



North Bay Regional Center Press



W I N T E R 2 0 1 4 W W W . N B R C . N E T

SPOTLIGHT ON INDEPENDENCE: THE VOICE OF NAPA & SONOMA

Whether in his work attire or casual dress, Loren Moale presents an image that conjures up memories of game show hosts. His hair is neatly combed, his smile genuine and broad, and his speech is articulately punctuated though softened by his smooth baritone. As if born to perform, by the age of 5 Loren made it clear to his parents that he was headed for the stage: when he saw a poster for Peter Pan, he asked his mother if he could be in the play. Inspired by his enthusiasm, she began researching how to get him involved.

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Two years earlier at age three, and still not speaking a word, Loren's mother Ruth, was only concerned about his immediate development. She enrolled him in the Napa Infant Program hoping this would benefit him, and then conducted a little research to find NBRC's Early Start program. At 3 years of age Loren was found eligible for NBRC and he began receiving behavior therapy and, fortunate for Ruth, respite services. Loren began pre-school and then elementary school, where he got a 1:1 aid and began speech therapy. With continued 1:1 support throughout his school years, Loren participated in regular classes (mainstream) so he could participate with his peer group. More importantly, though, Loren invested his energies in his true passion: acting. After enrolling in Napa Parks and Recreation's "Broadway Babies" at 5, Loren continued with Broadway Bound Kids in Sonoma, where he has since acted in over 26 plays, at "two a year" he explains. His favorite? "Wizard of Oz," he asserts, then continues, "I was Jack Scott in High School Musical, Vince Fontaine in Grease, Corney Collins— played by James Marsden in the film— in Hairspray; I get type cast as an announcer," he explains matter-of-factly.

The fact that Loren gets typecast as an announcer comes as no surprise. With a voice that sounds destined to be the next Ed McMahon, Loren took steps to follow his dreams and completed his Senior Project in broadcasting. Loren explains that he "went to a few stations like KFOG and met Peter Finch, now at the new KGO: KGO TV and KGO ABC7 " and then continues listing the stations and announcers he met. In fact his knowledge of the "whole lineup and broadcasters" so impressed the KGO announcer at the Napa Mustard Festival that they took him up in their helicopter while they did the traffic news. Loren has worked hard to achieve his many accomplishments with a perseverance and sense of purpose that keeps his target right in

front of him: to be a "big time" TV announcer or MC "the on-camera type introducing the host, like and MC." With a foot in the door already, local Napa'ens can see Loren at work with Arty on "Arty's Party," where he introduces Arty every Wednesday at 6:00pm. Actively working to advance his skills and experience, Loren volunteers at KVON on Jud's Napa Valley Show and records the PSA's for KSVY in Sonoma.

Over the past year Loren has embarked on a whole new adventure with Everybody A Star Foundation. The work of promoter and father Howard Sapper, Everybody A Star gives young people with disabilities the opportunity to create a music video and share their talents. Loren recorded at Prairie Sun studios in Cotati and took his first trip to the East Coast to participate in the Boston Green Festival "an environmentally friendly fashion show. Now a student at Napa Valley Community College, Loren enjoys his short walk, commenting, "A Place so near can take you so far." Yes, Loren has come so far, and with his winning enthusiasm, voice skills and talent, we look forward to seeing much more of Loren in the future. [Click here](#) to see more on NBRC's YouTube.





Friends of NBRC Brings More Support

As many clients and families know, NBRC's contract with the California State Department of Developmental Services does not always provide for the flexibility to fund *every* needed service. Recent changes in legislation have eliminated funding for services that target social and recreational activities, experiences which can result in improved communication skills and enhance peer-to-peer interactions. Though independent living may be the preferred option for leading a life that closely resembles that of any other adult, saving up for the move-in costs and funds for furniture may pose significant challenges for clients on fixed or limited incomes.

It is because of these limitations – and many others – that **Friends of NBRC Foundation** is proud to announce its formation, and launch a new era for promoting increased independence and productivity in the community. “We know we can do more,” says Friends of NBRC Board Member and Suisun Mayor Pete Sanchez.

Friends received a generous donation of \$100,000 from an anonymous donor. Friends quickly built on that after Clif Bar, a health energy snack who was tipped off

regarding the great work of NBRC, and wanted to include Friends in their golf tournament fundraising efforts. Clif Bar's Gina Setla, Human Resources Manager, presented **Friends of NBRC** a check for \$40,000 in September and Friends was on its way.

