



# Access New England

A publication of the New England ADA Center

February 2013

## Quick Links

[Disability Rights Web Course](#)

[ADA Employment Web Course](#)

[ADA Checklist](#)

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

**People without disabilities:  
8.3%**

**People with disabilities: 13.7%**

### Concord, New Hampshire Architectural Plan Reading Workshop Postponed Until March 6, 2013

[Read the Full Announcement](#)



May 12-15  
San Antonio, Texas

Stay Connected:



### "Our Time Has Come" by Endless Abilities team wins IHCD's #HOWCOOLISTHAT Video Contest

We are very pleased to announce that the video entry "[Our Time Has Come](#)" by the [Endless Abilities](#) team of Zachary Bastian, Harvey Burrell, Tripp Clemens, and Will Humphrey, has been selected as winners of the #HOWCOOLISTHAT video contest.

The video contest asked participants to

make their case for why mainstream media should increase coverage of athletes with disabilities and disability sports. The submission by Tripp and Windy Films highlights the theme and powerful message: "Our Time Has Come." We received excellent video submissions, and we are very appreciative to all of the participants and also express our gratitude to the time and expertise of the review panel. [Read the full press release.](#)

The [Inclusive Sports Initiative](#) is a project of the Institute for Human Centered Design and focuses on Disability in Sport, bringing people with disabilities from the margins to become integral members of the sporting community. Ongoing research, education and advocacy addresses the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport.

Driving the Dream



## Home - The Campaign for Independence and Freedom



Photo 1: New Britain, CT resident, David Bishop.  
Photo 2: Jerry Donovan utilizing the Paragolfer on Stanley Golf Course. Both photos taken by New Britain Parks and Recreation staff.

On January 16, 2013, New Britain was elated to announce that the Parks and Recreation Department had received a \$8,596.47 donation from Connecticare. The generous donation will be used to purchase a handicap accessible golf cart for Stanley Golf Course.

For the past year, the Parks and Recreation Department had been raising funds to purchase an accessible golf cart for Stanley Golf Course. To date, the Department had been successful in raising over \$19,000. Most recently, the Walking for Kids Foundation founded by D.J. Gregory donated \$6500.00 towards the cart.

The Department's campaign began when a New Britain resident, David Bishop, inquired about the possibility of an accessible cart at Stanley Golf Course. Mr. Bishop, a Veteran and retired New Britain firefighter, was an avid golfer and officer of the Stanley Seniors Golf Club for many years. Mr. Bishop suffered a stroke that went to his spine and left him a paraplegic. In an effort to resume playing the game he loves so much, and to provide the opportunity for others, Mr. Bishop collaborated with the Department to begin the campaign for "Independence and Freedom." The club anticipates having the cart available for use in April of 2013. [Read the full press release.](#)



## Independent Living Centers Funding Crisis in Connecticut

All state funds ( \$525, 680) for all five of the Centers for Independent Living in Connecticut are eliminated from Governor Malloy's 2014-2015 biennial budget. This means a loss of about 35% of their total funding.

This is terrible news for people with disabilities and their families.

The five Independent Living Centers provide services to over 1100 people with all types of disabilities, of all ages located throughout the state of Connecticut.

The Centers also provide a single point of entry into disability services, transition from nursing homes, skill development in employment, housing, education and transportation. These are in addition to the Centers' core services of independent living skills, advocacy, information and referral.

The Centers are staffed by people with disabilities, and if this funding is eliminated from the budget, many dedicated and valued employees will lose their jobs, and hundreds of people with disabilities in Connecticut will be unable to access services from the Centers. If these cuts go through, it is not known at this time if the impact will be distributed evenly among the five centers or if some of the centers may be forced to close entirely.

There was a public hearing before the Appropriations Committee on February 22 regarding the Governor's proposed budget and this budget elimination as part of the process leading to a final funding determination. All of the elected officials who questioned Amy Porter, Commissioner, Department of Rehabilitation Services, seemed concerned about the potential impact of these impending cuts.

The proposed budget also cuts \$1 million from Educational Aid for the Blind and Disabled, funds that are used to reimburse schools for support services such as hiring sign language interpreters for students, and eliminates 29% from the budget for a key employment support program for people with disabilities.



## Burlington, Vermont's Advisory Committee on Accessibility Resumes Work

Vermont's largest city has revived its long-dormant Burlington Advisory Committee on Accessibility. During the first meeting January 7, 2013, Mayor Weinberger tasked the committee with creating a plan to address accessibility needs and concerns in infrastructure and programming. The plan will tackle accommodations in City facilities and public areas, accessibility of City-sponsored programs and events, and the development of a culture of awareness. This municipal success is due to the work of a group of driven citizens with disabilities and community partners (AARP and MSS) facilitated by the Vermont Center for Independent

Living (VCIL). VCIL is the state affiliate of the New England ADA Center, responsible for providing ADA technical assistance and training to the state of Vermont.



