

BARRIER FREE OR BUST: ADVOCACY IS A MUST!

COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

20TH DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

1998 - Houston

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HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

1978 - THE BEGINNING

10:04 A.M. February 19, 1978

Boy Geyer moves. Lee Kitchens seconds to have Coalition. Bob Kafka emphasizes need to reach out to ethnic groups and regions. Lex Frieden moves Interim Board be established with: Marilyn Golden, Larry Johnson, Pat Pound, Larry Evans, Margie Flores, Lee Kitchens, Buffy Fetter, Elaine Roberts. Because the name Texas Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities was registered by the Secretary of State, Pat Pound negotiated a slight change to Coalition of Texans with Disabilities to get us incorporated.

March 20, 1978

Problems with voting identified for first action are lack of: knowledge about voting rights; meaningful information on candidates; information on laws and voting procedures; accessible polling places; and, accessible voter registration. (This leads to establishment of national Disabled and Able to Vote Campaign.)

September 29, 1978

The first CTD Annual Delegate Assembly held at El Tropicano Hotel in San Antonio. Delegates unanimously approve Resolution that twelve centrally important basic areas be addressed:

1. Meaningful consumer input in development and implementation of programs.
2. Statewide advocacy system for people with disabilities.
3. Reaffirmation of state policies concerning individuals with disabilities.
4. More adequate support and financing for state agencies whose sole focus is services to people with disabilities.
5. Reduction of architectural and environmental barriers.
6. Promotion of public awareness and acceptance.
7. Improvements in social services, expanded recreation opportunities, and broadened cultural experiences.
8. New, improved and meaningful employment opportunities.
9. Adequate and relevant transportation services.
10. Housing services responsive to individuals needs in least restrictive setting.
11. Effort to implement existing legislation.
12. Full access to the civil rights of all citizens.

November 11, 1978

First organizational memberships were accepted for Texas Chapter-PVA (State) and Reclamation Inc. (Local). Three were accepted on condition of payment: Texas Association of the Deaf (State), Coalition for Barrier-Free Living-Houston and MIGHT-Austin (Local). Following is

HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

a quote from the first membership recruitment materials: "A united front is necessary to obtain such goals as improved education, expanded rehabilitation services, accessible housing, effective transportation, civil rights, enhanced employment, consumer participation, and integration into the mainstream of Texas life. The building of this broad constituency facilitates representation of disabled Texans to government, the private sector, and the general public."

1979

At the beginning of 1979, CTD board Secretary reports 10 organizational and 20 individual members. CTD receives charter as non-profit in September of 1979. In 1979 CTD began seeking legal advice on Southwest Airlines discriminating policies concerning people with disabilities. The Delegates passed resolutions on access to voting, creation of what we now call para-transit, non-discrimination by educational institutions, long-distance discount for TTY users, and a required percentage of TRC board members be qualified persons with disabilities.

1980

By the end of 1980, CTD had 97 individual and 12 local, 3 state and 3 associate organizational memberships. CTD and member, MIGHT, co-sponsor Leadership Development Workshop.

1981

In its first organized effort to support significant pieces of legislation, 11 of the 14 bills supported by CTD were passed. Platform included employment, housing, voting, education, tax incentives, architectural barriers, support services, transportation, communications and autism. CTD was instrumental in the Architectural Barriers Law being reinstated days before it was due to expire. CTD implemented a statewide training on 504 (Rehabilitation Act) and six public forums across the state on housing needs for Texans with disabilities.

1982

By 1982 CTD had over 40 member organizations. CTD hired its first Executive Director, Linda Wren. CTD staff developed a paper on transportation issues for people with disabilities. CTD testified at several Title XX Block Grant Hearings, stressing the need for community-based services alternatives. In August CTD instigated a campaign of letter writing to President Reagan to ensure the rights of disabled persons by sustaining 504. Members responded in great numbers by contacting U.S. Congresspersons in support of adequate federal funding for rehab, special education and public housing for people with disabilities.

1983

"Disabled but Able" was the theme of Disability Rally Day and it was reported that 1500 citizens gathered at the state capitol to give testimony and lend credibility to our commitment

HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

to improve the quality of life for all Texans with disabilities. In the 67th Legislature, the Handicapped Parking Law was strengthened and clarified. Polling site accessibility provisions for Texans with disabilities were improved. CTD secured state funding in TRC budget for independent living centers in Texas. Our efforts helped assure funding for a Deaf-Blind Pilot.

