

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

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JANUARY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2021



CELEBRATING 46 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The Commission is charged with advising the Board of Supervisors (Board) on a range of issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities. The Commission's goals include taking action to achieve a County where people with disabilities find equal opportunities when accessing programs and services, especially during a time of health pandemic. Accordingly, this reporting period, the Commission and its Committees worked tirelessly to ensure that individuals with disabilities were guaranteed accessibility.

This reporting period, everyone, regardless of abilities, was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which added an additional layer of difficulty for all to access food, housing, transportation, and immediate medical attention. Due to the stay-at-home orders and social distancing, access to basic life necessities became more difficult, especially for the disability community. To assist this population, the Commission developed a strategy to coordinate presentations by County Departments, non-profit humanitarian organizations, and transportation entities that provided information on available programs and services at the Commission's monthly meetings.

For example, at its meeting held on October 21, 2020, the Commission scheduled the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RRCC); which provided important information on voting accessibility for people with disabilities. This information was key due to the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election, which occurred amidst the pandemic. The Commission also scheduled the Department of Public Health at its meeting of February 17, 2021 to bring information on the COVID-19 vaccines. This presentation generated the interest of many public members due to the concerns and questions regarding the vaccine. The Commission also invited Access Services, Inc. (ASI), transportation services for people with disabilities, which brought information on additional services that were implemented during ASI's low-peak ridership, such as the Meal Delivery Program for homebound ASI clients. The Commission's Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee also worked with the Department of Health Services and the various vaccination sites to create designated lanes at these sites with the goal of reducing wait times for people with disabilities who travelled to and from these vaccination sites utilizing public transportation.

This reporting period, the Commission suspended its 2020 and 2021 Access Awards Luncheon, which is the Commission's primary fundraising source to sustain its Memorial Scholarship Programs. However, the Commission developed alternate virtual fundraising strategies, holding three virtual silent auctions made possible by monetary donations and in-kind donations from Commission Members. These alternate fundraising efforts helped augment the Commission's Trust Fund that sustains the Memorial Scholarship Program. The Commission anticipates resuming its Scholarship Program in the Summer of 2022.

Although, the Commission was faced with difficulties in meeting its goals and objectives due to the pandemic, the Commission remained committed to its mission and worked diligently to advocate to ensure the welfare of people with disabilities notwithstanding the difficulties it faced.

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES COMMISSIONERS BY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT JANUARY 2020 – DECEMBER 2021

MEET THE COMMISSION



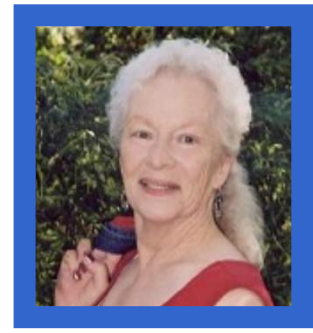
Carlos Benavides
President
(4th District)



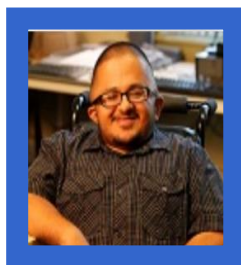
Lourdes Caracoza
1st Vice President
(1st District)



Ramon Pizarro
2nd Vice President
(4th District)



Peggie Reyna
Treasurer
(1st District)



Hector Ochoa
(1st District)



John B. Troost
(2nd District)



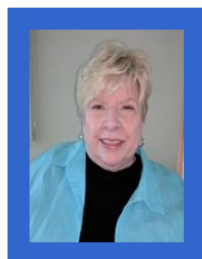
Michael Agyin
(2nd District)



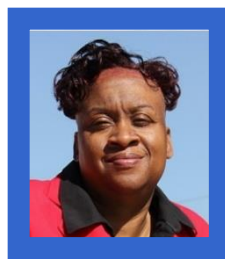
Danielle Sheppard
(2nd District)



Maggie Soleimani
(3rd District)



