

ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE

NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER



Upcoming Events

Hawaii Branch

Event #1: Youth Peer Support Group

Description: Access to Independence welcomes all youth between the ages of 14 – 24 who have a disability to join us in this monthly event as we discuss various topics relating to transitioning into adulthood, experiences of living with a disability, coping strategies, and any other issues that you feel are relevant. We hope that you will see this as a safe, non-judgmental environment that can help you along your transition all while making friends in the process. Our program will be filled with guest speakers, skills building, recreational activities, and more in order to serve as a stepping stone for you to achieve your independence and be successful in life.

Date: 11/21/2024

Time: 2:00PM – 4:00PM HST

Location: 200 N Vineyard Blvd, Oahu Conference Room, 5th Floor, Honolulu, HI 96817

Contact: Carolina Riquelme, LTSS Coordinator, 808-369-9521,
criquelme@accesstoindependence.org

Event #2: Cross Disabilities Support Group

Description: This group embraces individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Our monthly gatherings center on emotional support and social connection. In this welcoming space, consumers share experiences, explore coping strategies, and foster meaningful connections that go beyond boundaries!

Date: 11/27/2024

Time: 2:00PM – 4:00PM HST

Location: 200 N Vineyard Blvd, Oahu Conference Room, 5th Floor, Honolulu, HI 96817

Contact: Carolina Riquelme, LTSS Coordinator, 808-369-9521,
criquelme@accesstoindependence.org

Upcoming Events

Escondido Branch

Event #1: Voting Advocacy

Description: Come and get information on voting registration, ensure your voting location is fully accessible, and learn about absentee ballot procedures and more!

Date: 11/21/2024 (Every Third Thursday of the Month)

Time: 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Hermes Castro, Program Manager, 619-704-2058, hcastro@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #2: Benefits Options Counseling Program

Description: This program helps individuals learn about what benefits they are eligible for and navigate the application or appeals process including: Social Security, CalFresh, caregiving services, transportation services, healthcare applications, discounted utilities, and more!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Vivian Radam, ILSC, 619-704-2435, vradam@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #3: Disability Support Group

Description: Our disability support group aims to provide a platform for people living with disabilities to engage around different topics related to coping, overcoming hurdles, and sharing both positive and negative experiences. We invite our consumers to engage with us in a non-judgmental virtual atmosphere to enjoy a meaningful interaction with a diverse group of individuals!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Time: 12:30 PM – 3 PM

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Vivian Radam, ILSC, 619-704-2435, vradam@accesstoindpendence.org

Upcoming Events

San Diego Branch

Event #2: Voting Advocacy

Description: Come and get information on voting registration, ensure your voting location is fully accessible, and learn about absentee ballot procedures and more!

Date: 9/19/2024 (Every Third Thursday of the Month)

Time: 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Antoni Neri, Community Organizing Coordinator, 619-704-2439,
aneri@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #3: Transition & Diversion Program

Description: Are you ready to transition out of a residential medical institution into your own independent home? This program is for you! Let Access to Independence advocate beside you in order to transition into your community successfully!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Andrea Christopher, Transition & Diversion Coordinator, 619-704-2442,
achrsitopher@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #4: Benefits Options Counseling Program

Description: This program helps individuals learn about what benefits they are eligible for and navigate the application or appeals process including: Social Security, CalFresh, caregiving services, transportation services, healthcare applications, discounted utilities, and more!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 8885 Rio San Diego Dr. Ste 100, San Diego, CA 92108

Contact: Andrea Christopher, Transition & Diversion Coordinator, 619-704-2442,
achrsitopher@accesstoindpendence.org

Upcoming Events

Imperial Valley Branch

Event #1: Driving Simulator Workshop

Description: We are excited to host a youth workshop all about our driving simulator! We will introduce you to how the simulator works and highlight the many benefits it offers. You'll learn about road signs, traffic rules, and receive DMV study assistance all while gaining valuable hands-on experience with the simulator.

Date: 11/25/2024

Location: Zoom Event

Contact: Edgar Lopez, Youth Transition Coordinator, (760) 890-4651,
elopez@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #2: Voting Advocacy

Description: Come and get information on voting registration, ensure your voting location is fully accessible, and learn about absentee ballot procedures and more!

Date: Call us today to learn more!

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, CA 92243

Contact: (760)768-2044

Event #3: Enhanced Vision Program

Description: Access to Independence offers a program exclusively for individuals who are 55 years or older, with vision loss or blindness. Program services include; information and referral, self-advocacy, activities of daily living, adaptive equipment/assistive technology, and more!

Date: Call us today to learn more!

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, CA 92243

Contact: Susana Garcia, LTSS Coordinator, (760)965-4199, sgarcia@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #4: Transition & Diversion Program

Description: Our Transition & Diversion program safely supports and assists consumers throughout their process from their transition back into the community and safely in their home. Our Diversion program is intended to support individuals with disabilities who are high risk of becoming homeless or institutionalized. We assist individuals with remaining independent, and safely in their home.

Date: Call us today to learn more!

