

Creating opportunities for adults with disabilities since 1974



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## SEPTEMBER 2020 E-NEWSLETTER

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### A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I wish I had better news but we do not have a reopen date yet. Our virtual services will continue to be available and we are expanding them! Our weekly Zoom schedule is sent out to participants and our daily Zoom schedule is posted on Facebook as a morning reminder of our virtual offerings for the day. We will also be continuing to deliver activity supplies to our clients' homes. For our clients working in essential businesses, our job coaching will continue.

Starting this month, while we are closed, we are renovating the restrooms at our Pala location and the upstairs restrooms at our Alambre location. Why only the upstairs restrooms at Alambre? We can do these renovations without permits as they

are cosmetic in nature. We will address the downstairs Alambre restrooms when we complete all of the planned pending renovations requiring city permits. The current work should be done in 10 - 12 weeks. **We welcome donations to help with these costs and, if you'd like to help with this, please let us know!**

Once these renovations are done and when safe, we will start to look at reopening our on-site day programs taking into consideration how many people may return safely.

The week of September 13 through September 19, 2020 is Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week. We will be treating our staff to thank them for all they do for the people we serve. We can't share the details as we want to surprise our staff!

Thank you for reading and thank you for supporting Vocational Visions!

Be well!



[Email Joan](#)

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## CONGRATULATIONS PARTICIPANT EMPLOYMENT

Congratulations to DTAC Pala participant Clifford Powers who was recently hired as an employee at [High Park Tap House](#), a family-owned restaurant in Mission Viejo. Prior to the pandemic, Clifford was participating in an internship opportunity there supporting the kitchen staff during their busy morning networking breakfast meetings. Internships were then put on indefinite hold and networking meetings went virtual during COVID-19 so Clifford was missing his job very much. Impressed with Clifford's work ethic, the owners felt strongly that they could find new opportunities for Clifford, even while their restaurant is closed to in-person dining, and offered him a direct hire position on Mondays and Fridays. Clifford is very happy to be working again. He receives job coaching by VV staff members Diana and Devon at his worksite 100% of the time.

Clifford on the job  
at High Park  
Tap House  
restaurant



## PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT IAIN FIELD

In this issue, we are highlighting Iain Field who has been attending our DTAC Pala program since 2009. Iain has a very special talent that we would like to share with you below.



Iain is an amazing individual who loves to express himself through art. His tools of choice are his trusty colored pencils and his chalk pastels. With them, he opens up a world of endless possibilities. He began his hobby 20 years ago when he started to draw spaceships and futuristic cars. Throughout quarantine, Iain has been working to improve his artistic skills.

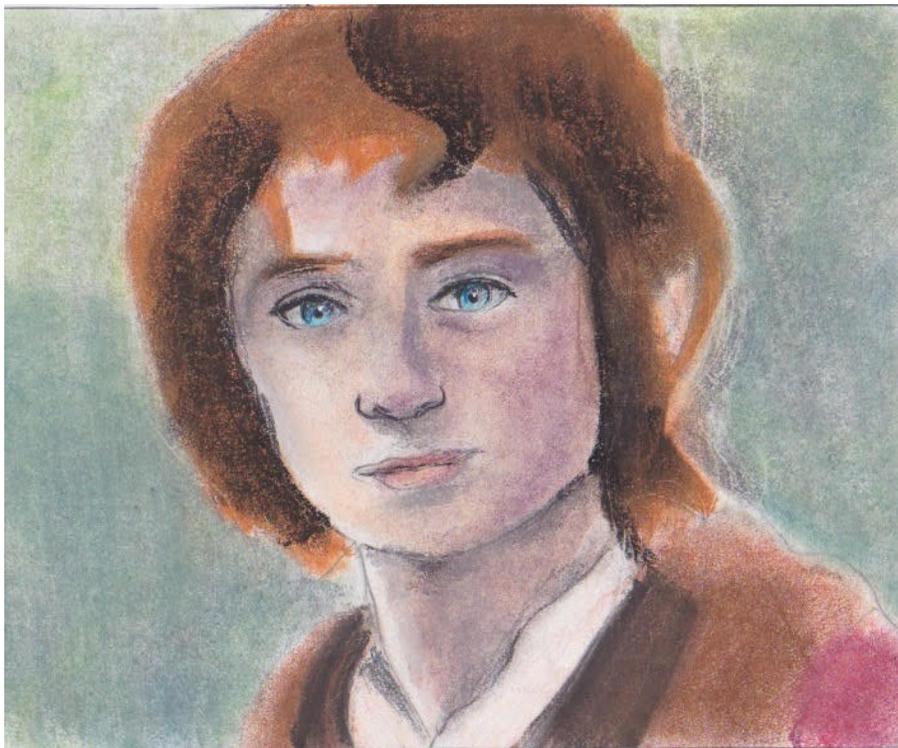
Here's a picture of Iain with his favorite coloring book. Iain is very detailed and takes his time whenever he colors. He prides



himself in his ability to be a master of color blending.

Iain began taking classes at [Art Steps in Mission Viejo](#) a few years ago to sharpen his skills.

Below are a couple of pictures Iain has made that he is especially proud of.



