New England ADA Center Field-Based Training Day Call for Proposals - Closing Date for Applications is December 31, 2013

We invite cities and towns to submit proposals to become the recipient of a Field-Based Training Day. The ADA Field-Based Training Day is a hands-on experience conducting an accessibility review and identifying solutions that would improve accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a municipality is selected, it will also receive $1,000 towards improving accessibility.

**Eligible Applicants:** Cities and towns in New England.

**Closing Date for Application:** December 31, 2013.

**Expected Number of Awards:** One per New England state.

To learn more and fill out an application: Visit the Field-Based Training Day website.

For questions or concerns please contact: Oce Harrison at oharrison@IHCDesign.org or 1-800-949-4232 or 617-695-1225 x 227.
Connecticut Grocery Store Chain Settles Lawsuit for Asking Applicants Illegal Disability-Related Questions

Food Farmacy, Ltd. and J&T Enterprises, LLC, doing business as Foodworks, has settled a disability discrimination lawsuit for violating the Americans with Disabilities Act. Foodworks of Connecticut asked applicants disability-related questions before offering them jobs. Foodworks also allegedly fired an employee after he had a seizure at work.

Read the full story.

Attend the Plans and Dreams After High School Event on December 18 in Concord, New Hampshire

Plans and Dreams after High School is a FREE event for families, advocates and students interested in the process of transition from school to adulthood and work. Featured speaker Nick Toumpas, Commissioner of New Hampshire DHHS, will answer questions about New Hampshire Medicaid managed care, Medicaid expansion and health care exchanges. Other topics include guardianship and special needs trusts, IEP transition planning and the Patient Information Center.

Register for Plans and Dreams after High School.

Photo: Nick Toumpas, Commissioner of NH DHHS.

Vermont Baseball Team Settles Accessibility Complaint
The U.S. Attorney's office says the Vermont Lake Monsters minor league baseball team has completed modifications to Centennial Field in Burlington, Vermont to make it easier for people with disabilities to attend the team's games.

Federal investigators determined there were three areas of the facility that didn't comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including in the parking lot, access route, and seating arrangement. Prosecutors say the team has now completed improvements in all three areas.

WANTED! Youth with Disabilities for Advisory Board

We want to help young people know about their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as they apply to college or to their first job!

WHO: Youth with disabilities (16-25)
WHY: Advise us on how we communicate with youth with disabilities
WHERE: Institute for Human Centered Design 200 Portland St. Boston MA
WHEN: March 22, 2014 @ 12:30PM - 3:30PM
REGISTER: https://www.regonline.com/NEYAB

Contact Stacy Hart at 800-949-4232 or SHart@ihcdesign.org if you are interested in learning more about this opportunity. Lunch will be provided.

Three ADA Centers Receive Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability Awards

The NIDRR-funded Great Lakes, Mid-Atlantic, and New England ADA Centers were presented with the Award for Excellence in Accessibility
Leadership from the Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD). The Award for Excellence recognized each Center's long-standing commitment to accessibility in the cultural arts for people with disabilities and older adults. The purpose of these awards is to increase awareness and focus on the importance of accessibility in artistic and cultural institutions.

Read more about the Kennedy Center LEAD awards.

**New England ADA Center Hosts Architectural Plan Reading Workshop**

On Wednesday, December 11, the New England ADA Center hosted an introductory architectural plan reading workshop at its Boston headquarters. Participants learned how to identify and interpret sets of drawings and determine potential accessibility issues according to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Photo: Architectural Designer Meghan Dufresne leads the architectural plan reading workshop.

**City of Boston Job Posting - Program and Policy Specialist, Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities**

The Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities seeks a Program and Policy Specialist. The selected individual will play a key role within the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities by administering the Commission's main programs and gathering, researching and analyzing information for the Commissioner to use in strategic planning and program development.
UMass Boston and IBM Working on Tech Center for the Disabled

The University of Massachusetts Boston and computer giant IBM are teaming up to devise new ways for people with disabilities and the elderly to benefit from technological advancements.

Through a partnership the two will open the nonprofit Collaborative Innovation Center. Their objective is to build on the research that both the University of Massachusetts and IBM have been doing for decades to increase accessibility in the workplace and on campus for people who have vision, hearing, and other impairments.

Read the full story.

National News

Judy Heumann - The Disabilities Treaty: Right Treaty, Right Time, Right for America

The United States set the gold standard for disability rights when we passed the ADA in 1990, and we have the opportunity to continue to lead. By ratifying the Disabilities Treaty, the United States can carry forward its strong leadership on disability issues,
breaking down barriers, and making a real difference for the one billion people living with a disability, many of whom too often face discrimination, inequality, abuse, or neglect.

Read the full text from Judy Heumann.

Photo: Judy Heumann.

DOJ Joins Suit Against H&R Block, Saying Website Violates ADA

The Justice Department has announced that it will intervene in a private lawsuit filed against national tax preparation firm H&R Block, saying its website does not allow sufficient access for people with disabilities.

The department's motion, filed Nov. 25 against Block subsidiaries HRB Digital and HRB Tax Group, says the company violated the Americans with Disabilities Act, which the Justice Department has ruled applies to websites.

Read the full story.

New Regulations Could Aid Veterans' Access to Health Care for Traumatic Injuries

The New York Times reports that the Department
of Veterans Affairs has approved new regulations to make it easier for veterans to receive health care and compensation for certain illnesses, including Parkinsonism, dementia, and depression, which have been linked to traumatic brain injury.

Read the full story.

Justice Department Reaches Settlement with Newseum to Improve Access for People with Disabilities

The Department of Justice announced that a settlement had been reached with Newseum Inc., which owns and operates the Newseum, to address alleged violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The settlement agreement resolves allegations that the Newseum, a museum of news and history in Washington, D.C., was operating exhibits and providing facilities that were not accessible to people with disabilities.

Read the Department of Justice announcement.

One in Ten U.S. Children Has ADHD According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

According to a new study, in 2011-2012, more than ten percent of U.S. children 4-17 years of age had been diagnosed with ADHD, and 6.1 percent of U.S. children 4-17 years of age were taking medication for ADHD.

Read the full story.
Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler and the National Institute on Aging (NIA) Deputy Director Dr. Marie A. Bernard signed an agreement to partner on research into the use of modern IP technology to improve and make more accessible phone service to Americans who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing.

Read the press release.

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) has released its 2013 Compendium on Disability Statistics. This report shows that people with disabilities are still much less likely to have jobs than people who don't have disabilities.

Read the press release and the full report.

A new study by the Reed Group concludes that despite being in place for more than two decades, ADA compliance requirements still confuse many employers. Key findings include the following:

- 70 percent of respondents said recognizing when an employer can deny an ADA leave request is either difficult or extremely difficult.
- 87 percent of employers are providing temporary light duty as an accommodation, even though that is rarely required under the law.
- Half of survey respondents have difficulty or extreme difficulty determining
whether or not an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on their business.

Read the full story.