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, CA 92243

Contact: Judith Brown, Transition & Diversion Coordinator, 760-618-0167,
jbrown@accesstoindpendence.org



SAVE THE DATE

Annual AT & Disability Resource Fair

November 14, 2024

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Imperial Valley Mall

3451 S. Dogwood Rd.

El Centro, CA 92243

Join us to celebrate and bring awareness to Disability & Employment Awareness month! Learn about different assistive technologies and local resources available in the community! There will be informational booths and resource tables from other organizations/agencies and employers and job seekers.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity!



www.accesstoindependence.org

WE'RE MOVING!

Access to Independence is thrilled to announce that we've moved to a new office location! As we prepare our new space, we're still here to serve you. Staff will continue providing services and meeting with consumers during the transition. For any questions, please contact Karina Leon, Program Manager, at (760)768-2044.

We can't wait to welcome you to our new space soon. Stay tuned for details about our upcoming Open House —we'd love for you to come celebrate with us!



HAWAII BRANCH



*Image text:
Keao
standing at
the podium
in front of
students.*

Access to Independence had the opportunity to provide a student presentation at Hawaii Job Corps. Program Manager, Leelynn, and Coordinator, Keao, presented in front of over 100 students on our organization and self-advocacy. In this photo, Keao is talking about her journey towards successful employment.

8th Annual **CARE BASKET FUNDRAISER**

Access to Independence aims to deliver 200 baskets filled with holiday meals that will feed whole families. Each care basket costs \$50 - \$100 and brings warmth, comfort, and hope to someone striving for independence.

**Help Us Deliver Hope
This Season**





Our offices will be
CLOSED

on November 28th and
29th. We will reopen on
Monday, December 2nd
during regular business
hours. Wishing you a
wonderful holiday!



WE'RE HIRING

Are you ready to be part of something extraordinary? We are thrilled to announce that our wonderful organization is expanding, and we are on the lookout for passionate individuals to join our dynamic team!

Now Hiring:

1. **Youth Transition Coordinator (Location: Honolulu, HI)**
2. **Information & Assistance Coordinator (Location: Honolulu, HI)**
3. **Long-Term Services and Supports Coordinator (Location: San Diego, CA)**
4. **Information & Assistance Coordinator (Location: San Diego, CA)**

Why Join Us? At Access to Independence, we take pride in fostering a positive and collaborative work environment. Our team is not just colleagues; we are a family that supports and uplifts one another. By joining us, you'll become an integral part of an organization dedicated to making a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve.

Benefits:

- Competitive salary
- Comprehensive health and wellness benefits
- Opportunities for professional development
- A supportive and inclusive workplace culture
- The chance to contribute to impactful programs and initiatives

How to Apply: Ready to take the next step in your career? You can apply for these exciting opportunities in two simple ways:

- Visit our Indeed job postings.
- Email your resume to jobs@accesstoindependence.org.

Don't miss the chance to be part of our incredible journey! We encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply. Help us continue making a difference in the communities we serve.

If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to reach out to us at accessmedia@accesstoindependence.org

Join us in shaping a brighter future! We look forward to welcoming new members to our fantastic team.



PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR FALL: 10 ENERGY-EFFICIENCY TIPS

As the leaves change color and the weather gets cooler, it's a great time to think about how you can save on your energy bill. Here are some ideas to help you keep your home cozy without breaking the bank. Simple adjustments can make an impact on your energy savings this season.

1. **Seal drafts:** Check your windows and doors for any drafts. Use weather stripping or caulk to seal up any gaps. This will keep the warm air inside and the cold air out, making your heating system work more efficiently.
2. **Adjust your thermostat:** Lowering your thermostat by just a few degrees can make a big difference. Try setting it to 68°F when you're home and awake and lower it when you're asleep or away. A programmable thermostat can make this even easier.
3. **Maintain your heating system.** Make sure your heating system is running efficiently by scheduling a maintenance check. Replace filters regularly to ensure your system is working at its best.
4. **Unplug electronics.** Even when they're turned off, electronics can still use energy if they're plugged in. Unplug devices when they're not in use or use a power strip to easily turn off multiple items at once.
5. **Use ceiling fans wisely.** Set your ceiling fans to rotate clockwise at a low speed. This will push warm air down from the ceiling, helping to keep your rooms warmer.
6. **Close the fireplace damper.** When your fireplace is not in use, make sure the damper is closed. An open damper allows warm air to escape up the chimney.
7. **Use rugs.** Cover bare floors with rugs to help insulate your home. Rugs can help keep your feet warm and reduce the need for extra heating.
8. **Take shorter showers.** Hot water can be a big energy expense. Try to take shorter showers and consider installing a low-flow showerhead to reduce water usage.
9. **Insulate your home.** Adding insulation to your attic, walls, and floors can help keep the heat in and the cold out. This can make a big difference in your energy usage.
10. **Use natural light.** Take advantage of the sun's natural heat by opening curtains and blinds during the day. This can help warm up your home without using extra energy.

By following these tips, you can enjoy a warm and cozy home this fall while keeping your energy bills under control. Find more energy-saving tips at [sdge.com/MyEnergy](https://www.sdge.com/MyEnergy).

