

New England Center

A publication of the New England ADA Center

August 2013

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July 2013 Unemployment Rate for People with Disabilities (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

People without disabilities:
7.4%

People with disabilities:
14.7%

Stay Connected:



(L-R) Veronica Blackwell, Jack Hanke, Will Lautzenheiser, Joe Genera, and Oce Harrison.

New England ADA Center and IHCD's Laugh and Learn ADA Celebration Featured on WBUR, Boston's NPR Station

On Wednesday, July 24th the New England ADA Center and the Institute for Human Centered Design hosted a panel of four comedians with different disabilities for a discussion on disability and being funny in celebration of the 23rd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"At the New England ADA Center (a project of IHCD) we decided to find a new way to get people thinking and talking and laughing, because we're really all in this together. The ADA gives people with disabilities equal access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness - and that happiness should include a lot of laughter!" (Oce Harrison, New England ADA Center Project Director). [Read more about the Laugh and Learn.](#)



Pictured L-R: Tim Reynolds, Tom Sullivan and Shannon Reynolds.

Tom Sullivan Performs at Burlington, Vermont's ADA Celebration

The [Vermont Center for Independent Living](#) celebrated the 23rd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act with a performance by Tom Sullivan – blind entertainer, author and inspirational speaker. The event was held at the Main Street Landing Black Box Theatre in Burlington on July 26. Prior to Sullivan's

performance, some local and state leaders shared their thoughts about the ADA, and an art show featuring the work of a disability rights advocate was enjoyed.

Boston Celebrates the ADA at



Government Center

Oswald (Oz) Mondejar of Spaulding Rehabilitation Network addresses the crowd at Boston's ADA celebration.

The Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities, The Massachusetts Office on Disability, the New England ADA Center, the Institute for Human Centered Design, members of the disability community, advocates and representatives of many other organizations all gathered at Boston's Government Center to celebrate the ADA. Following a Civil Involvement Breakfast at City Hall, the New England

ADA Center and IHCD staffed an exhibitor table, and attendees listened to speeches and music while enjoying pizza, hot dogs and grilled sausages.



New Hampshire Celebrates the ADA as Governor Hassan presents the Governor's Accessibility Awards

Governor Hassan (right) presents Robin Carlson with the award in the Individual category.

The Executive Council Chamber of the New Hampshire State House was the Venue as Governor Hassan joined the celebration of the signing of the ADA by presenting the 2013 Governor's Accessibility Awards. This years awardees included the following individuals and organizations:

Individual Award: Robin Carlson won in the individual category because of her 20 plus years of community advocacy volunteerism, as a leader, educator/trainer for direct care provider.

Business Award: Currier Museum of Art went above and beyond the ADA Standards by incorporating accessible cultural art center building that provides fully integrated museum programs and services that accommodate a variety of individuals with disabilities.

Community Project Award: Saint Andrew's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church, a community resource in their rural town, completely updated their facility to meet ADA standards so a diverse group of community members could access the facility barrier-free.

ADA Demonstration Model Award: The University of New Hampshire won as an ADA demonstration model because of Institutional and Administrative philosophy to support ADA standards and access for all individuals.

Public Business Award: Strafford County Department of Corrections has gone above and beyond ADA requirements in providing physical accessibility for volunteers and accessible programs and services for inmates.



Accessible Recreation, Food and Music at Dunn Park ADA Celebration

Colleen Flanagan and members of the Easter Seals Statewide Youth Leadership Network at Dunn Park.

Once again Dunn Park in Gardner, Massachusetts celebrated the signing of the ADA with a day of music, food and adaptive recreational activities. The Department of Recreation and Conservation (DRC) joined other

facilitators offering access to activities such as adaptive kayaking and assisted trail hikes.



New England ADA Center Receives the John F. Kennedy Center for the

Performing Arts Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) Award for Excellence in Accessibility Leadership - IHCD Board member Renee Wells Also Honored

The New England ADA Center received The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) Award for Excellence in Accessibility Leadership. The award acknowledges organizations and individuals who have made a significant impact on accessibility in the cultural arts for people with disabilities. The award was presented at the LEAD annual conference in Washington, D.C. on August 23, 2013, and includes \$1,000 which the Center will use to sponsor ADA workshops of cultural facilities. IHCD Board member Renee Wells, an accessibility consultant for the Vermont Arts Council and 25 year national leader on cultural accessibility, was also honored with a 2013 Award for Excellence in Accessibility Leadership from the Kennedy Center.



New England ADA Center and IHCD Complete a Summer of Field-Based Accessibility Training

IHCD's Josh Safdie addresses participants at the New Britain, Connecticut Field-Based Training Day sponsored by the New England ADA Center.

This summer the New England ADA Center awarded 'ADA Field Based Training Day' grants to evaluate facilities in four towns in New England: City Hall in Worcester, MA, The Bradford Library in Vermont, The Nashua Public Library in NH, and a

public recreation facility in New Britain, CT. The sites were

selected on a competitive basis, and municipalities received an award of \$1,000. Participants learned to use the [ADA Checklist](#) and apply what they learned to other facilities. [Learn how to apply for the 2014 ADA Field-Based Training Day for Cities and Towns in New England.](#)



Somerville, Massachusetts' Accessibility Self-evaluation Available Online - More Public Meetings Planned

A report detailing an exhaustive six-month evaluation of accessibility in Somerville, Massachusetts is now [available online](#). The completed Self-Evaluation, which outlines a physical inventory of the City's infrastructure and existing policies, practices and procedures regarding accessibility and identifies existing barriers to equal access, was prepared by the Institute for Human Centered Design.

