

Setting Sails



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

2022 Summer

SAILS Hosts 32nd ADA Anniversary Celebration



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

On Saturday July 23rd, 2022 San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) hosted the 32nd annual Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) celebration at Morgan's Wonderland Event Center. Hundreds of guests came to enjoy the celebration. They were met by a room packed with many vendors who shared information and community resources with all.

Cindy Watson, Chief Executive Director of the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind was SAILS honored keynote speaker. She shared her personal history, passion and visionary plans with everyone. San Antonio's honorable Mayor Ron Nirenberg was our Public Servant of the year. He expressed his excitement and support for SAILS Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) celebration and complimented the venue selection.

San Antonio Independent Living Services wishes to thank everyone for attending this year and all our sponsors who made this year's ADA Celebration truly successful. SAILS extends special thanks to the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation for being a key supporter again this year and Humana for sponsoring the lunch for all ADA guests. SAILS would like to thank all our T-shirt and LOGO sponsors too below:

Special Thanks to our Sponsors of the 32nd ADA Anniversary Celebration



SAILS Board Members (front row),
and SAILS Staff at the 32nd ADA Anniversary
Celebration

The Road to Joy

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Ms. Bernadette Cuellar began working with SAILS in the fall of 2020. At the time, she felt mistreated and defeated because the place where she was living needed major repairs and the landlord was not willing to fix the problems. When Ms. Cuellar met with her IL specialist, a plan was developed to address the challenges she was experiencing and through SAILS, Ms. Cuellar was able to express her needs to her landlord. When the request for repairs were still not completed, Ms. Cuellar was then able to find the courage to contact the San Antonio Housing Authority (now Opportunity Home San Antonio) to begin the process of getting her Housing Choice Voucher reissued to move to a new place.

During the process of finding a new place to live, Ms. Cuellar took the communication skills she learned from her specialist, Shawanna Marshall, and repeatedly demonstrated a strong ability to advocate for her needs by regularly following up with everyone who was involved with her housing process. And when she began to have unexpected trouble with her health, Ms. Cuellar did not let her focus and determination waiver. She sought help from others to strengthen her support network. This past April, Ms. Cuellar was able to move into her brand-new apartment and continues to travel on the road to joy!

Congratulations Ms. Cuellar for all your hard work!



Ms. Bernadette Cuellar created her road to joy

Walking In and Out of the House with Ease

Mariel Garcia, IL Outreach Specialist

Consumer Julia Dorsey from San Antonio, Texas contacted SAILS requesting a ramp for her home.

After patiently waiting and working with SAILS, a new ramp for her house, Ms. Dorsey is now able to go in and out of her home with ease. Most importantly, Ms. Dorsey can now walk down her ramp with peace of mind. She can hold on to the railing and exit the house safely without the fear of falling and she can more easily enjoy the sunrise in her backyard.

The ramp allows for swift access to the yard, which enables her go outside with her puppy, Lotto.

“I feel really good, and the ramp is amazing. I am really happy thanks to SAILS. I appreciate being able to hold on with no splinters too.”



Ms. Julia Dorsey is walking in and out of the house with ease now

Secure Online Donations to SAILS
<https://sailstx.org>
 Click link tab "Donate"

SAILS Consumer's Success Stories



SAILS Board Chair, Miguel Castro is a Member of the City of San Antonio's Disability Access Advisory Committee

By Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

Early last September, SAILS Board Chair, Miguel Castro received a call from his former supervisor, now the Policy Advisor for Mayor Ron Nirenberg.

Per our Mayor's request Castro was asked to fill a vacant committee member spot on the Disability Access Advisory Committee for the City of San Antonio. The Disability Access Advisory Committee was formed to help create policies and procedures and provide accessible services and facilities for the citizens of San Antonio who have disabilities.

Congratulations Miguel!



SAILS Board Chair, Miguel Castro is a Member of the City of San Antonio's Disability Access Advisory Committee

New Prosthetic Allows Mr. Diaz an Incredible Range of Motion

Savannah Robinson, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Christopher Diaz contacted SAILS-Waco to get assistance in obtaining a microprocessor knee for his prosthetic leg. This consumer is a 37-year-old male living in Waco, a city in McLennan County, Texas. Mr. Diaz lost his left leg due to a tragic firearm accident, leaving him with limited mobility. He struggled with his balance and stamina, often falling, and injuring himself when attempting day to day tasks. With help from SAILS, Mr. Diaz now has his prosthetic, which allows him an incredible range of motion, and he is back to taking care of himself independently and with less risk of injury!



New prosthetic allows Mr. Diaz an incredible range of motion

SAILS Is For Consumers

32nd ADA Anniversary Celebration

Photos by Frank San Miguel



Dreams Fulfilled Through Music booth



SAILS exhibit booth



Super Heroes attend the ADA Celebration



SAILS ADA Pep Rally!



Ready To Work exhibit booth



Cindy Watson, CEO of the SA Lighthouse receives Keynote award from SAILS Board Chair Miguel Castro

SAILS Is For Consumers

32nd ADA Anniversary Celebration

Photos by Frank San Miguel



Deaf Interpreter Services booth



SAILS Board Members with CEO, Dr. Brietzke



Bountiful attendees of the ADA!



