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Plugged In

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Connecting Santa Barbara County with Essential Developmental DisABILITY News

alpha
RESOURCE CENTER
OF SANTA BARBARA

4501 Cathedral Oaks Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

toll free 1 (877) 414-6227
voice (805) 683-2145
facsimile (805) 967-3647
www.alphasb.org



*Serving the Santa Barbara
Community since 1953.*



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*Plugged In is a free
publication that is
distributed bimonthly
from Alpha Resource Center.*

We WON!!! 200 fruit trees for Alpha!

As many of you already know, Alpha won the Dreyers Corporation "Communities Take Root" (<http://www.communitiestakeroot.com/>) contest!! As a result, we will be receiving 200 fruit trees which we will use to provide food for our participants, as well as share the crops with the community.

We want to extend a huge THANK YOU to those of you that voted so diligently. We are thrilled by the outpouring of support we received in reaction to this contest. Numerous people emailed us saying that they were voting daily, passing it on to their friends and family, and posting it on their facebook accounts. Thank you to everyone for voting and supporting Alpha through this process. We just received word that Alpha has been chosen to receive the first orchard!! Installation is scheduled for Saturday, June 12th. If you would like to volunteer that day between 11:30 and 5:00, we would love to have your help. Please contact Marisa at mbourke@alphasb.org or 683-2145 x105 for more information or to RSVP.

Once again, thank you for your support!

Executive Director:
Kimberly Olson

Editors:
Patty Moore
Amy Buesker

Translation:
Mariana Murillo
Norma Puga



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A Chapter of The Arc of the United States.



FRONT AND CENTER

Summer Camp

Every summer parents ask themselves the same question, "How are we going to keep our kids busy during the long break from school?" That question may be even more difficult to answer when your child has special needs since options can be somewhat limited. Sometimes just searching can be exhausting; so we have compiled a list that can hopefully alleviate that stress. In many cases scholarships are available. You can also contact the Santa Barbara Campership Alliance at 962-5560 for assistance, your/your child's service coordinator at TCRC for possible assistance or the Native Daughters of the Golden West Children's Foundation at 1-800-994-6349.

Day camps:

- Summer baseball camp through the Dos Pueblos Little League Challengers. June 8-10. More information at 681-9165 or www.dpllchallengers.org
- Down Syndrome Assoc. Santa Barbara County (DSASBC) Bike Camp June 14-18 at the Page Youth Center. Call 681-9165
- Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp at UCSB July 12-16. More information contact Rene Van Hoorn at 569-8999 ext.82102
- Social Group Camp for kids 6-12 with high functioning autism, PDD-NOS or Asperger's. 1482 E. Valley Rd. Call Dee Ann Barker 563-3008 for information.
- Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Adapted Programs provide 'reasonable and appropriate accommodations' for kids with special needs. Registration must be 3 weeks prior to the start of the program. More information at 564-5421 or email jthomas@SantaBarbaraCa.gov
- Happy Adventures Camp through Cornerstone House for people with disabilities ages 5-18. Camp will be held the first 3 weeks of August. More information at 680-2538 or www.cornerstonehouse.org
- Camp Wheez for kids with asthma. August 9-13. Call 681-7635

Overnight camps (located throughout California):

- Easter Seals Camp Harmon- Boulder Creek in Santa Cruz mountains www.centralcal.easterseals.com 831-684-2380 ext.107
- Camp Grizzly- deaf and hard of hearing – Grizzly Creek Ranch, Portola, CA www.norcalcenter.org 916-349-7500
- Jay Nolan Camp- 1 week inclusive camp for kids with and without disabilities- Lions Camp at Teresita Pines www.jaynolan.org 818-361-6400 ext. 107

To learn about these and other camps go to www.acacamps.org or www.specialcampsforspecialkids.com

MORE TO KNOW

Wellness with a Heart

Alpha Resource Center, in partnership with the Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles and Tri-Counties Regional Center, recently sponsored **Wellness with a Heart** at Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara. This 2 day symposium helped provide information to families, caregivers and medical professionals who care for people with intellectual disabilities. The primary goal was to provide information about the best opportunities for their optimum health and well being. Approximately 75 participants from Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles took part in activities that included a 2 hour session for Spanish speaking families, a luncheon for physicians, general information panels and break out sessions provided for specific topics of interest to smaller groups.

