

## CalABLE Quarterly

April 2020

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### From the Director

"Keep an ear to the ground" means to be aware of what's going on around you. This phrase comes from the practice, in the early American West, of literally putting one's ear to the ground to listen for the rumble of horse hooves. This quarter, we put our ear to the ground to learn how the CalABLE community uses resources to achieve a better life experience.

Insights from account holder demographics give data that helps CalABLE develop smarter strategies and improve services. Understanding the attributes of account holders provides a nuanced perspective on your personal and financial interests.

The vast majority of CalABLE account holders are California residents who use their account to invest in FDIC-insured or conservative portfolios (54.8%). Almost half of all CalABLE accounts are managed by parents on behalf of someone in their family—55% are men and 34% are women, with the remaining choosing not to respond (CalABLE Quarterly Performance Report, 1st Quarter, 2020). Beyond basic demographics, we know that account owners are fiercely devoted to the disability community at large.

Statistics show that almost 40% of account holders learned about CalABLE from a local community organization. This confirms the importance of local community groups and word of mouth to the well-being of members of the disability community. Let's celebrate together the champions working to help all of us achieve a better life experience. I intend to do just that in this issue of the CalABLE Quarterly.

Sincerely,

Dante Allen  
Executive Director  
CalABLE

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**Dante Allen**  
Executive Director  
CalABLE

### In this Issue

#### Making it Happen

Profound transformations are possible when we come together to support a cause. As Executive Director of CalABLE and a fellow Californian, I am proud to work with the nation's movers and shakers and local leaders on your behalf.

This Great State is fortunate to have remarkable programs that enable the disability community to obtain financial independence, as well as emotional, mental and physical well-being. While there's a great number of people dedicated to our community, below are three noteworthy organizations deserving praise.



**The Arc of California** began in 1950 as a small band of parents who fought the stigma that their children—and anybody with a disability—could not be a functioning part of a community. They confronted the cultural norm of institutionalizing people with disabilities because they knew that their children were, in fact, able.

Seventy years later, The Arc has kept its commitment to bettering the lives of those with disabilities. They have advocated for services for those denied education, daycare, preschool and the right to work. Thanks to the dedicated **Board of Directors and qualified team of professionals**, I am confident The Arc will continue to be a guardian for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, standing for their legal, civil and human rights for the next seventy years.

CalABLE is proud to support The Arc of California. And, I am personally grateful for The Arc's **mission** to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and to actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community.

On behalf of CalABLE, I salute the good people of The Arc!

Find your local chapter at [thearca.org](http://thearca.org).



**South Central Los Angeles Regional Center (SCLARC)** believes that "special needs deserve special attention."

With that mindset, SCLARC is devoted to ensuring that individuals who are eligible to receive services are assisted in living richer and fuller lives. One of 21 regional centers throughout California, SCLARC serves five County of Los Angeles Districts including Compton, San Antonio, Southeast and Southwest.

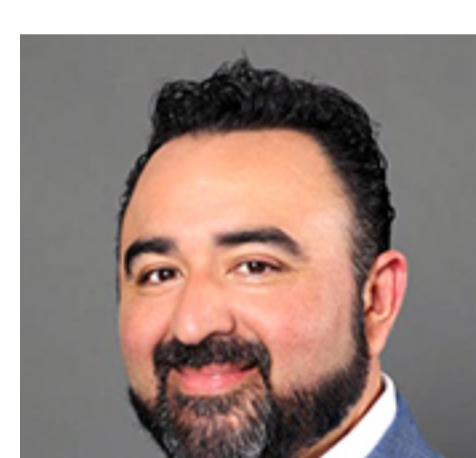
SCLARC attends to their neighbors with autism, epilepsy, cerebral palsy and similar disabilities by providing culturally sensitive services that strengthen families and enable consumers to lead independent and productive lives. Their scope is comprehensive beginning with intake, assessment and diagnosis, and continuing as a lifelong service coordination. Their comprehensive offering of services, ranging from residential placement to independent living training, and an adult day program to supported employment, truly shows their commitment to providing special attention to the disability community.