1984

March 10-14 declared "Disabled but Able to Vote" week and massive voter registration campaign launched. CTD's first paid director, Linda Wren departs and Jean Langendorf is hired. A new shared attendant program opens at ARCIL. Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are secured to mandate every state implement a Client Assistance Program. Keeping with our commitment to self-advocacy, we recommended the program be implemented through the Centers for Independent Living in Texas.

1985

Under leadership of Marshall Mitchell and Judy Wingard-Westbrook, CTD membership grows to 74 organizations. Justin Dart is presented with CTD's Meritorious Award for creating a National Policy for Persons with Disabilities. CTD asked each member organization to choose five people to respond to Legislative Alerts in two priority areas chosen by Delegates: community-based services and accessibility for disabled persons in all areas of life. CTD successfully fought off proposals to drastically cut appropriations for the Governor's Committee for Disabled Persons, Texas Department of Human Resources, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, Texas Commission for the Deaf and State Commission for the Blind.

1986

In August 1986, 200 gather in 103 degree heat to say, "Raise Revenue, No Cuts." CTD focuses on recommendations to the every twelve year Sunset Review of Texas health and human services agencies. Resolutions covered funding, tort reform, retaining separate agencies for Commissions and Schools for Blind and Deaf. CTD involved in advocacy for school age children, health care, PAS, housing, transportation, civil rights and employment. (Sound familiar?)

1987

CTD instrumental in a Legislative Forum in January, Disability Consumer Day in March, and over 300 attended a Candlelight Vigil at the Governor's mansion calling for more revenue for human services. CTD holds organizing training sessions to get people ready for the 70th Legislative Session. Legislative priorities include funding, separate state disability agencies, adoption of a public transportation accessibility bill, adoption of a shared attendant services bill, increased scope of enforcement for architectural barriers bill, change of state weights for special education, services to deaf-blind, and adoption of in-home and family support bill. Several bills are secured, and CTD stops effort by Legislature to put Texas Commission for the Deaf inside Texas Rehabilitation Commission.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

1988

On April 29th the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was introduced in both the House and the Senate. On July 12th, 150 people from across the state gathered in Austin to testify in support of the Act and tell of the discrimination they encounter. Justin Dart, co-chair at that time of the Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Americans with Disabilities recorded the testimony to present it to Congress. Fair Housing Act was signed into law. CTD signed on a transportation lawsuit which ruled that accessible public transportation must be provided to people with disabilities throughout the U.S. Comment period for proposed rules for Air Carrier Access Act extended after protest that access for people with disabilities is inadequate.

1989

Several pieces of legislation advocated for by CTD members passed the Texas Legislature: the Telecommunications Relay System (we led the nation on this); automobile refueling at self-serve prices; driver discrimination ended; and, the In-Home and Family Support program was established at Texas Department of Human Services. The ADA Action Network was relentless in efforts to secure passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1990

This was a great year for Texans and Americans with disabilities. All forces were organized for passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and it was signed into law on July 26 by President George Bush. Regulations went into effect to improve access to air travel for passengers with disabilities. Opal Petty won her case for negligence by Texas MHMR for keeping her in public mental hospitals for over five decades against her will.

1991

Belinda Carlton and Laura Brown took over leadership at CTD. CTD members gathered at the Capitol on July 26th to celebrate the first anniversary of the passage of the ADA and we secure written support of leadership for full implementation by the State of Texas. On August 12, over 100 join the "Free Our People" march on the Capitol to say money must be re-directed from institutions to community. CTD began its statewide organizing efforts which continue today. After an extensive struggle, House Bill 39, strengthening the Texas Architectural Barriers Law passed. CTD's PAS Task Force was instrumental in bringing about Senate Resolution 887, setting down a state vision and guiding principles for Personal Assistance Services. Much effort was spent on responding to proposed regulations to implement the ADA and Bob Geyer was the first person with a disability to be appointed to the Texas Department of Human Services Board.

