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1997 Annual Report



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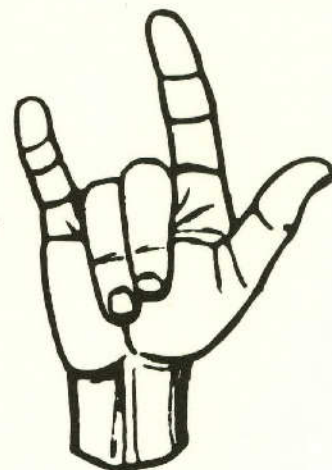
Smiles and signs that say "I love you"

Bridges —

*No matter how you say it—words, signs and smiles communicate,
“I Love You,” to Melissa.*

*Rose and Maurie Minette teach their daughter, Melissa, her first American
Sign Language sign—“I Love You.” Melissa will grow up bilingual, speaking
and signing to communicate with her mom.*

*Rose Aird Minette is hard of hearing and a program specialist for the
Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.*



TEXAS GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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- Mary Ann Board, *Bellaire*
- Larry Chevallier, *Joinerville*
- Victoria Christman, *Dallas*
- Douglas F. Grady, Jr., *Fort Worth*
- Peter Grojean, *San Antonio*
- Thomas P. Justis, *Grapevine*
- Kym Iris King, *Houston*
- Debbie H. Morrill, *San Antonio*
- James G. Olson, *Houston*
- Shirley Smith Pacetti, *Houston*
- Judy C. Scott, *Dallas*



The Governor's Committee discusses implementation of the new parking law during a meeting in Nacogdoches.
 Photo courtesy of Dave Rossman, Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel.

Ex Officio Agency Members

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- Bill Hammond, *Texas Workforce Commission*
- David W. Myers, *Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*
- Terrell I. Murphy, (Pat D. Westbrook retired December 1997) *Texas Commission for the Blind*

Governor's Committee Staff

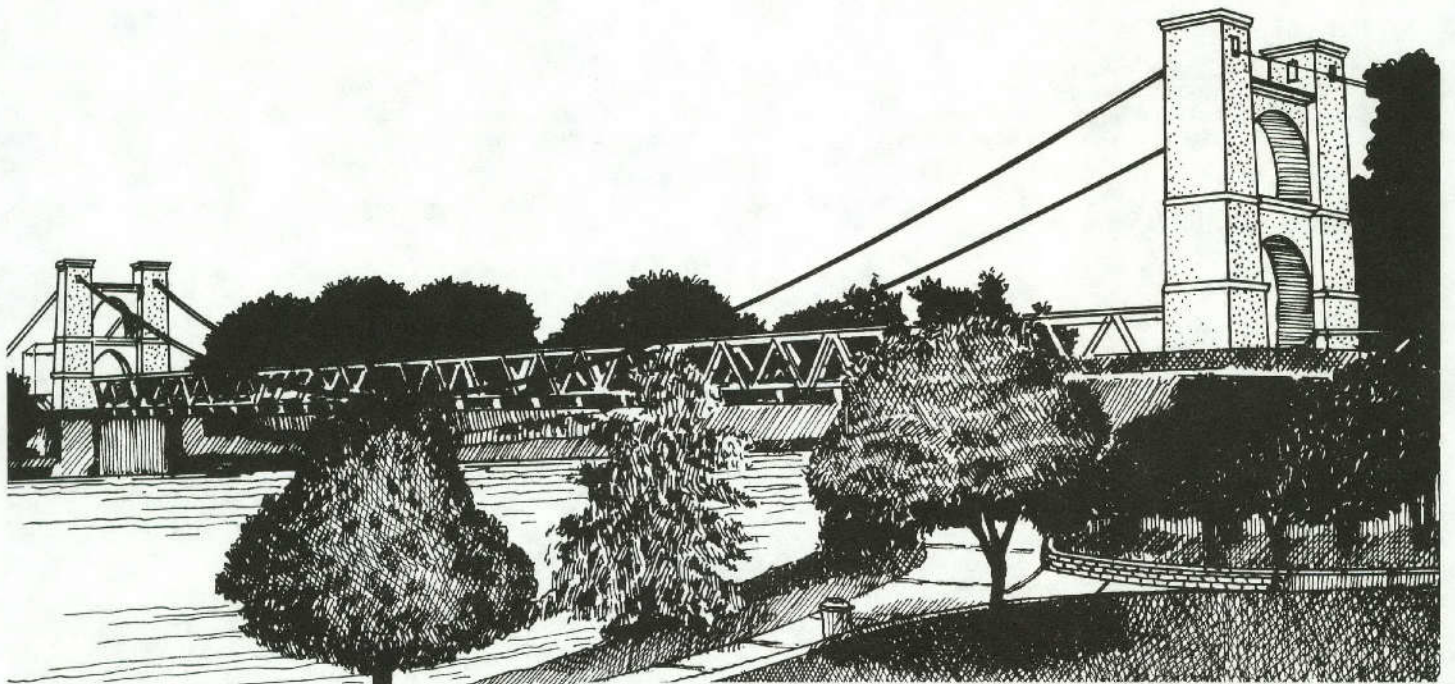
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The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.



Waco Suspension Bridge

A massive 473-foot suspension span, completed in 1869 over the Brazos River in downtown Waco. The bridge cables and materials were hauled overland to the bridge site since Waco lacked railroad connections at the time.

The bridge is the earliest known bridge in the state.



STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

GEORGE W. BUSH
GOVERNOR

Dear Fellow Texans:

Bridges are forever! During World War II, bridges which had heard the tramp of Roman Legions vibrated to the rumble of tanks. Still they stand; solid, strong, and serviceable. And so it is with the bridges Texans are building to carry us into the 21st century.

The members of the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities are, among many others, the architects insuring accessible Texas bridges to all our citizens, including 3.9 million Texans with disabilities.

The Committee is focusing its 1997 Annual Report on the establishment of sturdy foundations and accessible bridges. By providing recommendations to the Governor and Legislature, the Committee shapes policies and programs in many areas such as: technology, education, employment, housing, transportation, health, recreation, public awareness, and parking. These policies and practices, translated into actions, empower Texans with disabilities as customers, business owners, parents, employees, volunteers, and educators.

During 1997, Committee members addressed these issues before varied audiences. Members presented at conferences including the National Association of ADA Coordinators, the Texas Association of Journalism Educators, the Texas Rehabilitation Association, rotary clubs, and city councils. With member assistance, a new local volunteer committee in Midland joined the Governor's Committee network of 28 local volunteer committees. Members also received training on the Governor's priorities and appointee roles and responsibilities. Specific sessions addressed ethics, budgets and effective communications. Members also served on numerous boards, commissions, and committees volunteering time and energy to promote a higher quality of life for Texans with disabilities.

To be certain that the far end of our bridges are anchored in a strong, vibrant economy, we must insure the way is open to all Texans. The fuel to power a growing economy is not just atoms and oil, but people. If Texas is to remain a leader in the next millennium, the energy and abilities of all our citizens, including Texans with disabilities, must be harnessed into a growing, vital workforce.

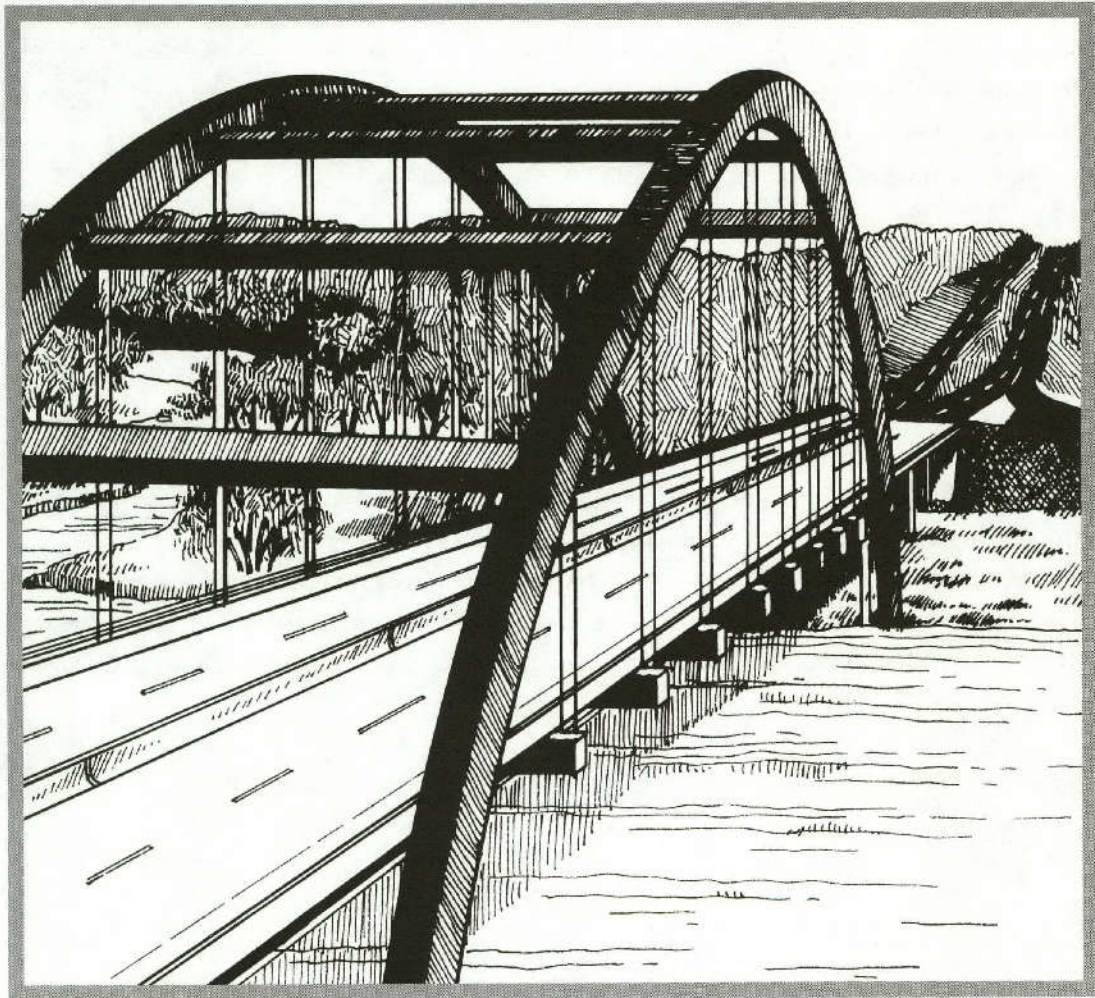
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James L. Caldwell".

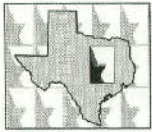
James L. Caldwell
Chairman



Governor George W. Bush and appointee James L. Caldwell who chairs the Governor's Committee and serves on the Texas Science and Technology Committee, Texas Commission for the Blind Board, and Continuing Advisory Committee on Special Education.



Loop 360 Bridge—Austin



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

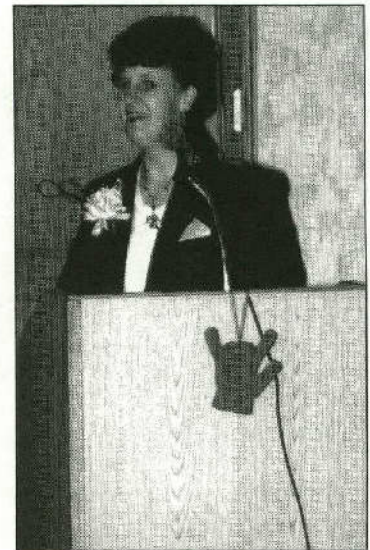
Pat Pound

Our society views disability as a natural occurrence in a normal life span. As the Texas population grows proportionally older and more diverse, the number of persons with disabilities increases and experiencing a disability becomes more routine. How our State addresses issues, copes with societal change, and builds bridges impacts the lives of an estimated 3.9 million Texans with disabilities.

The Governor's Committee values bridges—the business to government bridge, the state to local bridge, and the education to employment bridge. Strengthening relationships builds bridges with 29 local volunteer committees, (and 23 communities desiring such committees), disability organizations, businesses, and government. This report focuses on Texas' accomplishments founded on a sturdy network that recognizes and builds effective bridges.

The Committee's local ties are stronger. Three quarterly business meetings were held in the communities of Corpus Christi, Nacogdoches and San Antonio. Likewise, Austin, Bell County, Houston and Irving hosted four award ceremonies recognizing 43 employers, media professionals and persons with disabilities. Committee members, staff, and local volunteer committees jointly increased visibility, including media attention, as evidenced by over 1,000 disability-related Texas newspaper articles.

The Committee staff achieved considerable success this year while managing the challenges of staff shortages and an office move. Of the 1,487 laws passed by the Texas Legislature, staff tracked 241 affecting persons with disabilities. New laws passed dealt with educational testing, genetic protections, accessible parking, personal assistance and mental health parity. More than 21,000 Texans received technical assistance including 2,064 assisted by telephone (see chart).



Pat Pound encourages employment of people with disabilities during an address at Fort Hood. Fort Hood honored Jennifer Oliver, a computer specialist who is hard of hearing, as Employee of the Year. Ms. Oliver went on to receive several national awards.

Photo courtesy of Gary Littleton.