The symposium addressed a variety of medical, developmental and wellness issues for families that have kids with special needs such as Down syndrome, autism and other physical/cognitive conditions. Keynote speakers for the event were Brian Chicoine, M.D., and Dennis McGuire, Ph.D. co-founding directors of Adult Down Syndrome Center, Lutheran General Hospital, Illinois. Speakers for the breakout sessions included Dr. Iris Ambrocio Perez on sleep disorders, Dr. Anne Tournay on seizure disorders and Elina Manghi on adolescent & adult sexuality. The last time such an event was held in our community was 1988. However, with families desiring more information on coordinating care for their children with complex care needs and the success of the event, hopefully more opportunities for similar presentations will be held in the near future. We will keep you posted!



Circle of Life

Alpha's 7th annual "Circle of Life" luncheon was a huge success, and a joy to plan and attend. Over 400 guests, family and friends of Alpha, gathered. The energy was high as we enjoyed an hour with Alpha participants, MC Dennis Miller, and Kim Olson, Alpha's Executive Director.

Guests laughed and cried during Alpha's Performing Arts Troupe skit about how we are all essentially the same, if we can just "Imagine a World". Josh Weitzman, father of Hannah, spoke eloquently and from his heart about how having a child with Down syndrome has impacted his family. He said, "I love Hannah because she is Hannah ... and I am so blessed to hold her hand and help other people see her simply as Hannah". The Weitzman family is just one of 400 new families that Alpha's Children and Family Services serves each year. Kim told us about a gift she received from one of the founding mothers of Alpha, Edna Dahl, shortly before her death- a crystal bowl. "I saw in that bowl all her hopes and dreams for Alpha, a symbol of the abundance and generosity of others, a bowl that would be emptied and filled again."

The bowl is being filled! In one hour, we raised over \$140,000.00 for programs and services. News of growth and expansion for Alpha was announced at Circle of Life. Alpha has been chosen as a recipient of a memorial fund in honor of Ugo L. Melchiori, a well-known Santa Barbara builder and philanthropist. Alpha and the Melchiori family are collaborating to develop a portion of unused space at Alpha's Cathedral Oaks property. This project will incorporate sustainable landscape, outdoor classrooms, an additional employment program for Alpha participants, and a rental space for community events.

Thank you for your support of Alpha. Please let us know if you would like to be involved in "Circle of Life" 2011. For information please contact Marisa Bourke, Outreach Coordinator at mbourke@alphasb.org.

HAPPENINGS



ALPHA ANNUAL FAMILY BBQ

RSVP to LEE
LFAIRLEY@ALPHASB.ORG
805-683-2145, EXT. 101

THURSDAY JUNE 17, 2010
5:00-7:30 PM
4501 CATHEDRAL OAKS

—FRIENDS, FOOD, AND FUN—
COME AND RECONNECT WITH YOUR ALPHA COMMUNITY.

GAMES, PRIZES, RAFFLE
DUNK TANK AND JUMPERS
CRAFTS, MUSIC, MORE

\$10.00 MEMBERS
\$20.00 NON-MEMBERS

TRI-TIP, CHICKEN, FIXINS
CHILDREN'S MENU



DSASBC 1st Annual **BUDDY WALK** & festival

Saturday, June 19th
Chase Palm Park - Great Meadow
Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara

A celebration of all individuals in our community with Down syndrome
Live music, Games, Auction, Activities, Face painting & more...

Register online at www.dsasbc.org
or call (805) 886-4411 for more information

DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY



SAVE THE DATE—WALK ROLL & RIDE 2010!