## IHCD's Inclusive Sports Initiative Hosts Conversation on Legal Obligations of Schools to Provide Students with Disabilities Equal Opportunity to Participate in After-School

### Athletics and Clubs

On January 25, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights released guidance that clarifies existing legal obligations of schools to provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate alongside their peers in after-school athletics and clubs. This guidance makes clear that schools may not exclude students who have a physical or mental disability from trying out and participating in school sports, including colleges and universities.

Building on this groundbreaking announcement, on February 20, 2013, IHCD hosted a Community Conversation on the U.S. Department of Education guidance, facilitated by Eli Wolff and Dr. Ted Fay of IHCD's Inclusive Sports Initiative. The conversation included athletes with disabilities, educators, advocates and members of the nonprofit community exploring both general and specific implications of the guidance as it applies to inclusiveness, education, awareness raising and implementation. [Read more about this important topic.](#)



Congressman Joseph Kennedy, III and New England ADA Center Project Director Oce Harrison.

## Congressman Joseph Kennedy, III Addresses the New England Council

Freshman Congressman Joseph Kennedy, III addressed The New England Council at their Congressional Roundtable in Boston. Highlighting the need for

business and government to work together to support Massachusetts' innovation economy, he shared his views on education, research and development and responsible

budgeting. [Read his prepared remarks.](#)



## Successful ADA Standards Workshop in Augusta, Maine

Kathy Gips, Director of Training, New England ADA Center. Photo by Jennifer Smith, Maine Department of Labor.

On January 17 more than 100 municipal code officers, architects, designers and builders participated in an all-day ADA Standards workshop in Augusta, Maine. The event began with an introduction

from Eric Dibner, the Maine Accessibility Coordinator and followed with a panel of experts clarifying the Maine Human Rights Act, the obligation of state officials and the role of municipal code officers. The panel included John P. Gause, Maine Human Rights Commission; Ronald Peaslee, State Fire Marshall's Office and Paul Demers, Maine Building Officials and Inspectors Association. After the panel Kathy Gips, director of training at the New England ADA Center, reviewed the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. There were many questions and lively discussion.



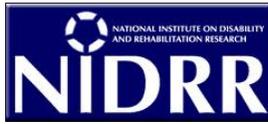
## Stories from Other States



### New Chief of Disability Rights Section Named, U.S. Department of Justice

The Civil Rights Division is pleased to announce that Rebecca Bond will be the new Chief of the Division's Disability Rights Section. In that capacity, Ms. Bond will oversee the Section's management team, develop and supervise investigations and litigation affecting all aspects of the Section's enforcement program, and lead the development and implementation of the Section's strategic vision, guidance, regulations, and policies. [Read the full press release.](#)

Three NIDRR Fact Sheets on



## Living Well with Multiple Sclerosis Available Online

A recent [National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research \(NIDRR\)](#) announcement includes links to the [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Multiple Sclerosis \(MSRRTC\)](#) and the following three new fact sheets from their Living Well with Multiple Sclerosis series:

- \* [Getting Trustworthy Health Information from the Internet](#)
- \* [Exercise and MS](#)
- \* [Getting the Most Out of Health Care Visits](#)

You can also visit the MSRRTC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more project updates.



## President Obama Appoints Jeff Rosen as New Chairperson of National Council on Disability (NCD)

The National Council on Disability (NCD) - an independent federal agency that advises the President, Congress and other federal agencies regarding disability policy - is proud to welcome Jeff Rosen as its new Chairperson. The agency also welcomed three new members also appointed by President Barack Obama to the agency on January 31, 2013 after the intention of their appointment was announced January 25. In addition, Council Member Chester Finn was appointed to a second term. [Read the full press release.](#)



## AFB App Helps People with Vision Loss Take Notes on iPhone, iPad, and iPod

touch

For the millions of Americans with vision loss looking for a simple, convenient way to take notes at work, at school, or at home, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) today launched the AccessNote™, a specialized notetaker for the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

"We designed this app to complement the iPhone's other popular features, like web browsing and email, so that users who are blind have all the tools they need in one, handy device," said Carl R. Augusto, AFB president and CEO.

A traditional notetaker is a portable electronic device that enables users who are blind or visually impaired to take notes, create documents, and access applications. These devices, extremely valuable for people who are blind or visually impaired, usually provide either speech or braille output (or both). They retail for upwards of \$2,000 and much more for those with a built-in braille display; AFB's AccessNote app is available for \$19.99. [Read more.](#)



## White House Announces Audio Descriptions for Public Tours

President Obama and the First Lady have long been committed to ensuring that the White House is truly the People's House, and that Americans with disabilities are fully integrated into our society. Continuing on that commitment, the White House Visitor's Office is pleased to announce the availability of an audio description for those taking a White House tour. This will give blind and visually impaired Americans and persons with other print disabilities the opportunity to listen to an audio described tour as they visit the historic, public rooms of the White House. [Read more about the audio descriptions.](#)

# New England Center



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