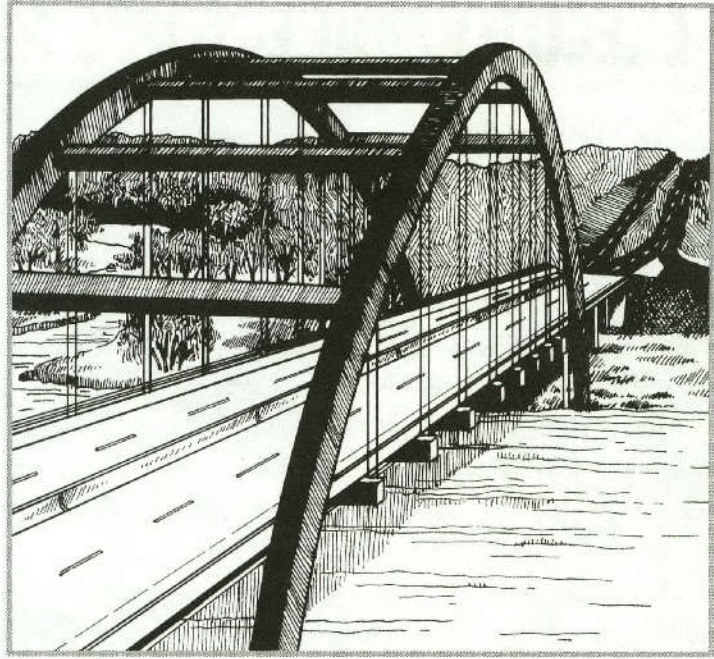
The Governor's Committee produced information comparing sign language interpreter programs, 12 in Texas and 3 out-of-state. Staff also analyzed the first-ever data about the 1,418 state employees with disabilities. Additionally, staff produced information about new ways for Texas businesses to comply with the ADA and how to hold an accessible meeting.

In 1997, the Committee made recommendations to the Governor and Legislature in the areas of ADA, education, employment, full participation and access, health, and independence. Report sections included an introduction, recommendations, highlights, new Texas laws, and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

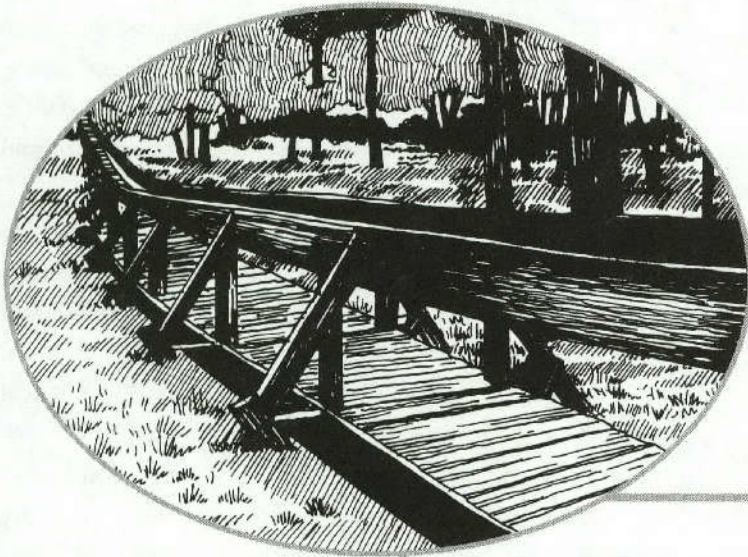
An easy to use insert summarizes 1997 Committee accomplishments and builds a bridge to the future by surveying you about issues affecting Texans with disabilities. The Committee invites you to shape the 1999 Committee's recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by completing this survey.

Calls to the Governor's Committee

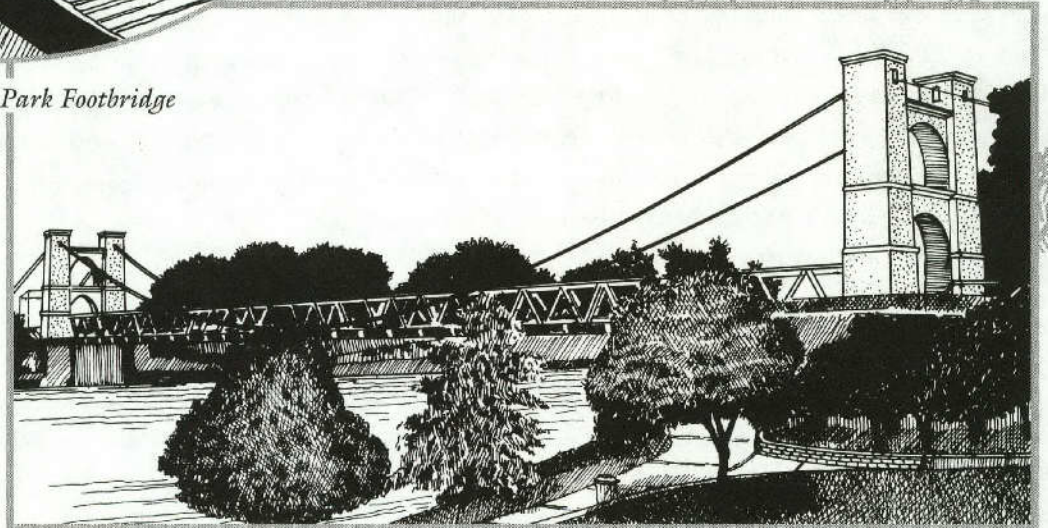
ADA.....	370	Awards Programs.....	260	Other.....	137
Local Committees.....	361	Access.....	215	Employment.....	121
Services and Information.....	306	Legislation.....	212	Business Leaders Network.....	82
		Total.....	2,064		



Loop 360 Bridge—Austin



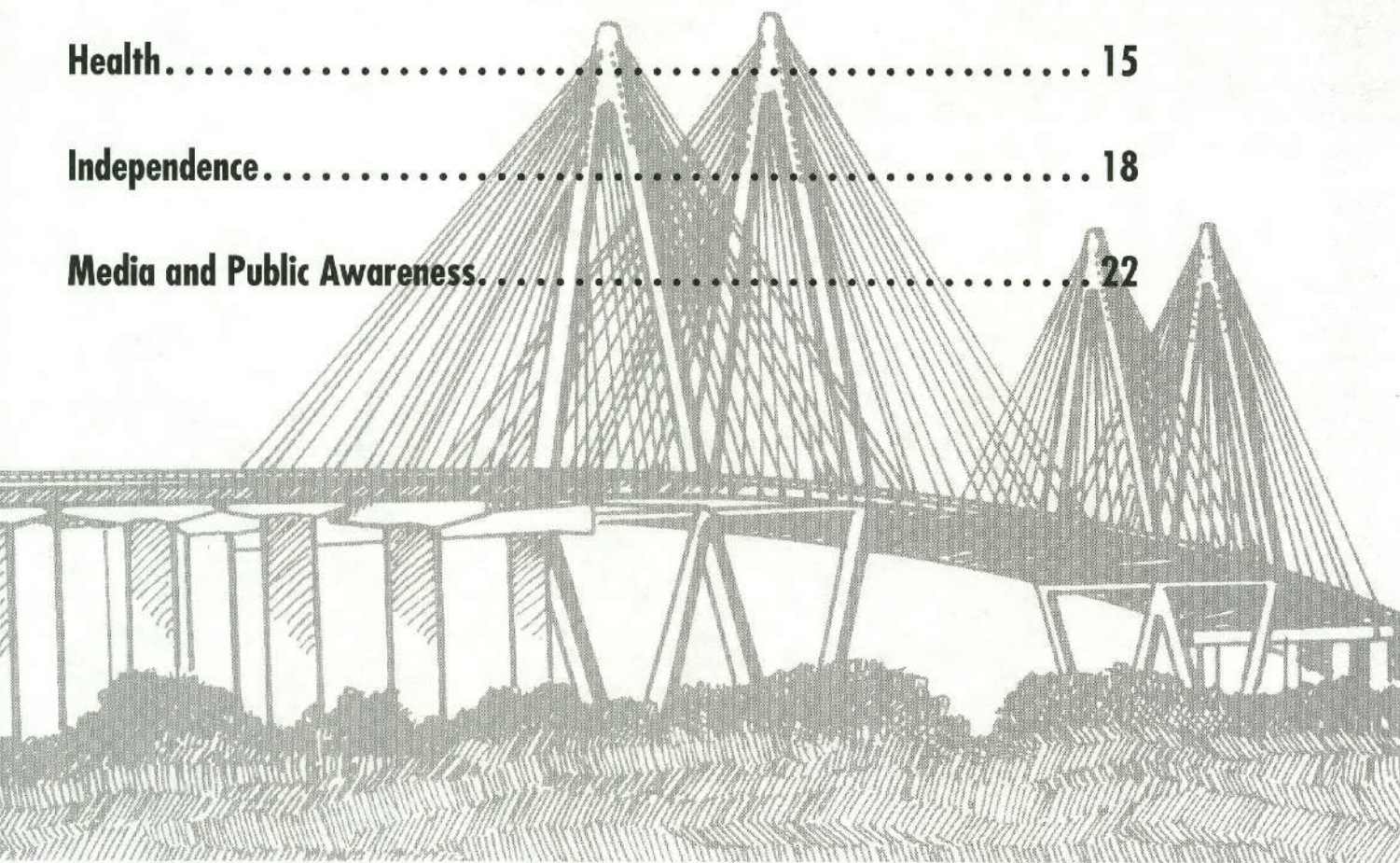
Rusk Garden Park Footbridge



Waco Suspension Bridge

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Fred Hartman Bridge—Baytown

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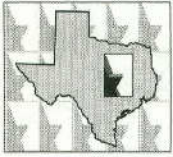
Under construction—the Cordova International Bridge of the Americas joining El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

Photo courtesy of Frank de Santos III
Texas Department of Transportation



Past Governor's Committee members Dik Johnson and Lena Coleman, and chair of the Texas Association, Rosine Runyon, discuss topics for a leadership conference targeting Texas volunteer committees near The Harbor Bridge in Corpus Christi.

Photo by Cindy Counts.



EDUCATION

Recommendations

The Governor's Committee made the following recommendations in education:

- Promote compliance in all Texas schools with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, state and federal transition and school-to-work legislation, and integration of accountability into overall school evaluation systems.
- Implement campus and district accountability evaluation systems that incorporate appropriate accessible measuring tools for students with disabilities.
- Promote full participation of students with disabilities, to the extent that it meets their individual needs, by encouraging adequate support services provided by skilled personnel, timely training for regular classroom teachers, and on-going student and parent involvement.
- Improve skills of persons with disabilities by promoting full participation in public schools, post-secondary vocational programs, and colleges and universities.



Students at the Texas School for the Deaf visit with the Governor.

Introduction

Congress, the Texas Legislature, and various other entities made progress on these recommendations this year. Congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Texas Legislature addressed testing of students with disabilities. Colleges began standardizing certain classes and procedures to better serve students. Both higher and secondary education are refocusing curriculum to include skills most needed by Texas employers.

Highlights

This section includes information about ADA compliance in school districts, college disability services, training for sign language interpreters, new state laws and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

ADA Survey of Texas Independent School Districts



In 1997, 542 Texas independent school districts responded to a Governor's Committee survey on ADA implementation. Most districts (80%) have an ADA self-evaluation and (83%) have designated ADA coordinators. In districts with less than 50 employees, 39% have designated ADA coordinators, although not required to do so. More districts provided ADA training to teachers and staff (59%), than to elected officials (39%).

Only 63% of all districts reported having developed an ADA facility transition plan. Most districts (91%) approach facility compliance by creating access to all schools, as compared to only 7% that prioritized access changes based upon requests. Some districts (31%) have funds approved for ADA modifications but have not expended, while others (13%) have pending bond elections for ADA requirements.

Interpreter Training Programs



The demand for the services of sign language interpreters, particularly for those with higher skills, has increased largely

ADA Compliance in Texas Schools

ADA Actions	All Districts	Districts with 50 or more employees	Districts with less than 50 employees
Included Disability in Non-discrimination Policy	91%	94%	82%
Adopted ADA Grievance Procedure*	87%	97%	49%
Designated an ADA Coordinator*	83%	95%	39%
Posted ADA Notices	82%	86%	68%
Trained Administrators and Supervisors	81%	84%	76%
Conducted ADA/504 Self-Evaluation	80%	83%	70%
Submitted Construction Plans to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation	68%	75%	41%
Developed a Facility Transition Plan*	63%	76%	18%
Completed 68-100% of Barrier Removal	59%	58%	62%
Trained Teachers and Other Staff	59%	85%	48%
Involved People with Disabilities in Planning	53%	57%	36%
Trained Elected Officials	39%	41%	33%
Included Statement of Accessibility in Public Meeting Notices	29%	31%	21%
Completed 34-67% of Barrier Removal	24%	26%	15%

* required only in districts with 50 or more employees

due to the requirements of the ADA. According to the Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, there are less than 250 higher-level sign language interpreters available in Texas to communicate in complex legal, medical, and psychiatric settings. Yet, more than 1,000 beginner-level interpreters are available in less complicated settings such as meetings, social services, and education to communicate with approximately 41,000 Texans who are deaf.

In 1997, the Governor's Committee surveyed sign language interpreter training programs (ITPs). In Texas, ITPs have almost doubled since 1993 and 83% indicate increased demand. Two new charts, available from the Governor's Committee, compare 12 Texas programs and three out-of-state programs. The charts include contact information, enrollment, equipment sufficiency, staffing, and class size. The results identified a need to increase training opportunities, improve beginner-level skills to achieve a higher level of certification, and to promote sign language interpreting/transliterating as a career.

Disability Services in Texas Higher Education

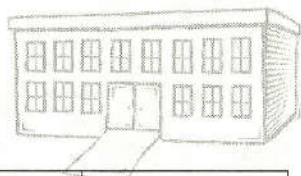


Texas colleges and universities offer a variety of accommodations for students with disabilities. Responding to a Governor's Committee survey, 100 institutions reported the availability of services as shown by the chart below. Various testing accommodations are the most common service followed by tutoring, remedial classes, and notetakers. Less than half of the colleges reported providing accessible transportation, internship programs, transition planning with local school districts, and attendant care. A list of the colleges providing any particular service is available from the Governor's Committee.

