

# Setting Sails



A Quarterly Publication For Friends And Consumers of San Antonio Independent Living Services

Fall 2015

## SAILS Hosted 25th Annual Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Celebration at Downtown UTSA



Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke,  
CEO/Development Officer of SAILS

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) proudly hosted the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) celebration at the University of Texas at San Antonio downtown campus located at 501 West Cesar E. Chavez on July 25, 2015. The theme for this wonderful commemorative 25th Anniversary of the ADA was Access and Inclusion for Life!

A pep rally kicked-off the celebration with guests chanting "ADA All the Way!" Guests were provided very special 25th ADA t-shirts sponsored by AmeriGroup RealSolutions. San Antonio's oldest VFW Post 76 provided Honor Guards to commemorate the event.

Emma Rudkin, Miss San Antonio was SAILS honored Keynote Speaker. Ms. Rudkin shared her inspirational story growing up as a deaf girl and how her continued dedication and faith helped her to be who she is today. Ms. Rudkin was very kind to stay after her speech to visit with the attendees and take photos.

San Antonio's Honorable District Attorney, Nico LaHood was honored as Public Servant of the Year. Chief Juanita Gardner accepted the award on his behalf after providing a touching and moving speech written by Nico LaHood.

SAILS had 50 community exhibitors who provided valuable information and services for the hundreds of guests attending the 25th Anniversary of the ADA

celebration. There were a dozen community awards presented in various categories and drawings for prizes throughout the celebration. And everyone was treated to a boxed lunch sponsored by HEB!



Miss San Antonio, Emma Fay Rudkin



Chief Juanita Vasquez-Gardner (accepting Public Servant of the Year Award for Honorable District Attorney Nico LaHood) and Miguel Castro, SAILS Board Member

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Starlight Casino Night**  
Benefiting San Antonio Independent Living Services  
Friday October 16th, 2015  
6:30pm - 10:00pm  
Formal Attire  
The Rosenberg Skyroom  
Incarnate Word University  
Hildebrand and Broadway, San Antonio

## Tina McCarty Is Living Independently

by Lynn Cruz, IL Specialist & Volunteer Coordinator



Lynn Cruz,  
IL Specialist &  
Volunteer Coordinator

Tina McCarty is a consumer with San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS). When Tina first became a consumer with a Independent Living Coordinator she was staying at Safe Haven and was beginning the steps towards her independent living. This included applying for Social Security and San Antonio Housing Authority. Instead of waiting for these services, she continued to take positive steps

towards her future. Tina became a client with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to seek out employment. She also wanted to improve her computer skills to enhance her job training so with the help of IL staff sought out extra computer training. Tina's next big step was that she was also able to move out of the shelter and into an apartment. I look forward to continuing to see the advances that Tina will make towards her bright future.

## A Journey To Independence

by Gloria Aguirre, IL Specialist



Mrs. Castro

Many of us think that living independently is easy. However, if you happen to be a person who has a disability or is raising a child with a disability it can be very difficult. You might find yourself needing some extra help or guidance.

Mrs. Castro who is the mother of four children found herself needing help as she is faced with many obstacles while raising her family. She has two young adult sons with disabilities. She shares, "if I as their mother don't give them a voice, then who will?" Although she wanted to give up many times she has not permitted her obstacles to stop her from learning how to advocate for her family.

After coming to San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS), Mrs. Castro learned she could get support and resources to help her family. Today, Mrs. Castro is on her journey to independence. She is happy to see her sons grow and flourish. One of her sons will soon be attending a day workshop with the other one next to follow.

SAILS plays a major role in assisting persons with all types of disabilities to live a more independent life by providing advocacy, independent living skills, peer support and information and referrals. Please call 210-281-1878 if you know a person with a disability needed SAILS services.

### Contents

### Page

SAILS Hosted 25th ADA Anniversary Celebration Success Stories, Tina McCarty, Mrs. Castro	1
15th Annual Bexar County Consumer and Family Support Conference	2
SAILS Hosted 25th ADA Anniversary Celebration Calendar Of Events	3
Frann Wright, New Exec. Administrative Asst.	4,5
SAILS Staff Attends 2015 Annual NCIL Conference	6
	6
	7

Follow Calendar of Events  
of SAILS Throughout The Year  
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<http://facebook.com/sailstx.org>

# SAILS Is For Consumers



## 15th Annual Bexar County Consumer and Family Support Conference

by Gloria Aguirre, IL Specialist

Reducing Stigma Through Empowerment and Education was this year's title of the 15th Annual Bexar County Consumer and Family Support Conference hosted by the Center for Health Care. The conference was held at The Wyndham River Walk Hotel on August 28th and 29th. Since San Antonio Independent Living Services partners with the Center for Health Care I had the privilege to attend and I really enjoyed it. The topics were great and all the vendors were informative and provided valuable resources.

