

INTERCONNECT

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One Day at the Beach, Valerie's Journey

Valerie spent most of her childhood and young adulthood in an institution. She joined the Jay Nolan Community Services family in the 1990's and has since secured her own apartment in the San Fernando Valley.

Exploring the world outside of the institution could be an overwhelming experience. Many activities that Southern Californians take for granted were all new to Valerie. Her long term support staff person, Sandra, described how she first met Valerie through Maggie Smith. Maggie felt they would be a great match and they bonded quite quickly. Sandra embraced the opportunity to expand Valerie's horizons, even on limited funds.



Sandra went on to describe the first time Valerie had gone to the beach. She laughed as she explained how they were carrying all the typical beach equipment, chairs, cooler, blanket, and as soon as Valerie saw the ocean she became alarmed and ran back to the car! Leaving Sandra with all the gear. Sandra followed her to the car and offered some soothing words.

After that day, Sandra figured the beach was not a desirable location. A few months later she attended a training on Jay Nolan Community Services and the trainer described how sometimes people need to take small steps towards a large goal. Sandra had been building her relationship with Valerie over those past few months and decided that she would talk to Valerie again about the beach, then take small steps to gaining Valerie's trust and raising her comfort level.

Sandra and Valerie started spending time at parks near the ocean. They then moved to sitting at picnic tables on the sand. Sandra was surprised and happy to see that Valerie seemed relaxed and confident. Out of the blue, Valerie walked out onto the sand and wrote her name. As a wave washed it away she smiled and wrote her name again. For the past several years Valerie has visited many beaches up and down the California coast and every time she writes her name in the sand.

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In Loving Memory of Maggie Smith

When we think of Maggie Smith, the first image is one of courage; courage to speak her mind freely on any topic. Especially on difficult issues, moral issues, ethical standards, personal responsibility, integrity, equality, and fairness. Concerns which might make others cringe and cower in the shadows were Maggie's favorites to step forward and speak first. The more controversial, complicated or difficult the problem, the more certain it was you would find Maggie at the center of a positive solution.

Perhaps the second most prominent trait Maggie possessed was her skill at advocacy. Maggie could always be found fighting for the underdog. Colleague or consumer, parent or community member, if you were at risk and needed help, Maggie was there to provide that help. She utilized her considerable talents throughout our organization. She was gentle, generous, caring and thoughtful. Blessed with a huge heart, she made friends everywhere she went.

When Maggie became seriously ill, the outpouring of love, concern, and gratitude from everyone was staggering. The concern increased as her health did not improve. Whether you knew Maggie casually or you knew her well, we are all much better off because she was here.



Everyone in the Jay Nolan Community Services family wants to share a special thanks to those who dedicate an entire week of their summer to enrich the lives of the children and young adults that enjoy the camping experience. **THANK YOU!**

Left to right, bottom to top:

First Row: Kim (Activity Coordinator – Sports and Game), Iliana (Asst. Counselor), Crystal (Asst. Counselor), Kathy (Counselor), Brenda (Asst. Counselor), LaQuan (Asst. Counselor), Edgar (Activity Coordinator – Archery)

Middle Row: Terry (Camp Nurse), Ashley (Counselor), Jessie (Counselor), Chris (Counselor), James (Counselor), Bryan (Asst. Counselor), Adam (Asst. Counselor)

Top Row: Missi (Camp Director), Monica (Asst. Counselor), Patrick (Asst. Counselor), Edwin (Asst. Counselor), Caveman (Activity Coordinator –Outdoor Theater), Gary (Activity Coordinator – Arts and Crafts), Steven (Asst. Counselor), Andres (Counselor), Robert (Relief Counselor)



Olaf's Blue Sass Queens Unite

Jay Nolan Camp prides itself on including campers with and without disabilities in every part of the sleepover summer camp experience. Every year, Jay Nolan Camp Staff help their Campers choose a name that represents their cabin. Our oldest girls' cabin chose "Olaf's Blue Sass Queens". One of the "Sass Queens" was struggling during the first part of the week. She didn't fit in with the rest of her cabin group right away. She was homesick and wasn't really connecting with the other girls. We asked her if she would like to move to the "Purple Pandas" cabin. This change would mean that instead of being the youngest girl in the oldest girl's cabin, she would become the oldest girl in the youngest girl's cabin. She said she wanted to make that change. Then something very interesting happened. She walked into her cabin, and announced she was moving out. The rest of the Blue Sass Queens were really sad. They WANTED her there and told her so. It was in that moment, she felt included. We saw her homesickness begin to subside. We saw her start to light up. We saw her contributing to her cabin's creativity, and we saw her cabin group embrace her. Congrats to "Olaf's Blue Sass Queens" and their cabin staff members for being such a great example of Inclusive Summer Camping!

