

## SILC February 2018 Newsletter

### Vision Lost and Found

Age-Related Vision Loss is answered by California Independent Living Centers such as Service Center for Independent Life (SCIL) and the Dayle McIntosh Center (DMC). Meanwhile, SILC members and volunteers will attend the Abilities Expo in Los Angeles February 23-25, 2018, surveying people with disabilities about their vision for independent living in California.

### SCIL Takes Vision Issues to the Street



Photo of a woman looking at three men who are holding white canes.

In a fitting tribute to Low Vision Awareness Month, SCIL rallied local government partners to install tactile cuts onto street crosswalks. Their ongoing education efforts led to collaborations with the Cities of Claremont and Fontana that should reduce incidents of walking into traffic by persons with visual impairments.

Currently in dialog with municipalities about safety-tactile cuts onto street crosswalks, SCIL vision advocacy efforts were boosted by an event, *Walk a Mile in Our Shoes*, with The National Federation of the Blind Inland Empire Chapter and the city of Claremont.

"The reason for this event was to highlight a problem people who are (white) cane users are experiencing when crossing streets," wrote Larry Grable, Executive Director at SCIL.

"We are proposing to have the cities' concrete cut 3 linear cuts running the center for the crosswalk from curb to curb," said Grable, "This way they (white cane users) could feel the center of the crosswalk and would never stray out of the crosswalk and walk into a car sitting at the light."

The advocacy work California Independent Living Centers implement benefits many more people than one-to-one services. SCIL seeks to empower all persons with any disability, and to advocate for a barrier-free society. As a result, Southeast Los Angeles County will be safer for many.

SILC at Abilities Expo at the Los Angeles Convention Center February 23-25, 2018!

Join SILC Members, staff, and volunteers as they survey hundreds of people attending the Abilities Expo this month. The Los Angeles event is one of seven conventions nationally for people with disabilities, their friends, and family. The SILC plans to survey people who are not currently receiving independent living services to learn more about unmet service needs. This survey is a southern California companion to a similar event in San Mateo last October. The survey is also part of the Needs Assessment the SILC completes every three years to prepare for writing the next State Plan for Independent Living.

Thriving With Vision Loss and the DMC



Photo of Dayle McIntosh Center staff – Operations Manager Brittany Hepler, Executive Director Paula Margeson and Program Manager Socorro Arroyo-Merchain.

The Dayle McIntosh Center staff partner with people losing sight to provide comprehensive service coordination. The Aging with Vision Loss program (AVL) offers referrals, skills training, peer counseling, assistive technology, and even moving grants, allowing seniors to thrive.

One 68-year old woman, who has low vision due to macular degeneration, changed her whole life at the end of 2017. This person also used a mobility scooter, because a stroke had affected her ability to walk.

Staff provided a "talking" glucometer and prescription reader so that the woman could address healthcare concerns on her own. She also expressed interest in moving, because she was living in a high crime area and had been physically assaulted.

The DMC Housing Coordinator and AVL Program Manager assisted the woman to move into a new, accessible/affordable apartment in the southern part of Orange County. DMC contributed grant funds toward move-in costs.

DMC Executive Director, Paula Margeson wrote, "The consumer is now able to care for herself and feels safe in her new home."

"She states that she is extremely pleased with the impact that the Dayle McIntosh Center has had on her life," wrote Margeson.

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