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## FEBRUARY 2021 E-NEWSLETTER

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### A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Are you following Vocational Visions on [Facebook](#)?

I invite you to follow us on our VV social media sites like Facebook where you can find our daily remote support schedule of virtual activities along with stories and accomplishments about our clients and staff and other information that may be of interest to you. It's an easy way to stay up to date with all that is happening in our organization.

Our renovation project continues on! Work has now begun at our Alambre facility and Phase 1 of the Pala renovations will be completed on or around March 9, 2021. Then, on to Phase 2. The facilities are quite a mess right now with various stages of demolition in process. Here's a video prepared by HRS Program Manager Sunny Leos to illustrate the demolition phase of the HRS program area.



We are excited to share exterior pictures of our two facilities which have recently been painted. It's nice to see the improvements on the outside. We can't wait to see the improvements within.

*Pala*



*Alambre*



If you've ever done a renovation, you know that unanticipated costs arise once the work gets started and uncovers unexpected issues. We recently received a very generous donation of \$50,000 to help us with some of these extra costs. Please watch for and consider opportunities to help us with this project!

[Email Joan](#)

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## COVID-19 VACCINATION NEWS



# GOOD NEWS

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has just released updated COVID-19 vaccine distribution guidance. Starting **March 15, 2021**, people ages 16 - 64 with a developmental “or other high-risk disability” will be eligible to receive the vaccine. A formal bulletin advising of these changes was sent to all vaccination providers on February 12, 2021.

Please help us to spread the word. After all the advocacy for our population to receive this life-saving protection from COVID-19, we now must do everything within our power to get the word out and encourage the IDD community to get vaccinated.

[Click Here to Read the Bulletin from CDPH](#)

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## NEW SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT **JEFF MAHER**

We are excited to share that Jeff Maher, who participates in our Supported Employment program, recently started a new job at [Albertsons](#) Grocery Store. Congratulations on your new job Jeff!

Jeff started his new job at Albertsons as a Courtesy Clerk on January 27th, 2021. Here he is doing his part to make sure the store is in tip-top shape for

customers.



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## PARTICIPANT MOVING ON JOEY NOMEILLINI

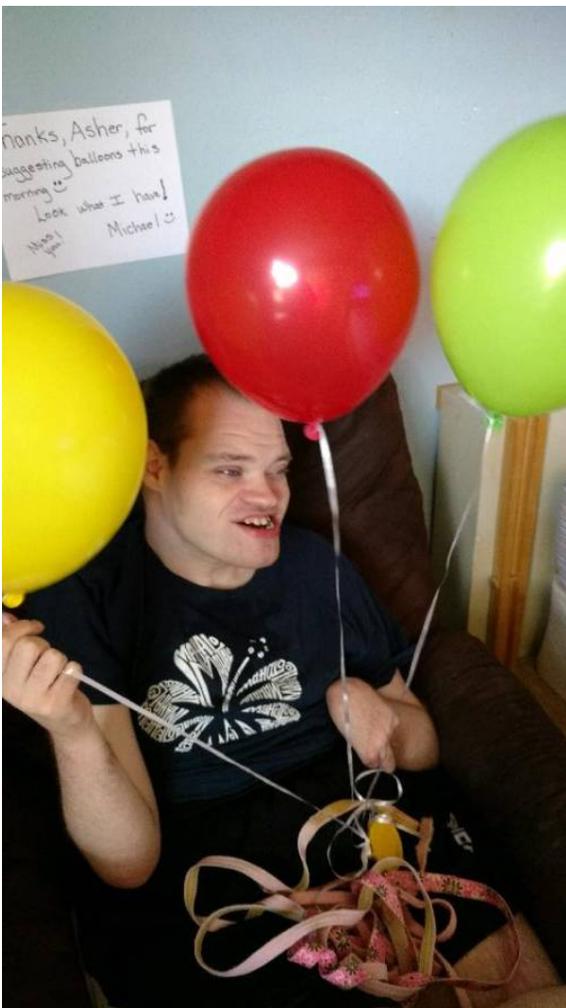
Joey Nomellini, who has participated in our ADP program for the last two years, is moving out of Orange County this month so he will no longer be able to work at [Cats Luv Us Boarding Hotel](#) in Laguna Niguel. For now, he will be able to continue with our Zoom activities. As a parting gift for, the owner at Cats Luv Us gave Joey a \$100 dollar gift certificate. This was in addition to the two bonuses he recently received. He has been a terrific employee and all of the humans and felines will miss him greatly. Good luck Joey in your new home and thanks for being such an amazing essential employee! We're happy we will still see you on Zoom.



## PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

### MICHAEL SHARMAN

This month we are shining our participant spotlight on Michael Sharman. Michael joined VV in 2008 and he participates in our DTAC Alambre program.



One of Michael's favorite things are balloons, and, when our facilities were open before the pandemic, he would always arrive at VV with a balloon tied to his wheelchair every day. He's recognized as the 'Balloon Boy'. Michael has always enjoyed going out into the community - especially to local shopping malls. When Michael would get to visit the Shops at Mission Viejo with VV, he and VV employee Asher would go on 'balloon hunts' throughout the mall. They were always guaranteed to get a balloon at Kevin Jewelers. Michael would often come home with more balloons than

he left with.

This is an activity Michael has really missed since we have been closed to in-person programming at our facilities. He also misses getting ready for the bus in the morning that would take him to VV.

