

I Linå'la-ta OUR LIFE



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Administration on Developmental Disabilities Tri-Agency



AT Loan Helps Small Business Grow By Ginger Porter



Noel Lazaga and his wife, Hikie Lazaga, are proud owners of a truck purchased through a loan from the Get Guam Teleworking (GGT) Loan Program. For more information on obtaining assistance through this program, call Carla Torres, Assistive Technology Specialist, University of Guam CEDDERS - GSAT, at 735-2490.

Dreams do come true! Just ask Noel Lazaga who has turned his dream into a reality with the establishment of his own yard maintenance business, 4N Yard & Maintenance Services. Equipped with new assertiveness skills acquired through the Self- Advocacy Workshop, Noel became an entrepreneur with the help and support of the Get Guam Teleworking Loan Program and the services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Guam CEDDERS.

The road to running his own business required hard work, persistence, and focus. He first requested that his VR case be reopened and then participated in trainings from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Later he learned business terms, developed a business plan, obtained quotes for equipment and services, and

applied for a loan. After obtaining a business license, he developed a customer base.

Noel has learned the ups and downs of loan applications, record keeping, purchasing, advertising, customer satisfaction, and monthly profit and loss. He uses his network of resources, including the SBDC, Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT), and his self-advocacy mentor, to keep him guided in the right direction on this new venture, routinely taking a look at his net income.

Noel has this advice for others who have self-employment goals: "If you need help, SBDC will help. You know, I have problems now, but little by little you get your problems fixed. ...Go ahead and do it and be positive."

Letter to Governor Calvo

from Self-Advocates in Action (SiñA)

December 14, 2010

Hafa Adai Governor-elect Calvo and Lieutenant Governor-elect Tenorio:

As members of SiñA, Self-Advocates in Action, we take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Guam.

We share in your commitment to achieve a higher level of customer service, accountability, and productivity in the months to come. In particular, we are committed to the realization of a higher quality of services and programs for individuals with disabilities.

Let our dictum, **"Nothing about us, without us,"** be the guiding principle for the design and setting of the groundwork for services and programs centered on INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES, rather than the institutional concept of isolation, segregation, and separation.

We embrace, uphold, and protect the right to self-determination in all facets of life, from independent living to innovative and meaningful vocational opportunities. We look forward to the necessary changes that are forthcoming so that these objectives and goals

can be realized. Specifically, we seek improvement of the leadership at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

As we look at individuals with the ability, aptitude, character and values reflective of SiñA's beliefs, and who have the vision and tenacity to effect this change, we forward the names of the following for your consideration for service: Ben Servino and Leah Rassier.

Both individuals have our confidence, and we consider them to be excellent candidates for leadership positions of the Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities and/or the present Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. We also seek the retention of Department of Labor Director, Maria Connelly.

We have requested that Mr. Servino and Ms. Rassier forward their resumes for your consideration.

We appreciate the opportunity extended to us to have our voices heard!

BIBA CALVO - TENORIO!

Best Regards,
SiñA, Self-Advocates in Action

"Nothing about us, without us"



Self-Advocacy workshop participants and facilitators pose for a group photo during their last session to commemorate their completion of the training. Self-Advocates who signed the letter to the governor are indicated by an asterisk*. Seated L – R: Erlinda Tydingco*, Leah Rassier, Evelyn Duenas* and Andrew Tydingco*. Standing L – R: Clinton Mesa, Lou Mesa*, Rodney Calimlim*, Beatrice Salas, Anthony Siguenza, Jesusino DeLizo*, Stephen Madarang, Tracy Fejeran*, Daniel Puno, Dawn Maka (Guam CIL), Marie Libria (DDC), Lisa Ogo*, and John Gogue, Jr. Not shown: Candace Perry*, Moses Puas*, Alan G. Salas*, Mike Torre*, Jason Lee Cruz*, Tavita Faasualie*, Bill Fuppul*, Rudy Ignacio*, Hikie Lujan Lazaga*, Noel Lazaga*, Marlon Molinas*, and Cecilia Perez Cruz*.

