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SDRC

# THE SDRC REPORT

To serve and empower persons with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve their goals with community partners.

## Master Plan for Developmental Services

Governor Newsom's proposed State budget includes the development of a Master Plan for Developmental Services. California Health and Human Services (CalHHS) Secretary, Dr. Mark Ghaly, announced the creation of a stakeholder committee to develop the plan. A Stakeholder Committee will collaborate with CalHHS and DDS to finalize the Master Plan by March 2025, aiming to provide a comprehensive roadmap for DDS..

Dr. Ghaly emphasized the need for integration and proactive thinking to address the evolving needs of consumers and families. The Master Plan aims for a person-centered developmental services system focused on quality, outcomes, and cultural competence, requiring input from diverse communities served by Regional Centers.

Since 2019, Regional Centers have experienced a 31% increase in served individuals, with DDS's budget growing by 88%. Notably, there's been significant growth among children under 22 with Autism diagnoses. However, individuals face challenges such as affordable housing shortages, limited employment opportunities, and accessing services from other sectors to address their holistic needs. Today, over 430,000 individuals and families receive our services and support. Individuals who receive services are more diverse and live longer.

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April 2024



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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT



## Michael James Bell (MJ) Facilities Assistant

Business Services, Facilities

**How long have you been employed at the regional center and what do you do?**

I have been employed at the regional center since January of 2022 and I am a facilities assistant. I mostly help with day to day property issues, supply orders and print jobs.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I coach tennis to kids at my neighborhood rec center and play (too many) video games. I also love going to theme parks!

**Why did you get into this business?**

I love real estate and property management. I went to SDSU to get a degree in business with an emphasis in real estate. Since I was a kid I was always fascinated with owning my own properties someday.



**Where do you hope to travel to in the next five years and why?**

I hope to travel to Italy and Japan! I would like to visit the colosseum in Italy and Tokyo Disney Sea in Japan.

**Tell us one thing people would be surprised to know about you.**

When I was a kid, I got to compete in a small local skateboard tournament with Tony Hawk.

**What is the most important characteristic of a good leader?**

I think transparency is an important leadership quality. To build trust is to be transparent. The more open you are to your team about your organization's goals and current challenges the more it makes it easier for employees to understand what needs to be done in their individual roles. When employees feel they have a purpose it leads to a higher level of employee engagement.

**What is the best advice you ever received?**

"Your success in life is largely dependent on how many uncomfortable conversations you're willing to have." - My former boss



## Master Plan Committee Members:

**Mark Klaus** – SDRC  
**Amy Westling** – ARCA  
**Areva Martin** – Family member  
**Barry Jardini** – California Disability Services Association  
**Beth Burt** – Family member  
**Brett Eisenberg** – CA Foundation for Independent Living Centers  
**Brian Zotti** – Options for All  
**Cheryl Brown** – Commission on Aging  
**Claudia Center** – Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
**Dora Contreras** – Family member  
**Edith Arias** – Family member  
**Elena Tiffany** – Self-advocate  
**Eric Ramirez** – Self-advocate  
**Gloria Wong** – East LARC  
**Joe Perales** – El Arc de California  
**Joyce McNair** – Family member  
**Judy Mark** – Family member  
**Kavita Sreedhar** – Family member  
**Kecia Weller** – Self-advocate  
**Kelly Kulzer-Reyes** – Family member  
**Larry Yin** – University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at CHLA  
**Lisa Cooley** – Self-advocate  
**Marie Poulsen** - Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention  
**Mark Melanson** – California Community Living Network  
**Marty Omoto** – California Disability Community Action Network  
**Norma Ramos** – Family member  
**Sara Speck** – Self-advocate  
**Sascha Bittner** – Self-advocate  
**Season Goodpasture** – Family member  
**Shella Comin-DuMong** – CHANCE Housing  
**Sylvia Yeh** – Family member  
**Tiffany Whiten** - SEIU  
**Tim Jin** – Self-advocate  
**Victor Lira** – Aveanna Healthcare  
**Will Leiner** – Disability Rights CA  
**Yvette Baptiste** – Family member



