

I Linå'la-ta OUR LIFE



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Administration on Intellectual Developmental Disabilities Tri-Agency



DISID Hosts Guam ADA Conference Estorian Lynn Tydingco



Sanchez, attorney, and Deputy Chief of the Disability Rights Section, U.S. Department of Justice, in Washington, D.C. and Barbara Judy, President of the National Association of ADA Coordinators (NAADAC), former Director and founder of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), and ADA Coordinator/504 Compliance Officer at West Virginia University. Ms. Judy is one of the leading authorities on reasonable workplace accommodations.

Also presenting was Beth Loy, Principal Consultant and Webmaster for the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor in Morgantown, West Virginia.

The main focus of the presentations covered a definition of "disability," principles of the ADA, what is covered under the law, and the implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA).

The panel of presenters facilitated a positive and interactive discussion with the audience, answering numerous questions and clarifying the laws. Each speaker had a great sense of humor that kept the presentations lively.

According to Ben Servino, DISID Director, the off-island speakers' trips to Guam were sponsored by the Governor's Department of Interior Impact Assistance Grant, the Bank of Guam, and the DISID ADA Compliance staff. Ben indicated that he is working towards the ADA Conference becoming an annual event.

The DISID Director and panelists were also guests on a special televised episode of The SuperFriends Show on Newstalk K57 and Channel 6.

ADA Conference organizers pose with the keynote speakers on January 10. Bottom Row (L-R): Tavita Faasualie, John Kimmons, Evelyn Duenas. Front Row (on the stage, L-R): Hank Parker, Alberto Ruiz Sanchez, Barbara Judy, and Beth Loy. Second Row: Gina Arca, Lou Mendiola, Lisa Ogo, Rudy Ignacio, Lynn Tydingco, Zeni Natividad, Jacob Cruz. Back Row (L-R): Carla Torres, Margaret Cruz, Andrew Tydingco, Marie Libria, Jared Leon Guerrero, & Carol Cabiles.

In an effort to increase public awareness on the importance of physical and programmatic accessibility on our island, the Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities (DISID) hosted the Guam American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Conference from January 9-11 at the Hotel Nikko. With over 200 self-advocates, government agency leaders, and ADA Compliance Officers from both the government and private sectors attending, participants developed a better understanding of the ADA laws and how to make programs and workplaces more accessible and ADA compliant.

Making this conference extra special were three national experts on the ADA who served as keynote presenters. The speakers included Alberto Ruis

“Just call me Yev”

Estorian Lynn Tydingco



Over 70 individuals with disabilities attended Dr. Yevgeniy “Yev” Tetyukhin’s first lecture, held on January 7 at the University of Guam’s Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero School of Business and Public Administration Building.

Guam recently was treated to a lively and inspiring series of special lectures

and appearances on disability-related topics by Yevgeniy Tetyukhin, PhD, a Russian Fulbright Scholar and University Professor in Kazakhstan. Dr. Tetyukhin, better known as “Yev,” is also a Disability Advocate, Wheelchair Athlete, and Professor of Languages, Civics, and Multiculturalism.

Formerly a part of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan historically views their citizens with disabilities as “invalids” who have no rights and are secluded from society. Persons with disabilities for the most part, were not educated or employed. There were no accessible streets or buildings.

At the age of three, Yev was completely paralyzed from polio. With the love, support, and persistence of his parents, Yev was able to overcome many barriers. His father handcrafted homemade crutches for him and eventually Yev gained the use of his upper body and acquired great mobility. His mother was a firm believer that knowledge is power and taught him to read at an early age. They encouraged him to live as “normal a life” as possible.

Faced with many challenges, Yev pursued his education. He was committed to educating and empowering other

persons with disabilities with self-advocacy and self-determination skills. Yev advocated with the government and his country for persons with disabilities to be included and integrated into the community. The KGB disliked Yev and opposed his efforts.

Advocacy is a fairly new concept in his country. After twenty years, progress is finally evident. New buildings are now being regulated to be accessible. Yev resides on the fifth floor of his apartment building with no elevators. With the aid of his crutches, he maneuvers up and down five flights of stairs everyday.

Yev’s inspiring lecture with the Self-Advocates emphasized the importance of accepting and embracing your disability. In addition, acquiring the knowledge and skills of self-advocacy and self-determination will empower persons with disabilities to achieve their goals of inclusion, integration, and independence.

During his interview with Lynn and Andrew Tydingco on The SuperFriends Show on Newstalk K57 Radio, there was a revelation that as leaders in Guam’s Self-Advocacy movement, Yev was our counterpart in Kazakhstan. It was also expressed that self-advocacy, the ability to speak and interact with people in an assertive manner, strength, and having a great sense of humor are essential to being an awesome Self-Advocate!