MORE SUCCESS!



Helping Us by Helping Himself!

Andrew was referred to the grant by his Regional Center Service Coordinator. When the DD council met Andrew he was extremely shy but very polite. Andrew did not speak much but did answer questions with “yes or no” responses. Andrew started writing things down for us and through his writing he would elaborate on the answers to our questions. He appeared to approach things very literally and with a serious demeanor. Through the discovery process we found that Andrew works well on the computer. We were able to find Andrew a job as an Office Clerk. Andrew is currently working 3 days a week for 4 hours per day. He enjoys work very much! He is learning new tasks and enjoys socializing with his coworkers. Through the grant we assisted Andrew in applying for ACCESS transportation services and Andrew is now taking ACCESS to and from work. His next step is in getting his driver’s license!

Education, Empowerment and Employment for Success is a grant project designed to demonstrate that the principles and practices of customized employment offer a better approach to employment development. We provide training and consultation for young adults and their families to understand how to develop real employment opportunities. We will also work with school systems, regional centers, and the Department of Rehabilitation, as well as community partners, to find ways to partner and increase employment outcomes for young people with disabilities transitioning out of high school and into adult life.

This project was approved for year two and running through March 2015. The funds for the project will be used to provide project coordination to address the continuing program of unemployment among people with disabilities. To date the project has served or is still in the process of serving 75 young adults. Currently, 30 young adults have had experience earning money, 15 young adults have accessed services post high school graduation, like SSI, IHSS, Regional Center and Department of Rehabilitation, and 10 young adults have chosen to pursue a path of higher education to increase their opportunities to work in industries that require more specialized skills. The grant has engaged in collaboration with more than 40 different community partners ranging from traditional funders, schools and other community businesses. The grant has also provided free customized employment training to more than 400 people in both San Diego and Los Angeles counties.

To learn more about the grant contact, Lisa Fisher at lfisher@jaynolan.org.

The Road to Independence

Raul was referred to the grant by his High School Transition teacher. When we met Raul he was in his final year of high school. Raul’s teachers recognized that upon graduation Raul would have no further access to outside supports. The school has been his only support system. Raul has experienced personal struggles including identifying stable housing, but he is currently residing at his grandparent’s home. Through the discovery process we were able to identify skills, interests, and ideal working conditions. We were also able to identify short and long term goals. Through the grant we assisted Raul in applying for jobs, Social Security benefits, and Department of Rehabilitation services. Raul is currently working at Super King Market 30 hours per week and receives benefits through work. He was approved for Social Security Benefits and is in the intake process with Department of Rehabilitation!





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The Mission of Jay Nolan Community Services, Inc. is to enable individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities to live fulfilling lives as members of the community by providing support services customized to their individual needs.

www.jaynolan.org

OUR VISION

EVERY PERSON LIVING A QUALITY LIFE

EMPOWERED

INCLUDED

EMBRACED

OUR AGENCY LIVING OUR MISSION

STRONG

RESPECTED

VISIONARY

Our Philosophy JNCS Believes that:

- All people have unique capabilities and gifts.
- All people need a sense of belonging to a family and to their community.
- All people have the right to be heard and to have their ideas acknowledged.
- All people can live in their own homes with the proper support and assistance.
- All people have the ability to contribute to their families and their communities.
- All people should be treated with dignity and respect, with their privacy protected.
- Relationships and trust are equally fundamental for a sense of inclusion to happen.
- For all persons, self-advocacy and empowerment should be promoted and honored.
- All people have the right to be free from pain, coercion, and cruelty inflicted by others.