# Congratulations!

## MOVE-IT-MARCH Winners



### North County:

Katie Kelley, Unit 43  
Gina Berdugo, Unit 5  
Melissa Oliva, Unit 31

### South Bay:

Folashade Akintunde, Unit 7  
Eden Samson, Clinical Svcs.  
Samantha Ortiz, ES

### North Inland:

Karla Chairez, Unit 38  
Stacey Hardifer, Client Svcs.  
Rebecca Jarvis, Unit 17

### South Inland:

Ashley DeJonckheere, Client Svcs.  
Fritza Plasencia, Unit 36  
Mayra Morachis, Early Childhood

### Imperial Valley:

Felisa Velasquez-Diaz, ICSG  
Jeanette Saucedo, Unit 6  
Teresita Madrigal, Unit 24

### East County:

Maria Lizaola, Unit 23  
Karmen McQuain, Unit 28  
Danielle Hazelhurst, Unit 8

### Main Office:

Jose Rosas, IT  
Silvia Malfavon  
Karinna Gutierrez



## March's Blood Drive

Our drive was the Largest we have had so far (from our last 8 drives). We helped save the lives of 108 people! That's amazing!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to give, and we also had 7 new donors. Way to go!

Please mark your calendars for our next drive, June 19th! Details to follow.



## A Message from the IT Helpdesk

The IT helpdesk frequently recommends shutting down computers when they are not in use. The one exception to this rule is for conference room computers. If those are shutdown, they power off and would need to be manually turned back on for the conference room to be operational.

Instead of shutting down a conference room computer using the keyboard and mouse at the end of a meeting, it is recommended to use the table top touch panel and press/tap the red Room Off button (for conference rooms that has them). This allows the TV to turn off but keeps the computer on for the next person who needs to use that room.

If there are any questions, please feel free to email [helpdesk@sdrc.org](mailto:helpdesk@sdrc.org).

## From Client Services Save The Date!



Kim and Gabby will be visiting all of the regions in May. Each session will be 1 hour in length, followed by a 30-minute informal chat.

All sessions will be in person with a Zoom option with the exception of Santee which will be in-person only.

Please forward items you would like us to include on the agenda prior to May 15th.

Download the document then click on the link for the schedule of dates, locations and Zoom links. [Click here to download the schedule.](#)



**Clients Served:**  
**41,922**  
**As of March 31, 2024**

This is an increase of 2,092 since July 1, 2023.

## The Lucky Few Live Podcast Event!



SDRC was LIVE with the [Lucky Few Podcast](#) on March 8th.

“The opportunity to cover a San Diego Regional Center outreach table at **The Lucky Few Live Podcast** was unique and amazing.

This event, which was in partnership with Gigi’s Playhouse housed other vendors, community members, listeners, and individuals who emphasize the worth and shift the narrative for people with Down Syndrome.

I had the opportunity to share our mission and services as well as gain knowledge on community needs, changes, and other available resources to continue serving our families.”

- Flor Burciaga

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## Randy DeLeon Service Coordinator, Unit 10



### How long have you been employed at the regional center and what do you do?

I have been employed with SDRC for 16 years as of this April. For the last 14 years, I have been the liaison to the mental health court and the liaison to Porterville Developmental Center in central California. My caseload consists of clients who are forensically involved and have had their competency to stand trial questioned.

### Why did you get into this business?

Before joining the regional center, I worked for Adult Protective Services with the County of Fresno. I learned about the regional center through Adult Protective Services. When I decided to move back to San Diego, SDRC was hiring - I'm still here 16 years later.

### Tell us about one of your best days at work.

Every day is my best day at work because I work with some awesome people in Units 10 and 48. I'm also blessed to have great leadership with my program manager, Zee, and the assistant director for residential, Shelly who have made unit 10 the best I have ever seen. I'm truly amazed at how strong and supportive leadership can make a difficult job seem so much easier. Now that unit 10 has been combined with part of clinical and residential development, the clients that we are placing back into the community will have a stronger chance of having a successful transition.

### Where were you born and raised and how many siblings are in your family?

I'm the youngest of six and was born on the Fourth of July in a small rural community in central California named Kingsburg. I grew up in a nearby town named Reedley and lived there until I came to San Diego to attend SDSU.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

Anyone who truly knows me knows that my spare time is reserved for thrifting. I've been selling on eBay for over 20 years - it's like therapy.