Now Friends is focused on the dual goal of expanding its



Clif Bar's Gina Setla (center) surrounded by (from left) Friends Board Member Pete Sanchez, Friends Chair Walter Hampe, Board Member Matt Bloom and Board Member Suzette Soviero

donor base and identifying needs relating to supportive education, social and recreational activities, supportive living, and family emergency supports not covered by NBRC. Friends is dedicated to funding these necessary services that assist those served by NBRC to lead more independent and productive lives.

Join **Friends of NBRC** June 4, 2014 to honor their first annual Friends Service Award recipient (to be determined) and acknowledge recipients of Friends' support this year. Go to the [Friends of NBRC](http://Friends of NBRC website) website, (Friends of NBRC.org) to make a donation or 'opt in' to learn more about Friends' work.



NBRC'S NEW WEBSITE & NEW LOOK: ENHANCING COMMUNICATIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Using technology to communicate important news and events has reached new levels this century with the advent of social media. With that has come new standards for agency websites to improve access and ease of finding information. With that said, NBRC is proud to announce completion of a total overhaul with a new look, logo, and website that we are proud to refer clients and families to.

Featuring a headline event, the NBRC home page also includes important legislative updates, current events, and links to community activities of interest to both clients and families. The Resources page provides links to both county, state, and local agencies as well as a page devoted specifically to autism resources. With recent National Voters Rights Act legislation supporting increased outreach to individuals with disabilities, this page provides important links to make voter registration a breeze. NBRC service providers will enjoy links to E-Billing, Special Incident Reporting, training calendars and Request for Proposal (RFP) resource needs information.

With more information about clients services and supports available in the community, we know you'll find nbrc.net a whole new world of great information accessible and easy to use.

Making the Time for Transitions

Planning for the future is something many of us put off until the last minute. We all know that when it comes to our children, preparing for the transition to adulthood is something we cannot put off. NBRC Service Coordinators (*formally known as Client Program Coordinator or CPCs*) and our partners in education are well aware of that and are here to help. Beginning with the Napa County Transition Conference & Resource Fair on January 15th and then the 6th Annual Sonoma County Transition Fair February 12th, the Solano County Transition Fair will wrap up the series on March 18th at the Solano County Office of Education. With over

500 attendees, these fairs allow clients and families to get information on work and residential services available, how to navigate social security, Department of Rehabilitation, and even tips from clients (Julie Yaeger, pictured left, in Santa Rosa) about the challenges and successes this transition creates. With the opportunity to ask questions directly of service providers and community agencies, these fairs give clients and their families the resources needed to make this important transition a positive experience. For more information and resources about adult transition, don't forget the Department of Developmental Services Client Corner: <https://dds.ca.gov/ConsumerCorner/Home.cfm>



'Yes We Can' Affirms Best Practices in Sonoma County

Welcoming a full house to Santa Rosa's Flamingo Hotel for the 10th Annual Sonoma County Best Practices Awards Breakfast, Adam Brown, Executive Director of the Disability Services and Legal Center, reiterated what everyone knows, "the greatest step towards independence is employment." But with the highest rates of unemployment, individuals with disabilities in Sonoma County know it takes a whole community to change hiring practices and employers perceptions, and increase the number of individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

This year the annual event was MC'ed by Shirlee Zane, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, who brought passion and commitment to recognizing businesses and individuals for their exemplary work. Encouraging everyone to assert themselves with a "Yes We Can!" shout-out and various intervals, Shirley brought presenters to the podium who gave awards for Best Practices. This year businesses honored for the Best Practices included Safeway, G & G Market, Santa Rosa junior College, and Kaiser Permanente. Individuals honored for their excellent work included NBRC clients Dr. Wayne Downey and Ross Long.

Dr. Downey works as adjunct professor at Santa Rosa Junior College, where he teaches psychology. Despite his inability to use his hands and his non-ambulatory status, Dr. Wayne Downey worked tirelessly to complete his PhD and become employed as a psychology professor. Joking about the initial reaction some of his students display upon seeing him for the first time, Dr. Downey's witty sense of humor reinforces his commitment to a fully integrated life.

Ross Long works as the Volunteer Advocacy Services Project Coordinator at Sonoma Developmental Center.

With 130 residents in need of advocates, Ross recruits, trains, and supervises 16 volunteer advocates and is the primary advocate himself for 30 residents. Despite his significant impairments, Ross works tirelessly to ensure residents' rights, choices, and opportunities for transitioning into the community are honored and respected.

