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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Media Contact**

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**MY DAY COUNTS MOBILIZES REMOTE SERVICES FOR ADULTS
WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

***Essential daily services for vulnerable population continue amid the coronavirus pandemic.***

**ANAHEIM, Calif. – (April 30, 2020)** – [My Day Counts](http://mydaycounts.org/) celebrated its first month of successfully providing services to its participants after being forced to close its facility amid the COVID-19 health crisis. The state and local mandates to close all non-essential services to help slow the spread of the coronavirus meant the sudden closure of the My Day Counts facility where hundreds of adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, an incredibly vulnerable and underserved population in Orange County, go for critical support services.

For people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, any change to a normal daily routine can be tremendously difficult for the individual to understand, particularly during these extraordinary circumstances. The support provided by My Day Counts is a critical part of their participants’ daily lives as the staff facilitates removing barriers to independence while providing life-empowering support and care. Most adults with disabilities rely on set routines so they have a sense of control over their already difficult lives, and the closure of the My Day Counts facility was a devastating disruption for many of them.

“We are an essential part of the daily lives of the people we serve, and we have a responsibility to find a way to continue serving them. Within two weeks of our facility closure, our team mobilized and developed strategies to serve this entire population remotely. This posed a few extraordinary challenges,” explained Mike Galliano, President and CEO of My Day Counts. “First, to give you some perspective, about 90% of our staff had never used video conference software like Zoom prior to this. The second challenge was that 100% of the program participants had never utilized remote technology, and many need hands-on training to learn new skills, which of course, we couldn’t provide.”

With a lot of patience and good humor, the My Day Counts staff completely redesigned programs intended for face-to-face interactions and began offering them to participants remotely. To help educate and transition program participants to a virtual learning environment, the staff provided individualized support via phone calls and emails. Many participants learned how to use the technology relatively quickly, and they are now able and excited to stay connected with their families and friends.

Over the last few weeks with this new way of providing remote services, My Day Counts has successfully:

* Helped “non-essential” working participants file for unemployment benefits;
* Facilitated an employed participant requesting a leave of absence due to a compromised immune system;
* Ensured their college students are continuing to move forward with classes;
* Supported participants who are within a few months of receiving their high school diplomas;
* Continued to host “Job Club” for unemployed participants who want to keep their skills sharp;
* Provided extensive education and training pertaining to staying healthy during the COVID-19 outbreak.
* Conducted discussion groups and social club meetings via video conferencing including: meditation, yoga, Spanish language class, reading club, e-greeting card making class, self-affirmation and emotional wellness group and recycling committee.

PHOTOS

Brian – Distance Learning, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/chdxy1sa9lzujyp5xs1cxet1a2gusr7z>

Jacob – Essential Worker, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/rqnlouj5m14wkec9176uzbd0s0rxtbhs>

Jay – Taking Online Classes, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/u54b9vdxh9nddn3fnemy9dantoa13o30>

Chai – Essential Worker, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/zi4hza0igra1m6judji4lb2nhvg60im3>

Daniel – Practicing Safety Precautions, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/6ueumdgjd78u1xqcpgcvv8s2is5ijpfh>

Elizabeth – Essential Worker, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/zjzuf0a53jugvpjlqksnfi43d8ls7dns>

Isaac – Essential Worker, visit: <https://app.box.com/s/ba5m3g5z490h2931zj8jdkj8a5mrvujc>

To learn more about My Day Counts, visit <http://mydaycounts.org/>.

**About My Day Counts**
Since 1951, My Day Counts has a rich history of developing and launching innovative services never before offered to people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in Orange County. The organization was founded to fill a gap in services to help people with disabilities be included socially, find gainful employment, and live independently. The mission of My Day Counts is to train people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities for success in life and work. By providing for people of all abilities support that includes employment, classroom and community-based instruction, recreational activities, motor skills and sensory awareness development, housing, case management, advocacy support, in-home education for families, independent living support, and transportation, My Day Counts enriches the lives of the individuals they serve and enables them to achieve their full potential. The life-empowering programs and services are provided to more than 450 adults with disabilities, both onsite at a 60,000 square foot facility in Anaheim as well as throughout the greater Orange County community. Its day programs include a newly developed evidence- and outcome-based training philosophy that emphasizes community integration, person-centered employment options, and curriculum-based trainings. For more information, visit [www.mydaycounts.org](http://www.mydaycounts.org).

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