

Setting Sails



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

Winter 2019

Casino Night Vegas-Style Fundraiser Was A Grand Success!



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

On Friday, November 1, 2019 San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) hosted a Casino Night Vegas-style at the beautiful Rosenberg Skyroom at the University of Incarnate Word to celebrate 38 years of service to our community. Guests were dressed for the occasion. Everyone enjoyed entertainment by local artist Ruben V who really "jammed" and sang the blues! Hearty food was provided by Grady's BBQ and Fresh Horizon's provided a wide array of cheeses, fruit and more! Silent Auction items were provided by Chris Tyson.

SAILS hosts a Casino Night fundraiser every year to provide much needed unrestricted funds that can assist with emergency assistance, program and items that our contracts do not allow. SAILS board of directors and staff sincerely appreciate the kind and generous support from the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation as a Silver Sponsor. SAILS would like to also extend our warmest gratitude to the following corporate sponsors PCSI, Inc., Documation, Mobility Works, Frost Bank, 101 Mobility, D1 Sports Training, Al Cano and Company, Deaf Interpreter Services, opSolutions, Senator Jose Menendez, VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind, Owl Radio & Low Vision Resource Center, InMotion Prosthetics, Acemart Restaurant Supply, Project Mend and SAILS Board members Rodney Harris and Dennis Wolf as table sponsors.

SAILS also appreciates the kind donations from

Carol Kelly, Justin Elliott, Dennis Wolf and Cubie Co for sponsoring the adult beverages for our Casino Night Vegas-style. Our volunteers were great! SAILS wishes to thank Sandra Ortiz, Gilbert Ortiz, Connie Reid and Troy Hoessly for their generous time. SAILS extends warmest thanks to John and Marilyn Weber, owners of Deaf Interpreter Services for providing ASL interpreters.

Let's do it all over again in 2020!

Special Thanks To Our Casino Night Event Sponsors

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Special Featured Restaurant Sponsor

Lupe Tortilla

Wine & Beer Sponsors



Ms. Candace Rieger's Life Changed with A New Powerchair

by Megan Zambo, IL Outreach Specialist

Consumer Ms. Candace Rieger was struggling getting around her house and going out with her manual wheelchair. She only has the use of one arm and to go outside would need someone to push her. She wanted a power wheelchair to be able to have more freedom with moving around and not have to rely on others.

Ms. Candace is very happy with her new powerchair. She has a basket on it where she can put any bag or items that she would normally need to hold onto. She is now able to go to the mailbox to get the mail and go on walks with her daughter and the dog. She doesn't have any problems getting to use the backyard now and easily gets around stores. She can do all this without have to rely on others. "I think my husband likes it more than I do. He doesn't have to push me around everywhere" she jokes.

"Without SAILS I wouldn't have received my new power wheelchair. It's a huge part in having more independence and my happiness"



Truck Modified: Early Christmas Present For Bradley Koenning

by Abel Zamora, Program Director

Mr. Bradley Koenning recently received a vehicle modification that will help him to continue to live independently.

Mr. Koenning resides in the Victoria area but has many medical appointments and physical therapy in San Antonio. He recently had his Mom's truck modified so that he is able to enter and exit the vehicle with ease. The seat extends outward and brings Bradley back inside, so that he can travel to meet his medical appointments and physical therapy sessions without a hitch.

Bradley and his Mom expressed gratitude for the seat and for SAILS making it possible for him to continue working towards his independent living goals. Bradley was happy that he received an "early Christmas present this year."



SAILS Is For Consumers



Mr. Jesus Zamora: Happier Life With A New Prosthetic

by Megan Zambo, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Jesus Zamora lost his leg in a bus crash in 1989 and was struggling to get around with his 30-year-old prosthetic. It was leaving cuts and blisters in his leg making it painful to get around and causing him to walk off balance. His health was affected as he couldn't take walks, something he really enjoys doing.

After getting a new prosthetic Mr. Zamora no longer gets blisters or has pain when he is walking. His balance has improved and he moves around much easier.

"I am grateful for everything the program has done for me!" He says he can take walks around the pond by his house everyday now. He is enjoying playing with his grandkids and helping his daughter around her house too.



Mr. Daniel Cantu: Gateway To Independent Living

Juan Tristan, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Daniel Cantu is very pleased to have overcome homelessness. He had originally accomplished this goal, and was on the Mod Rehab program with SAHA. However due to failed inspections by the Owner/Landlord, Mr. Daniel Cantu, as a consumer, was left with 30 days to move because SAHA abated payment due to failed inspections. With such short notice Mr. Cantu had no place to go.