Emphasizing the goal of "promoting and encouraging the hiring of people with disabilities," the Sonoma County Mayor's Committee President, NBRC's Eric Marin, recognized "there have been great strides in advancing rights" and "employment opportunities." But he reminded everyone that although Disability Awareness Month is recognized in October, "the awareness does not have to end. The intent of making this awareness month is that the awareness may go with you throughout the year . . . May you take with you the inspiration to 'go beyond any limit that faces you'."



Ross Long accepts the honor



Dr. Wayne Downey brings welcome change to SRJC Psychology Dept.

A SPECIAL GIFT

The Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting in Sacramento is a special event this year for NBRC. Every year the Department of Developmental Services asks one regional center to select a child between the ages of 5 and 9 to help the Governor light the Christmas tree. This year NBRC was asked and after reviewing all the children NBRC provides services for, a special child was selected; Angel Valencia-Ceja. From Vallejo, eight year-old Angel represented over 260,000 individuals receiving services from California's 21 regional centers. An opportunity of a lifetime, Angel hung a special ornament



and lit up the state capitol. See the full story on NBRC's [YouTube channel](#) or on our new website feature story at [nbrc.net](#)

COMMUNITY INPUT

NBRC strives for both transparency and accountability in our business practices, and those principles are put to the test annually with our Ethnic Expenditure Report. Passed in January 2013, per statute, 4519.5 ©, by December 31, 2013 each regional center shall post expenditure data on its website and have public input meetings to collect stakeholder input. This data must reflect expenditures and authorization utilization categorized by ethnicity and language groups, and broken out by age groups. With the intent of ensuring service coordination is provided equitably across ethnic groups and language barriers do not impact service coordination negatively, NBRC is holding two public input meetings: February 20th at NBRC 2013 Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa from 5:00-7:00pm, and Wednesday March 5th at the Napa office, 10 Executive Ct., Napa, also from 5:00-7:00pm. Pamela Madden-Krall will deliver a presentation about the data and facilitate community input; NBRC's data is also posted on our website's [transparency page](#) at [nbrc.net](#).

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES: EMPLOYMENT FIRST & SELF DETERMINATION

Two significant pieces of legislation will impact clients in the near future: Employment First (AB 1041) and Self Determination.

Employment First, moving across the country and implemented in many states, has arrived in California: In October of 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB1041, the Employment First law. This means that every adult (18 and above) who receives regional center services has the right to get support to get a job. Specifically, "it is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities." What this means for NBRC clients is that their planning team will be advocating first for jobs and employment support in developing adult transition plans. Why is this legislation important? "So people with developmental disabilities can have lives like

people who do not have disabilities," says Area Board IV.

Likewise Self Determination has gained momentum across the nation. A shift in the way budgets for services are administered, Self Determination gives clients or families of children with disabilities the ability to gain more control of their budgets. Utilizing a Financial Management Service (FMS), clients and their families will work with a facilitator to find the services needed, and then have payments administered through the FMS. But dependent on a Federal Waiver, the State has until December 2014 to apply, and then if the waiver is approved regulations will need to be created for the administration of Self Determination. If you'd like more information, go to [CapitolTrack.com](#)

Key

Legislation

- Competitive Employment given first priority
- Self Determination shifts locus of control
- Waiver Due December 2014

NORTH BAY HOUSING COALITION & NBRC MAKES DREAM COME TRUE

With much determination and persistence, Anthony and Sonia Jones and their two daughters finally fulfilled their dream of owning a home. Just before Christmas they moved into their 3-bedroom, 2-bath home in Vallejo. An accomplishment that was over 10 years in the making, it was done only through the collaborative efforts of many committed agencies and staff.

While buying a home is seldom a simple transaction, for the Jones this was a unique commitment forged between multiple partnerships including: The City of Vallejo Public Housing Authority (VPHA); The Arc Solano; North Bay Regional Center; Solano Diversified Services (SDS); North Bay Housing Coalition (NBHC); and Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC).

Sonia's Service Coordinator at NBRC, Heidi

Oestreich, is an expert at coordinating community resources to meet her clients' needs, and her support and advocacy for Sonia carried the Jones' through the ups and downs over many years. When Maria Gonzales of the VPHA came on board, she helped the Jones family creatively navigate through a maze of paperwork, rules and regulations so they could use their Section 8 Voucher as part of their mortgage payment.