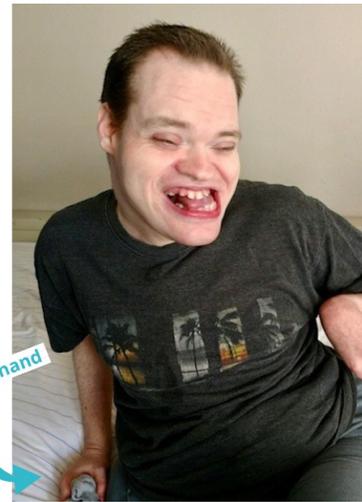
Out of an abundance of caution during the pandemic, Michael's parents keep him at home mostly.

One of Michael's favorite things to do, pre-pandemic and currently, is to go for a ride in his dad's truck. Pretty much daily, Michael grabs a pair of socks and points to his closet where his shoes are. So, from time to time, with no particular place to go, he gets to go on a ride around the city, just to get out and 'see the world' for awhile.

At home, Michael spends his time between his room and the 'man cave' upstairs. While upstairs, he enjoys watching action / adventure movies. He also enjoys stringing long lines of blocks on rope in various color patterns. Additionally, Michael loves to throw colorful Nerf balls at a small basketball hoop.

Michael will be so excited when life gets back to normal and he can, once again, get on the bus in the morning and return to fun at program. We at VV look forward to this as well.

Socks in hand



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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### PRANAYA SOERAADININGRAT

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 Pranaya Soeraadiningrat who joined VV's Emeritus program in February of 2019. We're excited to learn more about Pranaya, who also goes by Naya, in our Q & A below.



**Question:** Can you tell us some things you enjoy about working at VV?

**Answer:** What I love most about VV are the participants we serve and their openness to learn new things. In the Emeritus department, our team has really enjoyed utilizing our creativity to expand some of our programming. For example, we've been able to host an awesome Science Zoom class where we learn about new topics each week like the formation of the solar system and the science behind volcanoes.

My favorite part of this job has definitely got to be the close friendships I've been able to develop with my co-workers and our participants. I'm lucky to be able to call my co-workers at VV not only my friends, but also my family.

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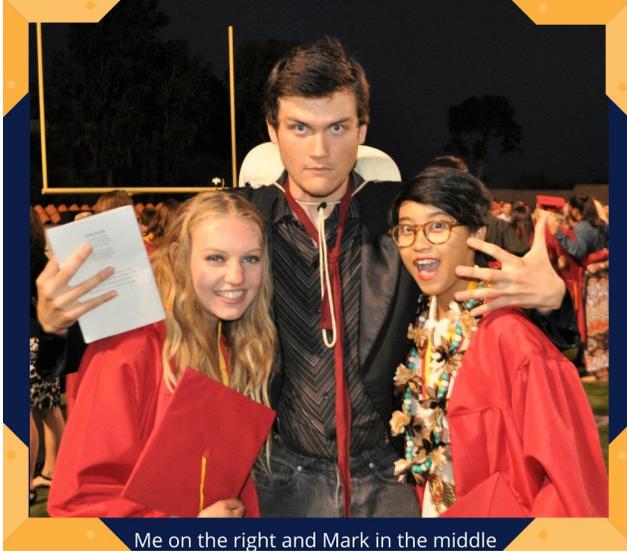
**Question:** What is something that could be added, removed or changed to make VV better?

**Answer:** I believe there's always room for improvement but, given all the hardship we've gone through in the last year, it's hard to say what we could do better at VV. I believe all the staff at VV has truly stepped up in the best way they could to ensure our clients get the service and representation they deserve. And I've been so proud and inspired by everyone I work with this last year! I hope that, when our facilities reopen, we can keep this spirit going and adapt the things we've learned in quarantine to make our days at VV even more fulfilling than before.

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

**Answer:** Before working at VV, I had never worked with people with disabilities. But,



when I was in high school, my best friend and prom date, Mark, had high function autism and we shared the same Fine Arts teacher. Mark is now designing theater costumes for a local theater in San Juan Capistrano and he has always been such a huge inspiration to me as an artist. Mark was one of the reasons why I pursued a

higher education in fine art photography and, to this day, he is such a great friend to me.

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**Question:** What's an interesting, unique or fun fact about you?

**Answer:** An interesting fact about me is that I went to art school in New York City and grew up with two kind hearted artists for parents. My father used to design gowns and my mother was a professional traditional Indonesian dancer who has traveled the world. Both of them remind me that there is so much joy to share with others through art, culture and creativity.

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

**Answer:** "Love many things, for therein lies the true strength, and whosoever loves much performs much, and can accomplish much, and what is done in love is done well." - Vincent Van Gogh

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You can find Pranaya hosting several Zoom classes including Science, Art History and Cooking. We appreciate Naya's enthusiasm and creativity in making our programming exciting and educational for our participants.



Me on the right and my Science Zoom co-host Kyla on the left

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## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Keep an eye out for our March 2021 newsletter for the next Board Member Spotlight!

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## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Presidents' Day	Feb 15, 2021
Board of Directors Meeting	Feb 24, 2021
Rare Disease Day	Feb 28, 2021

SAVE  
*the*  
DATE

Enchanted Evening 2022

**Saturday, April 30, 2022**  
Hyatt Regency  
John Wayne Airport, Newport Beach

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**This is so often true and almost always so unfortunate**

**"The worst thing about  
a disability is that  
people see it before  
they see you."**

Easter Seals

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## **EARN DONATIONS FOR VV WHILE YOU SHOP**



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.

