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AbilityFirst Event Spotlights 1564 Programs and Services

Stories of determination and accomplishment were the highlight of the recent AbilityFirst reception at the City Club in Los Angeles. AbilityFirst provides programs and services to help children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities realize their full potential. Business leaders in attendance learned more about the programs and services the organization makes available to the community. Plans for the future, including the new Joan and Harry A. Mier Center in Inglewood, were also shared with attendees.

Frank Quevedo, vice president, Southern California Edison, and an Honorary Committee member of the AbilityFirst Capital Campaign for the Joan and Harry A. Mier Center, hosted the event. His spirited welcome and remarks about AbilityFirst's strong mission, and Southern California Edison's commitment to individuals with disabilities, was illustrated that evening as three AbilityFirst ambassadors shared their appreciation through personal stories of growth and success.

Denise Guillen, a parent from the AbilityFirst East Los Angeles Center, passionately talked about her daughter, Caroline, who after only one year at the center, now spends most of her time out of her wheelchair participating in more activities.

Attendees also met Ronisha Penn. Until recently Ronisha was a



AbilityFirst supporters (left-right) Stasia Washington and Lorna Johnson with AbilityFirst Board Chair Angela Reddock at the organization's recent City Club event.

program participant in the adult program at the AbilityFirst Harry A. Mier Center. Pursuing a career in child development, Ronisha attends Southwest College and works part-time as a receptionist at the Harry A. Mier Center through AbilityFirst's Employment Services. Dolores Barrios spoke about her four years as an administrative assistant at AbilityFirst headquarters in Pasadena through employment services. The job has motivated her to attend East Los Angeles College to further develop

her professional skills.

Founded in 1926 as the Crippled Children's Society of Southern California, AbilityFirst continues to build on its rich history. With the support and encouragement of businesses such as Southern California Edison, it is hoped that awareness of AbilityFirst will continue to increase. For additional information on how to get involved, please contact Mary Beth Perrine, AbilityFirst vice president of development, at (626) 639-1743 or visit abilityfirst.org.