



**DISABILITY  
RESOURCE  
DIGEST**

**Volume 9 Issue 7 July/August 2009**

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The Disability Resource Digest (DRD) is a special project of SMD Alliance. SMD Alliance is based in Manitoba, Canada and provides strategic vision and policy direction to four SMD corporations: SMD Clearinghouse; SMD Foundation; SMD Ventures; and SMD Services.

The vision shared among the corporations is of a community that supports the independence, participation, and empowerment of persons of all abilities. Each SMD corporation pursues a complementary mandate in working toward this vision.

The DRD is prepared primarily as an informational resource for consumers, professionals and publics interested in remaining current in disability related issues. An archive of past editions of the DRD is maintained on SMD's web site (<http://www.smd.mb.ca>).

Published monthly (with a single summer edition for July and August), the DRD presents summaries of, and URL addresses for, notable disability-related content on the world-wide web (WWW). The DRD focuses on recently posted content but also includes coverage of other web pages of interest. The URL addresses cited in the DRD are current at the time of publication, but as content on the web is continually revised, the addresses in the DRD may not remain current.

The DRD is prepared for SMD Alliance by The Project Group (TPG) Consulting Cooperative Ltd., a Winnipeg-based consulting firm. Neither SMD nor TPG are responsible for the accuracy or reliability of the content cited in the DRD.

Readers interested in learning more about SMD Alliance are invited to visit: <http://www.smd.mb.ca> or to contact the agency by e-mail at [info@smd.mb.ca](mailto:info@smd.mb.ca). Readers are also invited to send comments and suggestions regarding the DRD to this same e-mail address.

## OBAMA ADMINISTRATION & DISABILITY

**Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, 2009** – by The President Of The United States Of America (*Disability.gov*). "Today we celebrate the 19th anniversary of the enactment of the historic Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Signed into law on July 26, 1990, this landmark legislation established a clear mandate against discrimination on the basis of disability so that people with disabilities would have an equal opportunity to achieve the American Dream. Our Nation is once again poised to make history for people with disabilities. I am proud to announce that the United States will sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in New York on December 13, 2006. The Convention is the first new human rights convention of the 21st century adopted by the United Nations, and it represents a paradigm shift in protecting the human rights of 650 million people with disabilities worldwide. We proudly join the international community in further advancing the rights of people with disabilities."  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Presidential-Proclamation-19th-anniversary-of-the-Americans-with-Disabilities-Act/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Presidential-Proclamation-19th-anniversary-of-the-Americans-with-Disabilities-Act/)

**Commission Votes to Revise Rules to Conform to ADA Amendments Act** – (*Disability.org*). "The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) voted today to revise its regulations to conform to changes made by the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, which would make it easier for an individual seeking protection under the ADA to establish that he or she has a disability. The Commission voted 2-1 to adopt the rules changes, at a public meeting this morning at the agency's Washington headquarters. The five-member body has two vacancies. The rules changes approved today represent an initial stage in the regulatory process and must next go to the Office of Management and Budget for review, and to federal agencies pursuant to Executive Order 12067, without public comment. 'In approving these proposed regulations, the EEOC today is taking a significant step toward returning the ADA to the broad and strong civil rights statute that Congress originally intended it to be,' said EEOC Acting Chairman Stuart J. Ishimaru. 'The proposed regulations will permit individuals with disabilities to participate to the fullest extent possible in the American workplace.'  
<http://www.eeoc.gov/press/6-17-09.html>

**Getting to Know the President's Disability Advisor: A Conversation with Kareem Dale** – (*AAPD*). "Kareem Dale is already making history. As Special Assistant to the President for Disability Policy, he is the first person ever named to a White House post exclusively dedicated to disability issues. Dale, who has a visual disability, will have direct access to the President in this role and he will coordinate the administration's efforts to see that people with disabilities are on a level playing field with all Americans. Originally from Chicago, Dale previously served as the disability director for the Obama for America campaign. He also served on the Arts Policy Committee and the Disability Policy Committee for then-Senator Obama. AAPD had an opportunity to have an informal conversation with Dale to find out a little more about the man and the path that has led him to his current position."  
[http://www.aapd.com/Newsletters/Newsletter\\_DisabilityAdvisor.html](http://www.aapd.com/Newsletters/Newsletter_DisabilityAdvisor.html)