### What is one of your greatest accomplishments?

My plan is to retire in Mexico, so after talking about it for years I finally found a house near the beach in a small coastal community north of Rosarito Beach. It was the best decision I ever made. I now spend my weekends at my local bar and watch the sunset with my margarita. I spend my weekdays in San Diego and my weekends in Mexico.

### What is the most important characteristic of a good leader?

I have worked with some wonderful leaders at SDRC. I have found that they have a vision, and they pursue it. They are great at communicating their vision. But most of all, especially in this field of work, they have great compassion.

### Where do you hope to travel to in the next five years and why?

Two years ago, I planned to travel to Spain, but on the day of my flight, I tested positive for Covid. I'm planning on going to Spain in July. Crossing my fingers it all works out this time. I have a tour guide named Bob Edward's who will be showing me all the best places for tapas.

### What is the best advice you ever received?

The best advice I ever received was from the first judge I worked with in the mental health court named Judge Frederick Maguire. One day, he pulled me aside and told me to never forget who the victim is. I use those words still to this day as a guide when difficult decisions need to be made.

### Tell us one thing people would be surprised to know about you.

October of 2023 was my 5th anniversary of being **cancer free!** I'm down a kidney, but I'm still enjoying life.



# LEADING THE CHARGE™

Are you feeling inspired after last week's Leading the Charge conference? Over 400 familiar faces shared their expertise and experience as individuals with developmental disabilities and those who advocate and provide support. The event brought a renewed passion to support our amazing community.



Viri Salgado, You Rock! Congratulations on an award well deserved... The LTC Award!



# Upcoming Client Services Forums

## JUNE

Monday, June 26th  
Eastlake at 8:30 a.m.  
National City at 11:00 a.m.  
Santee at 2:00 p.m. (lunchroom)

Tuesday, June 27th  
Carmel Mountain at 12:30 p.m.  
Carlsbad at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday June 28th  
Main 8:30 a.m. (Boardroom)

Thursday, June 29th  
Imperial at 2:30 p.m.

## OCTOBER

Monday, October 2nd  
Eastlake 8:30 a.m.  
National City 10:30 a.m.  
Santee 1:30 p.m. (lunchroom)

Tuesday, October 3rd  
Main 1:00 p.m. (Boardroom)

Wednesday, October 4th  
Carlsbad 10:30 a.m.  
Carmel Mountain 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 5th  
Imperial 10:00 a.m.

These meetings will be held in the same manner as the last round – Kate and Mark will be the only management staff present.

Attendance will be in-person only and you are welcome to attend at any of the locations in order to better fit your schedule.

# Calling ALL Staff!



Share your mission moment, a client success story, or a tribute from a family member, and we'll put you in the paper.

Please send your story to  
[communications@sdrc.org](mailto:communications@sdrc.org)



## March Tributes

### Congratulations to Our Recognized Staff!

Nyamal Wal  
Daniela (Dani) Orozco  
Kathi Rubio  
Camille Tewalt  
Rachel Hefler  
Alyssa Delagnes



### RECOGNIZE SOMEONE TODAY!

Each tribute will be thrown into a monthly drawing for a chance to win an SDRC t-shirt and water bottle or a \$30 stipend! We'll draw 10% of each month's entries. Winners will be announced via email.