1992

In February, CTD implemented an ADA "Train the Trainer" campaign, training 24 leaders from eight Texas cities. CTD took a stand along with Evan Kemp against the Jerry Lewis Telethon's

HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

pity approach. The PAS Task Force was involved in the commitment to close state schools and the Governor approved closure of Travis and Ft. Worth state institutions for people with mental retardation, as well as having outreach meetings in 7 cities across the state. Governor Richards did not close the Mexia institution because it would "destroy the town. . ."

1993

After organizing a march from Austin to the Governor's mansion, CTD secured a meeting with Governor Richards and her support to 1) work to ensure that families have supports needed to keep children with disabilities at home; 2) advocate at state and federal levels for securely funded long-term supports for people with disabilities; and 3) continue the dialogue with the disability community to create change. CTD members were instrumental in the passing of bills: polling place access amendments eliminating exemption for private polling places and requiring precinct conventions to be accessible; getting commercial facilities included in the Texas Architectural Barriers Act; updating the definition of disability in Human Rights Act to include "regarded as disabled;" and creation of a category for personal assistance services in licensure. CTD presented its first "Disability Dunce" honor to Thomas M. Suehs, Executive Director of Texas Health Care Association. This year we developed and passed our 1994-99 Strategic Plan.

1994

CTD members organized and Belinda took a road trip across Texas to gather members to meet with U.S. Legislators to advocate for "Health Care for All - No Band-aids." A poll which was carried out through CTD member organizations shows the seven most pressing issues for our members are the same as in 1985. The Advocacy Leadership Committee developed a training package on ADA to be used in 1995 in ten cities throughout the state. CTD's Project Coordinator made several road trips to Texas cities to train people with disabilities how to strategize on local PAS issues. With the help of these teams, our year long initiative ensured the Texas Department of Human Services Board approval of the Nursing Facility Waiver program (now CBA) which would extend PAS services to 20,000 individuals residing in nursing homes and want out, or who are at risk of entering a nursing home. In keeping with her commitments, Governor Richards testified in support of this program.

1995

Attempts to weaken the state's architectural barriers laws were defeated by CTD and member organizations. CTD advocated its position that Texas should include people with disabilities in the state's Minority Hiring Practices and set a percentage goal of people with disabilities hired by state agencies based on their availability in the statewide work force, just as it does with minorities. A press conference/celebration of the fifth anniversary of the ADA was held at the Capitol on July 24th. CTD's joint efforts with independent living centers demonstrated the strength of coalition efforts. \$3 million in funding was restored to Texas centers for independent living. Despite grassroots efforts, funding was reduced for many PAS services. The PAS Task

HIGHLIGHTS OF 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

Force worked hard to ensure that people with disabilities would be fully included in managed health care. CTD carried out Title III ADA Implementation Campaign and the PAS Task Force mobilized the grassroots. These efforts developed leadership in 245 individuals.

1996

CTD continued grassroots outreach, advocacy skills training and assistance organizing on local issues. The Disability and Media Initiative organized individuals in six cities to educate and develop relationships with their local media to improve coverage of disability related issues. We organized to defeat the proposed report of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations that called for gutting ADA and IDEA. CTD organized for strong implementation of the National Voter Registration Act. Fifteen alerts and bulletins were disseminated to members throughout the year. As always, team strengthening and building was seen as critical.

1997

A major victory was the PAS Task Force-initiated legislation to create a voucher program for the TRC PAS program and TDHS Client-Managed Attendant Services program, increasing consumer choice and control. The PAS Task Force trained HMOs on best practices in PAS and worked with Texas HHSC and TDHS on implementation of the STAR-PLUS pilot converting Medicaid to managed care and integrating acute and long-term care. CTD joined the fight to protect the ADA and IDEA when they were threatened by mandates to essentially dismantle their protections. CTD worked with Advocacy, Inc. to make the Texas Bill of Rights for People with Disabilities compatible with the ADA. CTD joined in a complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice over smoking in the Texas Capitol being ADA discrimination. Texas Legislation outlawed smoking in the Capitol, except by Legislators. To celebrate the anniversary of the ADA, CTD members filed seven lawsuits. CTD organized, identified 11 primary leaders and carried out a comprehensive training on PAS issues, message development and community organizing. By the end of the year, these leaders were back in their own communities putting together teams. CTD will support these teams in making changes in funding and delivery of PAS, giving people with disabilities more choice of where they live.

1998

The highway is still burning from road trips to support the PAS Teams in El Paso, Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, Tyler, the Rio Grande Valley, Killeen and Cleburne. The PAS Task Force has worked exhaustively on implementation of the PAS voucher legislation, and has worked to bring voucher options to all Medicaid PAS programs. Extensive work has gone into making recommendations to the Sunset Commission on Texas health and human services agencies. An ad hoc coalition, Equity and Independence in Long-Term Services and Supports, consisting of CTD members and non-members, has been established and is advocating our support of a single long-term services agency. We are, again, battling forces of darkness which are working to strip the Texas Architectural Barriers Law. Some plans for 1998 include training the teams on legislative visits, media training and getting ready for the next Legislature.

COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES 1997-1998 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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1994-1999 STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT: The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities is a coalition of individuals and organizations controlled by Texans with disabilities representing cross-disability needs and working together to eliminate all barriers to equal and full participation in life.

Strategic Plan Visions

- VISION 1** - Strong effective leaders provide direction and support at state and local levels.
- VISION 2** - CTD has stable and diversified funding sources sufficient to implement the memberships Strategic Plan.
- VISION 3** - CTD's members communicate and share needs, goals, and human resources.
- VISION 4** - CTD is recognized as the most influential advocacy force for Texans with disabilities.
- VISION 5** - All progressive groups controlled by people with disabilities are members.

Cross-Disability Priority Issues

- 1. Personal Assistant Services
- 2. Health Care Reform
- 3. Employment
- 4. ADA and Other Civil Rights Laws
- 5. Transportation
- 6. Housing
- 7. Advocacy for School-aged Children

CTD Past Presidents

Pat Pound	1978-1980
Bob Geyer	1980-1981
Bobby Simpson	1981-1981
Larry Johnson	1982-1983
Marshall Mitchell	1983-1985
Bob Kafka	1985-1987
Steve Johns	1987-1988
Larry Correu	1988-1989
Margaret Robinson	1989-1990
John Murray	1990-1991
Jerome Wright	1991-1993
Dave Cullum	1993-1994
Cheryl A. Hurst	1994-1995
Redge Westbrook	1995-1996
Mark Hammon	1996-1997
Christine Pacetti	1997

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Executive Director**

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**Lifetime Independence
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**Texas Association
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**Texas Commission for
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**Texas Mental Health
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Texas Nurses Association

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The Arc of Texas

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COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

"BARRIER FREE OR BUST:"

Friday - May 22, 1998

- 11:00 - 1:00 p.m. **Board of Directors Meeting:** Boardroom
- 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. **REGISTRATION, DELEGATE CHECK-IN and EXHIBIT VIEWING:** Ballroom A,B
- 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. **GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** Ballroom C,D,E
- MEDICAID MANAGED CARE REVIEWS IN TEXAS**
Ralph Rouse, Regional Manager, Office for Civil Rights for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- THE TEXAS SUNSET PROCESS - Why is it a Big Deal?**
Larry Graham, Policy Analyst, Texas Sunset Commission
- IMPROVING VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION IN TEXAS:**
Judith Sokolow, Advocacy, Inc.
Redge Westbrook, CTD Resolutions Chair
- 8:45 - 10:00 p.m. **HEROES REMEMBERED and SALUTED:** Ballroom C,D,E
Reception, Buffet and Cash Bar

Saturday, May 23, 1998

- 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND EXHIBIT VIEWING:**
Ballroom A,B
- 9:00 - 11:15 a.m. **GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** Ballroom C,D,E
- THE STATE OF THE STATE: ADVOCACY ISSUES**
Personal Assistance Services:
Laura Brown, PAS Task Force and Bob Kafka, ADAPT of Texas
Employment:
Stephon Breedlove, CTD Board of Directors and Advocacy, Inc.
Housing:
Stephanie Thomas, ADAPT of Texas
- 11:15 - 12:15 p.m. **CONCURRENT STRATEGY SESSIONS**
Regency, Rio Grande and Monterrey

20TH ANNUAL DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

ADVOCACY IS A MUST!"