Two public meetings will be held in August and in September, cosponsored by the City's Commission for Persons with Disabilities, to gather community feedback. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 28 at 6 p.m. at City Hall. A second meeting will be scheduled for September. Residents can also send questions and comments on the report via e-mail or phone. [Read more.](#)



The national Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team (WWAST) and Boston Marathon Bombing First Responders Compete at Fenway Park

The national Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team (WWAST) and the Boston Marathon Bombing First Responders Softball Team at Fenway Park in Boston.

On the evening of August 19, 2013, the New England ADA Center was on hand to watch

the national Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team (WWAST) challenge a team comprised of Boston Marathon bombing first responders to a game of softball at historic Fenway Park in Boston. In a highly competitive and well played contest, the Wounded Warriors defeated the First Responders by the score of 28 to 11.

The WWAST squad features players from across the country who have a variety of disability issues, but who are able to compete and win against teams that typically do not have members with disabilities. On this night, Greg Reynolds from Dighton, Massachusetts, who catches, throws and bats with one arm, made a spectacular diving catch in the outfield to record the final out. [Meet members of the WWAST](#) and [see more photos from the](#)

New England ADA Center Attends Massachusetts Stand Down for Homeless Veterans



Mobile veterans center services truck at the 2013 Massachusetts Stand Down.

On August 23rd and 24th more than a thousand U.S. military veterans gathered in Dorchester, Massachusetts for the 2013 Stand Down, where a wide range of employment, housing, health care and related services were available. Stacy Hart and David West from the New England ADA Center listened to the concerns of veterans, including many who had disabilities, and provided information about the New England ADA Center, the ADA National Network, Fair Housing Accessibility First and the Institute for Human Centered Design. Information

about how to contact the New England ADA Center, the rights of veterans with disabilities, and about service animals was of particular interest to the numerous veterans who stopped by to learn more about the ADA.

[Read the ADA National Network fact sheet: You Have a Lot to Offer: Ten Points for Veterans to Consider When Returning to Work with a Disability.](#)



Caregivers for Blind and Deaf New Hampshire Resident Sued Over Lack of Access to Interpreters

In 1990, after a visit at Concord Hospital, a doctor noted that Teddy Loscano, 46, could communicate with sign language and follow instructions easily. An interpreter was present for that visit. That was the last and only time that someone qualified to help Teddy Loscano communicate attended one of his appointments at the hospital or Concord Psychiatric Associates. Likewise, sign language interpreters have not been present at meetings where Teddy's Individualized Service Plan, known as an ISP, was discussed. The result, a lawsuit alleges, is that Mr. Loscano's ability to communicate has severely diminished. [Read the full story.](#)

Worcester, Massachusetts to Update its Disability Action Plan

In an effort to improve access to public facilities, the city of Worcester, Massachusetts will update its 9-year-old Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan. Jayna L. Turчек, human rights



Worcester,
Massachusetts
City Hall

and disabilities director, said the city administration is evaluating three bids that were submitted for the hiring of a consultant to help the city evaluate and update its ADA needs.

She said the consultant is to review the city's current transition plan, evaluate the needs and issues at municipal facilities and incorporate the findings into an updated transition plan. [Read more.](#)



Stories from Other States



The Radical Challenge of Building a Dorm for the Deaf

Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. is home to nearly 2,000 students who are deaf or hearing impaired, and its recently built dorm was designed with them specifically in mind. The Living and Learning Residence Hall 6 was built with a series of subtle and thoughtful design choices that use the principles of DeafSpace. Designed by New York City-based LTL Architects, the 60,000-square-foot building is the first to fully employ architectural principles that cater to the communication and spatial needs of the hearing impaired. [Read the full story.](#)



New Rules and Webinars Announced to Ensure Equal Employment

Vice President Biden announced two new rules that represent an historic advance for veterans and individuals with disabilities. By strengthening longstanding regulations under the [Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act \(VEVRAA\)](#) and [Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act](#), the new rules will ensure that qualified workers have more meaningful opportunities to find, secure and keep good jobs. For the first time, these rules provide metrics -- management tools that inform decision-making and provide real accountability -- to

measure federal contractors' progress toward achieving equal opportunity for people with disabilities and protected veterans. Read more.

OFCCP Webinars on the VEVRAA Final Rule - Please Choose One

August 29, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern) - <http://www.dol.gov/find/vevraa-1>

September 11, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern) - <http://www.dol.gov/find/vevraa-2>

OFCCP Webinars on the Section 503 Final Rule - Please Choose One

August 30, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern) - <http://www.dol.gov/find/section503-1>

September 18, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern) - <http://www.dol.gov/find/section503-2>

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A project of the
Institute for Human Centered Design



The New England ADA Center is a member of the [ADA National Network](#) funded by US Department of Education through National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research Grant # H133A110028.

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