

Setting Sails



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

Winter 2022

Coping with Covid-19 in 2022: Beginning a New Normal?



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

We survived COVID-19 through 2020 and 2021 and are now entering 2022; yet another year of COVID. I guess we have learned to live with “masking up.” We have social distanced from others to include even the people we love the most—our family members.

We made informed choices about taking the vaccinations and boosters. We even withstood the differences of opinion in our communities about COVID-19 and how to prevent contracting this dreaded illness. So, we have yet another strain called Omicron.

Dr. Fauci referred to the new variant omicron and stated, “just about everybody will get COVID-19” (Deseret News, January 13, 2022). Now, it seems we all need to begin our new normal because although this new variant is highly transmissible and infectious it has been much milder like a cold for the majority who received vaccinations. Our lives must go on and we each must find our own way to cope with COVID.

We should continue to be safe at work and play by wearing our masks. We should think of others and ourselves as we recognize that the virus will most likely be a part of our lives for a very long time. That is how I see it and hope that everyone in our community finds a new normal, stays healthy and is happy.

In Memoriam of Donald Cloman, SAILS Volunteer For Many Years



Mr. Donald Cloman, a volunteer with SAILS for many years

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) mourns the passing of Mr. Donald (Ducky) Cloman.

Ducky was a longtime friend of SAILS and volunteered for more than eleven years. He loved helping out with SAILS Annual Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) celebrations, Fiesta Fairs and Annual Picnics in the past. He was selected as Volunteer of the Year in 2018 and awarded a plaque at The Barn Door restaurant at SAILS Volunteer Luncheon.

Ducky also thoroughly enjoyed attending and supporting SAILS Casino Night fundraiser. He will be missed by everyone at SAILS.

SAVE THE DATE:

**SAILS 32nd Annual
Americans with Disabilities Act
(ADA) Celebration 2022!
Call 210-281-1878 ext 118
for details
and sponsor information.**

Mr. Alvaro Cruz: New Life, New Prosthetic Leg

Jesus Salazar, IL Outreach Specialist

I first met with Mr. Alvaro Cruz on 09/08/2021. Mr. Cruz was my first consumer as I had just started with SAILS a month before. Mr. Cruz had lost his leg due to complications from diabetes and was in need of a prosthetic leg.

While there were some challenges in obtaining Mr. Cruz's prosthetic, SAILS was able to progress the case and provide it to him through funding from our Outsourcing contract through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. I put in some hard work learning how to follow the rules of the contract and was very fortunate to have the support and training from my immediate supervisor, Abel Zamora throughout the whole process. He was instrumental to me learning the program but was also a big help to Mr. Cruz too.

When I asked Mr. Cruz what life was like before he received his prosthetic to now he stated: "I was depressed. I could not move very well around my house. I had to use a walker and would get very frustrated."

"I was surprised at how quickly you all at SAILS helped me and how patient you and Mr. Zamora were with me. I would tell anyone that if they needed help to contact SAILS."



Jesus Salazar, IL Outreach Specialist, helps consumer Alvaro Cruz get new prosthetic leg

Smiling With Success: Ms. Cynthia Perez

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Ms. Perez states if it wasn't not for SAILS, she does not know what would have happened. "Working with Ms. Marshall, I learned how to manage my budget. It was hard, but deep down I knew it would be alright.

Also receiving help from the CARES program has been amazing. It was nice to not have to worry about food and hygiene items."



Ms. Cynthia Perez is smiling with success

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SAILS Consumer's Success Stories



Mr. Aaron Ayala Moves In His New Apartment

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Mr. Ayala is a consumer of SAILS whose goal was to find housing. He said "I was very glad to receive encouragement and guidance from Ms. Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator.

Mr. Ayala was happy to be able to meet his goal and move into a new apartment and have a place of his own.



Mr. Aaron Ayala moves in his new apartment

Ms. Loredo Hears Well Now With Her New Hearing Aids

Ciera Fulton, IL Outreach Coordinator

Ms. Loredo had lost hope that she would ever be able to hear again. Her only wish was to hear her grandkids voice.

Ms. Loredo came to SAILS with little hope as she could not find anyone to assist her with hearing aids. SAILS was able to assist her with a new set of hearing aids that would eventually change her life. "I love them, I can hear my grandkids, their voice, that was my main reason for wanting hearing aids."

