The Community Association for Rehabilitation, Inc. (C•A•R)

40 Years of Discovering the Abilities in Disabilities

The roots of C•A•R go back to a tiny nursery school at a Palo Alto home and a backyard pool of south- er. During the 1950's, parents of children with de velopmental disabilities realized the need for community services to support their efforts to raise their children at home. In 1953, they formed C•A•R to promote education and training for their children, to advocate for services, and to educate the public. Over the past four decades, C•A•R has grown from a few scattered efforts by a handful of determined parents to a strong, innovative professional agency. Despite recurring fi nancial problems, it never wavered in its commitment to excellence in meeting the needs of people with developmental and other disabilities and educating the community about their needs.

C•A•R now offers seven diverse programs serving over 2,000 clients and their families each year. These pro grams enable C•A•R to provide a lifetime of services to an individual.

For instance Paul Benjamin, a 40-year-old Belmont man, started at the C•A•R Infant Program when he was two years old. He also learned to swim at the Betty Wright Swim Center @ C•A•R. As a school age boy, he participated in the after-school Creative Recreation Program. Now as an adult, Paul is employed through the C•A•R Employment Services program on a janitorial team and lives independently in his Belmont apartment. Paul continues to swim at the Betty Wright Swim Center and enjoys swimming for recreation and competition in the Special Olympics. If Paul is ever in need of an adult day program, he can use the C•A•R LEARN Program. Should he ever need in-home care, he can turn to the Respect Program for a home companion.

One of C•A•R’s primary objectives is to provide work, recreational, educational, and social opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to fully participate in our community. But there are many things that community members themselves can do:

• Talk directly to people with disabilities (not just their family or friends who may be with them).
• Consider hiring people with disabilities.
• Teach your children! Be honest when they ask about people who are different—explain that everyone is dif ferent. Focus on similarities. Reassure them that holding hands, hugging, or sharing toys is OK, because disabilities are not contagious.
• Neither ignore nor pay too much attention to someone who has a disability.
• Never pretend the person isn’t there.
• Be aware of legislation on issues such as housing, health care, employment, and public transportation that can affect the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Make your voice heard by your elected officials!
• Most people who have a disability. Visit an organization in your community that provides services to people with disabilities.

- REACH OUT! Volunteers! You can become a board member, work on special events, or spend a few hours a month helping in a variety of capacities at any number of agencies serving people with developmental disabilities.

We welcome the community to come to visit the C•A•R facilities to see exactly how people benefit from the services provided. Tours are held each Wednesday morning or by appointment. Come see how C•A•R discovers the abilities in disabilities.