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DD AWARENESS

COLOR: SILVER

MONTH: MARCH

2010 THEME:

*PATHWAY TO
SELF
DETERMINATION*

TRIAGENCY LEADERSHIP TRAINING



March was a busy month for the Disability Community in American Samoa. Paving the “Pathway to Self Determination”, the theme for the awareness, the Triagency held a Leadership Council Training. Held at the Governor Rex H Lee Auditorium on March 25, 2010, the training attracted 101 participants from government agencies, council members, and the general public.

The purpose of the Leadership Training is to build leaders amongst council members with disabilities and family. The training included the importance of People 1st Language amongst each other, community, and the media. The history of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and the purpose of why it was established shared some light of how people with disabilities were treated in the 1800-1950's.

Viewed as dangerous, forced to have abortion and sterilized, and segregated in

institutions, people with disabilities human and legal rights were violated continuously throughout the years. During the Kennedy's administration, intellectual disabilities (formerly known as mental retardation) became part of the social reform movement and the number of people with disabilities living in an institution declined.



The social reform identified a need for research, advocacy, a coordinated system, and capacity building. The establishment of the Protection and Advocacy (P&A), Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC), and the University Center for Ex-

cellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) continues to exist to implement activities that result in advocacy, systems change, and capacity building.

As an informal open forum, parents shared concerns about accessibility, emergency preparedness, and education concerns on how can “we” as a community address these concerns with the government and policymakers. “We” is just a starting point of paving the “Pathway to Self Determination”.

People 1st language on appropriate language and best practices on addressing people with disabilities was a hot topic to add on to an activity about “labeling”.

Highlight of the training were two prestigious awards: Humanitarian and Faipule of the Year (Please see separate article). The training was sponsored by the Triagency to support the Developmental Disability Awareness Month of activities.

DISABILITY AWARENESS IN MANU'A By: Lia Pelenato

Watch out now! The Disability Awareness is heading towards Manu'a. There's a team of eight specialists planning to visit the islands of Manu'a on April 5-9, 2010. The Special Education (SpEd) program under the Department of Education is sending over a team of specialist to meet with parents, educators, students and the people of Ta'u and Olosega Island about the Disability Awareness. The SpEd team will be providing information concerning related services such as:

- **Behavior** with specialist

Diane Crichton

- **Speech** with specialist Tailua Apaisa
- **Blind** with specialist Olive Isaako
- **Early Education** with specialist Segia Ioane
- **Assistant Technology** with specialist Pat Danielson
- **Physical Therapist** with specialist Jack Tinitali
- **Family Involvement** with Fa'anati Penitusi.

In the past, SpEd program has only presented Manu'a with two related services. This year,

SpEd has added five more related services for children with special needs and their families. Each specialist will be providing flyers and a presentation about the services they provide. The SpEd program wishes to reconfirm the resource centers as well as provide materials needed. As of now, they have two resource centers in Ta'u and Olosega. The team will be taking new materials as well as new computers for both resource centers. The team will also extent their visit to Fitiuta and Faleasao as well as raising awareness at the Manu'a High School.

SHRINERS CLINIC By Lia Pelenato

Shriners International is a fraternity based on fun, fellowship and the Masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth. There are approximately 350,000 members from 191 temples (chapters) in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the Republic of Panama. Shriners International supports Shriners Hospitals from Children, an International health care system of 22 hospitals dedicated to improving the lives of children by providing specialty pediatric care, innovative research and outstanding teaching programs. Children up to age 18 years old with orthopedic conditions,

burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate are eligible for care at Shriners Hospitals for Children and receive all services at no financial obligation to families.

The local American Samoa Shrine Club is a part of the Aloha temple and has about 21 active members. They have an Annual fundraiser which is the American Samoa Shriners Golf Tournament, which is usually held in the month of March to coincide with their Outreach program where the doctors from the Shriners Hospital in Honolulu fly down and hold clinics for three days. All pro-

ceeds from the Golf Tournament are sent to Hawaii and goes directly to the "Transportation Fund" which is only used for the Shriners patients and their chaperones.



