

2017 DAC Achievement Award Nomination Form

Nominee Information

Nominee Name: Resources for Independence Central Vally

Nominee Address: [REDACTED]

Nominee Phone: [REDACTED]

Nominee Email: [REDACTED]

Nominator Information

Nominator Name: Desjane Threat

Nominator Address: [REDACTED]

Nominator Phone: [REDACTED]

Nominator Email: [REDACTED]

Nomination Category (please select one):

- ☐ Individual
- ☒ Organization
- ☐ City of Fresno Employee or Department

Nominated for:

- ☒ Improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities
- ☒ Advocacy for issues pertaining to individuals with disabilities
- ☒ Volunteerism that has a positive impact on individuals with disabilities
- ☒ Development of new programs or services impacting individuals with disabilities
- ☒ Customer service to individuals with disabilities that is above and beyond the standard
- ☐ Innovation or Entrepreneurship by an individual with a disability or that has a positive impact on individuals with disabilities

Nomination Statement

Over the summer I (Desjane Threat) have had the pleasure of interning at Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV). I am a Fresno State student and intern for RICV through the Community Service Scholarship and Humanics program at Fresno State.

Before applying for the internship I didn't know who RICV was, being honest. While getting ready for my interview I did research on their website and Facebook page to learn about the organization. I was extremely impressed and eager to become the intern at such a great organization, which plays such an important part in the community. Resources for Independence Central Valley's Mission is "Encouraging people with disabilities to be in control of their lives and live more independently through a diverse range of choices and opportunities." Resources for Independence Central Valley is a nonprofit organization that serves people with disabilities.

As an intern I realize the importance of what they do. I am interning under the System Change Advocate Charity Tokash. I was able to go with Charity to legislative office visits and see her communicate with the legislative staff about what's going on at RICV. RICV is all about building relationships with the community and community involvement. I learned that RICV serves approximately 2,000 consumers with disabilities yearly. The population of people with disabilities served varies from: cognitive, hearing, physical, vision, mental/emotional, and other.

RICV offers many programs for people with disabilities.

BRIDGES is youth transition program that targets youth with disabilities and helps youth development. A community based program that is designed to assist high school students with physical or learning disabilities transition from the safety of the school environment to the more complex working world, educational environment, and/or adulthood.

Freedom to Ride is a program that helps people with disabilities learn independent and safe travel on the public transit system.

Creative Careers is a program that helps people with disabilities with finding independence through employment.

Independent Living Specialist (ILS) core services provides information and referral, individual advocacy, goal attainment planning, housing, employment and education resources and independent living skills training.

These are just a few of the programs and services that RICV offers for people with disabilities. RICV also helped with the development of Inspiration Park, a park that is made with people with disabilities in mind. RICV also has the Community Leadership Academy (CLA) which is a governance course that prepares people who want to serve in community leadership roles as board, council, and committee members serving local government and non-profit organizations.

Resources for Independence Central Valley since 1976 has been a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving people with disabilities. At least 51% of RICV's staff and Board of Directors have disabilities, representing the population RICV serves. While doing my internship here throughout the summer I've seen staff that love their job and put their blood, sweat, and tears into it. RICV staff has great relationships with the consumers that they serve. This is why I'm nominating RICV for the 2017 Achievement Award.

July 7, 2017

To whom it may concern,

My name is Frank Lizarde and I am the Director of Information and Assistive Technology at Resources for Independence Central Valley, RICV. My employment at RICV has positively impacted my life because it has given me the opportunity to help others in the disabled community. I have been Visually Impaired all of my life. I have had the pleasure of being able to teach my peers how to use Assistive Technology, AT, to bring increased independence to their daily life. From screen readers to I-phone APS, the world can all be at our finger tips. There are mobility aides that are useful as well; Wheelchairs, walkers, and white canes, just to name a few, assist our consumers to maintain their quality of life.

I am currently training Sarah Harris to be an AT Advocate. Sarah is totally blind. She lost her sight 14 years ago in a car accident. She was my AT student in the past and I am very happy to see her reach her employment goals. RICV is an important part of the community. We serve people with all disabilities. We work together with our consumers to remind them of their capabilities instead of focusing on their disabilities. It is through positive interactions like the one I have had with Sarah that show how important our services are. I am very proud to be a part of this organization.



Picture of Sarah and myself.

Thank you,



Frank Lizarde
Director of Information and Assistive Technology
Resources for Independence Central Valley, RICV

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July 7, 2017

To whom it may concern:

My name is Michael Mendez, Jr. I am employed by Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV) and agency that provides services to persons with disabilities and seniors.

My position is Transportation Specialist, my duties are Travel Training (persons with disabilities and seniors), and Wheelchair Tethering (Installing Securement Straps.) My job has many positive impacts such as; it has provided me with social skills, ambition, and confidence to put myself out there on the job. As far as my consumer, they have been impacted in a positive way also. After Travel Training they are able to independently, and with confidence using the FAX, Clovis Stage Line, and Rural Transit System.



These pictures are of me (Michael) on the left and Brandon James Jr. (consumer) on the right), Brandon is learning independence through transportation.

The work RICV does is very impactful for both staff and consumers. It empowers us and our consumers to have the independence to travel freely throughout the community.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Mendez, Jr.".

Michael Mendez, Jr.
Transportation Specialist
Resources for Independence Central Valley

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Hello,

My name is Nico Vargas and I am a past consumer for the BRIDGES program at Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV) and a current summer intern. RICV has impacted me so much about independence. I was a consumer last year and I didn't know that much about being independent. While I was in the BRIDGES program it provided such good services and activities. The last 2 weeks of the program was the volunteer experience and I wasn't use to it at first and now I love it.

Now as an intern this summer, I want to help others and give back to the community. The BRIDGES program helped me a lot to become a better person. I also volunteered at RICV Annual Dinner last year; I escorted the visitors to their tables. As an intern I help out the staff with getting the materials ready for the BRIDGES program. Through this I realized I am giving back to the community. I help consumers with their work sheets, pass out the work sheets, and help them with all activities. Helping others was difficult at first, but as I volunteer and help more I got used to it and I felt more confident about it. It's pretty nice.

If there are any more opportunities provided, I am eager to continue volunteering and expanding my responsibility at RICV, especially at the Annual Dinners. This year at the Annual Dinner I am going to be the live auctioneer and play the piano during dinner. I really feel like the staff are like family and care about their consumers. RICV and the BRIDGES program have changed my perspective on life and I am grateful for such a blessing and such great implications.

Thank you for the opportunity!

Sincerely,

Nico Vargas



Nico V.

To whom it may concern:

My name is Christopher Anderson. I am a consumer at Resources for Independence, Central Valley (RICV).

On June 13, 2005 I had a stroke. I was in a coma for two months. When I woke from the come I thought I was going to heal completely. However, I ended up having to stay in the hospital doing rehabilitation for a whole year.

In 2007 I was introduced to RICV and the resources they provide. Since that date RICV has had a positive impact with my life. Including counseling, help with identifying a correct diagnosis, finding a support system, self-advocacy and Assistive Technology to support my disability. Ever since I have started working with RICV I have developed a since of independence and purpose in my life.