Love Is In The Air! A Happy Valentine's Day Story By Cecilia "Lee" Cruz

If you're ready to fall in love, don't duck this Valentine's Day when cupid's arrow comes a' flyin'!

Scan back to February 14, 2010.

Cupid's arrow is about to hit Malesso-resident Gloria as she tuned in to KUAM's ISLA 610 radio. She listened to Cupid's helper, Glen Quinata, as he shared on the airwaves about his friend who was single and looking for a single woman to be friends with.

Something touched her heart. Gloria explained, "I'm not the type to call like that," but call she did. She laughs as she recalls that she hung up the first time before the phone rang.



Gloria V. Ungacta & Frank T. Ungacta

She said she waited about 30 to 45 minutes before she got enough courage to call again. Glen answered the call

and handed the phone to his friend and Gloria's now-husband, Frank Taitano Ungacta, Jr., fondly called "Kool Aid" by friends.

The rest, as they say, is history. Frank T. and Gloria V. Ungacta were married on June 24, 2010. Gloria picked her parents' wedding anniversary as her wedding date. "They were married a long time," she said and she is hoping for the same.

See Frank's story on the "Opening Doors" column.

Happy Valentine's Day everyone!

Valentine's Story II: Cupid Strikes Dancers



The love of dancing and having a good time brought two members of SiñA (Self-Advocates in Action) together on March 21, 2009. (L-R): Hike and Noel Lazaga first met at the Chamorro Village during the Wednesday evening Center Stage event which features a live band and dancing. After a 12 month courtship, they were married on April 7, 2010.

Rip Van Winkle Awakes from a 9 year Sleep By Marlon R. Molinos



Marlon Molinos (left) works on editing the weekly KPRG radio series *Beyond the Fence*, with Dr. Vivian Dames (right) the show's host and narrator.

Many may think that the first thing a person should do after high school is go straight into college and continue their education so they can get a great job. That was definitely the case for me, due to the fact that as I went through the motions of each grade level, the constant encouragement to go to college from my family was hard to overcome.

I decided to register for class over the summer of 1997, the same year I graduated high school. Continuously attending school from Summer 1997 to Spring 1998 eventually caused a burn out effect in me, forcing me to reconsider whether school was even a viable and worthwhile decision for me to continue.

So I decided to take a break, not knowing whether if I ever was going to return, or even reconsider going back to school. Working at Asmuyao Community School from 2002 to 2011 was definitely a great and somewhat challenging experience to be a part of because of the different tasks I had to undertake as their office manager. As some would say, there were some good days and there

were some bad days, but truthfully, it felt like this was a normal thing.

Coming to the decision of leaving a job that was, in a sense, my safety net, was a very hard decision to make. Not knowing what life had in store for me, had me thinking and asking myself, "Is this really it?" Being in this job, I was not able to go any further than where I was at the time which left me with a sense of feeling unfulfilled.

Returning to UOG was an adventure of its own. From the re-enrollment process to the first day of class, the one thing that lingered in my mind was my age being 33, which at the time made me question whether I could relate with the younger generation. Seeing only a hand full of people from my generation added to the insecurity of being "unrelatable."

Now with two semesters under my belt, I have a lot more confidence in my decision to return to college. I am more focused and determined to get my Bachelor's in Communications. The decision to take no more than two classes per semester and avoiding taking classes during intercession and summer has made me feel more at ease with my decision. What happens next is up to time itself.

Becoming A Better You Through Advocacy

By Maria Bontogon



Maria Bontogon, a Simon Sanchez High School junior, shared her successes with self-advocacy during IEP meetings, followed by a challenge to others to step forward to direct change in their lives.

We all know life is not a success-only journey. But are you someone willing to plunge into the unknown if necessary to live and breathe whatever you are aiming for to be a winner? When challenges arise, a winner doesn't tend to just go through the motions. Instead...a winner will passionately invest in advocacy to create a sustained atmosphere of success. With advocacy skills, it's kind of like you're equipped with a "survival kit"—armed and ready to make your rights and goals a reality! Challenges might still be ahead, but many self-advocates attained success and I'm proud to say I'm one of them.

I was chosen as one of the participants to attend in Hawaii's Pacific Rim International (PACRIM) conference and Self-Advocacy Summit in March 2012. From there, I gained increased sensitivity and awareness about disability and diversity issues from the various types of advocates. Suddenly, I recognized the significance and value of self-advocacy! Things started there. After the trip, I worked on an essay as a reflection on what I have learned and submitted it to Ms. Ginger Porter. Although it needed some editing, it became my first contribution to the newsletter, *I'Linalata* (Our Life), which gave birth to my first article! Then, Lynn and Andrew invited us to their SuperFriends radio show on K57 to discuss the advocacy experience we had.