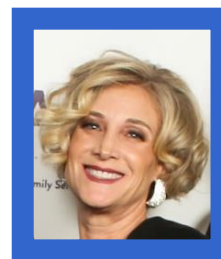
Louise E. Smith
(3rd District)



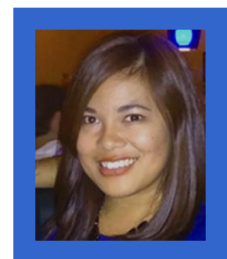
Deaka M. McClain
(4th District)



Jack Darakjian
(5th District)



Cathy Gott
(5th District)



Andrea Edoria
(5th District)



Wan Chun Chang
(Representative CA Department of Rehabilitation)

The Heart of Disabilities



Disabled . . .
Does Not Mean Unable

OUTGOING COMMISSIONERS



IN LOVING MEMORY OF DEE H. PINCHBECK

(Representing Little People, 5th District)
(Served from April 14, 2015, 2021 to May 26, 2021)

The Commission is deeply saddened by the unexpected passing of Commissioner Dee H. Pinchbeck on May 26, 2021.

Commissioner Pinchbeck, Fifth District Commissioner, was appointed in May of 2015, representing the Little People. In the early 1970's Commissioner Pinchbeck served in the Glendale Unified School District as an advocate for troubled teens and helped establish an Outreach Counseling Program in the Glendale Unified School District. Commissioner Pinchbeck worked a paralegal until she became disabled with a crippling form of Rheumatoid Arthritis. She was a great advocate, alongside Jane Small another incredible advocate for people with disabilities, while working at U.C.L.A. Most recently, Commissioner Pinchbeck worked with Helping Hands for the Blind where she helped families with loved ones stricken with severe arthritis and lupus. Commissioner Pinchbeck will be missed.

PAST YOUTH COMMISSIONER



Alana Bess
(Representative Youth Seat Ages 16-24)
(Served from 11/5/2019 to 03/31/2021/)

MISSION STATEMENT & ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mission Statement

The Commission was established in 1975 and was charged with advising the Board of Supervisors (Board) on a range of issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities and taking actions to achieve a barrier-free County where people with disabilities have equal access to programs and services.

To implement this guiding principle, the Commission and its Committees focus on issues of employment, education, diversity, health, housing, transportation, access, and recreation. The Commission also monitors the quality of municipal services, evaluates policy, recommends improvements to existing laws, and provides scholarships to students with disabilities through fundraising efforts.

At its meeting held October 21, 2020, the Commission unanimously voted to adopt the following Mission Statement that not only exemplifies the Commission's advocacy for people with disabilities, but for all people regardless of their diversity and abilities:

*"The Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities' mission is to advocate and represent the best interest of people with disabilities, promote equal access to all County resources and services, and lead a barrier-free environment to an independent community life and activities. The Commission works to promote inclusion, provides educational opportunities, and **champions the needs of all.**"*

Role and Responsibilities

In compliance with the Commission's Ordinance, this body makes certain to adhere to its role and responsibilities which are to:

- A. Advise the Board, with the assistance of County Departments and others, on the unique needs of people with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the areas of health, employment, education, public attitudes, barriers, and recreation;
- B. Conduct studies and make recommendations to the Board for improvement of policies, systems, and procedures in any areas the Commission feels are necessary, in the best interest of people with disabilities;
- C. Cooperate with organizations seeking to improve services to people with disabilities, promote activities for people with disabilities, and advise the Board on the efforts and activities being made for people with disabilities by other government agencies and private organizations;

Role and Responsibilities (Continued)

- D. Evaluate the adequacy of existing laws and proposed legislation related to people with disabilities from the County's point of view, and suggest necessary legislation which the County may wish to sponsor;
- E. Study and report on matters referred for such review by the Board;
and
- F. Distribute scholarships to recipients deemed appropriate by a majority of the Commission, when funds are available in the determination of a majority of the Commission. Recipients may include, but are not limited to, high school, college, or trade school students with a disability who seek to further their education. Any receipt or distribution of funds pursuant to the Ordinance governing the Commission is done in coordination with and pursuant to any procedures established by the Executive Office of the Board.

