

# THE **adjoiner** MONTHLY

CREATING **LIMITLESS** PATHWAYS

MAY 2026 EDITION  
THE LATEST ADJOIN NEWS

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

BY: Wendy Forkas

### A Full-Circle Moment



Over the past month, I experienced one of those rare moments that reminds you why the work we do matters so much.

I had the opportunity to attend Adjoin's Stockton ARTE Open House and Art Exhibition, and it brought back memories from more than 30 years ago. In the mid-1990s, I was hired to start a 24-hour Mobile Crisis program supporting individuals transitioning from the Stockton Developmental Center. I remember securing our very first office in Stockton and interviewing prospective staff while sitting in lawn chairs I had brought from home because we were still working to furnish the space. Like many new programs, we started with passion, determination, and a belief that we could make a difference.

Fast forward three decades, and there I was again in Stockton—this time as Adjoin's CEO—celebrating one of our newest and most innovative services: ARTE. Seeing artists with disabilities and autism proudly display and sell their artwork, connect with community members, and share their talents with family and friends was incredibly moving. The joy, confidence, and sense of accomplishment on their faces said everything about the impact this program is having.

As I reflected on how far our organization and our communities have come, I felt immense gratitude for the countless team members, partners, advocates, and individuals we support who have been part of this journey. It was a powerful reminder that the seeds we plant today can grow into opportunities that change lives for generations.

What made the experience even more special was having the opportunity shortly afterward to attend our Imperial Valley ARTE exhibition. As Adjoin's first ARTE program location, Imperial Valley holds a special place in our history. Celebrating the success of both exhibitions—seeing artists thriving, communities engaged, and dreams becoming reality—truly rounded out the moment and the month for me.

These experiences reinforced why I continue to love the work we do and why, after more than 30 years in this field, I remain passionate about creating opportunities for people to belong where they live, work, learn, and play.

I left both events feeling proud, humbled, inspired, and deeply grateful. Most of all, I am proud to be part of such an impactful organization and honored to work alongside a team that makes these life-changing moments possible every day.

**Thank you for all you do to help create limitless pathways for the people we serve!**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director

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## CORPORATE SAN DIEGO

Victoria got to represent Adjoin at the San Diego Business Summit hosted by the North San Diego Business Chamber! Adjoin is pictured with the Cause San Diego team and TCW Global CEO who gave a very inspiring final speech about how important philanthropy is to business culture to end the day of great networking and learning.



## veterans SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTY

As a thank you for lending their stories and being part of Adjoin's history, we thanked our clients who participated in video interviews during our branded media project. Case Coordinator Darren handed out the frames to Robert (left) and Richard (right)!



Juan Carpena, thank you for 3 years!

Happy Workaversary!



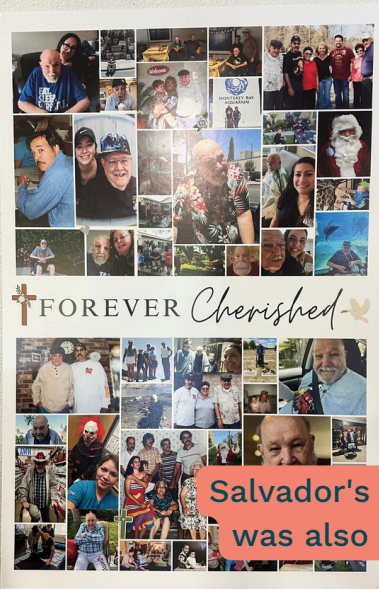
Angie recognized as Veterans Employee of the Month for May!

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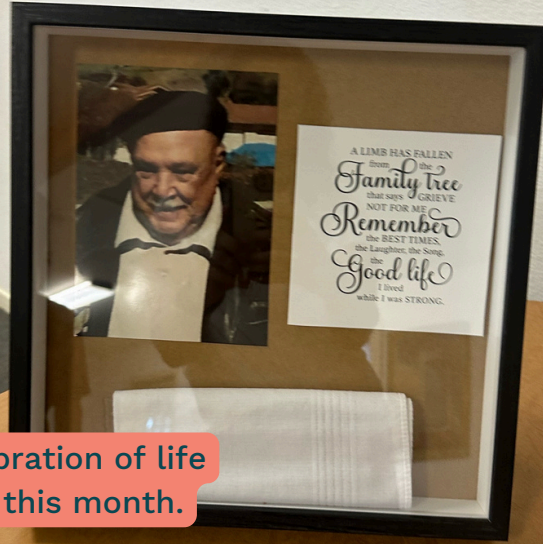
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 **catalysts** VISALIA

House manager Anavel was teaching Tim how to make homemade tortillas!



Salvador's celebration of life was also held this month.



Client Tim and Ruby were caught having fun during a visit to the local feed store, Tim showed his bravery by holding a snake and Ruby conquered her fear by petting it.



Rosemary enjoyed some time at the movies watching Micael Jackson.



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 **catalysts** STOCKTON

Happy Birthday  
Teddy, Jande,  
Anastacia & Valorie!



The Roots and Blossoms art exhibit was a HIT to say the least! The Stockton community and leadership came out and supported our first ARTE art exhibit and grant opening event!



 **catalysts** ORANGE COUNTY

The Orange County office continues to grow and strengthen our relationships with the OC Regional Center!



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## **catalysts** IMPERIAL VALLEY

As a thank you for lending their stories and being part of Adjoin's history, we thanked our clients who participated in video interviews during our branded media project!

The IV Day Program recently enjoyed a fun spring outing to Chuck E. Cheese. Clients had a wonderful time playing games, taking photos with their DSPs, and enjoying pizza, ice cream cones, and cookies. It was a great opportunity for socialization, recreation, and creating lasting memories together.



The IV Team helping an ILS client move into a new apartment! 🏠 Thank you to the Butterfly Club for your support and helping make this move possible!



Happy Birthday Alejandra, Mayra, Amanda, Marla, Kiarany, Lidia & Trizten!

## **catalysts** MERCED



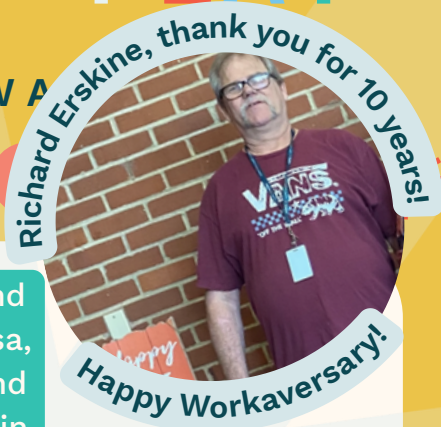
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 **catalysts** FRESNO

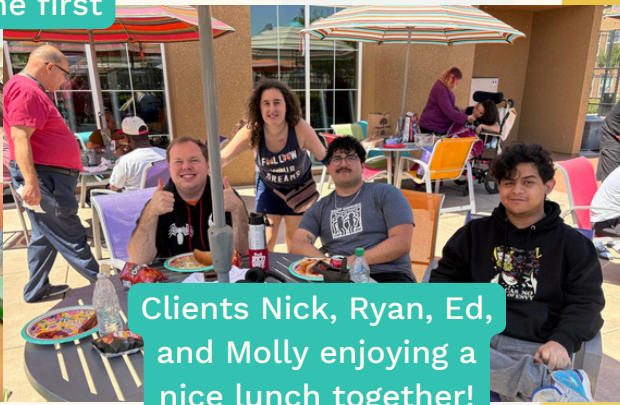
Happy Birthday Steven,  
Ma, Christine & Vanlisa!

Clients Stefan, Nick, and  
Ryan, along with PM Lisa,  
CM Frank, DSC Sam, and  
CM Kalia, participating in  
the Best Buddies Run  
event!



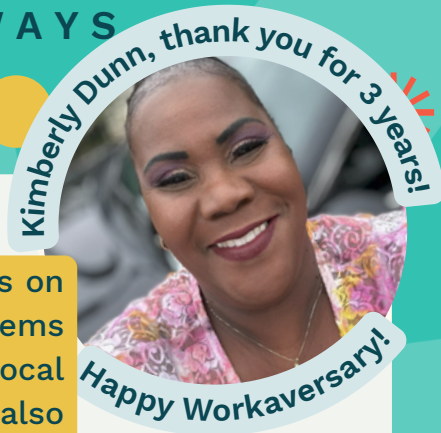
Client Ryan excited to  
receive an award at a  
social event and  
celebrate with friends!

Client Grace and DSP Danny are making  
sushi for lunch together for the first  
time!



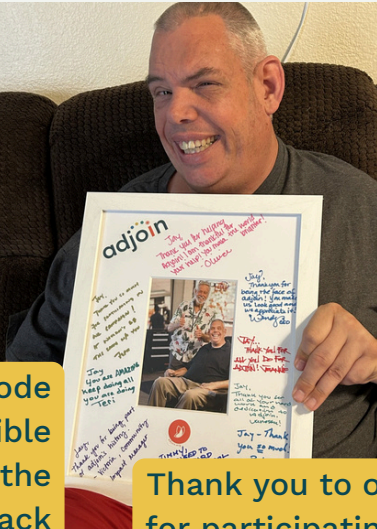
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Rene is a true advocate for people with disabilities. Rene sits on the Board of Directors with the Metropolitan Transit Systems and shares potential changes that should be made to the local transit system to improve access for others. Rene was also chosen and attended the Department of Developmental Services "Lived Experience Advisory Group" in Sacramento and is involved with San Diego's local People's First Conference and attends each year as a volunteer.