I thoroughly enjoyed the workshops this year. One workshop in particular, stood out to me. It was presented by Ms. Michelle Mata entitled "Dance as a Personal Medicine." I'm glad I got there early as the room filled quickly to capacity. Ms. Mata explained that she uses dance as a form of therapy. To my delight, all the participants lined up and followed Ms. Mata in various dances; everything from boot scoot boogie to the electric slide!

In general this is a great annual conference that focuses upon mental well being. I learned that it is "okay" for people to have a mental illness such as schizophrenia or Bipolar Depression. I am also very glad that the Center for Health Care is trying to help remove the stigma associated with people who have mental illness. It would be a better world if that goal could be accomplished! The Center for Health Care can be reached at 210-261-1000 or at [www.chcbc.org](http://www.chcbc.org)



Participants of the 15th Annual Bexar County Healthcare Conference

**Purchase Tickets or Tables  
For Your Starlight Casino Night  
Use Your Smart Phone  
Or Our Websites:  
<http://sailstx.org>  
<http://sailsadvocates.org>**



**Benefiting San Antonio Independent Living Services**

Friday October 16th, 2015  
6:30pm - 10:00pm  
Formal Attire  
The Rosenberg Skyroom  
Incarinate Word University  
Hildebrand and Broadway, San Antonio

**High Roller Table: \$1,500**  
10 Guests, 2 Wine Bottles, Hors d'oeuvres  
and \$10,000 Casino Money

**Table of 10 Guests: \$1,000**  
Hors d'oeuvres, \$10,000 Casino Money

**Individual Guest \$100**  
Hors d'oeuvres, \$1,000 Casino Money

Hors d'oeuvres, DJ Music by Puttin on the Hitz, Auction, Cash Bar  
Black Jack, Roulette, Poker, Slot Machine,  
Extra Casino Money

To Make A Donation Online  For Sponsorship Opportunities  
Contact Dr. Kitty Brietzke  
210.264.3501  
[kbrietzke@sailsadvocates.org](mailto:kbrietzke@sailsadvocates.org)  
For Online Purchase Of Tables And Tickets:  
[sailsadvocates.org](http://sailsadvocates.org) 



# SAILS Is For Consumers

## SAILS Hosted 25th ADA Anniversary Celebration

Photos by Frank San Miguel



The Unicorn Steppers perform



Guests Enjoying the ADA Celebration



TY Beck GM of Alamo Mobility



McGruff Checks Out the ADA



Amerigroup RealSolutions Booth



VIA Metropolitan Transit Exhibit

# SAILS Is For Consumers



## SAILS Hosted 25th ADA Anniversary Celebration

Photos by Frank San Miguel



WellMed Exhibits at ADA



CAAG Exhibits Adaptive Devices



Geoffrey Elkins from Grande Communications



Guests Visit the ADA Exhibitors



ADA Guest Registration



Larry Smith Received Advocacy Award

## Calendar of Events

### August

- 4- SAILS Fundraiser and Outreach Booth at Fish City Grill
- 7- Support Group / Any Baby Can
- 10-11 State Independent Living Council Meeting/ Dallas
- 12- SAILS Board Meeting & Planning Meeting
- 13- VITA Mobile Team at SAILS
- 16-18 Transportation Summit in Lubbock, Texas & SILC Meeting
- 26- Project Mend's Annual Toast of the Town
- 27- Support Group / Alamo Service Connection

### September

- 1- Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke's 12th SAILS Anniversary
- 4- First Friday Networking Meeting
- 4- Support Group
- 8- Staff Meeting & Dr. Brietzke's Birthday
- 19- Free to Soar GALA at Morgan's Wonderland
- 22- Staff Meeting
- 24- Support Group / The Arc of San Antonio
- 26- SAILS Booth at Buddy Walk
- 29- IL Staff Outreach in Uvalde
- 30- IL Staff Outreach in Medina County

### October

- 1- Frann Wright, Executive Administrative Assistant's Birthday
- 2- First Friday Networking
- 2- Support Group / Elder Resource Group
- 6- Staff Meeting
- 7- SAILS Board Planning Meeting
- 16- SAILS Starlight Casino Night & Boss Day
- 20- Staff Meeting
- 22- Goodwill Industries Annual Meeting
- 29- Support Group / Catholic Charities

## Welcome New S.A.I.L.S. Staff Member

**Frann Wright**  
**Executive Administrative Assistant**



Frann Wright, Executive Administrative Assistant

San Antonio Independent Living Services Board of Directors and staff would like to welcome Frann Wright as the new Executive Administrative Assistant!