IDEA Reauthorized

In 1997, Congress reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), ensuring that students with disabilities receive instruction which is similar to that received by other students. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) of each student will relate more clearly to

Disability Services at Texas Colleges and Universities



Disability Services at Texas Colleges and Universities	Percent Offered
Extended Testing Time	93
Help for Registration	90
Tests Given in Separate Rooms	90
Tutoring	89
Oral Tests	84
Disability Services Counselors	81
Note-takers	81
Remedial Classes	76
Continuing Education	74
Learning Laboratory	74
Readers	74
Adaptive Devices	69
Rehabilitation Agency Liaisons	67
Orientation	66
Accessible Recreation	65
Sign Language Interpreters	58
Vocational Assessments	52
Planned Recruitment	50
Community Work Experience	47
Internship Program	46
Diagnostic Assessment (IQ, etc.)	40
Vocational Classes	40
Transition Planning with School Districts	37
Accessible Transportation	36
Disability Support Groups	32
Self Advocacy Training	29
Social Skills Training	28
Sighted Guides	24
Post Employment Services	18
*Other	17
Attendant Care	11
Wheelchair Repair	10

*The "Other" category includes adaptive computer labs, Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDDs), mentoring, study skills classes, modified curriculum and computerized testing.

the curriculum for all students, and classroom teachers will assist in the development of each child's IEP. Parents of students with disabilities will receive routine progress reports similar to those currently provided for other students. In addition, state and district goal settings and assessment will be modified to include students with disabilities. Teachers will receive supplemental training to provide better instruction to students with disabilities. Finally, IDEA clarifies disciplinary rules for students with disabilities and provides mediation to parents who might otherwise litigate to resolve disputes.

Evaluation of Texas Special Education Services

In 1997, the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released the evaluation of Texas' implementation of IDEA. The report requires that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) develop a more comprehensive district monitoring system and implement a more responsive complaint response process. OSEP also called on the TEA to ensure that children with disabilities are placed into the least restrictive educational environment possible. Finally, TEA must ensure that a free and appropriate public education is provided to students with disabilities and that students in special education receive full access to the benefits afforded other students.

Texas Youth with Disabilities

This year three Texas youth with disabilities joined 49 others from around the country at a youth summit sponsored by the National Council on Disability (NCD). The conference provided students with information about employment options for persons with disabilities and the services to assist them in securing employment. Many of the youth had never encountered others with disabilities similar to their own. They exchanged ideas and information. NCD plans to repeat the youth summit again in 1998.

Reading Initiatives

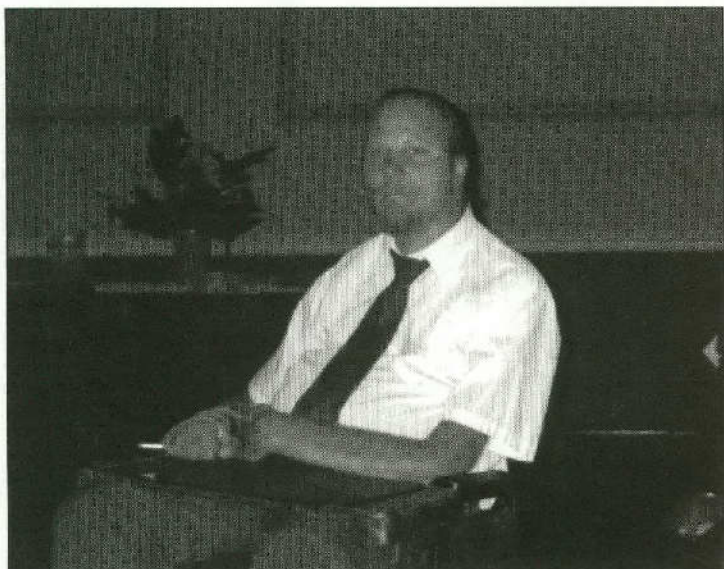
The Deaf Action Center of Dallas received a \$20,000 grant from the Texas First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative. First Lady Laura Bush announced the awards for ten programs that provide literacy services to children in pre-kindergarten through the third grade. The grant to the Deaf Action Center of Dallas will help families with a member who is

Scholarship Programs of Local Volunteer Committees on People with Disabilities

City/County/Contact	Program Description	Dollar Amount and Number of Awards Given		
		Prior to 1996	1996	1997
Austin Ron Lucey (512) 459-2577	Student with a disability attending a university, vocational training school, community college or other post secondary training may apply to receive a scholarship. The goal is to provide assistance to students who would benefit most.			\$3,000 3 scholarships
Beaumont Kyle Hayes (409) 880-3708	Student with a disability attending Lamar University in Beaumont, per anonymous donor requirement, may apply to receive a scholarship. Amounts vary depending on student need and resources.	\$43,500 22 scholarships	\$5,000 5 scholarships	\$7,000 5 scholarships
Corpus Christi Judy Telge (512) 882-9197	This is an endowment program and scholarship awards are paid from interest gained. The Southside Lions Club supports the program.	\$800 8 scholarships	\$1,500 6 scholarships	\$1,000 2 scholarships
Dallas Kim Bunting (972) 307-3176	Direct scholarships are awarded to individuals.	\$63,798 75 scholarships (since 1982)	\$6,000 3 scholarships	\$10,000* 5 scholarships
Houston and Harris County Steve Martinez (713) 237-2630	Scholarships of \$1,000 to graduating high school seniors with a disability are awarded and renewed, if possible.	\$85,000 85 scholarships	\$15,000 19 scholarships (11 new; 8 renewals)	\$5,000 (10 renewals)
Orange County Karen McKinney (409) 886-5591	The scholarship amount is based on student need and available resources.		\$500 1 scholarship	

Notes:

- Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Houston, and Orange County collectively awarded \$248,098 in an estimated 240 scholarships to students with disabilities since the onset of the programs.
- In 1996, the **Austin** Scholarship Subcommittee researched and received information from other Committees regarding scholarship programs.
- In 1996, **Beaumont** Mayor David Moore established the Margaret Harmon Education Fund as a living tribute in recognition of Margaret Harmon's efforts to improve life quality for Texans with disabilities. Margaret Harmon died on December 23, 1995.
- In 1997, **Corpus Christi** Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities provided a \$1,000 for a community-wide scholarship at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi in memory of former Mayor Mary Rhodes.
- * In 1997, **Dallas** was the first city to offer the NationsBank Abilities Scholarship Program. Winners were announced at the Dallas Mayor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities' Gala on October 25, 1997. The program is expected to expand nationally throughout NationsBank markets for the 1998-1999 academic year providing up to \$100,000 in scholarships.
- **Dallas** is considering a change in the scholarship program which may include internships and mentoring.



Corpus Christi Mayor's Committee scholarship winner Wilfred Wallace.

deaf teach reading to young children. They have already served more families than anticipated.

New Texas Laws

Testing and Accountability—HB 1800 provided an assessment system to bring special education students into the statewide accountability program for standardized testing. HB 1800 required the TEA to develop appropriate criterion-referenced assessment instruments for certain special education students and requires that these instruments assess competencies and growth in reading, writing and mathematics. HB 1800 also provided that a student's admission, review, and dismissal committee determine whether test modifications are necessary. *(Representative Hochberg and Senator Barrientos)*

Accessible Textbooks - SB 294 established an advisory committee to study the costs and benefits of using computer networks to update textbooks using the Internet. The advisory committee will coordinate with the State Board of Education's long-range technology plan and will provide recommendations to the 1999 Legislature. SB 294 specified that a subcommittee will investigate and report on the use of technology to provide textbooks to students with disabilities. *(Senator Sibley and Representative Maxey)*

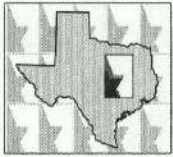
Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor's Committee reported the following accomplishments, in addition to scholarships awarded, in the area of education:

- Facilitated Texas A&M University's provision of interpreter services for students with hearing impairments during classes. *(Bryan/College Station)*
- Initiated a plan to serve as an incubator for issues faced by parents of children with disabilities. *(Corpus Christi)*
- Addressed students at numerous schools and school boards about sensitivity, accommodations, ARD and IEP processes, and employment issues. *(Dallas, Gaines County, Fort Worth and Laredo)*
- Published an updated, college resource directory covering approximately 34 colleges and universities. *(Houston)*
- Published and distributed 20,000 free copies of their quarterly tabloid on education, services, access, employment and other issues of importance to people with disabilities. *(Laredo)*



Rusk Garden Park Footbridge



EMPLOYMENT

Recommendations

The Governor's Committee made the following recommendations in employment:

- Ensure appropriate, accessible, and effective employment services for persons with disabilities through the local workforce development boards, one-stop career centers, Texas Workforce Commission, and vocational training programs.
- Increase job assistance and placement services from vocational rehabilitation agencies, including assistance with entrepreneurial efforts.
- Increase inclusion of persons with disabilities in business internships and other job training programs.
- Expand use of existing employment incentives by increasing awareness and simplifying procedures.
- Promote state and federal legislation that increases incentives, such as employer tax credits and social security reforms, for employment of persons with disabilities.

Introduction

Many Texans with disabilities secured jobs this year through state agency assistance-Texas Workforce Commission (5,988), Texas Rehabilitation Commission (23,525) and the Texas Commission for the Blind (1,252). While more Texans with disabilities are joining a national trend among young adults to start their own business, new statistics indicate that unemployment continues to be high for this population. The U. S. Census reported this year that one out of every five Americans has a disability and one out of every ten has a severe disability. Of Americans age 21 to 64, the employment rate is 82% for those with no disability, 76% for those with a non-severe disability, and 26% for those with a severe disability.

Highlights

This section includes information about state agency employment of persons with disabilities, the first entrepreneurship award, students gaining employment experience, the National Business Summit, ADA employment seminar and awards, job accommodations, compliance statistics, new Texas laws and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

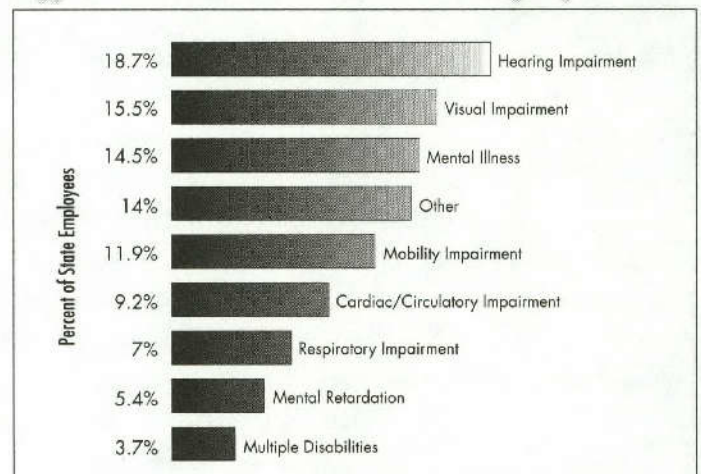
State Agency Employees with Disabilities



The Governor's Committee is charged with collecting and monitoring data on employment of persons with disabilities in state agencies. The State's major personnel database added specific disability fields to their system; the resulting reports reflect the initial data gathered after a five-year effort. Since this is initial data and reporting is completely voluntary for each employee, more persons with disabilities may be employed by state agencies than this data reflects. Approximately 135 agencies currently use this personnel database, however, many large agencies and state colleges do not. Results are as follows:

- Of the 45,594 employees from agencies reporting, 1,418 employees have disabilities (3.1%).

Types of Disabilities of State Employees



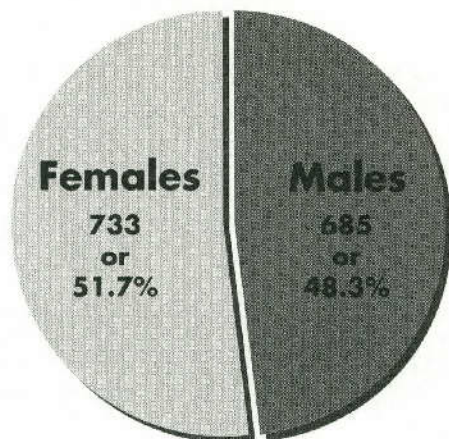
- The majority of employees with disabilities, like other state agency employees, earn between \$15,000 and \$34,999 a year.
- The gender of employees with disabilities tracks the gender of all employees.

ADA Employment Seminar and Awards Recognition

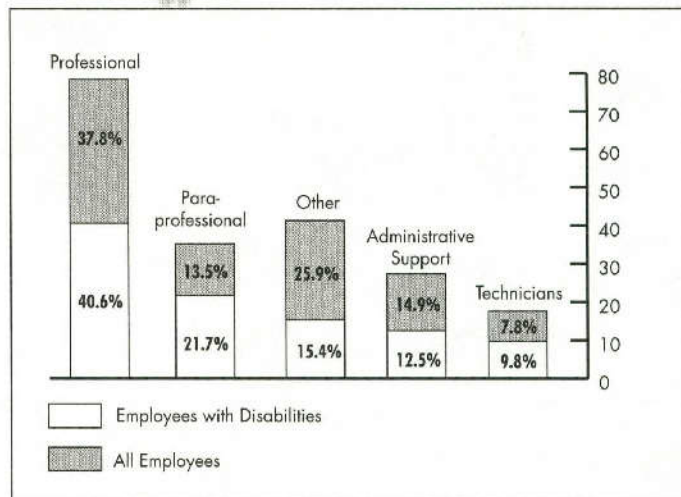
The Houston Mayor's Committee on People with Disabilities hosted a seminar celebrating the seventh anniversary of the ADA. Peggy Mastroianni, Associate Legal Counsel with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) addressed recent ADA guidance about accommodating persons with psychiatric disabilities. This guidance triggered considerable media attention and confusion among some employers. Her remarks at the seminar were timely and clarified misconceptions concerning the ADA guidance. Additionally, EEOC Commissioner Reginald Jones requested that employers provide information to the Commission on best practices regarding non-discrimination.

