

I Linå'la-ta OUR LIFE



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Administration on Developmental Disabilities Tri-Agency



Biba ADA! DISID Hosts Celebration Si Lynn Tydingco



Self-Advocates and agency representatives join Governor Eddie Baza Calvo during the signing of the proclamation commemorating the 21st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is twenty-one years old! To commemorate this landmark legislation, Guam residents celebrated the ADA's anniversary with a ceremony on July 26 at the Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities (DISID). The celebration featured the signing of a proclamation by Governor Eddie B. Calvo recognizing this important legislation and how it has impacted the lives of all Americans, most especially residents of Guam.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities in employment, State and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. It also mandates access in the area of telecommunications.

DISID hosted the event that brought together representatives from all the Government of Guam agencies, nonprofit organizations, and persons with all types of disabilities. To start off the program, Zeny Natividad gave a brief history and presentation on the Act.

During his remarks, DISID Director Ben Servino emphasized the continued commitment to educate, enforce, and ensure the island's compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. While much has been accomplished in terms of accessibility for individuals with disabilities, there are still many barriers that must be addressed in our island community. An announcement was made stating that there has been a reactivation of the ADA Compliance Officers within all of the Government of Guam agencies. The Officers, who were introduced and are currently being trained, are charged with facilitating access to their programs and compliance with the requirements of the ADA.

Governor Calvo applauded these efforts and recognized the hard work of various organizations, agencies, and individuals who have spearheaded the effort to adhere not only to the requirements, but also the intent and "spirit" of the Act. After posing for photographs with the different groups attending the event, Governor Calvo blessed the colorful fiesta table assembled through the generous contributions of those in attendance for the celebration.

Opening Doors: New Vision Guam Reaches Out

By Cecilia "Lee" Cruz

New Vision, Guam! (NVG) Is changing the way the island community understands blindness

through a series of events and activities. In July, NVG engaged Guam residents, businesses, civic leaders, and government directors in the practical application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This important civil rights legislation was enacted 21 years ago on July 26, 1990 and was designed to remove barriers affecting individuals with disabilities in all aspects of life.

NVG members started the month-long educational and awareness campaign with a tour of the University of Guam campus. Several members who are considering a college or academic career visited with the university's Elaine Faculo-Gogue, EEO/ADA Officer. NVG members expressed the importance of not only being able to safely travel within the campus and have full access to its facilities, but to also be able to access the university from without, via accessibility features of public transit and the physical infrastructure of public rights of way.

Fun and food did not escape NVG members in their advocacy work as they enjoyed a day of movie-accessibility at the GSAT Center. Popcorn and pop heightened the movie experience of descriptive video service (DVS) of the remake of John Wayne's "True Grit." DVS is becoming the standard by which the movie industry is making feature movies accessible to the blind with the use of non-intrusive descriptive narration. Other members pasta'ed the time away at Gabriel's House of Pasta, accessing their dining options with the availability of menus in audio, Braille, and large print formats.

Public transportation both on the fixed route and paratransit were critical topics that NVG members addressed with a visit to the Guam Regional Transit Authority (GRTA) and to Senator Tom Ada's office to register a concern relating to the absence of reasonable accommodations for the blind on the transit.

Real life experiences were shared in a two-hour radio interview of NVG members on the "Patty on the Radio" talk show on K-57. Long distance call-in listener and Rainbow Vision founder and president, Jackie Cabrera, was the highlight of the interview as she explained the

successful vocational rehabilitation services she received in Washington State. Within a brief period, Jackie, who is blind, received rehabilitation training and graduated with honors from a culinary academy. Jackie currently runs her catering business "See What's Cooking with Jackie."

NVG also initiated its monthly serving of the homeless at the Kusinan Kamalin Karidat by coming together to cook and serve the homeless as a gesture of thanks and appreciation to the community.

This "living the law" practical application of the spirit of the ADA will be a part of NVG's annual observance of the enactment of the ADA. For more information about blindness and blindness issues, please call 456-0400 or 456-3793, or send email to newvisionguam@gmail.com.



Members of New Vision Guam listen to Elaine Faculo-Gogue, University of Guam Institutional Compliance Officer, as she explains the options available for students with vision impairment.

PDN Hosts ADA Roundtable Discussion

Si Lynn Tydingco

The Pacific Daily News hosted a Roundtable discussion on Thursday, August 4 to address the

question "What more must be done in Guam to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act?"

SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action members were invited to speak on this topic and to submit letters on the featured question. Lynn Tydingco, SiñA President, submitted the letter that appears on page 3, on behalf of the organization.

SiñA

Self-Advocates in Action

Buenas yan Hafa Adai:

SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action is a nonprofit organization comprised of individuals with all types of disabilities and their families, who promote self-advocacy by assisting, educating, forming alliances and participating together to further strengthen efforts to accomplish individual goals to improve one's quality of life; to experience self determination, to choose and decide for one's self; to speak up to empower one's self; to promote and protect one's dignity; and to educate each other, members of the community, and public servants on issues that are important to us.

The Guam Developmental Disabilities Council five year State plan addresses and monitors nine vital areas of emphasis for individuals with developmental disabilities: transportation, housing, employment, education, health, self-advocacy, recreation, quality assurance, and community support.

Transportation is a major concern for individuals with disabilities. We rely on the Paratransit and Fixed Routes services for medical treatment, employment, education, grocery shopping, meetings, networking, and recreation.

The Guam Regional Transit Authority has never been fully funded for operations. The funding shortfall for FY2011 required reduction of services in April and again in July. Even with emergency bridge funding from the governor pending availability of federal funds, shorter hours and eliminated days of service affected work schedules, appointments, medical service, and our contribution to the community.

Our transportation services have been significantly reduced:

- There are no longer services on Sundays and holidays.
- There are no services between the hours of 10:30am to 2:30pm.
- Ride denials appear to be at an all time high.
- Demand response service so vital to our mobility diminished by 55%.

The following reasonable accessible accommodations need to be implemented:

- Automated and verbal announcements on buses, vans, and telephones.
- Fully accessible bus shelters with Braille, large print signage, and wheelchair space.

Our independence and our quality of life are deeply affected. Bring us to the table to have a voice in all matters that concern us.

Last year, SiñA, in collaboration with Guam CEDDERS, hosted a forum with government agency heads and island leaders, addressing issues affecting individuals with disabilities. Testimonies and possible solutions were discussed. As a result of the forum, Governor Calvo held true to his word by considering our recommendations for the selection of government leaders providing service to individuals with disabilities. Ben Servino, DISID Director is making positive changes and involving us in the process.

We thank you Governor Calvo and Ben Servino!!! We still have many challenges ahead of us, but together we can make positive changes that will enhance all of our lives.



Members of the disability community attended the Pacific Daily News roundtable discussion on the ADA on August 4.



SiñA's motto is "Nothing about us, without us."

BIBA GUAM! BIBA ADA!
Si Yu'os Ma'ase!
Si Lynn Tydingco
SiñA President

This letter was originally published in the Pacific Daily News on Sunday, August 7, 2011.

Self-Advocates Celebrate Liberation Day Si Lynn Tydingco



Individuals with disabilities, their families, and community supporters joined efforts to build the first-ever Liberation Day parade float. Go to the bottom of page 8 for another Liberation Day photo.

Liberation Day 2011 was a historical event especially for Individuals with Disabilities!

After two years of suggesting that Individuals with Disabilities participate in the Liberation Day Parade, SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action Vice President Andrew Tydingco presented the idea once again during a SiñA meeting.

Ben Servino, Director, Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities (DISID) liked the idea. DISID, in collaboration with SiñA and numerous network partners in Guam's disabilities realm, joined forces to make this idea a reality.

With less than a month until the parade, several steering committee meetings were held in preparation. Mr. Servino secured the necessary permits. Alvin Ancheta, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, designed the float. Andrew Tydingco, Helena Gumataotao Kubo, and Zeny Natividad coordinated the food and party tent at Kilroy's on the parade route.

Many of the disability organizations, network partners, and the business community donated their time, effort, food, and money to ensure the success of the event.

The Liberation theme was "Our Man'amko, Our Legacy" (An accessible community for our Man'amko

is an accessible community for all.) Represented on the DISID float were Persons with Disabilities and our Man'amko (our senior citizens.)

Members of SiñA marched in front of the DISID float. It was the first time that Persons with all types of Disabilities actually marched and rolled in the Liberation Day Parade!!

Due to the efforts of Governor Eddie Calvo, Mr. Servino, Rudy Cabana from Guam Regional Transit Authority, Mike Garrido from Kloppenburg Enterprises Inc., SiñA Vice President Andrew Tydingco, SiñA President Lynn Tydingco, and Jane Borden, the Paratransit and fixed route transportation services were operational for the Liberation Day festivities.

