



ALTA CONNECTIONS

The Quarterly Client, Service Provider, and Staff Update Newsletter



ACRC's new Sacramento office

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Executive Director Lori Banales

Have you heard the news? Alta California Regional Center's (ACRC's) Sacramento office is relocating to Natomas in March 2025. We will occupy a portion of the Centene Campus located at 4151 Commerce Way, Sacramento, CA 95834. As our organization grows, serving 31,000 individuals across ten northern California counties, so too, does our need to relocate our headquarters to accommodate our staff and community events. After 14 years at Harvard Park, we look forward to welcoming over 550 team members to the Centene campus. ACRC is situated in the State Capitol and as such, we have the unique opportunity to host statewide meetings and activities. This location offers a full array of local amenities to support those functions.

In addition to statewide meetings, ACRC supports a variety of other functions and meetings, including vendor resource fairs, client micro-enterprise promotions, community trainings, and a long-standing holiday tradition, Santa Day, which we have expanded to include customs and celebrations across cultures.

Our new facilities will be a beautiful space to welcome our staff and the public. We are excited to invite you all into our new space!

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ANNOUNCEMENT

ACRC IS HOSTING QUARTERLY VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETINGS - 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 discussions 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> to get the link. No registration required.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - CONT.

While preparing for this move, we continue to embrace the important work of supporting individuals with developmental disabilities. We are attracting great candidates to join our team so that we can continue to bring caseload numbers down to facilitate relationship building and person-centered planning with those we serve. Over the past twelve months, we have hired 208 staff. We are committed to recruitment and retention strategies to grow a happy and supported workforce.

There are several initiatives that we are promoting currently: Person-Centered Planning workshops and training; Supported Decision-Making workshops and training; Community Education workshops; DSP Collaborative; and Coordinated Future Planning, to list a few. ACRC is proud to share that our work on Coordinated Future Planning (aka, Caregiver Succession Planning) has been recognized by the legislature and a bill (AB 3291) currently awaits the action of the Governor to sign or veto by September 30th. I am hopeful that when this newsletter drops in October, that we are able to state the bill was supported. Regardless of the outcome, our community can be assured that our work in this area will continue.

As we lean into Fall, remember to look through our community calendar which is posted on our website <https://www.altaregional.org/events-calendar> to learn what's happening in our area.

ACRC HOSTS SOUTH KOREAN COLLEGE STUDENT TOUR

We had the pleasure of hosting students on tour from Inje University Department of Special Education. They met with staff from ACRC and took a tour of Meristem in Carmichael in time to pick some fresh vegetables. ACRC loves sharing the amazing developmental disability service system in California to visitors.



OUTREACH

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 July - September.

If you are interested in community events, please visit our website 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.



**Southside Park
Play Date by
Access Leisure**



**Día de la
Familia**



**UC Davis Summer
Institute on
Neurodevelopmental
Disabilities**



**Next Level Anime by
Hmong Youth and
Parents United**



**Disability Pride
Resource Fair**



**Shingle Springs
Tribal TANF**



**Local Aging and
Disability Friendly Action
Plan by Resources for
Independent Living**

UPDATE ON SOCIAL RECREATION SERVICES



Social Recreational Services were restored in 2021, and ACRC continues to increase the number of vendors and Financial Management Services agencies to offer participant directed services. This helps providers offer services with an efficient process for payment.

ACRC is committed to promoting awareness to children and adults, promoting in communities of color, and to non-English speaking communities! Social recreational services are available and may be funded by ACRC.

We have conducted training sessions for Service Coordinators (SCs) and the community at large. Training materials are posted on our website and can be accessed in multiple languages: <https://www.altaregional.org/post/social-recreation-activities-camp-and-non-medical-therapies-restored>

MEETING OUR MISSION



On Thursday, July 25th, Mr. and Mrs. Calanchini, proud parents of Nina, attended our Board Meeting to share how one of our incredible SCs, Tiffany Nunez, positively impacted the life of their daughter and how the social recreation services she participates in benefit Nina.

MEET KRISTINE GAMBERG, EDUCATION SUPPORT MANAGER!



Kristine collaborates closely with educational partners across our 10-county catchment area. Her team conducts weekly education consultation clinics and monthly education workshops for SCs. Kristine identifies and bridges gaps for children and families transitioning from IDEA Part C to Part B services, and students following their secondary school completion.

Kristine has over twenty years of experience in education. She worked for Sacramento City Unified School District as a special educator and as a program specialist. She brings in-depth knowledge of special education laws and policies to ACRC.