Ms. Loredo became emotional while stating "yall keep doing what yall are doing and keep making a difference in people live."

Ms. Walker: Im Hearing Sounds I Haven't Heard In Years

Ciera Fulton, IL Outreach Coordinator

Ms. Walker came to SAILS needing assistance with hearing aids. "I felt like I was getting on everyone's nerves when I asked them to repeat themselves." said Ms. Walker.

"When I got my hearing aids, I gained a lot more self-respect and look at myself differently, I'm hearing sounds I haven't heard in years! It is life changing. "After working with Sails and receiving the best service, I would tell anyone that is wanting to work with SAILS to DO IT!"

"Yall were nothing but kind to me! Thank you for changing my life!"

Our Mission:

To advocate for the rights and empowerment of the people with disABILITIES and to provide needed services to people with disABILITIES in order to increase their self-determination and independence

Mr. Joshua Mattingly Enjoys Mobility With His New Wheelchair

Catheran Lopez, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Joshua Mattingly lives in Converse, Texas. He contacted SAILS for assistance in obtaining a wheelchair, a standing wheelchair and a bariatric shower chair.

Mr. Mattingly lives with his father. He says it has been a struggle to be as independent as possible. However, after working closely with SAILS staff he was able to obtain a manual wheelchair and a standing wheelchair last January. He also received a bariatric shower chair. He is so much happier and related "I can do more things on my own now and my dad doesn't have to help me as much. I am much more independent."

He is looking forward to increasing his independence even more and just enjoying life with more freedom. He and his father report they feel blessed and are thankful for getting assistance through SAILS, stating, "It's more than we expected."



Mr. Joshua Mattingly enjoys mobility with his new wheelchair

SAILS Support Group Meets Monthly

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

This winter, the SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group met to educate the attendees about healthcare, food benefits and domestic violence issues.

In November 2021, Paul Mata with the San Antonio Food Bank provides services beyond meeting the needs of the community for food benefits. Last December 2021, Patricia S. Castillo with PEACE Initiatives helped consumers who attended the Support Group learn how to recognize the signs of domestic violence and obtain help.

Finally, this January the participants received an indepth view of all the healthcare options and programs from WellMed speaker, Carol Zernial. Did you know they offer palliative care along with free health education classes?

If you or someone you know would like to attend SAILS ZOOM Gateway to Abilities Support Group meetings please call us at 210-281-1878 and ask for Shawanna Marshall.



Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Secure Online Donations to SAILS

<https://sailstx.org>

Click link tab "Donate"

Ms. Terry Bruce: New Life

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Ms. Bruce joined SAILS at a heartbreaking moment in her life. She recently lost her husband and was facing eviction due to no source of income. With the aid of her Independent Specialist, Ms. Bruce was able to keep her independence and establish benefits and services in her name.

"I was surprised by how much my Specialist was with my case and assisted me with finding a solution. She was very informative and provided resources that helped me with maintaining my independence." Ms. Bruce commented that she was also so pleased with the courteous manner in which she received services from the very beginning. Thanks for the compliments Ms. Bruce. SAILS is glad to help!

"I was also pleased with the courteous service I received from the receptionist."



**"Thank You For Being
Our Logo Sponsor"**

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Mr. Thomas Salazar:

His Home Environmental Control Unit Helps Control and Improve Quality of His Life

Abel Zamora, Program Director

"Thank you all for everything that you have done for me." These words were spoken by Mr. Thomas Salazar, a SAILS consumer who resides in Victoria County, Texas. Mr. Salazar has received items through the SAILS Outsourcing program, most recently, an Environmental Control Unit. Mr. Salazar depends on his newly obtained ECU unit to continue living in his home due to multiple significant disabilities. The ECU unit will allow Mr. Salazar to control many aspects of his home life due to his substantial limited movement. Mr. Salazar will be able to communicate better with his live in using the voice command features of the device.

Mr. Salazar is the embodiment of the SAILS program goals, to have consumers live in their home and maintain their independence in the least restrictive environment possible.