James L. Caldwell, Governor's Committee Chairman, and members Kym I. King and Shirley Pacetti recognized outstanding accomplishments of eight individuals and companies for employing, empowering and promoting the abilities of Texans with disabilities. A list of award honorees can be found in the appendices of this report.

Gender of State Employees with Disabilities



State Employees with Disabilities and Job Types



First Texas Entrepreneurship Award

On July 10, 1997, the Governor's Committee presented the first award to a Texas entrepreneur with a disability. Chad R. Raney, owner of CareChoice Home Medical Supply, Inc. in Texarkana, received the award for his business leadership and civic involvement. As a consumer of medical services, Chad became frustrated with local medical equipment stores not understanding his needs. He opened a store offering easy access and interactive design for each customer. Chad donated accessible gym equipment to a



Entrepreneur of the Year, Chad Raney remarks, "It doesn't get any better than this!" as he accepted the first such award from Governor's Committee member, Shirley Pacetti.

Photo courtesy of Michael Norris.

State Agencies with Greatest Percentages of Employees with Disabilities



health club, and is working with a hardware store to provide ramps for persons with disabilities.

Students Gain Employment Experience

Eight high school students from the Houston area interned this year through the High School High Tech Program. This program began two years ago thanks to funding from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The internships are organized and administered by United Cerebral Palsy of Texas. The students who participate in the program are students with disabilities who have the interest and ability to pursue careers in high-technology fields. Four of this year's interns had the opportunity to work at NASA, where some of them performed complex tasks such as computer testing and maintenance. Two other interns worked at Memorial Hospital, and one worked for McDonnell Douglas (now Boeing). The McDonnell Douglas intern was able to work with engineers in a robotics laboratory. Each of the employers reported a high degree of satisfaction with their High School High Tech Program interns.

Thirteen Texas students with disabilities became employed as interns or permanent employees as a result of efforts by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. President's Committee staff interviewed 61 Texas college students. The students provided prospective employers with information about their field of study, abilities and accomplishments. Called the Workforce Recruitment Program, this effort was recently broadened to include private employers. As a result of the

program's expansion, students from across the country gained valuable work experience and training.



Stephanie D. Ramon gets hands-on training in operating high-tech television equipment on the set of The CBI Worknet, a monthly show produced by students with disabilities. The CBI and Free Enterprise Program of the Lubbock ISD won a 1996 Barbara Jordan Award from the Governor's Committee.

National Disability Business Summit



On March 5, 1997, Dallas hosted "A National Disability Business Summit: Why Hasn't the Employment of People with Disabilities Increased?" The Summit was sponsored by the Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Supported Employment, and the Dallas Mayor's Committee for the Employment of People with Disabilities. The Summit involved more than 20 Texas business leaders, including Governor's Committee Chairman, James Caldwell, who is a person with a disability, is employed by IBM, and serves on several other boards and commissions.

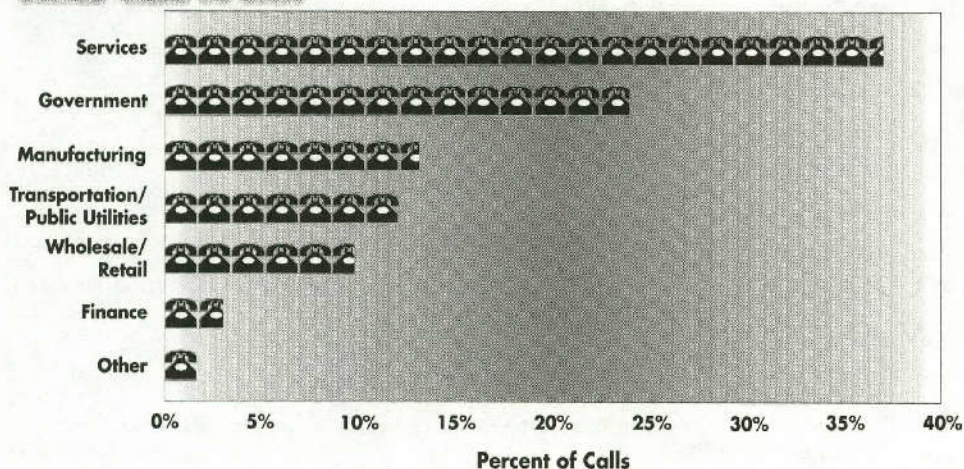
Participants recommended businesses include people with disabilities in diversity recruitment, internship and mentoring programs, and future summits. Recommendations for vocational rehabilitation included training in business cultures and operating in a more business-like manner. In short, Summit participants recommended that businesses and vocational rehabilitation professionals need to learn more about each other in order to bridge the communication gaps and improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. A follow-up Summit is planned for March, 1998 in Delaware.

Job Accommodation Network



Texas ranks second among the states in total calls to the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a free service of the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities. In 1996, 81% of Texas callers sought to accommodate current employees. Most calls focused on employee retention, followed by improving productivity and training. The chart lists Texas calls by business type.

Texas Calls to JAN



"I'm not surprised that Texas ranks high for use of the JAN. I believe that Texas businesses understand that hiring people with disabilities is cost-effective and good for business," said James L. Caldwell, Chairman of the Governor's Committee.

Employment Complaints

Texans with disabilities alleged employment discrimination by filing 1,781 ADA employment complaints with the EEOC this year. In Texas, alleged complaints include

wrongful discharge (56%), failure to provide reasonable accommodation (21%), harassment (12%), failure to hire (9%), and unfair disciplinary actions (8%). These categories correlate to national data. Alleged back impairment complaints decreased, while those with psychiatric impairments increased, each equaling 15.9%. Other impairments most frequently cited in Texas included neurological impairments (13%), and extremities (11%). This also correlates to national data. The Texas Commission on Human Rights received 432 complaints of employment discrimination based on disability this year.

Note: These figures may total to more than 100% as individuals may allege multiple violations.

Lawsuits

This year, an analysis of resolutions in 52 Texas ADA lawsuits shows 40 (77%) alleged employment discrimination. Another 6 (11.5%) alleged accessibility discrimination; and 6 others (11.5%) policy discrimination.

Outcomes of the 52 suits described above are as follows:

A court finding of discrimination was made in 4 of the cases (8%), and settlements were achieved in another 20 (38%). The defendant was favored in another 24 cases which were either dismissed or a motion for summary judgment was granted (46%). The remaining 4 (8%) were either closed or are on appeal.

Wendy Wilkinson, attorney and project director of the Southwest Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) has reviewed the outcomes of the ADA cases since the law was passed. She raises questions about how the lack of understanding of disabilities has impacted the manner in which attorneys prepare and plead ADA cases. The DBTAC provides training and technical assistance to increase understanding of people with disabilities and the requirements of the ADA.

Resolution of Texas ADA cases resulted in:

- modification of employer policy concerning medical back x-rays;

- compensatory damages and lost wages for failure to hire and requiring pre-offer physical examinations;
- reinstatement with lost wages and employer policy changes in regard to individual assessments and third party examinations;
- a determination that an individualized assessment of direct threat is not always required by the ADA, (*federal district court*);
- a ruling that employees in Texas must exhaust administrative remedies before they can sue based on the ADA in federal court (*5th Circuit Court of Appeals*); and
- a determination that safety risks may be a consideration in the determination of the reasonableness of an accommodation (*5th Circuit Court of Appeals*).

New Texas Laws

Protections Regarding Genetic Information—HB 39 prohibits the use of genetic information for eligibility in employment, issuance of occupational licenses, and health insurance. HB 39 extended these protections for people who refuse to submit to a genetic test, provided that an individual who submits to a genetic test has the right to know the results of that test, and requires confidentiality of test results except in limited specified circumstances. (*Representative McCall and Senator Zaffirini*)

Consistency with the ADA—HB 220 redefined “disability” to make state law consistent with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act by including references to HIV and AIDS to the definition of disability. (*Representative Maxey and Senator Gallegos*)

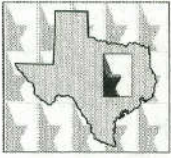
Dispute Resolution Policy—SB 694 endorsed the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by state agencies. The bill established standards and will allow funds to be expended for training, consultative assistance, and compensation of impartial third parties. State agencies may obtain their ADR services through other governmental agencies, the 14 Texas community Dispute Resolution Centers, or through pooling arrangements with other agencies. SB 694 granted judges from the State Office of Administrative Hearings the authority to conduct ADR

proceedings and refer contested cases to ADR. (*Senator Brown and Representative Greenberg*)

Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor’s Committee reported the following accomplishments in the area of employment:

- Served on the local workforce development board. (*Arlington, Bryan/College Station, and Dallas*)
- Recognized businesses for hiring people with disabilities attracting more than 1,500 people to events; raised \$60,000 at the employment awards gala in Dallas; presented certificates to 27 employers in Nacogdoches. (*Austin, Bell County, Dallas, Gaines County, Houston, Laredo, Nacogdoches and Victoria*)
- Hosted “Incentives for Hiring People with Disabilities” conference; received media coverage. (*Beaumont*)
- Provided tours of Dallas businesses employing people with disabilities to businesses from Canada, England, and Germany. (*Dallas*)
- Participated in school-to-work initiatives including a presentation to the National Chamber of Commerce School-to-Work Advisory Committee. (*Dallas*)
- Met monthly with local workforce development board executive director to provide employer feedback on workforce issues. (*Dallas*)
- Introduced a database of interns from the President’s Committee to more than 20 businesses. (*Dallas*)
- Held and participated in career fairs and seminars with an estimated 114 employers and 1,240 job applicants with disabilities. (*Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth and Houston*)
- Assisted Oklahoma, Oregon, and Arkansas in the development and design of career fairs. (*Dallas*)
- Drafted “The Employer Speaks” chapter of a white paper for The Institute for Rehabilitation Issues. (*Dallas*)
- Provided employment and ADA information to entrepreneurs through the Business Assistance Center. (*Fort Worth*)



FULL PARTICIPATION, ACCESS and the ADA

Recommendations

The Governor's Committee made the following recommendations in full participation, access and the ADA:

- Promote laws and policies that are consistent with the goals of the ADA—full participation, independence, self-sufficiency, and equal opportunities.
- Enforce existing laws that ensure facility access, parking for people with disabilities, housing and employment protections, transportation access, and voting accommodations.
- Promote the availability of accommodations including qualified sign language interpreters; accessible computer hardware, software, and telecommunications services; and captioning and audio description.
- Examine current laws, regulations, and administrative procedures to ensure that state-leased space complies with the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) and amend or strengthen so that all leases are inspected.
- Encourage private business to publicly display their achievement of substantial compliance with the Texas Accessibility Standards.
- Promote the increased use of mediation and other alternative means of dispute resolution to resolve ADA complaints, when applicable.
- Encourage the General Services Commission to enhance ADA compliance among contractors in the State Travel Management Program through education and monitoring activities.
- Encourage the Higher Education Coordinating Board to expand its five-year review of state-supported colleges and universities by gathering data about ADA compliance, law suits, complaints, and the proactive measures that have been taken to prevent reoccurrence of those issues.

Introduction

Texans with disabilities fully participated in the life of our state. Many served on government boards and commissions, others pursued new recreational options, and all 3.9 million participated as customers. Nationally, the hospitality and hotel industries report a 12% increase in their revenue due to the changes they have made to comply with the ADA. This illustrates an increasing awareness that accessibility is profitable. Internationally, many countries are modeling their disability rights laws after the ADA. In Texas, new laws will increase access and promote ADA implementation.

“Texans have responded by making our state more accessible to people with disabilities. Improvements have been made to the Capitol Grounds, the State Cemetery and state offices and parks,” said Texas Governor George W. Bush.

Highlights

This section includes information on state agency accomplishments, access implementation, compliance statistics, a legal update, new Texas laws, and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

State Agency Accomplishments

All state agencies responsible for documenting ADA self-evaluations have done so and provided copies to the Governor's Committee. Other examples of actions by state agencies include:

- Increased accessible pathways and parking, and added 28 new curb cuts on the Capitol grounds. Banned smoking in public areas of the State Capitol to accommodate people with respiratory disabilities. (*State Preservation Board*)

- Implemented an Ergonomics Assessment Program reducing employee injury rate and received a Safety Award from the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission. (*Texas Department of Human Services*)
- Added disability/arts related links to website and provided grants for accessibility arts projects including Fort Worth's Imagination Celebration "Weekend for Youth Who are Deaf." (*Texas Commission on the Arts*)
- Revised ADA policies, grievance procedures, and provided mandatory employee ADA training. (*Texas Department on Aging*)
- Sponsored two 3-day ADA workshops focusing on employment issues. (*Texas Department of Health*)
- Trained approximately 150 persons on the Texas Accessibility Standards; and developed a new brochure about state access requirements. (*Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation*)
- Redesigned templates for accessible parking signs to meet the Texas Accessibility Standards. (*Texas Department of Transportation*)
- Increased accessibility information in the Texas State Travel Directory and provided a means for receiving lodging access feedback. (*General Services Commission*)
- Exceeded current ADA access requirements by adopting proposed federal guidelines for detention and correctional facilities. (*Texas Commission on Jail Standards*)
- Accommodated appointees by providing real-time captioning. (*Governor's Office*)
- Reported 4,297,340 Relay Texas telephone message/relay calls, an 8% increase over last year. (*Public Utility Commission*)

Access Implementation

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) reviews plans and inspects facilities regarding accessibility. This year, as compared to last, TDLR reviewed 6,436 plans for a 25% increase, performed 3,397 inspections for a 43% increase, received 183 complaints for a 58% increase, and imposed 18 penalties totaling

\$7,969, more than double that of 1996. TDLR certified 1,758 projects as accessible for an increase of 72%.