Defining Self: The Power of Words

By Cecilia "Lee" Cruz



Cecilia "Lee" Cruz

Poet, professor, writer, teacher and philosopher, Maya Angelou

believes that words are things and that one day we will design a way to measure their power (Oprah Winfrey Network, January 2011 broadcast). Words are all around us every day, in every way, from dawn

to dusk, and in our sleep. Words define how we look at the world and how we look at ourselves.

Who do you say that you are? Yup, there's homework. Write down three words that best describe how you see yourself. In a show of solidarity, I'll do the exercise with you. Here we go . . . I am contemplative, goofy, and adventurous.

Now, think of three words that best describe how you would like to be. We're designing your future here, so

take some time and thought. I'll do it with you. Here I go . . . this is harder . . . I would like to be successful, charitable, and just.

Time's up! How'd you do? Now, if you are a person with a disability, did any of your three words include your disability? My guess is that not one word had to do with your disability. I'd like to know what you wrote. Send me an email: openingdoorguam@gmail.com.

With a few simple words you have the power to define yourself, who you are; and to design yourself, who you want to be. We are, all of us, art in motion, words in motion. I challenge you to do this exercise every month this year. By December, you will have 33 words that paint the YOU that you desire to be. Surround yourself with these words, write them, say them, breathe them into you. Let your self-portrait in words be the measure of how powerful words can be. Happy New Year!

Thank You Mr. Cruz

By Terrie Fejarang



Manuel Cruz, Executive Director of the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council (GDDC), addresses the audience at the Tri-Agency Conference held in August 2010.

Manuel Cruz, Executive Director of the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council (GDDC)

resigned from his position effective January 1, 2011.

During the three and a half years of Mr. Cruz's tenure, the GDDC facilitated numerous activities and events to improve the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and promoted increased awareness of the many challenges they encounter. Some of these activities included conducting disability awareness workshops, writing letters to the editors of local newspapers, and facilitating policy changes in the areas of transportation, education, and employment. Mr. Cruz also was instrumental in having the GDDC provide referral assistance for individuals with disabilities to access services and housing available through Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority programs. Fostering collaborative efforts to hold conferences for individuals with disabilities and family members and co-sponsoring the printing of this newsletter are just some of the accomplishments that have taken place under his leadership.

Dangkulu na si Yu'os ma'ase', Mr. Cruz!

Self-Advocates Overcome Barriers By Ginger Porter

Have you ever attended a workshop or training, and thought, “Oh, that was really good,” but never really put the information provided to good use? You learned valuable information, but then didn’t really do anything with it? The Self-Advocacy Workshop for Individuals with Disabilities, sponsored by Guam CEDDERS and the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council, is a different experience. You learn a lot — but you work on putting the information you learn to immediate use.

In the Self-Advocacy Workshop, participants are encouraged to formulate a “project” to put their developing skills to use. The cool thing is, the outcomes

of these projects benefit the individuals involved, and oftentimes, other individuals, too.

For example, one project involved speaking to the management of a local theater to point out that people with visual impairments could not see their snack bar menu. This challenge was quickly overcome when the theater manager designed and produced a menu that was in large print and another that was in Braille. Other signage in the theater was made accessible for people who are blind or have low vision.

Below is a listing of other projects taken on by self-advocates that have yielded positive results.

2010 Self-Advocate Accomplishments

- ✓ Theater seating improved for persons using wheelchairs
- ✓ Two people obtained Social Security benefits
- ✓ A hostile workplace was resolved
- ✓ Respite care assignments were stabilized
- ✓ The Guam Police Department requested sensitivity training
- ✓ One person started a business
- ✓ Vocational Rehabilitation received authority to license blind vendors
- ✓ Library improved access for patrons who are blind
- ✓ Letters to improve access were sent to Sen. Rector and a medical clinic
- ✓ Petition letter opposing merger of DISID & DMHSA was submitted
- ✓ Letter of recommendations was sent to Governor’s Transition Team
- ✓ A person represented himself at a VR appeal
- ✓ Forum with agency leaders was held
- ✓ Forum with policy makers was held
- ✓ New Vision Guam was organized
- ✓ Steps taken to organize SiñA: Self Advocates in Action
- ✓ 6 persons trained to facilitate Self-Advocacy Workshop
- ✓ Accessible materials requested at VR and DISID
- ✓ Accessible materials requested for Health Certificate training/testing
- ✓ Free mailing of materials for the blind requested at US Postal Service
- ✓ Customer service checks conducted at Agana Post Office & Treasurer’s Office

Tri-Agency Parent Training

By Nieves Flores, Ed.D.



