

Setting Sails



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

Spring 2012

Message from SAILS' Executive Director: Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

A 22nd Year Celebration for the ADA



Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke,
Executive Director of SAILS

On July 26, 1990 President George W. Bush signed into law the most comprehensive piece of legislation ever written for persons with disabilities-The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA acts as civil rights legislation for families with disabilities. We must not forget the original intent of ending unjust segregation and exclusion of persons with disabilities from our "mainstream" society.

Our gratitude goes out to the thousands of people who made up the 'disability rights movement' and whose efforts have helped to change the lives of thousands of persons with disabilities today. These historical "disability advocates" sought justice in our American courts and with Congress to ensure that people with disabilities would be included in all aspects of living. Many of these advocates told their own very compelling stories of discrimination to Congress during the ADA legislative process. They succeeded by way

of their unwavering commitment to help people with disabilities receive the justice they deserved (Bush).

On Friday, July 27, 2012 San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) will host the 22nd Annual Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) celebration with a theme: "honoring our veterans!" The celebration will start at about 8:30a.m.with several hundred excited supporters who will gather at San Antonio's Mercado for the Unity Pride Stroll and then over to 401 Villita for the day's events. Strollers will carry company banners along the march towards Villita where nearly 50 vendors will await their arrival. Many organizations such as our friends at AmeriGroup Corporation, Alamo Service Connection (ASC), Deaf Interpreter Services, Pride and San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind will provide free resources for all.

A keynote speaker will share an inspirational story with everyone. SAILS will also honor the designated Disability Organization of the Year and Public Servant of the Year. Many other individuals and organizations will be recognized too. SAILS staff encourages everyone to save the date for this wonderful community event. This is the largest ADA celebration in Texas! If anyone is interested in participating as a vendor please contact Gloria Banik at 210-281-1878 or gbanik@sailstx.org, or visit our website at <http://sailstx.org>.



SAILS Employees and volunteers with banner,
leading the march of ADA Celebration in 2011

DARS and SAILS Working Together

by Lori Crownover



Dora Gray

SAILS' Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) receives regular referrals from The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Independent Living Program. DARS' Independent Living Program refers consumers with many different types of disabilities for special telephones. One

such consumer, Mrs. Dora Gray, a very active Senior Citizen who lives in one of the small Texas towns that SAILS serves, received an emergency telephone through STAP. This is a great thing for Mrs. Gray who, unfortunately, broke her leg recently! Mrs. Gray also has a hearing loss and can definitely benefit from the amplification on the E.R. telephone. Mrs. Gray reports to STAP Specialist, Lori Crownover, that she is very happy with the hearing aids that DARS provided her and the amplified phone which works well with her hearing aids. Mrs. Gray, who is very involved in her church, also referred a friend to STAP who is really in need of an amplified phone.

Many consumers, like Mrs. Gray's friend, are referred to STAP or call in themselves as word gets out about the program. SAILS' STAP also receives approximately 5 to 10 referrals a month from DARS, in addition to the many other referrals from community agencies such as Social Workers As Needed, The San Antonio Lighthouse, San Antonio Housing Authority and Christian Senior Services.

Recently, SAILS received a donation of a large number of cordless phones from Haven for Hope. Many consumers are able to take advantage of these donated phones until they receive their adaptive telephones from STAP.

No Commute Is To Far

by Albert Pulido



Albert Pulido, CWIC Specialist

On January 3, 2012, Mrs. Molly Griffin called S.A.I.L.S. to inquire about the Social Security Ticket to Work program. She had become disabled in November of 2010 due to a back injury. On November 21st of 2011 she returned to work at "San Antonio Locksmith and Security". She was paid \$10.00 an hour and worked from 32 to 38 hours per week.

In mid-January her hours were not only reduced but she also switched to the "midnight shift." This made it difficult to commute because she resides 60 miles away. She considered terminating her job until I informed her that under the Social Security Work Incentives program she was entitled to deduct her mileage both to and from her place of employment. I shared with her that Social Security determines the actual mileage rate. This information was favorable because it meant that she would remain under the wage limit and permit her to retain her Social Security benefits awhile longer while she continues to seek a full time job much closer to her home.

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A Future Counselor

by Mary Blake



Carol

Carol is a United States veteran who has served her country well. For more than a year she has also been a faithful participant in the Gateway to Abilities Program (GAP).

SAILS/GAP now recognizes and applauds Carol for her matriculation at San Antonio College (SAC) in the

Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor Program (LCDCP). She stated: "I always wanted to do this, but couldn't do so until recently due to my disabilities. My goal is to get a license through the state of Texas to counsel drug and alcohol dependent persons". Carol is presently completing the course work requirements and will move on to the internship component in the near future.