Jessie Rocha, Director of Consumer and Support Services at SCLARC, recently said, "The relationship between CalABLE and the regional center is an important one because it provides an additional resource for the community we serve. For many, the CalABLE program now allows them to save money while maintaining their benefits. By saving money through CalABLE, the individuals we serve have an opportunity to do meaningful things in their lives such as saving for a dream vacation, for durable medical equipment, for social and recreational activities, the opportunity to visit family, and more."

Watch this [Video](#) about SCLARC.

Watching the video above, I am struck by the joy of the professionals caring for the disability community in South Central Los Angeles. The **management at SCLARC** are a model of competence and kindness, and their tireless work and buoyant attitude have not gone unnoticed.

I applaud your outstanding work and persistent joy!



**Jessie Rocha**,  
Director of Consumer  
and Support Services



affiliated with [GATEPATH](#)

**Abilities United** was born out of the desire of 12 families who wanted to close the gap in social services for people with developmental disabilities. Fifty years later, the San Francisco Bay Area organization offers therapeutic, vocational, educational and recreational experiences to people of all abilities, helping members of the community achieve their most meaningful life.

Abilities United believes in the power of inclusion, with the intention that people of all abilities learn, live, work and play together. Programs provide opportunities for participants to experience social interactions, daily living skills, and through an Enrichment Program, art projects, computer education and swimming lessons.

Check out this [story](#) of one family's experience with Abilities United.

Specifically, I admire Abilities United's relationship with their surrounding community. By offering fundraising events that funnel donations back to services for the special needs community and events such as the **Stanford Special Needs Appreciation Game, Disability Thrive Day, Authors Luncheon, swimming competitions**, and more, they engender compassion with the public and raise awareness about those with special needs.

Thank you, Abilities United, for your efforts to help the special needs community to meaningfully participate in the community at large. Hats off to the noble people of Abilities United!

» [Hide the full article](#)

#### Protect Your Assets

News coverage of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) and corresponding market turbulence offers powerful stimuli to question earlier investment choices, even those associated with your CalABLE account. While it may feel liberating to make dramatic changes to your investment elections in times of uncertainty, the financial experts that guide the plan's investment management remind us that it is often not wise to overreact.

**Consider the following insights during times of market volatility:**

#### Stay the Course

If you elected one of our target risk portfolios (conservative, moderate or aggressive growth), you have wisely managed some market risk by spreading your savings across different asset classes. Even if one investment is performing poorly, another could perform better. Resist the urge to readjust your portfolio based on market conditions alone—and ask a professional for help.

#### The FDIC Option

Risk averse account owners may want to consider a gradual adoption of the FDIC-Insured Portfolio as a way to safeguard a portion of your savings and diversify your account. Assets in the FDIC-Insured Portfolio are 100% invested in an interest-bearing custodial account at TIAA Bank, a division of TIAA, FSB, and an affiliate of the Program Manager.

As the situation continues to unfold, I encourage you to maintain perspective, remaining level-headed when the markets are volatile. As tempting as it might be, checking your account balance frequently may add to your anxiety. So, limit your screen time. Rest assured, we will keep you up-to-date on potential impacts to the CalABLE program as the circumstances evolve.

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#### Roll Up Your Sleeves

Did you know that CalABLE will soon launch an Ambassador program that serves to enrich the lives of the disability community through outreach and experience? CalABLE Ambassadors live with a disability, care for a family member with a disability, or are passionate about spreading the word about CalABLE across California. Does this describe you?

Ambassadors know firsthand how important it is to promote financial health and resources that enrich their own life, as well as the community around them. The CalABLE Ambassadors are our way of sharing real examples of how owning a CalABLE account can improve lives.

As a CalABLE Ambassador, you will be able to download communication tools and attend events that promote CalABLE and empower individuals with disabilities to have greater independence and more financial security. Additionally, your logo and contact information will be featured at [CalABLE.ca.gov](http://CalABLE.ca.gov), you will receive training and support from CalABLE staff, and you will have access to marketing tools.