### Congratulations March drawing winners:

Nyamal Wal  
Rachel Hefler  
Alyssa Delagnes



**Don't Forget...** You can nominate multiple people every month!

## Birthdays

### April 1

Avril Lo[ez Gonzalez

### April 2

Lourdes Delatorre

Caitlynn Peregoy

Athena Chua

### April 3

Gina Berdujo

Carlos Chee

Zeltzin Marquis

### April 4

Aide Macias

### April 5

Emilia Martinez-Lopez

Vivienne Dimalanta

Joseph Valdes

### April 7

Alice Aumack

Stephanie Figueroa

### April 8

Dina Al-Sennawi

Kathy Vang

### April 9

Gicela Naranjo

Gwendolyn Noll

Jose Romero

Reyna Zuniga

### April 10

Amanda Cason

### April 11

Wyatt Guina

Ivett Loaiza

Alynah Oviedo

### April 12

Laura Backe

Jazmine Hepburn

Amanda Maksim

### April 13

Marisol Aguilar

Samantha Ortiz

Krisdel Padilla Ramirez

### April 14

Lupe Van Veghel

Alexis Garcia

### April 15

Liliana Calderon

Paula Hess

Michelle Wright

### April 16

Elizabeth Marshall

Lily Kokami

### April 17

Alfredo Navarro

Karina Viveros Jimenez

### April 19

Jeff Lee

### April 20

Delia Camacho

Jazmine Hamme

Kacie Nguyen

Jewel Smith-Price

### April 21

Folashade Akintunde

Kimberly Steitz

### April 22

Raquel Zaragoza

Yesenia Rodriguez

### April 23

Claudia Alvarado

Jeffrey Nelson

Johanna Pacheco

Viridana Montes

### April 24

Briana Barajas

Joviaan Rodriguez

Sheryl Ann Testado

Shannon Limbo

### April 27

Naty Ahumada

Jamie Barea

### April 28

Emily Aguirre-Mendez

Daniel Miles

### April 29

Gina Gonzalez

Roberto Grijalva

### April 30

Becky Arnold

Kristal Howell-Rossow

Alez Perez

Kierstein Pfaltzgraff

## Anniversaries

### 1 Year

Daniel Miles

Joseph Valdes

Alynah Oviedo

Monica Fox

Michelle Wright

Rubi Mena

Kristen Jensen

Dina Al-Sennawi

Megan Winje

Samantha Ortiz

Conor Lloyd

Shannon Limbo

Edrika Dave

Amie Chambers

Magaly Abarca

### 5 Years

Jose Gonzalez

Alfredo Navaarro

Claudia Perez

Naty Ahumada

### 15 Years

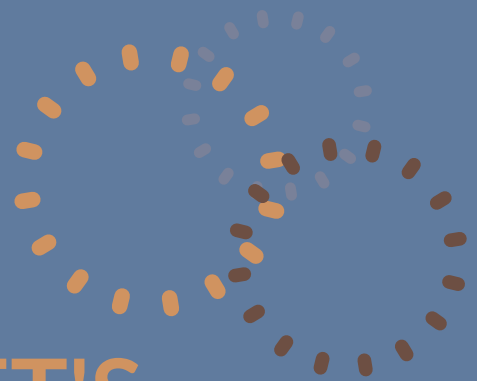
Wenddy Baca

### 25 YEARS

Galo Vargas

Deborah Hodge

Jorge Moreno



LET'S

Celebrate





Congratulations Team Kristal, Iris, and Stephanie!



Congratulations, Natalie!



## Crazy Sock Day

Thank you to everyone who participated in the special day to honor Down Syndrome Awareness!

Take a minute to learn more about Down Syndrome Awareness Day and why socks: [Home - World Down Syndrome Day](#).

# A Mission Moment

Way to go  
Jessica Orozco-Ochoa!



Hello,  
I am unsure who to reach out to, however I want you to know, that our family has had the BEST Service Coordinator, Jessica Orozco-Ochoa. We have been so fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with the San Diego Regional Center over the past five years. We absolutely adore Jessica. She has been so responsive, kind, personable, pleasant, thoughtful, and just an overall amazing helper to our family. She has set the bar high for others in the same position. We were, and still are devastated to hear that our case will be transferred soon, due to the ever-changing demographics of the service areas. We are hopeful that we will have a Service Coordinator as wonderful as Jessica but are fearful that she has reset the standard of care. Please acknowledge her for her efforts. SDRC is lucky to employ her and our family has been so fortunate to have had a chance to work with her.

With much gratitude and appreciation, The Medina's

## UPDATE Your Email Signature

Follow the information for formatting:

**Include** San Diego Regional Center under your title.

**You may also add** pronouns, unit #, fax #, degree (BA, MA, etc.)

**Refrain from posting** work hours, days you're not in the office, poems, quotes, links to other sites, and voicemail instructions.

