



# The Gazette



A Publication of Modern Support Services, LLC  
Volume V, Spring 2013

**“An institution is not a place it’s a state of mind.™”**

Tom Pomeranz, Phd

## DSP Spotlight

### News from our Glendale Office

By Winter Dainard, Courtesy of Shanta Wallace



**I had the pleasure of interviewing Shanta Wallace here in our Glendale office about her experiences with Modern Support Services. Shanta is an extremely dedicated and focused staff member who goes above and beyond to meet the needs of the people she supports.**

*We are pleased to highlight Shanta in this edition of the Gazette.*

Shanta has been working with Modern Support Services since October of 2011. In interviewing her, she explained that her favorite thing about her job is working with an individual she supports named Vicky. Going out in the community and enjoying the day together, such as their usual lunch at McCabridge Recreation Center, are activities that both Shanta and Vicky look forward to. Shanta stated “Vicky is like a sister to me. We do our nails, our hair, and all that girlie stuff,” which they both equally enjoy.

Shanta explained that the method she stands by in her work is strong communication and understanding the consumer you work with. Communication eliminates unnecessary problems and strengthens the relationship you are building with the individual you work with. Shanta also emphasized that one must really understand the goals and needs of the individual they support, and that with a better understanding of who they are and what they need to accomplish, more progress can be made. Shanta expressed that one of the goals she works directly with Vicky on is hygiene maintenance and communication is the key to allowing advancement with this goal.

I asked Shanta if she has any advice for a person working with a difficult individual or situation, and she offered three tips: good communication, patience, and redirection. As previously mentioned, communication can do wonders in building relationships and progressing an individual’s goals. Shanta stated “Patience is a virtue. If you don’t have patience, it isn’t going to work.” Lastly, Shanta explained that one must redirect and keep the individual on track, if not it will be much more difficult to produce satisfactory results.

Shanta stated “I really like Modern Support Services. To be honest, it is the best company I have ever been with, and I have been in this field for over 10 years.” She detailed how managers and staff go out of their way to help out and make things work, and really appreciates the effort they put in. Modern Support Services also thanks Shanta for all her effort and the progress she has assisted others make! ♡

# March Is Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!

Proclamation 5613: National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, 1987  
February 26, 1987

## A Proclamation

Nearly four million Americans have grown up with severe physical or mental impairments that have slowed their learning, limited their mobility, inhibited their expression, and rendered them dependent on others for care and assistance.

For many of these people with developmental disabilities there is now the prospect of a brighter future and greater opportunity. Americans are becoming increasingly aware that such disabilities need not keep individuals from realizing their full potential in school, at work or at home, as members of their families and of their communities.

New opportunities have been created through the efforts of those with developmental disabilities and their family members, along with professionals and officials at all levels of government. Working together, they have brought about significant changes in the public perception of young people and adults with developmental disabilities, opening new doors to independent and productive lives.

One important new milestone is the fruitful partnership between government and the private sector in finding productive employment for people with developmental disabilities, people who might otherwise have been destined to a lifetime of dependency. In the past 2 years, the Administration's Employment Initiative has resulted in finding job opportunities for more than 87,000 people with developmental disabilities.

The Congress, by Public Law 99 - 483, has designated the month of March 1987 as "National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

Now, Therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of March 1987 as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. I invite all individuals, agencies, and organizations concerned with the problem of developmental disabilities to observe this month with appropriate observances and activities directed toward increasing public awareness of the needs and the potential of Americans with developmental disabilities. I urge all Americans to join me in according to our fellow citizens with such disabilities both encouragement and the opportunities they need to lead productive lives and to achieve their full potential.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan

# SARA ERSTAD-LANDIS

*By Winter Dainard*

Sara has been a recipient of Modern Support Services for over five years, living independently in her own apartment after moving from Maryland to California. While in Maryland Sara was receiving services from another program while living independently, but stated “They really didn’t do much for me.” As a long time recipient of Modern Support Services, Sara has improved immensely over the years she has spent with us.

Sara has many interests and talents, but most notable is her love for animals and her dedication in sports. Sara is a volunteer for a non-profit called Pet Orphans in Van Nuys, which rescues dogs and cats and helps adopt them into suitable homes through pet rehabilitation and public education. Sara helps the shelter by socializing with the animals, feeding them, walking them, and helping out with their laundry. Sara told me “If you don’t like dogs, you’re not for me!” Additionally, Sara has been involved in Special Olympics since she was a young girl, playing sports like basketball, softball, bowling and more. Recently, Sara took home both Gold and Silver medals in the Special Olympics bowling tournament in both Tri-Valley and Antelope Valley.

Sara has made vast improvements in recent months that she takes great pride in, most notably her consistency with hygiene maintenance. Sara follows charts that give her daily reminders on what she has done or needs to do that day, such as brushing her teeth in the morning and evening. Sara said “I’m proud of myself for completing my charts when getting ready for the day. I like being rewarded and seeing the stickers I put on my charts. I feel like I’ve earned it.”

Sara explained that an obstacle that she battles is managing her feelings when people she cares about have to leave for various circumstances, whether it be friends, family, or staff. Most recently, Sara’s mom moved back to the East coast, and Sara treasures every opportunity she gets to speak with or see her mom. Despite this struggle, Sara has remained very strong and positive. For example, Sara has not had a hospital visit in regards to a seizure since February of 2012, whereas before she was in the ER weekly. Sara explained that she believes what helps her most is her service dog, Phoenix, who helps de-stress her during hard times. Sara also stated that “I like my staff because they let me do my own thing and help me be independent. They’re cool, and I know they are here to help me when I need it and give me advice.”