He had applied for the mainstream housing voucher through Alamo Area Council of Government. Mr. Cantu had 60 days to find an apartment or risked losing his voucher. During Mr. Cantu's apartment search, he faced many financial barriers and other obstacles. He had to use self-advocacy to solve some of the barriers.

Finally, Mr. Cantu found a one-bedroom apartment and moved in. He was filled with joy and relief! Mr. Cantu accomplished two goals. One was obtaining affordable housing and the other was learning self-advocacy. During my follow up with Mr. Cantu he said, "SAILS is the Gateway to Independent Living."



SAILS Is For Consumers

2019 Casino Night Fundraising Event

Photos by Liberty Vela



Casino Guest is a winner!



Holding the winning hand



Gilbert and Sandra Ortiz



Dr. Brietzke and Emcee Steve Cavazos



SAILS raffle a success



Guests enjoy Casino Night

SAILS Is For Consumers



2019 Casino Night Fundraising Event

Photos by Liberty Vela



Ladies just want to have fun



"Dancing to the music"



Linda Knolton and Dr. Brietzke



Ruben V entertains



Board Secretary Rodney Harris



Great event to take a selfie

November 2019

- 1- SAILS Casino Night Vegas Style Fundraiser
- 5- Fish City Grill Fundraiser
- 8- SAILS Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
- 13- SAILS Board of Director's Meeting
- 15- Administrative day
- 19- Staff Thanksgiving Luncheon
- 27/29- Thanksgiving Holiday Break

December 2019

- 2-5 SAILS HHSC Financial Monitoring Visit
- 6- SAILS Staff Holiday Luncheon
- 13- SAILS Support Group Luncheon
- 17- SAILS Holiday closure through January 1

January 2020

- 2- SAILS offices re-open
- 3- SAILS Support Group Meeting/Setting Goals
- 7- SAILS Staff Meeting & Fish City Grill Fundraiser
- 11- SAILS Board Meeting & Board Retreat
- 17- 1st ADA Planning Committee Meeting

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A New Year, A New Board Of Goals: SAILS Consumers Support Group Monthly Meeting

by Juan Tristan, Laura Johnson, Shawanna Marshall, IL Outreach Specialists

In a recent monthly Support Group Meeting, participants, SAILS consumers, are busy creating their goal boards for the new year!

Staff members Juan Tristian and Laura Johnson, IL Outreach Specialists, are assisting some of our visually challenged consumers, to work on and post their goals.

Everyone in the group meeting was happy with their new goals set for the new year!



Welcome New SAILS Staff Member Albert Pulido, IL Outreach Relocation Specialist



SAILS welcomes Albert Pulido, former CWIC employee who retired a few years ago. He is now SAILS new IL Outreach Relocation Specialist. He will be transitioning persons with disabilities from nursing homes back into community living. Albert has 15 years prior experience at SAILS assisting person with disabilities who are on social security and desire to work. He also has 20 years of experience working at the Social Security Administration. He will be a real asset to our SAILS team!

SAILS Is For Consumers



Mr. Jefferson Is No Longer Stuck In A Box: I Can Hear Well Now With The New Hearing Aids

Megan Zambo, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Jefferson Thomas was having a difficult time hearing. When having conversations, he couldn't understand what was being said and was always asking people to repeat themselves. This caused him to draw back from socializing and would feel left out of group conversations. "You never know how much not being able to hear affects your life until you don't have it" Mr. Thomas stated.

Mr. Thomas is now able to be a part of conversations and can embrace his social life once again. "I lost the capability to communicate" he goes on to say, "I am so grateful to be able to have a social life again." Mr. Thomas can do a lot more now besides socializing. He can hear perfectly on his phone and doesn't have to have his phone on full blast.

"I was stuck inside a box not being able to hear. After getting the hearing aids I am out of the box and free!"



Ms. Lanelle Choate Is Out And About In Town, With Her New Hearing Aids

Megan Zambo, IL Outreach Specialist

Ms. Lanelle Choate suffered from hearing loss due to working in a loud environment for many years. Later she was able to transfer over to teaching but not before it affected her hearing. Ms. Choate would have a hard time following along with religious ceremonies and classes. She also enjoyed teaching her friends and family's children art classes. Ms. Choate didn't feel in touch with what was going on around her and missed many phone calls because she couldn't hear it ring.

After getting her hearing aids she feels much more comfortable on what is going on when she is around town. "It's going wonderfully" she says, "these are fantastic hearing aids". Talking on the phone is no problem at all for her. She can have conversations in the car with her daughter and friends. Ms. Choate is now back to enjoying art with the soft-spoken children and even helping with tutoring English, something she wasn't able to do before. She can enjoy ceremonies and hear every word of the speakers as well !



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OTHER FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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