ACRC hosts quarterly community education workshops. Please join us!
[Special Education - Alta California Regional Center](#)

STAFF SPOTLIGHT BONNIE DIBBLE-CIUDAD

Bonnie Dibble-Ciudad started her ACRC journey in 2019. For the last 5, almost 6 years she has been advocating for families in Early Intervention. Before she got her start at ACRC she received her bachelor's degree in psychology from UC Davis and worked in the foster care system facilitating multidisciplinary team meetings. During this time she was introduced to the regional center and learned very quickly what a great resource it was for the families she was serving.

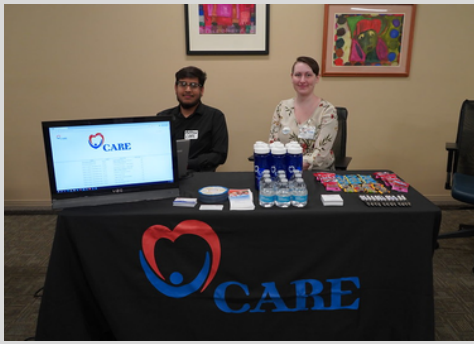


Bonnie consistently goes above and beyond for every single one of the clients on her caseload, making sure they know they are heard and supported. Her favorite part about her job is advocating for families who do not speak English or are new to the county, and seeing the babies of course is a bonus! Bonnie's number one priority is to make sure that each family is getting equal access to resources and care throughout many of the systems we work with. Bonnie is originally from Peru and immigrated to the United States in 2011, She was raised in a multigeneration household and with this background she is aware of the unique differences we have in accessing services here in the United States.

In her free time Bonnie loves to read or listen to a good audiobook. She enjoys painting watercolors and playing with her 3-year-old daughter, Bella. Bonnie started fostering in 2019 and in 2020 Bella came to Bonnie and her husband's home at just 3 weeks old, they were able to finalize her adoption in 2022 and she is the best! Right now, Bonnie is finishing up her Masters degree in Child and Adolescent psychology while enjoying time with her family and 2 dogs!

ACRC HOSTS VENDOR FAIRS

On August 2024, we welcomed service providers offering Early Intervention Services and behavioral services for vendor fairs at our Harvard office. Thank you to the organizers and service providers that came out.



CLINICAL CORNER



ACRC receives over 300 intake applications per month to assess for regional center eligibility. This increase has and continues to challenge our internal capacity to process the numbers within the required timelines. Working within a defined operations budget, we continue to increase our clinical resources through partnerships in the community and applaud our Community Services Department for their quick onboarding of vendored psychologists who are willing to expand their practices to include regional center comprehensive evaluations.

These expansion efforts are ongoing as we continue to recruit licensed clinical psychologists who have experience with performing psychological evaluations addressing the question of Intellectual Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Visit <https://www.altaregional.org/post/psychologists-evaluations> for more information and a link to access our Request for Proposal which details how to move forward in contracting with us for this purpose. We welcome your partnership to assist us in providing timely assessment to our applicants.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICE COORDINATOR TRAINING



ACRC held our quarterly Facility Liaison training on August 12, 2024 for our SCs, Liaison Support Coordinators, and Community Services & Supports Specialists who all are involved in supporting clients residing in residential care homes and the residential providers. The Facility Liaison training is an ongoing quarterly training where ACRC covers a variety of topics that may include quality assurance monitoring, implementation of new services and/or changes, resources, and many other items. We occasionally invite our community partners to present and educate our staff on their agency's role and responsibilities and how we can best partner to support clients and providers.

For our August quarterly training, we had Long Term Care Ombudsman join our training to speak on their role in supporting clients in residential care homes and how we best partner when a need arises. There was a tremendous amount of good information shared with our staff which provided clear direction on when Ombudsmans can help. This was not only a great opportunity to educate our staff but also to connect and further build our partnership.

ACRC SUPPORTING LOCAL STUDENT'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT



This summer, Reyva Johnson (in orange), ACRC Client Advocate, partnered with Sacramento City Unified School District's (SCUSD) College and Career Readiness Office, SMUD, PilotCity, and several SCUSD high school career technical education programs. Reyva delivered person-centered thinking curriculum and activities to students to prepare them for the workforce. Students created one-page descriptions to guide them in thinking about qualities they have to offer to employers and what they are looking for in an employer. Reyva's passion for working with transition-age youth shines through in her work with students.

ON MY OWN LAUNCHES ROOMMATE MATCHING DATABASE WITH HCBS GRANT FUNDING



For years, the ACRC vendor community has focused on housing issues. With rising rents and stringent rental qualifications, securing housing independently is challenging, especially for adults with disabilities. Finding a compatible roommate adds another layer of difficulty due to limited access to community networks.

