

Creating opportunities for adults with disabilities since 1974



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## NOVEMBER 2020 E-NEWSLETTER

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### A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Greetings from Vocational Visions!

Well, here we go. The holiday season is fast approaching. How can it be November already? I don't know about you but I am looking forward to 2020 coming to a close and hoping that 2021 will be a much better year for everyone.

Our restroom renovations will be completed this month and the next round of renovations will begin December 1, 2020. These renovations will include interior/exterior paint, new flooring, new lighting, parking lot repairs, new entrance doors and so much more. We expect all renovations to be completed by the end of February. The opportunity to do all this work is the silver lining to having our facilities closed during the pandemic. When we reopen, everyone will return to a much more attractive, cleaner, safer, and more accessible environment. Watch for opportunities to contribute to Vocational Visions to help us with these costs and for a grand reopening celebration when it is safe to do so.

We wish everyone a wonderful month and a very happy Thanksgiving! It's a wonderful holiday and a great time to reflect on the things for which we are grateful. Despite the difficulties of 2020, I sincerely hope you have many things for which you are thankful!

Be safe and be well!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joan McKinney".

[Email Joan](#)

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## HALLOWEEN 2020 CELEBRATIONS

As we move into the holiday season, we are reminded just how much our VV family enjoys celebrating special days together. Celebrations have been looking a little different this year but we still manage to make wonderful memories. For example, we celebrated Halloween virtually with costume parties and parades via Zoom.

Check out these neat costumes worn by some of our participants and staff. It's nice that we can keep our traditions intact during the pandemic and celebrate safely.



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## PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

### JAIRUS VILLAMATER

Jairus Villamater has been attending our ADP program since 2016. This month, we'd like to share what he has been up to these past few months while our facilities have been closed to in-person programming.



Jairus has been attending Vocational Visions since he was 20 years old and has become a shining star in Job Coach Elle's life. Jairus loves to take long walks with his family and loves the outdoors as you can see from the photo collage above. They had quite a lot of adventures this past summer including encountering a very big rattlesnake on one of their outdoor adventures.

Jairus enjoys talking about his adventures. He is a very good communicator and loves to tell coach Elle stories about them every time they chat.

If you asked Jairus what he has missed most about VV life before the pandemic, it would probably be cleaning the horse restrooms at [The J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center](#), and, of course, seeing all his VV friends in person. He's happy to be able to attend our Zoom activities during the week.

Recently, Jairus has taken on some new responsibilities at home. Jairus has been babysitting a family member's dog named Hulk for a whole month. His parents made a promise to Jairus and his sister Julia that, if they kept up to their responsibilities taking care of Hulk, his parents would adopt a dog for them. Jairus' mom Maureen said of her son - "I am so proud of Jairus. He dutifully walks Hulk twice a day, morning and early evening. He gives Hulk the right amount of food and water too. I believe a big part of his

success is because of the Vocational Visions staff including Job Coach Elle and ADP Program Manager Atrem."



## HELP FIND A DOG FOR JAIRUS



Jairus' family is still looking for a dog who needs a new home. They have explored shelters and rescues. If, by any chance, you know of a small to medium sized dog who needs a new home, let us know and we will share with the family.

Here is a summary of the type of dog they hope to adopt:

- Approximately 6 months to 2 years old
- Kid friendly
- Pet friendly
- Prefer a dog that doesn't shed much like a Poodle or Schnauzer mix

If you know of a dog that needs a home, please send an email by clicking [here](#) with details.

The family hopes that they will find a special dog who will become

a best friend for Jairus.

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT DEVON JACKSON

Our organization is blessed to have a wonderful staff of Direct Support Professionals who provide guidance to our participants. This month, we would like to highlight Devon Jackson who joined DTAC Pala in 2018. He was hired to manage shipping and receiving for our warehouse. While his primary responsibilities are to ensure an orderly warehouse, he gets along very well with the participants and staff so everyone knows they can always ask him for assistance. He's happy to help. Since our warehouse is not receiving new shipments during the pandemic, Devon has been fortunate to move into an Instructional Assistant role. He's happy to maintain employment at VV and he even hosts some of our cooking tutorials on Zoom. Let's find out more about 'Chef Devon'.



**Question:** How did you first learn about VV?

**Answer:** I first heard about VV through a contact at my church, Venturis Jones, who happens to be the HR Manager for VV.

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**Question:** How would you describe VV to someone new?

**Answer:** I would describe VV as a community where we all help each other to be better.

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**Question:** What is your favorite part about your job at VV?

**Answer:** Making great friends and knowing that I'm helping is very rewarding.

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**Question:** Did you volunteer or work with people with disabilities before VV?

