

I Linå'la-ta OUR LIFE



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Administration on Developmental Disabilities Tri-Agency



SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action

Si Lynn Tydingco



Members of SiñA proudly pose for a group photo in front of the statue of former governor of Guam, Ricardo Bordallo, at the Governor's complex in Adelup. (Seated L-R): Evelyn Duenas and Josie Cortez. (Standing L-R): Odelia Jaime, Jean Quitugua, Antoinette Dela Cruz, Roy Rosario, Rodney Calimlim, Noel Lazaga, Tavita Faasumalie, Lynn Tydingco, Rudy Ignacio (partially hidden), Jesusinio Delizo, and Hikia Lazaga.

SiñA: Chamorro for "it is possible". In this case, SiñA is an acronym for Self-Advocates in Action!

SiñA is a nonprofit organization consisting of individuals with all types of disabilities who have come together to promote self-advocacy, education, community awareness, and independence.

Three years ago, University of Guam CEDDERS sponsored Self-Advocacy Workshops (facilitated by Ginger Porter) for Individuals with Disabilities and their families. The workshops educate individuals with

disabilities of their rights, entitlements, to speak out for oneself, to effectively communicate one's needs, and to empower them to promote inclusion and independence.

Since that first workshop, several self-advocates were trained and currently facilitate the workshops.

SiñA's membership includes individuals with all types of disabilities, their family members, advisors, and associate members (persons without disabilities who support SiñA's mission). The youngest member is 14 and the eldest member is 64 years old.

...continued on page 2

SiñA *...continued from page 1*



SiñA members who also go by the name of the “Seven Blind Mice,” include (Front row, L-R): Lisa Ogo, Roy Rosario, and Rudy Ignacio. (Back row, L-R): Lynn Tydingco, Jesusinio Delizo, Tavita Faasumalie, and Andrew Tydingco.

SiñA has made their presence known in an assertive manner not only within our island community but in Hawaii and Washington, DC.

SiñA’s motto is “Nothing about us, without us.”

There’s no stopping us now! *Sa SiñA Ta Chogue!!!*
(Because we can do it!)

SiñA Officers:

President:

Erlinda Tydingco

Vice President:

Andrew Tydingco

Secretary/Treasurer:

Jean Quitugua

Members-At-Large:

Noel Lazaga
& Stephen Madarang

Contact information:

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SiñA’s Accomplishments to Date

- Spearheaded public awareness to promote accessibility in stores, restaurants, theatres, and other public places.
- Hosted a forum with island policy makers, agency leaders and service providers to address issues concerning the lack of response and services from agencies and service providers in a timely manner.
- As a result of the forum, individuals with disabilities now have a voice in the selection process of government agencies that provide services to them.
- Liberation Day 2011 was the first time that Individuals with all types of disabilities actually marched in the parade. In collaboration with other network partners, DISID/ DVR had a float, and afterwards everyone in the disability community celebrated at Kilroy’s in Anigua.
- Participated in the *Pacific Daily News*’ Roundtable Discussion regarding Guam’s compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). SiñA’s letter on transportation was published in the August 7, 2011 edition of the PDN.
- Created and gained sponsorship for the **SuperFriends Show** which airs every second and third Tuesday of each month from 12 noon to 1pm on Newstalk K57. It is a show about individuals with disabilities and issues that concern them.
- Hosted the first annual White Cane Safety Day Power Walk and Corporate Blind Team Relay on Sunday, October 30 at the Paseo Recreation Complex.
- More Individual Plans of Employment (IPE) have become a reality.

White Cane Day Events Build Awareness

By Ginger Porter



Lynn Tydingco (left), SiñA President and Cecilia "Lee" Cruz (right), New Vision Guam! President are all smiles as Benito Servino, DISID Director, assists Acting Governor Ray Tenorio, who is wearing a sleepshade, use a signature guide to sign the Proclamation declaring White Cane Safety Day on October 14.

