

Creating opportunities for adults with disabilities since 1974



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## June 2021 E-NEWSLETTER

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### A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



June 14<sup>th</sup> was the day we began to reopen in-person programming at Vocational Visions.

We've heard back from many of our program participants and their families about how they wanted to return. To start, we are offering two days of onsite program. Our participants will continue with Zoom classes and other alternative services for the remainder of the week. Some individuals will attend Mondays and Wednesdays, others Tuesdays and Thursdays. Others have decided they are not yet ready to return to onsite program and will continue with alternative / virtual services for the time being. The House of Champions Clubhouse will resume normal operating hours effective Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> kicking off with a pizza meet and greet from 11:00 am - 6:00 pm.

One of the challenges we face to reopening fully is our need for staff! Over the course of the pandemic we had about 15% of our staff leave Vocational Visions for a variety of reasons. Like other employers, we are finding it very difficult to find candidates to fill

the vacant positions. If you know someone looking for work, please refer them to Vocational Visions. A completed job application along with a resume can be emailed to [HR@VocationalVisions.org](mailto:HR@VocationalVisions.org).



**WE'RE  
HIRING!**

**POSITIONS**

- JOB COACHES**
- COMMUNITY COACHES**
- INDEPENDENT FACILITATORS**
- INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS**
- PROGRAM QUALITY LEADS**
- LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE**

<http://www.vocationalvisions.org/images/pdf/Application-Employment.pdf>

**CLICK HERE FOR OUR JOB APPLICATION**

**VOCATIONAL VISIONS**  
Creating opportunities  
for adults with disabilities  
since 1974

Thank you to those who participated in our Empowering Possibilities Online Giving Day! We truly appreciate your generous donations to help us with the costs for our renovations. Please watch for opportunities to visit Vocational Visions to see our newly renovated buildings in the near future!

Our Enchanted Evening Committee will be meeting later this month to get to work on the event scheduled for April 30, 2022. If you'd like to help plan the event, want to donate something to the auction, be an event sponsor and / or volunteer on event day, let us know. Please watch for information as we get closer to the event date! Won't it be wonderful to get together for this again?



**EMAIL JOAN**

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## **EMPOWERING POSSIBILITIES OC 2021 RESULTS**

Thank you to the **65 wonderful donors** who gave to Vocational Visions during the [Empowering Possibilities OC](#) fundraiser on May 20, 2021. We raised **\$13,975** including some mail in donations. We sincerely cherish your support.

This fundraiser, an annual event hosted by the [Orange County Community Association](#), brings nonprofits dedicated to improving the lives of our OC community members with disabilities together for a collective day of online giving. This year, the 10 organizations participating collectively raised **\$129,242** from over **500 awesome donors**.

THANK YOU!

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## VV EMPLOYEES ON THE MOVE

### AGAPE KANSIIME

Agape Kansiiime has transitioned from our Emeritus program where he was a Program Quality Lead (PQL) to our DTAC Pala program where he is serving in the role of Assistant Manager. We'd like to congratulate him on his promotion.



### JEANETTE TANAP

Agape is taking over for Jeanette Tanap. Jeanette is leaving VV to pursue her Master's Degree. We wish Jeanette well in her new

adventure. Thank you Jeanette for 10 years of outstanding service to our participants!



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## DONATION APPRECIATION

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ST. JOHN PAUL II COUNCIL #16488

The [Knights of Columbus Council #16488](#) from the San Francisco Solano Church in Rancho Santa Margarita, CA dropped by for a very special delivery. They recently sponsored a one day fundraiser after church service to raise money for three orange county organizations whose mission is to make lives better for those with disabilities: [L'Arche Wavecrest](#), [Special Olympics](#) and [Vocational Visions](#). This was their first fundraiser since the pandemic and they were amazed at the outpouring of support. Mark Lundquist, Grand Knight, and Chris Boyd, Membership Director, presented our Fund Development Associate Danielle Booth with a check for **\$3,000** for VV. Here they are in front of our new VV sign at our Pala building. Danielle was delighted to give them a quick tour of the building and show off our remodeling. We are very appreciative of their ongoing support for our organization over the years.



**Mark Lundquist, Danielle Booth and Chris Boyd**

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## **PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT**

### **JULIE YOO**

This month we are shining our participant spotlight on Julie Yoo. Julie joined VV in 1997 and she participates in our Supported Employment program.

Julie is excited about the prospect of returning to work at the beautiful [Montage Resort Hotel](#) in Laguna Beach after the pandemic. She started working there in 2011. She likes all aspects of her job and we hear she is amazing at it.



Working next to the beach is also a plus since Julie loves the beach. She's not a fan of swimming in the ocean but she does enjoy hanging out at the beach.

