

## Silicon Valley Independent Living Center



February 2012

We hope you are excited to start the new year as we are! My name is Eliza Riley. I am the Youth Leadership and Outreach Coordinator here at Silicon Valley Independent Living Center (SVILC).

Our Youth Advisory Council got together one night and started thinking what can we do for our peers. They came up with a title for the work they do, calling themselves "Youth United." They really liked the idea that they are united in one cause: justice. This unification speaks volumes about them as they want to see their community linked hand-in-hand through age, gender, and race.

SVILC encourages disabled members of the youth community to step up and take part in Youth United as a way to explore who they are and who they want to be. This interactive leadership and organizing program teaches the history of our people and its great leaders with disabilities. Youth will learn about disability rights law and first steps of becoming leaders in our community.

I will be sending out these letters monthly to keep you informed on what our youth leaders have been up to and some upcoming events that we would love to see you attend.

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### Student of the Month

Let's give Justin Steinberg a standing ovation. He is a rapper who has been working with Youth United for a year and has grown leaps and bounds. He recently wrote "Dealing With The Pain." Youth United has adopted this as their theme song. In this rap he says things such as:

*Livin' with two disabilities can really be tough,  
Even with a strong family, that ain't quite enough  
To wash away the pain, sadness and rage.  
But I've made friends with peeps that are on the same page.  
Thank god for the SVILC!  
Thanks to them, I have no reason to be ashamed of who I be.  
Getting in touch with my own disability pride,  
I realize that I have a lot of peeps on my side.*

It has been a delight to see how his creative energy has developed and his confidence grown to be comfortable free-styling in front of a live audience. He has just received word that he has been accepted to San Francisco State University and will begin studying there next semester. He wants to work with children with visual disabilities in a school setting. He is already making plans to live in San Francisco and coming back to SVILC for some of our regular activities and to continue writing and rapping.

## Suggested Reading

Here is a PDF that we recommend on [Cyber bullying](#)

“Cyber bullying is the willful and repeated act of harming others electronically through email, instant messaging, Web sites, chat rooms, social networking sites, cell phones and other electronic means. About one-third of all youth using the Internet have been bullied.”

We encourage you to look at [YO! Disabled and Proud](#) for more information.

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## Upcoming dates

You can now go online and fill out an application for the Youth United program. All you need to do is go to [SVILC](#) and click on the Youth United button. This program takes place on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5:30-7:30. The dates of the program are:

2/20/12—4/13/12

5/07/11—6/28/12

8/06/12—9/28/12

### **Braille Boot Camp**

*Introduction to Reading Braille*, taught by Gaeir Dietrich of the High Tech Center Training Unit (HTCTU) of the California Community Colleges, is a three full day intensive training designed to teach sighted participants to read and write Grade One (uncontracted) Braille and read Grade Two (contracted braille) Braille. Our goal is to promote braille literacy, provide initial training to those working with braille users, and inspire further study of the braille code. Please consider Braille Boot Camp if you are a parent or family member of a child with a visual impairment, if you work with a braille reader in school, if you create alternate format materials, or if you're just curious about braille! Come join us and find out how this training came to affectionately be known as "Braille Boot Camp!"

### ***One-Day Option!***

Can't attend all three days? We understand. Attend one day only, Tuesday, February 7, for an introduction to the braille alphabet.

### **WHEN:**

Tuesday, February 7, 9:00-4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 8, 9:00-4:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 9, 9:00-3:00 p.m.

For more information or to register, please contact Kathy Romero at [SVILC:KathyR@svilc.org](mailto:SVILC:KathyR@svilc.org) or 408-894-9041 ext. 216

**We regret child care will not be provided.**