- 12:30 - 2:15 p.m. **LUNCHEON: Ballroom, C,D,E**
KENNY MURGIA SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARDS
KEYNOTE: *Barrier Free or Must: Advocacy is a Must*
Belinda Carlton, CTD Executive Director and
Justin Dart by Video
- 2:45 - 4:15 p.m. **GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Ballroom C,D,E**

THE STATE OF THE STATE: ADVOCACY ISSUES
Healthcare:
Jennifer Cernoch, Texas Respite Resource Network
Civil Rights:
Wendy Wilkinson, ADA Assistance Center (DBTAC)
Transportation:
Art Jackson, Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority
- 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. **CONCURRENT STRATEGY SESSIONS**
Regency, Rio Grande and Monterrey
- 8:00 - 10:30 p.m. **MEMORIAL DAY PARTY - Ballroom C,D,E**
Hor d'oeuvres and Cash Bar
The River: - Performing group of kids with disabilities.
Ashley Adams: - Teen hard of hearing country western singer.
Disc Jockey and Dance Floor

Sunday, May 24, 1998

- 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST: Ballroom C,D,E**
- 9:00 - 12:00 noon **DELEGATE ASSEMBLY:**

Board Election Results

Report to Board and Delegates

Presentation of Proposed Resolutions

1998-99 Action Plan Presentation

CHALLENGE SPEECH BY 1998-99 PRESIDENT

ADVOCACY, INCORPORATED



<http://www.advocacyinc.org>

The mission of Advocacy, Inc. is to advocate for, protect, and advance the legal, human, and service rights of people with disabilities.

In addition to our main office in Austin, Advocacy, Inc. has regional offices in the following cities:

▶ Austin, 512-454-4816

▶ Dallas, 214-630-3472

▶ Houston, 713-974-7691

▶ Lubbock, 806-765-7794

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Stephon Breedlove, J.D.
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EMPOWERMENT
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1998 MEMBER MISSIONS AND GOALS

ADAPT of TEXAS

ADAPT of Texas is a non-profit grassroots disability rights group, that seeks to increase awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, by effectively advocating for greater accessibility in the community, more accessible and affordable housing, and increase the availability of personal attendant services. ADAPT of Texas strives to promote dignity and independence for all people with disabilities.

Advocacy, Inc.

Advocacy, Inc. is a non-profit corporation funded by the United States Congress to protect and advocate for the legal rights of persons with disabilities in Texas. Advocacy, Inc. is funded under four separate federal laws to protect the legal rights of persons with disabilities and persons who are or have applied to be clients of the state vocational rehabilitation system. Advocacy, Inc. is completely separate from state or local government and is staffed by attorneys, paralegals, social workers, psychologists, rehabilitation specialists, and other professionals.

AARP - American Association of Retired Persons

AARP excels as a dynamic presence in every community, shaping and enriching the experience of aging for each member and for society.

ACBT - American Council of the Blind of Texas

The American Council of the Blind of Texas is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind. The organization was established in 1978 and meets once a year in convention to conduct business. ACBT has chapters in most of the major cities in Texas. The mission of the organization is to promote independent participation of all blind and visually impaired persons in society. The ACBT works towards fulfilling the needs of its members and its mission through advocacy and educational programs.

AMCPD - Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

The committee was established by City Ordinance 870319-J, which states the AMCPD's purpose is "To carry on a program to encourage, assist, and enable persons to participate in the social and economic life of the City of Austin and achieve maximum personal independence; to become gainfully employed; and to enjoy fully and use all public and private facilities available within the community." The Committee's membership is made up of nine local residents appointed by the Austin City Council. AMCPD's main goals are to: enhance employment opportunities, assure job accommodations, provide leadership recognition, sponsor workshops and conferences, maintain a resource and referral network, address accessibility issues, and promote public awareness.

LIFE - Lifetime Independence for Everyone

The purpose of LIFE Independent Living Center is to protect, defend and advance the rights and dignity of all people. It is our belief that all people have dignity and worth and that our community needs all of its citizens. We cannot afford to waste one individual. We encourage the entire community to join with us to access the abilities of all its citizens.

Multiple Sclerosis Society - Southeast Texas Chapter National

The mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Society is to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis through education and research.

PVA - Paralyzed Veterans of America/Lone Star Chapter

The key objective of the Paralyzed Veterans of America is to take actions necessary to restore spinal cord injured or diseased veterans' bodies and life potentials as closely as is humanly possible to those Americans not suffering spinal cord dysfunction. This objective will be accomplished through quality health care, securing veterans' benefits, medical research, education, recreational activities and general advocacy for people with disabilities.