If you're ready to roll up your sleeves and become an Ambassador, sign up at [calable.ca.gov/ambassador](http://calable.ca.gov/ambassador).

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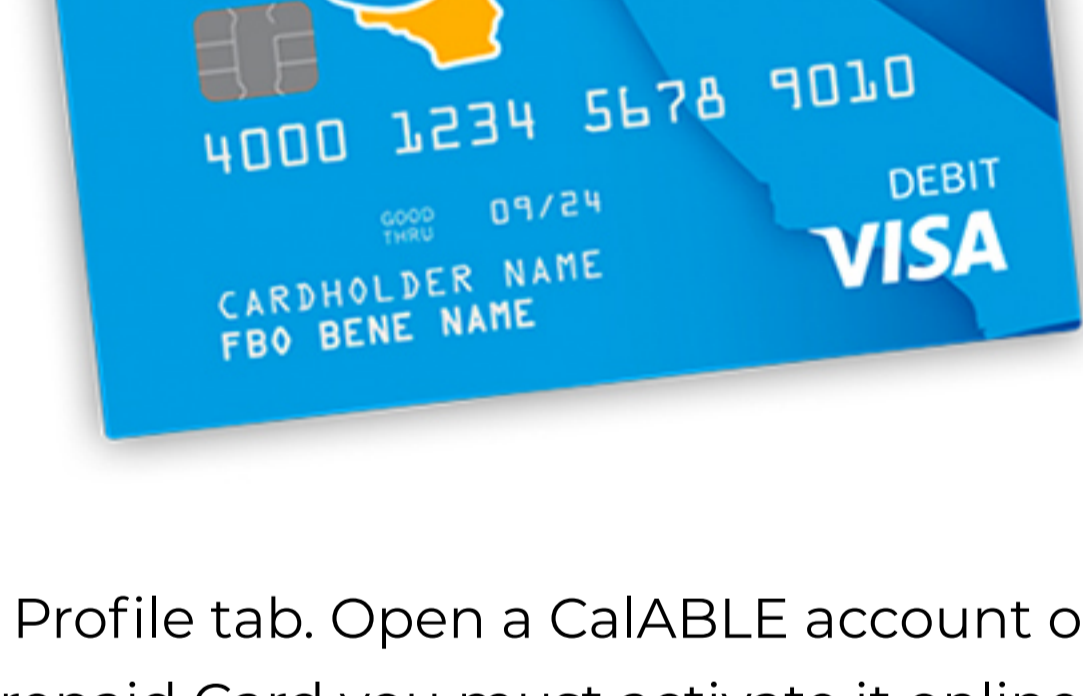
#### "Show Me the Money"

The CalABLE Visa® Prepaid Card is here!

You're going to love having a CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card. Simply load it up and access your funds everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. You're in control. Just one more way CalABLE is working toward helping you achieve a better life experience.

#### Here's how it works.

The CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card, available as of January 30, 2020, allows you to have a maximum balance of \$9,999 with a daily purchase limit of \$2,500. The CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card is issued by MetaBank®, N.A., Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. and can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted.



You can request a CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card at the time of enrollment or anytime afterward by logging into your account and selecting "Prepaid Card Request" from the Profile tab. Open a CalABLE account or request a Prepaid Card at [access.calable.ca.gov](http://access.calable.ca.gov). After you receive your CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card you must activate it online at [CalABLEcard.com](http://CalABLEcard.com).

You can load funds onto your CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card by logging into your account at [CalABLE.ca.gov](http://CalABLE.ca.gov), requesting an ACH withdrawal, and then selecting "CALABLE CAPO" as the target account. Funds will be available on your card within three to five business days from the date of the withdrawal.

**Questions?** Go to [www.CalABLEcard.com](http://www.CalABLEcard.com) or speak with a customer service representative Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. PST at 1-888-853-5316.