Carol Cabiles, Protection & Advocacy Program Coordinator, Guam Legal Services Corporation Disability Law Center, (standing), greets a parent and her son during one of the training sessions held for parents to provide in-depth information on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and their rights as parents and advocates for their child.

The Developmental Disabilities Tri-Agency, consisting of Guam Legal Services Corporation

Disability Law Center, the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council, and Guam CEDDERS, in collaboration with the Department of Education, is conducting a series of trainings for parents with children in special education. The trainings, which began in November, 2010, will run through February of 2011, and take place at various locations throughout the island.

With guidance and information provided at these trainings, the goal is for parents to be better equipped to advocate for their children. Some of the topics covered are parent rights, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and forms, and transition from high school to post-secondary settings and/or employment.

For more information on upcoming parent workshops, please contact 735-2562 or email nieves.flores@guamcedders.org



Nieves Flores, Ed.D., Guam CEDDERS Training Associate, provides tips to parents on how to advocate for their child who receives Special Education services during the training sessions for parents.

Assistive Technology Corner

By Carla Torres

Assistive technology used to be regarded as rehabilitative or prosthetic in nature, with the ultimate goal of providing individuals with disabilities the means for maintaining independence and the ability to earn a living.

For infants and children, the use of assistive technology was atypical because they are dependent upon adults and to expect them to earn a living would be absurd. Today, we realize how crucial it is to nurture their developmental capacities so that they can experience their own selves, their environment, and the person within them. This, in turn, leads to growth and learning. Today, we regard the purpose of assistive technology as increasing, maintaining, or improving one's functional capabilities.

Children with disabilities should be given the means to access developmentally appropriate experiences they would not otherwise have because of their disabilities, like playing with toys or reading books. Assistive technology can play a big role in giving them this access. Moreover, it doesn't always require high tech gadgets to accomplish such. In fact, many assistive technologies can be made with household, inexpensive knick knacks. Let's look at a few.

Card Holders

By eliminating the struggle to hold onto cards, a child can more easily participate and enjoy card games. Card holders can be made with a block of foam, plastic lids, or even a hairbrush. The foam and hairbrush could be affixed to the table surface using Velcro for stability.

Page Turners & Page Fluffers

To make page turning easier, objects like clothespins can be clipped on or elastic ponytails can be glued onto the pages at varying levels to enable a child to turn the pages independently. Other items that make great page turners are popsicle sticks for cardboard books, daily contact lens cases, and giant paperclips.

If you would like to learn more about low cost Assistive Technology solutions, please call GSAT at 735-2490/1 or stop by our office, House 19 Dean's Circle, UOG Campus.



Card Holders



Page Turners & Page Fluffers



Transit Talk

By Ginger Porter

Gassing your car, paying your power bill, and a trip to the grocery store are all costing more

due to the increase in the price of oil. Similar economics are affecting your transit system, and the Guam Regional Transit Authority Board (GRTA) has had to face some harsh realities about how much service it can afford.

At the December 20, 2010 meeting, the Board voted to cut service in March to meet budget in order to certify funds for a contract for the rest of the budget year. How will the lack of demand response service affect your life? That is the amount that needs to be pared from expenses to meet the budget (GRTA has no power to print money).

Mr. Felix Dungca, the new interim Executive Manager appointed upon the departure of Mr. "Joey" Manibusan, along with GRTA staff and a board member, met with personnel from the Bureau of Budget Management & Resources on January 25th to take another look at how to keep the system running under the existing financial conditions. Just be advised that cuts in service are still a VERY REAL OPTION.

On the brighter side, four self-advocates, who are ADA eligible riders, participated as members of the public at the January 18 GRTA Board meeting. They provided insight to problems they experience with phone response time and scheduling rides.

Did you know that ADA guidelines state that a transit agency "must design and implement its system to achieve minimal telephone wait times?" An average hold time should be no more than two minutes, and when you call to check on your ride, the hold should be even less! Now that is good news for people who use cell phones to schedule and check on rides. Encourage your GRTA Board to set a standard for telephone hold time; the Federal Transit Administration expects it.