**Answer:** I volunteered at the VA Hospital in Loma Linda where some of the patients were uniquely-abled.

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**Question:** What's something interesting about you that you would like to share with us?

**Answer:** I grew up in special education myself.

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**Question:** What is your motto for life or a quote that really resonates with you?

**Answer:** 'A winner is a dreamer who never gives up' - Nelson Mandela.

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Thanks Devon for wearing many hats at VV and for being positive, patient and always willing to help wherever you can.

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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SHERI LEE



Our organization is blessed to be served by a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors (BOD). This month, we're highlighting Sheri Lee, a long time board member for over 20 years (our records show she joined back in 1997). Sheri serves as our BOD Secretary. Let's get to know more about her below.

**Question:** Time is a valuable commodity. What inspired you to dedicate some of your valuable time to Vocational Visions (VV)?

**Answer:** A co-worker of mine, at the time, had a son who went to VV (back when it was known as Saddleback Enterprises) and they were short board members so she asked me if I would join and I happily did.

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**Question:** Can you tell us a little bit about what line of work you are in?

**Answer:** I am a Senior Executive Administrator (33 years) for FirstService Residential (formerly Merit Property Management)

which manages single family homes, condominiums and townhomes in California. We are the largest community management company in California. I support a couple of VP's, Regional Directors and Senior Community Managers.

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**Question:** What are some experiences that really stand out for you over the years of volunteering for VV?

**Answer:** I've enjoyed being a part of our Enchanted Evenings since the beginning. The group of volunteers always work so well together to put on these events.

I have also enjoyed seeing out House of Champions Clubhouse evolve because it is a great contribution to our clients. I love watching the videos from their events and parties. I always attend whenever the Clubhouse/VV has any fundraisers. It's fun to get to actually interact with the clients, which we board members don't get to do on a daily basis.

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**Question:** What is your motto or, a quote about life, that really resonates with you?

**Answer:** 'Treat people the way you want to be treated.'

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Thank you Sheri for your many years of dedication to VV and for serving in the important role of Secretary on our BOD. We appreciate you!

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## CONGRATULATIONS JOEY NOMEILLINI

Joey has been working at [Cat Luv Us Boarding Hotel](#) in Laguna Niguel since 05-15-2019. Recently, Joey received a raise at work because he is so "pawsome" and deserving based on his high quality work performance and commitment. Joey works 4 days per week. On his day off, he joins us for our Zoom activities and even hosts one of ADP's two weekly Dance sessions.

# Congratulations Joey!

We heard you got a raise at work because  
you are such a "pawsome" employee at  
*Cats Luv Us Boarding Hotel*



**Joey & Einstein**

## CALENDAR

Alzheimer's Awareness Month

Entire month

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Entire month

National Family Caregivers Month

Entire month

Veterans Day

Nov 11, 2020

World Kindness Day

Nov 13, 2020

Thanksgiving Day \*

Nov 26, 2020

Day after Thanksgiving \*

Nov 27, 2020

\* Vocational Visions is closed for these holidays

# SAVE the DATE

**GIVINGTUESDAY**

December 1, 2020

## Enchanted Evening 2021

**Saturday, April 24, 2021**

Hyatt Regency

John Wayne Airport, Newport Beach

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## TWAS THE NIGHT OF THANKSGIVING

by: C.J. Beaman

Twas the night of Thanksgiving, but I just couldn't sleep,  
I tried counting backwards, I tried counting sheep.  
The leftovers beckoned - the dark meat and white,  
But I fought off the temptation with all of my might.

I tossed and I turned with sweet anticipation,  
As the thought of a snack became infatuation.  
So I raced to the kitchen, flung open the door  
And gazed at the fridge, full of goodies galore.

I gobbled up turkey and buttered potatoes,  
Pickles and carrots, beans and tomatoes.  
I felt myself swelling so plump and so round,  
'Til all of a sudden, I rose off the ground.

I crashed through the ceiling, floating into the sky  
With a mouthful of pudding and a handful of pie.

But I managed to yell as I soared past the trees...  
Happy eating to all! Pass the cranberries, please!

May your stuffing be tasty, may your turkey be plump,  
May your potatoes & gravy have nary a lump,  
May your yams be delicious,  
May your pies take the prize,  
May your Thanksgiving dinner stay off of your thighs.



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shop this holiday*

Amazon donates when you  
shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com).

 

Shop [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) & select **Vocational Visions** as your charity.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to us.

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Link your **Ralphs Grocery Store** shopper's card to **Vocational Visions**:

[\*\*Ralphs Community Contribution Program\*\*](#)

Then, swipe your shopper's card, or enter your associated phone number, whenever you shop at Ralphs and Ralphs will make an annual donation to us.

