



SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

Mission Statement

Compassion In Action- USA is committed to providing personal advocacy services without cost to our community members who are struggling with a health-related crisis. We will provide assistance to each person until they have received the medical services and disability benefits they are eligible for, so that they may live in dignity.

WHAT WE DO

We provide advocates to assist those in our communities who are seriously ill through the process of acquiring Social Security, SSI Disability and other needed services.

Please call us at:

(626) 967-6800

for further assistance.

Jeri's 10 Year Nightmare Changes to JOY!

- I worked as a housekeeper for 14 years at a hospital near my home
- I injured my back while working at the hospital in 1998
- Filed for Social Security Disability in 2000
- Denied twice - appealed
- Had a hearing in 2002 - Lawyer representing me never requested medical records to defend me. The judge denied my appeal
- Got a new attorney and filed a new case; Denied twice - appealed
- Had a hearing with another judge in 2005 – this time with medical records
- Judge denied second claim saying I wasn't credible because a person with no income shouldn't be able to afford to call her elderly mother in Ohio once a week. My roommate had phone service with flat rate long distance – but the Judge never asked how I could afford to call my Mom.
- My lawyer appealed. Filed a new case in 2005; Denied twice - appealed
- Hearing scheduled in July 2007 with the same judge who denied me in 2005– more Nightmares!!
- Judge postponed Hearing –needed Appeals Council decision on 2005 denial – although Appeals Council maintained they never received an Appeal, a denial was received from them on April 28th.
- Hearing finally took place April 29th.
- Now on the verge of being homeless.
- Today is June 4, 2008. I just received my APPROVAL – I can't believe it!

The only bright spot in this long fight was getting Compassion's phone number from a friend in 2006. Compassion's advocate reviewed all the decisions I had received through the years, organized my records and helped my doctors provide appropriate detailed reports which include all of the limitations caused by my injury that keep me from being able to work. Neither of my lawyers ever did this. Those records are filed with Social Security and were part of the file for the recently held Hearing . Because of all of the filings and appeals, the second lawyer is still representing me. If I have my way, Compassion will represent all of my claims with Social Security in the future.

Not only has Compassion worked on my Social Security Disability case, they have also made sure I had food, holiday baskets, and a compassionate ear whenever I need it. They are the only glimmer of hope in this whole dark mess!! I could never have won this fight without Compassion!

Letter From Our President



Dear Friends,

Jeri's story is one we hear every day. At Compassion our goal is to always have a "happy ending" . Assisting our clients move to self-sufficiency is why we exist.

2008 has been another growing and changing year for Compassion. This newsletter will update you on our progress and the changes that have taken place.

Our focus is always on those in our communities who need an Advocate – one that will do whatever is needed to secure benefits and services for the seriously ill. To do that we must have funding to operate our office, pay staff and put gas in our vehicle that takes that Advocate to our clients and meetings. For the past 2 years, I have worked full time (plus) for Compassion so that we could solidify our organization and continue the work we do so well. Last June we moved into our first office – our clients that were able could come to us and we could serve more clients every day. This was a true blessing!

With the start of 2008 we knew that we did not have enough funding so that I could continue to work full time for Compassion. After much prayer I began to look for alternatives and in February, accepted a position with Foothill Unity Center. Compassion and Foothill have collaborated for several years and we are aligned in our concerns and care for those we serve.

This position at Foothill does not change my commitment to Compassion, only the hours I am available. This month we have again moved our office so that we have evening and weekend access. We are now housed in the campus of Neighborhood Christian Fellowship in Covina – 18821 E Arrow Hwy, Covina, 91722. We are very happy here and very grateful to Pastor Gordon Coulter and Pastor Mark Bargaehr of this church for allowing us to be here at a very reasonable rent. If you would like to visit our office and learn more about what we do, please call us at (626) 967-6800 and we will set up a time to meet.

As we move into the Summer months, we are looking for volunteers to staff our office during the day so that our phones are answered and our clients served. We can be reached at (626) 967-6800. Helen Marshall has been a blessing! She volunteers every Monday and Wednesday mornings at our office assisting callers with information, referrals and doing client intakes. Thanks, Helen!

We are also continuing our collaboratives and participation with coalitions and consortiums that are partnering with us for grants. We know that the funding we need to staff our office is "just around the corner" and we will continue to move confidently ahead.

Our thanks to Josette Fregoso for volunteering to produce our Newsletter on a quarterly basis for us. We want to be sure we are communicating on a regular basis and keeping you informed of all that is happening.

Again our thanks go out to all of you who have kept us sustained with your encouragement and prayers since 2002. We will honor your commitment to us by continuing to push ahead, grow and work to better the lives of those we serve.

Have a great Summer!

Barbara Case

Despite all of the changes in 2008, Compassion continues to win. Over 75 cases have been approved – 8 of those so far in 2008. Additionally we have won Medi-Cal cases in less than 1 week which has allowed our clients to receive immediate care for life threatening illnesses. (The average wait for disability based Medi-Cal approval in California is 1 year.)

2008 Donor Partners

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***“Generosity is only
benevolence in practice”.***

**Bishop Thomas Ken
(1637-1711)**

Your support is vital Please send donations to:

**Compassion In Action- USA
PO Box 383
San Dimas, CA 91773**

PayPal and credit card donations can be made on our website:

www.compassioninaction.us

501(c)3 Non-Profit EI#61-1422369 All donations are tax deductible.

Making a Difference ~ By Josette Fregoso

My name is Josette Fregoso and volunteering is my passion. I have been volunteering at homeless shelters for about 7 years. I participate in several charity walks and I have been a child advocate for CASA. I am a wife and mother as well as a native Californian. My family and I have moved from California to Utah to Illinois to Maryland, where we currently reside.

Volunteering has been rewarding, enlightening and fulfilling. Volunteering is good for my soul and it helps me keep things in perspective. The people that I have met and worked with are simply amazing.

Like most people my life is quite busy so, when I discovered virtual volunteering, I was excited! Here is an opportunity to give more of myself without even leaving home.

While visiting www.volunteermatch.org I found a listing for Compassion in Action - USA. They were looking for someone to help with their newsletters. I was immediately interested. After speaking with Barbara and hearing all about Compassion in Action and the wonderful work that they do, I knew I wanted to be a part of it.

Until I spoke with Barbara I didn't really believe that one person can make a difference but now I know that one person can make a difference because Barbara is making a difference. Not only was I completely impressed with her tenacity, determination and her heart, I was also thoroughly inspired to make a difference myself, as well as try to inspire others to do the same. It is my great honor and privilege to be involved with Compassion in Action! The fact that Compassion is based in California is a bonus for me because I now have another connection to southern California, my home.

One person can make a difference and if one person can make a difference just imagine what we could accomplish collectively!

Volunteer Corner

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for Compassion In Action- USA, we have numerous places for you to serve and we will train you:
Advocacy Specialist-- Research Assistant--Event Assistant--Office Support

Please email: volunteer@compassioninaction.us

Or call (626) 967-6800 For more information.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR 2008 VOLUNTEERS!!

**Helen Marshall Linda Reyes Tyler Johnson
Josette Fregoso Chris & Khryste Langlais Susan Williamsen
Elena Richardson Vivek Charu**

Display your compassion with the New Compassion Puzzle Piece

Compassion assists in the restoration of our clients' lives one piece at a time.
By purchasing our puzzle pieces you help us in this process.



"I AM COMPASSION IN ACTION"
Puzzle Piece Key Ring
\$6.00 each Tax Included

To place an order, please call
(626) 967-6800
or email us at
puzzle@compassioninaction.us
or contact us at the following
address:

Compassion In Action –
USA
PO Box 383
San Dimas, CA 91773



"I AM COMPASSION IN ACTION"
Puzzle Piece Necklace
\$9.00 each Tax Included

Shipping Costs

1-4 pieces \$2.00

5-10 pieces \$4.00

11 + pieces \$8.00

Payment can be made by credit card,
check and money orders.
All donations are tax deductible.

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Compassion's 2007 Luncheon Volunteers

L to r: Kimberle Kelly, Aurora Williamsen, Helen Marshall, Maxine Coleman, Kassidee Williamsen, Susan Williamsen, Elena Richardson, Terrence Richardson, Adam Perez, Barbara Case, Diana Berger, Linda Reyes

Our thanks to all of you who gave so much of your day to make our 2007 Luncheon and Silent Auction a great success. A special "thank you" to Diana Berger for sponsoring our Luncheon. Her generosity allowed 100% of the proceeds to go to the work of Compassion.

With great food and stories from our clients, volunteers and community partners, we hope that each of you who attended went away with a greater understanding of why Compassion is needed.

Almost \$10,000 was raised in less than 3 hours. We thank you!