Abel Zamora, Program Director, helps Mr. Thomas Salazar get his home environmental unit

**Online Request For Services, SAILS Consumers:
<http://sailstx.org>
Click link tab "Contact",
and then "Request For Services"**

Calendar of Events: Dec, Jan, February

December 2021

- 3- SAILS Virtual Gateway to Abilities Support Group/PEACE Initiatives
Presenter Patricia S. Castillo
- 7- Staff Meeting
- 9- SAILS Holiday Luncheon
- 17- SAILS Holiday Closure

January 2022

- 4- SAILS Re-Opens after Holidays
- 7- SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group/WellMed, Presenter Carol Zernial/Executive Director
- 8- SAILS Board Meeting & Planning Meeting
- 11- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 17- Martin Luther King Holiday
- 28- SAILS In-Service Training: Rural Outreach

February 2022

- 4- SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group/VIA
Presenters: Sylvia Castillo & Michael Dominguez
- 8- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 11- ADA Planning Meeting
- 21- President's Day

Mr. Eddie Vasquez Moves In His New Apartment After 3-Year Waiting

Robert Pena, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Eddie Vasquez received his new apartment this January – after waiting 3 years on the SAHA waiting list. He has been working with guidance of SAILS IL Specialists, Juan Tristan and Theresa Hernandez.

Eddie was able to maneuver through the intricacies of SAHA, ACCOG and criminal system: to appeal a SAHA denial due to background.

Mr. Vasquez has overcome homelessness, divorce, and loss of his mother due to Covid in 2021.

His apartment on the North West side and it is closer to his family.

He is happy to call Hilltop Oak Apartments his home!

Mr. Eddie Vasquez moves in his new apartment, after 3-year waiting, with assistance from SAILS



Contents

(page)

Coping with Covid-19 in 2022: Beginning a New Normal?	(1)
In Memoriam of Donald Cloman, SAILS Volunteer For Years	(1)
Mr. Alvaro Cruz: New Life, New Prosthetic Leg	(2)
Smiling With Success: Ms. Cynthia Perez	(2)
Mr. Aaron Ayala Moves In His New Apartment	(3)
Ms. Loreda Hears Well Now With Her New Hearing Aids	(3)
Ms. Walker: Im Hearing Sounds I Haven't Heard In Years	(3)
Mr. Joshua Mattingly Enjoys Mobility With His New Wheelchair	(4)
SAILS Support Group Meets Monthly	(4)
Ms. Terry Bruce: New Life	(5)
Mr. Thomas Salazar: His Home Environmental Control Unit Helps Control and Improve Quality of His Life	(5)
Calendar of Events: Dec, Jan, February	(6)
Mr. Eddie Vasquez Moves In His New Apartment After 3-Year Waiting	(6)
Ms. Mary Ann Arrellano and Her New Hearing Aids: "You (SAILS) Have Changed People Lives On A Regular Basis"	(7)
Mr. Arturo Rodriguez: I Am Happy That I Was Able To Get Help From SAILS	(7)

SAILS Is For Consumers



Ms. Mary Ann Arrellano and Her New Hearing Aids: "You (SAILS) Have Changed People Lives On A Regular Basis"

Abel Zamora, Program Director

Mary Ann Arrellano refers to the hearing aids she received through the SAILS Complex Rehabilitation Technology program a "gift and a blessing."

A resident of Bexar County, Ms. Arrellano felt isolated and apart from family because of significant hearing loss stemming from the effects of physical disabilities. Mrs. Arrellano stated that with the gift of having most of her hearing again, she feels a part of her community and family again. She remains overjoyed being able to fully engage with her very close knit family.

As one vendor representative who dispensed Mrs. Arrellano's hearing aids said, "I just wish you all could be flies on the walls during these fittings. You guys can't fully understand the amazing work you do. You truly change peoples lives on a regular basis."



New hearing aids:
life changing for Ms. Mary Ann Arrellano

Mr. Arturo Rodriguez: I Am Happy That I Was Able To Get Help From SAILS

Jesus Salazar, IL Outreach Specialist

Consumer Arturo Rodriguez came to SAILS requesting hearing aids.

When I met with Mr. Rodriguez and his wife I could tell that he was having difficulty hearing both his wife and me while we went over his application. Mr. Rodriguez and his wife Belina both expressed how obtaining hearing aids from our program would greatly change his life. On 01/27/2022 I received a call from Mr. and Mrs. Rodriguez letting me know that he had received his hearing aids. I asked Mr. Rodriguez how receiving his hearing aids helped him and he stated "It feels great being able to hear my wife's voice and to hear so much more clearly,"

"I am happy that I was able to get help from SAILS."

**Visit Our Website:
<https://sailstx.org>**



**Online Request For Services, SAILS Consumers:
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