***Frodo Baggins***

Here is his freehand drawing of Frodo from *The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings*. Iain is very proud of this picture because it was challenging to complete. It took a very long time and he put in a lot of effort so he felt very accomplished when he finally finished it. Frodo is one of the main characters and Iain likes the way the actor, Elijah Wood, portrayed Frodo in the movies. Iain used pastels to create this masterpiece. The color combinations, details and shading elements bring realism to the image.



***Alvin from Alvin and The Chipmunks***

Iain loves cartoons. This picture he drew and colored is one of his most special pictures. Iain loves the predicaments that Alvin Seville and his chipmunk friends get into. He also enjoys their singing.



It is said that all artists are dreamers and Iain dreams of time traveling into the future, like his favorite movie **Back to the**

**Future.** If he could ever build a time travel car, he would travel to the future to share his art.

With all of his knowledge, Iain would one day love to become an educator and help others to unlock their own potential within the field of art.

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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### LINDA ALBERS



Our organization is blessed to be served by a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors (BOD). This month, we're highlighting Linda Albers who is our Chairperson and has served on our BOD for ~ 39 years now. Let's get to know more about Linda below.

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

**Answer:** I was in charge of the Adult Education program for the Saddleback Valley Unified School District and, back then, it was affiliated with Vocational Visions. While my job originally brought me to the BOD, it is my love for the participants, the staff and the mission of VV that keeps me here.

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**Question:** What line of work are you in?

**Answer:** I am self-employed as an attorney. I am passionate about working with clients who have employment discrimination claims violating their civil rights. I also specialize in estate planning and appreciate being able to help people to get their legal affairs in order so they can have peace of mind.

I am happy to provide legal guidance to VV as needed along with our other attorney board members.

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**Question:** Have you ever volunteered or worked with people with disabilities in the past?

**Answer:** Not other than my almost 40 years with VV. In the past, I

volunteered with Orange County 2-1-1 which is an organization that connects OC residents in need to critical social services such as housing, job placement, food and health insurance.

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**Question:** Besides being instrumental in helping to manage the business side of things at VV, what else do you enjoy about being a VV volunteer?

**Answer:** I get to serve with a fine group of people full of wonderful collective wisdom and common sense who share the responsibility of our success. I enjoy that Joan brings in managers to share client accomplishments and events at our monthly meetings so we get to hear about the great things happening at VV. I like it when we get to honor VV long term employees for their dedication. I also look forward to being an active member of our Enchanted Evening planning committee every year.

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

**Answer:** “Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game.” - Babe Ruth. I have a lot of quotes that help guide me in my day to day living. I love this one because it reminds me not to sit on the sidelines. Don't be afraid to give it a go.

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Thank you Linda for your many years of dedication to our organization and for your leadership role as our BOD Chairperson for the last ~ 5 years.

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### ANAHITA NADERI

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 Anahita Naderi, who joined our ADP program as a Job Coach in June of 2019.



**Question:** How did you first come to learn about Vocational Visions (VV)?

**Answer:** I was introduced to VV through the Welfare to Work program.

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**Question:** If someone you know, or just met, has never heard of VV, how would you describe our organization to them?

**Answer:** I would share with them that working at VV is like being a member of the X-Men crew. We have so many amazing clients who have incredible gifts that I would never have imagined existed in the special abilities community. We have clients who are DJs, YouTube bloggers, athletes, spelling champs, story tellers, performers, singers, artists, cooks, Disney aficionados, car collectors and, most importantly, their hearts are full of love & joy! VV is an awesome place for our clients and staff members.

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

**Answer:** My favorite part of working at VV is the nurturing community and close relationships that come to life between clients and staff on a daily basis. We laugh, we cry, we dance, we use a lot of hand sanitizer, but, at the end of the day, we are like a really big loud happy family.

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**Question:** What is something that could be added, removed or changed to make Vocational Visions better?

**Answer:** I believe that having interactive events where our clients, their families and our staff could gather together for socialization and communication would be an awesome addition to our program.

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

**Answer:** Prior to being hired at VV, I had never volunteered or worked with people who are uniquely-abled. Growing up, I was actually a bit intimidated to be around people who were considered disabled because, in some ways, I felt sorry for them.

However, I met a good friend whose sister has Down Syndrome and she completely changed my perspective. She lived at a group home, had a job, had a boyfriend and she was quite witty and funny. I am grateful for her influence in my life.

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**Question:** What is an interesting fact about you that you would like to share?

**Answer:** I have been a resident of 2 continents, 3 countries, 10 cities and 22 homes. This has gifted me with an incredible ability to adapt.

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

**Answer:** "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." ~ Albert Einstein

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**DSP RECOGNITION WEEK  
2020 IS COMING!**

***SEPTEMBER 13 - 19, 2020***

DSP = Direct Support Professionals

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is a person who assists an individual with a disability to lead a self-directed life and contribute to the community, assists with activities of daily living and encourages attitudes and behaviors that enhance

## CALENDAR

Labor Day *	Sep 7, 2020
DSP Recognition Week	Sept 13 - 19, 2020
Board of Directors Meeting	Sep 23, 2020
Deaf Awareness Month	Entire month
Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month	Entire month

\* Vocational Visions is closed on this day

SAVE  
*the*  
DATE

Enchanted Evening 2021

Saturday, April 24, 2021

Hyatt Regency

John Wayne Airport, Newport Beach

## EARN DONATIONS FOR VV WHILE YOU SHOP

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

[www.ralphs.com/i/community/community-contribution-program](http://www.ralphs.com/i/community/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.



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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