It's official! Guam was first in the nation to declare White Cane Safety Day in 2011 with a proclamation signing held on October 14. In the presence of members of SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action, New Vision Guam!, Guam Marianas Lions Club and the Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities, Department of Labor, Guam Developmental Disabilities Council, University of Guam CEDDERS, and other friends, Acting Governor Ray Tenorio, penned his signature onto a proclamation declaring White Cane Safety Day. The Acting Governor took real steps to emulate those with vision loss by placing a sleepshade over his eyes and using a signature guide to affix his name to the Proclamation.

"Wow, I actually did it!" exclaimed Acting Governor Tenorio, to which President Lynn Tydingco retorted, "Now you really have to put on your sleep shade and join us for the relay and walk with the white cane." "I'll be there!" he replied.

Guam Marianas Lions Club President, Joe Besagar then presented SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action with 20 white canes which were used during the first ever White Cane Relay and Power Walk held on October 30 at the Paseo Sports Complex in Hagatna. With the much appreciated support of the Guam Marianas Lions Club, the Guam Running Club, and the University of Guam CEDDERS, the event was a success in fulfilling the mission to increase awareness of individuals with vision loss.



Onania Snively, member of the Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities (DISID) team, takes the lead at the start of the White Cane Relay event. Trailing closely behind are Chris Wolke, from RIM Architects and Keith Villaluna, from the University of Guam CEDDERS. The DISID team took first place in the relay.



Left photo: Onania Snively (front), taps her way under the watchful eye of Ginger Porter, University of Guam CEDDERS Initiative Area Coordinator, and SiñA Advisor. Right photo: University of Guam CEDDERS team member, Vicky Ritter, hands off the white cane to Jay-Lynn Mendiola during the third leg of the relay.



5k Power Walk winners from the various categories pose with SiñA board members.

Jackie Cabrera Returns as Speaker for Diabetes Conference



Jackie Cabrera (left) and Dee Delgado (right) completed the White Cane 5K Power Walk held on October 30.

Do you remember Jackie Cabrera? Some of you may recall that she was featured in the December 2008 issue of I Lina'la-ta. At that time, Jackie, who lost her vision in her late 20's due to complications with diabetes, took on the challenge to fulfill her dream of becoming a professional chef and graduated from the Western Culinary Institute Le Cordon Bleu in Portland, Oregon.

Jackie was recently back on island for a brief break from her hectic work schedule. The proud owner of a catering business, C What's Cookin', Jackie is busy pleasing her eager customers with her specialties which she calls "international foods." Based in Olympia, Washington, Jackie works with six employees, all who happen to be from Guam, as they prepare meals on-site.

In addition to visiting family and friends during her short stay, Jackie was invited by the Guam Diabetes Association to deliver an inspirational speech to our local diabetic population at their annual conference held at the Guam Hilton Resort & Spa on November 8. Jackie says her message is simple: "Dream it, follow it, LIVE IT!!" Amen to that, Jackie!!!

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

By Ginger Porter, M.Ed.

Society expects certain responsibilities and recognizes rights of young people turning 21.

Should we not expect the same recognition of disability rights within the Americans with Disability Act (ADA)? After all, both have reached the landmark anniversary of twenty-one, a common turning point of maturation and independence.

The ADA has been around long enough to expect maturity. It should be commonplace that we consider the right of equal access to all public buildings, programs, services, and communications as being usual. It should be commonplace that we initiate accessibility in our planning of streets, pedestrian ways, transportation, housing, information, communication, healthcare, and leisure activities. It should be commonplace to find access in our gyms, our pools, our restaurants, our theaters, hotels, and tours, whether by bus, trolley, train, boat or plane.

Although we find pockets of excellence and compliance to the spirit of the ADA in our island community, we also find that many

barriers still exist to the equal access that is guaranteed to individuals with disabilities.

What does it take to ensure that the remaining barriers are removed and we achieve compliance with the ADA? It takes education, and lots of it. It takes people with disabilities getting out into the community, making statements in their own way, standing up for themselves, and making it known that they are good customers, good people, good friends, good neighbors, and good for our community. It takes a corps of individuals with disabilities assessing environments and educating businesses and agencies, and it takes a corps of good allied support.