Additionally, pursuant to the Ordinance governing this body, the Commission has the authority to raise funds in order to subsidize and enable any scholarships. These fundraising activities may include benefits, solicitations for donations, campaigns, or any other type of charitable event that has been approved by the County's Chief Executive Office.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historical Background

The Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was established by the Board on June 20, 1975, to advise the Board on disability issues. In 2022, the Commission will celebrate its 47th year of leadership and advocacy.

The members of the Commission were selected to represent a broad variety of disabilities and disability services; and include a representative from the State Department of Rehabilitation. Further, the Commission is mandated by the Board to:

- Keep abreast of disability-related community problems, develop disability laws and regulations, and provide testimony, reports, evaluations, and recommendations to the Board;
- Work closely with the County's ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Compliance Officer, and various County Departments to devise innovative approaches to problem-solving and to ensure full and equal access to all phases of County Programs and facilities; and
- Hold open meetings and public hearings to address issues of common concern to the disability community.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The Commission is a diverse body representing a broad variety of disabilities, and members appointed to the Commission represent the following disabling conditions, service providers and categories defined below:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| A. Blind; | J. Legal profession; |
| B. Deaf or hearing impaired; | K. Medical profession; |
| C. Mute or speech impaired; | L. State Department of Rehabilitation; |
| D. Developmentally disabled; | M. Deaf before language acquisition (age three); |
| E. Wheelchair users; | N. Partially sighted; |
| F. Ambulatory with difficulty; | O. Parent of a child with a disability; |
| G. Energy limited; | P. Learning disabled; |
| H. Emotionally disturbed; | Q. Little People; |
| I. Psychology profession; | R. Youth (16 to 24 years of age). |

As a diverse group of Commissioners, the Commission strongly promotes and supports Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). During its monthly “in person” meetings, this body provides a platform for members of the public to fully participate on topics being discussed and share their challenges, concerns, opinions, and ideas for creating a barrier-free environment, and improving equality and accessibility for County resources and services. These ideas, concerns, and opinions are discussed openly and freely and are embraced by the Commission. During the pandemic, members of the public were invited to participate virtually at all meetings of the Commission. In addition, an item was and is always placed on every meeting agenda allowing members of the public to participate.

At its meeting held October 21, 2021, the Commission adopted the following mission statement that not only represents the advocacy it encourages for people with disabilities, but for all people regardless of their abilities because the Commission strives to champion the needs of all:

“The Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities’ mission is to advocate and represent the best interest of people with disabilities, promote equal access to all County resources and services, and lead a barrier-free environment to an independent community life and activities. The Commission works to promote inclusion, provides educational opportunities, and champions the needs of all.”

The Commission works tirelessly to support and encourage DEI through its leadership, advocacy work, events, and via the work of the various Committees’ activities that unwaveringly promote the wellbeing of people with disabilities.

However, in a recent review of the Commission’s Bylaws, the Commission recognized that while Article XIII slightly touches on DEI by setting forth protocols for communication with persons who are deaf/hard of hearing, it falls short of formal language to reflect the Commission’s commitment to zero tolerance for inequities of ethnic, gender, racial, or religious biases/DEI. Therefore, the Commission’s goal is to address DEI at future meetings and to amend the Commission’s Bylaws.

Nevertheless, the Commission recognizes that DEI is priority. To that end, the Commission established the Lesbian Gay Transgender Bisexual Queer Disability Community Ad-Hoc Committee (LGTBQ+ Committee) to promote inclusivity for this population. This Committee’s goals are to improve the rights, access and inclusion of the LGBTQ+. Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in late 2019, this Committee held three focus workgroup gatherings, in the cities of Long Beach, Downey and Los Angeles. During these gatherings, the Committee ascertained that the leading concern of the LGBTQ+ is discrimination, particularly in senior assisted housing, nursing homes, and in-home care environments.

