

At 91 Years of Age, Blind Musician Shares Love of Music

Self-Taught Musician Abraham Magana Serenades Santa Maria Wisdom Center Staff and Friends

The Life Steps Foundation's Santa Maria Wisdom Center boasts its own resident multi-instrumentalist, Abraham Magana, who plays 11 instruments including the guitar, violin, cello, and accordion. Quite a talent in itself, but more so as he is totally blind.

Mr. Magana was born in 1923 in Jalisco, Mexico. At age 11, he bought his first guitar for the equivalent of \$1.50. He taught himself to play by watching other musicians. At age 35 he began to lose his eyesight and within about seven years he was totally blind. Even so, he continued to play his instruments and learned new music simply by ear.

He attended just three years of school prior to picking cotton in the fields of Mexico. While still a teenager, he met his wife Maria with whom he had a large family. To care for his family, Mr. Magana traveled back and forth to

work in the fields of California. His wife supplemented the family's income through her work as a seamstress. They moved to the United States permanently in 1975. Maria passed



Musician Abraham Magana

away this past November after 63 years of marriage. They still have 11 surviving children.

While living in Guadalupe, CA, Mr. Magana became a member of a mariachi band called "Los Costenos Del Valle," translated as "The Coast Valley Mariachis." The band traveled the country for many years playing a variety of venues. Though no longer with the group, he continues to play and enjoy his music on a regular basis . . . including here at the Santa Maria Wisdom Center. Just this January, he played mariachi guitar at a birthday party given at the center for one of our participants who turned 100 years "young!"

We look forward to many more years of beautiful music with our very own 91-year old mariachi player!

Meeting a Growing Need for Elder Care

The Life Steps Foundation's Santa Maria Wisdom Center ("SMWC") provides critical support for frail elderly and disabled adults in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. The majority of people who receive services at the center are elderly individuals who have a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and experience moderate to severe dementia or other cognitive impairment. Many of them are physically frail, with debilitating mobility issues.

Today, there is an urgent need for aging adult care facilities in Central California. According to census figures, the number of people who are 60 plus years of age living in Santa Barbara County jumped by more than 15% between years 2000 and 2010, rising to 74,995 individuals.

On a national level, 10,000 people turn 65 in the U.S. every day, yet there are roughly 3,500 adult day centers across the U. S. to help care for them.

Further, an estimated 43.5 million Americans are caring for elderly family members today; 87% of them are unpaid, and many are overwhelmed by the caregiving requirements of their loved ones. Often, without access to quality adult day health services, they have no choice but to move their loved ones into costly skilled nursing care facilities.

Center based services, such as those provided at the Santa Maria Wisdom Center, are indispensable to the City of Santa Maria, as well as communities across the nation.

Know the Difference - Signs of Alzheimers vs. Age-Related Changes

Signs of Alzheimer's	Typical age-related changes
Poor judgment and decision making	Making a bad decision once in a while
Inability to manage a budget	Missing a monthly payment
Losing track of the date or the season	Forgetting which day it is and remembering later
Difficulty having a conversation	Sometimes forgetting which word to use
Misplacing things and being unable to retrace steps to find them	Losing things from time to time

Source: Alzheimer's Association

Frontline Q&A

"In Step" Interviews SoCal Adult Services CEO Kristine Engels

Q: What is the most common type of disability addressed by Life Steps Foundation SoCal Adult Services?

A: Cognitive disabilities.

Q: Which SoCal Adult Services program is undergoing the greatest amount of growth this year?

A: The Seaside Learning Center at our Long Beach location. We have a waiting list of approximately 15 clients wanting to come to the center.

The Seaside Learning Center is a day program supported by the Harbor Regional Center. It encourages social and cognitive learning, community awareness and friendship among adults with disabilities. Participants can choose to take part in a variety of activities, such as day field trips, computer training, health and safety classes, nutrition, and arts and crafts.



Q: Which program or service has the greatest need for private funding support right now?

A: That would also be our Seaside Learning Center. We are seeking funding to improve our client kitchen area.

Q: Anything else?

A: Our main office area at So. Cal Adults Services is in need of new carpeting. Our office supports our clients by helping them in cases of emergency, and as a safe place for them to come to just sit and talk or use the office copiers for their government forms.

For more information, contact SoCal Adult Services at their Long Beach headquarters – tel: (562) 366-7131.

* This is the first in a series of brief "Frontline Q&A" interviews to introduce you to specific Life Steps programs and services, including the funding priorities and people who benefit. Each issue will highlight a different Life Steps Foundation program or Affiliate location through an interview with program leadership.

A Story of Twin Success

"Next month is my girls' 4th birthday," said Tiffany Li, mother of twin daughters. "My twins Joyce and Grace still talk often about their teachers and enjoy watching videos taken while they were in class." The youngsters participated in a program through the Life Steps Foundation Children and Family Services (CAFS) Affiliate in Whittier, California.



Twins Joyce and Grace receive assistance from Rosana Chen, CAFS Early Interventionist.

Tiffany shares her letter about how the program helped her two tiny infants grow into successful toddlers:

Thanks Life Step Foundation for your experienced infant interventionists, whose work was the highlight of the early stages of my twin girls lives.

Since they were only one year old, the infant interventionists instructed my twins for two years in cognition, language, gross motor, fine motor, self help and social skills development. They were always cheerful, positive, and friendly during each visit. The staff was confident and comfortable while working with my girls using a variety of interesting interactive toys and hands-on craft projects.

The infant interventionists were also willing to share resources, experiences and the knowledge of infant development with my husband and me. It was very important to receive reports and responses on our daughters' progress.