Valero volunteers!



S.A. Fire Museum Society exhibit table



Mayor Ron Nirenberg receives plaque from SAILS Board Chair

June 2022

- 3- SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group/ Disaster Preparedness, Presenter Evelyn Garza from SA Metro Health District
- 8- SAILS Board of Director's Meeting
- 9- SAILS Internal ADA Planning Meeting
- 14- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 17- SAILS In Service Training

July 2022

- 4- Independence Day Holiday
- 13- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 11- Columbus Day Holiday
- 23- SAILS 32nd Americans with Disabilities Act Celebration
- 27- Resource Fair at NE Resource Center

August 2022

- 5- SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group/ Mental Health, Presenter Janet Paleo, CFO of Prosumers International
- 9- SAILS Staff Meeting
- 26- SAILS In Service Training
- 30- The BIG GIVE SA Training

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Mr. Martin Ocasio feels Confidence With His New Eye Prosthetic

Savannah Robinson, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Martin Ocasio received an eye prosthetic with the help of SAILS-Waco. Mr. Ocasio is a 54-year-old male living in Copperas Cove of Coryell County, Texas. Mr. Ocasio lost his eye due to a long-time struggle with glaucoma. His eye was removed for his health, which resulted in the need to seal his eyelid. This was very uncomfortable for Mr. Ocasio, both physically and emotionally. With his new prosthetic, this consumer now feels confidence in his appearance and no longer struggles with physical discomfort in his eye.

SAILS Staff Invited to a Tour of SA Lighthouse for the Blind

By Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

On Wednesday, September 14, 2022 the staff participated in a tour at the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind's Eads Avenue location. Everyone enjoyed the lively and informative presentations from their staff. It was especially nice to meet the youth transition group attending class that day.

Our SAILS team were enlightened about the staff at the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind who were busily working in their "high tech textile manufacturing" (according to SA Lighthouse for the Blind employee, Brad McKnight) area sewing and assembling chin straps for a contract with the military.



SAILS Staff members tour SA Lighthouse for the Blind

SAILS Consumer's Success Stories



Mr. Ricky Quinones: New Hearing Aids Are Great!

Savannah Robinson, IL Outreach Specialist

Mr. Ricky Quinones is a Waco resident in the McLennan County, Texas. He contacted SAILS-Waco to get assistance in obtaining hearing aids. Mr. Quinones suffered from near total deafness that led to him yelling to communicate and missing out on many joyful parts in his life. With the assistance of his IL Specialist, this 63-year-old was able to get the hearing aids that best suited his needs. Mr. Quinones states, "Yeah, they're great! I don't have to yell and strain my voice anymore."

Computer Lab Is Available For Use By SAILS Consumer

Shawanna Marshall, IR/Volunteer Coordinator

Consumer: Carol Ramirez

"SAILS allowed me access to use a computer to search for housing and compete applications. When the pandemic hit, I continued to receive information for where I could go to search for housing."



Ms. Carol Ramirez benefits from using SAILS computer lab facility

SAILS Support Group Meetings

Ashley Trayler, IL Outreach Specialist

SAILS: Gateway to Abilities Support Group continues to meet monthly to provide consumers with information and resources that may be beneficial to them within the community, while in a social, interactive environment. For the month of July, SAILS had the pleasure of welcoming Prosumers' founder, Janet Paleo, as the group's guest speaker, with the topic of Mental Health. Janet initiated the support group with her encouraging story of personal experiences dealing with her mental health, and journey to advocate for herself, and others. Her advocacy for Self-care and goal setting lead her to start the Prosumers Organization, and provided the momentum our support group needed to encourage the SAILS attendees, and staff to reflect and share their personal experiences with Mental Health.

The sincerity of everyone's stories moved Ms. Terry Bruce to share a poem that she wrote and memorized for her late husband, which was seen by many, as the highlight of the meeting. Ms. Bruce gave many individuals encouragement to become creative when expressing themselves. Asher Eggleston excitedly, and confidently shared their passion to cook, and even created a personal goal of enrolling into Culinary School.

This support group had everyone eager to attend future meetings and continue their journeys with SAILS to work towards their goals.

If you or someone you know would like to attend SAILS Gateway to Abilities Support Group, please give us a call!

Online Request For Services, SAILS Consumers:

<http://sailstx.org>

**Click link tab "Contact",
and then "Request For Services"**

San Antonio Independent Living Services
11306 Sir Winston Street, 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
Ben Lukeba	HR-Executive Support Specialist
Abel Zamora	Program Director
Shawanna Marshall	IL/Outreach Specialist
Mariel Garcia	IL/Outreach Specialist
Virginia Ramirez	IL/Outreach Specialist
Ashley Trayler	IL/Outreach Specialist
Anna Brocato	IL/Outreach Specialist
Savannah Robinson	IL/Outreach Specialist (Waco)
Patricia Vick	Receptionist (Waco)

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Kevin LeMelle	Board Member
Elizabeth (Liz) Jackson	Board Member

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**Editor: Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.,
SAILS' Chief Executive Officer.**

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