

ALTA CONNECTIONS

The Quarterly Client, Service Provider, and Staff Update Newsletter



More on our featured artist
Bitah Baharestani pg.8

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Executive Director Lori Banales

The second quarter of the year has been chock-full of advocacy, outreach and celebration as the end of fiscal year 23/24 ended. On June 22nd, the Governor's office announced a Budget deal had been reached with legislative leadership. In part, the agreement reflects one of our system's major advocacy efforts related to the provider rate implementation. The agreement states that the implementation of increased provider pay will be delayed by six months to January 1, 2025. This is a change from what was proposed in the Governor's January budget and May revise which stated that the delay in rate implementation would push out to July 1, 2025. Leading to this point, our entire community, as well as the collective statewide community, lobbied the legislature to stand beside individuals with developmental disabilities to reverse the governor's proposal. These efforts played out at Grassroots Day in April, budget hearings and in rallies throughout the state. In Sacramento, the voices of our community were heard loudly and proudly as several hundred marchers convened on the Capitol's East lawn to advocate for services. Ultimately, these efforts were heard and a compromise to the full delay was reached.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

ACRC IS HOSTING QUARTERLY VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETINGS - AUGUST 7TH AND NOVEMBER 6TH - 11AM-12PM

PLEASE NOTE: THE INTENT OF THE COMMUNITY MEETING IS TO SHARE UPDATES ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION AND TO ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITY. THIS IS NOT A SPACE FOR CLIENT SPECIFIC ISSUES. THOSE DISCUSSION ARE WELCOMED AT THE PLANNING TEAM LEVEL OR IN A ONE ON ONE CONVERSATION. THANK YOU FOR UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO PRESERVE CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT [HTTPS://WWW.ALTAREGIONAL.ORG/CALENDAR](https://www.altaregional.org/calendar) TO GET THE LINK. NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - CONT.

Additionally, Trailer Bill Language (TBL) has been printed and the major provisions include:

1. A statutory requirement for the development of the Master Plan for Developmental Services;
2. Implementation of the final phase of the rate models 1/1/25;
3. Allowance for remote IPP/IFSP meetings if the individual has been seen in-person in the last 12 months for IPPs and 6 months for IFSPs;
4. Using statistical practices to more efficiently complete provider audits;
5. Elimination of the Family Cost Participation and Annual Family Program Fees;
6. Changing the timing of assessments for children who are provisionally eligible; and,
7. Updating social recreation statutes to include a requirement for identification of a RC contact to DDS and training for some staff.

Other areas of celebration and advocacy surrounded activities supporting Pride Month. ACRC marched in our second Pride Parade in downtown Sacramento. The number of agency marchers doubled this year, and the goodwill and spirit of the day was embraced both by those who marched and by those who cheered from the sidelines.

ACRC was honored to support the movie screening of Being Michelle, alongside the California Policy Center on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and STEP, at the historic Crest Theater. The documentary film was a testimony to the perseverance and strength of the human spirit. A truly moving film that I highly recommend seeing.

As you read through this edition of Alta Connections, you will see that we hosted another Microenterprise Fair, another job fair in Sutter County to promote the workforce of our providers, participated in public testimony across El Dorado County and Folsom City to support a fully inclusive Community for Health and Independence project with AKT Development. We continued this advocacy and support at the 50th Anniversary Gala for the California Commission on Aging, where this community model was spotlighted. Staying involved and connected with our stakeholders has synergized our presence and impact across our ten counties. We are grateful for the opportunities we have to show up for those we have the privilege to serve.



Pictured here are ACRC Board Member Jackie Armstrong and Lori Banales speaking at the May Day Rally held by the Capital Coalition. For full budget information you can visit: <https://arcanet.org/about-arca/legislation/2024-25/>

OUTREACH

Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) is committed to participating in community events that provide resources, opportunities to connect with diverse cultures, and to commune with clients and families of the regional center. Check out photos from some of the events we have participated in from April - June.

If you are interested in community events, please visit our calendar at <https://www.altaregional.org/events-calendar>. If you are an event organizer and are interested in having ACRC participate in an outreach event, contact Shamir Griffin, Cultural Diversity Specialist by email at sgriffin@altaregional.org.



**Juneteenth Celebration
in Yolo County**



El Día del Niño



Art-Tism



**WeEmbrace Disability
Resource Fair**



**Autism Acceptance
Day**



**Families for Early
Autism Treatment Walk**



Slavic Festival Yarmarka



**Art on the
Spectrum**

ACRC CO-SPONSORS BEING MICHELLE SCREENING AND PARTICIPATES IN PANEL DISCUSSION



The California Policy Center on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities hosted a screening for Being Michelle at the Crest Theatre in Sacramento, Lori Banales provided opening remarks and Jordan Eller participated in a panel discussing regional center supports for incarcerated clients. Our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist Michael Mercado helped plan the event.

BEING MICHELLE is an award-winning feature-length documentary film about a deaf woman with autism who survived incarceration and abuse and now uses her artwork to depict the trauma she survived and heal from her past.



DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING VENDOR FORUM

ACRC recently held a forum for all vendors who currently serve or are interested in serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community to cross collaborate resources and learn how to expand to support the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

<https://www.altaregional.org/deaf-and-hard-hearing-information>



CLINICAL CORNER

MEET OUR SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST, MICHELE MATSUMOTO

Michele Matsumoto is the staff Speech Language Pathologist at ACRC. She has been a member of the clinical team since 2019. Her role is largely focused on supporting Service Coordinators in the Early Start Program by providing clinical consultations, trainings, and evaluations. She implemented a learning module on early communication from birth to 12 months that validates the evidence that speech therapy encompasses more than just late talking. This supports the service coordinator’s responsiveness to the concerns of caregivers prior to the typical acquisition of first words at around 12 months of age.

Michele has been instrumental in the development of service standards for early intervention feeding therapy which underscores the professional training and clinical expertise of ACRC’s vendored feeding therapists while maintaining appropriate safeguards. She is acutely aware of the need to expand access to services for Early Start families and helps to ensure that the clinical components of new programs align with best practice.



Early Intervention holds a special place in Michele’s heart and practice. Having the opportunity to meet and serve ACRC’s youngest clients and their families is impactful, hopeful, and challenging. In the midst of the joyfulness that is a natural part of interacting with toddlers, there are often caregivers who are overwhelmed and worried. Listening with compassion and acting with kindness reinforces the belief that every child can learn and grow. Michele is invested in learning about people and their unique stories, sharing knowledge, and enabling others to gain competence and confidence is their important roles in serving ACRC clients and their families.

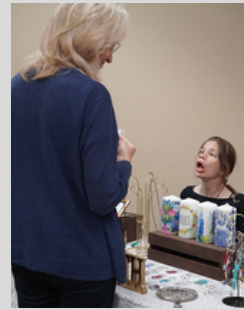
DISABILITY HOUSING ALLIANCE AND ACRC ADVOCATE FOR COMMUNITY FOR HEALTH AND INDEPENDENCE



On April 25, 2024, AKT Development presented their vision for the Community for Health and Independence to the Folsom City Council and the El Dorado Board of Supervisors. Speakers in support from ACRC included Executive Director Lori Banales, Client Advocate Reyva Johnson and Director of Community Services John Decker. Also pictured here is Kim Zehring from the Disability Housing Alliance discussing her interest in this development that will partner with UC Davis to create a new housing community to support the health of those that are aging and those with disabilities. <https://sites.google.com/view/disability-housing-alliance/home>

ACRC HOSTS MICROENTERPRISE FAIR

ACRC happily supports the incredibly talented artists and artisans served by the regional center by hosting Microenterprise Fairs. These well attended events support our regional center's strategic plan focus area of employment. You can learn more about Microenterprises here: <https://rula.disabilityrightsca.org/rula-book/chapter-9-community-participation-work-day-and-leisure-activities/could-i-be-self-employed-in-my-own-business/>



DSP COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS WITH SUTTER COUNTY ONE STOP FOR A JOB FAIR IN YUBA CITY AND LAUNCHES SOCIAL MEDIA

ACRC continues to implement our DSP Collaborative initiative partnering with Valley Mountain Regional Center to offer local job fairs and a free job board available only for regional center service providers. We also launched our social media accounts. <https://dspcollaborative.org/>. Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61558627656942>



ACRC WALKS IN SACRAMENTO PRIDE PARADE

We participated in the Sacramento Pride Parade on June 9, marching alongside staff, clients, family, and members of the community! This is an event we look forward to and have really enjoyed the last two years.



A MESSAGE FROM THE SIERRA COLLEGE LIFE PROJECT

The LIFE Project's contract with DDS comes to a close on June 30th. Our efforts over the past 15 months have been enlightening and productive. The materials produced by this project are being added to a public Google folder. Please view, bookmark, and share these resources.

A succession plan has been developed (available in the Google folder), incorporating key insights from the project, on what can be done to improve the communication, coordination, and integration of service providers, employers, and parents to improve the effective of employment and training services for individuals with disabilities (especially I/DD), to find and succeed in well-paying jobs. Time will tell whether the efforts of the Succession Planning Team will be able to continue and expand upon what has been started by the LIFE Project efforts.

Regardless of outcome, we on the LIFE Project Team would like to express our gratitude to Sierra College, especially Amy Shultz and Lindsay Kerr, and to Alta California Regional Center, especially John Decker and Carly Shearer, for their support and guidance. Take care.

Project LIFE Team: Rick Larkey, Amanda Reynaud, and Michelle Alford-Williams.



FEATURED ARTIST PROFILE - BITA BAHARESTANI

Bitah Baharestani has been attending Progressive Employment Concepts for 31 years (since 1993). A great nature lover, Bitah often depicts landscapes and floral scenes in her paintings. Art is a passion she shares with her mom and draws inspiration for some of her works through their travels together in Europe and the United States. Her art is also transferred onto tote bags, cards, and phone cases.



Bitah's paintings are often completed in watercolor, acrylic and pastel. Her paintings have great texture, color, and variety. Her works have been shown in art exhibitions in many places throughout the Greater Sacramento area. Painting fills her sense of accomplishment and integrity and has proven a productive way for translating inner vision to outer reality.

If you are interested in purchasing any of Bitah's variety of artworks, please feel free to check out 'Bitah Designs' Etsy or Facebook pages:

Etsy - <https://www.etsy.com/shop/BitahDesigns>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/BitahDesigns/>

Or you can also contact Program Director Judy Odipo at judyodipo@progressiveemployment.org