Sandra Scanlan (PH) lifts a teddy bear for a patient at LBJ. Books, stuffed animals & toys donated to LBJ by Shriners.

....AND THE WINNER IS...? By: Tafa Tupuola

It may not have been the Oscar's or the Academy Award's but the excitement of presenting two prestigious awards, Humanitarian and the Faipule of the Year, was the highlight of the day.

Presented at the Triagency Leadership Council Training on March 25, 2010 at the Gov. Rex Lee Auditorium, the audience waited patiently for 2 1/2 hours anticipating for the announcement of the recipients. The requirements for the Humanitarian Award was based on a non-profit organization supported by non-federal funding in delivering services to the disability community. Nominees for the award were Shriners, Hope House, Lions Club of Pago Pago, and the Latter-Day Saints Humanitarian Society. The

category was a tie and awarded to Shriners (Orthopedic and burn clinics) and the Lions Club of Pago Pago (Project Eye Care).

The final award, Faipule of the Year, was based on House of Representatives who've taken advocacy to the next level in participating in councils, community activities, and addressing policy issues that impacts "community inclusion". The award was presented to Rep. Taotasi Archie Soliai from the Ituau district.

The awards were voted on an online survey for council members, agencies, and family members to cast their voice. The award presentation was on behalf of the Interagency Council that includes various agencies working collaboratively

in addressing disabilities.

Rep. Taotasi, received all three awards on behalf of the Shriners as a member, Lions Club as President, and as a Faipule. The ambience of presenting the two awards was like a "night at the Oscar's".



Lions Club of Pago Pago receiving the Humanitarian Award for their Project Eye Care.

COUNSELORS TRAINING By: Ernie Seiuli

Vocational Rehabilitation hosted a training for all agencies that support and provide employment services for people with disabilities. Dr. Hermann Scanlan, a former American Samoa Vocational Rehabilitation counselor and ASCC instructor was the consultant for this training. Dr. Scanlan is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor at the national level. The two day training held on March 21 – 22, 2010 was hosted at the Tradewinds Hotel.

Various government and private agencies such as ASG Human Resources, Hope House, ASVOC, Special Education Program, UCEDD, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors provided great feedback. The rationale of the training was to in-

volve key stakeholders with an array of services that enhances the quality of life, and more focusing on employment for people with disabilities.

Employment for people with disabilities was the main focal point of the training on legislation, policies, and services that prepare people with disabilities to make significant and imperative gains in personal independence, health, adjustment, and educational statuses that are necessary prerequisites to acquiring employment, the keystone in their definition of a quality life.

In addition, the training also provided information of how to facilitate good job matches for people with disabilities that result in satis-

fied and satisfactory workers. In the conclusion of the training, the guest speaker puts an emphasis on how we acquire and facilitate client of understanding of themselves within the context of the world of work through physically, economically, personally, and socially.





University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities

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OUR MISSION

The University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) assures that individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families participate fully in activities that will design and promote self determination, independence, integration and inclusion in all facets of life in American Samoa. The UCEDD will ensure the delivery and purpose of the Developmental Disabilities Act through culturally competent activities.



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**PLEASE CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT
BEFORE YOU PRINT THIS NEWSLETTER,
THANK YOU!**

ACRONYMS/MEANINGS

- ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act
- ASCC:** American Samoa Community College
- ASDOE:** American Samoa Department of Education
- ASIC:** American Samoa Interagency Council
- DD:** Developmental Disabilities
- DDPC:** Developmental Disability Planning Council
- DOH:** Department of Health
- P & A:** Office of Protection & Advocacy
- PH:** Physical Therapist
- SPED:** Special Education
- Tri-Agency:** Developmental Disability Planning Council, Protection & Advocacy, and UCEDD.
- UCEDD:** University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities