



# HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

SUMMER 2012

## NEW LAW PROVIDES ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT SERVICES THROUGH PRIVATE INSURANCE: HRC Booklet Offers Guide for Families

*Booklet Developed by Cori Reifman, HRC Benefits Specialist*

A new law became effective July 1, 2012, as a result of Senate Bill 946. This law requires that private health care insurers shall provide access to needed behavioral health treatment services, for people with Autism or Pervasive Developmental Disorder.

### **About the new HRC booklet**

This booklet will:

- Describe some of the changes taking place,
- Give you some information about how to obtain behavioral health treatment services through private health insurance, and
- Outline what to do if you have a problem obtaining behavioral health services.

The regional center's primary role is to coordinate services for clients and their families that will enable clients to lead more independent, fulfilling lives. In carrying out this role, Harbor Regional Center sometimes pays for services, but we also help families identify and access other payment sources for which they are eligible. These may include public programs such as the public school, Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and private resources such as client trusts and health insurance. The Lanterman Act requires us to seek out these other sources of coverage before we pay for services.



The purpose of this booklet is to provide information for families, about how you and your family might receive autism services, following recent changes to the law. Perhaps until now you have received autism services for your child such as behavioral health treatment including Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) through Regional Center and/or the public school system. This booklet provides a guide to accessing their health plans for needed behavioral health treatment and other medically necessary services for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

We hope that families will find this booklet helpful. You can find this booklet online at [www.harborrc.org](http://www.harborrc.org), or pick up a copy in our HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center. ■

## PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORK

### Kaiser Permanente South Bay Joins in Expanding Opportunities

*Danielle Heck,  
HRC Employment Specialist*

Harbor Regional Center has a laser focus on improving employment opportunities for our clients. In addition to recently instituting a new Employment Orientation for clients and their families as well as a Job Preparation Course, Harbor Regional Center has been persistent in establishing the employment training program known as Project SEARCH.

Since first learning about the program in February 2009, from founder and Senior Director of Project SEARCH, Erin Riehle, the program has been steadily developing to create opportunities for our clients. Erin Riehle started Project SEARCH in 1996 as Director of the

*Now employed full time, Curtis Sudol was a highly motivated intern at the Long Beach Courthouse.*



Emergency Department of Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Erin felt that it made good business sense for hospitals to hire individuals with developmental disabilities to fill some of the high-turnover, entry level positions in their departments.

One of Harbor Regional Center's core values is *respecting partnerships*. Project SEARCH embodies collaboration and partnerships between businesses, educational institutions, and adult service agencies. This unique internship program provides real-life work experience and total immersion in a workplace to help youth with developmental disabilities make successful transitions from school to adult life.

In January 2011, Harbor Regional Center (HRC) initiated the Project SEARCH program with Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) and PathPoint, an adult service provider. The program was hosted by the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles at the Long Beach Courthouse. At the Long Beach Courthouse, HRC clients have learned marketable skills through internships in the Traffic, Civil, Jury, Judicial, and Criminal Departments.

#### **Continuing with Exciting Expansions**

During the 2011-2012 school year, the HRC Project SEARCH program continued to grow with new groups of students at the Long Beach Courthouse, and also at the San Pedro Courthouse, in partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

Since we first began working with Project SEARCH, HRC has been networking with local hospitals to establish internships in a healthcare environment. We are excited to announce that Kaiser Permanente

*(continued on page 3)*

*Preparing for Work (continued from page 2)*

South Bay Medical Center (KPSBMC) is the first hospital in our area to step forward to lead this innovative program. HRC is partnering with LAUSD and Best Buddies Jobs to start Project SEARCH in August 2012 at KPSBMC.

Of course, the ultimate goal of these programs is competitive employment, utilizing the skills students have learned. Curtis Sudol and Humberto Rojas are two examples of graduates who are successfully applying what they learned

through HRC's Project SEARCH and Job Preparation Course. HRC Employment Specialist Mayra Martinez was able to market their skills in document processing to employer SourceHOV, a leading company in business processing services for industries including healthcare and government. Curtis and Humberto now work full-time at SourceHOV, earning above minimum wage and benefits.

HRC Employment specialists are eagerly seeking out more companies that will employ our well-prepared HRC clients. ■



*(above) Jamie Martinez, here with coworkers and supporters, gained confidence and learned to become a valued worker at the Los Angeles County Courthouse, as a Project SEARCH intern. Left to right, Efrain Ruiz, Los Angeles Superior Court; Erin Riehle, founder of Project SEARCH; fellow interns Omar Montreal and Frank DiMeglio; Joseph Lee, LAUSD Project SEARCH; and Maria Ortiz, Pathpoint, supported employment service provider.*

*(right) Humberto Rojas on the job at SourceHOV in Carson.*



## BUDGET NEWS FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES, 2012-13

### **Another Round of State Funding Reductions Means Continued Strain**

Each year in January, the Governor releases his "Governor's Budget" for the State of California. This is followed by a May revision, based upon updated projections for state revenue and expenses as well as more current data concerning things such as population growth. The details of the complete state budget are reviewed by the state legislature through the winter and spring months, while working to agree upon and pass a budget by the end of June. This process was again complicated this spring by lower than expected state revenues, for a projected budget deficit of \$6 billion.

### **Budget Passed in June**

This year the Governor and legislature were able to reach agreement, and pass a budget by the end of June. For Developmental Services, the approved budget included a decrease of \$100 million for the 2011-12 fiscal year ending June 30th, and a decrease of \$200 million going forward for 2012-13.

### **Payment Reduction to Regional Centers and Service Providers Will Continue, But at a Lower Percentage**

Over the past few years, state legislators have heard increasingly desperate testimony regarding the extreme stress that payment reductions have placed upon the system. In January the Governor's Budget had proposed to restore full payment to regional centers and service providers. However, one component of the additional \$200 million cut, approved to go into effect this July, will be a payment reduction for regional centers and service provider payments of 1.25%. This represents a partial

restoration of payments, compared to the 4.25% reduction that has been in place since 2010.

DDS also plans to reduce utilization of Developmental Centers, where the per capita cost is much higher than the cost of providing services in the community through the regional centers. The Southern California Regional Centers will continue their collaborative efforts to develop homes and other community services for clients impacted by the planned closure of Lanterman Developmental Center, while DDS will closely control and limit any new admissions into any of the remaining developmental centers in the state.

The reduction to the developmental services budget also anticipates a reduced need for state funds for autism-related services, due to a new law requiring insurance coverage for services for people with autism spectrum disorder. Regional Centers are now letting families know about this new requirement in the law, effective July 1st, 2012, and providing information on how to access insurance coverage for needed behavioral health treatment and other medically necessary services.

Last year DDS cost-saving proposals also included a requirement to conduct independent supported living assessments for clients with greater service needs. This year, in response to extensive stakeholder input, this requirement will be replaced by a new standardized assessment for all clients receiving Supported Living Services.

### **Another Dark Cloud on the Horizon**

If the Governor's ballot initiative to increase the state sales and income taxes is not approved by the voters in November, the budget plan includes a trigger reduction to developmental services of an additional \$50 million for the second half of 2012-13, and \$100 million reduction for the full fiscal year 2013-14.

*(continued on page 5)*

*Budget News for Developmental Services, 2012-13 (continued from page 4)*

### **Federal Funding**

There is again a strong emphasis on maximizing funding from sources other than the state General Fund. The regional centers statewide have thus far enrolled over 96,000 clients with developmental disabilities in the federal Medicaid waiver program, which has allowed the state to

receive over \$1 billion in federal funding in the current year. We will be expected to continue to identify new clients who are eligible to be enrolled in this program, to bring California more than \$6 billion in federal funds in the next five years.

**Complete budget information for Developmental Services can be found on the DDS website at [www.dds.ca.gov/Budget/Home.cfm](http://www.dds.ca.gov/Budget/Home.cfm) ■**

## **STATE SENATOR RODERICK WRIGHT PRESENTS WOMEN OF DISTINCTION 2012**



*Left to right, Former Mayor John Rea, Marcia Good, Senator Roderick Wright, Patricia Del Monico, Alex Good*

Not one but two women in our HRC family were honored for their leadership by State Senator Roderick Wright, at the 2012 Women of Distinction Awards.

Congratulations to Patricia Del Monico and Marcia Good!

Patricia Del Monico received recognition for her many contributions to our community, serving for 34 years as the Executive Director of Harbor Regional Center.

Marcia Good was recognized for serving on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and for advocacy on behalf of students and families with the Palos Verdes Unified School District and Southwest Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA).

Both women were nominated for this distinguished honor by former Mayor of Palos Verdes Estates, John Rea. Mayor Rea attended the awards presentation along with Marcia's son Alex Good, and fellow HRC Board Members George Bird and David Gauthier. ■

# FAMILY *matters*

## TRANSITION: LOOKING FORWARD Parent and Student Conferences

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*Antoinette Perez,  
Program Manager*

*Nancy Spiegel, Director of  
Information and Development*

HRC clients and families preparing for the transition from secondary education to adulthood want to know what they can do to succeed in post-secondary education and training, the workplace, and community living. Harbor Regional Center is committed to supporting our clients and families to be knowledgeable about their options, so that they can pursue their dreams for the future. We are working in collaboration with all of our key partners, including local school districts, colleges, HOPE, the Department of Rehabilitation, and service providers, with a shared goal of creating exciting new possibilities for our clients facing transition.

HRC's wants to deliver vital information for our clients and families who are in school and preparing for transition to adulthood. At our fall family conference, "Exploring Transition and Post-Secondary Options," over 100 students and parents heard about current initiatives and opportunities for post-secondary education and employment. Speakers from Long Beach Unified School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, and Redondo Beach Union High School/Southwest Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) provided information about specially-designed programs and services

within the public school district to assist students as they transition out of high school. Representatives from Long Beach City College, California State University, and UCLA increased awareness of new programs to open up the college experience to individuals with developmental disabilities. California Mentor Network and Modern Support Services demonstrated how service providers help to support HRC adults in their journey.

This spring, we followed up with a summit for students and their families, "Taking Charge of Your Future." Approximately 100 students ages 14 to 22 and their parents heard about college, employment, and opportunities for community participation once they leave school. They attended breakout sessions to hear from other students who are already engaged in post-secondary school options. The summit also provided an opportunity to start formulating or to review their current transition plans to take back to their school planning team.

HRC staff have also paid visits to transition fairs put on by several of our local school districts, to continue information sharing and planning for the future. Harbor Regional Center is committed to the continued development of innovative services and supports that expand horizons for students in transition and all adults that we serve. ■

# LEARNING BY DOING

## A Calendar of Enrichment Activities Designed for Parents of Infants and Toddlers at HRC

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*Kathie Sarles, M.Ed., HRC Early Childhood Specialist*

A welcoming, child-friendly environment, coupled with fun-filled and interactive music and movement activities with engaged parents, are the primary ingredients that create the recipe of growth and learning for infants and toddlers.

Harbor Regional Center's Together from the Start parent training calendar for eligible children and their parents 0-3, is designed with that recipe in mind. These trainings enhance a parent's knowledge while fostering connections with HRC professionals and with other parents alike. A variety of trainings are consistently offered alternating between HRC sites. These weekly offerings include: **Mommy, Daddy and Me Mondays** which invites all children 0-36 months to come with their parents to sing, move with music, read books and play with developmentally appropriate toys. **Toddler Tuesday** offers children 18-36 months and their parents, a four-part communication series, which demonstrates how certain activities, when used daily, will enhance communication skills. **Wee Ones Wednesday** invites children 0-18 months and their parents to come and focus on motor development through learning activities that enhance the natural progression of gross and fine motor skills. **Thursday is Child's Play** offers older children 18-36 months and their parents, an opportunity to participate in felt board stories, art activities and finger plays which are activities they can then incorporate in their home. **Infant Massage** which rounds out the week on Friday is offered as a four-part series for infants 0-12 months (no walkers). The lights are dimmed, the sweet sound of music is playing in the background and the cooing and babbling of infants is heard – all sights and sounds that create a relaxing and wonderful atmosphere that enables us all to focus on the babies and begin to learn a skill that creates a bond for life. From Monday morning until Friday afternoon, connections are being made and enrichment is happening.



*Bridgette Lopez learns how to incorporate massage into her daily routine with daughter Bridgette Sofia.*

Although our calendar is filled with trainings that are offered weekly, we also offer parent trainings that only happen once a month or are offered as a one-time presentation. July began our newest monthly training: **Learning Café**, with the featured topic, *Tantrums: What to do?* Parents can come pour a cup of coffee, have a snack while listening to the discussion or being part of it. This presentation will be facilitated by a behavioral specialist, and future presentations will feature other professionals from HRC or perhaps a parent who has knowledge on a topic. Parenting is hard work and taking time out to relax while learning is important. Let us know about a topic that you would like to know more about or discuss with other parents.

Our calendar will always be changing as the needs of our clients and families change. It is our goal that every month we will offer a new way to enhance learning for our clients and their parents. Pick up your calendar today; you can find them at the resource center, the family center, or from your Counselor. ■

# Client *focus*

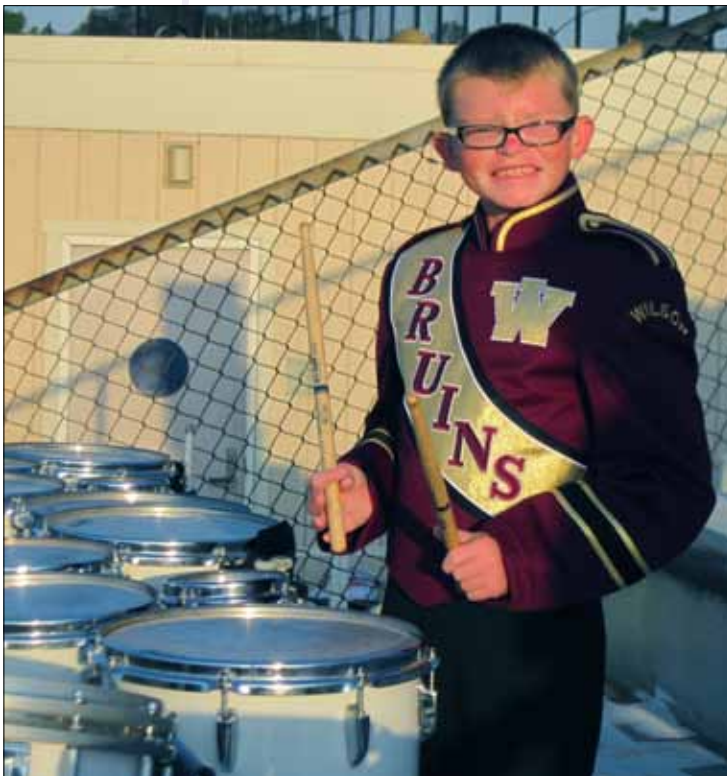
## JON HILL A Wilson Favorite

*Kerry Ryerson, HRC Public  
Information Specialist*

That's what the photo caption says in the Wilson High School 2011 yearbook. When you spend time with Jon you'll instantly understand why he's a "Wilson Favorite" because he really is an engaging and well-rounded young man.

While Jon was growing up, his parents would take him to watch the high school plays and the basketball and football games. Jon has always enjoyed being a spectator at the school games but when he started participating in various sports through Special Olympics, he became the athlete to watch!

*How does Jon's mom  
describe her son?  
"He's my hero!"*



Not only is Jon an athlete, he has a true gift for music! Jon's musical talents include teaching himself how to play different instruments without having formal lessons. He taught himself how to play the drums by watching the movie "Drum Line" hundreds of times. Then he moved on to other instruments – like the trombone which he played in the band when he attended Rogers Middle School.

Jon is currently in 10th grade at Wilson High and he has taken his musical talent to the school's marching band where he plays drums. That is no easy task when considering the time involved. Students must commit to attending the two week drum line camp during the summer and to be at the practices after school and at the games during the regular school year. Jon does all of this enthusiastically. When the band is not practicing after school, Jon hangs out on campus and shoots hoops or plays tennis.

HRC Counselor Steve Campos is very proud of Jon's accomplishments. "It is a pure joy to work with Jon and his family."

Jon enjoys his everyday life on campus but he isn't too thrilled with learning Algebra! He would prefer to be playing a sport or an instrument. As busy as he is with sports and music, Jon takes time out to go to the school dances and it's widely known that he is an amazing dancer. There is even a picture in the Hill's living room showcasing his break dancing moves! The word on campus is that Jon "dances with all of the hot girls!"

Not only is Jon "Wilson's Favorite," it sounds like he is Wilson High School's "Triple Threat" – athlete, musician and dancer!

Great job Jon! ■



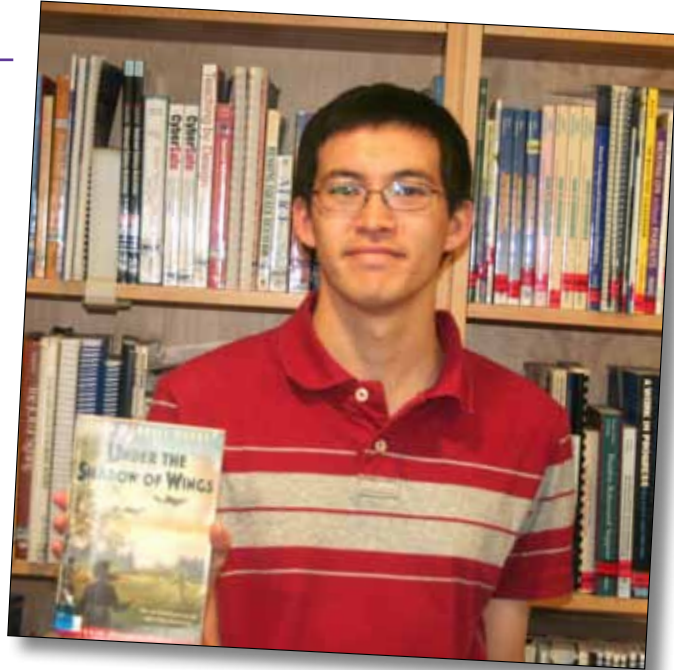
## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

*Kris Zerhusen, HRC Resource Center Assistant Manager*

The Resource & Assistive Technology Center is pleased to welcome Bryant Louis as a new volunteer. Bryant learned about the opportunity to volunteer during his participation in the HRC Job Preparation Course.

Bryant is currently working to keep the items in circulation organized so that Counselors, parents and service providers can easily locate desired items.

Bryant exhibits a positive, optimistic attitude and freely shares his interests and areas of knowledge with others. Next time you are in the Resource and Assistive Technology Center, be sure to say hello to Bryant! ■



*Bryant takes a short break from organizing the books to show off one of his favorites.*

## RECOGNIZING EXTRA EFFORT!

HRC is dedicated to providing support, information and choices to our clients and their families. Our staff, from the receptionists to our psychologists, strive to demonstrate our core values through their interactions with you.

You can help us recognize those individuals who have provided you with outstanding care and service. When you see an HRC staff member who is demonstrating respect by treating people considerately, working collaboratively, looking for ways to be helpful, responding quickly and explaining any delays, listening, sharing information, or any other assistance you found helpful, simply fill in this form and mail it to: Office of Information and Development, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 or by e-mail at [cheryl.perez@harborrc.org](mailto:cheryl.perez@harborrc.org)

We will make sure that the HRC Counselor, support staff, clinical staff, Resource Center staff or other members of the HRC team receive your note along with our special recognition.

Name of person you wish to recognize: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

How that person demonstrated outstanding service or fulfillment of our core values: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We appreciate your support in helping us acknowledge these outstanding individuals.

## DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR MORE INDEPENDENT LIVES

### Meet Esteban Doria

*By Barbara del Monico, Manager  
HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center*

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Esteban Doria, our new Assistive Technology Specialist, joined the Harbor Regional Center Resource & Assistive Technology Center staff in December 2011. Esteban works together with a speech language pathologist to conduct assessments and consultations. Their assessments then identify and recommend specialized equipment which will allow HRC clients to lead more independent lives.



Assistive Technology (AT) includes strategies and equipment which helps people with disabilities communicate, access the computer in order to learn or do their job, and control certain devices in the environment when they cannot use standard methods. These strategies and equipment include such things as voice output communication devices, modified keyboards, and switches.

Esteban spends time with clients during the evaluation process to determine what skills and interests they have, and then makes recommendations for equipment or strategies to meet their needs. He says that his greatest reward is when a client smiles proudly, after learning to use the AT equipment. Once the client receives his/her equipment Esteban assists with setting it up and then trains the client to use it.

Clients and their families interested in an appointment to determine the need for assistive technology should contact their Harbor Regional Center Counselor, who will work with them to prepare a referral. The team in the AT Lab will gather further information by sending an informational packet to the client and/or family to be completed and returned. Once the completed packet is received, the AT Lab will contact the client or family to schedule an appointment.

We're very glad to have Esteban as a member of our team, and he looks forward to working with many more HRC clients! ■

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

*By Dominique DeBorba*

When parents first find out about Sensory Processing Disorders, their reaction usually comes as: a “light bulb moment,” the “ah ha!,” “So that explains it!” Finally...a thorough explanation and a name for the behaviors and developmental concerns that exist!

Sensory Integration Disorder or Dysfunction is a neurological disorder that results from the brain's inability to integrate certain information received from the body's five basic sensory systems. It can present itself in many ways, but some of the more common symptoms include: over or under sensitivity to touch, movement, sights or sounds, distractedness, social and emotional problems, physical clumsiness and delays in speech, language, or motor skills.

Many children make great strides in overcoming these symptoms through effective Sensory Integration (SI) and occupational therapy. Here in the Family Resource Center we have many materials on the topic of Sensory Integration that can start parents on their way to educating themselves on this disorder, and to helping their child. From the original Jean Ayres books on SI to the more recent “Out-of-sync child” series, please be sure to stop by and check them all out.

**Sensory Integration and the Child** – Dr. Jean Ayres, a pioneer in the field of Sensory Integration and founder of the Ayres clinic has written this book to help parents and teachers to recognize Sensory Integrative Dysfunction and understand its treatment. This book does not have all the answers, but it will give many parents the opportunity to understand their child better. The greater the understanding of a problem, the more effectively it is helped. This book was written to promote that understanding.

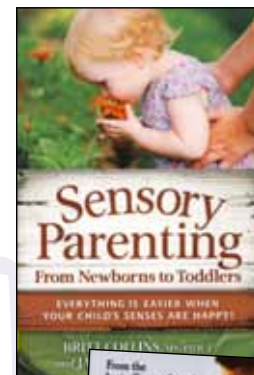
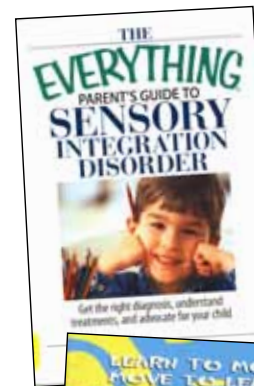
### **The Everything Parent's Guide to Sensory Integration Disorder**

– This book provides an in-depth definition of Sensory Integration Disorder and explains its effect. It highlights occupational therapy treatments and explains techniques that can be used by families.

**Learn to Move, Move to Learn** – This handbook is an excellent resource for “best practice” occupational therapy services for children in preschool and early childhood settings. Each lesson addresses motor, language, sensory, cognition and social/emotional skills.

**Sensory Parenting From Newborns to Toddlers** – Everything is easier when your child's senses are happy. This book written by an occupational therapist-parent team has compiled parenting tips using child's senses as a main consideration.

**Growing an In-Sync Child** – This book includes simple, fun activities to help every child develop, learn, and grow. It emphasizes early motor development as one of the most important factors in a child's physical, emotional, academic, and overall success. ■



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## BOARD MEETINGS

September 18, 2012 - 8:00 a.m.  
 October 16, 2012 - 6:30 p.m.  
 November 20, 2012 - 8:00 a.m.  
 No Meeting in December

The Board of Trustees of Harbor Regional Center meets on the Third Tuesday of the month, with the exception of June, August and December, when the Board does not meet.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The meetings are held in Conference Room A4 at Harbor Regional Center.

Harbor Happenings is a publication of Harbor Regional Center, a program of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation.

### Join the HRC E-mail Network!

Receive e-mail bulletins from HRC on important news. Simply send an e-mail to [enetworksubscriber@harborrc.org](mailto:enetworksubscriber@harborrc.org), provide us with your name and your e-mail address, and ask to be added to our electronic mailing list.

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