



Health Care and Community News
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Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative to Host its First Advocacy Conference

San Bernardino County, October 8, 2009 – Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative (IEDC) – a group that unites organizations which serve people with disabilities – will stage its first ever Advocacy Conference at California Baptist University in Riverside on Saturday, October 10, from 10:00am-3:30pm.

The Advocacy Conference will be educational, promoting equal opportunity and access to persons of all disabilities – and all ages. It’s touted as the largest cross-disability conference in Southern California.

“This event is very important,” said Dr. Brad Gilbert, chief executive officer for Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP), a not-for-profit healthcare provider, which helped form the IEDC. “The conference will supply the tools to live more independently, a goal we support since more than 20,000 of IEHP Members are people with disabilities.”

The Advocacy Conference aims to empower people with disabilities to ably participate in all aspects of life.

Attendees can sign up for a cascade of no-cost workshops. Topics include: employment, assistive technology, education, health, legal, housing and transportation. Many dynamic figures in the disabilities sector are slated to host the workshops, such as Marilyn Holle of Disability Rights California and Richard Devylder of the California Emergency Management Agency.

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A hallmark of the conference will be keynote speaker, Paul K. Longmore, Ph.D., a prominent, award-winning advocate for persons with disabilities. Longmore, professor of history and director of the institute on disability at San Francisco State University, has written many essays on the subject and will speak on “Explaining the Disability Rights Movement: What Do We Stand For? What Do We Oppose?”

The IEDC crafted the Advocacy Conference, making it the second initiative from the San Bernardino-based group since 2006 when it launched the Disability Resources Expo, a sprawling indoor event that drew more than 1,200 attendees to over 100 exhibitors showcasing services and products for people with disabilities.

“The Advocacy Conference will be truly productive,” said Gary Melton, director of health administration for IEHP. “People with disabilities will gain the resources to experience the best quality of life.”

This will be a no-cost, sit-down event; lunch will be provided. Continuing Education units will be offered. For details on the Advocacy Conference, go to iedisabilitiescollaborative.org.

Sponsorship stems from partnerships with PossAbilities of Loma Linda University, Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP), Molina Healthcare of California, First 5 San Bernardino, State Independent Living Council and others.

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About IEHP:

IEHP, Inland Empire Health Plan, a Knox-Keene licensed Health Plan located in San Bernardino, California, is organized as a not-for-profit public agency. The IEHP service area includes San Bernardino and Riverside Counties and currently serves over 420,000 Members in the following Programs: Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, Healthy Kids, and a Medicare Advantage Special Needs Program.

About the Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative:

Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative was formed in 2006. Based in San Bernardino, it comprises more than 80 organizations serving people with disabilities in Riverside and

San Bernardino Counties. It dedicates its efforts to promoting equal opportunity, universal access, and full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life.