Treasurer Fiona Ma recently said, "This is a great step forward that gives CalABLE account holders a convenient new way to help manage their personal finances and become more financially independent."

I couldn't agree more.

*For more information on the CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card, including applicable fees and full terms and conditions, please visit [CalABLEcard.com](http://CalABLEcard.com). The CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card is issued by MetaBank®, N.A., Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from the Visa U.S.A. Inc. The CalABLE account is not a MetaBank nor Visa product or service. MetaBank nor Visa endorses or guarantees the products, information, or recommendations provided on this site. Neither MetaBank nor Visa are liable for any failure or products or services advertised on this site outside of the CalABLE Visa Prepaid Card.*

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#### ABLE Plans Come Together

**The National Association of State Treasurers (NAST)** Annual Legislative Conference took place February 9-11 in Washington, D.C. Why should you care?

**The Honorable Deborah B. Goldberg**, NAST President, reminded conference attendees that "when Treasurers speak, federal decision-makers listen." In a day and age when it seems Washington is more partisan than ever, this year's conference is an excellent reminder that we must rise above party lines. **Hon. Tobias Read**, Oregon State Treasurer, said it best in his recent letter to NAST:

"Every day, we keep the lights on and the finances running smoothly. And it is State Treasurers who frequently make public policy priorities a financial reality. And in that spirit, it is always the right time to push for our shared priorities."

Why was this conference important for the ABLE community?

Because it highlighted the importance of ABLE programs, with several discussions regarding ABLE legislation and regulation, the future of ABLE programs, and how they will evolve in your best interest. This year, NAST is advocating for congress to:

1. Increase the age of disability onset for eligible account holders from 26 to 46. Support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act of 2019 (H.R. 1814 | S. 651).
2. Allow multiple accounts for the benefit of the same beneficiary.
3. Increase or eliminate the annual contribution limit.
4. Allow lump sum contributions (up to the maximum contribution amount) in certain circumstances.
5. Allow greater flexibility in ABLE accounts for beneficiaries with a spouse.



Treasurer Fiona Ma with outgoing ABLE Committee Chair, Hon. Michael Frierichs, Illinois State Treasurer

While Congress has already made several improvements to the ABLE Act, it could benefit from additional enhancements. These changes would have insignificant cost to the federal government but would greatly benefit you. Stay tuned for updates regarding legislation that affects the CalABLE community.

During the conference, the Hon. Deborah Goldberg announced the 2020 appointees to the seven committees that govern NAST in conjunction with the Executive Committee. I am thrilled to let you know that our very own Treasurer Fiona Ma was elected ABLE Committee Chair (see photo above). Given Treasurer Ma's proven record of accomplishment for the people of California, the interests of the ABLE community across the nation are in competent hands.

Lastly, I am honored to have been asked to present at the NAST conference regarding the history, policy and legal realities of ABLE programs, and resources available to the public when disability and self-determination are involved. Briefing colleagues on ABLE accounts reminded me of the privilege it is to work toward a better life experience for the benefit of people with disabilities.



Dante Allen, Executive Director of CalABLE presenting at 2020 NAST Conference.

#### CalABLE is GivABLE

Strengthen the disability community and help individuals achieve a better life experience by spreading the word about CalABLE. Watch this [video](#) and share it with someone who isn't familiar with CalABLE.

#### The AchievABLE™ Corner

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn." Benjamin Franklin

CalABLE teamed up with **National Disability Institute (NDI)** to provide online resources in the **AchievABLE™ Corner**. One aspect of that initiative is intended to involve you in learning about strategies that build financial wellness for persons with disabilities by providing online education.

Check out the **roster** of FREE courses and get involved by taking a class. The class list continues to change, so check back periodically for newly added courses.

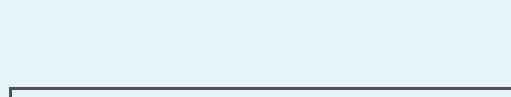
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FAQS

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