REACH of Dallas, Denton and Fort Worth

Rehabilitation, Education and Advocacy for Citizens with Handicaps, Inc.

REACH, which stands for Rehabilitation, Education and Advocacy for Citizens with Handicaps, is a North Texas based nonprofit corporation with the mission of providing services to people with disabilities and education to the community. In order to achieve this mission, REACH operates 3 resource centers on independent living - the REACH Resource Center on Independent Living in Fort Worth, the REACH of Dallas Resource Center on Independent Living, and the REACH of Denton Resource Center on Independent Living. Through the centers, REACH provides an array of services including individual and systems advocacy, peer counseling, independent living skills training, information & referral, and ADA technical assistance.

Reclamation, Inc.

Seeks to help reclaim the human dignity destroyed by barriers and negative attitudes toward people with disabilities. Reclamation, Inc. desires to bring about positive visibility by showing people with disabilities performing worthwhile projects. The primary means of doing this is to provide housing for people with disabilities.

RUN - Resource Utilization Network

The purpose of RUN Independent Living Center is to protect, defend and advance the rights and dignity of all people. It is our belief that all people have dignity and worth and that our community needs all of its citizens. We cannot afford to waste one individual. We encourage the entire community to join with us to access the abilities of all its citizens.

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MARIA DE LA ROSA

ADA (Americans with
Disabilities Act) SPECIALIST

TRAINED BY:
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& the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
& Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD)

CHRIS MYLNEK

CTD BOARD TREASURER

1997-1998

SAN ANTONIO



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SAADA - San Antonio Area Disability Advocates

The San Antonio Area Disability Advocates organization was established exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific activities. SAADA strives to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities by enhancing the social, economic, and employment opportunities. SAADA cooperates with various disability groups in promoting cross disability advocacy, education and training through workshops and seminars. SAADA promotes the political power of persons with disabilities by conducting voter registration programs and encouraging persons with disabilities to engage in the political process. SAADA provides a forum for the free exchange of ideas and opinions and encourages the implementation and continued strict adherence to the rules of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

SAILS - San Antonio Independent Living Services

The founding purpose and continuing commitment of San Antonio Independent Living Services is to advocate for the rights and empowerment of persons with disabilities and to provide access to those services which assist them in increasing self-determination and independence, through programs which are directed, developed and delivered by persons with disabilities.

SETLIFE

The mission of SETLIFE, Inc. is to empower people with disabilities to live independently in their own community through: better access to community and state programs and services; better access to community facilities and the workplace; greater participation in leadership and advocacy roles; better transition planning for young adults, and greater participation in decision making regarding their lives.

SWCID - Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf

The primary purpose of SWCID is to provide a comprehensive two year college program and an educational environment to assist deaf students in achieving their educational and career objectives. Courses in developmental/preparatory studies, general studies programs and vocational/technical training are available. Hearing individuals preparing for vocations in deafness-related fields may also pursue their educational career objectives at SWCID. In addition, professionals employed in the field of deafness are provided opportunities to upgrade their skills/knowledge through workshops and seminars sponsored by SWCID.

Texas Advocates

The Texas Advocates work together and speak out for people with disabilities to have equal opportunity to participate with dignity and respect as members in all aspects of community life.

TDCHH -- Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The mission of the Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired is to eliminate communication barriers and to guarantee equal access for people who are deaf or hearing impaired as is available to all other people. The Commission shall be an advocate for people of all ages who are deaf and hearing impaired to enable them to express their freedoms, participate in society to their individual potential, and reduce their isolation regardless of location, socioeconomic status, or degree of disability.

THDS - OSPD

***Texas Department of Human Services
Office of Services to Persons with Disabilities***

It is the position of the Texas Department of Human Services that people with disabilities of all ages can live in the community when provided appropriate services and supports. To this end the Texas Department of Human Services will take all appropriate and legislative appropriation requests which support these actions to ensure the development of a system of community-based services and supports for persons with disabilities. Additionally, the Texas Department of Human Services will work with other state agencies, consumer and advocate groups, service providers and the Texas Legislature to ensure that this vision becomes a reality in Texas and to educate and inform itself and the public regarding this philosophy.