**Remove the Pride logo.** A new version will be available to use during Pride month.

**Make sure all the links work!**

### HOW TO UPDATE:

1. In Outlook, click on **File** in the far left corner
2. Select **Options** from the left blue column
3. Select **Mail** (under General)
4. Under the **Compose Messages** section, select **Signatures**
5. Choose **any font style for your name** that suits you
6. Use Calibri Light, 11 points, for all SDRC information
7. Use Calibri Light, 10 points, for the mission statement
8. Copy the SDRC Join Our Team and social media icons

### EXAMPLE

**Name**  
Title  
San Diego Regional Center  
Phone number  
Your.Email@sdrc.org



Mission statement optional



# LEAP

Learning & Education for All Professionals

LEAP is where you access mandatory training and professional development courses.

LEAP manages your learning history and provides a transcript with classes taken and your level of competency attained. Each person can chart their learning path to achieve professional development goals.

## The Benefits of Online Training

- Convenient
- Self-paced
- Competency-based
- Relevant topics applicable to each person's career path
- Interactive and dynamic content
- Up-to-date courses

LEAP also offers reporting tools to help management monitor their team's progress.

## NEW Staff Training:

### SDP 1: Staff Introduction to Self-Determination

Basic introduction to the Self-Determination Program.

### SDP 2: Staff Introduction to Individual Budgets in Self-Determination

Basic introduction to Self-Determination Individual Budgets.

## Don't have a LEAP account?

New employees must register. If you have recently changed your name please log in using your existing account and update the information on your profile to reflect the new name/email.

Create your LEAP account [HERE!](#)



## MANDATORY Staff Training

All SDRC staff are required to complete the following trainings (*new employees must complete within the first six months of employment*).

**Harassment Free Workplace** – online (completion required every 2-years) - [Employee](#) / [Manager](#)

**Introduction to the Regional Center System** – available online: [Enroll HERE](#)

**Working From Home: Security** – available online: [Enroll HERE](#)

**Safety in the Workplace** – online: [Enroll HERE](#)

**Workplace Etiquette** – online: [Enroll HERE](#)

**SDRC Emergency Action and Fire Prevention Plan** – available online and in-person : [Enroll HERE](#)

**Person Centered Thinking** – available in-person: Enrollemnt opportunities will be announced when it becomes available.

**What You Need to Know About COVID-19** – available online: [enroll HERE](#)

**Privacy and Security Series** - online: [enroll HERE](#)

If you have taken the **New Normal and Cyber Security Fundamentals training**, you do **not** need to complete the new Privacy and Security Series training.

If you have **attempted to complete** the New Normal and Cyber Security Fundamentals training, but received errors that it was unavailable, **you must complete Privacy and Security Series**



# April Events

**National Minority Health Fair**  
Wed, April 3rd 10 AM - 3 PM  
Educational Cultural Complex

**Adult Education Career/Resource Fair**  
Wed, April 4th 11 AM  
SUHSD

**SDHSD Resource Fair**  
Thurs, April 11th 4:30 - 6 PM  
Mira Costa Community College

**43rd Annual Children's Fair**  
Sat, April 13th 10 AM - 12 PM  
Bucklin Park, El Centro

**Children's Services Transition Planning**  
Wed, April 17th 4 - 6:30 PM  
El Cajon Medical Therapy Unit

**Encinitas Union High School Resource Fair**  
Thurs, April 25th 11 AM - 1 PM  
Ocean Knoll Elementary

**IEP Day**  
Sat, April 27th 8 AM - 4 PM  
Hilton Double Tree at Hazard Center Way



**[Nominate an individual on your caseload!](#)**



## Save the Date!

**SAT, April 27, 2024**  
**8:00 am - 4:00 pm keynote & workshops**

Involved Exceptional Parents Day is a unique one-day conference and resource fair in San Diego, CA. It is designed for parents, caregivers, educators, and service providers of children with disabilities. Workshops address early childhood and school-age support, transition, and adult programs & services.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER -- LORA KELLER**  
This year's Keynote Speaker is Lora Keller. Parent, Advocate, and Changemaker, Ms. Keller exemplifies a parent who has turned her passion and advocacy into action, changing life outcomes for her son and the disability community.

SDRC Vendor # PY2843

  
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