ANNUAL WORKPLAN

Annual Workplan

Annual Work Plan for the Commission over 2020-21 has been to:

- Continue collaboration with the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to yield better housing outcomes for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). In 2020, the Commission sent a letter to the Board of Supervisors with recommendations on how to achieve better housing outcomes for the IDD population. To date, the Commission's Policies on Developmental Disabilities (POIDD) Ad-Hoc Committee has met with representatives from Supervisor Kathryn Barger's Office, and is also collaborating with members of the Los Angeles City Council to address affordable housing issues for the IDD population, and to continue efforts to raise awareness about the unique needs of the IDD population who are more at risk for homelessness;
- Collaborate with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), members of the LA County Workforce Development Board (WDB), and the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to introduce these Departments to, NeuroTalent Works (formerly Spectrum Works), a private non-profit agency with a vision to build neurodiverse workplaces by transitioning gifted individuals on the autism spectrum to employment opportunities. NeuroTalent Works can help the DOR, WDB and other County Departments better understand the needs of people with IDD while providing support to this population to assist them in obtaining competitive and integrated employment;
- Continue collaboration with the LAHSA to assist with a better process to gather information and more accurately quantify the IDD population within LAHSA's Greater Los Angeles Homeless Counts; unfortunately, progress was not made on this endeavor due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Continue advocating to yield a Countywide expansion of the Access Services Inc.'s Parents with Disabilities Program, a program that provides transportation services to and from school to children of parents with disabilities. Unfortunately, due to the closures of schools located in the County, during the pandemic, the Commission's advocacy was halted.
- Hold alternate fundraising opportunities in the absence of the Commission's primary fundraising stream, the Access Awards Luncheon. The Access Awards Luncheon, held annually in October during Disability Awareness Month, is an event that is key in upholding the Commission's Trust fund to sustain the Commission's Memorial Scholarship Program. The Access Awards Luncheon was suspended in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Connect people with disabilities to public and private programs and services within the State, County, and City of Los Angeles, to improve/streamline service delivery for them, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020-21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2020-21 Accomplishments

Over the past two years, the Commission's accomplishments include:

- Presiding over 22 of the 24 regularly scheduled meetings, which brought to Commission several presentations by County Departments, including the Departments of Health Services (DHS), Public Health (DPH), Public Works (DPW), the Workforce Development Aging & Community Services (WDACS), as well as non-profits and disability related-presenters, who provided information on available resources in the areas, of health, employment, transportation, homelessness, and COVID-19. These meetings, while virtual averaged approximately 20+ participants enabling discussion on issues of common concern for individuals with disabilities;
- Holding virtual meetings during the "Safer at Home Order for Control of the COVID-19 pandemic," while successfully providing reasonable accommodations such as having real time American Sign Language interpreters and enabled-platform captions, for hard of hearing or deaf individuals;
- Hosting a resource table for three days (February 21, 2020 through February 23, 2020) at the 2020 Abilities Expo at the Los Angeles Convention Center, an event that brought together products and services under one roof for the community of people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, seniors, and healthcare professionals. At the Expo, the Commission offered emergency handbooks and other informational brochures for people with disabilities. The Commission also invited the Department of Human Resources to share information on County employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
- Sharing vital information during Commission meetings regarding Access Services Inc.'s (ASI's) suspension of ridesharing to safeguard the health of its riders and workforce due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and ASI's Meal Delivery Program for homebound residents with disabilities, an available food resource during the pandemic. At its meeting held July 15, 2020, the Commission approved sending a letter to ASI commending and thanking ASI for the invaluable services provided to ASI riders during the pandemic.
- Augmenting the Commission's Memorial Scholarship Trust fund, made possible by Commissioner donations. This reporting period, in the absence of the Commission's fundraising events/opportunities, several Commission members made monetary and in-kind donations;
- Eliciting presentations by Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RRCC) to share information on voting accessibility for people with disabilities. At the Commission's meeting held on October 21, 2020, a presentation by the RRCC generated the interest of many members of the public due to the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election amidst the pandemic. Additionally, at the Commission meeting of February 17, 2021, a presentation by the Department of Public Health (DPH) provided vital information on COVID-19 vaccines;

