

Sophie's • Gazette

M A Y • 2025

A PERSON CENTERED NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE'S CENTER
Edited in the Theresa & Edward O'Toole Foundation Adaptive Computer Learning Center
Shifting Gears @ Michael Klein 2024



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SMSC
Closed
Memorial Day Holiday

Monday, May 26, 2025

Happy
Mother's
Sunday, May 11, 2025 Day



SMSC Self-Advocacy Board On-the-Go

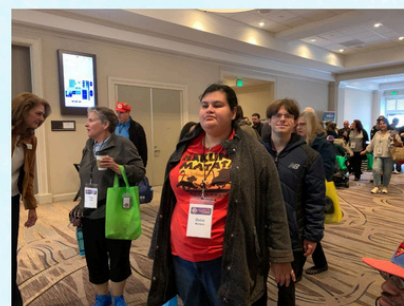


State Council on Developmental Disabilities Area Board XIII

Emergency Preparation Workshop



SMSC Self-Advocacy Board members attended a disaster preparation workshop held by the State Council on Developmental Disabilities at their Area Board XIII office. Deborah Marshall, Community Program Specialist talked about preparing for natural disasters like earthquakes, fires, and floods. Frederick DeBerg, staff facilitator for the board, was proud of how the students listened, took notes, and asked pertinent questions during the presentation. He commented, "They are eager to learn and to make a difference while serving on the board." Chelse Voisard was excited that she got to go to the workshop as a substitute. "Everyone got an emergency backpack with a flashlight, extra batteries, a hand-held radio, rolls of masking tape, a mini first aid kit, and canned and dried fruit", Chelse remarked. She has an interest in safety and disaster preparation and added, "I gave my two-cents worth every once in a while on the topic!"



Leading the Charge Conference

Discovering Connections Through Mentoring! **The Case for Giving Grace**

Several of SMSC students attended Leading the Charge: Discovering Connections Through Mentoring, a conference put on by Exceptional Family Resource Center and Developmental Disabilities Provider Network. Held at the Doubletree by Hilton Mission Valley, the day offered several sessions to support improving life-outcomes and expanding opportunities for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Topics included assistive technology, career and college pathways, and customized employment opportunities. SMSC students attended *The Case for Giving Grace*, a workshop on how to handle challenging situations with practical strategies. "I thought the presentation was good and wished that I could have reviewed the slides again. The presenter stressed that accidents happen when there are miscommunications and I agree with that", Clayton Hauer remarked. "People need to think about the physical challenges of people with disabilities before building. They should consider ramps to replace stairs and make bathrooms larger", he added.

My Experience in Sacramento on Grassroots Day

By: Cali R Williams



Each year, the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) organizes Grassroots Day, an event where representatives from California's 21 regional centers come together in Sacramento to advocate for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). This gathering provides a platform to discuss pressing issues, share personal stories, and influence legislative decisions to vote for well-funded accessible services and supports.

SMSC student, Cali Williams was chosen to attend the conference as a Self-Advocacy Board Member for the San Diego Regional Center (SDCR). "I went to Sacramento with a group representing the SDRC for Grassroots Day. During our two-day trip to Sacramento, we had back-to-back meetings with legislators," Cali said. On the first day she attended a meeting that lasted all day until dinnertime. "By-the-way the food was somewhat yummy in my opinion! After a long and fun day my group went back to our hotel room for a nightcap to relax", she remarked. On the second day there were more meetings with Assembly Members. "I gave a speech that my mom helped me write. It was about my personal story and about the bills we want the legislators to pass that will help my life." After her speech everyone had lunch, then it was back to meet with more representatives. "It was a fun experience being at the state capitol to show our support for change. In an Uber to the airport that last day, I thought, yes I kind of want to go back and to do that again!"



US Senator Peter Padilla



According to the word on the Hill, Cali was a rockstar, telling her story and working for the rights of I/DD while meeting with several legislators including Senator Pete Aguilar, Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Senator Steve Padilla, Minority Leader Brian Jones, and Assemblymember Dr LaShae Sharp-Collins. You go girl!



**Dr. LaShae Sharp-Collins
Assemblymember AD 79**



America on Main Street is El Cajon's Largest Block Party! It is held on Saturday, May 17, 2025 from 3-8PM on East Main Street and Rea Avenue in Downtown El Cajon. Activities include multiple stages of live entertainment, food booths, rides, arts & crafts booths, a petting zoo, bounce houses and more! It is a family friendly event and most activities are free of charge. Come celebrate the diverse cultures in our community during America on Main Street!

Stop by Sophie's Gallery during America on Main Street and make & take a free friendship bracelet! Shop our 20% off sale on full price items. We are open 4-7PM during America on Main.