Patti Uplinger of NBHC demonstrated her commitment and expertise throughout the process, accompanying the Jones' on many appointments with the VPHA and CHDC to understand what they were getting into and complete the paperwork. With a unique combination of

funding leveraged through Section 8, CHDC, and a generous housing grant coordinated through NBHC. At last the Jones family were given the key to their own home: a dream come true.

After identifying repairs and some remodeling was needed, CHDC also contributed to the funding needed for these improvements, further enhancing the magic of this journey.

When the day arrive for the big move, The Arc Solano and SDS (where Anthony works) jumped on board and helped. Mike Huckins, the Executive Director of The Arc Solano, climbed up and down three flights of stairs at the old apartment to get everything out.

On a warm day in December everyone gathered for a housewarming party and enjoyed the tour of the home. The Jones family expressed their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for a dream fought long and hard for, and accomplished only through the collaborative efforts of a small village of caring individuals.

A Home of their Own



PREFERRED LANGUAGE CHOICES

Another round of legislative bills and trailer bill language impacting regional center services recently became known as the "Preferred Language" bill. Governor Brown signed SB 555 by Senator Lou Correa (Democrat - Santa Ana), requiring the 21 regional centers to provide communications related to a person with developmental disabilities (and their families) in their "preferred language" as part of the Individual Program Plan (IPP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Correa previously said his bill was needed because people with developmental dis-

abilities, "...health disparities can result in significant health, social, and economic consequences," and that "...California's diverse language and ethnic communities account for about 60% of its population and that ethnic disparities exist within the regional center system." Correa contended that people with developmental disabilities receiving services from regional centers - and their family members who are limited English proficient "...have the right to get culturally and linguistically competent information about the Individual Program Plan (IPP) and the Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) processes and procedures," adding that "...health literacy is essential to promoting quality of

life, health development, and healthy behaviors across all groups and life stages." For clients and their families, this means that you can request that the IPP and/or IFSP be provided to you in a language of your choice. Using a Preferred Language Choice form, NBRC Service Coordinators will provide clients and their families the opportunity to choose to have communications related to the IPP/IFSP provided in the language of their choice. NBRC supports equitable access and coordination of services across various ethnic groups and encourages clients and their families to make every effort to utilize this important communication tool.

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Mission: The purpose of North Bay Regional Center is to assist people with developmental disabilities or at risk for developmental disabilities in the North Bay Area to obtain services and supports they need to live as other people live in the community.

COMMUNITY & RESOURCE LINKS

Department of Developmental Services

www.dds.ca.gov

Transition to Adult Life: www.dds.ca.gov/WeInclude/JobSeekersTransition.cfm

Health and safety information to individuals with DD
www.ddssafety.net

Appeals, Complaints & Comments:

www.dds.cahwnet.gov/Complaints/Home.cfm#es

Lanterman Act & Title 17: dds.cahwnet.gov/Statutes/LawsRegs/Home.cfm

Early Start Home Page: www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart/

Resource Materials: www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart/ResourceMaterials.cfm#parents

Spanish Resources: www.dds.ca.gov/Spanish/Home.cfm

Sonoma County: www.sonoma-county.org/

Solano County Services www.co.solano.ca.us/services/default.asp

Napa County: www.countyofnapa.org.

Social Security: www.ssa.gov/

Supplemental Security Income –SSI: www.ssa.gov/pgm/links_ssi.htm

Benefits for Adults Disabled Before 22: www.ssa.gov/dibplan/dacpage.shtml

Survivor's Benefits: www.ssa.gov/ww&os2.htm

Employment Support for Young People: www.ssa.gov/pubs/10026.html#employment

Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services:
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep/index.html>

The Riot(Rights & Advocacy:) www.hsri.org/leaders/theriot/index.html National Conversation on Healthy Relationships CD-Rom Available

CONSUMER INFORMATION

Read more about transitioning to adulthood:

Software Testing Company Relies on Employees with Aspergers <http://healthland.time.com/2011/09/22/a-software-testing-company-relies-on-employees-aspergers-skills/>

Autistic and Seeking a Place in the Adult World http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/18/us/autistic-and-seeking-a-place-in-an-adult-world.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper

Far Below Minimum Wage– the pros and cons of sub-minimal wages www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2011/05/22/far-below-minimum-wage.html

Helping Youth Develop Soft Skills For Job Success
<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/information-brief-28>

ParentsCAN Family Resource Center
ParentsCAN.org

Matrix Family Resource Center
Matrixparents.org

What we do for ourselves vanishes with us; what we do for others remains and is immortal