



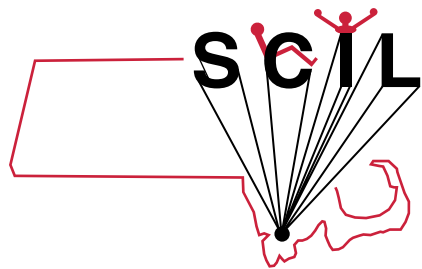
Filomena visits with Azorean villagers. The full range of Filomena's independence was documented for her return to her birthplace in the Azores as a true ambassador of independent living.



Best of all, Filomena shared hope for the future by visiting schools. This young student has inspired Filomena's next advocacy mission. She came home to New Bedford, determined to organize the acquisition and delivery of a wheelchair for this boy so that he can help lead the next generation to independent living.

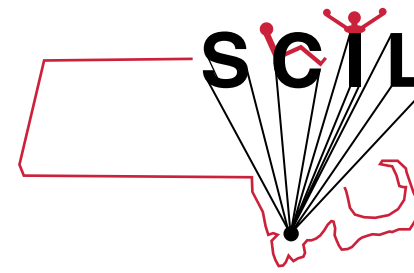
Continued from front page.

In May Filomena and her husband, James, returned to the Azores for a week as guests of the governmental and social collaborators for the European celebration, where Filomena made three major presentations in communities in San Miguel, and they made site visits to numerous schools, government and social agencies, cultural sites, museums, commercial sites and industrial locations.



Southeast Center for Independent Living, Inc.

**Merill Building, 1st floor
66 Troy St.
Fall River, MA, 02720**



Southeast Center for Independent Living, Inc.

Open Monday through Friday 9AM to 5PM

**Merill Building, 1st floor
66 Troy St.
Fall River, MA, 02720**

**Phone: 508 - 679 - 9210
Fax: 508 - 677 - 2377
Email: scil@secil.org
Web: www.secil.org**

SCIL Gazette Newsletter, Summer 2011

Disability Advocate and SCIL Staff Member, Filomena Tripp, Makes Waves At Home and Overseas!



Meet Filomena Tripp, SCIL's first International Ambassador of Independent Living.

Independent Living Transition Specialist, Filomena Tripp, became SCIL's first international advocate in May by returning to the land of her birth to advocate and testify for independent living. She was born without upper and lower limbs in 1955 in Lagoa, the Island of San Miguel, Azores. Her family immigrated to New Bedford, Lagoa's sister city where Filomena has become one of this region's most respected and effective advocates for persons with disabilities.

San Miguel is an island paradise of extraordinary beauty, and the island residents are strong, gracious and proud. These are the strengths Filomena has brought to her entire life's work. Approximately a year ago, people preparing for the European Year of Volunteering and Active Citizenship, learned of Filomena and her remarkable achievements.

Robert Medeiros, president of the Mosaic Cultural and Solidarity Association of Lagoa, Azores, USA and Canada, met with Filomena, and they collaborated with a film crew to record her at home in New Bedford, at work at SCIL, and in the community. Filomena utilized this material as she became the guest of honor for the Azorean celebration of the European Year, focusing on the theme of "Disability and Social Integration."

Turn to the back page for more...



Filomena Tripp was brought to the attention of Robert Medeiros, president of the "Mosaic Cultural and Solidarity Association of Lagoa, Azores, USA and Canada." He is shown here with Filomena at an event in New Bedford.



Filomena and her husband, James, visit the picturesque Azores. The terrain, while beautiful, present rugged challenges for mobility.



But getting around the islands is made easier with technology and the help of some friends.



Enjoying our ADA Anniversary Picnic Celebration at Buttonwood Park.

August 2010



SCIL at the Working Waterfront Festival with our display of Sailor Valentines.

September 2010



SCIL's first showing of our Sailor Valentines at the Narrows Center for the Arts Festival.

September 2010

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind Award Ceremony



Erica Costa of Somerset has been working with SCIL as a student intern since 2008. She has made such valuable contributions to our work and operations that we have invited her to stay connected with SCIL as a

consultant for future projects. SCIL participated in the award ceremony put on by the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, MCB, to promote the hiring and community awareness of visually impaired college students. SCIL received an award for its internship program it had with Erica, who is a local Bridgewater State University student and is blind due to having Alstrom's Syndrome. MCB Commissioner Janet LaBreck spoke and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to every intern and host employer.