Since 1992, the U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has received 627 Texas ADA complaints: 12 in employment, 452 against government entities, and 163 against private business. Of the 112 new complaints in fiscal year 1997, 95 complaints were against government agencies and 12 claimed business discrimination. Complaints against government agencies may be higher because people only have one government agency for each specific service, but may merely choose to shop elsewhere when they encounter barriers in a business.

The DOJ maintained its efforts to resolve issues without litigation. A settlement with Ferris Texas Police Department ensured effective communication with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Another settlement with Day's Inn of Fort Stockton, Texas corrected accessible design and construction deficiencies.

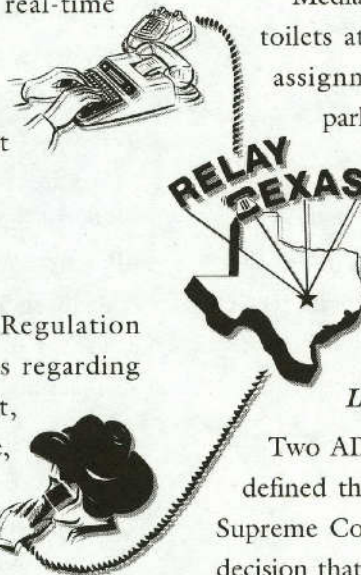
Texas businesses are impacted by outcomes involving national companies. La Petite Academy agreed to modify policies to ensure that children with serious food allergies, diabetes, and other disabilities will be able to attend day care, and to improve accessibility at several facilities. Shoney's, Inc. restaurants will post notices and train staff to ensure access to people with service animals. Courtyard by Marriott hotels will ensure travelers with disabilities get the accessible rooms they were promised. A Texas outlet of a national department store will create an accessible fitting room and improve restroom access.

Mediated complaints resulted in accessible, portable toilets at a major Texas outdoor swap meet and the assignment of valet parking for regular fees at a parking garage where no accessible parking exists.

An ADA mediation project from the DOJ trained 48 Texas mediators for ADA government and private business issues. Of the 14 Texas complaints referred, 7 have been successfully mediated.

Lawsuits

Two ADA lawsuits concerning issues of access further defined the application of the ADA in Texas. The U.S. Supreme Court let stand a 5th Circuit Court of Appeals decision that held that the ADA was not an election law as

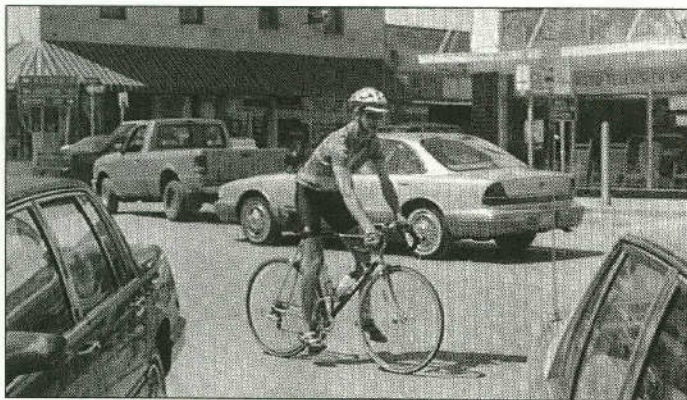


used in Texas statutes, and the Texas Secretary of State did not have sufficient legal authority to force local election officials to comply with the ADA in making polling places accessible to disabled voters. Local authorities remain responsible for ADA compliance in elections. In a separate appeal, the 5th Circuit upheld a lower court ruling supporting the broadest feasible access for service animals.

New Texas Laws

Access in Leased State Offices—HB 2493 increased accessibility of state leased facilities by requiring inspection of such facilities prior to occupancy by the state; and requires cancellation of the lease if it isn't brought into compliance with accessibility standards within 60 days of the inspection or a longer time if circumstances justify. (*Representative Maxey and Senator Shapleigh*)

Provision of TDD's—SB 667 established a voucher program to provide individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired specialized telecommunication devices for telephone access. SB 667 provided that the Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Public Utility Commission administer to specific parts of this program, and modified membership of the Relay Texas advisory committee and requires it to advise about this program. (*Senator Barrientos, and Representative Naishtat*)



Gary Schneider, a member of the Bell County Committee and a person with a head injury, cycled 5 hours from the Capitol to Belton to hand deliver a House Resolution about the Barbara Jordan Awards to County Judge John Garth heightening awareness for the May 16 media awards event in Belton.

Photo courtesy of Gary Bradford, *The Belton Journal*.

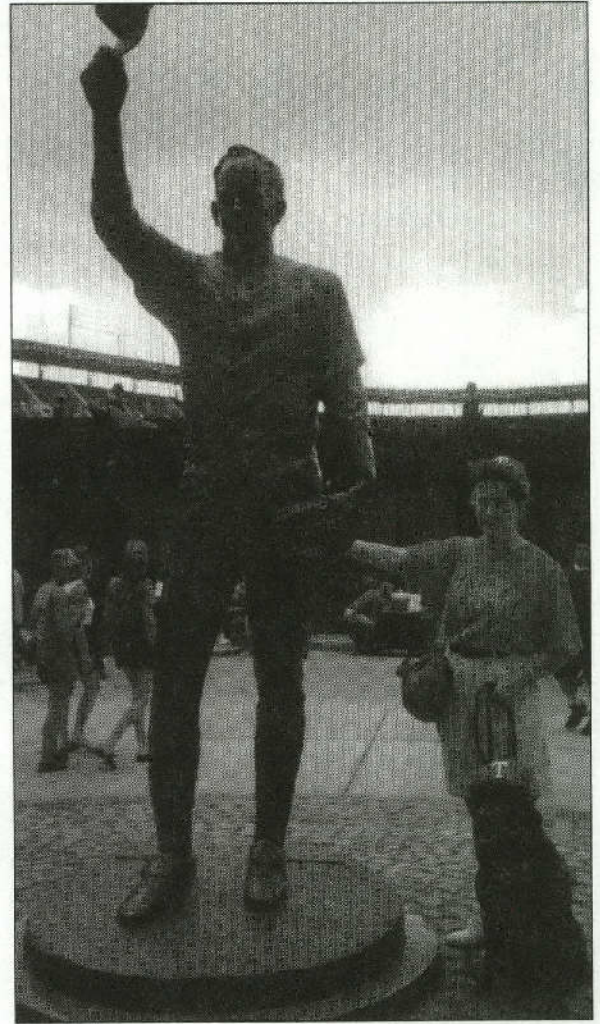
Consistency with the ADA—HB 2525 updated the language of the Texas Human Resources Code to be more consistent with the ADA. The bill updated old terminology in the code, (e.g. handicapped, able-bodied, and assistance dog), and replaced it with updated language. HB 2525 modified procedures regarding accommodations in educational institutions. (*Senator Moncrief and Representative Naishtat*)

Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor's Committee reported the following accomplishments in the area of full participation and the ADA:

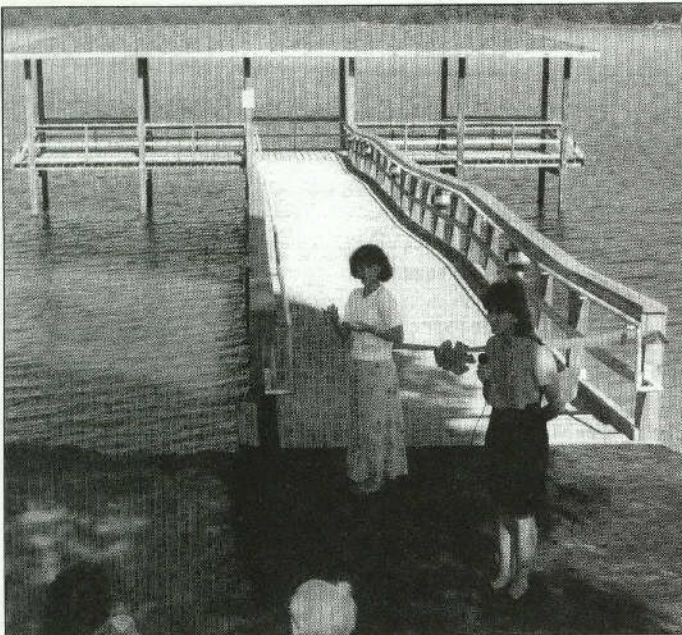
- Visited theaters, museums and other businesses to encourage and support ADA compliance. (*Arlington*)
- Worked with the municipal court on access issues, continued sidewalk and curb cut inventory, and conducted a site review at the Senior Citizen Activity Center. (*Austin*)
- Held a review with the Aviation Department on building access at the new airport and initiated a proposal to align the city with the Texas Accessibility Standards. (*Austin*)
- Conducted access outreach at the Community Action Network and Coalition of Texans with Disabilities Conference. (*Austin*)
- Established a home page on the Internet. (Bryan/College Station and Fort Worth); designing a web page. (*Beaumont*)
- Installed a ramp at City Hall (*Beaumont*)
- Nominated a person with a disability to participate in a national ADA access, awareness, and advocacy training seminar for minority persons with disabilities to build leadership and self-advocacy skills; selected as one of 35 participants nationally. (*Corpus Christi*)
- Provided ADA information on a routine basis to businesses. (*Dallas*)
- Reviewed ADA cases, and board members shared case reviews with other employers. (*Dallas*)

- Provided technical assistance regarding access improvements at the courthouse including a new elevator, remodeled restrooms and public telephones. (*Gaines County*)
- Addressed businesses and civic leaders and provided ADA information. (*Houston*)
- Held a fall festival which included a drawing for a television with proceeds benefiting the local committee's assistance to people with disabilities. (*Jasper*)
- Distributed fact sheets on Texas businesses gaining a new tool for ADA compliance, the Texas Accessibility Standards, to architects and building contractors. (*Laredo*)
- Improved access at parks and reviewed plans for zoo expansion and a community playground. (*Lufkin*)
- Conducted disability awareness training for businesses, civic leaders and city officials as part of a leadership program. (*Nacogdoches*)
- Built and dedicated an accessible fishing pier at Lake Nacogdoches; received television and newspaper coverage. (*Nacogdoches*)
- Improved access at the county fairgrounds. (*Tyler*)



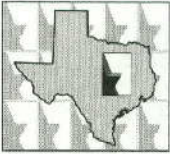
Claire Roffino and her dog guide, Rita, pose for a snapshot before attending a Rangers game at The Ballpark in Arlington.

- Decorated an accessible float and participated in several parades. (*Victoria*)
- Sponsored a "movie night" and requested accommodations for people with hearing impairments at two new movie theaters. (*Waco*)



A dedication ceremony for the new, accessible fishing pier on Lake Nacogdoches drew more than 150 people. The city, civic organizations, and local businesses supported this Mayor's Committee project. Kathy Strong, Chair of the Nacogdoches Mayor's Committee, spoke to the crowd as Lori Ivey interpreted.

Photo courtesy of Deva Rossman, Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel.



HEALTH

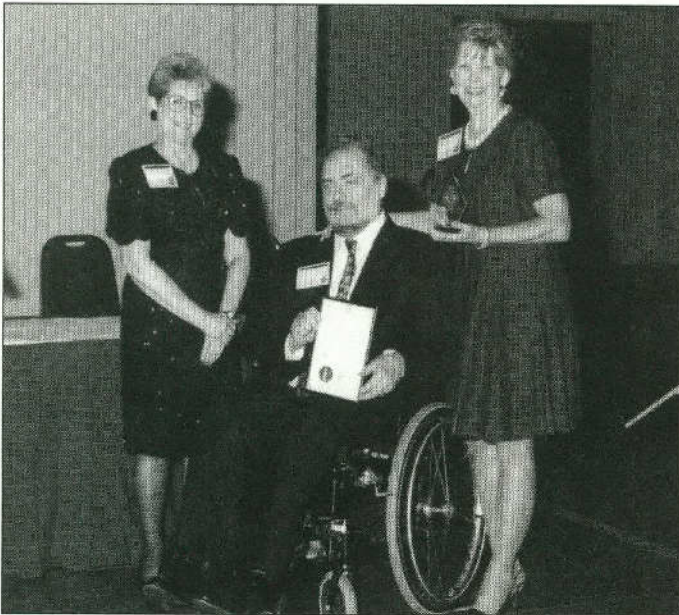
Recommendations

The Governor's Committee made the following recommendations in health:

- Promote maximum availability of quality health care, while encouraging individual responsibility and healthy lifestyles.
- Monitor managed care effectiveness in serving persons with disabilities.
- Promote health insurance reforms that increase information available to consumers such as reasons for denials or non-renewals and company complaint history, and make such information available in accessible formats.

Introduction

Health care, health insurance, and the changing picture of diseases in our society led to much action regarding policies and programs. Focus began shifting to dealing with chronic



Austinite Melva Jean Cain (right), an advocate for people with mental disabilities, received The Governor's Trophy from Governor's Committee Chair, James Caldwell, and member, Shirley Pacetti, on July 10, 1997 in Houston.

Photo courtesy of Michael Norris.

diseases rather than infectious diseases, with increased attention on mental health. As our state grows proportionately older and more diverse, disease and disabilities are likely to increase. How health issues are addressed will greatly contribute to the ability of persons with disabilities to fully participate in our state.