Sophie's artists were invited to create panels for Play My Way an adaptive recreation center play space that is accessible & inclusive!

Play My Way
grand opening is
May 4, 2025
9:30 AM - 3 PM
for more information visit
their website
playmywaysd.com



Daniel Ybarra
Chandra Deal
Susan Kendrick



SCDD Supported Self-Advocate Zoom Meetings

Zoom link: bit.ly/421knkO

Meeting ID: 937 0215 8975 | Passcode: 123763

- ❖ 1st Tuesday of the Month – 11 a.m.
Health and Wellness Rap Session
- ❖ 2nd and 3rd Wednesday – 4 p.m.
Advocates at the Movies
- ❖ 4th Thursday of the Month – 11 a.m.
I SPEAK Newsletter
- ❖ 3rd Friday of the Month – 2 p.m.
San Diego People First

Zoom link and passcode are the same for all meetings.

Additional training will be scheduled, and flyers will be sent out via email to let you know about them

Requests for interpretation or other accommodations must be received a week in advance.

For questions and/or to be added to the email list contact Debbie Marshall at debbie.marshall@scdd.ca.gov or call 619-913-8232.

Sophie's Gallery Events





Saturday, June 7, 2025
10 AM - 6 PM
In Downtown El Cajon

During Artival, Sophie's Gallery presents a retrospective show celebrating 25 years in Downtown El Cajon. Shop the gallery archives and peruse the history of previous shows through our collection of postcards and posters. New works in a variety of art media are offered for sale including mosaics, painting, sewing, jewelry, printmaking, weaving, and more!



Sophie's Gallery Celebrates Artival
 A community art festival in Downtown El Cajon
Saturday, June 7, 2025
10 AM - 6 PM



Lupita Shahbazi Collage



Carol Minear Clay Sculpture

Sophie's Gallery welcomes back guest artists Lupita Shahbazi and Carol Minear who will showcase their whimsical art during the Artival event. Lupita creates fanciful collages using paper, paint, and found objects while Carol is known for her playful sculpted clay lamps, caricatures, and animal sculptures. Both artists were featured in solo shows at Sophie's Kensington Gallery. The two of them will have art featured inside the gallery and table displays in front of Sophie's. A portion of their sales will benefit Sophie's Gallery.

Sophie's



Gallery

25th
Anniversary
 2000 - 2025



Sophie's Gallery
140 E. Main Street / El Cajon, CA 92020
619.593.2205 / stmcs.org

Mosaic Heart © Felicia Laverdiere
 Mosaic Heart © Rachel Guerrero
 Mosaic Heart © Gretchen Cameron




Sophie's Organic Garden
PRESENTS OUR ANNUAL

Mother's Day Flower Sale

Held in the lobby of St. Madeleine Sophie's Center
Thursday, May 8th & Friday, May 9th
During regular business hours

Single Roses: \$2.00
Create your own bouquet: Prices vary






47TH Haute with Heart
FASHION SHOW & LUNCHEON

LONDON CALLING

St. Madeleine Sophie's Center
Serving Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for Over 50 Years

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2ND, 2025
10AM-2PM • HILTON SAN DIEGO BAYFRONT

HONORING **BEV IRELAND**

PRESENTED BY
The Mansour Group

THE GUILD HOTEL

ENJOY A DAY OF

- FREE FLOWING CHAMPAGNE
- LIVE MUSIC
- SILENT AUCTION
- FASHION SHOW
- LUNCHEON

General Admission: \$225 per seat
Includes complimentary champagne during the pre-luncheon reception, a full-course luncheon, complimentary parking, and multiple live entertainment acts.

VIP: \$325 per seat
Includes all ticket benefits plus premium runway seating, valet parking, and complimentary wine during the full-course luncheon.

Proceeds benefit St. Madeleine Sophie's Center

 **HAUTEWITHHEART.ORG**



Changes at Program

By: Coleen Baucom

Hello my fellow readers we have had a great year so far as we wait with growing excitement for the completion of all the construction on campus. Our former lunch room is getting much needed upgrades and the new senior building will be opened in the summer! During the changes on campus we have been going in the community more and have more volunteer jobs. I know some of us are confused about all the changes here, but I am super happy that we are all working together to make the best of it, including getting to know everyone on campus. I have seen that staff is working hard to make our experience on campus nice and comfortable. I want to thank the members of the Self-Advocacy Board for doing a great job. I really liked their last meeting with the message, Be Different Be Nice! I also want to welcome the two new staff in the Senior Department. Well my fellow readers, I hope you all enjoy this newsletter.