The advocacy workshop I attended in April 2012, led by Self-Advocates in Action (SiñA) President and Vice-president Lynn and Andrew Tydingco and adviser Ms. Ginger Porter, strengthened my self-empowerment, knowledge, and skills. Next thing I knew, I'm already a member of this non-profit advocacy organization.

In July 2012, SiñA launched a concert – SiñA ta Kanta – to help raise money for the Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) conference. We showcased our talents like ukelele and piano playing, singing, and dancing. Before the concert, I was interviewed for a PDN article to help raise awareness about the concert and conference. Then I talked about my advocacy story again in the SuperFriends

radio show. It's a show creating optimism for people with special needs. Eager to illustrate the passion and power of advocacy, I wrote two more articles titled: "You Made SiñA ta Kanta Happen" and "Advocacy Leads to Bookshare.org"—published in *I'Linalata*. One of my passions is hitting books, so I joined bookshare's international reading contest where I won 2nd place out of 245 participants submitting over 775 entries. This inspired me to create yet another article—"Bookshare's Express Summer Reading Contest" published in GLSC's newsletter.

Unsurprisingly handy, I was able to use advocacy in solving my class schedule issues during the start of the school year and on some other school situations as well. It's awesome! Youth advocacy chapters are on-going in schools through SiñA's effort to spread advocacy. Molliann Campos and I were selected to lead in our respective schools. No doubt, it will create a unique positive impact...new directions for school youth. Also recently, SiñA held an advocacy consumer conference at the Guam Marriott Resort & Spa and Self-advocates like me shared our advocacy stories.

Just imagine all the advocacy efforts that took place. I survived and thrived using advocacy...so can you! It is an important ally...one way to fight apathy in this world. Don't you agree?

This article was first published in the December 2012 issue of I Tellai, Guam CEDDERS' quarterly newsletter.

Go To The Source! DVR Client Realizes Dream

By Cecilia "Lee" Cruz



Frank Taitano Ungacta, Jr. navigates the grounds of the Ho'opono Center for the Blind campus in Honolulu. Frank is a new trainee at the Center, which provides instruction in activities of daily living, technology, employment, and orientation and mobility to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

The next time you want to know something, really know something, go to the source. That is exactly what Frank Taitano Ungacta, Jr. did as he realized his dream to receive blind rehabilitative training in Hawai'i at the Ho'opono School for the Blind.

The process took four years and four vocational counselors, but Frank did not lose sight of his vision. The 38-year-old Malesso resident advises others in the island's blind community, "Never give up, because I was on the verge of giving up, but I kept pushing my counselors. In a telephone interview from his dialysis chair in Honolulu Frank said, "Unfortunately we don't have (this program) back home, but maybe one day, minus today, things will change."

Frank became blind literally overnight in November 2008 due to diabetic retinopathy. He started his intake

process with Guam's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in December 2008. Between now and then, Frank took a leadership role in establishing a support, education and advocacy organization of, for, and by the island's blind called "New Vision, Guam! (NVG)" He held the office of vice president of NVG and was a founding board member. It is fitting that January 3, 2013 marked his departure for training, since that date also marked exactly one year since NVG became officially chartered as a non-profit organization.

Under the name Kool Aid, Frank is best known for his constant presence on the air waves of talk radio K57. He made it a point to keep in the public's mind the need for services for the blind on Guam.

Even from Honolulu, he continues to keep radio celebrities Ray Gibson and Patti Arroyo, along with Super Friends show hosts Andrew and Lynn Tydingco up-to-date on the progress of his training live on the air.

Frank says that his favorite class at Ho'opono is his technology class where he is learning non-visual access of computers. He laughed lightly as he reports that he is up to the letters "f" and "g" in Braille class.

As he explains about his progress, "Everywhere I went (on Guam), I carried my wife's shoulder. My wife would guide me to appointments, would guide me in the elevator, would guide me upstairs. I've been here four weeks already and I'm doing that all on my own."

What is the first thing he looks forward to upon returning to Guam? "I'm looking forward to my wife. I miss my wife so much, you don't know how much I miss her... and when I come back the first thing I'm going to do is kiss her and hug her and tell her thank you for letting me go to this program," Frank said tearfully. "That's what I'm going to do when I come home. Then I'm going to cook her a meal that she can enjoy. Since I got married my wife's been cooking, and guiding me, and taking care of me. So, that's also why I'm here, to help my wife help me help us."

