This is Living! Newsletter | Spring 2023 | April, May, June

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**This is Living! Newsletter** Spring 2023: April, May, June

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Highlights:Atlas the Alert Dog; 2023 ADA Conference; ASL Interpreting Services; Learn about Housing Services, RSVP for Movie Night

Available in alternative format | Independent Living Center of Kern County

*End Page 01*

# Page 2 | ILCKC Services

## Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) Program Services

OIB Program Services include: Computer literacy skills, use and demonstrations on magnification and screen-reader programs, use of adaptive equipment - including, but not limited to: cellphones, smart phones, video magnifiers, and other Assistive Technology (AT) that is available for demonstration.

## ILCKC Housing Services & Resources

In order to empower independent living, our housing services offer a variety of resources to individuals with Access & Functional Needs (AFN), aging adults, and people with disabilities (PWD).

We assist consumers with locating affordable and accessible housing through effective decision-making, budgeting, referrals, mediation, home modifications, advocacy, and more. Services are at no cost. Contact us today for assistance!

Contact us today for assistance!

* ILCKC Housing Services
* Locating Affordable Housing
* Connecting with the Housing Authority
* Agency Referrals and Warm Hand-offs
* Skill Building: Decision-making, Budgeting and more!

# Page 3 | American Sign Language Interpreting Services

Are you Deaf, Hard of Hearing (HoH), Deaf-Blind, Deaf-Disabled, or Late Deafened?

You might need various services such as housing, information and referral, peer support, independent living skills, advocacy, and more. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Department at Independent Living Center of Kern County (ILCKC) provides American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services. ILCKC provides Deaf Advocacy from one of Kern County’s own Deaf community members! Our Deaf Advocate can assist with your various and unique needs.

ILCKC’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department Services provides professional and qualified ASL interpreters to meet a variety of needs such as:

* Employee Interviews, Orientations, Trainings, and Job Evaluations
* Government, City/County Public Meetings or Events, Elections, and Campaigns
* Conferences, Workshops, Seminars, and Presentations
* Community Events, Weddings, Funerals, and Church Services
* Post-Secondary Education, Required Events and Functions, Advisory Meetings, and Graduations
* Parent-Teacher Conferences, School Functions and Events, and K-12 Education
* Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings
* Medical and Health Care
* Social Services
* Vocational Rehabilitation
* Legal or Probation Hearings
* Public Service Announcements
* Staff Meetings
* Media
* Trainings

If you have any questions or need to contact our ASL Interpreting Services Department,  
you can reach us by

* Email | [aslrequest@ilcofkerncounty.org](mailto:aslrequest@ilcofkerncounty.org)
* Video Phone | (661) 369 - 8966
* Voice | (661) 325 - 1063

# Page 4 | Assistive Technology

## What is Assistive Technology? How can Assistive Technology help?

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined as devices, durable medical equipment (DME), rehabilitating devices, and other tools to improve one’s quality of life. AT assists people with disabilities (PWD) and individuals with access and functional needs (AFN) to live as independently as possible in order to obtain the best quality of life.

Our AT program is available at no cost to the consumer. We offer computer skills specific to individual needs.

*AT classes held by appointment.*   
Contact us to sign up! Call (661) 325 -1063 and speak to the AT Department regarding ILCKC’s Repair and Re-Use program to inquire about available equipment for your specific needs.

We accept donations! Within our AT department, we accept donations for items that are lightly used, in good condition, and have the potential to be Repaired and Re-Used!

**AT Repair and Re-Use:** Within our AT department, we offer a Repair and Re-Use program. Repair &Re-Use program offers pre-owned equipment such as wheelchairs, shower benches, crutches, and walkers

*At no cost to people with disabilities or individuals with access and functional needs.*   
*Based on availability.*

# Page 5 | Service Animal Spotlight & CFILC DDAR

Atlas the Diabetic SpecialistName: Atlas (aliases: Turkey, Papas, Big Boy, Top Dog, Dog of all of all Dogs, Poochie, the Cats’ Meow)

* Place of Birth: Yuba City, CA | Breed: Fox Red Labrador | Age: 5 | Color: Dark Red Shade of Yellow
* Current Position: Service Dog, 2021 – Present | Place of Employment: ILCKC
* Relationship Status: Tammy is my handler, but I am available when needed to assist in play on my   
  breaks and after stress-related incidents.

Special Skills/Certifications: Diabetic Alert Dog\*

\*Atlas is Diabetic Alert Dog. He received specialized training so that he can smell someone’s blood sugar levels to check if the levels are high or low, to alerting individuals who may have hypo/hyperglycemic episodes. This is important because Atlas can alert dangerous levels of blood sugar before they become symptomatic.