When I asked her how GAP helped her to achieve this milestone, she replied: "in many ways". Case management services helped Carol to look beyond her disabilities to see her abilities. "My case manager has motivated me to become independent and to once again become a contributing member of the San Antonio community. Carol is happy that this computerized program will allow her to study at her own time and pace to insure success and to avoid failure.

I asked Carol to tell me the value of the monthly GAP classes. She responded: "they give me the resources I need to find available services". The vouchers and CPS/utilities payments through the City of San Antonio provide the financial assistance I need to meet my needs.

In conclusion, Carol praised GAP and the SAILS staff for all our programs, services and benefits. "GAP has taught me how to mold my talents into skills and abilities.

Access For All Includes Parking

Kitty L. Brietzke, J.D.

I recently met Craig Spradling, CTO and Co-founder of Parking Mobility. We sat down and visited about the troubles that people with disabilities have when it comes to gaining access to disabled parking. I am not a person who has to depend on a wheelchair nor do I have a physical disability. However, I manage San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) so I am exposed on a daily basis to the various challenges that people in wheelchairs, in particular, have to face when it comes to accessing to all types of services. On a personal note, I have a family member that relies on a wheelchair when she wants to get out of her house. So, I was very interested in what Mr. Spradling wanted to tell me about Parking Mobility.

Parking Mobility's mission is to eliminate disabled parking abuse.

It is easier and faster for citizens of San Antonio, for example, to get involved with reporting parking violations through the use of the technology of free smart phone applications, recruitment and training of volunteers to report the abuses and the opportunity for a nonprofit or other organization to raise money while raising awareness of disabled parking abuse!

For more information about Parking Mobility please contact Mr. Craig Spradling at craig@parkingmobility.com or call him in Austin, Texas at 512-782-4541. SAILS supports Parking Mobility in their efforts to end disabled parking abuses.



SAILS Board Members Enjoy Their Annual Training

On Saturday, January 14, 2012 San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) Board of Directors gathered at the Lions Field Clubhouse for annual training and fellowship with staff.

Gloria Banik, Director of Programs and Resource Development began the training by presenting updated information about SAILS programs and services.

Mallika Rangarajan, Executive Administrative and HR Manager followed important and insightful information about safety. Everyone took a lunch break and then Executive Director, Dr. Kitty Brietzke presented information about Cause-Related Marketing. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and they all look forward to next year's retreat!



Mr. Andrew Galan, current Chair of SAILS Board of Directors and Dr. Kitty L. Brietzke, Executive Director, presenting the appreciation plaque to Ms. Frann Wright, immediate past Chair, in the recognition of her services.



SAILS Programs, services, cause-related marketing are among the many subjects that including in the discussions and training for the Board Members

Welcome S.A.I.L.S. Staff Member's Promotion



Irma Medrano
Community Work Incentive Coordinator

Ms. Irma V. Medrano has served as receptionist for SAILS for one and half years and has now been promoted to Community Work Incentive Coordinator. Ms. Medrano has a background of 23 years in banking administration and has served as a volunteer for many non-profits, currently including VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) in which she has been for three consecutive years. Another important asset is that she has some knowledge of American Sign Language which will be very helpful in supporting SAILS deaf consumers.

Events And Community Outreach



SAILS Support Group Holiday Party

by Mary Herrera

On December 2, 2011 SAILS support groups had their annual Holiday Party.

This years SAILS had there gather at BrookHill Baptist Church. We were fortunate to have The Director Ginger Treanor assist SAILS to use their church hall for the Holiday event for our support group.

We had over 46 people attend. Every one brought a side dish to share and lots of desserts. We had cakes donated, We had Christmas music playing though out the event, people started to sing Christmas carols. We had games and prizes handed out.

There was plenty of holiday food, music and games throughout the gathering. Everyone even started singing carols! How lucky we were because the children from the church provided handmade gifts for everyone in the support group. Everyone was so pleased and thankful. They all went home with their very own gift.

If you are interested in participating in any of the support groups, please contact Marie Herrera or Gloria Aguirre at 210-281-1878

SAILS Seeks CDBG Funds

by Gloria Banik

The Bexar County Commissioners Court has requested proposals that will be used in Bexar County (participating specific areas) for public service. SAILS will be submitting a proposal for \$25,000 for "Essential Needs". Essential needs could be rental or mortgage assistance, telephone connection charges, visual smoke alarms, and/or door bell signalers. The Commissioners will meet February 21st at the Bexar County Commissioners Courtroom at 1:30 pm. SAILS staff will present information about the need of persons with disabilities. Join us if possible.



Ms. Yolanda Aguirre enjoys herself at the party

Mrs. Barnes-Janie Cantu & Diane Cook at the party



SAILS Received Award for Utility Assistance

by Gloria Banik

SAILS has received \$2,500 to assist persons with utility bills. For more information, please call 281-1878 extension 123 or extension 115.

SAILS Fiesta Resources Fair And Picnic:

April 22, 2012 10:00am - 3:00pm
Commanche Park # 2
2600 Rigsby Ave
San Antonio, TX 78222



Calendar of Events Jan, Feb & March

JANUARY

National Thank you, Eye Care, Volunteer Blood Donor, Book, Birth Defects Prevention and Glaucoma Awareness Month

- 1 Happy New Year!
- 6 Support Group meeting (Disabled, Non-Disabled & Young People) Lighthouse for the Blind, 1-3 pm
- 7-9 State Independent Living Council (SILC) Congress, Houston
- 14 Board Retreat -- Lion's Field 9am to 1 pm
- 16 HOLIDAY--Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 18 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) starts at SAILS 9 am to 4 pm
- 19 AACOG Transportation-rural counties 9 am to 11am
DARS/SAILS School Transition Mtg.-Mad Hatters 12:00 pm
- 20 VITA 9 am to 4pm
ADA Planning Mtg.,-Amerigroup, 4203 Woodcock 10am-11am
- 23 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 25 VITA 9am to 4pm
Presentation--Vision Source 7pm
- 26 Gateway to Abilities (GAP) workshop - Amer. GI Forum 1 pm
Bexar County
- 27 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 30 VITA 9am to 4pm

FEBRUARY

National Black History, Bird Feeding Month, Burn Awareness, American Hearth and Cancer Prevention Month

- 1 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 3 Goodwill Annual Meeting-Pearl Stable 7:30 am
Support Groups--Lighthouse 1pm
- 6 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 8 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 10 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 13 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 14 Valentine's Day--JOIN SAILS at GENGHIS GRILL, 1903 N. Loop 1604E, Suite 1106
- 15 VITA 9am to 4pm

- EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP SAILS 2pm - 3 pm
- 16 Veteran's Information Meeting-Tri-Point, 3233 N. St. Mary's 6-8:30pm
- 17 VITA 9am to 4pm
ADA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING--SAHA, 818 S. Flores 9:45am to 10:45 am
- 20 HOLIDAY--President's Day
SAILS Closed
- 21 Bexar County Commissioners Court 11:30 am
- 22 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 23 GAP Workshops--American GI Forum
- 24 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 25 Tapestry Conference--Region 20 8am-3:45 pm
- 27 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 29 VITA 9am to 4pm

MARCH

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness, Nutrition, Save Your Vision and American Red Cross Month

- 2 VITA 9am to 4pm
Support Groups -- Lighthouse 1pm
- 3 Low Vision Expo--Colonial Hills United Methodist Church--5247 Vance Jackson 9 am -12 pm
- 5 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 7 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 9 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 12 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 14 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 16 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 17 Kendall County Fair--Boerne Fairgrounds
- 19 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 21 VITA 9am to 4pm
LEGAL RIGHTS WORKSHOP--SAILS 2pm-3pm
- 22 GAP Workshops
- 23 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 24 Southside ISD Wellness Extravaganza--1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd
- 26 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 28 VITA 9am to 4pm
- 30 VITA 9am to 4pm

SAILS Is For Consumers

SAILS Employee Appreciation Luncheon

SAILS staff gathered at Silo's for their annual staff appreciation luncheon. One of SAILS newest Board members, Vince Boyd and past Board Chair, Frann Wright showed their support and shared kind words for the staff's hard work. The staff thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the fine cuisine!



The Entire SAILS Team



Board member, Vince Boyd joins staff for their appreciation luncheon (fifth from the right)

SAILS Attended Morgan's Wonderland Extreme Home Edition Makeover

by Gloria Aguirre

On January 4, 2012 SAILS staff attended Morgan's Wonderland Extreme Home Makeover Edition to surprise one very lucky veteran with a new home! Over 500 people were in attendance and the producer of Extreme Home Maker Home Edition was there to share that San Antonio was a great place to tape their last episode. Be sure to follow the progress of the lucky recipient at Morgan's Wonderland website to find out the latest information. Congratulations to the lucky recipient and thanks to Extreme Makeover Home Edition for choosing San Antonio.



Representatives of SAILS (left to right), Lori Crownover, Gloria Aguirre and Mary Herrera, show support to Mr. Gordon Hartman at the event



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OTHER FORMATS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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Mallika Rangarajan	Executive Administrative & HR Manager
Charles Villarreal	Accountant

Gloria Aguirre	IL/Outreach Specialist	Mary E. Blake	IL Skills Coordinator
Marie Herrera	I&R/ Volunteer Coordinator	Lori Crownover	IL/STAP Specialist
Albert Pulido	CWIC	Irma Medrano	CWIC

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