

DCRC

VOICE

The Disability Community Resource Center Newsletter

June 2019



DCRC Newsletter Edited by Jay Aquino and TJ Hill

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Queer Disabled and Proud!

We took a short break from our last newsletter and now we're well into June! We have been so busy at the Disability Community Resource Center (DCRC) – growing, welcoming new staff, adding new programs, raising Mental Health Awareness in May, graduating our latest Peer Specialist Training class and now celebrating LGBT Pride Month. What a beautiful time of year and a great time for the DCRC!

I have been reflecting a lot on Pride this year. I'm amazed at how far the LGBTQ rights movement has come and also tremendously grateful for the bounty of freedoms I enjoy today as an out gay man with a disability. This year Pride Month is particularly significant because it marks the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York City. At our DCRC Pride Celebration, we honored the memory of Marsha P. Johnson, an African-American transgender woman and revolutionary LGBTQ rights activist who is credited for being an instigator in the Stonewall riots. What many people don't know is that Marsha was also a person with a mental health disability who fought hard to



DCRC Executive Director TJ Hill

recognize the intersectionality in all social justice movements – believing we are stronger when we lift each other up and fight for equality together.

Marsha P. Johnson and her friend and fellow activist Sylvia Rivera will be honored this year with the first monument in the world recognizing transgender activism near the historic Stonewall Inn where they both helped spark and international movement toward equality for all people. DCRC joins in honoring their legacy and celebrating the Pride of queer disabled people everywhere. We are stronger together. We are one community. We lift each other up.



DCRC LGBT Pride Month Celebration

There are many ways to lift up the DCRC so we can continue our important work of promoting the independence of people with disabilities. Join our Kroger Co. Family of Stores Community Rewards Program by supporting the Disability Community Resource Center (ID: CQ054) as your community non-profit. Donate through Amazon Smile while doing your online shopping. We also love regular monthly PayPal donations as an ongoing gift. Stand with us in Pride

this month and every month by supporting the DCRC – for details go to www.dcrc.co/donate/.

Happy Pride!

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Looking for the right job can be like trying to find the right pair of shoes. Finding the right fit can make all the difference. This was the case for Frederick Butler.

By his own admission, Frederick had been drinking as an alcoholic for many years. As a result, he was in the Beacon House's long-term treatment program. The Beacon House is a nonprofit organization that assists men through their drug and alcohol treatment program. The program helped Frederick to stop drinking. As his time at the Beacon House began to wind down, the program director of the Beacon House asked him if he wanted to work. "I never had a job before. But I knew when I left, I am going to need a job to support myself," remarks Frederick. The Program Director said he was going to help him find a job.

Through the help of friends, family, and the staff of the Beacon House, Frederick started the process of looking for work. Eventually, Frederick came to DCRC. He worked with DCRC's Employment Services Manager, Benita Bruner, to find out what job would best suit him. He wanted to work in

a warehouse or grocery store. In addition, he felt he needed to work somewhere close to where he lived. That way, he could catch the bus or walk home. Benita agreed. They worked together on his resume and making sure he had the appropriate clothing for a job interview. A job interview with Ralph's grocery store was set up for him. Job Developer Jose Gonzales also worked closely with Frederick during the job preparation phase.

Frederick got the job at Ralph's. He started working there, bagging and assisting customers. Job Developer Colleen Dragovich also worked with Frederick at the job site, coaching him on various aspects of the job. Frederick has completed his goals with DCRC and says he is very happy with his job. He is also currently attending school. Frederick says that the employees at his job like him because the way he carries himself: "They like the way I do the work. They only have to tell me one time. I fit right in."

We are glad to have assisted you, Frederick!

DCRC's Employment Services Manager
Benita Bruner is available at (310) 390-3611
ext. 257, or by email at benita@dcrc.co.

DCRC's Job Developer Jose Gonzales is
available at (310) 390-3611 ext. 253, or by
email at joseg@dcrc.co.

DCRC's Job Developer Colleen Dragovich
is available at (310) 390-3611 ext. 268, or by
email at colleen@dcrc.co.

App of the Month: Seeing A.I.

Seeing A.I. is a visual assistance app available for the low vision community as part of an ongoing Microsoft research project. Because of that research, the app is improved and updated regularly. It uses recognition technology to explain the items visible to a smart phone's camera. Anirudh Koul started developing the app due to his grandfather's gradual loss of vision and the technological improvements in image classification accuracy in artificial intelligence (AI) computer "vision." Originally dubbed Deep Vision, Koul recruited a team of people within Microsoft to work on the project. Eventually through much project development, the app broadly released as Seeing A.I. on July 12, 2017 to mobile IOS users.

To use the app, the user points the smart phone's camera. By using either the touch screen or voice over, the user can select the following items (called channels by the developer) for the app to recognize:

- Short Text – Reads out the text when it is in front of the camera.
- Documents – Captures the text of a document by recognizing the edges of a printed page and capturing each page of a document. These documents can also be saved to be "read" later.
- Products – Scans barcodes and gives all available information of a product (name, package information, etc.)



Screenshot of Seeing A.I. The app recognizes a pair of scissors

- People - Scans and saves the faces of people the user wants to recognize and reference in the future. The app can also estimate of the age, gender, and emotions of people who's faces it reads.
 - Currency – Recognizes the nationality and amount of paper currency.
 - Browse photos – Describes a selected photo on the user's phone.
- Other functions are currently under development, but still can be beta-tested by the user.

- Scenes – Creates a description of what the camera sees when pointing at a scene to take a photo.
- Color – Identifies the color of objects.
- Handwriting – Reads handwritten text.
- Light – Recognizes the level of brightness around the user and alerts them through the use of audio tones.

According to our Assistive Technology Services Coordinator Keith Williams, Seeing A.I. is one of the most featured apps we display and recommend for use by our members at the Center.

For more info, you can visit the app's official website at: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/ai/seeing-ai>.

This app is available in the [iTunes App Store](#).

Upcoming Events

DCRC's ADA Celebration

When: Friday July 26

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Where: DCRC Community Room

Celebrate Disability Independence day with us! Let's celebrate the 29th Anniversary of the American with Disabilities (ADA)

Live Q & A panel by DCRC Board Members.

Join us for demonstrations, refreshments, art display, face painting and community resources.

**No need to RSVP, for more information,
call: 310-390-3611**



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