Everyone involved in this event was so excited about being INCLUDED that they were not able to sleep before the parade!

Persons with Disabilities participating in the Liberation Day Parade celebrated Guam's history, enjoyed networking with other agencies and organizations, and maximized the opportunity to facilitate community education and awareness. This is proof positive that we, as Individuals with Disabilities, can make GREAT things happen together! After all, SiñA's motto is "Nothing about us, without us!"

Linda's Story

By Carla Torres

Antolyn Renee Hernandez was a young and healthy mother of two darling little boys, Shinnosuki and Marquel. Despite dealing with asthma since she was born, Antolyn lived a fairly normal life. On February 9, 2005, at the tender age of 27, she suffered an acute asthma attack and her life was forever changed. Medics were slow to arrive; the acute attack cut off Antolyn's oxygen supply to her brain causing severe damage and leaving her in a vegetative state. Her mother, Linda Megofña, became her caregiver and the caregiver of her two boys. Because of Antolyn's severe medical condition, Linda could not transport her to and from places. The only time Antolyn would leave her house was to seek medical care during which an ambulance or a pre-arranged non-emergency medical transport would come to take her.

For six years, Antolyn missed out on many family outings, including her sons' school programs and sporting events. Her mother Linda dreamed of having an accessible vehicle, one that would grant her the freedom to take Antolyn wherever she pleased. The Guam Options for Alternative Loans- Assistive Technology Program (GOAL-AT) made that dream come true. Linda had learned about this program almost two years ago and has been in contact with the program's coordinator, Carla Torres, ever since.

A brand new accessible van with its high cost was not an option for Linda and pre-owned accessible vans, well, on Guam, are just extremely hard to come by. Carla and Linda set out on a mission to find a good, reasonably priced used van that could be modified to fit Antolyn's needs. Given our small island and limited resources, this

was not an easy task. Numerous vans were looked at, a deal or two fell through. Then there it was, something so rare, a newspaper ad for a used accessible van. It was within Linda's price range and in good condition too. Linda immediately contacted the owner and provided Carla with a price quotation to be included in her loan application. The loan application was approved and Linda's dream was realized.

Carla recalls an afternoon at the auto shop; the mechanic was assessing a prospective van. Linda and her grandsons hanging about, observing. Suki, with his big hazel brown eyes, turns to Linda and says, "Ama, we're getting this car so Momma can come watch our soccer games, right?" Holding back her tears, Carla knew this was why. This was why the mission of finding Linda an accessible van was such an important one. This was why the GOAL-AT Loan Program exists.

This was how Antolyn and her family were going to get back a sense of normalcy again. This was how Antolyn, Linda, Shinnosuki, and Marquel were going to improve the quality of their lives. This was how their family could be together.

Six years is a long time. A lot could happen in six years. For Antolyn Hernandez and her family, the last six years has been filled with heartache. For six years, Antolyn didn't participate in family parties, shopping, or her sons' school and sporting events. The GOAL-AT Loan Program did more than finance an accessible van, it ended heartache and frustration.

Carla recalls speaking to Linda after Antolyn's first trip in the van. Linda shared: "I looked in my review mirror towards the back. I saw my girl. She was looking out the windows. I saw her two boys next to her and I just cried. I thought to myself: Finally. We're all together. Then Marquel says to me, 'Ama, we need to take Momma to the mall.'" She told him, "Yes, Boy, we do."



Linda Megofña (far right) poses in the family's new accessible van with her daughter Antolyn Hernandez (seated) and grandchildren Shinnosuke Kuranami (right) and Marquel Kuranami (left).

Self-Advocates Air Frustration With Transportation



Left photo: (Left to right) Josie Cortez takes notes while Lisa Ogo voices her concerns about Guam's transit system. Right photo: (Left to right) Tom Manglona shares his experiences with the transit system while Ginger Porter, Guam CEDDERS Initiative Area Coordinator, and forum facilitator looks on.

Thirty-one individuals took the opportunity to speak up about their experiences with the public transportation system

at the 2011 Transportation Forum, held on the University of Guam Campus on May 27. The forum, facilitated by Ginger Porter, Guam CEDDERS Initiative Area Coordinator, closed the six-year gap of comment and discussion of public transportation in an open arena by individuals with disabilities and their families.