Atlas also assists with Mobility Assistance due to physical impairments. Atlas also serves as a Mobility Assistance Service Dog. He has received mobility training to prevent his handler,

Tammy, from falling due to Tammy’s disability. There are times that Tammy loses her balance and Atlas is there to ensure she doesn’t fall and avoiding any further injury. He retrieves and delivers items, reduces anxiety, and a people magnet.

Fun Facts: I received specialty training and obey commands, such as: site, stay, down, load up (into a vehicle), heel, and much more!

## A program of the Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)

Disability Access and Resources (DDAR) Program

Visit online: disabilitydisasteraccess.org/

Ready for an unexpected emergency? DDAR provides necessary resources to people with disabilities affected by Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)

# Page 6 | April Calendar

* Independent Living Skills | Social Paint Event| Wednesday, April 12th | 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM
* Team Advocacy | Social Night: Movie| Monday, April 17th | 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM
* Informal Peer Support | Decision-Making Skills | Wednesday, April 26th | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

# Page 7 | May Calendar

* Independent Living Skills | Helpful PDF Tips & Tricks | Wednesday, May 10th | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
* Team Advocacy | ADA and What it Means to Me | Monday, May 15th | 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
* Informal Peer Support | Stress & Emotional Health | Wednesday, May 24th | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
* MEMORIAL DAY | Monday, May 29th | Office will be closed in observance of Memorial Day

# Page 8 | June Calendar

* Independent Living Skills | E-mail Tips & Tricks | Wednesday, June 14th | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
* Team Advocacy | Spotlight Session | Monday, June 19th | 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
* Informal Peer Support | Social Night: Movie | Wednesday, June 28th | 2:00 PM

# Page 9 | Calendars – A look ahead

Plan in advance – July, August, September

* 07/04/2023 – Independence Day: *Office will be closed in observance*
* 07/26/2023 – 33rd Annual ADA Anniversary
* 09/04/2023 – Labor Day: *Office will be closed in observance*

**Zoom ID** 256 654 8249  **US Dial-In** +1 669 900 9128 Zoom hyperlink: [**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2566548249**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2566548249)

# Page 10 | Staff Highlight & Consumer Success

## Spring Quarter Staff Highlight

Renee has been a part of ILCKC since 2009. She started as a receptionist volunteer. Shortly after, she was hired and became a part of the ILCKC team.

In 2010, Renee transferred positions from receptionist to an Independent Living (IL) Specialist – specializing in housing people with disabilities who were homeless.

Focusing on housing the homeless, Renee earned the title of Housing Specialist. She brings years of experience and expertise to our agency. Along with her years of experience and an earned Associate’s Degree in Administration, Renee has a positive attitude, provides positive change, and overall outcomes for the consumers that we serve.

Renee welcomes her work with a “Good Morning ILC!” every time she steps in to the office. We are absolutely thankful to have Renee Hernandez to be a part of the ILCKC team!

## Consumer Success Story

Mr. Flores lives with a cognitive disability and was homeless for over a year. One day, Mr. Flores walked into ILCKC with his caseworker from the Mission of Kern County, a local non-profit temporary shelter. He soon became a consumer of ILCKC and qualified for the DULCE voucher, a housing voucher specific to people living with a disability.

It was unclear if he could be housed due to qualification difficulties. Our Housing Specialist, Renee Hernandez, did not let the uncertainty stop her from assisting Mr. Flores. Over time, Renee got to know Mr. Flores a bit more.

Renee advocated Mr. Flores so that he could obtain housing. Aside from assistance with housing, Renee noticed that Mr. Flores did not have a few fundamentals down, such as regularly paying his bills and routine living skills. Several obstacles stood in the way of Mr. Flores’ chance to obtain and secure housing.

Renee’s goal is to provide him with the necessary tools by empowering Mr. Flores to set goals & secure his housing. Mr. Flores is one step closer to his goals in his new home.

Mr. Flores is grateful to have Renee’s assistance and guidance throughout this hurdle. Mr. Flores told Renee he was “tired of being out [there]” and living without a home. Renee encouraged him by saying, “If you work with me, I will work with you.” Since being housed, he shares his gratitude by saying, “Thank you to ILCKC for believing in me.”

# Page 11 | SAVE THE DATE: The Americans with Disabilities Act

RSVP on FB: Search for 2023 Kern County ADA Conference

Our Annual ADA Celebration will be held on Wednesday, July 26, 202at the DoubleTree Hotel, 3100 Camino Del Rio Court, Bakersfield, CA 93308 - Put the date on your calendar!

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* Top half of page
  + April | May | June
  + “The Independent Living Center of Kern County”
  + Left column contains agency image front door image, address and contact information
  + Social media handles are included: Instagram, twitter, facebook
* Bottom half of page
  + Top left: Agency logo and agency address (5251 Office Park Drive, Bksfld, CA 93309)
  + Top right stamp “FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY DISABLED”
  + Center: box to insert mailing address
  + Bottom right of page: “Spring 2023 Newsletter – This is Living!”