Celebrate the 24th Anniversary of the ADA Across New England!

July 21 through 25, Rhode Island: ADA Anniversary Public Forum Series
During the week of the 24th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities and over 20 other state and non-profit agencies will conduct a week-long series of open forums to hear the concerns of people with disabilities and their families. The forums are open for anyone to come and speak; representatives of the sponsoring agencies will be there to listen. View the forum schedule to learn more!

July 23, Connecticut: Abilities Walk and Roll Event
Come celebrate the ADA at Walnut Hill Park in New Britain on Wednesday, July 23rd with the Abilities Walk and Roll Event! A one mile walk begins at 5:00 PM and followed by a concert by Soul Sensation at the Darius Miller Band Shell. Free ice cream sundaes given to all, and there will be free t-shirts and prizes all night.

July 23, Boston: Poetry Slam and Art Exhibition
Celebrate the 24th anniversary of the ADA with the juried Poetry Slam winners and a juried Art Exhibition, July 23, 2014 starting at 6:30 PM at the Institute for Human Centered Design, home of the New England ADA Center in Boston. See more details on our blog!

July 24, Vermont: Picnic Celebrating the 24th Anniversary of the ADA
The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) invites you to a picnic in celebration of the 24th anniversary of the ADA. Come meet friends and make new acquaintances! The picnic will take place at Branbury State Park, 3570
Lake Dunmore Road in Salisbury from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Questions? Contact Sue Booth at 229-0501 or by e-mail at suebooth@vcil.org. For updates, visit the VCIL website.

July 24, Boston: Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities Disability Pride Parade and A.D.A. Celebration Day
This year a Disability Pride Parade will kickoff the festivities! At 11:00 AM, join the Commission Advisory Board as we gather near the flag pole on City Hall Plaza to march around Government Center. Following the parade, Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities welcome all to attend A.D.A. Celebration Day, a FREE event for children, families, and individuals of all abilities, Thursday, July 24, 2014, 12 noon - 3:00 PM at Boston City Hall Plaza. Enjoy food, music, friends and fun! Email felicity.ingle@gmail.com for details. View the event flyer.

July 25, New Hampshire: Governor's Accessibility Awards
Join Governor Hassan as she presents this year's awards! Each year to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Accessibility Awards are given to recognize leaders in New Hampshire communities who adhere to the best practices and/or offer services that are inclusive to individuals living with a disability. The awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday, July 25, 2014 starting at 11:00 AM in the Executive Council Chamber at the New Hampshire State House, 107 North Main Street, Concord, New Hampshire. For more information contact the Governor's Commission on Disability.

July 25, Massachusetts: ADA Day Celebration at Dunn State Park
Come celebrate the ADA at Dunn State Park in Gardener, Massachusetts. Enjoy adaptive sports, live music, food and fun! Sponsored by DCR's Universal Access Program and the Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council, this event takes place from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. For more information contact the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Universal Access Program at 413-545-5353 voice; 413-577-2200 TTY. Directions are available at the Dunn State Park web page.

News From Around New England

J.M. Hollister Clothing Loses Fight Over Wheelchair-Accessible Entrances
The Massachusetts State Supreme Court upheld a decision requiring 11 J.M. Hollister clothing stores in Massachusetts to make their entrances accessible to people with disabilities.

The Supreme Judicial Court refused the company's request to overturn a Superior Court judge's decision that was upheld last year by the Appeals Court.

Read the full story.

IHCD's Valerie Fletcher Contributes to the National Endowment for the Arts' "Art Works" Blog

Design is not a fine art but a social art, always facing outward toward other people. The building, the playground, the toothbrush, the smart device, the shoe only become that imagined something better if people use it. It gives design its power as a "consequential endeavor."

I believe that the facts of life in our time-worldwide--not only set us up for design as a consequential endeavor but demand urgent attention to design as a necessary tool for a new reality. There are more than seven billion people on the planet as of 2011, in a hundred years growing from only one billion. We live longer and survive more than at any time in history, an undeniable achievement of the last century. Though the intensity of the pattern varies, increased lifespans and more people living with functional limitations are true of every continent. The leading measures of development are fewer births, higher rates of health, and longer lives. Today only Japan has a population in which 30 percent of the population is over 60.

Read the full story.

VCIL Celebrates ADA Anniversary and Improved Access
As the country celebrates the 24th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act this summer, the Vermont Center for Independent Living applauds improvements statewide to accessibility for people with disabilities.

VCIL Executive Director Sarah Launderville said, "Twenty-four years after the signing of this historic legislation we have community members and friends in the business community who are breaking down barriers that stand in the way of people with disabilities being fully included in our society. We are proud to have been able to provide technical assistance to businesses, the state of Vermont and our community to ensure that people with disabilities can access goods, services, education and the equality we deserve."

Read the full story.

2014 Empowerment Forum For People with Disabilities, August 7 in Bangor Maine - Keynote Speaker: John Robinson

C.A.R.E.S., Inc. (Advocacy, Case Management And Assistive Technology For Maine's Citizens With Disabilities) has announced the 2014 Empowerment Forum For People with Disabilities taking place August 7, 2014 in Bangor Maine with Keynote speaker John Robinson.

Robinson is Managing Partner and CEO of Our Ability, a motivational/inspirational speaker as well as a video executive producer on numerous award winning productions for Public Broadcasting and web. In the past two years, Robinson has been from Australia to the White House, and is the subject of a national documentary shown on Public Broadcasting Stations titled Get Off Your Knees: The John Robinson Story.

Learn more about and register for the forum. Also, learn more about Our Ability and John Robinson.

Photo: John Robinson.
University of New Hampshire Adults with Disabilities Health Survey - Respond by July 25

The Health Disparities Project at the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability is asking adults with disabilities to take a brief survey about access to health care. The survey is part of the University's research on why access to health care and health outcomes differ among people with different types of disabilities. Individual survey results will be kept confidential. Respond by July 25, 2014.

Visit the survey home page.

Boston wants projects to be more accessible to the disabled - BRA Approves New Accessibility Guidelines

After many years of hard work and collaboration between the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), accessibility will now be a fundamental aspect of all new development projects in Boston. The BRA recently voted to adopt an Accessibility Policy into its Article 80 Review Process.

The Article 80 process may include, but is not limited to, review of a project's impacts on transportation, public realm, the environment, and historic resources, and "accessibility" will now be a category added to the project impact list of features to be outlined before proposals will be reviewed.

Read the BRA press release.

Photo: Kristen McCosh, Commissioner, Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Disability Reframed Community Film Series presents a FREE Screening and Discussion of The Heart is a Lonely Hunter

This film from 1968 takes place in the Deep South
and depicts the story of a deaf man who rents a room in the home of a struggling family as their teenage daughter is coming of age. The screening will be followed by a lively moderated audience discussion, and free light refreshments will be served. Come be a part of this fun and exciting event on Saturday, July 26, 2014 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM at the Cambridge Main Library Lecture Hall, 449 Broadway, Cambridge.

View the event flyer.

News From Around the Country

2014 Webinar Series on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Starting July 22

The Administration for Community Living (ACL), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institute on Aging (NIA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are collaborating to host a webinar series to increase knowledge about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and resources that professionals in the public health, aging services and research networks can use to inform, educate and empower community members, people with dementia and their family caregivers.

Learn more about the Alzheimer's webinar series.

Validity Of CDC Autism Rates Questioned

With autism numbers rising every few years, some researchers in the field are sharply questioning the reliability of the government statistics. An editorial
published this month in the journal Autism is taking the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to task for the methods they use to assess prevalence of the developmental disorder.

Read the editorial.