You can do your part as well. Riders can assist a transit agency to reduce phone hold times by calling during off-peak times whenever it is possible. You are also encouraged to only call when your ride is actually late; that means, calling after your pick-up window expires. Those options might not suit everyone's need, but if you

have no immediate need to know who your driver is or when they are expected to arrive, give them a try. Also, do your part by being ready within your pick-up window time.

The input of self-advocates at the Board meeting was very productive as riders gave suggestions for improvement to the provider, who was present. If you are interested, the next Board meeting is scheduled for 10:00am, February 21, GRTA Conference Room, Dept. of Administration Bldg, Hagatna. Call 735-2369 for more information.



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Alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, or audio tapes) of **I Linå'lå-ta** will be made available upon request. Please contact Margaret Johnson at 735-2477(v), 734-6531 (TTY), 734-5709 (fax) or email: margie.johnson@guamcedders.org for more information.

The University of Guam is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

SAVE THE DATES!

March 18 & 19



2011

GSAT Conference & Fair

AT: Making it Work for Business

A Focus on Employment and Accessibility

For more information, contact:

Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)

Tel: 735-2490 TTY: 735-2491

Email: carla.torres@guamcedders.org

ATTENTION: Deaf Community

Consultants from the Post-Secondary Education Project Network (PEPNet) would like to meet with you and your family.

- A meeting will be held on April 3, 6pm, at GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao.
- If you plan to attend or for more information, please visit Terrie Fejarang at House 17 Dean's Circle, University of Guam or send her an email message at terrie.fejarang@guamcedders.org

FEBRUARY 2011

Feb 10 GOAT-AT/GGT Loan Review Committee meeting. Call 735-2490/1 for more information.

Feb 12 "The Ins and Outs of Special Education," 9:00am-11:00am, GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2490/1, 735-9127 for more information.

Feb 14, 15, 17, 18, 22 "Passenger Assistance Refresher Training," GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2369 for more information.

Feb 16 -17 GOAT-AT/GGT Loan Review Committee meeting. Call 735-2490/1 for more information.

Feb 19 Project Menhålom Training, Hilton Guam Resort & Spa. Call 735-2561 for more information.

Feb 21 GRTA Board Meeting, 10:00am, GRTA Conf. Room, DOA Bldg., Call 735-2369 for more information.

Feb 26 "The Ins and Outs of Special Education," 9:00am-11:00am, Agat Youth Resource Center. Call 735-2490/1, 735-9127 for more information.

MARCH 2011

Mar 1, 4, 7, 10, 15, 17 "CTAA PASS Training," GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2369 for more information or 735-2478 to leave a message.

Mar 16 GOAT-AT/GGT General meeting. Call 735-2490/1 for more information.

Mar 18 GSAT Conference "AT: Making it Work for Business, A Focus on Employment and Accessibility." For more information call 735-2490.

Mar 19 GSAT Fair "AT: Making it Work for Business, A Focus on Employment and Accessibility." For more information call 735-2490.

Mar 20-23 "Children's Mental Health Research Conference." Call 735-2414 for more information.

Mar 23-25 "Annual NASW Conference." Call 735-2414 for more information.

Mar 26 "Special Education Parent Conference," 9:00am - 2:00pm, Marriott Resort & Spa. Call 735-2561 for more information.

Mar 26 "Self-Advocacy Training," GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2369 for more information or 735-2478 to leave a message.

APRIL - MAY 2011

Apr 2 "Self-Advocacy Training," GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2369 for more information or 735-2478 and leave a message.

Apr 4-5 "PEPNet Workshop." Call 735-2477 for more information.

Apr 9 "Autism Awareness Fair," 10:00am - 3:00pm, Agana Shopping Center.

Apr 16 "Special Education Parent Conference," venue TBA.

Apr 16 "Self-Advocacy Training," GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao. Call 735-2369 for more information or 735-2478 to leave a message.

Apr 18-20 "Sign Language Interpreters Workshop," 8:00am-4:00pm, GSAT House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam, Mangilao.

May 28 "Children's Mental Health Fair & Conference," venue TBA.