TMA - Texas Medical Association

Texas Medical Association was organized in 1853 to serve the people of Texas in matters of medical care, prevention and cure of disease, and the improvement of public health. Today, its mission statement continues in the same direction: "Improve the health of all Texans."

TMHC - Texas Mental Health Consumers

Texas Mental Health Consumers is a consumer advocacy organization for mental health and mental health related issues. The mission of TMHC is to encourage, educate, train, and organize people who have received services, voluntarily or involuntarily from the mental health system to advocate for themselves and to support each other.

TNA - Texas Nurses Association

The mission of the Texas Nurses Association is to advance excellence in nursing. The vision is for Registered Nurses to be leaders and catalyst in promoting healthy communities.

TPVA - Greater Austin

Texas Paralyzed Veterans of Association - Greater Austin

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association (TPVA) is an organization comprised of Veterans with spinal cord injury or diseases, and whose purpose is to promote medical research in the fields of injuries and diseases of the spinal cord, advocate for reconditioning programs, and acquaint the public with the needs of paraplegic and quadriplegic persons.

TPVA - SE Chapter
Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association

The Texas Paralyzed Veterans Association (TPVA) is an organization comprised of Veterans with spinal cord injury or diseases, and whose purpose is to promote medical research in the fields of injuries and diseases of the spinal cord, advocate for reconditioning programs, and acquaint the public with the needs of paraplegic and quadriplegic persons.

TRC - *Texas Rehabilitation Commission-Consumer Affairs*

The Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) assists people with disabilities to participate in their communities by achieving employment of choice, living as independently as possible, and accessing high quality services. TRC offers a wide range of services that meet the needs of people with disabilities and are consistent with client choice and eligibility. Services range from empowering people to carry out independent activities of daily living, to the timely and accurate adjudication of social security disability claims, to transitional services that support people in getting and keeping jobs, to services that result in competitive employment.

TSB - *Texas School for Blind and Visually Impaired*

The mission of TSBVI is to provide opportunities for children and youth who are visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities, to develop the skills necessary to lead vocationally, personally, and socially satisfying and productive lives. TSBVI welcomes the challenge of providing educational services which will result in productive, fulfilled adults who will enjoy the same responsibilities and privileges as all citizens of Texas.

TSD - *Texas School for the Deaf*

The mission of Texas School for the Deaf is to provide a positive learning and living environment which addresses the unique needs of a diverse population of deaf learners and enables them to become productive members of society.

The Arc of Texas

The Arc of Texas, a non-profit, volunteer organization, is committed to expanding opportunities for people with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities to be included in their communities. The Arc supports families, advances public policies, provides training programs and builds a statewide network of advocates.

TCCD - *Travis County Council for the Deaf*

The mission of the Travis County Council for the Deaf, through its Deaf Community Center is to provide educational, social, and recreational programs and activities to enrich the lives of the deaf and hard of hearing community in the greater Austin area.

VAIL - Valley Association for Independent Living

VAIL is a non-profit organization and Center for Independent Living established to serve people with disabilities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. In addition to the Independent Living core services (information and referral, peer counseling, independent living skills training, and advocacy), VAIL also assists in the elimination of architectural, programmatic and communication barriers through an ADA Assessment Team, and by selling at-cost TTYs to consumers, agencies, and businesses and a fee-for-services Interpreter Program. VAIL also administers a Diabetes Education and Prevention Program, independent living services for the deaf and hard of hearing, an independent living specialist to provide personal assistance services, and an independent living specialist to do outreach to the under-served in the more than 600 colonias in the valley. VAIL provides monthly group counseling sessions. It also has an Employment Program for people with disabilities, including individuals with HIV. VAIL also has a Home Modification Program to assist people with disabilities.

Volar Independent Living Center

Volar is a consumer-controlled, community-based center for independent living serving El Paso County. Volar is committed to providing independent living services and information and referral, and to developing community options for persons with different types of disabilities to empower them to live the kind of lives they choose. Volar has advocated for the rights of people with disabilities for 14 years.

Grupo Dignidad, Igualdad y Oportunidad

We salute CTD, Friends and Delegates!

Rebecca Vera Lopez

Daniel Lopez

Grupo Dignidad, Igualdad y Oportunidad

Saludos a CTD, Amigos, y Delegados!

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