ARTE Creative Arts Coordinator, Sofia graduated from UCSD with her MASTERS IN SOCIOLOGY! What a great accomplishment!



Thank you to our clients Jay and Shelley for participating in the interview portion. You did a GREAT JOB representing Adjoin Catalysts Division services!

IL client Lily attended a camp where she rode horses and created art. This was made possible by her staff advocating to SDRC who paid for the week-long trip. Now that she had the horseback riding bug, she has signed up for weekly riding lessons!



DSP Jenni and IV staff Jonathan attended the SDP Workforce Summit in Sacramento. Jonathan must have left IV around 3:30 AM to meet Jenni and Teri at 6 AM to catch their flight! Now, THAT is dedication. They enjoyed 2 days meeting and socializing with other DSP, and staff from DDS.

Tailor Day client Leo graduated from UEI Vocational/Trade school with a certificate in HVAC systems. He hopes to land a job soon with the help of his TD staff Scott. Thank you, Scott for all the support you gave him to help make this happen!



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## ANNIVERSARIES TEAM MEMBERS

- 17** Kathleen Hartland San Diego
- 10** Richard Erskine Fresno
- 9** Isidro Sandoval Fresno
- 7** Andrea Hernandez Fresno
- 4** Paola Garcia Imperial Valley  
Diana Garcia Hernandez Imperial Valley
- 3** Elizabeth Niebla Merced  
Evelyn Reyes Visalia  
Juan Carpena Veterans  
Kimbery Dunn San Diego

- 2** Micah Mendoza Imperial Valley  
Giseelle Mares Imperial Valley  
Maria Nuno Imperial Valley  
Mariana Mejia Visalia  
Lenor Smith Imperial Valley  
Shannon Arellano Visalia
- 1** Brenda Leach Visalia  
Erica Cortez Visalia  
Diana Salazar Imperial Valley  
Maryvell Concepcion Merced  
Patricia Mancera Imperial Valley  
Rosalinda Rodriguez Visalia  
Andrea Torres Meza San Diego  
Maria Canchola Imperial Valley  
Jayla Scott Stockton  
Amanda Boone Fresno



## ANNIVERSARIES CLIENTS

- 35** Michelle Y. San Diego
- 30** Edward G. Fresno  
Joann C. San Diego
- 24** Melinda O. San Diego  
Jami S. San Diego
- 18** John K. Merced
- 15** Ricardo F. El Centro
- 10** Karen V. El Centro

- 9** Ricardo A. El Centro  
Jose E. El Centro  
Leonard C. Stockton
- 7** Christopher H. El Centro  
Kevin B. San Diego  
Nolav S. Merced
- 6** Patricia S. El Centro  
Miguel A. El Centro  
Alan M. El Centro  
Alfredo O. El Centro  
Diana L. El Centro  
Timothy G. El Centro  
Raul Q. El Centro  
Diego L. El Centro  
Laura G. El Centro

- 5** Christine N. Visalia  
Aiden P. Stockton  
Sedric D. Visalia  
Steven M. El Centro  
Jason W. El Centro
- 4** Gilberto Z. El Centro  
Sinclair D. Stockton
- 1** Marcos M. El Centro  
Susan R. El Centro  
Adonis M. Merced  
Jose J. Stockton  
Christian C. Stockton  
Soleil T. Stockton  
Vianca G. Stockton  
Erica N. Stockton  
Anthony G. Stockton

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## SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

## BICYCLE SAFETY

Tips for Bicyclists  
and Drivers!

Stick to designated bike paths  
and follow all traffic laws

Travel the same  
direction as traffic

Always wear a  
properly fitted  
helmet and high-  
visibility clothing

Look for cyclists and  
pedestrians before turning  
or opening a car door

If riding at night,  
ensure you have  
lights

Give cyclists space when passing. California law  
requires drivers to give at least three feet of clearance



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## POLICY OF THE MONTH UNDERSTANDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION



### MEDICAL BENEFITS

Covers treatment costs for work-related injuries and illnesses.



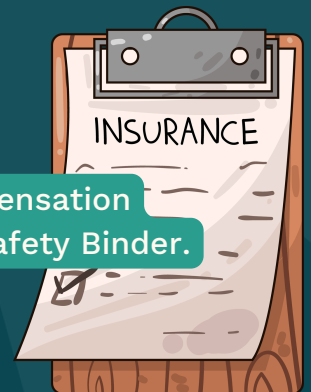
### WAGE REPLACEMENT

Provides income when you're unable to work due to workplace injuries.



### LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Employers must maintain workers' compensation insurance by law. This can be found in our Safety Binder.

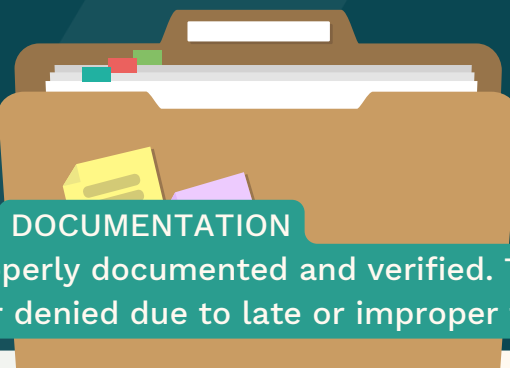


### WORK-RELATED INCIDENT

Injury or illness must occur during work activities.

### TREATMENT THROUGH WORKER'S COMP

Must utilize Nurses Triage Line at 844-842-2540



### DOCUMENTATION

All injuries must be properly documented and verified. Treatment could be delayed or denied due to late or improper forms.



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## TEAM ENGAGEMENT WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

Submit your ideas to [sparktank@adjoin.org](mailto:sparktank@adjoin.org)!

The Spark Tank is a standing committee of Adjoin team members who serve as an intermediary between all levels of the organization and leadership to help identify gaps, explore opportunities, and create solutions that can enhance the services Adjoin provides.



Olivia is Adjoin's Chief Compliance Officer!

Any grievances can be directed to Olivia Blaylock at [olivia.blaylock@adjoin.org](mailto:olivia.blaylock@adjoin.org)

Submit an anonymous comment on the Adjoin Team page!

All team members can access the Team page on the Adjoin Website and submit an anonymous comment at the bottom of the page.

<https://adjoin.org/team-member-information/>



**What is on your mind? Send Adjoin anonymous feedback or your great idea!**

MESSAGE \*

Please enter your comments.

e.g. The reason for my anonymous message is...

SEND ANONYMOUS MESSAGE

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## ENERGY BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: HELP IS AVAILABLE

Managing energy bills can be challenging in cold weather. But did you know that SDG&E® offers several assistance programs to help customers reduce their energy costs and improve energy efficiency?

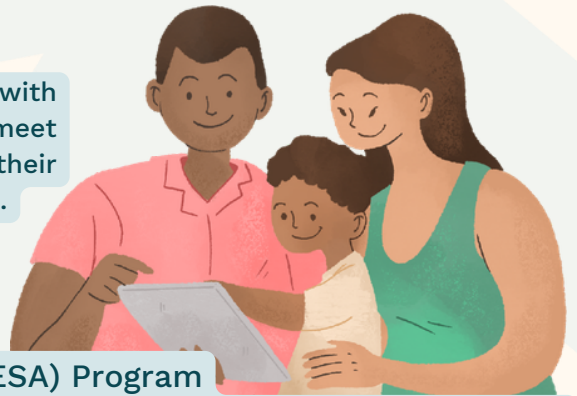


### California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) Program

The CARE program provides a 30% or more discount on monthly energy bills for eligible households. Eligibility is based on household size and income, or participation in certain public-assistance programs. Applying is quick and easy, with no documentation required. Find out if you qualify at [sdge.com/CARE](https://sdge.com/CARE).

### Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) Program

FERA offers an 18% discount on electric bills for households with three or more people who exceed CARE income limits but still meet FERA guidelines. This program helps larger families manage their energy expenses more effectively. Learn more at [sdge.com/FERA](https://sdge.com/FERA).

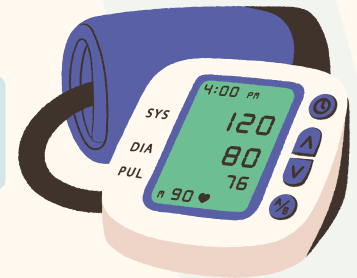


### Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) Program

The ESA program provides no-cost, energy-efficient home improvements to income-qualified customers. Services and products may include attic insulation, energy-efficient refrigerators, weatherstripping and more. The program aims to reduce energy use and help lower bills. Find details at [sdge.com/ESA](https://sdge.com/ESA).

### Medical Baseline Allowance

Customers with certain medical conditions may qualify for additional energy at the lowest rates through the Medical Baseline Allowance program. This helps offset the cost of operating medical equipment or maintaining necessary heating and cooling. Learn more at [sdge.com/Medical](https://sdge.com/Medical).



### Payment Arrangements

If you're having trouble paying your energy bill, you can request an extension to help avoid interruptions to your service. Flexible payment arrangements are also available to help you pay down past due balances. Learn more at [sdge.com/PaymentArrangements](https://sdge.com/PaymentArrangements).

Learn about these programs and more at [sdge.com/assistance](https://sdge.com/assistance).