight



ACRC awarded start-up funds for Housing Access Services (HAS) to assist clients to gain/acquire housing as well as assist clients in maintaining their current housing.

Individual Housing Transition Services. These services provide direct support and assistance with activities and processes associated with an individual's preparation for, and transition to, housing. This includes assistance with completing and understating rental applications and lease agreements.

Individual Housing & Tenancy Sustaining Services. This service is made available to support individuals to maintain tenancy once housing is secured. The availability of ongoing housing-related services in addition to other long-term services and supports promotes housing success, fosters community integration and inclusion, and develops natural support networks. Includes a crisis housing plan for clients who maybe facing eviction or other housing related concerns such as utility shut offs, etc. Housing Access Service will also work directly with landlords and the client to help resolve issues.

## Closed Service Providers

- Knowledge Empowers You - ILS - Challenges maintaining sufficient staff
- PRIDE Industries Madison - Day Programs - Relocating to new site
- Eagle Accessibility Solutions & Equip. - Home modifications - New ownership
- Trails at the Lake ILS - ILS - Challenges maintaining sufficient staff
- Tahoe Community Integrations - Day Prog & ILS - Challenges maintaining sufficient staff
- Brighter Home Group Home - Transitioned from a home for children to a home for adults
- Rick & Nicole Fortes Care Home 2 - Vendor requested to close home

# WHAT'S NEW IN 2022 - DDS/ACRC UPDATES

## Rate Study Implementation



In 2018, the Department of Developmental Services submitted a rate study completed by Burns & Associates addressing the sustainability, quality, and transparency of community-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities to the Legislature in March 2019. ACRC's Accounting and Community Services Departments are working hard to verify the information in the rate study to make the new rates for service providers accurately reflect the supports provided to regional center clients.

- The first rate increases related to the study will begin **April 1, 2022**, at that time, DDS will **implement a rate increase for qualifying service providers** that equals one-quarter of the difference between current rates and the fully-funded rate model for each provider.

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/vendor-provider/rate-study-implementation/>

## Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

The 21st Century CURES Act, signed into law in 2016, requires that States set up an Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system to verify that services for all Medicaid-funded personal care and home health care services occurred. EVV begins January 1, 2022 and was put into place to help ensure people are getting the services in their home that they need and are entitled to. Under the CURES Act, an EVV system must verify the following service components:

1. Type of service performed;
2. Individual receiving the service;
3. Date of the service;
4. Location of service delivery;
5. Individual providing the services; and
6. Time the service begins and ends.



See attached to this newsletter *Frequently Asked Questions from DDS*.

## Mirasol Village - ACRC's First Multifamily Housing Development

As a result of stakeholder feedback, ACRC prioritized the development of affordable housing through the Community Resource Development Plan. The first project, located just north of downtown Sacramento off Richards Blvd, is Mirasol Village. ACRC facilitated the awarding of \$1.5 million dollars of funds from DDS to the developers, which led to an agreement for 15 set-aside units in this new development slated for individuals with developmental disabilities and low incomes. *To learn more about this development and the units available for regional center clients, please see the attached flyer.* Apartments available late Summer.



Our community partners on this project.

Note: ACRC continues to seek out opportunities like this throughout our 10 counties.

## ACRC BY THE NUMBERS

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

**Here is who we serve as of December 20, 2021:**

Early Start - 2,429

Lanterman Clients - 24,547

Total = 26,976

***In an effort to better support the diverse needs of our ever-growing population, there will be a number of new types of positions at ACRC.***

**ACRC has a number of new positions this fiscal year:**

**Emergency Response Coordinator** - Hewitt Matanari - reporting to Mechelle Johnson, Director of Client Services

**1:40 Caseload Service Coordinators (6)** - Annie Green (Spanish language), Chai Her (Hmong language) - reporting to Andrew Ponce, Intensive Case Management Unit Manager

**Associate Client Advocate** - to be hired - reporting to Jennifer Bloom, Associate Client Services Director

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist** - starts January 2022 - reporting to Olivia Procida, Community Services and Supports Manager

**Participant Choice Specialists (4)** - to be hired - reporting to Johnny Xiong, Tracy Brown, and Jennifer Bloom, Associate Client Services Directors

**Health and Safety Waiver Specialist** - to be hired - reporting to Jordan Eller, Specialized Services and Supports Manager



## FEATURED ARTIST PROFILE

**Name:** Lindsay Platz

**About the artist:** Lindsay Platz is a multimedia artist who specializes in painting, ceramics, and polymer clay. She likes to use bright colors in her art. She enjoys trying new methods and being experimental. Lindsay has been creating art since she was 15 and has been an artist at the **Work Of Art studio and gallery in Auburn** for the last four years. She likes to share her art with the world and one day dreams of owning her own studio.