Join us as we imagine a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect!

Student Poetry/Essay contest in the fall!

- 4th/5th/6th
- Junior High
- High School

Win cash, gift certificates and other great prizes!

More information—
contact Amy at
abuesker@alphasb.org



... Where Everyone is Treated with Dignity and Respect

Walk, Roll & Ride
2010

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

9:30 AM

Girsh Park

In partnership with the California Lemon Festival

MORE TO KNOW



“Imagine A World Award” Presented to Elephant Bar, Learningden Preschool and San Marcos High School Girls Swim Team

In early February a group of Katie’s FUNd participants joined Kim Olson, Executive Director of Alpha, in presenting Alpha’s Imagine A World Award to Elephant Bar in Goleta for the outstanding service they provide. Groups from Katie’s FUNd have been visiting Elephant Bar for the past few years to enjoy meals together and have always appreciated the atmosphere of respect that is present. In January a large group went for dinner and was greatly impressed by the service they received from their waitress Courtney. Not only did she provide great food service, she learned almost everyone’s name in the group by the end of the night and made a personal connection to the group. It was a wonderful embodiment of the idea behind the award which is to “Imagine a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect”. Courtney was proudly in attendance to receive the award along with the General Managers of Elephant Bar.

Two local schools honored with Alpha’s “Imagine a World” award

The Learningden Preschool and San Marcos High School were the May recipients of our “Imagine a World” award.

The Learningden has an educational philosophy that allows children to express and learn based on their curiosity and pace. The staff and directors support and welcome children with all abilities and talents. “We think it’s important for children to come together with people different from them. It teaches them that all people are different, but that we treat them the same,” said Karin Keleman, director. Each week, adult participants from Alpha Resource Center volunteer at the Learningden, cleaning and organizing the play yard. “Alpha’s participants are happy to be contributing to others in our community, and spend over 100 hours every month in volunteer community service. We appreciate organizations like the Learningden that embrace diversity and value inclusion.” said Kim Olson, Alpha’s Executive Director.



The San Marcos High School Girls Swim team was also awarded for their exemplary inclusion of people with disabilities by treating them with dignity and respect. Board member Lynn Rodriguez had this to say: “The coach, team, and parents have all been so supportive of Blair (Lynn’s teenage daughter, who has Down syndrome). She is held accountable for practice and events, and she is acknowledged and encouraged by all of her teammates and their families for her efforts and participation. Coach Roth has been a great mentor. He is establishing a great atmosphere of acceptance and appreciation for all the kids involved.”

**Santa Barbara Zoo Award
Presentation
Friday, May, 21, 2010
11:00 am**

**Zodos Award Presentation
Tuesday, June 1, 2010
10:00 am**

If you have a person, business, or organization you would like to nominate for Alpha’s “Imagine a World” Award, please contact Marisa at mbourke@alphasb.org.

Alpha is excited to continue recognizing community businesses and organizations with the Imagine A World Award. Next up? The Santa Barbara Zoo and Zodos Bowling and Beyond!

STRATEGIC PLAN

Alpha Resource Center Strategic Planning Survey Results 2009-10

Lisa Macker, Bernie Schaeffer, Jeff Brookshire, Board Members and Strategic Planning Committee Members and Kim Olson, Executive Director

Thank you to all who provided input to our strategic plan. Those of you that sat down for an interview, took the online survey, or mailed in your responses, your information has been so valuable.

Our next step is to establish 2, 5 and 10 year goals. We plan on having this information to the Board of Directors for their approval at their May board meeting.

Survey respondents believe that achieving financial stability and independence is the most critical issue facing Alpha Resource Center.

This priority includes, through competitive wages and benefits, the ability to hire and maintain a sufficient number of high quality staff to better meet participants and families.

In addition to financial stability, respondents identify eliminating the waiting list as the greatest unmet need.

This priority includes increased emphasis on individualized community based services through a wide array of supports and services for adults. Outreach and family support county-wide for everyone family desiring support.