Social Dynamics Preparing to Offer Vocational Training

Located in Burlingame, CA, Life Steps Foundation's Social Dynamics program is a center-based provider of intervention services and educational training for adults with developmental disabilities and severe behavioral challenges. The State of California's Golden Gate Regional Center is encouraging that all service providers, including the Social Dynamics program, explore vocational skills training for clients. As a result, we are expanding our work-readiness services.

Social Dynamics will offer clients the opportunity to develop employment skills, volunteer, and progress toward possibilities for paid employment. At this time, our staff is exploring the capacities of our current client-base to facilitate a vocational skills training

program, and is making plans to include the opportunity as part of initial intake for future clients.



Social Dynamics clients enjoyed a Holiday Celebration luncheon with their family members and staff.

Life Steps Mission

Life Steps Foundation, Inc., is a fiscally responsible, culturally competent organization dedicated to meeting the health, psychological, and socioeconomic challenges of people throughout their life span.

Orcutt House Soon to Open for Seniors with Developmental Disabilities

Life Steps' Central Coast Adult Services Affiliate is gearing up to open the Orcutt House, a small-scale 24/7 residential care option for developmentally disabled (DD) elderly adults who have dementia, physical coordination and mobility limitations, or socially challenging behavior. The Orcutt House offers 'round the clock caregiving services and skills training.

Located in the City of Orcutt, the Orcutt House will offer a friendly, safe, clean and comfortable home environment for up to six DD senior residents at a time. Residents will have access to a variety of social and recreational opportunities, nutritious meals,



assistance with personal care, as well as life-skills training and support. All care will be tailored to the capabilities of each individual.

Stay tuned for more news on the grand opening of the Orcutt House soon!

A Loyal Volunteer Meet Delores Smith

It was 1995 and Delores Smith answered a help wanted ad at the Life Steps Foundation. At the time, little did she know that the ad she answered would evolve into a 13-year career working in a variety of administrative departments at the corporate office in Culver City, CA.

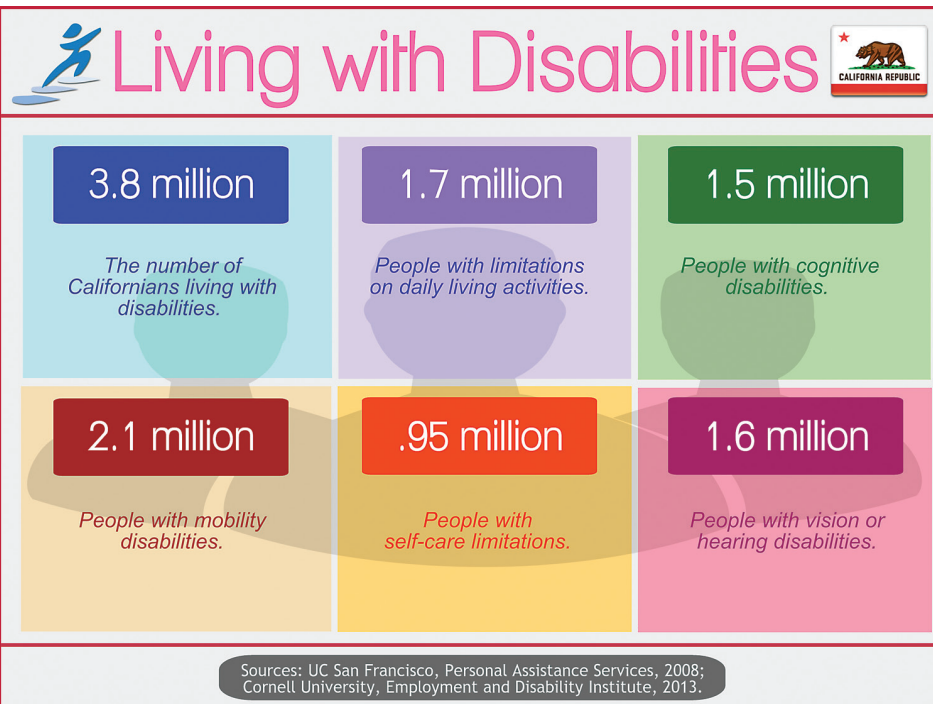
After retiring in 2008, Delores continued her involvement with the Life Steps Foundation by becoming a volunteer. Now at the age of 83, she contributes her time and talents to assisting our accounting staff.



LSF Volunteer Delores Smith.

"It gives me something to do, and I like getting out and being with younger people," she said. "Everyone is so nice and we have a great rapport. I enjoy my projects and staying involved with the Life Steps organization."

Learn how you can join Delores and others in helping the Life Steps Foundation assist Californians with disabilities. To learn about our volunteer opportunities, contact our corporate office at (310) 410-8190.



Our Wish Lists

Donate an item and become a Life Changer!

You can become a Life Changer!

This year alone, Life Steps Foundation's community service locations throughout California will be helping to answer some of the most basic wishes of more than 12,000 people of all ages

who live with cognitive, developmental, mental and physical disabilities. Our work empowers them with the skills, training and care they need to overcome some of their biggest challenges and take their next steps in life.

Each of our service locations has compiled a Wish List of their greatest needs. Help us help others today! You'll find our Wish Lists at www.lifestepsfoundation.org.

Follow us online at:
www.lifestepsfoundation.org
www.facebook.com/lsgroup
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Stepping Up for People of All Ages

From time to time, all of us need help taking some of the more challenging steps in life. At Life Steps, we help those with the greatest challenges by giving them training, skills and confidence to achieve greater independence and realize their personal potentials. In today's economy, your support is more urgent than ever. Please consider joining our Life Steps Community with a donation. Visit our website www.lifestepsfoundation.org and click on the "Donate" button today! Your name will be recognized on our **Life Changer** list of donors. Thank you for your support.



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