

# LOS ANGELES SELF-ADVOCACY NEWS

By And For People With Developmental Disabilities

February, 2008

Issue 4

## How to File Complaints with Access Services By Margaret Barcelo

When a rider is experiencing a problem with Access Services, the first thing they should do is call the Customer Services Center at 800-827-0829 (press 1) between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

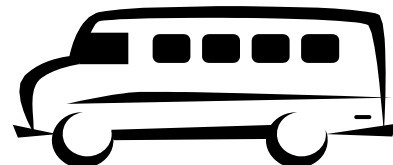
Have the following information handy and available when calling to file a complaint. The more information you have to give to the Customer Service operator, it will be better for you and the person that is taking down your complaint:

- A) Rider's Name and Access Identification Number
- B) Date of the incident
- C) Requested Pick-up time
- D) Scheduled pick-up time
- E) Actual pick-up time
- F) Pick-up location
- G) Driver's name and vehicle number (if applicable)
- H) Summary of what happened
- I) Any other useful information that may assist in the investigation.
- J) Remember, it is wise to report any complaints that you have as

soon as possible. It usually takes about one or two weeks to process the complaint. The rider will get a response by letter or a phone call by Access Services at the rider's request.

### More Tips for Using Access Services (ASI).....

- ASI has a back-up system if your ride does not come on time. They can find another vehicle from another provider, or send a vehicle to wait with you, or figure out something else. If your ride is past the 20-minute window, call the Operations Monitoring Center 24 hours a day at 1-800-827-0829 (Press 2).
- ASI vehicles are busiest on weekdays from 7 AM to 10 AM and from 1 PM to 5 PM. When possible, try to schedule your trips before, in between, or after these times.



# People With Disabilities and Crime

By Wesley Witherspoon

This is a topic many people do not want to talk about because of the pain: physically and/or mentally. Crime is important to know about because it happens to people with disabilities more than people without disabilities. Please don't be afraid to report a crime. If you do not report a crime, other people can get hurt too. The three groups of people that are more likely to be a victim of a crime are senior citizens, children, and people with disabilities.

The USC UCEDD has a free training for self-advocacy groups to understand what is a crime, and safety tips. If your organization is interested in a training, you can contact the USC UCEDD at 323-361-6097. Also, people with disabilities can ask for a self-defense class.



## The First Annual “An Inclusive Life” Conference

Area Board 10 in partnership with all seven Los Angeles County Regional Centers is sponsoring the First Annual “An Inclusive Life” Conference on Tuesday, May 13, 2008 at the California Endowment’s Center for Healthy Communities in downtown Los Angeles. The one-day conference will focus on new and innovative initiatives and strategies that help people with developmental disabilities live and work more independently in the community.

The keynote speaker will be Cary Griffin of Griffin-Hammis Associates who will share his extensive knowledge and experience about Customized Employment and how this new strategy is helping people find and keep real jobs for real pay. Breakout topics include: Work and Benefits; Post-Secondary Education; Leadership and Advocacy; Making Friends and Moving from School to Adulthood; Assistive Technology and Facilitated Communication; and Self-Directed Services. There will also be a wine and cheese reception immediately following the conference.

Registration forms and brochure will be available in March. Registration fees are \$50 for consumers and family members and \$100 for professionals. Area Board 10 will be providing fee waivers for consumers who cannot afford to pay. Please mark your calendars. For further information, please

contact Bruce Harrell at Area Board 10 at 818-543-4631.

## Self-Advocacy Group

### Spotlight



In this issue, we are featuring People First of Whittier which actually includes 7 separate self-advocacy groups for people who receive services from CAPC, Inc. These groups have as many as 20 members and as few as 3, but most average between 10 and 12 self-advocates. Five of the groups meet weekly and 2 meet every other week.

What makes People First of Whittier's groups unique is that there is a group for everyone. One is an all male group; one is an all female group; one is more geared for people living independently; one is for younger members from 20 to 30; one has members whose ages range from 25 to 40; etc. New members can try out different groups to decide which one they feel most comfortable in. If they attend the same group 3 times, then that group votes them in as a member.

Each group holds elections every six months for President, Secretary, and Treasurer. That way, many members get a chance to be officers and learn leadership skills.

All of the groups meet at locations in the community, either at community centers, members' homes, members' churches, and one meets at the Red Cross.

Their facilitator, Melissa Hernandez, has been assisting the groups for about a year, although some of the groups are more than 10 years old. For more information about

People First of Whittier, contact Melissa at 562-693-8826.

## Employment Editorial...

### S. B. 1270

### Comes to Pasadena

By Tom Fambro

The 4<sup>th</sup> recommendation of S.B. 1270 refers to employment of persons with disabilities: increasing jobs in the community, and improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

Now at Foothill Vocational Opportunities, a transitional workshop in Pasadena, classes have started to prepare the clients to move out of the workshop into the community and into real jobs. There are classes in grooming and hygiene, communications, social skills, interviewing skills, etc.

Since many of the clients have only worked in the workshop, this is a ground breaker. The state is demanding that persons with disabilities be moved into the community. My guess is that it is a result of 1270. Therefore, 1270 has come to Pasadena.

Los Angeles Self-Advocacy News is published by the Self-Advocacy Board of Los Angeles County with help from Area Board 10.

Our officers are: President – Daniel Redmond; Vice-President – Colette Madore; Secretary – Carmen Redmond; Treasurer – Dennis O'Brien; Sergeant-at-Arms – Tom Fambro.

You are invited to send articles, stories, or letters by May 1 for our June issue. Send them to: Self-Advocacy Board, 411 N. Central Ave., Suite 620, Glendale, CA. 91203.

Phone: 818-543-4631. Email: [sablac@earthlink.net](mailto:sablac@earthlink.net)  
(We will do our best, but we cannot guarantee that we will have space to include all materials sent to us.)

## Dear Aggie!



*Dear Aggie: I have a job working at Grouse's store since I graduated from high school. I strongly feel I am a very responsible 21 year old young man. I take the public bus almost everywhere I go. I live with my parents, and younger brother and sister.*

*How can I convince my parents that I am ready to move out and get my own place? The problem is that I need my own space and I don't get any privacy at home.*

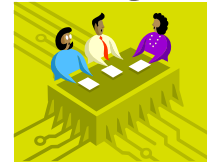
*Sincerely yours, Fuse rated*

Dear Fuse rated: I am proud to hear that you are a responsible adult that has a job and wants to move out from your parents' home. I am wondering if your parents see you as a responsible person. Have you contributed toward any household expenses like rent, telephone, or food? You have to make sure that you have enough money saved to move out, including your first and last month's payment for your rent. Then you have to decide if you would like to have a room-mate or not.

It is not that easy to find a place to live that you can afford. It's very expensive in the real world. I wish you good luck in the decision you make when the time comes.

*(Aggie is our new columnist who will answer your questions about rights and self-advocacy in each newsletter. Address your letters to: Aggie, Area Board 10, at the address on the right.)*

## It's Conference Planning Time Again!!



We have set the date for the 10<sup>th</sup> Los Angeles Self-Advocacy conference for September 27-28, 2008. We'll be celebrating 20 years of self-advocacy in L. A.! It will again be held at the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Airport Hotel.

Many people sent in ideas for naming the conference. The Self-Advocacy Board voted in November and the winning title is:

My Thoughts, My Voice, My Life

This winning name was submitted by 15-year old Allison Liao who is becoming active as a student self-advocate! Thank you, Allison. Allison will be presented a prize at the conference.

More details about the conference will be available soon. In the meantime, it is not too early to start saving your money now!

## Next Self-Advocacy Board Meeting

February 9, 2008

1:00 to 4:00 PM

Area Board 10 office

411 N. Central Ave., Suite 620

Glendale, CA. 91203

Questions? Call 310-439-1425 or 818-543-4631.