Friends of Cats

By: LaShaun Bynes



I used to work at Friends of Cats. I would go with staff and loved folding blankets, sweeping, and making friends with the cats while there. I would like to go back to work because I have the skills and I am a good worker. It is hard for me to be in the classroom all day so I sometimes visit staff in your offices on campus. Don't worry about me I know that I can't stay long and interrupt your work. I just want to say hi!

2025 / May Birthdays

Steven Bartholomew

Tori Bayer

John Blalock

Heather Brewer

Stephan Bruening

Elmer Buck

Jerry Burch

Melissa Corrao

Emily Cunningham

Sara Elias

Dong Han

Lauren Heim

Luis Herrera

Kristian Huerta

William Lane

Felicia Laverdiere

Virginia Lippold

Nicole Lumpkin

Benjamin Mason

Michael Mercadante

Jessica Pena

Paul Rioux

Lisa Rowin

Tiffany Simpson

Roberto Suarez

Gabrielle Vargas

Cali Williams



Thank you to All Our Donors!

Monthly Giving New Members



Blanca & David Gibson

Son, Robert is a proud member of the Tritons swim team and is excited about the upcoming season. His parents said that Robert thinks of St. Madeleine's as a job and never wants to miss a day of work!

Jean Poutous Sr.

Son, Jean loves to show off his style on the Haute with Heart runway and is looking forward to modeling in this year's fashion show! He enjoys working in St. Madeleine's kitchen making and serving lunches two days a week.



We invite you to become a Champion of the Future by joining our Monthly Giving program.

We really need your help!

Visit us at www.stmsc.org/support-us check the box for recurring gift. It's that easy!



SMSC's Monthly Giving Pin
Receive your pin when you sign up for Monthly Giving!

San Diego Women's Club



Judy Mantle, 1st Vice President of the **San Diego Women's Club** presented St. Madeleine Sophie's Center with a donation at the club's recent meeting. Their contribution is earmarked for the **McGrath Family Senior Center** that is currently under construction in our upper garden. The San Diego Women's Club is a philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting community improvements locally and internationally. At the meeting our CEO Debra Emerson and our Development Director, Joe Perucca gave a short presentation about our center and answered questions from their membership before accepting the club's generous donation!

CJ Moon Photograph: McGrath Family Senior Center



Rotary



SMSC welcomed the Rotary Friendship Exchange Team, District 3000 from Southern India. Guests were greeted by a festive *welcome* banner made by our senior students. Students Kristen McClure, Cali Williams, and Clayton Hauer gave each visitor a welcome gift bag. Clayton asked how far away India was from El Cajon and learned the flight covering 9,000 miles and took 19 hours. Development Director and tour guide, Joe Perucca provided a history of SMSC from beginning to current year, highlighting our mission, program designs, and specialty programs. During our visit with the Senior Department, guests learned first-hand from B-Mod staff and students the recycling program process. Soon after we split into two groups to tour the campus. Visitors enjoyed walking through the garden, seeing the construction site where the new McGrath Family Senior Center is being built, and talking with students at every stop. The ADC department was holding an interactive class on recycling and guests were pleased to watch students learning practical skills. Our visitors enjoyed seeing students working in the kitchen serving lunches, and engaged with a group working in the garden. At the end of the tour they shopped in Sophie's Too and met Debra Emerson, our CEO. Impacted by the quality of our programs our guests presented SMSC with a donation!

By visiting our campus guests can connect with our students in a more meaningful way, making SMSC come alive! If you haven't already please schedule your tour today.
jperucca@stmsc.org



May • Puede / 2025

LUNCH MENU

May 1st Mediterranean shrimp with bell peppers over rice *

May 2nd Pizza and side salad

May 5th Beef nachos

May 6th Spaghetti with Italian sausage and garden salad

May 7th Greek chicken, cucumber salad, and rice pilaf

May 8th Pineapple pork, coconut rice, and broccoli

May 9th Pizza and side salad

May 12th Fried chicken over mashed potatoes, and coleslaw

May 13th Turkey and cranberry ciabatta sandwich and chips *

May 14th Eggplant parmesan over pasta and side salad

May 15th Grilled chicken Caesar salad and garlic bread

May 16th Pizza and side salad

May 19th Tinga tacos, rice, and beans

May 20th Glazed pork over sweet potato puree and vegetables

May 21st Cheese ravioli with sun dried tomato sauce and side salad

May 22nd BBQ bacon cheeseburger and fries

May 23rd Pizza and side salad

May 26th Memorial Day Holiday Closed

May 27th Pesto pasta, garlic bread, and side salad

May 28th Mediterranean bowl and pita bread

May 29th Chicken yakisoba *

May 30th Pizza and side salad

* New Menu Item

Illustration of a Pangolin, a prehistoric anteater and the only mammal covered with scales!