"When I got blind and was on dialysis, I never thought I'll get married or I'll never have a family, or have a life, and my wife showed me that miracles can happen." Frank said.

Guam DD Council Training

By Marie Libria, Guam Developmental Disabilities Council



Demonstrating self advocacy skills, some members of the Executive Board volunteered to take the lead to conduct the Council training on December 12 with the guidance of the Executive Director. Training information included: The Spirit and Intent of the DD Act, By-Laws, and Robert's Rules. Attending the training were: Front row (L-R): Moses Puas, Evelyn Duenas, Noel Lazaga, Gina Arca, Josie Cortez, Lisa Ogo. Back row (L-R): Marie Luarca, Marie Libria, Rosanne Ada, Executive Director, Hikie Lazaga, Jeng Magana, Lou Mendiola, Josephine Guerrero, Carol Darlow, Evelyn Manibusan, MayLynn Fejaran, Rudy Colet, Erlinda Tydingco, Chairperson, Jody Pizarro, Terrie Fejarang, and Andrew Tydingco.



Members of the Executive Council led the DD Council Training Workshop held on December 12, 2012. L-R: Erlinda Tydingco, Chairperson; Andrew Tydingco, Adult Committee Vice Chair; Josie Cortez, Corresponding Secretary; Esther "Gina" Arca, First Vice Chairperson; and Evelyn Duenas, Second Vice Chairperson.



The Guam Developmental Disabilities Council held its General Membership Meeting on November 28, 2012 at the Holiday Resort & Spa. Agency reports were provided by the Department of Public Health and Social Services in the areas of the Maternal Child Health, Medicaid, and Senior Citizen programs.



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Comments may be sent to:
Guam CEDDERS
Office of Academic & Student Affairs
University of Guam,
UOG Station Mangilao, Guam 96923
Phone: 735-2480/1 Fax: 734-5709 TTY: 734-6531
Email: terrie.fejarang@guamcedders.org

Guam DDC Executive Director: Rosanne Ada
GLSC-DLC Director: Harold Parker, Esq.
UOG CEDDERS Director: Heidi San Nicolas, Ph.D.
Editors: Ginger Porter, Terrie Fejarang
Layout & Design: Sean Lizama

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Alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, audio tapes, or electronic file) of **I Linå'lå-ta** will be made available upon request. Please contact Margaret Johnson at 735-2477 (v) or 734-6531 (TTY), or email: margie.johnson@guamcedders.org for more information.

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Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY - SEPTEMBER 2013

Feb 14 PADD Council Meeting, 4pm - 5pm, Sinajaña Senior Citizens Center. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Feb 20 Executive Committee Meeting, 9am - 10am, GDDC Conference Room. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Feb 21 Disability Sensitivity Training, 8am - 5pm, DOA Training Room. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Feb 28 Guam CEDDERS Advisory Council Meeting, 3-5pm, Venue TBA. Call 735-2477 for more information.

Mar 4 Proclamation Signing, 10:30am, Governor's Office. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Mar 9 19th Annual GSAT Assistive Technology Fair, 10am - 3pm, Micronesia Mall. Call 735-2490 for more information.

Mar 13 DD Council, General Membership Meeting, 11am - 2pm, Hilton Guam Resort & Spa. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Mar 21 SRC Meeting, 9am - 3pm, DVR Conference Room, 6th floor DNA building. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Mar 23 19th Annual GSAT Assistive Technology Conference, 8am - 3:30pm, The Westin Resort Guam, Call 735-2490 for more information.

Mar 30, Apr 6, Apr 20 Self-Advocacy Workshops, 10am-2:30pm, Hs. 19 Dean's Circle, UOG. For more information call 735-2478.

Apr 13 Autism Community Together (ACT) Fair, 10am - 2pm, Agana Shopping Center. Call 735-9127 for more information.

Apr 17 Executive Committee Meeting, 9am - 10am, GDDC Conference Room. Call 735-9127 for more information.

May 25, Jun 1, Jun 15 Self-Advocacy Workshops, 10am-2:30pm, Hs. 19 Dean's Circle, UOG. For more information call 735-2478.

Sep 14, 21, Oct 5 Self-Advocacy Workshops, 10am-2:30pm, Hs. 19 Dean's Circle, UOG. For more information call 735-2478.

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19TH ANNUAL GSAT ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE & FAIR

FAIR
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2013
10 AM - 2 PM, CENTER COURT, MICRONESIA MALL

CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2013
8 AM - 3:30 PM, SOMNAK BALLROOM, THE WESTIN RESORT GUAM

To register, for more information,
or to request for reasonable accommodations, contact:
Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)
Tel: 735-2490 TTY: 735-2491
Email: gsat@guamcedders.org



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