Ms. Wright has had many years prior experience in administrative support, some with Fraud Investigations at USAA, HCCSD (Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Department and most recently, she worked as a Correction Officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice where she prepared logs and records and reports of jail activities and other duties.

However, Ms. Wright is not new to SAILS at all. She is a past board member and past Chairperson for a total of almost 5 years. She comes to SAILS with a wealth of experience and knowledge about SAILS policies and procedures, financial statements and contracts.

"We all look forward to working together for SAILS mission". Frann says, "I know it will be smooth SAILing (pun intended). I deem it an honor and a privilege to be the newest member of this fabulous SAILS team!"

**You can sign up to volunteer,  
to help people with disabilities,  
SAILS consumers, on our website:  
<http://sailstx.org>  
Click link tab "Volunteer"**

**Current SAILS events can always be viewed  
on our Facebook page:  
<http://facebook.com/sailstx.org>  
Click To Like Us!**

# SAILS Is For Consumers



## SAILS Staff Attended 2015 NCIL Conference in Washington, D.C.

by Lynn Cruz, Michelene Brown, IL Specialist, and Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke

SAILS staff attended the Annual National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) Conference in Washington, D.C. on July 27-30, 2015. The NCIL Conference was held during the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). There was much excitement around this important anniversary and the annual march to the White House grounds was much larger than ever.

Michelene Brown and myself, Lynn Cruz enjoyed a workshop titled, "The Past, Present, and Future of IL." The main speaker was Lex Frieden, a long time educator and advocate for people with disabilities. During his presentation he shared a short video footage from 1978, "Independent Living: Six Model Programs" which related programs to increase independent living. It was interesting to see that these concepts are still being used 37 years later. Frieden also mentioned the importance of the Centers for Independent Living to look beyond government funds to provide services to persons with disabilities. Another video he shared can be found at [www.ilru.org/21st-century-ideas-for-independent-living-centers](http://www.ilru.org/21st-century-ideas-for-independent-living-centers).

Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke enjoyed attending a workshop presented in part by the head of the Japan Council of IL Centers. It was a real learning experience for the interactive workshop participants because the various staff from IL Centers throughout the United States were able to ask the Japanese questions about how what they did at their centers and what challenges they have in their various areas, especially with accessibility. The Japanese mentioned how they wanted to enact their own "ADA law." There were about 100 participants in the workshop. The closing remarks were provided by Yoshiko Dart, wife of the late Justin Dart. "Lead on, Lead on."



SAILS Staff Attended 2015 NCIL Conference in Washington, D.C.



Lynn Cruz, Michelene Brown, Gloria Aguirre and Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke at 2015 NCIL Conference in Washington, D.C.



Representatives from Japan Independent Living Centers at 2015 NCIL Conference in Washington, D.C.

San Antonio Independent Living Services  
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## OTHER FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

### San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS)

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(800) 474-0295 [www.sailstx.org](http://www.sailstx.org)

#### SAILS Staff

##### Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D. CEO/Development Officer

Charles Villarreal	Accountant
Frann Wright	Executive Adm. Assistant
Cynthia Contreras	Receptionist
Micheline Brown	IL/Outreach Specialist
Albert Pulido	CWIC
Irma Medrano	CWIC
Gloria Aguirre	IL/Outreach Specialist
Mary E. Blake	IL Skills Coordinator
Lynn Cruz	IR and Volunteer Coordinator

#### SAILS Board of Directors

Patricia M. Byrd	Board Chair
Dennis S. Wolf	Vice Chair
Jerry D. King	Treasurer
Audi Hanley	Secretary
Miguel Castro	Board member
Rodney Harris	Board member
Donna McBee	Board member
Hector Saenz	Board member
Thoa Vo	Board member

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However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the DOE or the DARS and you should not assume endorsement by local, state, or federal government.

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