



GCDP REPORT

Austin, Texas

May, 1987

Impacting Employment Opportunities in 1987

More than 70 representatives of local mayor's committees attended a one-day symposium for their officers and subcommittee members. Affiliated with the Texas Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons (TGCDP), these local mayor's committees identify local needs and implement projects to meet the needs of disabled Texans in their communities. The event, "Employment and the Mayor's Committee . . . A Symposium," was held at the Texas Commission for the Blind's Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center in Austin on March 26.



At the Symposium Luncheon, Richard D. Land, D. Phil., who is administrative assistant to the Governor and liaison to the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons, said, "We can no longer afford the luxury of not utilizing the potential of everyone in our society. Talent is being wasted when we don't help individuals overcome their disabilities." Photo by Ted Candler Texas Rehabilitation Commission



"Having a mayor's committee is one of the best ways we can impact employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in 1987."

Steve Johns



The morning session was keynoted by Steve Johns, director of Handicap Services, City of Dallas, a former staff member for Project LINK Job Bank, an active member of the Dallas Mayor's Committee and a dynamic disability advocate. "When the Governor's Committee asked me to do this presentation on Doing More With Less they assured me I was well qualified. I guess they saw my budget for this year," said Johns.

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DID YOU KNOW?

The Legislative Council and the Legislative Reference Library are providing a toll-free telephone number for people wishing to learn the status of state legislation. The service operates 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday. Call toll-free 1-800-252-9693.

In June GCDP will distribute the 1988 Ability Counts Journalism Contest information to more than 1,300 English and Journalism teachers in Texas. The contest is an excellent way for students to improve their writing skills while learning more about Texans with disabilities. If there is a secondary teacher you would like to share the contest information with contact GCDP at 512-445-8275.

The week of June 21-27, 1987 has been designated nationwide as "Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week." This week is particularly symbolic because June 27 marks the birthday of the most respected and well known American who was deaf and blind, Helen Keller. For information on activities in Texas contact Rolando Garza, public information officer, Texas Commission for the Blind, at 512-459-2612.

GCDP's first annual report has been completed. The report, titled "Volunteers are the Key", focuses on the accomplishments of the Governor's Committee and the local mayor's committees during fiscal year 1986. If you would like a copy of the report, please contact GCDP.

Courtesy parking reminders have been reprinted and are now available for distribution. If you are interested in a supply of parking reminders contact GCDP.

Bolander's Article Places First

Sherri A. Bolander, a senior at Wall High School in Wall, Texas, placed first in statewide competition for the 1987 Ability Counts Journalism Contest. The contest is sponsored annually by the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (PCEH) in cooperation with the Texas Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons.

At a recent awards ceremony Bolander received a \$1,000 scholarship as well as a gold medal contributed by the Disabled American Veterans. Bolander was recognized for her winning state essay, "Workers with Disabilities: Success through Independence." She also plans to take advantage of an all expense paid trip to Denver, Colorado to attend the annual meeting of PCEH.

"I hope that my story about Bryan Webster has encouraged at least one person."

When asked why she entered the competition, Bolander replied, "I decided to enter this contest to offer hope and encouragement to every individual with a disability. I hope that my story about Bryan Webster has encouraged at least one person."

Naomi Hesser, Bolander's sponsoring English teacher, said, "I want to have my students enter the Ability Counts Journalism Contest. I feel it will inspire my students to do their best writing."

People with disabilities are working in a wide variety of jobs and this enables them to be independent. Their success is seen in their work as well as in the way they control their own lives. With this in mind, juniors and seniors in Texas entered the contest and studied the theme, "Workers with Disabilities: Success through Independence."

Volunteers Needed to Identify PALS

For almost twenty million hearing impaired people, travel can be stressful and frustrating. Special sound systems called Public Assistive Listening Systems (PALS) can help relieve that stress. These systems allow hearing impaired people to listen to speech with no outside interference. It is similar to having someone talk to you in a soundproof room — speech is much louder and clearer.

To increase the use of PALS a directory of their locations as well as a description of each system must be developed. Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH), a non-profit organization for people who are hearing impaired, has acquired a grant to establish and maintain a database of information about PALS. Carolyn Colley, PALS coordinator for the State of Texas, is seeking community volunteers to assist in identifying and describing PALS in Texas.