Highlights

This section includes information about the new federal mental health parity law, business perspectives, a Texas Legislator appointed to a national board, a study on women with disabilities, new Texas laws, and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

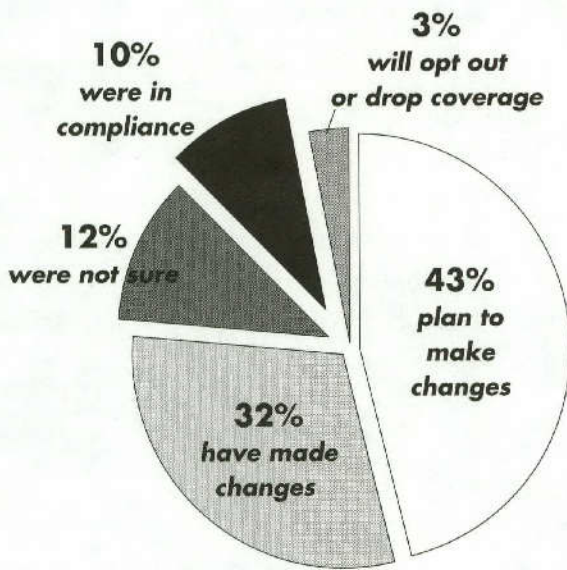
Employer's Attitudes Toward Mental Health Parity

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Parity for mental health benefits is a reasonable national policy goal	70%	25%	5%
Parity for mental health benefits is important to employees in our company	74%	21%	5%
Parity for mental health benefits will cost more than our company is willing to pay	30%	54%	16%

Mental Health Parity Law

Congress passed the national mental health parity law requiring businesses with more than 50 employees to offer health plans that have equal dollar limits for mental and physical illnesses. The law requires compliance by self-insured employers, traditionally exempt. Additionally, the federal law provides for state laws to take precedence if they provide more favorable benefits. Business can still choose to drop health coverage rather than comply.

Employer Response to Mental Health Parity



Of the 247 respondents familiar with the Mental Health Parity Act

Business Perspectives

A recent survey by the National Alliance for Mentally Ill (NAMI) surveyed over 300 employers about the Mental Health Parity Act. The survey revealed that of 247 employers familiar with the act, 85% are either in compliance, have made changes, or planned to make changes to comply with the act by the end of 1997. Employers who have implemented parity say it helps them retain employees longer and be more competitive. The survey found at least 7 of 10 employers agree that parity is a reasonable national policy goal and that parity is important to employees. Most (54%) also responded that parity would not cost more than the company was willing to pay. Among employers who consider parity too expensive, 60% still think that it is a reasonable national goal.

NAMI Board Appointment

Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman from Houston was appointed to the NAMI Board in October. Representative Coleman sponsored the Texas Mental Health Parity law (HB 1173). NAMI is the nation's leading grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illness. Currently there are more than 168,000 members nationwide.

Study on Women with Disabilities

The Baylor College of Medicine researched the lives of women with disabilities and the results, released in 1997, included significant findings. The study found that abuse is a very serious problem for women with disabilities. Although women with disabilities did not experience more abuse than women without disabilities, they tended to experience abuse for longer periods of time. The study also found that women with disabilities generally have limited opportunities to establish romantic relationships. Despite this fact, 87% reported that they had had at least one serious relationship or marriage. Women with disabilities were also more likely to encounter barriers to receiving health care. This problem is especially acute when women with disabilities seek reproductive health care, as many physicians may not be knowledgeable about the woman's disability.

New Texas Laws

Parity for Mental Illness—HB 1173 equalized insurance coverage for physical and mental illness. The law required plans to include inpatient and outpatient services; prohibited lifetime limits on the amount of treatment for mental illness; and established equal limits, deductibles, and co-insurance factors for mental illness and physical illness. *(Representative Coleman and Senator Ellis)*

Insurance Risk Pool—HB 710 established a Health Insurance Risk Pool designed to help Texans who were previously uninsurable, or whose health insurance would be more expensive than the pool due to these conditions. The Health Insurance Risk Pool was implemented in January, 1998, and is administered by the Texas Department of Insurance. *(Representative Averitt and Senator Sibley)*

Care for Children with Special Needs—SB 1165 provided special consideration to children with special health care needs. This law required the Health and Human Services Commission to define children with special health care needs and develop a pilot program to determine the best way to serve children with special needs within the managed care setting. During this period, children may still voluntarily enroll in Medicaid managed care. *(Senator Zaffirini and Representative Berlanga)*

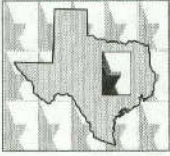
Prevention of Blindness—SB 1403 established a Texas Commission for the Blind program to aid in the prevention of blindness. The program will provide education, screening and treatment for residents who are not covered under an adequate health benefit plan. Funding will come from a voluntary one dollar fee on the renewal or issuance of driver's licenses. *(Senator Moncrief and Representative Naishtat)*

Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor's Committee reported the following accomplishments in the area of health:

- Participated in an annual health fair. *(Gaines County and Waco)*
- Co-sponsored a Consumer Help Day with the Texas Department of Insurance in October; designed for Texans with disabilities, caregiver of children with special needs and their advocates, technical experts from four state agencies provided assistance to individuals on issues ranging from health insurance to self advocacy. A keynote address was given by Texas Supreme Court Justice Greg Abbott; assisting with the event were Governor's Committee members Kym I. King and Shirley Pacetti. *(Houston)*
- Worked with the Immunization Coalition, Mercy Rehabilitation, and Rodriguez Pharmacy. *(Laredo)*

“NAMI is at the vanguard of tearing down barriers that have kept people with brain disorders from enjoying basic rights,” said Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman.



INDEPENDENCE

Recommendations

The Governor's Committee made the following recommendations on independence:

- Support state and federal initiatives, including shifts in funding, that increase or improve personal assistance services and consumer control of such services.
- Encourage transportation providers to improve and coordinate their services and expand public transportation services, especially in rural areas.
- Encourage initiatives to increase affordable, accessible housing options.

Introduction

Where Texans live and how Texans get around continue to be major concerns. Congress has begun to shift many federal housing programs to state and local levels. Texas Legislators revised the law about parking for persons with disabilities largely to decrease its abuse by non-disabled persons.

Highlights

This section contains information on housing, personal assistance, transportation, accessible parking, new Texas laws and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

Housing

As a result of an ADAPT of Texas complaint, Texans with disabilities may find more accessible housing in the coming years due to a new agreement between Housing and Urban Development and the City of Austin. To keep its federal housing funds, Austin agreed to fund access modifications

to 500 housing units, amend the City's housing plan to make accessible housing a priority, deny funds to projects that do not meet the access requirements, and contract with disability groups to provide ADA training to staff and housing contractors. The agreement in Austin increased awareness and willingness to address disability housing in other cities around the state.

The Consumer-Controlled Housing Initiative (CCHI) recently helped Texans with disabilities access nine housing grants totaling \$2,622,070. The funds will go to several Texas organizations to help individuals buy a house, obtain rental assistance, and make accessibility modifications. CCHI also published a manual on housing policy change which identifies attitudinal, legal, systemic, and financial barriers and suggests ways that individuals and groups can improve housing options.

The Texas Home of Your Own Coalition assisted five Austinites with disabilities to become first-time homeowners, and two homes are under construction. Similar efforts have been established in Houston and El Paso.

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs adopted four new basic accessibility requirements for new homes that utilize the HOME Program. There must be an accessible route into the residence; wide enough doors to accommodate a wheelchair; light switches, electrical breakers, and electric plugs at accessible heights; and wood blocking installed in bathrooms to facilitate installation of grab bars.

Personal Assistance

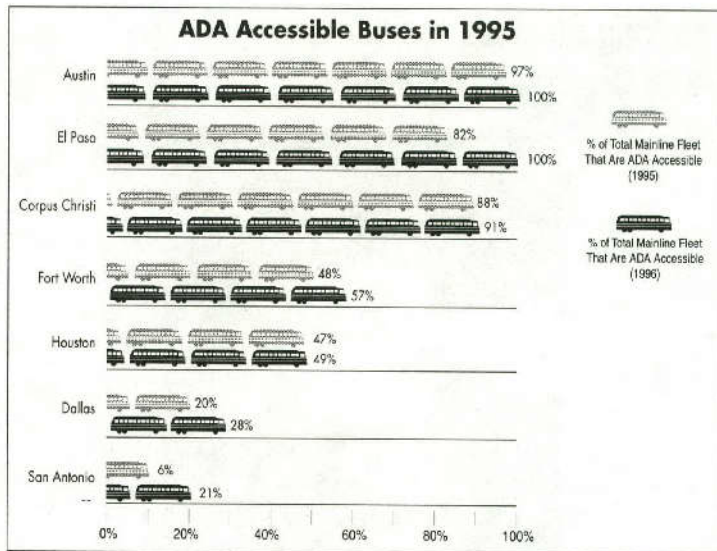
Home health care workers continue to be listed among the fastest growing jobs as the need for such services increases. Federal accomplishments in this area include repeal of language causing an institutional bias for funding of such services. New Texas legislation created a pilot voucher program to provide consumer controlled personal assistance services.

Transportation

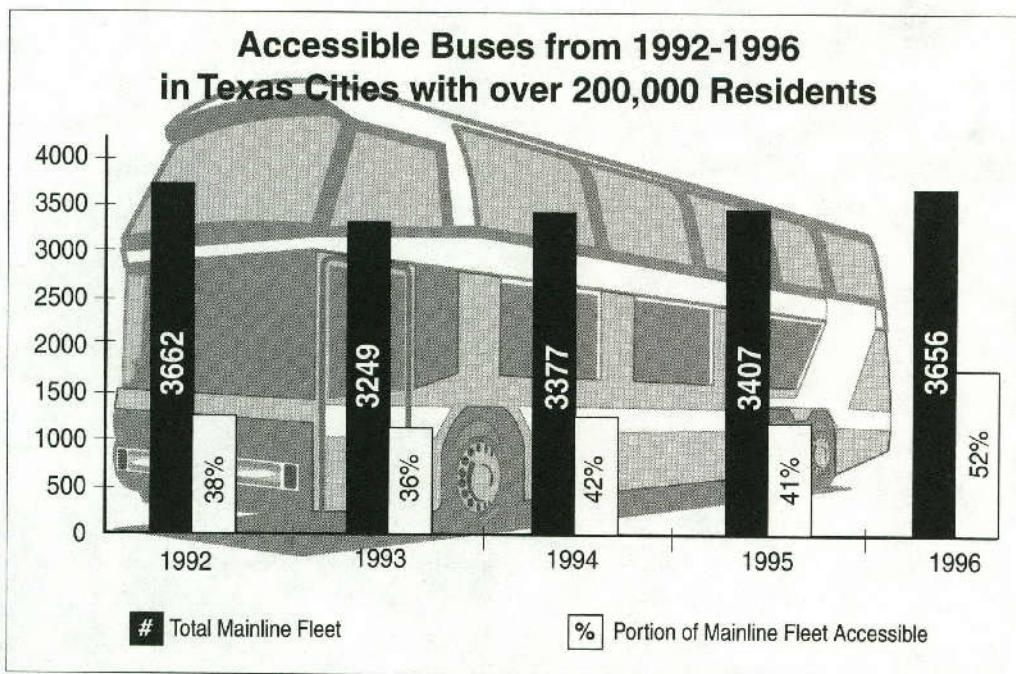


The Texas Department of Transportation is concerned about the relatively low level of accessibility in rural transit systems. They require those programs to purchase only lift-equipped vehicles unless they specifically authorize a waiver. Overall, the U. S. Department of Transportation reported 13 ADA discrimination complaints from Texas this year, and 18 claiming disability discrimination under the Air Carrier Access Act. Transit authorities in Dallas and San Antonio continue to have the lowest percentage of accessible active fleet and the highest number of ADA complaints in Texas. However, the number of accessible buses in Texas cities continues to rise. Fifty two percent of the buses in Texas cities were accessible in 1996, compared with only 38% in 1992.

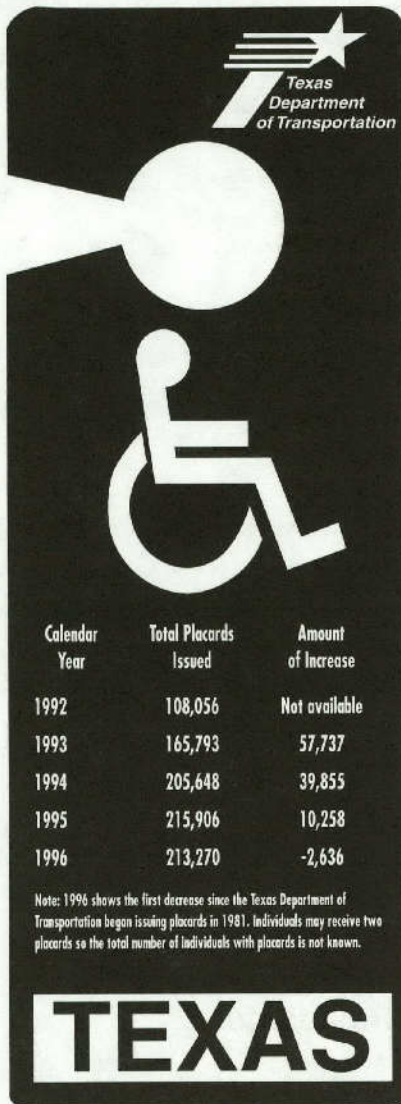
Texas communities showed their commitment to accessible parking through the nine local programs, many are sponsored by local Committees on People with Disabilities. Some programs focus on education, using public service announcements and brochures. Several gathered information from needs assessments in their communities.



Others monitored accessible parking in their communities by training volunteers to issue tickets. Collectively 488 volunteers in Texas programs issued 20,352 tickets resulting in \$326,498 revenue for their communities. A parking chart detailing current programs and sixteen developing programs is available from the Governor's Committee.



Parking Placards for Persons with Disabilities Issued in Texas



New Texas Laws

Accessible Parking—HB 580 required that a hologram be placed on disabled parking placards to prevent duplication; required a notarized statement or written prescription from a physician for the first application for a placard; provided that the applicant's driver's license or identification number be recorded on the placard; limited validity of permanent placards to four years; allowed charging for parking at meters, garages and lots within municipal airports; allowed a police officer to seize a placard under certain circumstances; and provided a system for return or revoking such seized placards. (*Representative Coleman, Senator Moncrief*)

Client-Centered Personal Assistance—HB 2084 established a pilot program to provide personal assistance services through the use of vouchers. The pilot will be incorporated into existing programs operated by the Texas Department of Human Services and the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. HB 2084 increased the control persons with disabilities have over the delivery of these services. (*Representative Hilderbran and Senator Nelson*)

Alternatives to Institutions—SB 118 required that a person or agency placing a child in an institution be contacted and informed of services, support and placement options that might prevent institutional placement. In addition, the person or agency will also be informed of opportunities for permanency planning, which will be required for each child in an institution. (*Senator Zaffirini and Representative Naishtat*)

Transportation Inventory—SB 370 required the Texas Department of Transportation to provide an inventory of transportation providers to Texas human service agencies for distribution. (*Senator Armbrister and Representative Bosse*)

Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

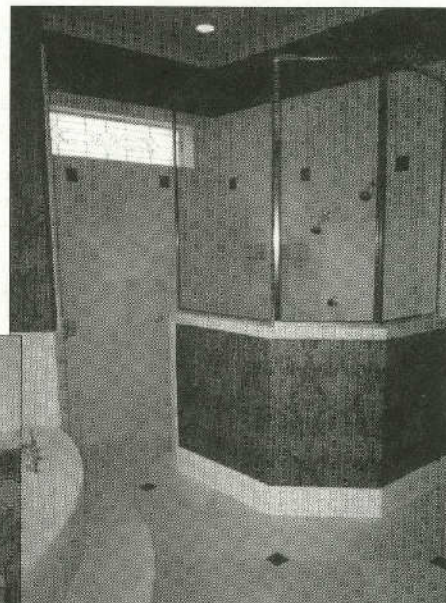
A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor's Committee reported the following accomplishments in the area of independence:

- Worked to improve transportation services for people with disabilities and served on the Board of Handitran. (*Arlington*)

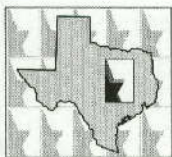


Alvin Police Department recognized for volunteer parking enforcement program.

- Donated graphic design work to Handicapped Resources Association for personal assistance fundraiser. *(Arlington)*
- Presented at the Urban Transportation Committee and the Fair Housing Task Force. *(Austin)*
- Showcased home access features of a homeowner who chairs the Austin Mayor's Committee during a live television interview. *(Austin)*
- Worked with a task force on equitable method of adding permits related to accessible taxi cabs. *(Austin)*
- Worked with Texas A&M University to provide students with disabilities the alternative of accessing attendant care through home health care. *(Bryan/College Station)*
- Served as a "sounding board" for Texas Department of Transportation on access issues. *(Bryan/College Station)*
- * Promoted accessibility in Habitat for Humanity homes. *(Bryan/College Station)*.
- Worked with the city's community development block grant staff to review a 5-year plan and encouraged efforts to obtain an accurate count of people with disabilities. *(Corpus Christi)*
- Conducted nine educational or monitoring programs on accessible parking; issued an estimated 13,529 tickets, generating \$248,970 revenue involving 290 volunteers. *(Arlington, Austin, Beaumont, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Laredo, Lufkin and Tyler)*
- Worked with the City towards conducting a needs assessment related to parking. *(Corpus Christi)*
- Hosted a disability access forum to discuss transportation and housing issues. *(Fort Worth)*
- Joined with Bank of America to support efforts to provide low interest loans to people with disabilities primarily to finance van purchases. *(Fort Worth)*
- Assisted with transportation, yard maintenance, home repair and wheelchair loans. *(Laredo)*
- Facilitated the purchase of a van for a college student with a disability living in a rural area; coordinated with a bank, the Lions Club, the Kiwanis, and a vocational rehabilitation agency. *(Lufkin)*
- Worked with Home Builders Association on the design of homes for people with disabilities; reviewed plans for access to community parks including playgrounds and the zoo. *(Lufkin)*
- Worked with the city regarding transit services. *(Lufkin)*
- Worked towards a transportation system including accessible transportation. *(Victoria)*



Worked with a builder to design, build, and dedicate a "Friendly Home" providing complete access while maintaining style and beauty. Featured on the Tour of Homes, it achieves access with a sloped walkway from driveway to front entrance. The master bath includes a wide and level shower and blocking in the walls for easy installation of grab bars. The Fort Worth Mayor's Committee was awarded \$1,000 from the National Home Builders Association for the project.



MEDIA and PUBLIC AWARENESS

Governor's Committee Objective

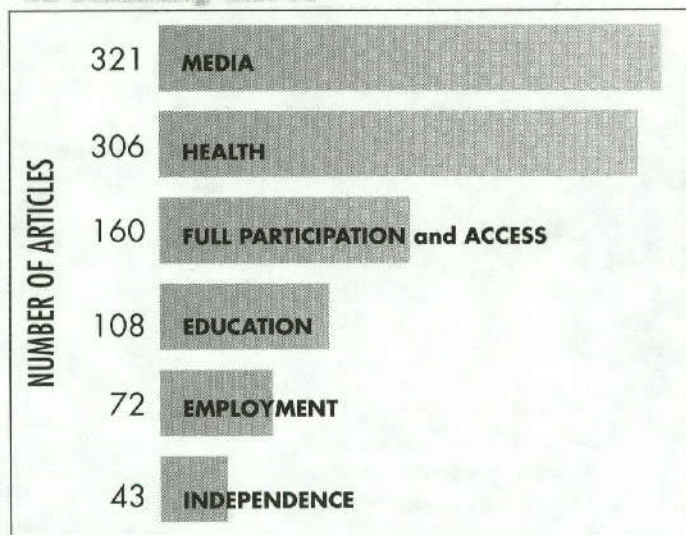
The Governor's Committee adopted the following media-related objective:

- Foster member participation in public presentations focused on disability issues and promote media awareness of disability issues and the activities of the Governor's Committee.

Introduction

Media coverage increased this year. The Governor's Committee tracked Texas newspaper articles numbering over 1,000 on subjects like health, education, independence, the media and more. The Associated Press covered the controversy of whether or not to portray Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a person who used a wheelchair. Dateline NBC aired a segment on employment and housing

Texas Newspaper Articles on Disability Issues



The Governor's Committee joins the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities in support of depiction of FDR using a wheelchair. Pat Pound is pictured reading a letter of support from the Governor.

discrimination with correspondent John Hockenberry. Nickelodeon's Nick News featured children, young adults and notable role models talking about people's curiosity about disabilities.

Highlights

This section includes information about Governor's Committee accomplishments, the FDR Memorial, a Dateline television show, a new "Chicken Soup" book, National Disability Employment Awareness Month and local volunteer committee accomplishments.

Governor's Committee Accomplishments

Committee members interviewed with newspapers and television stations about Committee activities including parking, recreation, employment, accessibility, and awards programs. Members also addressed groups such as the Texas Association of Journalism Educators, the Bell County Judge and Commissioner's Committee on People with Disabilities, the Texas Rehabilitation Association, and others about the Committee. A directory of 125 past

Barbara Jordan Awards winners was produced. Members introduced a new Barbara Jordan media award subcategory designed for increased participation by high school journalism students. The Committee recognized 14 media professionals for quality work about people with disabilities at a ceremony in Belton. A list of winners can be seen in the appendices of this report.

“Uncover the truth, report the facts and tell the story with fairness and accuracy. What does this mean when covering disability? To report that a man uses a wheelchair is a fact; to say he is confined to a wheelchair is a judgment. To report that a woman has multiple sclerosis is a fact; to say that she is afflicted with MS is a perception,” said Governor’s Committee member Kym I. King in a letter to Texas media professionals.

FDR Memorial

As a result of the advocacy efforts of organizations and individuals from across the country, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, D.C. will include at least one statue of the President in a wheelchair. Roosevelt, who had polio, needed assistance to walk and used a wheelchair during his four terms as President.

“I am proud to stand with the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities in urging the FDR Memorial Commission

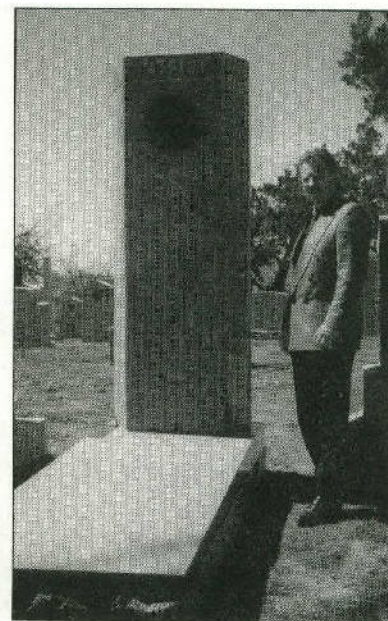
to portray President Roosevelt in one of its statues as he was in life: in a wheelchair,” said Governor George W. Bush. “For President Roosevelt, as for 49 million Americans today, disability was a fact of life, a fact to be recognized and dealt with, not hidden or ignored.”

Video Captioning



Section 713 of the Telecommunications Act generally requires video programming to be closed captioned.

Although it allows exceptions, the Act should result in television and video programming that is increasingly accessible to people with disabilities. Exceptions apply to certain programs as well as certain producers, syndicators, and video providers. Bench-



Barbara Jordan's tomb at the Texas State Cemetery. Internationally-prominent sculptor, David Deming, pictured, designed the tombstone and sculpted the original portrait for the medallion which is mounted on the tombstone. Deming designed the award medallion for the Governor's Committee Barbara Jordan Award.

“For disabled people the ADA is about freedom, not regulations and lawsuits. Disabled people are looking for what makes everybody’s life great, the ability to think up adventures big and small and just go for it. Like right here on the Brooklyn Bridge. I bet you didn’t know that it’s the coolest wheelchair ramp in the world. I guess it also helps commuters get into Manhattan, but for me, this bridge is the symbol of freedom, where there’s nothing out there in front of you to shut you down,” said news correspondent John Hockenberry.



marks serve to implement Section 713 gradually with transitional periods based on calendar quarters, with the final quarter for compliance ending in 2005.

Hockenberry Dateline NBC Segment

National news correspondent John Hockenberry signed copies of his biography during a visit to The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research in Houston. In addition, Dateline NBC aired a recent segment, "No Way In" with Hockenberry addressing employment and housing discrimination as well as accessibility.

Chicken Soup

The best selling authors of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books are writing a new book focusing on people with disabilities. Stories from people with disabilities and people whose lives have been touched by someone with a disability will be shared. A portion of book sales will go directly to organizations that serve people with disabilities.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month



In 1997, the Governor's Committee distributed 350 educational kits from the President's Committee to Texans. The kits were used in numerous ADA celebrations during July and NDEAM celebrations in October of 1997.

Local Volunteer Committee Accomplishments

A public/private partnership of 29 local volunteer committees supported by the Governor's Committee reported the following accomplishments in the area of media and public awareness:

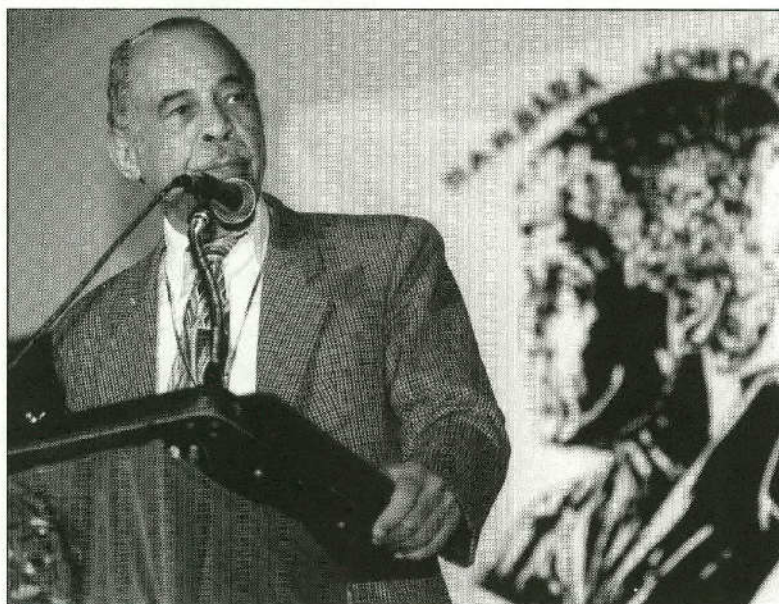
- Interviewed on cable television about local committee accomplishments. (*Arlington*)
- Honored by the Mayor as a Barbara Jordan media award recipient, a proclamation was issued declaring October 29, 1996, "Olivia Alexander Day"; Ms. Alexander

appeared on an Arlington Update television program about the media award. (*Arlington*)

- Interviewed on numerous television shows about accessible housing, access and parking; participated in a radio call-in show regarding employment and the ADA. (*Austin*)
- Hosted the Barbara Jordan media awards and presented 12 award medallions and 2 honorable mention letters; received county-wide coverage; attracted 400 people to the event; provided a program incorporating local character and professionalism; utilized 1,700 volunteer hours; raised \$7,000 to lower the event cost through sponsorships, a golf tournament, and a distance bike ride from Austin to Belton by person with a disability. (*Bell County*)
- Received county-wide coverage from the "Eye on Accessibility" program and included smaller towns in access outreach efforts through city officials and the media. (*Bell County*)
- Held an awards luncheon and recognized Jennifer Oliver, a computer specialist with a hearing disability who received numerous awards: named recipient of the Jennifer Phillips Award for spirit and courage, named the Fort Hood Employee of the Year, named 1997 Department of the Army Outstanding Employee of the Year

with a Disability, and was featured on the U.S. Army Homepage (*Bell County*).