Providing adult services for individuals currently on a waiting list takes clear precedence over any new services; however a work services program that includes job development and job support is also a very high priority interest.

Respondents also indicate that supported living services are either a very high priority or high priority. In addition, other services listed in the survey generated significant support, including childcare and after school activities, as well as increased advocacy services.

The need to improve Alpha's ability to build effective corporate partnerships, as suggested in the survey, may offer a clue to achieving financial stability and independence.

Respondents offer overall praise for Alpha's practices or strategies, especially providing quality direct services, family support, and inspiring supporters to become enthusiastic spokespeople for the organization.

Additional personnel devoted to agency development including fund raising is viewed as critical to achieving Alpha's staff development goals.

Furthermore, as stated previously, improved staff wages and benefits as well as additional staff needed to achieve the agency's mission are considered very high priorities.

In regard to organizational development, the goal of increased financial stability again takes precedence.

To support this aim, an advisory group of high powered community members receives very high priority followed by improved public relations.

The Capital Improvement receiving the most support is the development of open spaces on site for community recreation to generate income for Alpha Resource Center.

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UPDATE FROM ALPHA

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Replacement of the vehicle fleet and upgrading parking areas in that order also has significant support.

Respondents view a legacy group to encourage planned giving as a very high priority to support the goal of financial stability.

Opportunities for stakeholders to contribute their time and talents are also a high priority.

Summary

At present, if survey respondents had their way, the very highest priority to address would be achieving financial stability and independence to support strong and sufficient staff to provide the highest possible quality services, including increased community participation, with a primary goal to eliminate the agency's waiting list. Accordingly, respondents gave very high priority for the immediate future to:

1. Building effective corporate partnerships.
2. Additional staff devoted to agency development including fundraising.
3. Creating a high powered community advisory group.
4. Developing Alpha open space for community recreation to generate needed income.
5. Supporting formation of a legacy group to encourage planned giving.

Katie's FUNd Update

Whew! It's been another busy few months for Katie's FUNd participants. We were joined by volunteers from Arts for Humanity for a few of our Friday night events in the beginning of the year and they led us in activities from art to music and theater. Two of the highlights of our off-site schedule were Alice in Wonderland and Santa Barbara Drum Day. Drum Day was held at Chase Palm Park. There were more than 300 people in attendance playing various drums, shakers, and other rhythm instruments. It was so powerful to hear everyone playing together and a great way for the community to come together for an accessible and inclusive opportunity. We are excited to have the Dancing Drum group join us to lead us in a drumming workshop in June!



We recently returned from our 3 day camping trip at Refugio State Beach. It was a wonderful weekend filled with campfires, sandcastle building contests, and scavenger hunts. We learned how to pitch tents and make hobo stew! It was a weekend that is sure to provide happy memories for many years in the future! We are currently gearing up for our summer program in June and July! Looks like there's no slowing down for this group! For more information or to register please contact Amy at abuesker@alphasb.org or (805) 683-2145 x127.



Return Service Requested

UP CLOSE - CRUISERS SOCIAL CENTER



Cruisin' the Community

“Cruisers” is a fitting name for this social center as they are always on the move! The Cruisers are one of Alpha’s adult program’s most mobile groups and they can be found out in the community engaging in a number of different activities almost every day of the week. The staff for this group, Paul, Tina, Jill, and Rosa, have a lot of energy and it’s a good thing because they need it to keep up with this lively group!

At the time of the interview one group was just returning from a UCSB baseball game and they were filled with excitement. When asked about their favorite activities, the participants answered enthusiastically– “car wash”, “basketball”, and “swimming” were all mentioned along with bowling and working out at the YMCA. When Alpha staff, Paul, was asked about his experiences with the group he stated “People ask me how I like working with people with disabilities, but I don’t see them as disabled. I just see them as Gerald, Lorne, you know”. Keep an eye out for these Cruisers around town and say hello – if you can keep up with them that is!