Thanks to the following for their generous donations of food baskets for our consumers!

Pastor David A. Arruda and the Faith Fellowship United Methodist Church, Mansfield

Union United Methodist Church, Fall River

Somerset United Methodist Church

Father Marc Bergeron, St. Anne's Church

Many thanks to the following people/organizations that contributed to our Holiday Party in December 2010:

Linda and Jesse Barbosa

Blueport Wireless

Deborah Kohl

Eulalia and George Pitta

Lisa M. Pitta

Lisa Sholes
(in memory of Mary Branco)

Raymon Pielech Zexter PC
Rachael Collins



Save the Date! ADA Annual Celebration Friday, July 22

The Statewide Independent Living Council will again be holding the ADA Annual Celebration for Independent Living Centers at Dunn State Park in Gardner, MA on Friday, July 22.

The bus will leave SCIL at 8:00 A.M. and leave the park at 2:30 P.M. Lunch will be provided. There is plenty to do there like swimming, kayaking, seeing old friends, music. It should be lots of fun! Please call 508 679-9210 for reasonable accommodations by July 15th and to reserve your seat on the bus. We ask, however, that you only sign up if you intend on actually attending the event.

The Year in Pictures



Disability Awareness Day at Government Center.

October 2010



Staff and consumers enjoying our Christmas party at SCIL.

December 2010

New Appointments

Lisa Pitta, SCIL's Executive Director, has been appointed by the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee to the Dental Assisting Program Advisory Committee. This committee is looking forward to Lisa's knowledge in order to upgrade the Dental Assisting Program in keeping up with new trainings and technology so its students can successfully transition to work in the dental field.

Karen Sullivan, our Community and Transition Coordinator, has been appointed to serve on the New Bedford Advisory Board of the Department of Transitional Assistance by Commissioner Julia E. Kehoe. Karen was also voted to the Board of Directors for the Attleboro Area Community Council for a two year term.

New Staff

SCIL is pleased to announce the addition of three new staff members, **Wendy Gonzales**, **Stanley Oliver** and **Joseph Martins**. All come to SCIL with a wealth of experience.

Wendy holds an associate's degree in qualified social work from Brunel University, London; a bachelor's of general studies from the University of Connecticut; and her Master of Arts in special education, severe and multiple disabilities, from the University of Arizona where she was awarded a scholarship for academic excellence. She has served as quality standards advisor, care manager/social worker, manager of group homes and residential establishments, and mentor to social work students in Slough, England, as an administrative assistant to the registrar at University of Connecticut, and special needs director and teacher at the Tucson Jewish Community Center. She moved to Massachusetts in 2009 and spent nearly a year with the Southern MA Educational Collaborative teaching elementary children on the autism spectrum, grades 1-4. She holds her Massachusetts educator's license from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for severe disabilities, all levels. Wendy began her service at SCIL as a volunteer for our TAP program and she has recently been hired for SCIL's new position of Options Counselor.

Stan is a retired Community College Counselor at Massasoit Community College, Brockton / Taunton campus. He also served as a Massachusetts Rehabilitation counselor in the Brockton and New Bedford area offices. He holds a Masters Degree in Education from Suffolk University, and a certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Rehabilitation and Administration from Assumption College. He is filling in for our Independent Living Specialist who is out on medical leave.

Joe has been a long time vocational educator, an administrator, and is currently serving on the Fall River School Committee. He was employed for 33 years at Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School as an electronics instructor in 1968, advanced to principal in 1986, and promoted to superintendent in 1992. He retired from Diman in July 2001. Joe's love for education and helping students did not stop upon leaving Diman. He accepted the director's position at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center in Newport, Rhode Island. Wanting to slow down a bit, he left the Newport Tech Center in 2006, and accepted a part time position at an alternative high school in Providence, Rhode Island as a school based coordinator. In June 2007, he ran for the Fall River School committee, and is now serving his second, two year term. Joe serves as Employment and Education Coordinator, a new position here at SCIL.

Welcome aboard Wendy, Stan and Joe! We look forward to working with you!



**Call SCIL at
508 679 9210**

and ask to be placed on our mailing list to receive the latest news on upcoming computer and art classes, and other program events.