To tackle this issue, On My Own Independent Living Services (OMO) sought feedback from people with disabilities and various community groups on the concept of a roommate matching system. Utilizing the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) funds, OMO created a user-friendly roommate matching platform called OOMM. The platform, accessible on desktop and mobile devices, allows users to create a safe and secure profile by answering a few simple questions. Users can then view potential roommate matches, with higher percentage matches indicating greater compatibility. The platform also features a chat option for engaging with potential roommates, and a section for housing alerts and rental opportunities. The goal of OOMM is to allow people with disabilities a greater opportunity for connection to potential roommates which ultimately will help them to achieve their goal of living independently.

For more information, contact Michelle Ramirez, CEO, at oomm@onmyown-web.com, and visit <https://onmyown-web.com/oomm-roommate-matching-service/> to watch an informational video about the program.

DSP COLLABORATIVE LAUNCHES NEW SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES AND WEBSITE



We are excited to announce the launch of our official Facebook and Instagram pages, alongside a newly redesigned dspcollaborative.org! These new platforms will help us better connect with our community and offering inspiring stories and important announcements. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay informed, share your experiences, and join the conversation.

Our revamped website now features a News & Events page so you can stay updated on current events, including upcoming DICE job fairs. We are also proud to introduce DSP Stories, a new section where current professionals share their experiences and the reasons they love their work. These stories highlight the passion and dedication of DSPs and aim to inspire all who visit.

Additionally, the website now has increased capacity for future expansion, ensuring we can continue to grow and provide even more resources to DSPs across the state.

We invite you to explore the new dspcollaborative.org and connect with us on social media. Thank you for being an essential part of the DSP Collaborative.



 DSPCollaborative  @dspcollaborative2024

INFANT TODDLER DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT TRAINING



On August 2nd the Early Start Units conducted an Infant Toddler Developmental Assessment (IDA) in person training at ACRC for new staff and for seasoned staff to practice administering and scoring the IDA. The IDA is an assessment tool that Early Start SCs use to measure an infant and toddlers gross motor skills, fine motor skills, language, cognitive skills and self-help skills and gives staff an idea of additional assessments that may need to occur in order to determine eligibility for the Early Start Program. This screening is used for infants and toddlers ages birth to three years of age. The person administering the assessment will use standardized toys from the IDA kit to do a hands on screening with the client as well as ask parents interview questions.

For this training we had 4 staff at ACRC who offered to bring in their adorable infants and toddlers for us to practice, play and learn. This adorable 7-month-old baby girl is sweet Kali, daughter of Katie Robert, Client Services Manager at Alta. A special thanks to Kristen Sorabji, SC, Jose Trujillo, lead SC and Emily Everett for administering the IDA and for being present to help staff learn how to score the IDA and to answer questions. It was a wonderful day of learning and fun!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT VANESSA MORENO



Vanessa began her career path in 2016 supporting Neurodiverse individuals within their home environment, implementing applied behavior analysis techniques as an adaptive skills trainer. As an adaptive skills trainer, Vanessa appreciated the opportunity to make valuable connections with the individuals that she supported and their families and helping them make those monumental gains in their life. During her time in the ABA field, Vanessa had the opportunity and privilege to interact with ACRC SCs. Vanessa made the decision to change her career, which would in turn have a greater impact on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Vanessa found the profession of social work aligned with her professional goals which led her to a career with ACRC in 2017.

In her role as a SC supporting transition age and adult clients, Vanessa has found it incredibly rewarding to be able to make connections with clients, as well as their families, and assist them with accessing services which allow them to be integrated in their community. As a SC, Vanessa truly values the importance of understanding the individual needs of the clients on her caseload, and their families, as well as their long-term goals and service needs. Vanessa enjoys being able to assist them with accessing services and resources in the community which they reside in and being able to see the positive outcomes those beneficial services have on their lives. In addition, as a bilingual SC, Vanessa values the importance of having the opportunity to support Spanish speaking families and making those connections, both linguistically and culturally, as well as helping them understand the various services and the regional center system.

FEATURED ARTIST ASPEN BLACK

Aspen Black has been attending Work of Art Southside Unlimited located in Folsom for two months. Aspen's aesthetic is described as mystical and she enjoys creating things that help others. For example, Aspen has created "worry slugs" which are ceramic shaped slugs with a thumb-sized indentation on the bottom. These worry slugs are a wonderful fidgets tool to help relieve anxiety and are small enough to fit in pockets. She creates different sizes and colors. Aspen also enjoys creating crystal bracelets and necklaces.

If you are interested in purchasing any of Aspen's variety of artworks or jewelry, please feel free to check out: Work of Art – College Greens Email: workofart@southsideunlimited.com [@woa_ceramics](https://www.facebook.com/woa_ceramics)
[Work of Art Studios | Sacramento CA | Facebook](#)

