



Access New England

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EEOC Alleges Discrimination at Maine Kohl's Store

Kohl's Department Stores, a nationwide, Wisconsin-based retailer, violated federal law when it refused to accommodate a diabetic employee's request for a regular schedule and forced her to quit her job at a Westbrook, Maine, Kohl's store, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit it filed today. The EEOC's lawsuit, Civil Action No.11-00320, filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Maine, alleges that Kohl's failed to accommodate Pamela Manning, who began to suffer significant complications to her diabetes after Kohl's switched her from her long-held set schedule to an irregular schedule. The EEOC's suit states that her oral requests for a return to a set schedule were repeatedly ignored. After Manning brought in a note from her doctor that explained the need for her to work a predictable day shift to help prevent serious complications from her diabetes, Kohl's again refused to change her schedule.

Click [here](#) to read the full press release.

[Disability Rights Web Course](#)

[ADA Employment Web Course](#)

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Products & Technologies that Change People's Lives

Universal Design &
Assistive Technology
in Massachusetts

September 23, 2011 Hynes Convention Center, Boston, MA



IHCD to Convene a Universal Design and Assistive Technology Expo, Conference and Design Competition

*Friday, September 23, 2011 - Hynes Convention Center,
Boston*

Under the Leadership of Secretary JudyAnn Bigby, MD of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Secretary Gregory Bialecki of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and Secretary Paul Reville of the Department of Education, the Commonwealth is hosting a set of linked events on Friday, September 23rd at the Hynes Convention Center. The Institute for Human Centered Design is the convenor for all events that include a day-long Conference, an Expo and a Design Awards program. Co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and UMMS Work Without Limits, the agenda for all events will have four thematic areas: Home, Work, Life-Long Learning, and Fitness/Recreation/Sport.

Click [here](#) to register and for more information. Admission to see the Expo is free of charge.

If you have questions about the conference or suggestions about content, please email info@ChangePeoplesLives.org or call 617.695 1225 v/tty ext. 235.



Finding the Right IT Tools for Persons with Disabilities

Story from *MIT News*

As another academic year comes into view, Assistive Technology Information Center (ATIC) staff are out in front, testing IT tools for those who have various disabilities or temporary injuries, such as visual or hearing impairments, dyslexia, or repetitive strain injuries. Mary Ziegler, IT Manager of Accessibility and Usability, notes that ATIC

performs three key functions:

- Matching assistive technology to the needs of individuals through consultations and demos. Technologies range from speech recognition and screen reading software to alternative keyboards and pointing devices.
- Helping to make academic courses accessible. With MIT's emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math, making formulas, graphs, diagrams and other visual course materials accessible is one of ATIC's greatest challenges.
- Providing a technology-enabled workspace for students with disabilities. Room 7-143 is a 24-hour/7-day-a-week workspace for students who've been granted access as an accommodation for a disability-related need.

Click [here](#) to read more.



Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST Continues Offering Guidance on the Fair Housing Act



Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST is a HUD-funded program that promotes compliance with the Fair Housing Act's accessible design and construction requirements. The program consists of a

Design and Construction Resource Center (DCRC), a comprehensive training curriculum, and a web site.

For technical assistance, training, and resources on the Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines, call (888) 341-7781 (V/TTY), or visit the www.fairhousingfirst.org (website). DCRC staff are available to answer questions 9AM-5PM EST Monday through Friday.



Amber Fagan Responds to a Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST Caller

Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST-DCRC services are provided by the Institute for Human Centered Design, a nonprofit organization in Boston that promotes accessibility and universal design. These services, which had been temporarily suspended during HUD's

contract renewal, are again available to the public.

Click [here](#) to see a list of Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST Frequently Asked Questions.



Institute for Human Centered Design



Tentative Settlement Reached in Maine Disabled Rights Case

Story from *Maine Public Broadcasting*

Attorneys for as many as 75 disabled people living in Maine nursing homes say they have reached a proposed settlement with the state in a lawsuit over their clients' rights to access more services under federal law. The lawsuit alleged that in the operation of its Medicaid program, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Nursing Home Reform Act. The class action lawsuit was brought on behalf of people diagnosed with cerebral palsy, epilepsy and other related conditions who were forced to live in nursing homes throughout the state of Maine, even though they have no cognitive impairment and some of them are in their 20s.

Click [here](#) to read more.



United States
Department of Transportation

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood Takes Action to Make Websites and Kiosks Accessible to Air Travelers with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), in its ongoing effort to ensure equal access to air transportation for all travelers, today proposed a regulation that would require airlines to make their websites accessible to individuals with disabilities and ensure that their ticket agents do the same. DOT also proposed that airlines make automated airport

kiosks at U.S. airports accessible to passengers with disabilities. U.S. airports that jointly own, lease or control such kiosks with airlines would also have responsibility for ensuring the accessibility of automated airport kiosks.

Under the proposed rule, airlines would be required to make their websites accessible to persons with disabilities over a two-year period. Websites would be required to meet the standards for accessibility contained in the widely accepted Website Content Accessibility Guidelines. The requirement would apply to U.S. and foreign carriers with websites marketing air transportation to U.S. consumers for travel within, to or from the United States.

Click [here](#) to read the full announcement.



Steven Bassett

Steven Bassett Joins IHCD

Steven Bassett, Accessible Information and Communication Technology Specialist, is responsible for smooth operation of all internal Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and will be responsible for accessible ICT

outreach, capacity building and training and creating a new ICT weekly email list. Steven brings an unusual background in both technology and design. He recently completed a bachelor's degree in Environmental Design at the University of Colorado at Boulder. His familiarity with the rapidly changing world of social media will also allow him to advance the work of the Institute by exchanging information and reaching new audiences. When Steven is not at work you may find him running, practicing yoga or reading on his iPad.



Lynnae Ruttledge

Lynnae Ruttledge Visits IHCD

Lynnae Ruttledge, commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), visited IHCD. Prior to being appointed as commissioner

of RSA by President Obama, Ms. Ruttledge served as director of the Northwest ADA Center and was acting director of the National Institute on Disability Research and Rehabilitation (NIDRR).

Commissioner Ruttledge was given a tour of IHCD's Boston headquarters and met with key IHCD staff including New England ADA Center Project Director Oce Harrison.