2020-21 Accomplishments

- Holding three virtual Silent Auctions made possible due to the generosity of Commission Members who provided in-kind donations that were placed for bid. These items generated approximately \$1,925;
- Hosting a Virtual Online Fundraiser through an online platform where Commission Members created customized online sites (pages) and shared them via social media with Family and Friends who made donations to the Commission's Memorial Scholarship Fund. This Virtual Online Fundraiser generated approximately \$5,710. The Commission also sent letters to philanthropic organizations seeking monetary and in-kind donations;
- Sending a letter to the California Public Utilities Commission at the recommendation of the County's Chief Executive Office, supporting the transfer of the 2-1-1 Dialing Code to Los Angeles County (County), giving the County direct control over the 2-1-1 Dialing Code;
- Advocating for a Countywide expansion of the Access Services Inc.'s (ASI's) Parents with Disabilities Program (PWDP), which provides transportation services to and from school for children of parents with disabilities. This rating period the Commission worked tirelessly with ASI to ensure that the PWDP was expanded Countywide to all areas serviced by ASI. The Commission's advocacy yielded positive results and currently this service is offered Countywide;
- Joining the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) at its September 14, 2021 Board meeting to support the adoption of a resolution by the LBUSD for the designation of the second week in October as Disability History Week in Long Beach Schools;
- Partnering with the WDACS' Workforce Development Board (WDB) to host the Los Angeles County Workforce Disability Roundtable (Ad-Hoc Workgroup) in partnership with RespectAbility, the Department of Rehabilitation, and other key stakeholders, with the goal to enhance workforce services for people with disabilities by bridging employment gaps for this population and generating long-term goals on this endeavor. The Roundtable is scheduled to take place in January 2022;
- Participating with the Bringing Our Loved Ones Home (BOLOH) Task Force, launched by the Board on February 20, 2020 to address the problem of wandering among individuals suffering from Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, and other memory-related impairments; and
- Collaborating with the Department of Health Services and key transportation stakeholders, such as Access Services, Inc., to ensure that COVID-19 vaccination sites offer designated lanes for people with disabilities who travel to and from sites on public transportation to facilitate the wait time for these individuals.

ONGOING LONG-TERM PROJECTS

Ongoing Long-Term Projects

The Commission's ongoing long-term projects include advocating on behalf of people with disabilities to:

- Promote the importance of inclusion and accessibility in recreational areas and explore the feasibility through specific projects to have Mobi-Mats at County beaches; and advocate for inclusive and sensory-bound playgrounds in parks in each Supervisorial District;
- Collaborate with the Commission on Alcohol and Other Drugs (COAOD) to raise awareness regarding opioid addiction amongst people with disabilities who are most prone to take pain medication. The Commission will continue to meet with the COAOD to join forces on this endeavor.
- Review concerns brought forward by the Access for All - Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) Subcommittee in a proposed letter to the Director of Mental Health Services, Subcommittee that is under the Department of Mental Health. UsCC concerns include: the lack of culturally and linguistically accessible mental health services throughout the County for those that are Deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind, and the absence of a designated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator who can adequately address the gaps in services for the disability and deaf communities. The Commission's goal is to schedule fact-finding meetings with the Department of Mental Health in an effort to address the concerns brought forward by the UsCC Subcommittee;
- Collaborate with the WDACS' Workforce Development Board to improve workforce services for people with disabilities and provide input to the Workforce Development Board's Area Plan;
- Collaborate with key Departments to help reduce homelessness and improve housing possibilities for people with disabilities;
- Review disability-related legislation that promotes inclusivity and investment in universal design from the County's point of view, explore the feasibility of collaborating with the Departments of Regional Planning and Public Works to advocate for the inclusion of universal design in future housing developments and/or provide recommendations to the Board to support such legislation;
- Raise awareness regarding people and organizations that have made a positive impact on, and contributed to a barrier-free environment, in the lives of people with special abilities. Reconvene the Commission's Annual Access Awards Luncheon to honor and acknowledge individuals with disabilities;
- Hold fundraising events, if possible, to augment the Commission's Trust Account in order to sustain its Memorial Scholarship Program that promotes higher education for students and veterans with disabilities;
- Collaborate with relevant County Departments and/or Commissions to raise awareness regarding opioid use and addiction, of which the disability population is susceptible due to chronic pain and other health issues. During this reporting period, the Commission met with the Commission on Alcohol and other drugs and anticipates further collaboration and joint effort;
- Dialogue with appropriate County and State Departments, such as Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), to continue advocating to ensure prioritizing the growing needs for housing for individuals with disabilities; and
- Collaborate with the County's Lesbian, Bisexual & Queer Women's Health Collaborative (LA County LB QWHC) to ensure inclusivity and equity for this community.

STANDING AND AD-HOC COMMITTEES

Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

Carlos Benavides, President
Lourdes Caracoza, 1st Vice President
Ramon Pizarro, 2nd Vice President
Peggie Reyna, Treasurer

EVENTS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Carlos Benavides, Chair
Members: Lourdes Caracoza, Cathy Gott, Peggie Reyna, John B. Troost, Ramon Pizarro, Louise E. Smith
Community Member: Louis Burns

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

John B. Troost, Chair
Members: Carlos Benavides, Ramon Pizarro, Deaka McClain

EDUCATION COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

John B. Troost, Chair
Members: Carlos Benavides, Lourdes Caracoza, Louise E. Smith

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (2020-21)

John B. Troost, Co-Chair
Peggie Reyna, Co-Chair

HOUSING COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

Peggie Reyna, Chair
Member: Carlos Benavides

LGBTQ+ DISABILITY COMMUNITY COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

Louise E. Smith, Chair
Members: Carlos Benavides, Lourdes Caracoza, Peggie Reyna,

Note: Michelle Anne Babitz (Served 2017-2020; Resigned 2020)

POLICIES ON INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

Jack Darakjian and Cathy Gott, Co-Chairs
Members: Carlos Benavides, Lourdes Caracoza, Ray Pizarro

ACCESS AND MOBILITY ON COUNTY SIDEWALKS COMMITTEE (AD-HOC)

Louise E. Smith, Ray Pizarro, Co-Chairs
Members: Carlos Benavides, Deaka McClain

WORKGROUP TO COLLABORATE WITH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (AD-HOC)

Lourdes Caracoza & Ray Pizarro, Co-Chair
Members: Carlos Benavides, Cathy Gott; Jack Darakjian; Wan Chun Chang

EVENTS

2020 & 2021 ANNUAL ACCESS AWARDS

For over 30 years, in recognition of October as “Disability Awareness Month,” the Board of Supervisors (Board) and the Commission have held an Annual Access Awards Luncheon. At these celebrations, the Board and the Commission not only honor individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions and/or have promoted equality and accessibility for people with disabilities, but also highlight the special abilities of people with disabilities.

As a non-profit organization, the Commission depends on the proceeds generated from this luncheon celebration, as well as the monetary and in-kind donations from generous corporate friends that allow the Commission to sustain its Memorial Scholarship Programs and outreach to the disability community, on an annual basis.

However, in 2020 and 2021, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Commission was unable to host a Luncheon and its fundraising stream was negatively impacted. The Commission is eager and welcomes California’s “reopening” to reconvene this very important Annual Access Awards Luncheon to continue highlighting unique people with special abilities and to resume its fundraising efforts. The last Annual Access Awards Luncheon held by the Commission was in 2019. To view the 2019 Luncheon event, please click on the following links: [2019 Access Awards Luncheon](#) & [2019 Event Photos](#).

2020 & 2021 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Since 2003, the Commission has provided 110 scholarships to young men and women and veterans with disabilities that reside in Los Angeles County. These scholarships assist students and veterans, with disabilities, to further their educational goals. Scholarships are sustained with proceeds from the Commission’s Access Awards Luncheon. The Commission’s Memorial Scholarship Program offers scholarships in each of the three categories below:

Bernard Siegel/Bill Tainter Scholarship Program is a program to honor the memory of former Commissioner Bernard Siegel who was a passionate and empathetic advocate for people with disabilities. Mr. Siegel was a distinguished professional in the aerospace industry, which included the LEM landing craft that successfully landed a man on the moon. This program is also named after Bill Tainter, who was the Executive Director for the State of California Department of Rehabilitation. Mr. Tainter increased representation of people with disabilities in top-level management positions in the Department and was a nationally recognized leader and role model in the disability community. His work also included developing programs and workshops on disability awareness, as well as presentations on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) legislation.

Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Program is a program to honor the memory of former Commissioner Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr., who passed away in July 2007. Mr. Hamilton was a veteran of the Armed Forces and a life-long advocate for the disability community.

Ruben Anthony Rios Creative Arts & Design Memorial Scholarship Program is a program to honor the memory of former Commissioner Ruben Anthony Rios, an artist and a life-long advocate for the disability community.

The Commission collaborates with several agencies to distribute scholarship applications to men and women with disabilities who meet guidelines for financial need and plan to pursue educational goals. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission suspended its 2020 and 2021 Memorial Scholarship Programs. Instead, the Commission set goals and developed strategies to continue its fundraising efforts. The Commission looks forward to resuming the Scholarship Program in the Summer of 2022. In 2019, the Commission sponsored 28 scholarships. Please click on the following link to access the 2019 Memorial Scholarship Program held at the June 18, 2019 Board of Supervisors’ (BOS’) meeting: [June 18, 2019 BOS Meeting](#).

MEETING PRESENTATIONS

MEETING PRESENTATIONS

Although the Commission faced obstacles and challenges due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Commission managed to virtually host most of its 2020 yearly scheduled meetings, cancelling only two, and held all meetings in 2021. The Commission's goal was to use its meetings as a forum to share important information regarding resources, services, and programs available to people with disabilities, particularly during the most difficult time of pandemic. Meetings served as an important venue in which Commissioners, County Departments, non-profits, and disability-related stakeholders exchanged information on COVID-19 vaccines, transportation, and food and housing resources for people with disabilities.

Meeting presentations for this reporting period (January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021) are listed below:

- Presentation by Harbage Consulting on the Coordinated Care Initiative, a demonstration Project in seven counties across the State of California for people with both Medicare and Medi-cal benefits - "dual eligibility." [1-15-20](#)
- Presentation by Department of Human Resources on Los Angeles County Talent Pipeline Programs and Employment Programs for People with Disabilities. [2-19-20](#)
- Presentation by Access Services, Inc. on its Services and Proactive Safety Measures in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. [6-17-20](#)
- Presentation by the Los Angeles World Airports' (LAWA's) on its Section 504 and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Compliance Programs of LAWA Airports, including the Los Angeles Airport LAX-it Program. [7-15-20](#)
- Presentation by Maral Karaccusian, MSW, Office of Supervisor Janice Hahn, regarding Los Angeles County's Coordinated Service for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities. [8-19-2020](#)
- Presentation by the Center for Health Care Rights, HICAP/SHIP regarding Medicare Benefits, Coverage Options and Assistance Programs for Medicare Recipients. [9-16-20](#)
- Presentation by the Department of the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Voting Accessibility for People with Disabilities. [10-21-20](#)
- Presentation by the Department of Public Health on the County's efforts to control the use of opioids/reduce opioid addiction, specifically for people with disabilities who are prone to use pain medicine. [11-18-20](#)
- Presentation by Anat Habani, Regional Disability Integration Lead, The American Red Cross, on the importance of Equity in delivering disaster relief. [12-16-20](#)
- Presentation by The Los Angeles World Airports' (LAWA's) ADA Office and Disability Access and Accommodation Advisory Committee (DAAAC) on a Planned Series of Webinars Regarding ADA Training. [1-20-21](#)
- Presentation by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health regarding the Administration of the COVID-19 Vaccine to People with Disabilities. [2-17-21](#)
- Presentation by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (DMH's) Access For All Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) Subcommittee on the Subcommittee's history, current projects aiming to increase accessibility to DMH Services, and present concerns of accessibility. [3-17-21](#)

MEETING PRESENTATIONS (Continued)

- Presentation by Access Services Inc. (ASI) on Services Offered to Assist ASI's riders during the COVID-19 Pandemic. [4-21-21](#)
- Presentation by Mark Altieri, Public Partnerships, on the Self-Determination Program (Program) and the Opportunities the Program will Provide to Regional Center Service Recipients. [5-19-21](#)
- Presentation by the Los Angeles County Office of the Chief Executive Officer on an application to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requesting the transfer of the designation and control of the 2-1-1 dialing code (2-1-1) from the current Information and Referral (I&R) service provider to the County of Los Angeles and requesting that the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities take possible action on a letter to the CPUC supporting such transfer. [6-16-21](#)
- Presentation by Elizabeth Ben-Ishai, Principal Analyst, Chief Executive Office, on Strategies to address Homelessness for People with Disabilities. [7-21-21](#)
- Presentation by LA Metro (Metro) on Metro's Pilot Projects and Metro's effort to enhance transportation services for people with disabilities traveling to Los Angeles Dodger Stadium. [8-18-21](#)
- Presentation by Richard Hernandez, Systems Change Advocate, Disabled Resources Center (DRC), on Programs and Services Offered for Individuals with Disabilities. [9-15-21](#)
- Presentation by Access Services Inc. on its FY 2022-2026 Short Range Strategic Plan. [10-20-21](#)
- Presentation by the Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources (DHR) on DHR's Career Development Internship Program. [11-17-21](#)
- Presentation by the Workforce Development Aging and Community Services' Workforce Development Board Structure and on the WDB's Local Plan. [12-15-21](#)
- Presentation on the Enforcement of the County Sidewalks to ensure Street Vendors and Catering Trucks are following Code Enforcement and Public Health Standards to Prevent Access Issues that Can Lead to Unsafe Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities.
 - Department of Public Works
 - Department of Public Health
 - Department of Workforce Development, Aging & Community Services
 - Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department [12-15-21](#)

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REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

JANUARY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2021

BRINGING OUR LOVED ONES HOME TASKFORCE
(BOLOH)

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP
Carlos Benavides, Member
Lourdes Caracoza, Member

ACCESS SERVICES, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP
John B. Troost, Member

EAST LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY
PEDESTRIAN PLAN
(PUBLIC MATTERS)

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP
Carlos Benavides, Member
Lourdes Caracoza, Member

CONCLUSION

Although the Commission was faced with setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic during this reporting period, the Commission was pleased to uphold its monthly meetings providing a virtual platform (via teleconference/phone) to hear the concerns and needs of members of the public, and to invite key Departments to the Commission's virtual meetings to share information on available resources to the disability community and those in need.

In addition, while the COVID-19 pandemic isolated people through social distancing, the Commission confirmed that through a committed and innovative collaboration of County Departments, Commissions, and other key stakeholders, it was still possible to share information on available services and resources during this most difficult time. With this mindset, the Commission continues to identify ways to effectively fulfill its advocacy mission and fundraising efforts to uphold its mandate and programs.