Colley said, "Volunteers would be asked to contact sound system dealers and installers in their area to identify places where PALS have been installed. A brief questionnaire must be completed for each PALS that a volunteer is able to locate." In the near future, this project will be expanded to include listings for hotel

chains that provide visual alert systems (VAS) for the telephones, doors and smoke and fire alarms.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to locate PALS in your community contact Carolyn Colley,

1119 West 9th St., Austin, Texas, 78703
or after 3:30 p.m. call 512-476-2053.
No previous training or experience with individuals who are hearing impaired is necessary.

Austin City Council Passes Disability Rights Ordinance

The Austin City Council unanimously approved an ordinance Thursday, March 19, 1987 to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities in all programs and activities of the City. The ordinance is patterned after the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities by recipients of federal funds. Also, under the new ordinance a nine member panel would meet regularly and advise the Council on problems affecting Austins' citizens with disabilities.

The Austin Mayor's Committee became interested in pursuing a disability rights ordinance when the federal Office of Revenue Sharing was discontinued and, consequently, the City's responsibility to comply with Section 504. Martha Arbuckle, chairperson of the Austin Mayor's Committee, said, "Austin is the only city we know of that has an ordinance of this type." Arbuckle pointed out that the city no longer receives revenue sharing funds from the federal government and the rules that went along with the money prohibited cities from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. "The local ordinance will make sure we are protected," she said.

If you would like more information about the ordinance contact Martha Arbuckle, chairperson of the Austin Mayor's Committee at 512-835-2350 extension 262 or Peggy Terry, City of Austin, at 512-445-1030.

Handi-Trout Accessible Fishing for Persons with Disabilities

The San Angelo Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities sponsored a "Handi-Trout Accessible Fishing Day" on February 28 at the San Angelo Municipal Swimming Pool.

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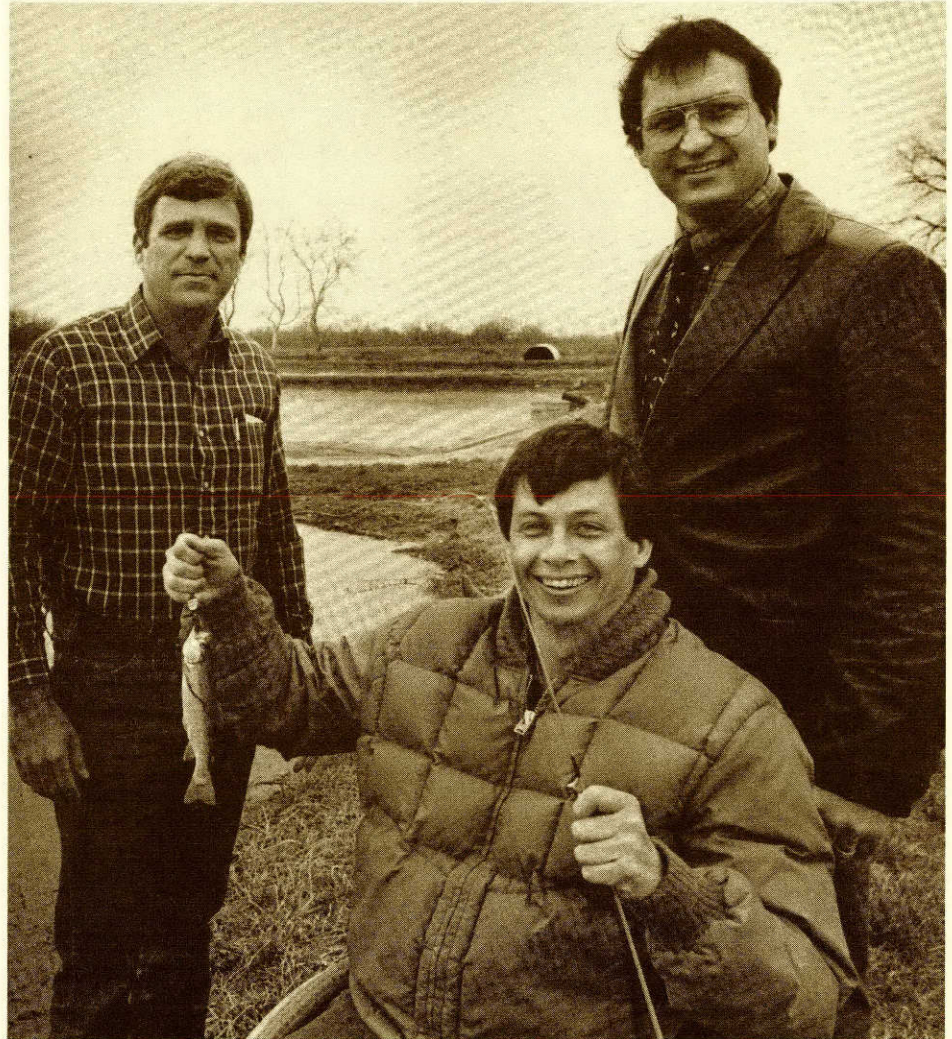
“The whole idea of the event is to get persons with disabilities involved who normally would not go fishing or who have never been fishing.”

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Technicians from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department released about 1,500 catchable-sized rainbow trout into the pool on February 27. The fishing event, which attracted more than 200 people, was free of charge with no fishing license required for individuals with disabilities.

“The whole idea of the event is to get persons with disabilities involved who normally would not go fishing or who have never been fishing,” said Randy Dorman, chairperson of the San Angelo Mayor's Committee. In the business world, Dorman, 28, has been employed by Bank of the West for about five years and currently is mortgage operations officer.

Bill Provine, regional fisheries director with Texas Parks and Wildlife, said, “We consider events like the handicapped-accessible fishing day an investment in the fishing future of Texas.”



Randy Dorman, chairperson of the San Angelo Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities, displays his catch, a rainbow trout. With Dorman is Bill Provine (at left), regional fisheries director with Texas Parks and Wildlife. At right is Don Hill recreation specialist with the San Angelo Recreation Department. Photo by David Branch San Angelo Standard Times

The event generated a huge amount of community support. Members of the General Telephone Bass Club were on hand to assist and act as fishing advisors. Field and Streams Sporting Goods donated tackle gear and bait, while rods and reels were provided by Sportmen's Clubs of Texas and the Boating Trades Association of Texas.

The Governor's Committee in cooperation with several mayor's committees and Texas Parks and Wildlife is planning to hold several similar fishing events in the fall of 1987. For more information contact Andy Alexander, staff representative, GCDP at 512-445-8274.



October 4—10, 1987

NATIONAL EMPLOY THE HANDICAPPED WEEK
“making employment a reality”

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"The good economy in Texas did not necessarily bring good times for disabled Texans and during the belt tightening time it appears disabled Texans, who rely on critical support services and agencies which serve disabled persons, are being placed directly behind the buckle," said Johns. "It is apparent today that in human services we are being asked to do more with less."

Local mayor's committees, which represent more than 2,103 community volunteers, play a significant role in their communities by creating opportunities for disabled Texans through:

- encouraging and promoting employment opportunities,
- heightening public awareness of the needs of disabled persons,
- encouraging the development and continuation of support programs.

Johns believes, "Having a mayor's committee is one of the best ways we can impact employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in 1987. The mayor's committee cannot solve all employment problems for persons with disabilities within any particular community. However, it can be an important part of a network of services working toward this common goal of employment for persons with disabilities."

Communities ranging in size of population from 5,000 to over 1,000,000 have mayor's committees. It is estimated that 59% of Texans with disabilities live in counties served by a local mayor's committee.

"A mayor's committee cannot be all things to all people. Setting clear and

"People are being trained for jobs that do not exist—we need to look at the future job market. Do you realize that McDonald's employs more people than U. S. Steel?"

Jay Rochlin



concise goals to benefit your community is a key factor," said Johns.

The Symposium luncheon featured executive director of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (PCEH), Jay Rochlin of Washington, D.C. Rochlin, formerly an AT&T executive on loan to PCEH, has worked to expand employer involvement with PCEH through the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). JAN is a computerized system providing information to employers about worksite accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Rochlin said, "People are being trained for jobs that do not exist—we need to look at the future job market. Do you realize that McDonald's employs more people than U. S. Steel?" Recently, McDonald's McJobs program was expanded to train and employ people with disabilities.

"If it wasn't good for business", said Rochlin, "McDonald's wouldn't do it."

The action-packed Symposium included discussions on subcommittee structure, membership development, fund and resource acquisition, tax exempt status, worker's compensation insurance, and emergency planning for workers with disabilities.

Cities represented at the Symposium were Austin, Beaumont, Bryan/College Station, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Angelo, San Antonio, Sweetwater, Temple, Laredo, and Wharton.

GCDP Report

The GCDP Report promotes employment and public awareness of the abilities and special needs of persons with disabilities. This quarterly GCDP Report is published by the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons.

Communications may be addressed to: Cindy Counts, Editor, GCDP Report, 118 East Riverside Drive, Austin, Texas 78704. You may also call (512) 445-8741 VOICE or TDD.

Taped copies of the GCDP Report will be provided upon request.

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