**How can we buy your work?** Work of Art Studio 660  
Lincoln Way Ste. 100 Auburn CA 95658

**Social Media?**

<https://www.instagram.com/auburnworkofart/>



***The Self-Determination Program (SDP) became available for all regional center clients in July 2021. Our next Alta Connections Newsletter in April 2022 will feature the efforts to expand SDP in our area.***

# New Affordable Housing Opportunity for Adults Supported by

## Alta California Regional Center

### **Mirasol Village - Block A**



(1200 Richards Blvd., Sacramento 95815)

INDIVIDUALS CAN BE CONSIDERED FOR A UNIT BY COMPLETING THE  
**MIRASOL VILLAGE HOUSING INTEREST SURVEY ([CLICK HERE](#))**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 1/17/2022**

ACRC secured 15 affordable set-aside rental units at Mirasol Village Block A. In order to be considered for one of these units, you must complete the on-line **Mirasol Village Housing Interest Survey**.

**Property Site.** Mirasol Village Block A is a mixed-income development located in the River District Neighborhood in the City of Sacramento which consists of 8 “garden-style” apartment buildings.

**Resident Services.** Common areas include on-site property management and resident services offices, computer lab, community room, community and resident service spaces, landscaped courtyard, swimming pool, play areas, and bike storage. Education classes such as nutrition, exercise, health resources, etc. Socialization activities such as bingo, gardening, and community building events.

**Rent.** Units will come with Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) with rent and utility costs set at 30% of SSI/SSP or 30% of total household income.

**Target Tenants.** Priority will be given to individuals with (1) rental exceptions, (2) accessibility needs (i.e. wheelchair), and (3) SLS/ILS, but no housing has been found. Other individuals may be considered through a lottery.

#### **Timeline for Selection Process.**

January 17, 2022	Mirasol Village Housing Interest Survey <b>closes</b>
January 20, 2022	<b>Public meeting</b> via Zoom at 4pm ( <b>the Lottery will be generated at this meeting</b> )
February 1, 2022	Final list for tenancy completed

#### **Time Frame for Move in.** (The following projected timeline may be modified)

March, 2022	Potential residents to submit completed application to JSCO
June, 2022	Submit SHRA project-based voucher (PBV) application
August, 2022	Start move in

**Non-Discrimination Clause.** ACRC shall not discriminate in the selection of a tenant based on race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age, or sexual orientation.

**Transparency Clause.** Completing the **Mirasol Village Housing Interest Survey** does not guarantee you a unit at Mirasol Village Block A. ACRC intends to utilize some units for individuals receiving rental exemptions and individuals who have mobility needs and supports such as the use of wheelchairs. The remaining units will be determined through a lottery which will be generated during the public meeting on January 20, 2022.



## FAQS ABOUT ELECTRONIC VISIT VERIFICATION (EVV)

### General Information

#### **Q1. What is electronic visit verification (EVV)?**

**A1.** EVV is a part of the 21st Century Cures Act enacted in 2016. EVV was put into place to help ensure people are getting the services in their home that they need and are entitled to.

#### **Q2. What does the 21st Century Cures Act require?**

**A2.** [Section 12006\(a\) of the 21st Century Cures Act \(the Cures Act\)](#), mandates that states implement EVV for all Medicaid personal care services (PCS) and home health care services (HHCS) that require an in-home visit by a provider. This applies to PCS provided under sections 1905(a)(24), 1915(c), 1915(i), 1915(j), 1915(k), and Section 1115; and HHCS provided under 1905(a)(7) of the Social Security Act or a waiver, per [Medicaid.gov](#).

#### **Q3. What information does the EVV system have to verify?**

**A3.** SSA section 1903(l)(5)(A) provides that the system must be able to electronically verify, with respect to visits conducted as part of PCS or HHCS, the data points below.

- the type of service performed;
- the individual receiving the service;
- the date of the service;
- the location of service delivery;
- the individual providing the service; and
- the time the service begins and ends

#### **Q4. When does the Federal Government require states to implement EVV?**

**A4.** Pursuant to Subsection (l) of Section 1903 of the Social Security Act (SSA) (42 U.S.C. 1396b), all states must implement EVV for Medicaid-funded PCS by January 2020 and HHCS by January 2023. In accordance with federal provisions, the State submitted a Good Faith Effort Exemption (GFE) request on October 2, 2019 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to extend the EVV implementation date for PCS to January 1, 2021. On October 22, 2019, CMS approved the State's GFE request for PCS, and California's GFE approval letter from CMS is available on the [EVV CMS GFE Webpage](#).