### *A Note from Sara*

*“My name is Sara Jeanne Erstad-Landis. I am one of three sisters. I live on my own. I Have a dog names Phoenix. I am 33 years old. I have done many things in my life and want to do more. I was born July 16, 1979 in Ohio. I am a person with many disabilities. I like to shop, cook, do arts and crafts, watch TV, and go out to eat. I collect different things like baseball cards, marbles, Winnie the Pooh, and odds and ends. I also like many animals, kids, and babies. I like many things. I have gotten many awards and talked to many people and many groups. I want to thank MSS for all they’ve done for me and all the other people!”*



## Check Out These Valuable Resources

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### Free Services

- **Free cell phones** available for California residents on SSI, Medicaid and Food Stamps. Call **1-800-395-2171** or visit [www.assurancewireless.com](http://www.assurancewireless.com) to apply
- **Free tax assistance** for individuals or families with a combined income of \$57,000 or under. Call Jeffrey Louie at **1-818-937-8071** for questions or to schedule an appointment, or log on to [www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com)

### Food Banks

- [www.lafoodbank.org/pantry-locator](http://www.lafoodbank.org/pantry-locator)
- [www.homelesshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks](http://www.homelesshelterdirectory.org/foodbanks)
- [www.cafoodbanks.org](http://www.cafoodbanks.org)

### Homeless Shelters

- [www.homelesshelterdirectory.org/california](http://www.homelesshelterdirectory.org/california)
- [www.lahsa.org](http://www.lahsa.org)
- [www.salvationarmyoc.org/pr\\_ser\\_shelters](http://www.salvationarmyoc.org/pr_ser_shelters)

### Regional Centers

#### North Los Angeles County Regional Center

[www.nlacrc.org](http://www.nlacrc.org)

818-778-1900

#### South Central Los Angeles Regional center

[www.sclarc.org](http://www.sclarc.org)

213-744-7000

#### Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center

[www.elarc.org](http://www.elarc.org)

626-299-4700

#### Westside Regional Center

[www.westsiderc.org](http://www.westsiderc.org)

310-258-4000

#### Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center

[www.lanterman.org](http://www.lanterman.org)

213-383-1300

#### Harbor Regional Center

[www.harborrc.org](http://www.harborrc.org)

310-540-1711

#### Regional Center of Orange County

[www.rcocdd.org](http://www.rcocdd.org)

714-796-3700

#### San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center

[www.sgprc.org](http://www.sgprc.org)

909-620-7722



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## Stop By and Visit Us at an Upcoming Transition Fair!

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### **March 21<sup>st</sup> at North Orange County Community College District**

1830 W. Romneya Drive, Anaheim, CA 92801

6:00pm to 8:30pm

### **April 3<sup>rd</sup> at Cal State Fullerton**

800 North State College Blvd, Fullerton, CA 92831

10:30am to 12:30pm

### **April 25<sup>th</sup> at Centinela Valley Center for the Arts**

14901 South Inglewood Ave. Lawndale, CA 90260

5:00pm to 7:30pm

### **May 9<sup>th</sup> at the Glendale Civic Auditorium**

1401 North Verdugo Rd, Glendale, CA 91208

5:45pm to 8:30pm



We are pleased to announce that Modern Support Services has been selected for the 2012 Living Options (Residential) Vendor Award by the Regional Center of Orange County

# SUCCESS STORIES

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We have always been very pleased with every representative Danielle has but I have to admit Yesenia is a "diamond"! She's smart, attentive, genuinely concerned and caring. We love her and thank you for hiring such an awesome person. Every client of yours needs a Yesenia. :) She's just on top of her game. You've taught her the procedures of this business and she has made it her own. **She's a professional, she's accurate and has a natural gift of putting her client, Danielle, at ease.** She's a Blessing!

Thank you,  
– T. Brown  
*Parent*

I like Modern Support Staff because they help with all of my doctor appointments. When I get sick they are there for me. Modern Support help to be more independent.

– H. Lopez

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the staff at Modern Support Services, LLC for their ongoing commitment to the well being of my son, David.

The ILS workers are always compassionate, patient and very supportive of David. Thank you for your excellent services.

– Doris M.

Many many years ago we were referred to Modern Support by a local Regional Center to help our son with his Independent Living Skills (ILS) needs. Everyone that I worked with was very pleasant, understanding and compassionate towards my son. Unfortunately, soon after we moved out of the Los Angeles area and couldn't work with them any longer.

Just about a year ago, our family moved back to the suburbs of Los Angeles and I insisted that Modern Support Services be the provider again for my son's services, who has Autistic disorders. He gets along with his caregivers, because they understand his needs and help him achieve targeted goals. Modern Support Services has really been our support in time of need. One of the best things that happened to my son is learning to take the bus; it allowed me to have free time to do other things. Thanks to Modern Support Services, he received training to take the bus to work. Now he rides the bus to his work, and feels very independent.

I truly believe that Modern Support Services has been a God send to us. It's hard to find people you can trust to take care of your children or young adults with disabilities. I can undoubtedly recommend that you give Modern Support Services a chance, especially if you have been unhappy with other agencies.

Good Luck to all readers,  
– Anna

# The Gazette

**The Gazette** is a publication of **Modern Support Services**.  
The Gazette wishes to thank the MSS staff and the individuals we support for sharing their stories.

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