



A bridge between the disability community and organized philanthropy

## The Spirit of the ADA: DFN Members Join National Celebrations of the Americans with Disabilities Act Tenth Anniversary

# F

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Local celebrations in 24 cities marked the cross-country journey of the Spirit of the ADA Torch, which was first lit in Alaska 10 years ago. The flame was rekindled for the anniversary celebrations and carried across the country to build the spirit of connection among America's 54 million people with disabilities and to encourage them to "renew the pledge" to the promise of equal access to the American dream inherent in the ADA and IDEA.

One of DFN's newest members, the American Association of People with Disabilities

(AAPD), was the national host organization for the relay. A national membership organization created by and for people with all types of disabilities, AAPD promotes political and economic empowerment -- goals that were central to the message the Spirit of the ADA Torch Relay carried across America.

The Torch was lit in Atlanta on June 7 from the eternal flame on the grave of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.-- a poignant reminder of the historical links between the disability community and its predecessors. In a speech at the lighting ceremony, Andrew Imparato, AAPD's President and CEO, drove home the historical links, pointing out that "the disability rights movement modeled itself on the successes, vision and passion of the civil rights movement."

"All of us, both here in America and around the world, have benefited from the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities," he said. "The Spirit of the ADA Torch Relay gives us all the opportu-

the past 10 years and renew our commitment to an America that works for everyone."

Volkswagen of America, which contributed \$500,000 and provided a van and equipment for the relay, was the primary national sponsor. Other national sponsors were AccessLife.com, Continental Airlines, Microsoft, The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and Shepherd Center.

*Relay Highlights on page 4*

### INSIDE

- 2 California Projects In Full Swing
- 2 DFN Welcomes New Chair
- 3 The Director's Corner
- 4 The Spirit of the ADA: Torch Relay Highlights
- 5 President Clinton's Digital Divide Initiatives
- 5 Sharing the Wealth Summit
- 6 Workshops in Barriers to Work & Healthcare
- 6 Survey on Communication Gaps
- 7 New Members & Profile
- 8 Conferences & Meetings
- 8 Announcements
- 9 Resources

**T**hanks to grants from The California Endowment, DFN is conducting two M initiatives that will not only provide direct information and assistance to funders and grant-seekers in California, but will also create the basis for similar projects

*Executive Director*

*Consultant*

*Accountant*

*Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation*

*NEC Foundation of America*

*Puerto Rico Community Foundation, Inc.*

*Blanche Fischer Foundation*

*J.P. Morgan & Co. Incorporated*

*Green Oaks Mental Health Foundation*

*The Chicago Community Trust*

*ELA Foundation*

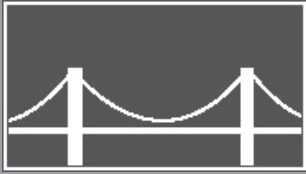
*American Express Foundation*

*ELA Foundation*

*Kate and Richard Wolters Foundation*

*Hawai'i Community Foundation*

*Newsletter Editor*



# The Director's Corner

by **Jeanne Argoff, Ph.D.**  
**Executive Director, Disability Funders Network**

A bridge between the disability community and organized philanthropy

I've just returned from The Council on Foundations' Fall Conference for community foundations. I was unable to attend one of the luncheon plenaries and was dismayed to discover afterwards that I had missed a talk that was so wonderful the speaker received a standing ovation. The speaker was a designer who was recently recognized by *Time* magazine as a "Hero for the Planet" for his work in sustainable development. He and his firm practice "ecologically, socially and economically intelligent architecture and community design."

I eagerly listened to the tape and agreed that it was, indeed, a wonderful speech full of important and moving ideas about designing for all creatures on the planet and for future generations. But, I was dismayed yet again when I heard not one word about universal design -- a principle known to many in the disability community and referring to the importance of designing for all people with the full spectrum of functional abilities and limitations.

Since I was not at the speech in person, I could not ask if the speaker did any work in universal design -- hopefully he does. The point, though -- and many of you will know where I'm going before you read these words -- is that the concept of universal design should have been an integral part of a design-focused talk that was otherwise as wide-ranging and far-seeing as this was. There was mention of native peoples and of animals, but he did not mention people with disabilities or the design concepts that enable them to operate freely within the built environment.

I have considered deeply whether I am too sensitive, too Johnny-one-note, or even perhaps that I am being unfair. After all, there were many minority group concerns that were not mentioned, and you can't cover

every base every time. But then I thought about how important to everyone the concepts of universal design are -- how everyone benefits from ramps and other features that cover the range of human abilities. And I thought about how significantly common architectural and design features have been barriers over the years, keeping disabled people out of spaces -- physical and cyber -- that others enter easily. And I thought about how often disability concerns are left out of discussions of issues that are as important to the entire planet as the ones this captivating and right-minded speaker was discussing.

**Disability issues are everyone's issues, because they crosscut every dimension of our social and physical environment.**

So I apologize if I have done him a disservice by thinking what I've been thinking and saying this in print. I tried to contact him and will continue to do so. When I get him I will signal to him that the fact that his talk was so wonderful made the omission even more glaring. And I hope that the next time he gives this speech it will be more universally designed.

It is just this type of omission that makes our work in the disability arena so important. Whether you are a grantmaker or a grantseeker, your efforts raise awareness that disability issues are everyone's issues, because they crosscut every dimension of our social and physical environment. And if we don't raise our voices, even eloquent and enlightened individuals won't get the message.

**O**n June 17th the Spirit of the ADA Torch arrived in the *San Francisco Bay Area*, birthplace of the independent living movement and home to the first center for independent living. Seventy-five torchbearers wearing yellow ADA t-shirts waited in Oakland's Jack London Square for the flame to cross the Bay from its starting point at PacBell Park, home of the Giants. Guest speakers included Judy Heumann, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the U.S. Department of Education, and Mary Lou Breslin, co-founder of Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF).

The True North Foundation supported a local voter registration drive held during the celebration. According to Susan O'Hara, DFN member and True North Trustee, the opportunity to tie the relay to voter registration during an election year was particularly attractive.

The Torch made its way down to *Los Angeles* on June 19. In Southern California as in other areas of the country, a number of related events took place before and after the official Torch Relay activities. One was the celebration in *Pasadena* on July 21st and 22nd, where the City and the Accessibility and Disability Commission celebrated with festivities in Central Park and Victory Park. The centerpiece of the event was a Walk of Progress sponsored by the ELA Foundation, one of DFN's founding members. The Walk featured photos and displays showing the progress and the challenges of ADA compliance in Pasadena over the past ten years.

The theme of the *Chicago* celebration was "ADA and the Everyday." Marca Bristo, chair of the National Council on Disability and executive director of Access Living of Chicago (one of the first independent living centers), spoke to an audience of over 40,000 fans gathered at Wrigley Field for the White Sox vs. Chicago Cub's game. Bristo noted the city's long history of disability rights activities and emphasized that the ADA makes it possible for people with disabilities to participate in the daily life of their communities and cited public transportation as just one example. She asked the crowd at Wrigley Field to join the disability community in making the promise of the ADA a reality, characterizing that promise as "independence not dependence; empowerment not paternalism; and inclusion not exclusion." A community celebration at Jackson Field after the

## PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES DIGITAL DIVIDE INITIATIVES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

On September 21, President Clinton announced a series of public and private initiatives to create “digital opportunity” for people with disabilities. Among the wide ranging set of initiatives were:

- ◆ A blue-ribbon commission funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation (Flint, MI) to address the problem of affordability of information technologies and integration of accessibility and usability into academic curricula and university services.
- ◆ Pledges from over 45 high-tech CEOs to adopt corporate-wide “best practices” on accessibility and from 25 of the nation’s top research universities to expand research and education on accessibility;
- ◆ The creation of a task force to examine Medicare/

Medicaid coverage of assistive technology;

- ◆ \$9 million in grants from Americorps to support volunteers who will train people with disabilities in the use of information technology;
- ◆ \$16 million in grants from the Department of Education to promote accessible information technology, and \$1.8 million for an initiative to develop standards for accessible online learning;
- ◆ A business incubator with an emphasis on the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities to be created by Microsoft, Community Options and other partners.

## Sharing the Wealth Summit Lists Philanthropy’s Challenges

Jeanne Argoff, executive director of The Disability Funders Network, was among more than 100 policy makers and leaders from the philanthropic world to share ideas with a national audience on the challenges facing charitable giving and to build action steps to confront those challenges.

This by-invitation-only summit gathered many of the best thinkers from the world of philanthropy, academia, government, non-profits, financial institutions, foundations and religious organization to be a catalyst for positive change.

Youth in philanthropy, e-philanthropy, venture philanthropy, and inclusiveness in philanthropy were

among the many topics discussed during this very hands-on summit.

The Sharing the Wealth summit was held in St. Paul, Minnesota on September 7-8, 2000. It was produced by Minnesota Public Radio’s Sound Money personal finance program and the MPR Civic

Journalism Initiative. The summit results are being amplified nationwide on the radio,

Internet, and in print. A one-hour radio special is being produced by Minnesota Public Radio for a national release in November.



## Helping Foundations Take a Leadership Role in a New Legislative Initiative Addressing Barriers to Work and Healthcare

Meetings with grantmakers in Los Angeles and San Francisco last June launched the new DFN/GIH project to define the role of foundations in working with state and federal agencies to expand access to employment and healthcare for Californians with disabilities. Dr. Susan Daniels, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Disability and Income Security Programs at the Social Security Administration, attended both meetings to emphasize the significance of the problem and raise awareness of the potential impact foundations can have on this issue.

The workshops brought grantmakers together with federal and state officials, grassroots advocates and subject matter experts to look at how foundation involvement could enhance California's response to the opportunities presented by groundbreaking federal legislation that addresses barriers to healthcare and employment for people with disabilities. Characterizing the problem for the workshop participants, Dr. Daniels pointed out that it takes place in an economy that has never been better: unemployment is at its lowest, and welfare reform is putting more and more people into the workplace -- which is where most people obtain access to health insurance.

Yet, for one group in our society, Dr. Daniels continued, lack of access to healthcare is a tremendous barrier to employment. People with significant disabilities are often excluded from private insurance and frequently have healthcare needs that only Medicaid or Medicare can support. But to get this public insurance coverage, they must declare themselves "unable to work." For these people, the systems governing health and employment are in conflict.

## Survey Will Explore Communication Gaps Between Funders and Disability Groups

While the Foundation Center does a commendable job of collecting data about the dollar amounts, topic areas and recipients of disability grants, many experienced grant-seekers and a growing number of grantmakers in the field have voiced the need for additional information. In par-

New legislation, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, has the potential to resolve the conflict by providing millions of disabled Americans with expanded choice in employment services and offering states the option of allowing them to work and still carry public insurance by "buying-in" to Medicaid or extending their Medicare coverage. Importantly, however, many of the healthcare and employment access provisions of the new legislation are options only; and state officials and advocates seeking to implement the act on a state level are discovering that private sector partnerships are essential for unlocking the vast potential of the new law.

Other workshop speakers -- Brenda Premo, Director of the Center for Disability Issues and the Health Professions and past Director of Vocational Education for California, and Bryon MacDonald, Coordinator of the California Work Group on Work Incentives and Health Care -- provided information about the grassroots advocacy movement behind the legislation and the context for continued state-level action.

Workshop participants developed an initial list of roles foundations can play in the ongoing systems change signaled by the new legislation -- from funding projects demonstrating creative health insurance packages combining public and private insurance to forging connections with such existing mechanisms as community development financial institutions and community development corporations.

DFN and GIH will release a report of the proceedings and a list of initial follow-up activities in October.



# NEW MEMBER PROFILE: MICROSOFT'S ACCESSIBILITY GIVING

The Microsoft Corporation's Accessible Technology Group (ATG) joined DFN last May. Since that time, the corporation has been a visible presence as a disability funder. The company was a national sponsor of the Spirit of the ADA Torch Relay and the gala that capped the Washington, DC celebration (see article on p. 1). Recently, the firm made headlines for its support of the President's digital divide and technology initiatives for people with disabilities (page 5), with its support of the technology business incubator.

While the ATG has been dedicated to accessible technology solutions for the past 12 years, Microsoft made a further commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities have equal access to technology in 1999 by inaugurating a national grants program designed to support innovative solutions to the specific technology needs of individuals with the full spectrum of disabilities. In its first two years, the program has funded a series of initiatives, including research grants focused on increasing personal computer accessibility and support for programs that use computer technology to increase employment opportunities.

Microsoft's U.S. field offices also support the company's commitment to accessibility by providing grants and software donations to expand access to technology in order to enhance learning and communication in disadvantaged communities, including the disability community.

Over the past three years, field offices have supported twenty organizations serving individuals with disabilities. Some of those organizations are the MBF Center, Philadelphia; Work, Inc., Boston; Hearing Impaired Press (HiP), Alameda, CA.; Touch the Future, Atlanta; and Carolina Computer Access Center, Charlotte.

The company's continued focus on accessibility is the result of internal collaboration between its Accessible Technology Group and its Community Affairs Department, which oversees Microsoft's Giving Program. The collaboration has created a distinctive program that reflects a marriage between the objectives of the company-wide national philanthropic program and the disability focus of the Accessible Technology Group.

Microsoft's Giving Program is guided by three objectives: 1) to help bring the benefits of information technology to under-served people and communities; 2) to provide support to organizations in communities where Microsoft employees live and work; and 3) to support Microsoft employees who take an active role in their communities by volunteering and/or by donating to organizations through the company's matching gift programs.

The marriage between Microsoft's Community Affairs and the Accessible Technology Group has created a program aimed at "leveling the playing field by making sure that people with disabilities -- one of the most under-served communities, both here and abroad -- has access to the benefits of computer technology," said Bruce Brooks, Director of Community Affairs.

## Microsoft Accessibility Technology for Everyone



### NEW MEMBERS!

**Access Living**  
Chicago, IL

**AAPD (American Association of People with Disabilities)**  
Washington, DC

**ARC of the Capital Area**  
Austin, TX

**California Foundation for Independent Living Centers**  
Sacramento, CA

**Consumer Health Foundation**  
Washington, DC

**CVE, Inc.**  
San Francisco, CA

**Greater Waltham Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc.**  
Waltham, MA

**Jasper County Support Services**  
Joplin, MO

**Lavelle Fund for the Blind**  
New York, NY

**Microsoft Corporation**  
Redmond, WA

**Tracey Murray**  
Atlanta, GA

**Outdoor Explorations**  
Medford, MA

**Pennington Associates**  
Arlington, MA

**Rainbows United, Inc.**  
Creve Coeur, MO

**Arthur B. Schultz Foundation**  
Incline Village, NV

# CONFERENCES MEETINGS

## **Boston (October 25, 2000, 8:30 - 1:00)**

DFN will be a featured presenter at the Community Matters Roundtable on Disability Issues sponsored by The Boston Foundation, The Boston Globe Foundation, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. The roundtable will provide an opportunity for the disability community, service providers and private funders to come together for an open exchange of information. The goal of the half-day meeting is to communicate the needs and concerns of the disability community and to clarify both the availability of and access to private funding to help in meeting those

needs. DFN Executive Director Jeanne Argoff will talk about national trends in disability grantmaking and will highlight projects funded by DFN members and some of the cutting-edge approaches to funding in the area taken by our members. Other speakers at the half-day conference are Commissioner Elmer Bartels, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission; Sally S. Peabody, President, Associated Grantmakers, Inc.; Robert Wadsworth, Program Director, The Boston Foundation, and Klare Shaw, Executive Director, The Boston Globe Foundation.

## **New York City (November 8, 2000, 8:30 - 11:00)**

Inclusive education is the topic of a special program on November 8 co-hosted by DFN and the New York Association of Grantmakers (NYRAG). Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul & Mary will set the stage by talking (and singing!) about the need for schools to become "ridicule-free zones" so that children with disabilities and others who are perceived as "different" can get the full benefits of inclusion without becoming targets for ridicule and exclusion by their classmates. Jill Chaifetz, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York will present the history and

policy implications of the inclusive education movement and discuss local efforts to reform the City's public education system, which lags woefully behind the national norm. James Billy, Executive Director of the Harlem Independent Living Center, will complete the non-profit panel by talking about the importance of transition from school to work. Grantmakers Irfan Hasan of the New York Community Trust and Jacqueline Elias of J.P. Morgan will provide the funders' perspective and facilitate an active interchange with the audience.

## **Philadelphia (April 28 - May 2, 2001)**

Plans are underway for DFN events at the Council on Foundations' 2001 Annual Conference. DFN designed a session on the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, which grows out of the California-based project outlined in the article on page 6, and will co-sponsor a number of sessions with other affinity groups. Of particular note is the Joint Affinity Group session on

board and staff diversity and a session on aging in a diverse society designed by Grantmakers in Aging. DFN will also hold its yearly business meeting at the conference site on April 30 and will participate in the planning of the first-ever joint event involving all of the 36 affinity groups under the Council's umbrella. Look for more information about all of these events in upcoming issues of

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**M**ainstream, one of DFN's non-profit members based in Washington, DC, will hold its third annual Walk-a-thon on Sunday, October 15 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 in Sligo Creek Park, beginning at Maple Avenue across from Adventist Hospital. Held during October, Disability Awareness Month, the Walk-a-thon celebrates families with disabilities. The walk is on a level,



paved two-mile course and is fully accessible. All people with disabilities are encouraged to participate. Entrance fee is \$10 and participants are encouraged to secure sponsors. Each participant will receive a Walk-a-thon 2000 T-shirt. For more information call 301\891-8777, [info@mainstreaminc.org](mailto:info@mainstreaminc.org), or go to Mainstream's web site at [www.mainstreaminc.org](http://www.mainstreaminc.org).



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**G**rantmakers in Aging will hold its Annual Conference, **Elder-Friendly Communities: Opportunities for Creative Grantmaking**, on October 11-13 in New York City. Foundations preparing to meet the challenges of tomorrow's communities, which in thirty years will have double the number of older adults, should plan to attend. The GIA Annual Conference brings together funders to address trends and opportunities, especially as they relate to an aging society.

GIA welcomes funders from organizations not currently active in this area of grantmaking, but who are particularly affected by our aging society -- health; education; children, youth and families; and neighborhood funders. In response to grantmaker input, the conference program is designed to provide information both on supporting elder-friendly communities, and on strengthening skills for effective grantmaking in general.

Among other things, conference participants will have the opportunity to:

- ◆ Learn what constitutes an elder-friendly community
- ◆ Acquire useful knowledge, examples and practical "take-home" tools related to elder-friendly communities within the context of aging and philanthropy
  - ◆ Learn about the range of community-based services needed to help older people support their communities and ways in which communities help older adults
  - ◆ Hear updated information about demographics and issues related to elder-friendly communities for the increased number of older adults in the U.S. and Canada

The conference will take place at 320 Park Avenue, 35th Floor in midtown Manhattan, New York City. Lodging is at Loews New York Hotel.

## RESOURCES

**T**he Center for Women Policy Studies, a national multi-ethnic feminist policy research and advocacy organization, has published two important new reports on disabled women's issues. The Center prepared "Women and Girls with Disabilities: Defining the Issues -- An Overview," by Barbara Waxman Fiduccia and Leslie R. Wolfe, for the first-ever conference for grantmakers on women and girls with disabilities, convened by Women and Philanthropy, DFN, the Center, and other groups in June 1999. The paper briefly addresses a wide range of issues -- including physician-assisted suicide, access to health care, reproductive rights and health, family life, education and employment, violence against disabled women and girls, and disabled women's leadership. The report is available from the Center for \$8.00 per copy.

### *DFN News*

In the first of a series of reports on disabled women's issues, the Center published *Violence Against Dis-*

*abled Women*, also by Barbara Waxman Fiduccia and Leslie R. Wolfe. This paper summarizes research findings and data on the prevalence of violence against disabled women and girls and its impact. Topics include domestic abuse and battering, sexual abuse of girls, rape and sexual assault, and forms of violence against disabled women and girls that are masked as socially accepted treatment within families and institutions. The report is available from the Center for \$4.00 per copy.

In November of 2000, thanks to a generous grant from the True North Foundation, the Center will publish two new reports. The first is tentatively entitled "Creating Our Future -- Disabled Girls and Teen Women" and is authored by Harilyn Rousso, a winner of the Center's 2000 Jessie Bernard Wise Women Award. The second addresses disability feminism and is tentatively titled "Disability Rights and Women's Rights -- Shared Values and Visions"; its author is Rosemarie Garland Thomson -- a leader in the field of disability and feminist studies.

For more information about the Center's work on these and other issues, contact Center president Leslie R. Wolfe by phone at 202-872-1770 ext. 208 or by email at [lwolfe@centerwomenpolicy.org](mailto:lwolfe@centerwomenpolicy.org).