Although progress was noted since initial Task Force recommendations were released in June 2005, many common elements of need are still present. Bus stop signage, frequency of fixed route stops, electronic fare systems, interior visual stop signs, and high capacity buses were high on the list for fixed route improvements. Paratransit service comments reflected a need for continued attention to interpersonal relations skills for operators and others working with the public.

Given the emotional testimonies provided by attendees, it was clear that the temporary reduction of service, though yielding more fixed routes and paratransit buses, is creating problems of access.

A brief survey of interest generated a list of persons willing to serve on an Advisory Committee to the Guam Regional Transit Authority (GRTA) Board and documented topics for future educational activities. Interestingly, nearly all paratransit survey responders wanted to know more about fixed route services, indicating an increasing interest of eligible paratransit riders to use both systems. This is an important step for advancing individual independence of persons with disability.

Forum proceedings will be compiled into a report with recommendations for the GRTA and local policy makers.

SiñA Self-Advocates in Action

Proclamation Signing
October 14, 11:00am,
Adelup Governor's Complex

2011 White Cane Safety Day *"Exploring the World, One Tap at a Time."*

Power Walk / Relay, October 15,
(From Adelup to Paseo Statue of Liberty)
Fee: Individuals - \$8.00 Pre-registration and \$10.00 relay day.
Corporate Teams - \$250.00
For more info please contact SiñA at 788-3534 or sinaguam@gmail.com



National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Events

Tune in to the Superfriends Radio Show!

September 13 & 20, 12pm on K57

NDEAM Proclamation Signing

September 26, 11am, Governor's Conference Room.

Employer/ee Workshop/Appreciation

October 7, 7:30am - 4pm, Holiday Resort & Spa

"A Day in a Life"

October 14, 8am -12pm, Venue TBA

DVR Consumer/Provider Appreciation

October 21, Merienda/Open House, DVR Reception Area, 6th floor, DNA Bldg.

Disability Awareness Films, DVR

October 21, Conference Room, 6th floor, DNA Bldg.

NDEAM Appreciation Picnic,

October 29, Ypao Beach Park.

For more information contact Ben Servino, DISID Director at 475-4646.



Congratulations Clinton!



Clinton Mesa, Self-Advocate and a member of Autism Community Together (ACT), graduated from Guam Community College with a Associate of Science degree in Visual Communication. Congratulations on your accomplishments and best wishes as you embark on your career!



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Alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, audio tapes, or electronic file) of *I Linã'lã-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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New Statewide Independent Living Council Sworn In



Newly sworn in members of the Statewide Independent Living Council include (Front Row L-R): Bill Fuppul, Candelaria Castro, Benito Servino, DISID Director; Delfina Santa Romana; Elisa Cruz. Back Row L to R: Albert San Agustin, DVR Administrator; Dawn Maka, Guam CIL, Barbara Zacharias, Robert Kelley, Linda Megofna, Tamie Knapp, Carol Darlow, Ginger Porter, CEDDERS; and Carol Crisostomo, DVR.

Independent living issues will be receiving attention from a new Statewide Independent Living Council appointed by Governor Calvo and sworn into office on August 4. All but two of the members are new to the Council, but certainly not new to the needs for independent living. Their energy is driving a calendar of action to revise the By-Laws, establish an annual calendar, and review of the State Plan for Independent Living.

For more information contact Ben Servino, DISID Director at 475-4646.

Liberation Day SiñA Marchers



The proud members of SiñA celebrate their participation in the 2011 Liberation Day parade and festivities.

The Program for
**Protection and Advocacy
for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)**
and
**Protection and Advocacy for Individual
Rights (PAIR) and Individuals with
Developmental Disabilities (PADD)**
with Guam Legal Services Corporation
will be holding a Public Input Sessions
on
Saturday, September 17, 2011

PAIR & PADD

Proposed Goals and Objectives for FY2012

11:00a.m. to 12:00 noon

and

PAIMI

Proposed Goals and Objectives for FY2012

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

at the Guam Reef Hotel, Main Ballroom

The proposed Goals & Objectives are now
available for public review.

To request a copy, request reasonable accommodations,
or for more information, please contact:

GUAM LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION DISABILITY LAW CENTER

Telephone: **477-9811**

TDD/TTY: **477-3416**

Written comments will be accepted until
September 23, 2011 at
Guam Legal Services Corporation 113 Bradley Place, Anigua or
via email at information@guamlsc.org



This ad was developed by the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) and the Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights (PAIR) programs at Guam Legal Services Corporation, through funding from grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration.