

# Setting Sails



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

Summer 2021

## A Successful 31st ADA Anniversary Celebration Virtual Event



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

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS), in partnership with Deaf Interpreter Services (DIS) successfully hosted the 31st Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Celebration on Saturday, July 24, 2021.

SAILS has a long history of hosting the ADA celebration in-person at Villita Hall in San Antonio. Due to the risk of any attendees catching COVID-19, the board of directors made the decision to host a virtual ADA celebration this year. This was a big undertaking since SAILS had not ever taken on a task like this before.

With SAILS partners and sponsors in place we pulled it off! Our virtual platform was set up just like we had with our branded ADA events in the past with a warm welcome to our virtual guests. I introduced our Keynote Speaker, Nick Scott, World Champion Body Builder, renowned motivational speaker and author. Several awards were handed out to our Public Servant of the Year, Nonprofit Organization of the Year, Humanitarian award, Individual Advocacy award and Small Nonprofit of the Year.

Guests enjoyed visiting the virtual vendors and sponsors submitted their video commercials or presentations about their company. We had a great wrap up and then had a drawing for many prizes that included one lucky winner of \$500 cash! SAILS also received over 24,000 hits to our launch of the ADA.

SAILS is keeping the 31st ADA celebration online at

our website [sailstx.org](http://sailstx.org) for one year. Please visit this wonderful ADA virtual celebration over and over again!



Dr. Kitty Brietzke, CEO of SAILS  
in her opening remarks  
launching the 31st ADA Anniversary  
Celebration, a virtual event, July 24th, 2021



Keynote Speaker: Nick Scott  
Nick Scott is a World-Wide Accomplished  
IFBB Professional Wheelchair Body Builder,  
Published Author, Certified Fitness Trainer,  
Champion Wheelchair Ballroom Dancer,  
Business Entrepreneur.

## Mr. Melek McIntosh: A Stable Job And A Place To Stay

Theresa Hernandez, IL Outreach Specialist

When Melek McIntosh first came to SAILS he wanted to learn how to maintain his budget so he could live more independently. He had recently lost his job and started seeking new employment. Eventually he found work as a security officer. He was very excited about his new job.

Then he started having problems with some neighbors around his apartment complex. He decided it was time to search for a new place to live. He saved his money and planned his move. He now is happily living in a new place and continues to enjoy his job too!



Mr. Melek McIntosh: a stable job and a place to stay

## Ms. Norma Jasmine Hamilton: I Accomplish My Goal

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Before coming to SAILS, Ms. Norma Jasmine Hamilton was having trouble making ends meet.

She described her situation as "robbing Peter to pay Paul and robbing Paul to pay Peter." The guidance she received from her IR/Volunteer Coordinator Shawanna Marshall helped her to analyze things and make better decisions. She understands how to budget. She said, "I tried three or four programs but SAILS was the only one that assisted me by calling me on a regular basis to help me stay on task." I am thankful to SAILS.



Ms. Norma Jasmine Hamilton: I accomplish my goal

**Online Request For Services, SAILS Consumers:**

<http://sailstx.org>

Click link tab "Contact",

and then "Request For Services"

## **Mr. Wagoner: These Hearing Aids Are Good**

Ciera Fulton, IL Outreach Coordinator, Waco Office

Mr. Wagoner is a consumer of SAILS Waco office. He has been wearing hearing aids since he was 15 years old. His last pair quit working and he was having great difficulty hearing his family and friends and even his doctor.

He told me, "I want to be able to hear and communicate with the people in my community." SAILS IL Outreach Coordinator in Waco assisted him with obtaining new hearing aids through our program funded by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

Mr. Wagoner said to me. "ya'll are good people. I will definitely be sending people your way!"

## **Ms. Nancy Curl: These Hearing Aids Absolutely Open A Whole New World For Me!**

Savannah Robinson, IL Outreach Specialist,  
Waco Office

Mrs. Nancy Curl is also a consumer of SAILS Waco Office. She is 72-year-old, lives in Bell County, Temple, Texas.

She told me that she was in her fifties when she first struggled with her hearing loss. She had recently needed hearing aids again and was frustrated because she felt like she could not participate at events with her family. SAILS IL Outreach Specialist explained the process of obtaining her request for hearing aids. She received her new hearing aids and is so pleased and states, "these hearing aids absolutely opened up a whole new world for me! I can even hear my preacher at church!"

## **Ms. Linda Buckelew's New Hearing Aids: I Can Hear My Husband And Doctors Much Better!**

Savannah Robinson, IL Outreach Specialist,  
Waco Office

SAILS Waco office was able to assist Mrs. Linda Buckelew with her request for hearing aids. She lives with her husband Jimmy in Belton, Texas located in Bell county.

Mrs. Buckelew has been wearing hearing aids for many years but her last hearing aids quit working and she was having great difficulty hearing. She struggled to hear her husband and people in her community. When she learned she would receive new hearing aids through SAILS Waco office she was very happy. She expressed, "it does make a difference in talking with people; I can hear my husband now and doctors too."

## **Ms. Barbara Thomas: I Surprise My Daughter With My Hearing**

Ciera Fulton, IL Outreach Coordinator, Waco

From the very beginning when I was working to help my consumer Ms. Barbara Thomas, she told me,

"I am going to surprise my daughters when I can finally hear." That is exactly what she did when SAILS Waco office assisted her with her hearing aids.

Her daughters could not believe she finally got them. She says, "no more yelling." Ms. Thomas stated that she loves her hearing aids and appreciates her IL Coordinator's help too. Congratulations Ms. Thomas.

## Mr. Mario Dominguez: I Am Very Thankful For All The Help From SAILS

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Mr. Dominguez is no stranger to SAILS.

He returned for help in 2020 because he was having trouble paying his bills. His truck had broken down and he was still paying medical bills from a surgery. "I was feeling preoccupied and concerned about paying my bills and wanted options for help before I became depressed over the situation." Mr. Dominguez's biggest concern was keeping a roof over his head. Then in a blink of an eye, like millions of people, Mr. Dominguez was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. His supplemental source of income was cut off and he was making do with only his social security check. With the aid of his specialist IR/Volunteer Coordinator Shawanna Marshall, Mr. Dominguez received help completing a budget that met his needs. He also received guidance to enroll in programs that would help him pay his rent and electricity bill. He was even able to obtain food through the San Antonio Food Bank because of a partnership SAILS has after receiving funding from the CARES Act. "I felt relieved after I received help with my bills. A lot of pressure was off my mind. The help I received from SAILS and other sources was enough to allow me to get by long enough until the COVID restrictions were lifted, and I was able to get back to my normal routine."

"I am very thankful for all the help SAILS has given me and I know I will call again if I should ever need help."



Mr. Mario Dominguez: I am very thankful for all the help from SAILS

## Ms. Stacye Dean: Employed As A Financial Analyst And Lives In A Beautiful Apartment

Theresa Hernandez, IL Outreach Specialist

Stacye Dean first came to SAILS program with a goal of successfully managing her budget. She needed a job and wanted to maintain her apartment. Things took a turn when she found out the apartment office was not going to re-new her lease. She was told she had to leave at the end of the month.

Ms. Dean learned how to advocate for herself. She stepped up to the challenge. She continued searching for employment. She signed up with the SAILS CARES ACT program.

SAILS referred her to the Fair Housing Council and she was informed of her rights. She found out she did not have to leave her apartment that soon. This gave Ms. Dean more time to take care of business.

Today Ms. Dean is employed. She is a financial analyst. She lives in a beautiful apartment. This is a result of her strong determination. Great job Stacye Dean!



Ms. Stacye Dean: employed as a financial analyst and lives in a beautiful apartment

## Mr. Sweet Wants To Teach Others How To Play Guitar Now

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

At the age of 18 Mr. Sweet was expelled from high school just three months from graduation. However, completing high school was always on his mind. He claims, "life interrupted my plans." At the age of 57 he wanted to feel like he completed something.

Mr. Sweet originally came to SAILS when he was a consumer under our "Gateway to Abilities" program that was funded by City of San Antonio. He said he learned a lot about how to address his employment and transportation needs. Eventually he ended up assigned to IR/Volunteer Coordinator Shawanna Marshall who assisted him with exploring avenues to obtain his GED. Mr. Sweet began to explore types of GED programs offered. He was at Highlands High School for awhile but the program closed due to the pandemic. Good news followed when he started taking GED courses online. He passed the practice tests and soon passed the actual GED testing. He

## Ms. Norma Scales Learns Budgeting To Keep Her Independence

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Ms. Norma Scales came to SAILS in 2018 seeking a better place to live.

At the time she wasn't satisfied with where she was living because the rent was too expensive. With the assistance of her specialist IR/Volunteer Coordinator Shawanna Marshall, Ms. Scales was able to complete a budget to understand her expenses and what she could afford. "I realized I needed to look for a smaller place that was within my budget.

Working with SAILS to understand my needs helped me to help myself."

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told me he was so excited and "I called my family." SAILS is so proud of Mr. Sweet's success in obtaining his GED. He now wants to learn to read sheet music and teach others how to play the guitar. Good luck to you Mr. Sweet.

## SAILS Welcomes Two New Staff Members

Dr. Kitty Brietzke, CEO



Priscilla Freasier  
IL Outreach Specialist

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) welcomes Priscilla Freasier as one of our new IL Specialists. She is a graduate of the University of Incarnate Word with a Bachelor's degree and a major in Psychology. She has experience in the instruction of students with disabilities at Edison High School where she also participated in ARD meetings. Priscilla says she is passionate about helping others. She will be a great asset to the SAILS team and helping our consumers with disabilities.



Jesus Salazar  
IL Outreach Specialist

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) welcomes Jesus Salazar as one of our new IL Specialists. He is a graduate of the University of Incarnate Word with a Bachelor's degree and a major in Criminal Justice. He is also a proud veteran and SAILS is thankful for his service. He has experience in case management in both Parole and Probation and worked extensively with consumers with many barriers to independent living. Jesus will be a great asset to the SAILS Team and helping our consumers with disabilities.

## June 2021

- 4- SAILS Virtual Gateway to Abilities Support Group
- 8- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 9- SAILS Board of Director's Meeting
- 30- ADA ZOOM Planning Meeting

## July 2021

- 2- SAILS Virtual Gateway to Abilities Support Group
- 5- Holiday for 4th of July
- 6- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 24- 31st ADA (Virtual) Celebration

## August 2021

- 6- SAILS Virtual Gateway to Abilities Support Group
- 10- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 18- The Big Give Virtual Training
- 31- Contract Planning Meeting

## SAILS Consumer Support Group Monthly Virtual Meetings

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator  
Theresa Hernandez, IL Outreach Specialist

The SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group continues to meet regularly once a month via Zoom. This past quarter, consumers have enjoyed receiving information from the following organizations to help them in their independent living goals. "Have you signed up? Call our office today!"

May: Health and Human Services Commission – Provider and Residential Care Services

June: VIA - Para Transit Services

July: San Antonio Metro Health District – Disaster Readiness

Aug: San Antonio Public Library- SAPL Services

## Secure Online Donations to SAILS

<http://sailstx.org>

Click link tab "Donate"



SAILS Consumer Support Group monthly virtual meetings

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# SAILS Is For Consumers



We Appreciate Our Sponsors In Your Support  
For SAILS 31st ADA Anniversary Celebration Virtual Event



Humana



The Gordon Hartman Family  
FOUNDATION

San Antonio Independent Living Services  
31st Annual Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)  
Virtual Celebration



San Antonio Independent Living Services  
11306 Sir Winston St., Bldg F  
San Antonio, TX 78216



## OTHER FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

**San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS)**  
11306 Sir Winston Street, Bldg F, San Antonio, TX 78216  
V/TDD (210) 281-1878 Fax (210) 281-1759 (800) 474-0295 sailstx.org

### SAILS Staff

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

Charles Villarreal	Chief Financial Officer
Abel Zamora	Program Director
Shawanna Marshall	IL/Outreach Specialist
Theresa Hernandez	IL/Outreach Specialist
Catheran Lopez	IL/Outreach Specialist
Priscilla Freasier	IL/Outreach Specialist
Jesus Salazar	IL/Outreach Specialist
Cynthia Contreras	Receptionist
Ciera Fulton	IL/Outreach Coordinator (Waco)
Savannah Robinson	IL/Outreach Specialist (Waco)

### SAILS Board of Directors

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