The good is realized when barriers are removed. Our community needs to take that step into someone else's shoes, listen, understand the needs, and open the door to remove the barriers to full inclusion and equal access. It's not difficult, complicated, or expensive. Education can change attitudes, and when attitudes are changed, we can achieve a universally designed community where everyone can participate fully and on equal ground.

Tri-Agency Conducts Sessions on Transition

By Carol Cabiles



Parents, students, and family members listen to Laurretta Sotto (standing) talk about Sheryl, her adult daughter. She spoke about the events that led up to the family's decision in becoming Sheryl's legal guardian during the parent session on October 8 at the Mangilao Senior Citizens Center.

The Guam Tri-Agency on Developmental Disabilities (UOG CEDDERS, GLSC-DLC and GDDC) in partnership with the Department of Education Division of Special Education, conducted a series of training sessions for parents/guardians and students in middle and high school receiving special education services. Four sessions were held in October and November that took place at various locations throughout the island.

The goal of the transition sessions is to prepare students receiving special education services for a seamless transition into life after high school and present opportunities for parents/guardians to learn more about the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process in relation to transition services, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, self-advocacy and transfer of rights.

For more information on transition, contact Guam Legal Services Corporation - Disability Law Center (GLSC-DLS) at 477-9811 or email carol.cabiles@guamlsc.org

AT Corner: AT on the iPad 2

By Carla Torres



Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) recently added the Apple iPad 2 to its device demonstration & loan library.

There are many applications for the iPad 2 that can provide learning tools and functional supports for individuals with disabilities, both young and old. However, the ability for the iPad 2 to become an alternative augmentative communication (AAC) device is truly remarkable. With the cost of AAC devices running into the thousands, this device could mean the difference in affordability.

There are a variety of AAC apps available for individuals who have difficulty speaking. GSAT can help individuals determine which app would best meet his or her needs. One AAC app that offers individuals a full-featured communication solution is the Proloquo2Go™. It has "natural sounding text-to-speech voices, close to 8000 up-to-date symbols, powerful automatic conjugations, a large default vocabulary, and full expandability."

In addition to the iPad 2, GSAT also has the Apple iTouch. The iTouch can run the same apps as the iPad 2 but is much more portable. Because a variety of apps can be housed on the iDevices, they can be a comprehensive assistive technology solution for some. Contact GSAT at 735-2490/1 for a free demonstration.

Disability Health Conference Draws Over 200

By Marie Libria



Guam DD Council members (L-R) Ligaya Manguna and Anna Kilroy (foreground) listen closely during a presentation during the "Guam Disability Health Conference" held on September 24 at the Marriott Resort and Spa.

The Tri-agency consisting of the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council (GDDC), Guam Legal Services Corporation-Disability Law Center (GLSC-DLC), University of Guam CEDDERS networked with the Guam Medical Association (GMA) to sponsor the Guam Disability Health Conference held on September 24. Over 200 participants including individuals with disabilities, family members, health care professionals, educators, and service providers attended the event held at the Marriott Resort and Spa. The conference goal was to inform individuals with disabilities about health care services, as well as to provide recommendations to medical professionals, and other service providers to assist them in their provision of care for this population.

The Conference started with a lively session on American Sign Language medical signs. Other sessions focused on "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Mood (Bipolar), Anxiety, Autism and other Emotional/Intellectual Disorders," "Clinical Psychology and Individuals with Emotional/Intellectual Disabilities," "Regaining Control through Physical Therapy for Patients with Physical Disabilities," "Power of Attorney & Adult Guardianship," and "ADA Accessibility-Is your office ready for 2012 requirements?"

Participants were actively engaged throughout the conference, with the evaluations indicating positive levels of satisfaction.

GDDC Elects New Officers

Si Lynn Tydingco



The newly elected officers of the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council pose with council staff at the September 24th meeting. (Seated L-R): Evelyn Duenas, Second Vice Chair and Josie Cortez, Secretary. (Standing L-R): Rosanne Ada, Executive Director; Suzie Contreras, Program Coordinator; Erlinda Tydingco, Chairperson; Gina Arca, First Vice Chair, and Marie Libria, Program Coordinator.

