



SANTA ANA NORTH ROTARY 1959

Employment on the Autism Spectrum

Gloria Pekala and Liza Kessler spoke today on employment opportunities for special needs adults, specifically those on the autism spectrum.

We watched a video Liza co-produced, showcasing the successful results of these hirings. Among the local employers are Hyatt Regency Irvine; Atria Golden Creek Senior Living; Shelley BMW; Documentation Specialist Co; and Inclusion Films.

We learned that autistic workers have several advantages – they tend to be more focused, organized, and detail-oriented than most. They are also likely to be extremely punctual (and early) and reliable in work attendance.

There are programs in place to support employers in bringing on workers from this population. Gloria, for instance, is a workplace advocate with OC Advocacy Network. At no cost to the hiring employer, a workplace advocate first attends work with the new employee, helping them learn the job and adapt to the environment. They also make sure a particular job, environment, and work group is a good fit for the individual.

The advocate also works with the employer.

Our guests and several people on the film mentioned how happy and motivated these workers are to have a job to do, to be useful and valued.

In 1990 there was a sharp increase in diagnosed cases of children on the autism spectrum. Those children are now adults and many are ready to enter the workforce.

The state funds extra education and training for autism spectrum students, for four years beyond high school. This may be vocational and/or college and also includes job prep training.

Liza has been invited to the Czech Republic to speak on this topic. She also mentioned a Marriott hotel is being built in Indiana with specific focus on special needs employees.

Bruce mentioned a local Smart & Final as an employer as well.

Liza and Gloria focus on creating work sites for special needs adults.

The Rotations

May 21, 2014

SANTAANANORTHROTARYCLUB.ORG

We meet Wednesdays at noon
at Antonello Ristorante
3800 S Plaza Drive, Santa Ana

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

May 28, noon to 2 p.m. **OFFSITE** hands-on service being Book Doctors for Think Together – slightly new location, 2101-B (2nd floor) E . Fourth Street, Santa Ana. **This is our regular club meeting**; we understand if you need to leave at 1:15. We will bring in lunch. This is also a great opportunity to bring guests and friends to participate in hands-on service with Rotary.

NO LUNCH MEETING June 11, as we're having Mel's Continuation Celebration that evening – see below.

June 18 crossover Board meeting immediately following lunch meeting. All members of both the outgoing and incoming Boards will attend.

June 25 Club Assembly.

July 2 no meeting.



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 11, evening, Antonello: Not your average demotion party – we're having a **Continuation Celebration** for Mel! If you haven't already RSVPd to Lisa Scaglione, please do so. And many thanks to Penny Byram for her help with this – you know if Penny's involved it's going to be fun, with good entertainment, and entertaining surprises.

June 16, Governor's Transition Party (and Gov. Rae's birthday!) Register online at DaCdb. Fun night of music and Knott's Chicken! (Other menu options are available) Our own Ali Danta is heavily involved in planning this event so you know it's going to be a great party!

INTERACT SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Century High School (home of the Interact club we sponsor) annually holds exit interviews with seniors. In addition to faculty, community members are invited and encouraged to participate, as a way to learn more about what the school does. Since we are involved with the school via the Interact club and our participation in the school's Academies scholarship programs, we've been invited. Any individual member who is interested should RSVP (info below) and you may attend for whatever time you can. **The sessions are Wednesday and Thursday May 28 and 29, from 7:30 – 10 a.m.** My impression was one is not required to attend the full two and a half hours if one's scheduled does not allow. Just RSVP as available. I think this would be a good way for us to show our support and learn more about the school and programs we do support at Century. The school is on Grand, near Edinger.

Century High School Senior Exit Portfolio

You are invited to serve as an interview panelist for the Class of 2013 presentation of electronic exit portfolios. This student-focused process allows students to:

- * Reflect on work and see growth accomplished throughout four years >of high school;
 - * Receive positive feedback from staff and community;
 - * Practice the interview process for real-world application;
 - * Focus on strengths;
 - * Begin a life-long process of reflection and service;
- and

- * Connect work to post-secondary goals.

WHEN? Wednesday, May 28, and Thursday, May 29, 2014
TIME: 7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

We look forward to sharing the accomplishments of our seniors with you.

Click below to go to the hyperlink to the form:
<http://www.sausd.us/Page/21518>

Thank you,

OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT OUR INTERACT CLUB and Century High School's eBusiness Academy (presented to our club by our Interact faculty advisor Alan Gersten around July 2012?)

But first an opportunity to help yourself: Many of the students are seeking summer internship opportunities. Generally this would be for a couple of months, up to 20 hours per week, and may be paid or not. If your company would be interested please give me whatever contact info you would like me to pass along to Mr. Gersten. Remember the students are Santa Ana based, near the school at Grand x Edinger.

Now, back to how we can help them: as you know our club helps with the funding mechanism of the school's scholarship fundraiser. They have several Academies (like the eBusiness one) who combine to do a big basket raffle (opportunity) fundraiser, and the money goes to scholarships which are awarded to applicants based on merit (The funds are only released to a student after (s)he has presented documentation of enrollment in / attendance at college.)

We can help in two ways:

- (1) buy raffle tickets – you can do this online and they will put your tickets in your chosen baskets for a chance to win
- (2) we can put together a basket. An easy way to go would be a bundle (or tree) of gift cards – easy to participate, just buy a gift card from wherever you like, and bring it to a Rotary meeting and I'll collect them. (Need to know the \$ value on the card) Or if you'd like to give actual items for a basket, Rita has very kindly offered to turn it into an attractive offering.

Thank you for your support! Note that a lot of our Interactors are in the eBusiness or other academies so we may well be helping them too.

CLUB ANOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

President's Remarks – Mel El Guindy

Reminder: Next meeting May 28 will be Book Doctor, hands on project at Think Together offices. Details on p. 1

Guests:

We were happy Eric Stein joined us again. Eric is a client of Phil's; he works in branding and marketing, and will be a speaker for us at a future meeting.

Mark Aaron, R Newport Balboa and an Assistant Governor, joined us at Ali's invitation. Mark mentioned that our club sponsored him in Scouting in his youth, and here he is, serving our District as an AG. Our community support continues to pay dividends! Mark is also the person who put our club in contact with Alan Gersten, of Century High School's eBusiness Academy (with whom we now work on their fundraisers); that suggestion also spawned the Interact Club we sponsor at Century HS. (See p 2 for ways we can easily support them right now.)

Mel, along with Maureen Bricken, attended Santa Ana College scholarship presentation May 16. Our club provides

scholarships funded by Maureen Bricken in honor of Gordon's strong support of education.

Memorial Day, May 26, 10 am.: Gordon Bricken is being honored as part of the annual service for the veterans at Santa Ana Cemetery. Although not a veteran himself, Gordon for many years provided support to this annual ceremony.

Maureen Bricken wanted us to have the information for those who are able to attend.

May 31: OC Legal Aid Society fundraiser: Wine Festival at the Great Park in Irvine (in Hangar 244), from 2-5 p.m. with beer and wine from about 40 providers, and about 10-15 restaurants. There will also be live music, a silent auction, and an opportunity drawing. Tickets are \$75 through May 12 and \$100 thereafter, with a designated driver ticket available for \$20. For more information go to www.greatwinefestival.com