

# Berkeley Center for Independent Living Announces Appointment of New Executive Director, Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda

*The Berkeley Center for Independent Living (CIL) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda as its new Executive Director.*

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*Joshua Halstead, Chair of the Board of CIL*

for Independent Living ([CIL](#)), a pioneering force in the disability rights movement since 1972, is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda as its new Executive Director. With a distinguished career as a global disability rights advocate, scholar, and innovator, [Dr. Pineda](#) brings his wealth of experience, passion, and dedication to propel the CIL vision forward, ushering in a new era of advocacy, advancement, and progress.

Under Dr. Pineda's leadership, CIL aims to significantly enhance the quality of life and accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons through direct services, policy advocacy, and research. Recognized as a leading global advocate for disability rights, Dr. Pineda has been instrumental in shaping major initiatives, including his roles in presidential appointments by former President Barack Obama and significant contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Joshua Halstead, Chair of the Board of CIL, expressed his excitement about the appointment, stating, "Dr. Pineda embodies the values and principles of our movement and is the right leader to guide CIL into this transformative chapter. His commitment to inclusion and his innovative approach to disability rights will undoubtedly inspire and invigorate our community."

Influential disability rights activist Joan Leon also endorsed Dr. Pineda's appointment, saying, "Victor has always been a trailblazer in our community. His leadership at CIL will not only drive the organization forward but also amplify the voice of people with disabilities at a crucial time."

Dr. Pineda is uniquely positioned to steer CIL toward a future where every individual is

empowered, and every voice is heard. Dr. Pineda's vision integrates the historical context of the Independent Living and Disability Rights Movements with a commitment to inclusion and accessibility, focusing on renewing trust and building strategic partnerships that bridge gaps and foster deeper community connections. At the core of his leadership is a commitment to community-centered initiatives, collaboration, and innovation.

Dr. Pineda, an adjunct professor and alum of the University of California, Berkeley, has a deep and personal connection to the Independent Living Movement, which originated on the very same campus. This relationship is further enriched by his long-standing friendship with the late Judith Heumann, CIL's founder and a pioneer of the Disability Rights Movement.

Join Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda and the CIL for a series of town-halls to craft a blueprint for a future where disability rights are human rights, and independence is accessible to all. As the first independent living center in the country, CIL continues to strengthen its legacy as a major influencer in policy, advocacy, and research on disability rights, both nationally and internationally.

Dr. Pineda and CIL will spearhead a series of dialogues and workshops aimed at reimagining inclusion, accessibility, and empowerment across sectors, including emerging technologies, mobility, housing, employment, and vocational rehabilitation. These initiatives are designed to foster community development, create synergies with local governments and private companies, and lead the change needed to build a future that allows each person to thrive equally.

For more information about Dr. Victor Santiago Pineda's appointment and CIL's future initiatives, please contact:

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