PCS implementation is expected by January 1, 2022. HHCS implementation is expected by January 1, 2023.

**Q5. Which regional center services and service codes does EVV apply to?**

**A5.** EVV applies to PCS funded by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and provided through regional center vendors. Those are:

- Respite, 465, 862 and 864
- Supported Living, 896
- Personal Assistance, 062
- Home Maker Services, 858 and 860

Additionally, EVV applies to HHCS funded by DDS and provided through regional center vendors. Those are:

- Nursing, 460, 742 and 744
- Home Health, 854 and 856
- Speech Therapy, 707
- Occupational Therapy, 773
- Physical Therapy, 772

**Q6. Does EVV apply to services in the Self-Determination Program (SDP)?**

**A6.** Yes. Any regional center service that provides PCS or HHCS would be covered under the EVV requirement. More information about which SDP service codes will be provided as the state continues to implement EVV Phase II.

**Consumer Related**

**Q1. If the staff person that provides my personal care or home health services lives with me, will they have to do EVV?**

**A1.** No. If the individual providing your services lives with you, they will not be subject to the EVV requirement. For EVV, that individual is considered a “live-in caregiver”.

**Q2. What is the definition of a “live-in caregiver”?**

**A2.** The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has developed a definition of live-in caregivers in accordance with federal guidance released on August 8, 2019.

“A caregiver is considered a ‘Live-in Caregiver’ if the caregiver regularly remains in the recipient’s home for more than 24 hours at a time, during which they are available to provide any of the authorized personal care services.”

**Q3. What if I live in a rural area and there is no cell coverage or access to the internet?**

**A3.** The State is exploring how to implement EVV for those that don’t have access to the internet.

**Q4. Can EVV be implemented in ways that minimize privacy concerns, particularly around the need to capture location information through the EVV system?**

**A4.** Services either starting or stopping in your home are subject to EVV requirements and electronically capturing the location in which the service is started and stopped is sufficient for meeting the minimum requirements specified in the Cures Act.

**Provider Related**

**Q1. When can Providers expect to receive information and training regarding the required use of the new EVV system?**

**A1.** Throughout EVV implementation, DDS will be hosting frequent webinars where current activities and upcoming timeframes are provided. Previous webinar materials and any upcoming webinar registration links can be found under the [“Meetings” tab on the EVV webpage](#). Additionally, anyone who would like an email notification when DDS has updates regarding EVV, can request to be put on the notification list by emailing [EVV@dds.ca.gov](mailto:EVV@dds.ca.gov).

**Q2. Why is In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) implementing the EVV system effective November 1, 2019?**

**A2.** IHSS is leveraging their electronic timesheet system for EVV and therefore is on a different timetable than regional centers and other programs. For more information about the EVV implementation process go to the [CDSS EVV Webpage](#).

**Q3. Will the State provide an EVV system for providers to use or will providers have to secure their own EVV system?**

**A3.** The State has chosen to implement the open vendor model for the collection and reporting of Phase II EVV data. That allows providers a variety of choices in how they choose to collect EVV data. Providers are able to subscribe to the state provided EVV system, called CalEVV; subscribe to another EVV system of their choosing; or leverage their existing software products for the collection and verification of EVV data.

If providers choose their own EVV system, the system must comply with the requirements noted in the “General Information”, question number 3 above and be able to transmit that data to the state’s aggregator system, called CalEVV Aggregator.

**Q4. What measures will be taken to secure privacy and confidentiality of data?**

**A4.** The State will have safeguards in place to ensure individual’s private information will remain confidential and protected. All federal and state requirements around privacy such as HIPAA remain intact. EVV only verifies the six data elements required by law.

**Q5. Do EVV data collection systems have to use Global Positioning System (GPS)?**

**A5.** No. The 21st Century Cures Act requires that location is collected for each EVV visit, and the state's EVV solution, called CalEVV, collects GPS coordinates at the start of the visit and end of the visit when using the mobile application. The application is not collecting GPS data outside of visit start and stop time. The application does not track caregivers or consumers ongoing. GPS coordinates are stored in the CalEVV system as part of the visit information and are informational only.

GPS is one method to electronically capture the location of service delivery at check-in and check-out. Other EVV data collection systems may collect the location requirement of EVV using another method.

**Q6. Is EVV causing Recipients to be homebound?**

**A6.** California's approach to EVV will not change how services are provided nor where services are delivered. Pursuant to Public Law 114-115 Sec 12006 (c)(3), EVV shall not limit the service provided, constrain an individual's choice of caregiver, or impede the way care is delivered.

