



CSLN

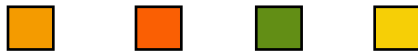
California Supported Living Network

OUR VISION

To ensure that supported living and independent living services remain a viable option for people with developmental disabilities, we envision a united group of service providers, consumers, families and members of the community speaking with one strong voice advocating for supported living and independent living services throughout California.

Advocating For The Systemic Development Of Quality Supported Living and Independent Living Services For Californians With Developmental Disabilities

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D o n n a B e t t e n c o u r t



The whitewater of the past six months has passed over and, as usual, we are left to mop up, clean up, and get back to our mission of improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities by providing them with the gift others take as a birthright - the right to live in a home of their own.

I have had the privilege of serving two terms as President of the California Supported Living Network; once in the early days after the CSLA pilot project, and again these past four years. I would like to quote an article I wrote during my first term that appeared in one of Bill Allen's wonderful periodic newsletter; these things concerned me in 1995 and they concern me now, 16 years later.



ing my first term that appeared in one of Bill Allen's wonderful periodic newsletter; these things concerned me in 1995 and they concern me now, 16 years later.

“Will supported living services continue to be provided to consumers with severe developmental disabilities, and if so, what will define the difference between Independent Living Services and Supported Living Services? Will costs dictate who will be served with supported living, and who will not? Will federal Medicaid dollars continue to flow? Is there life after CSLA?”

Clearly, when funds are short, citizens are measured for their “worthiness” and some are found not worthy of funding - the poor, the mentally ill, the undocumented, and the developmentally disabled. We find ourselves in these

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times. Cost containment measures, both in ILS and SLS services are in effect: referrals are low, least costly provider language dictates rates, eligibility criterion for SLS services are applied (i.e. he is too mentally retarded, she is too physically disabled, he has a conservator, she can't speak, he is "not ready", and she can't direct her staff). And so, after almost 20 years, supported living services in California is flatlining. The question now, as then in 1995, is whether supported living services will flourish, and whether this service will continue to support those for whom the service was intended.

I contend that supported living services is worthy of resuscitation, and it will be made clear, after the madness of the past two years has passed, that it remains a viable, cost effective support option for all persons with developmental disabilities.

It has been a pleasure to serve as President of the California Supported Living Network, both then, and now. I turn the office over to Joan Schmidt, and I know that we are in able hands. Thank you for your support over the past years.

Donna Bettencourt

President of the California Supported Living Network

12th Annual CSLN Leadership
Conference, April 19 - 20, 2012

By Joan Schmidt, Conference Coordinator



This year more than ever it's critical that those interested in preserving Supported Living Services and Independent Living Services gather to hear speakers on a variety of topics that are relevant to the service we provide. This year's conference will focus on the implementation of the trailer bill language, the new audit requirements, scheduling software and other business practices. As usual there will be topics of interest to providers, staff, consumers and family members with emphasis on best practice and upholding the philosophy and values we embrace.

Resources, exhibitor's information and networking opportunities are always a highlight of the conference and as usual the Complimentary Hosted Hospitality Event is something you won't want to miss.



The Dana Hotel on Mission Bay

The room rate this year at the beautiful Dana Hotel on Mission Bay in San Diego is \$119.00 per night, with free parking, and a reasonably priced shuttle service.

We hope you will join us for this informational and fun filled two days on the beach in beautiful San Diego. Check the CSLN Web site in November for details and registration information.



Matt - The Beginning

By Jen Lengyel



Having only known Matt now for 1 ½ years, it is clear that this is just the beginning of his story. When we met Matt we knew he was very passionate about tennis. He played tennis a lot, studied tennis, competed in tennis leagues, but looked at tennis as his hobby. However, what became abundantly clear pretty quickly is that tennis was more than a hobby for Matt; it truly was his passion and how he wanted to spend his life. When Matt lost his job at Safeway, which he complained cut into his tennis schedule, he decided to do something with his passion. Matt had a support person take him to the



Mickey, Walt and Matt

Small Business Entrepreneurial Center and was able to get (free) advice from seasoned business people on how to start a small business. Matt wasted no time. With some assistance from the business consultants and some from his support staff he created a flyer for GEMT Tennis. He had an idea that he wanted to teach children tennis either individually or in groups. He began to pass out flyers when he would play tennis at different courts. The calls started coming pretty quickly as people were able to watch Matt play and see his skills.

Matt began with one young boy. The lessons were going so well the mother wrote a letter to the City of

Sunnyvale, requesting that Matt be able to use their courts without paying large fees. The letter worked and the City waived most of the fees for Matt to teach on their courts. Upon reading the letter, one person from the City office who also operates a Tennis Club, asked Matt to come by so he could see him play. He hired Matt to teach 2 hours a week at his Tennis Club. Matt currently has 5 students, all private lessons and has decided that is enough as he works on his next goal.

Matt has begun studying for the USTA exam which when he passes will allow him to teach tennis anywhere. Again with little support, Matt investigated the exam and found a way he could have some accommodations during the test. He makes flash cards weekly and practices daily. In addition, his family has hired a private coach for him to increase his skill level. Matt plans to take the test at the end of 2011 or beginning of 2012. He is so committed and at times has to be reminded to take a break.

Matt's future is full of endless potential and he has taught me a lot about perseverance and working hard for what you want. He has hit many stumbling blocks along the way but he has not given up. If anything, his passion has grown.