Julie also enjoys hanging out with her group home dog Tucker, a Goldendoodle, who is almost 10 years old. When he celebrates his birthday each August, he wears a birthday hat and eats doggy ice cream. Julie likes to brush Tucker and play ball with Tucker. She needs two balls because once Tucker catches one, he doesn't want to give it back until another one is thrown.



Julie celebrated her birthday in May. She had a wonderful time with her friends.



The group birthday picture is of Julie and her church friends. She attends Hope Christian Church in Tustin. They have a really neat ministry called [Construction Zone](#) for adults with disabilities that meets Sundays and Wednesdays.

Julie loves to do coloring and other arts and crafts. She loves shopping and cooking as well, especially pancakes. She enjoys eating out now and then and her favorite restaurant is [Islands](#). Now that the movie theaters have reopened, she can't wait to go back and see a movie in the theater. Her favorite types of movies are animal movies (especially horses) and funny movies.

One of the neatest things that Julie is looking forward to is her annual trip to [CampCare](#) in Lake Tahoe next month. She's been going for about 18 years with her friends (missing last year because it was canceled). She loves the arts, sports, horseback riding, singing and all of the other fun things that are part of this week long experience. All of the women in her group home will be

attending with her.

We hope Julie and her friends have a memorable time at camp. It's so nice to be able to resume traditions after this last year.

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### MELODY DOWNEY



Our organization is blessed to have a wonderful staff of Direct Support Professionals who provide guidance to our participants. This month, we are highlighting Melody Downey who joined VV in 2014. Melody is Supervisor for our Clubhouse program. Let's learn more about Melody in our Q & A below.

**Question:** How did you first find out about VV?

**Answer:** I was working at a local elementary school with Debbie Watkins, who had been a VV employee for more than 10 years at that time, and she asked if I wanted to work at the clubhouse doing craft projects. That's where it all began.

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**Question:** If someone you know or just met has never heard of VV, what would you share with them to help them to understand what VV is about?

**Answer:** I would tell them about Clubhouse and how much fun it is. I honestly have the best job ever! We have themed parties each weekend and who does not like a good party with over 50 of their awesome friends?

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

**Answer:** I love my Clubhouse family. We are a close bunch of friends who love to dance, sing karaoke, make crafts and hang out. We have so much fun together. It never feels like work for me. Here are a couple of pictures of me with some of my Clubhouse family (Shannon, Christina and Frank).



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

**Answer:** I think Vocational Visions is an amazing place and the only thing I can think of to make it better would be to find more sponsors so we can continue to grow and do good things.

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**Question:** Did you volunteer or work with people who are uniquely abled before working at VV?

**Answer:** Yes, I did. I worked on the playground and volunteered for 12 years Saddleback Valley USD. I was running Art Masters, class parties and other fun projects for K - 6 grade students with disabilities.

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**Question:** Are there any interesting, unique or fun facts about you that you would like to share with us?

**Answer:** I have been married for 23 years. I have two fantastic boys and a two year old Corgi. I love making crafts. One of my favorite things to do is cross stitch. Here's one of my cross stitch projects:



I also enjoy reading and have read over 56 books just this year.

One more fact is that I have been cancer free for 12 years now.

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

**Answer:** My favorite quote would be from J.R.R. Tolkien - "All that is gold does not glitter, Not all those who wander are lost".

Clubhouse is reopening Saturday, June 19. Good luck Melody with the reopening. We hear you have a lot of wonderful things scheduled for participants including a pizza meet and greet, movie nights, a BBQ, a karaoke party and a visit from OC Elvis and that is all in the second half of this month. We sure do value your remarkable creativity and organizational skills. For anyone who is interested in learning more about our Clubhouse program, please [click here](#).

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## JUNE CALENDAR

Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month	Entire Month
Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month	Entire Month
Autistic Pride Day	June 18, 2021
VV Board of Directors Meeting	June 23, 2021
4th of July Holiday *	July 5, 2021

\* Vocational Visions is closed on this day in observance

SAVE  
*the*  
DATE

Enchanted Evening 2022  
*All You Need is Love*

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

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# hello SUMMER



*"Some of the best memories are made in flip-flops."*

~ Kellie Elmore

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## EARN DONATIONS FOR VV WHILE YOU SHOP



Click on this link to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) to go right to the page to select **Vocational Visions** as your charity for Amazon purchases.

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

We have 82 Amazon users who have selected us as their charity for AmazonSmile and we received \$833.22 from Q1 2021 activity (a record quarter for us thanks to our supporters).

Click [here](#) for instructions to activate AmazonSmile on your Amazon mobile app.

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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 a quarterly donation to us.

We received \$46.61 from Ralphs from Q2 2021 activity across 9 households who did the one time sign up to designate VV as their charity and then did nothing more than shop as they normally would using their Ralphs card or associated phone number during checkout.