On September 24, the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council (GDDC) elected their leaders who will serve for the next two years. The GDDC advocates for systems change, public policy, and best practices that promote the full inclusion and integration of people with developmental disabilities. Areas of emphasis in the State Plan include transportation, housing, education, employment, self-advocacy, recreation, and health.

The GDDC was established as an independent entity on August 9, 1994 by Executive Order 94-09. The Council has a membership consisting of twenty eight individuals appointed by the Governor of Guam. Seventeen are self-advocates or consumer representatives and 11 are state-agency and non-profit representatives to include University of Guam CEDDERS, DISID, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Department of Education, Department of Public Health & Social Services, Guam Legal Services Corporation - Disability Law Center, Department of Administration, Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority, and Catholic Social Services.

New Group Completes Self-Advocacy Workshop

By Ginger Porter



Participants in the Self-Advocacy Workshop included (Front row, L-R): Leah Rassier, Facilitator; Jane Borden, Brigida Quinata, personal care assistant; Odelia Jaime, Erlinda Tydingco, Facilitator and Ginger Porter, University of Guam CEDDERS Mentor. (Middle row, L-R): Julian Sakisat, UOG Student; Dawn Maka, CIL Director; Shannon Leon Guerrero, Rudy Ignacio, Roy Rosario, Jean Quitugua, Facilitator and UOG students Crystal Bannister, Doris Quinto, and Ruby Catotocan. (Back row, L-R): Tahjare Darlow, Jacob Cruz and Gabriel Lau.

New Self-Advocates reported major progress on personal projects at the close of the September 2011 training.

Changes occurred in access to services at the Government of Guam Retirement Center and UOG personnel received written personal thanks for making student accommodations readily available. The crowning glory of accomplishments was achieved by an individual, who was awaiting the court's determination on an employer discrimination case. Knowing his rights and knowing who to access for assistance was key to his success.

Not all projects get completed in the one-month time frame that spans the training, but everyone gets started, and that is what is important. Ongoing projects target the education of young students to get rid of the "H" word, advocating for new bus stops, and certifying a disability to assistive technology.

Facilitators Lynn Tydingco, Leah Rassier, and Jean Quitugua did a great job of facilitating the content and also brought four UOG Social Work students into the real world of people and disabilities. Facilitators look forward to the November training and the opportunity to collaborate with secondary educators in bringing their self-advocacy to high school students in the near future.



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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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Hafa Bidadaña Si Lisa? (What is Lisa doing?)

Estorian Lynn Tydingco



Lisa Ogo

As a result of applying her self-advocacy skills, Lisa Ogo embarked on a new adventure on October 3 to fulfill her desire to attend the Ho'opono School for the Blind in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Lisa, who has been blind since birth, is learning new skills and is being trained in Personal Home Management, Computer Literacy, Braille, and Mobility Training. She notes that she enjoys her Personal Home Management course the most. Lisa says that when she returns to Guam she looks forward to cooking and baking for SiñA and GSAT functions. Her most challenging course is the Mobility Training.

Tune in to the next issue for an update on "Hafa Bidadaña Si Lisa."



Are you an individual who is entitled to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) based on disability or blindness?

Are you interested in returning to work or experiencing a barrier to employment?



The Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Program

at Guam Legal Services Corporation—Disability Law Center may be able to provide you with advocacy related to accommodations in the workplace, employment discrimination, need for assistive technology, or other services related to securing or regaining employment.



For more information, please contact
**GUAM LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
DISABILITY LAW CENTER (GLSC—DLC)**
at 477-9811/2

or visit our website at www.lawhelp.org



SSA has reviewed this publication for technical accuracy. However, this ad should not be considered an official SSA publication.

Learn More About Self-Advocacy



Guam CEDDERS invites you to learn more about self-advocacy and practice the skills to become a good self-advocate. This just might be a life changing event, and we think you'll be glad you chose to come.

A series of three sessions:

Saturday, November 12 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

Saturday, November 19 9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Saturday, December 3 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

Location: GSAT, House 19, Dean's Circle, University of Guam

**For more information and reservations,
contact Ginger Porter at 735-2478
or email at ginger.porter@guamcedders.org.**



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