- Placed five NDEAM posters on billboards with a daily traffic count of 79,000; displayed one poster on Interstate 10, two posters on Highway 87, and several posters in small Orange County towns; issued proclamations; published articles representing the cities of Vidor, Pine Forrest, Rose City, Bridge City, Orange, West Orange, and Pinehurst (*Orange County*).
- Published 20,000 free, quarterly tabloids on issues of interest to people with disabilities. (*Laredo*)
- Participated in an NDEAM disability awareness fair emphasizing opportunities for and potential of people with disabilities, especially students. (*Laredo*)
- Produced and routinely distributed a newsletter. (*Gaines County and Waco*)
- Designed a T-shirt bearing the committee logo that volunteers wear the to events to help promote their program. (*Waco*)
- Held press conferences; encouraged and received newspaper, television, radio coverage for workforce, access, and awareness issues like fishing, parking, jobs, awards, and more. (*numerous Local Committees*)



T. F. Freeman, Barbara Jordan's debate coach at Texas Southern University, spoke about her during the 1996 Barbara Jordan media awards ceremony in Belton on May 16. In 1983, the Governor's Committee named the media awards in her honor. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," said Freeman. Photo courtesy of Jennifer Reynolds, Temple Daily Telegram.

Selected Proclamations and Letters of Greeting about disability issues from Governor George W. Bush

February

Adult Education and Literacy Month
Burn Awareness Week, **February 2-8, 1997**
Cardiac Rehabilitation Week, **February 9-15, 1997**
School Psychology Week, **February 10-14, 1997**
American Heart Association Day, **February 25, 1997**

March

Educational Diagnosticians' Week, **March 2-8, 1997**
Juvenile Arthritis Week, **March 3-9, 1997**

April

Parkinson Disease Awareness Month
Tumor Registrar Week, **April 13-19, 1997**
The Builders Association of Fort Worth and Tarrant County and The Fort Worth Mayor's
Committee on Persons with Disabilities, **April 15, 1997**
(for designing, building, and showcasing the "Friendly Home" that provided access and maintained style and beauty)
The University of Texas-Arlington's Movin' Mavs Wheelchair Basketball Team, **April 16, 1997**

May

Blindness Awareness Month
Clarence Schroeder and Ray Sessek, 1997 Honor Ushers Corps of the Boy Scouts of America/University of Texas Football Ushering Program, **May 1, 1997**
Melanoma Monday, **May 5, 1997**
Julian Guerrero, named a "Star of Life" by the American Ambulance Association, **May 8, 1997**
Community Partners in Leadership, **May 17, 1997**
Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Awareness Day, **May 17, 1997**
The North Texas Family Support Conference, **May 29, 1997**

June

The National Industries for the Severely Handicapped Convention, **June 1-4, 1997**
12th Annual Texas Council of Community MHMR Centers Training Conference, **June 4-7, 1997**
Texas Association of the Deaf's 39th biennial convention, **June 5-8, 1997**
Hand Therapy Public Awareness Week, **June 15-21, 1997**

July

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill Conference, **July 10-13, 1997**
The American Kinesiotherapy Association, Inc. Conference, **July 12-15, 1997**
Occupational Therapy Week, **July 12-19, 1997**
Acoustic Neuroma Awareness Week, **July 13-19, 1997**

Martha Gallier, recipient of the American Heart Association's Texas Affiliate's Dwight D. Eisenhower Lay Volunteer of the Year Award, **July 18, 1997**

Batten Disease Awareness Week, **July 20-27, 1997**

American with Disabilities Act Awareness Day, **July 26, 1997**

August

Area Health Education Center Week, **August 10-14, 1997**

September

Leukemia Awareness Month
Destination Dignity Month (mental illness and mental retardation awareness)
Marrow Awareness Month
Patricia Axe, retirement of a Texas Rehabilitation Commission disability examiner, **September 3, 1997**
Celebration of Life Week (breast cancer), **September 21-27, 1997**
Iron Overload Disease Awareness Week, **September 21-27, 1997**

October

Dystonia Awareness Month
Family Health Month
Rett Syndrome Awareness Month
Ulcer Disease Education Awareness Month
Breast Cancer Awareness Day, **October 8, 1997**
Jennifer Oliver, Fort Hood Outstanding Federal Employee with a Disability, **October 8, 1997**
Respiratory Care Week, **October 12-18, 1997**
Mary Clardy, Peter J. Salmon National Blind Employee of the Year Award, **October 13, 1997**
Expo '97: A Tribute to Employers hiring Texans with disabilities, **October 17, 1997**
Career and Recovery Resources, Inc. Awareness Day, **October 22, 1997 (NDEAM)**
The Banana Tree in El Paso, for hiring people with disabilities, et al., **Oct. 23, 1997**
Dr. Grade England, Professional of the Year Award, International Council for Learning Disability Conference, **October 25, 1997**

November

Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
Epilepsy Awareness Month
Home Care Month
Hospice Month
Dr. Phil Hatlen, American Foundation for the Blind 1997 Migel Award, **November 7, 1997**

December

Day for Angels: Angelman Syndrome Awareness Month

Employment Award Winners



Presented July 10, 1997 at the Wortham Theater Center in Houston

The Governor's Trophy

Melva Jean Cain, Austin

Large Employer of the Year

USLD Communications, San Antonio

Medium Employer of the Year

The Plaza San Antonio—A Marriott Hotel

Small Employer of the Year

COIL (Center on Independent Living), San Antonio

Public Employer of the Year

Alvin Police Department

The Entrepreneurship Award

Chad R. Raney, Owner

CareChoice Home Medical Supply, Inc., Texarkana

Martha Arbuckle Award

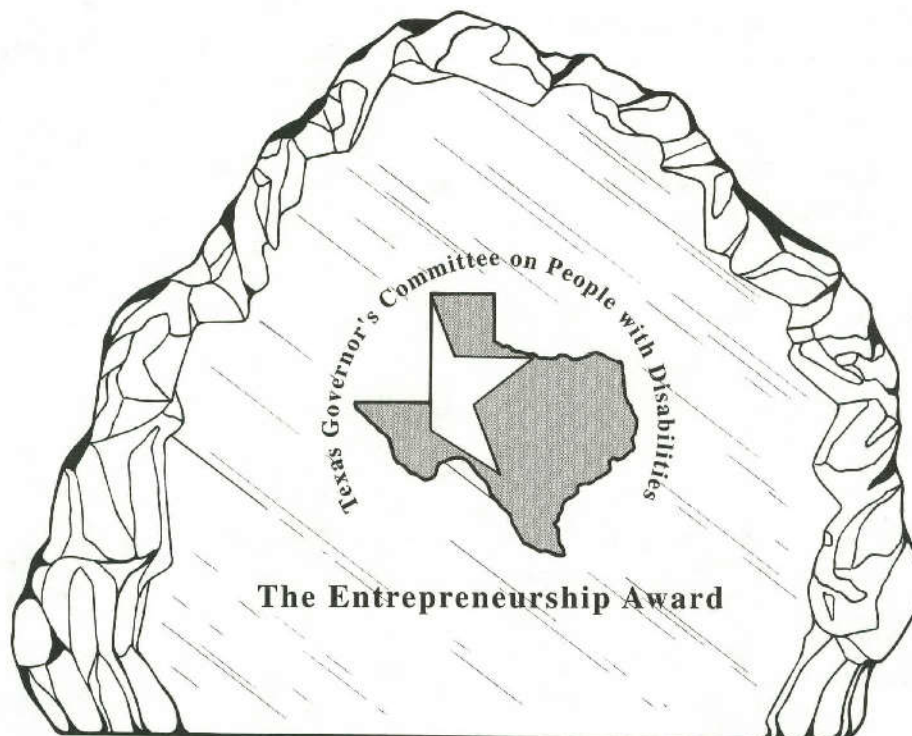
Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Honorable Mention

CBI and Free Enterprise Program,

Lubbock Independent School District

Adopted by the Committee on February 21, 1997.



Barbara Jordan Award Winners



Presented May 16, 1997 at the Bell County Exposition Center in Belton

Special Contribution—Individual

Deborah Betts Morehead, Shreveport, Louisiana
“Don’t Tell Me I Can’t” . . . A Biography of Kathleen DeSilva

Special Contribution—Organization

CBI and Free Enterprise,
The CBI Worknet, Lubbock

Public Relations

KALEIDOSCOPE Television,
 Bill Nichols, San Antonio
“Public Relations Campaign”

Print—Feature Article

Mark Wrolstad, The Dallas Morning News—High Profile
“Judy Scott . . . Enlightening others about the blind experience”

Print—News Article

Jessica Stump, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
“Opening Doors for the Disabled . . . LIFE Center offers assistance in overcoming daily barriers”

Photo Journalism

Jay Godwin, Photo Editor, Austin American-Statesman
“Japan’s Unuseful People” and “Shattering an Age-Old Myth”

Audio Visual

Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Peter Baer and Scott Blesener
“People with Mental Illness”

Audio Visual

Robert Fong, Cornerstone Media, Beaumont
“Job Quest: People Who Want To Work”

TV News Feature

KWES-TV, Midland, M. Gayle Hill
“Callie Smart, Story”

TV Documentary

Ellen Robertson Neal, KACV-TV, Amarillo
“When You’re Special—A Lesson in Compassion”

TV Public Service Announcement

TIBH Industries, Inc., Austin
“What happens when the school bus doesn’t come anymore?”

Honorable Mention—Print Feature Article

William Kerns, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
“Comedian makes loyal return to Lubbock . . . Fonseca shows wheelchair doesn’t matter when it comes to laughs”

Honorable Mention—Print Feature Article

David Sikes, Killeen Daily Herald
“Former Belton grid star still tackling challenges . . . Harry Wilson looks to future”

Radio—Advertising

Capital Metro, Austin, Nancy Crowther
“Paul Hunt Radio Ad 1996”

Adopted by the Committee on February 21, 1997.

TEXAS LOCAL VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES . . .



THIS VOLUNTEER EFFORT IS AN INVESTMENT

The Texas Governor's Committee has built community partnerships through local volunteer committees since the late 1940s. This volunteer effort is an investment in the community and in the lives of people in the community. The Committee now supports a network of 29 local committees, develops policy recommendations, and plans long range about Texans with disabilities. Local volunteer committee accomplishments are featured in each section of this report.

Volunteer committees operate locally to make decisions and shape policies for citizens with disabilities. These local committees address issues including parking, employment, access, the ADA, transportation, housing, education, health and more. Each committee receives information about issues, trends, and the work of this Committee. In 1996, the Governor's Committee reported an estimated 1,302 volunteers worked 49,048 volunteer hours for an estimated value of \$629,780. This map indicates the location of each local volunteer committee.

An additional twenty-three (23) communities expressed interest in developing a local volunteer committee. They are: Abilene, Alamo Area, Beeville, Bellmead, Crystal City, Del Valle, Garland, Georgetown, Groesbeck/Limestone County, Jacksonville, Lake Worth, Marshall, Mesquite, Pasadena, Plainview, Plano, San Marcos, Texarkana, Texas City, Rio Grande Valley, Weatherford, Wharton, and White Settlement.

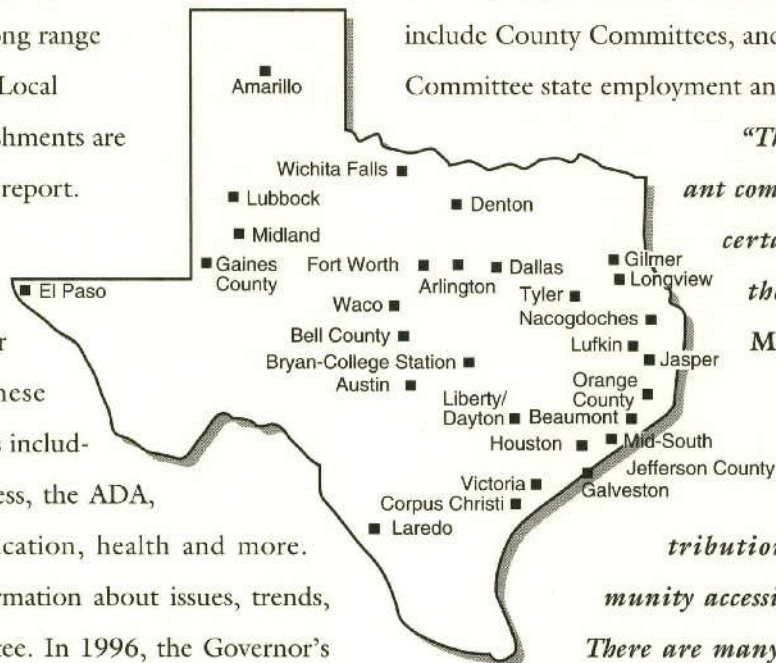
The Texas Association of Mayors' and County Committees on People with Disabilities develops leadership skills, provides mentoring, advances policies and programs, and provides funding assistance. This year the Association held a leadership conference in Corpus Christi, elected new officers, applied for seven grants, changed its name to include County Committees, and supported the Governor's Committee state employment and media awards programs.

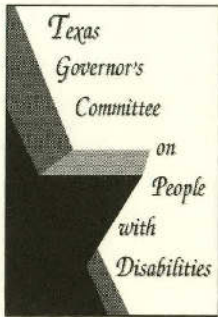
"There isn't a more important committee in our City, and I certainly stand in support of them," said Arlington Mayor Elzie Odom.

"Participate, learn, and take back to your communities your contributions in making your community accessible and inclusive for all. There are many among you who have the capabilities to be leaders," said former Mayor

Mary Rhodes.

(Judy Telge, chair of the Corpus Christi Mayor's Committee, shared former Mayor Rhodes challenges with Leadership Conference participants in Corpus Christi on June 20, 1997. This conference was dedicated to the memory of Former Mayor Rhodes who died of breast cancer on June 4, 1997 only 2 months after completing her third term as Mayor).





Texas Governor's Committee on
People with Disabilities

P.O. Box 12428

Austin, Texas 78711

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED