



Austin, Texas

May, 1986

## *PUSH FOR ENFORCEMENT OF DISABILITY RIGHTS*

On February 3, Attorney General Jim Mattox announced an advisory committee to work with his office in evaluating enforcement needs under state laws protecting the rights of disabled individuals.

"Our aim is very simple," Mattox said. "First, we want everyone in Texas to understand that disabled individuals are citizens first and foremost, and they should have every opportunity to be treated as such instead of being labeled as disabled first and citizens second."

Bob Kafka, President of the statewide Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, will serve as chairperson of the Attorney General's Disability Rights Advisory Committee which is composed of 16 volunteer citizens working together for the rights of disabled Texans.

Kafka said the advisory committee will analyze Texas laws protecting the rights of disabled persons and their enforcement. The committee may make recommendations to the next legislature on ways to strengthen the laws or add new legislation. In addition, the committee will make recommendations to the Attorney General on disseminating information about the laws to disabled persons so they will have an understanding of their rights.

To help reach the Attorney General's goal, his office will closely look at compliance with state laws such as consumer protection laws, the architectural barriers law and anti-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, public transportation, education, and others. Attorney General Mattox said, "I want to see those laws enforced to the maximum."

Additionally, Mattox urged the Texas Congressional delegation to review a special report delivered to the President and the Congress by the National Council on the Handicapped. The report, "Toward Independence", focuses on current federal laws and programs for disabled individuals and recommends legislation to increase incentives for disabled persons to become fully integrated into their local communities. The Disability Rights Advisory Committee voted to endorse the report as worthy of further study and possible implementation.

Copies of "Toward Independence" as well as information on the activities of the Attorney General's Disability Rights Advisory Committee are available by contacting Bob Kafka at 512-443-8252 or Robert Lemens, Attorney General's office, at 512-463-2120.

### *DID YOU KNOW?*

On February 27, 1986 the TRC Board expressed strong support for the GCDP program by recommending a substantial increase in the GCDP 1988-89 budget request.

Drop in oil prices hit state agencies' budgets hard. GCDP faces an immediate loss of \$28,000 in operating funds (11% cut). Program will operate at a minimum level for the remainder of 1986 and 1987.

Harris poll shows 72% of USA's disabled individuals feel life has improved in the last decade. Copies of the national survey entitled "Disabled Americans: Self Perception 1986, Bringing Disabled Americans into the Mainstream" is available by contacting Nina Hill, Project Director, at 212-679-0100.

A bill to amend Title 23, United States Code, to provide for a uniform system for handicapped parking has been introduced. The bill, H.R. 3889, has been referred to the Committee on Public Works and Transportation.

To file complaints about buildings which do not meet the requirements of Texas' Architectural Barriers law contact Doug Lawson at 512-463-3211.

Head injury is one of the fastest growing disability groups in the United States. Three years ago Texas had no organized support group for individuals and families dealing with head injury. Today, a state chapter as well as 14 local chapters exist. For information call 1-800-392-0040.

EZJ Ranch is a camp for physically disabled youngsters between the ages of 10-16. The camp is held during the week of Independence Day and stresses independent living and outdoor recreation. Call Bob Kafka at 512-443-8252 for additional information.

Barbara Jordan media entry forms will be available in late May. Please retain materials you are interested in nominating for this media awards program. This is one way to recognize the media in your community for a job well done.

## TDHS ATTENDANT SERVICES PILOT PROJECT UNDERWAY

**D**uring the last legislative session Texas Department of Human Services was provided with an appropriation of 1.1 million dollars for each year of the biennium to develop demonstration projects for shared attendant services. Attendant services enhance quality of life and promote independence for many persons with disabilities. By meeting basic personal needs, attendant care may allow a disabled person the freedom to participate in training, education, employment or volunteer activities.

Under contract with DHS, the organizations listed below will provide services under the pilot attendant care program. Persons living in one of these service areas and interested in participating in the program as a client or an attendant should contact the service provider directly.

Attendant care services such as personal care, home management tasks and escort services are being purchased through these contracts. To the greatest extent possible the client will be responsible for the hiring, training, supervising and terminating of the attendant.

### City of San Antonio

1405 North Main  
San Antonio, Texas 78212  
Contact: Sam Garcia 512-299-7241  
Serves Bexar County

### Concepts of Care

317 Peoples #911  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401  
Contact: Diane Crawford  
800-242-3042 (toll free)  
Serves Hidalgo, Bee, Live Oak,  
Refugio, Cleburg, Jim Wells, and  
Willacy Counties

### Americare Professionals

107 West Camellia  
Orange, Texas 77630  
Contact: Patsy Owers  
409-882-0523  
Serves Orange, Jefferson, Hardin,  
Newton, and Jasper Counties

The service will target physically disabled adults who are capable of self-directing their attendant care. At a minimum the contracts are to develop a pool of potential attendants, determine client eligibility and level of need, make payment to the attendant or the client, provide emergency back-up attendant capability and act as a broker by linking clients interested in shared living arrangements or other special attendant arrangements.

Attendant services will be provided in the client's home and may also be provided at the client's school or workplace if feasible. Attendant services may include:

**Personal care.** Help with activities related to the persons' physical health such as bathing, (un) dressing, preparing meals, feeding, exercising, grooming, routine hair and skin care, self-administered medication, toileting and transfer/ambulation.

**Home management.** Activities related to housekeeping that are essential to a person's health and comfort. Examples of home management activities are changing bed linens, house cleaning, laundering, shopping, storing purchased items, arranging furniture, and washing dishes.

**Escort.** Arranging for transportation or accompanying the person on trips to obtain health care services and household items.

For information about the TDHS pilot attendant care program contact German Valtierra, program specialist, TDHS, P.O. Box 2960, Mail Code 543-W, Austin, Texas 78769, 512-450-3136.

**Note:** The National Council on the Handicapped has developed recommendations for a national policy for attendant services. These recommendations are available by contacting GCDP.

## THE 70th SESSION OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE IS AROUND THE CORNER

**T**his spring the Texas legislature will hold hearings and determine state appropriations for fiscal years 1988-1989. Forecasts predict that the state will be operating under one of the tightest budgets in its history. Setting priorities will be tough and funding cuts are sure to occur.

Like all citizens, disabled Texans and their supporters (e.g., members of mayor's committees, employers, family members and service providers) must be prepared to clearly express their needs and funding priorities for the '88-'89 biennium. The democratic process allows opportunity for voting and more. Legislators are available year 'round and want to hear from their constituents. Let them hear from you.

## LOCAL COMMITTEE NOTES

# Independence at El Centro College through the Dallas Computer Training Course

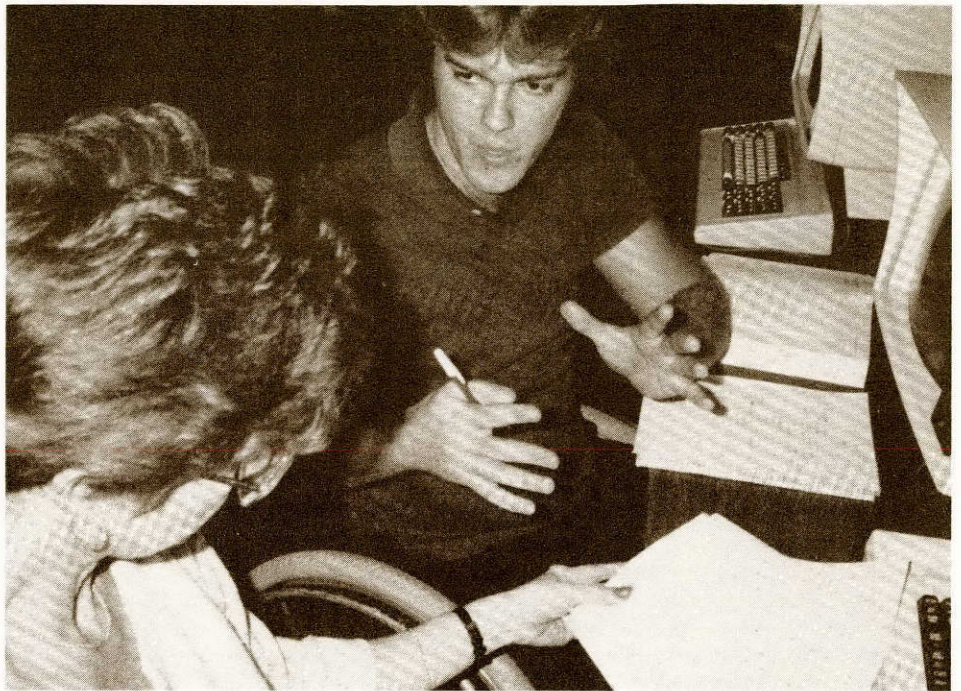
Employment in high tech industries is IN and persons with disabilities want to participate in this lucrative field. An outstanding example of volunteer efforts to promote the employment of disabled workers is illustrated by the students at the Computer Programmer Training course operated in Dallas at El Centro Community College.

This program resulted from the coordinating efforts of the Dallas Mayor's Committee and thirty-four major businesses, including IBM, M Bank, E-Systems, and ITT Courier. These businesses serve on a Business Advisory Council which governs the operation of the course and coordinates funding and placement activities. Training is not merely introductory or generic. It is geared to industry standards and includes both academic and internship experience. The program operates with the funding and support of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission.

Students will be trained annually in a program that will enable them to earn \$25,000-30,000 a year with opportunities for further professional growth and advancement. Jobs at this level will provide adequate income for these individuals to become self-sufficient, independent, and productive persons without social security or welfare assistance which many currently receive.

Todd Cox, a student in the program said, "It is a great opportunity to become independent. It's tailor-made for the physically challenged and provides a chance to show the world that we can be productive."

Leslie Skibell, program director of vocational rehabilitation at El Centro says, "I think Dallas businesses are going to end up fighting over hiring these people. Right now we have 21 students and our goal is 100 percent placement."



One student, who enjoys the challenge, shows that quality and productivity are the name of the game.

## WHAT IS A LOCAL MAYOR'S COMMITTEE?

A mayor's committee is a group of volunteers operating under the sanction of a mayor to positively address the needs, such as employment, of local citizens with disabilities. Affiliated with the GCDP, local volunteer committees work to impact local conditions. The existing 19 local mayor's committees in Texas work with more than 2,000 community volunteers.

An example of an activity that addresses a local need is the establishment of full time job banks that match disabled persons with job vacancies in their home community. Three mayor's committees have initiated the operation of job banks to serve disabled persons.  
Project LINK, Dallas  
JOB LEAD, San Antonio  
JOB MATCH, Austin

Since 1982 these job banks have served 2,792 disabled Texans.

Major job fairs are held annually in at least four Texas cities including Houston, Fort Worth, San Antonio and Dallas. Traditionally, these cities bring together 40-50 employers who may interview 200-300 applicants in a day. Successful hires often result from these interviews.

Popular projects generating community interest include sporting events such as wheelchair basketball, disability simulations, logo design contests and wheelchair races for fund raising.

Local Mayor's committees identify local needs and implement projects to meet the needs of disabled Texans in their community.

Membership on local committees is open to the public and there is no membership fee.

# ACCESSIBLE APARTMENT FACILITY SCHEDULES OPENING

In August of this year an accessible apartment offering supervised living is scheduled to open in south Austin.

The facility, to be located at Manchaca near Stassney, will offer a nice place to live with supervision, subsidized living arrangements, and staff available to assist with services of

daily living such as personal care.

Those eligible under Texas Department of Human Services guidelines are encouraged to make application. Also, if your income exceeds TDHS

guidelines you may still be able to rent an apartment if you make private arrangements.

For information about this facility contact TDHS, Services to the Aged and Disabled (016-8), P. O. Box 15995, Austin, Texas 78761, 512-444-0511.

**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 Dr., Austin, Texas 78704. You may also call (512) 445-8741 VOICE or TDD.

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

Cindy Counts ..... Editor  
 Susan Antoniewicz ..... Illustrator  
 Sue Durban ..... Illustrator  
 Becky Neito ..... Illustrator  
 TRC Printing Services ..... Printing

**EMPLOYMENT AWARDS PROGRAM**

*Annual Calendar*

May, June	GCDP distributes nomination packets
July	Local Mayor's Committees select local winners
August 15	GCDP deadline for accepting nominations
October 3	GCDP Employment Awards presentation ceremony
October 5-11	National Employ the Handicapped Week
January 15	PCEH deadline for accepting nominations

For more information or to receive a nomination package call GCDP staff person John Burns at **512-445-8270**.

Texas Governor's Committee  
for Disabled Persons  
118 E. Riverside Drive  
Austin, Texas 78704

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Austin, Texas  
Permit No. 1605