



## News, Stories and Event from your friends at UCP Stanislaus

December 2020

### From the Desk of Chris Martin

#### Season's Greetings



Before we end the year, UCP is excited to announce our first **Season of Giving Auction**. This is a great opportunity to do some holiday shopping and help support UCP programs and activities from the comfort of your couch. On **Tuesday December 1<sup>st</sup>** we will be launching the online **Season of Giving Auction**. Items for Auction have been graciously donated to UCP for the event. If you are not local, there are opportunities to sponsor various participant activities and needs.

Please logon with the link below and bid on some great items while helping to support UCP's ability to fund programs and activities for adults with disabilities in Stanislaus County. Happy Bidding!

2020 has been a wild ride and I am grateful to have been able to lead UCP with a hardworking team of Directors and Managers. I look forward to 2021 and seeing what next year holds for us.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season.

<https://www.32auctions.com/UCPStan2020>



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## Programs Change Lives

Path to Independence

By Ignacio Chavez

Recently I sat down with Aric Elliott to discuss his path to independence. Aric has worked with UCP for the past 4 years in our Employment Services Department. He graduated from UCP's Work Crew program in which he earned minimum wage while learning valuable soft skills to help him transition to competitive integrated employment in the community. UCP's Individual Placement Program was then able to support Aric in securing his current job by helping him prepare his resume, apply for jobs online, practice for interviews and advocating for his strengths with the employer.

### Aric Elliott Interview

**Where were you born?**

*I was born in Modesto on December 26<sup>th</sup>, but I grew up in Waterford.*

**Do you have any hobbies? What do you do with your spare time?**

*I like playing video games and watching movies, those are my hobbies. My favorite movie is Star Wars and I love the show, the Mandalorian. My favorite video game is Assassins Creed Valhalla.*

**What was your very first job? The thing you first remember getting paid to do.**

*My very first job before going to Howard, was getting paid to help my Grandma out with farming and landscaping in Waterford.*

**What are all the places you have worked so far?**

*Howard Prep and UCP and now I work for Safeway.*

**Safeway is where you work now? What do you like best about it and how many hours per week do you work?**

*Yeah, I work at Safeway now and my favorite part is bagging and getting carts. It Depends but I work either 16 or 32 hours per week.*

**How did you get that job?**

*I got help from DOR (Department of Rehabilitation) and having help from UCP to get the job.*

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**How have UCP services helped you in your employment journey?**

*UCP helped teach me how to do an application, create a resume and practice for an interview.*

**Thanks for speaking with me today. Do you have any closing words or words of encouragement for young people like yourself that may be starting on their employment journey?**

*Always stay confident. Never have the thought that you won't get the job. Have confidence about getting the job.*





## A New Way to Connect

By Andres Fuentes

UCP encountered many new challenges during the pandemic. Stay at home orders forced us to close our doors and stop in-person services for the safety of our members. We had to come up with creative and innovative ways to communicate.

Technology became our friend. *Zoom classes* quickly gave our members the opportunity to connect and receive services from home. Our virtual classes expanded to include science, music, fitness, dancing, games, cooking, language and more.

In October we began offering *in-person visits* to families who expressed interest. Visits are modified to comply with most protective or local COVID-19 safety guidelines in effect at the time of service. This allowed us to personalize our services even more and interact with members individually. Our staff have come up with many safe and creative ways to keep our members engaged and work on their individual service plans.

Nicael Moore an Instructor from Turlock UCP created small Zoom classes to help members who didn't like big group classes feel more at ease. This also allowed Nicael to work on their *personal goals* via Zoom. Nicael started doing home visits in October and has received positive feedback from members and families alike.

*I enjoy visits with Nicael because she helps me calm down, we work on my goals and I have someone to talk to. I like Zoom because it's fun and I get to see my friends.*

**Andrew G**

*Andrew was emotionally falling apart at the beginning of COVID. I can say for Andrew that he would not have survived COVID without UCP and Zoom classes. He also loves the home visits. UCP support is all he had outside of his parents.*

**Susan, Andrew's mother**

*I like zoom because I like to do PE and see my friends. I like home visits because me and Nicael are friends and we get to play games together and work on goals.*

**Kim**

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*Martin was always too shy on Zoom. Home visits are good because Nicael is always prepared, she takes precautions and makes my brother smile because I know he misses his friends.*

**Miguel, Martin's brother**

*We enjoy listening to the members and seeing the members smile when we login to Zoom. We really enjoy home visits and the interaction Katie has been receiving by Nicael, she is always coming up with different sensory things for her to do.*

**Tim, Katie's father**





**Treasurer, Rachelle Riggs**

## Board Briefs

(Editors Note: Over the next few months, we are highlighting individual Board members, so our readers get to know them a bit better.)

**Rachelle Riggs** joined the UCP Board of Directors in 2019 after meeting some of our participants while volunteering in the community. She currently serves as Board Treasurer.

**What is your favorite drink?** Club Soda with Lime

**When and where did you first hear about UCP Stanislaus?** We worked together on the Chef Bag program through The United Way

**What unique skills or talents do you bring to the Board?** HR Background & volunteering,

**How long have you been a member of the Board and why should others join?** 1 year - to help spread the message of "Life or inclusion for individuals with disabilities"

**The BEST thing about COVID is....?** Finding time to help others

**What must people know about UCP Stanislaus that they don't?** UCP serves all disabilities not just members with cerebral palsy.

**What other boards or volunteer roles do you participate in?** I participate/volunteer in the following events: Bee Positive Foundation, Relay for Life, Heart Walk

**Your go-to Karaoke song is...?** none...no one wants to hear me sing :-)





## Holiday Festivities

At UCP we typically enjoy many holiday celebrations and events. This year we will not be able to enjoy them the same way, but we are not letting that stop us. One change will be the Turlock Christmas Parade that we have enjoyed participating in, this year instead there will be a **Christmas Cruise** on **December 4<sup>th</sup>** at the Turlock Fairgrounds. Come out for the cruise through the Fairgrounds and say, "Hi!" safely from your vehicle.



This year we will also enjoy an online Christmas Party full of carol singing and festive fun. To get you in the holiday mood, we created a Christmas Memories slide show for all to enjoy.

<https://youtu.be/4eStN92Yvzk>

*Happy Holidays from all of us here at UCP!*

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