**Launch of Revamped Web Site Coincides with ADA Anniversary** – (*Spinalcord.org*). "In conjunction with the 19th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the U.S. Department of Labor has re-named and re-launched DisabilityInfo.gov as Disability.gov. The

site offers comprehensive information about programs and services to better serve more than 50 million Americans with disabilities, their family members, veterans, employers, educators, caregivers and anyone interested in disability-related information. The new Web site will integrate content from 22 federal agencies and be managed by the Labor Department. The former DisabilityInfo.gov site has been revamped with social media tools to encourage interaction and feedback, and new ways to organize, share and receive information. Visitors will be able to sign up for personalized news and updates, participate in online discussions and suggest resources for the site. New features include a Twitter feed, Really Simple Syndication feeds, a blog, social bookmarking and a user-friendly way to obtain answers to questions on such topics as finding employment and job accommodations. Additional tools will be added during the months ahead."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2324>

### **Obama Administration Taps Disability Community to Help Fill Vacant Positions –**

*(RehabManagement)*. "The White House Office of Personnel is reaching out to the disability community for potential candidates for appointment within the Administration's state and regional offices, and to expand the number of people with disabilities serving at senior levels of the Administration, according to a statement released by the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Washington. . . The Office of Personnel has informed the Committee on Disability Power and Pride that they are looking to fill multiple political and other appointments within the Administration's state and regional offices nationwide. They are reaching out to the disability community to obtain the names and resumes of people for consideration for such appointments."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-29\\_01.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-29_01.asp)

### **President Obama Announces New White House Office of Olympic, Paralympic and Youth Sport –**

*(Disability.org)*. "Today, President Barack Obama announced the formation of the White House Office of Olympic, Paralympic and Youth Sport. This permanent White House office will promote the values of the Olympic Movement and encourage increased youth participation in athletics. The primary function of the Office will be to enhance awareness of the Olympic Movement through promotion of its fundamental principles at the federal level. President Obama said, 'It is an important goal of my administration to give our nation's children every possible tool they need to grow, learn and succeed in life. A key part of this is increasing access to healthy, constructive activities like sports for our nation's children. Too many American kids – particularly those in urban areas – have no access to organized sporting activities. Sports are an important way to instill values, judgment and teamwork in our nation's kids, and this new office reflects our commitment to giving all our children a chance to thrive. As the International Olympic Committee moves forward with their selection process we hope that this new office can serve as a model for youth involvement worldwide'."

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/President-Obama-Announces-New-White-House-Office-of-Olympic-Paralympic-and-Youth-Sport/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Announces-New-White-House-Office-of-Olympic-Paralympic-and-Youth-Sport/)

### **President Obama Commemorates Anniversary of Olmstead and Announces New Initiatives to Assist Americans with Disabilities –**

*(Disability.gov)*. "On the 10th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision in the case of Olmstead v. L.C., President Barack Obama today celebrated that anniversary and launched 'The Year of Community Living,' a new effort to assist Americans with disabilities. Specifically, the President has directed Health and

Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan to work together to identify ways to improve access to housing, community supports, and independent living arrangements. As part of this effort, later today, Secretaries Sebelius and Donovan will announce several new initiatives including details about increased numbers of Section 8 vouchers and enhanced interagency coordination to address this critical civil rights issue. The initiative also will include listening sessions conducted by HHS across the country to hear the voices and stories of Americans and to keep the President's pledge to be as open and transparent as possible."

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/President-Obama-Commemorates-Anniversary-of-Olmstead-and-Announces-New-Initiatives-to-Assist-Americans-with-Disabilities/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Commemorates-Anniversary-of-Olmstead-and-Announces-New-Initiatives-to-Assist-Americans-with-Disabilities/)

**President Obama Meets with Disability Leaders** – (*JFAActivist*). "From the JFA Moderator: The following is SUMMARY was prepared by the individuals who attended a small meeting with President Obama to discuss Disability Policy Priorities on Friday, July 24. This conversation with disability leadership is an important first step for the President and the Disability Community to work together toward fulfilling the promise of the ADA: equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. The Justice for All Action Network (JFAAN) was pleased to have several members of its steering committee involved in this conversation and hopes future meetings will be even more inclusive of the leaders of the national organizations representing the major disability groups run by persons with disabilities."

<http://jfactivist.typepad.com/jfactivist/2009/07/president-obama-meets-with-disability-leaders.html>

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## ACCESSIBILITY

### **ACCESS2ALL - Mobility Schemes Ensuring Accessibility of Public Transport for All Users**

– (*Access to All*). "The main aim of proposing the ACCESS 2 ALL coordination action is to encourage Public Transport operators belonging to the project target group to adopt innovative technological concepts and mobility schemes that enable high quality mobility and transportation services for all, as well as to provide their personnel with the necessary knowledge on the particularities of specific user groups, such as the elderly and disabled, ICT-illiterate, dyslexic and illiterate people, etc. ACCESS 2 ALL aims at defining concrete mobility schemes, guidelines and policy recommendations, ensuring accessibility of Public Transport to ALL users, through the coordination of current research efforts, the production of common research roadmaps, the identification of best practice models and the appropriate use of ICT aids and networks. The achievement of all above stated objectives will be measured and verified through well specified milestones and specific success assessment criteria."

[http://www.access-to-all.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.access-to-all.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1)

### **AFB Partners with AOL to Explore the Feasibility of Accessible Walking Directions from MapQuest**

– (*AFB*). "Ever wonder whether an online service designed to provide driving directions to the sighted could provide relevant information to the blind, or others with vision loss? So have AFB TECH and AOL. Together the organizations are developing early

prototype technology intended to harness the vast amounts of data available from AOL's MapQuest to create Accessible Walking Directions (AWD)."

<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=42&TopicID=242>

**Blind Drivers Plot Their Own Course** – (*NFB*). "A voice rose above the chatter in the University of Maryland parking lot: 'Blind man driving!' Twenty people took turns piloting a car on this muggy Friday morning, the first public test of technology that might one day overcome barriers to putting the blind behind the wheel. The quest to drive has captivated the blind community as it has become more integrated into a car-centric society. Some likened Friday's test to a moon landing -- a fitting analogy, considering that the prototype vehicle vaguely resembled a lunar rover. 'One day, we'll be on the road with them,' said Ishaan Rastogi, 15, a blind New Jersey high school student with a Yankees cap pulled over his eyes and the first to test the vehicle. The event capped a summer science academy organized by the National Federation of the Blind for 200 blind and low-vision young people from across the country. The youths had spent the week rock climbing, bungee-jumping and launching weather balloons, activities tailored to teach that there is no limit to what a blind person can do."

<http://www.nfb.org/nfb/NewsBot.asp?MODE=VIEW&ID=458>

**CVS/pharmacy Enhancing Accessibility for the Visually Impaired To Its Web Site and Store Point of Sales Devices** – (*ICDRI*). "CVS/pharmacy, the nation's largest retail pharmacy, announced today that it is implementing functional improvements to benefit its customers with visual impairments and other disabilities. The Company has installed tactile keypads in all CVS stores and it will enhance its website in 2009. Today's announcement is the result of a collaboration between CVS/pharmacy, the American Foundation for the Blind, American Council of the Blind and California Council of the Blind. CVS/pharmacy's actions were applauded by these groups. . . CVS/pharmacy's point of sales improvements are designed to assist customers who cannot read information on a flat screen point of sale device and therefore cannot privately enter their PIN or other confidential information. All CVS stores have been equipped, at a minimum, with a tactile device at both the front check-out counter and the pharmacy counter to ensure that customers unable to use a flat screen keypad do not have to provide their PIN to a store employee. The Company is also training its store employees to provide appropriate interaction with visually impaired customers regarding the use of the new tactile devices."

<http://www.icdri.org/legal/CVSSettlement.htm>

**Housing Bill, Inclusive Home Design Act, Requires Visitability Standards** –

(*AbilityMagazine*). "'Universal standards for homes built with federal money are long past due,' said Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-IL. 'Implementing accessible features when homes are built is a simple matter of fairness, cost effectiveness, and common sense.' People with mobility impairments have limited access to most homes constructed with federal assistance because there are currently no federal standards for accessibility features that these homes must include. However, new legislation introduced by Rep. Schakowsky, the Inclusive Home Design Act (HR 1408) would greatly increase the number of homes that are accessible for people with disabilities. Currently, 95 percent of new single-family homes and townhouses built with federal assistance fail to include any features that make it possible for people with mobility impairments to live in or visit the homes."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_home\\_Schakowsky.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_home_Schakowsky.html)

### **Iowa 9-1-1 Call Center First to Successfully Trial 9-1-1 Text Messaging – (AbilityMagazine).**

"Black Hawk Consolidated Public Safety Communications Center has become the first 9-1-1 Call Center in the nation to successfully receive text messages sent directly to 9-1-1. A broad team of communications companies worked collaboratively to support the public safety needs of the 31 million citizens with speech and hearing issues who rely upon text messaging as a primary means of communications. Currently they must communicate with 9-1-1 operators using a relay center or a specialized communications device. This groundbreaking effort allows people with speech difficulties, deaf or hard-of-hearing to use text messaging to communicate directly with a 9-1-1 operator in an emergency. The team of companies including i wireless, Intrado Inc., Positron Public Safety and RACOM Corporation were involved in this effort."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_9-1-1.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_9-1-1.html)

### **Understanding Web Accessibility – (ATRC).**

"This Certificate Course is aimed at Web content developers, and people who need to know about making content on the Web accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. The course will help Web authors develop the skills and understanding needed to create Web sites that comply with accessibility standards. The course has been developed at the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (ATRC) at the University of Toronto, in collaboration with Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO), Cantor Access Inc, and Vubiz Inc. The ATRC is a world leader in the development of accessible information and communication technologies and standards. The ADO implements the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Cantor Access Inc. provides consultation and education in many areas associated with Web accessibility. Vubiz Inc. is a developer of accessible instructional media."

<http://www.atutor.ca/services/courses.php>

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## **ADVOCACY**

### **It's Our Story National Launch at National Press Club, Washington DC – (AbilityMagazine).**

"On July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)—the world's first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities. Now 19 years later the law still resonates with a powerful history and that is impacting everything from the Healthcare bill and Justice Sotomyer's nomination, to the race for the American presidency. On the eve of the 19th Anniversary of the ADA a broad coalition of organizations—representing the 54 million Americans with disabilities—will launch the 'It's Our Story' national initiative. 'It's Our Story' is a video oral history project that uncovers the power, pride, and personal struggles of living with a disability. The 'It's Our Story' initiative is the most ambitious and holds the most comprehensive history of this unique civil rights struggle,' said Judith Heumann, Director of the Department of Disability Services for the District of Columbia and one of the most illustrious leaders of the disability community. Scott Cooper, the project's director, states that, 'at the project's core lie over 6000 testimonies of what is was like, is and should be like to live with a disability in America'."

[http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news\\_itsourstory.html](http://www.abilitymagazine.com/news_itsourstory.html)

### **Spina Bifida Featured Prominently During Supreme Court Confirmation Hearings –**

*(SpinaBifidaAssociation).* "A large component of the important work the Spina Bifida

Association (SBA) carries out as an organization is advocacy action. We share information and the need for critically important programs on behalf of the Spina Bifida cause with our legislators in an effort to increase the visibility of this complex birth defect and to improve the quality of life for those affected. One very visible and recent result of the impact of this work was squarely set in the public's eye yesterday during Confirmation Hearings for Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor when Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK.) posed a question related to Spina Bifida to Judge Sotomayor."

[http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org/site/c.liKWL7PLLrF/b.5307339/k.FB66/July\\_16\\_2009\\_Spina\\_Bifida\\_Featured\\_Prominently\\_During\\_Supreme\\_Court\\_Confirmation\\_Hearings.htm](http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org/site/c.liKWL7PLLrF/b.5307339/k.FB66/July_16_2009_Spina_Bifida_Featured_Prominently_During_Supreme_Court_Confirmation_Hearings.htm)

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## COMMENTARY

**Should Disability Funding Be Part of Health Reform?** – by Ben Adler (*The American Prospect*). "With an estimated 37.5 million eligible voters with a disability -- and the aging baby boom generation means the ranks of the disabled will grow -- disability rights is an emerging brand of identity politics. . . . The Obama campaign had a comprehensive disability-issues platform, and President Obama hired Kareem Dale to be the first White House special assistant for disability policy. On July 21 the president also announced the U.S. will sign on to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. So why are disability activists in an uproar? Instead of celebrating Obama's announcement, on July 21 a coalition of disability-rights organizations held 26 simultaneous protests at the DNC headquarters, local Democratic Party offices, and at Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus' state office in Missoula, Montana. . . . Because, like other key progressive constituencies, such as gay-rights and reproductive-rights advocates, disability-rights groups are watching long-awaited priorities be delayed as the president and Congress focus on the economy, climate-change legislation, and health reform."

[http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=should\\_disability\\_funding\\_be\\_part\\_of\\_health\\_reform](http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=should_disability_funding_be_part_of_health_reform)

**Social care - a users' wish list** – (*Disability Now*). "All current Government talk is of reforming social care to put disabled people and other service users 'at the centre'. Yet the lead on 'personalisation' and 'self-directed support' has largely come from non-disabled 'experts', making it difficult for disabled people to get their views heard, let alone included. Now findings from a national consultation event jointly organised by the Commission for Social Care Inspection and Brunel University challenges this. It brought together policymakers and a very wide range of disabled people – this included people with physical and sensory impairments, mental health service users, people with learning difficulties, older disabled people and people who identified as 'neurologically diverse'. Social care is a residual system based on means-testing and professionally defined needs-assessment. Crucially this user-led consultation shows that disabled people want a universalist service, everyone is entitled to, free at the point of delivery, like the NHS, not one rationed by charges and eligibility criteria."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/news-focus/social-care-a-users-wish-list>

**You'll never walk alone** – (*Disability Now*). "Disabled people have learnt the hard way over the years to be wary of the phrase: 'in your own best interests'. Much has been justified under that vast umbrella including institutional care, aggressive medication, forced sterilisation – the list

goes on. Which is why when the subject of tagging of patients with dementia comes up, my antennae begin to quiver, not, I would argue, out of a kneejerk response to the infringement of liberty, but from bitter experience of how 'assistance' can become 'control'. My wife is a psychiatric nurse, and has spent many years working in care homes. She's also married to me, and is, I would say, if anything even more robust than me on this issue of self-determination and personal freedom."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/have-your-say/petes-place/youll-never-walk-alone/?searchterm=Peter%20White>

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## EDUCATION

### **Second edition of Designing Positive Behavior Support Plans published**

**Email** – (AAIDD). "In recent years, positive behavior support (PBS) has emerged as a progressive and an effective approach to helping people with developmental disabilities overcome challenging behaviors, and foster a caring environment in service settings and schools. The new second edition of [Designing Positive Behavior Support Plans](#) by Linda M. Bambara and Timothy P. Knoster presents all the steps it takes to gather important information about problem behaviors and develop and implement comprehensive support plans successfully in classrooms. The book is published by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD)."

[http://www.aaidd.org/news/news\\_item.cfm?OID=2001](http://www.aaidd.org/news/news_item.cfm?OID=2001)

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## EMPLOYMENT

### **Hiring at the Social Security Administration: Linking Candidates with Disabilities to SSA**

**Jobs** – (*Disability.org*). "The Social Security Administration has hired a significant number of employees, including many with disabilities, throughout the country this fiscal year. SSA expects to continue hiring during the next fiscal year which begins on October first. Additionally, SSA plans to open some new facilities in the next few years and this will provide new employment opportunities. Although different offices and regions of the country will experience different rates of hiring, which are impossible to predict in advance, our ongoing hiring initiative offers a unique opportunity for individuals with disabilities to be considered for SSA positions. These jobs will be at various skill levels including a number of entry-level positions."

<http://www.cessi.net/ttw/SSAHires/index.html>

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## GENERAL INTEREST

**Campbell swings Lords on assisted dying** – by Sunil Peck (*DisabilityNow*). "An impassioned speech by a disabled peer in the House of Lords has thrown the issue of assisted dying into sharp relief. In July, peers rejected an amendment to the coroners and justice bill proposed by Lord Falconer, which could have allowed people to help a disabled person to travel to a country to die without the threat of prosecution. Peers voted against the amendment by 194

votes to 141. Baroness Campbell of Surbiton, the disabled peer who spoke against the amendment in the chamber, told Disability Now that she had heard conversations in the Lords and read articles in the press that assumed that the lives of disabled people who could not live without the assistance of another human being must be intolerable. She said that such talk reflected 'pretty scary times' for disabled people and wanted to secure the right for others like herself to gain more support and palliative care and live a dignified life. . . . But Debbie Purdy, who has multiple sclerosis and is seeking legal clarification about whether her husband would face prosecution if he helped her travel abroad to die, said that she was 'extremely disappointed' that the amendment had been defeated in the Lords."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/news-focus/campbell-swings-lords-on-assisted-dying>

**Canadians unite to help people living with spinal cord injury** – (*NewsWire*). "Thousands of Canadians demonstrated how they can make a difference in the lives of others by coming together this past weekend in communities across the country in support of Rick Hansen Wheels In Motion, presented by Scotiabank. Fundraising is ongoing to June 30, but preliminary results indicate that the 7th annual Rick Hansen Wheels In Motion has raised more than \$1.2 million."

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/June2009/16/c7070.html>

**European Citizen Award 2008** – "European Citizen Award goes to Stockholm Laureate is Dr Adolf Ratzka from the Independent Living Institute. One day after Sweden assumed the EU Presidency, Stefan Prystawik, EU Coordinator of the European Anti-Discrimination Council - EAC will come to Stockholm to present the 2008 European Citizen Award to Dr Adolf Ratzka of the Independent Living Institute. The European Anti-Discrimination Council dedicates its annual European Citizen Award to honor extraordinary achievements with eliminating discriminatory living conditions over an extended period of time by outstanding members of society. Adolf Ratzka received the award in 2008, honoring his successful initiatives for a self-determined life of persons with disabilities over many decades."

<http://www.eacih.eu/024cc19b2109b4f03/index.html#024cc19c3c07e9102>

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## GOVERNMENT

### CANADA

**\$24 Million For More And Better Affordable Homes In Downtown Winnipeg: Province Launches New Long-term Strategy Backed by \$327-million Investment** – (*Government of Manitoba*). "Hundreds of students, new Canadians, seniors and families are among more than 1,700 households that will benefit from new and improved housing in the downtown Winnipeg area. . . . 'Our Government is moving aggressively to ensure Canada's Economic Action Plan is implemented rapidly here in Manitoba and across Canada,' said Toews. 'I'm pleased that more lower-income individuals, families, seniors and persons with disabilities will benefit from safe, affordable housing in their communities.' The Province of Manitoba is contributing \$227 million over two years for housing initiatives in Winnipeg and across the province. The federal contribution is close to \$100 million over two years under Canada's Economic Action Plan, the

two-year extension of federal funding for the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI) and the renovation programs for low-income households, for a combined investment of \$327 million."  
<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2009-6-01&item=6136>

**\$30-Million Strategy Opening Doors For Manitobans With Disabilities: New Investments Kick-start Consultations to Build Foundation for Comprehensive Strategy –**

(Government of Manitoba). "The province is renewing its commitment to a long-term strategy for Manitobans who have disabilities with a \$30-million down payment on more accessible housing, enhanced access to public buildings, more support for children with disabilities in child care, better employment services and improved supports for caregivers, Family Services and Housing Minister Gord Mackintosh, minister responsible for persons with disabilities, announced today. This investment in creating a more accessible, inclusive society marks the launch of consultations that will build the foundation for a long-term vision for Manitobans with disabilities, Mackintosh said. 'Everyone has abilities. People are not 'disabled' except by our attitudes and the environment built around them,' Mackintosh said. 'Our challenge is to unleash the untapped energy by breaking down barriers.' As a basis for consultations, Mackintosh released a document that focuses on 10 priorities for action as the province seeks to build on its 2001 strategy: Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Strategy on Disability."

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2009-6-01&item=6038>

**Consultation on the Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities –**

"Canada's signing of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2007 demonstrates our government's commitment to advancing the rights of persons with disabilities. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada is seeking input from Canadian organizations, individuals residing in Canada, and any Canadian citizens residing abroad who are interested in sharing their views on the ratification, implementation and reporting of the Convention. In particular, we encourage people with disabilities and those who are familiar with disability issues to participate and have a voice in this consultation. Your experience and knowledge on these issues make your contribution essential to this process."

<http://www15.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/>

**Government of Canada Announces First-ever National Study on Neurological Diseases –**

"The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Canada's Minister of Health, today announced support for a major national study on neurological diseases. This announcement fulfills a commitment made by the Government in the 2008 Speech from the Throne. 'Our Government is taking concrete action to break down barriers for Canadians with neurological diseases,' said Minister Aglukkaq. 'We need a deeper understanding of these diseases to better address the needs of affected Canadians and those who care for them. This study will give Canadians living with these diseases and their caregivers a chance to share their experiences and, with this knowledge, we can take steps to help improve their lives'."

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/nr-rp/2009/2009\\_0605-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/nr-rp/2009/2009_0605-eng.php)

**Government of Canada Helps Remove Barriers for People With Disabilities – (Neil Squire).**

"Senator Yonah Martin, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, today announced funding to the Neil Squire Society to help improve the quality of life for people with disabilities across the country. 'Our government

is committed to supporting people with disabilities and their families,' said Senator Martin. 'With this funding, the Neil Squire Society will continue working on projects that increase opportunities and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.' Senator Martin announced \$210,000 in Social Development Partnerships Program - Disability (SDPP-D) funding to enable the Neil Squire Society to improve national programs that support people with disabilities."

<http://www.neilsquire.ca/section.asp?catid=121&subid=130&pageid=588>

**McGuinty Government Helping People With Disabilities** – (*NewsOntario*). "Ontario has appointed Charles Beer to conduct a mandatory independent review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Under the act, Ontario is making the province accessible for people with disabilities by 2025 through standards, which will break down barriers in key areas of every day life. Beer will evaluate how these accessibility standards are being developed. Through this review, Ontario can make sure accessibility takes place in a way that makes sense for people with disabilities, businesses and organizations. Ontarians will have the opportunity to participate in this review and provide feedback about the act. Beer will also consult with people from the disability, business and public sector communities. He is expected to submit his report in January 2010."

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2009/06/ontario-launches-review-of-accessibility-legislation.html>

**Ontario denying funding to disabled baby despite need, reverend says** – by Romina Maurino (*The Canadian Press*). "The father of a 10-month-old baby with severe cerebral palsy said Wednesday that he's worried he'll have to give up his daughter unless the government removes a cap denying her the funding she's entitled to. 'It's not a big chunk of money but it makes a big difference in terms of being able to keep her at home,' said Rev. Matt Gallinger, a United Church minister from Ottawa. 'Our concern is that without enough financial support we won't be able to keep her at home.' His daughter Daria must be fed through a tube and has a host of care requirements that qualify her family to receive support through the government's special services at home program."

[http://chealth.canoe.ca/channel\\_health\\_news\\_details.asp?news\\_id=28178&news\\_channel\\_id=145&channel\\_id=145&relation\\_id=1555](http://chealth.canoe.ca/channel_health_news_details.asp?news_id=28178&news_channel_id=145&channel_id=145&relation_id=1555)

## U.S.

**Disability benefit claims surge during recession** – by Sam Hananel (*Business Week*). "Social Security officials say they expect an even larger spike in new disability claims than they had predicted, as aging, injured baby boomers tumble out of the work force and need income. Officials estimate they'll receive 3.3 million new disability claims over the next year, up from their previous estimate of 3 million projected just five months ago. The unprecedented wave of new applications raises questions about the agency's ability to curb historic backlogs and cut processing delays, a problem that has plagued the agency for years. Officials had been making progress in reducing a massive backlog of disability appeals cases."

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D99PIG8G0.htm>

**HHS Announces Initiatives in Support of the "Year of Community Living "** – (*Disability.gov*). "In support of President Obama's proclamation of the 'Year of Community Living,' HHS

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius today announced a funding opportunity that will make it easier for older people, younger adults, and their families to learn about and access health and long-term care options through Aging and Disability Resource Center Programs (ADRCs). ADRCs provide 'one-stop shop' sources of information, one-on-one counseling, and streamlined access to programs and services that can enable people to remain in their own homes and communities. This funding opportunity will expand ADRCs across the country. ADRCs are a collaborative effort of the [Administration on Aging \(AoA\)](#) and the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#). Since 2003 AoA and CMS have jointly funded ADRC pilot programs in 45 states and territories. The new funding will build on and expand the existing pilots and ensure that every state can offer this program and its services to their citizens." <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/06/20090622b.html>

#### **HUD To Offer Housing Assistance To 4,000 Americans With Disabilities – ([disability.gov](#)).**

"The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development today joined President Obama's commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision by announcing that it will offer rental assistance to 4,000 non-elderly families with disabilities, including 1,000 vouchers specifically targeted to those transitioning out of nursing homes and other care facilities. Through its funding notice, HUD is seeking comment from public housing authorities and others to ensure this critically needed assistance is distributed and administered in the most effective manner possible. Today's announcement coincides with the tenth anniversary of the Supreme Court's ruling in Olmstead v. L.C. & E.W. which affirmed the rights of individuals with disabilities to live independently. To commemorate this landmark decision, President Obama declared 2009 the Year of Community Living." <http://www.hud.gov/news/release.cfm?content=pr09-095.cfm>

#### **Social Security Holds Compassionate Allowances Hearing on Early-Onset Alzheimer's Disease – ([SSA.gov](#)).**

"Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, today hosted the agency's fourth public hearing on Compassionate Allowances. Commissioner Astrue was joined by Marie A. Bernard, M.D., Deputy Director of the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, and other Social Security officials. They heard testimony from some of the nation's leading experts on early-onset Alzheimer's disease and related dementias about possible methods for identifying and implementing Compassionate Allowances for people with early-onset Alzheimer's." <http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/pr/compassionate-allowances-0709-pr.htm>

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## **HEALTH/WELLNESS**

#### **Canada should follow U.S. lead and allow advertisers to promote more health benefits of food products – ([Fraser Institute](#)).**

"Canada's rigid advertising standards leave the public in the dark about health benefits potentially associated with certain food products, according to a new, peer-reviewed study from independent research organization the Fraser Institute. 'The research reviewed in this report suggests there's a link between consuming particular foods and lowering your risk of developing certain diseases, but in Canada you won't find the potential health benefits of many food elements printed on product labels,' said Brett Skinner, Fraser Institute director of bio-pharma and health policy." <http://www.fraserinstitute.org/newsandevents/news/6808.aspx>

**Disability and Public Health** – by Charles E. Drum, Gloria L. Krahn, Hank Bersani Jr. (AAID).

"Public health professionals have had few opportunities to learn about disability in a public health context. Now Disability and Public Health provides a thorough roadmap to professionals and describes how disability complements a public health context. By promoting an understanding of disability, the book provides a basis for enhancing the success of all of public health initiatives."

<https://bookstore.aaid.org/BookDetail.aspx?bid=96>

**Muscle Density Linked to Disability** – (*Business Week*). "Exercise programs designed to increase muscle density in the elderly could help reduce rates of disability and hospitalization, new research suggests. The contention stems from a study of 3,011 healthy U.S. residents, aged 70 to 80. During about a five-year span, more than 55 percent of them were hospitalized at least once. People most likely to be hospitalized were those who scored lowest on measures of physical function, such as walking speed, ability to stand up from a chair repeatedly, grip strength and leg strength. The researchers also found that people with the least dense thigh muscles -- meaning more fat than lean tissue -- were more likely to be hospitalized than those with more dense thigh muscles."

<http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/content/healthday/629488.html>

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## LEGAL

**The Disability Law Lowdown Podcast** – "Brought to you by nationally recognized leaders in the field of disability law, the Disability Law Lowdown Podcast delivers the latest in disability rights information every other week. You can subscribe for free and have shows automatically delivered, or you can listen to the show and read the transcripts from this site."

<http://dll.ada-podcast.com/>

**Three disability 'firsts' in a European Court of Human Rights case** – (*The Mental Disability Advocacy Center*). "In the recent case of *Glor v. Switzerland*, the European Court of Human Rights has for the first time (1) found a violation of the right to non-discrimination on the basis of the applicant's disability, (2) referred to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and (3) used the human rights concept of 'reasonable accommodation'."

<http://www.mdac.info/en/node/187>

**UK families win fight over birth defects** – by Jill Lawless (*Business Week*). "Britain's High Court on Wednesday ruled in favor of a group of young people, born with deformed hands and feet, who say pollution from a former steelworks contributed to their disabilities. Eighteen claimants aged between 9 and 22 sued a local authority, claiming their pregnant mothers were exposed to a stew of airborne toxins from the disused British Steel plant at Corby in central England. A judge ruled that Corby Borough Council was liable for the deformities in all but two of the cases. The huge steel plant, one of the largest in western Europe, closed in 1980 and the 680-acre (275 hectare) site was redeveloped. The council denies there is any link between the

dismantling of the plant and cleanup of the contaminated land, and birth defects in local children, including missing fingers and deformed hands and feet."

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D99O5UOG0.htm>

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## MEDICAL

**Catastrophic Epilepsy Caused by Defect in One Gene** – (*BusinessWeek*). "A mutation in a single gene causes catastrophic epilepsy, U.S. scientists say. And that finding, they say, could lead to treatments or a cure for the disorder. People with catastrophic epilepsy suffer severe muscle spasms, persistent seizures, mental retardation and sometimes autism. 'At present, there is no proven cure to offer children with this specific epilepsy,' Dr. Jeffrey Noebels, a professor of neurology, neuroscience and molecular and human genetics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, said in a news release from the college. 'We now have new clues into the mechanism and have already initiated studies with a new class of drugs not previously explored for this disorder.' Noebels and his team found that a mutation on a gene called *Aristaless-related homeobox (ARX)* caused catastrophic epilepsy-like symptoms in mice, including muscle spasms, seizures, learning disabilities and reduced social interaction."  
<http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/content/healthday/628736.html>

**Nation's First Bilateral Hand Transplant Recipient Speaks About Surgery, Progress** – (*RehabManagement*). "Jeff Kepner, the nation's first bilateral hand transplant recipient, is speaking publicly about his surgery and the progress he has made since the May 4 procedure, according to a statement released by UPMC, Pittsburg. Kepner lost both hands and feet following a bacterial infection in 1999, and is the second patient to be treated with the 'Pittsburgh Protocol,' a new immune modulation therapy that aims to reduce the risk associated with toxic antirejection drugs, says the statement. A transplant team composed of surgeons, hematologists, nurses, therapists, and researchers has cared for Kepner since the 9-hour surgery. He receives daily occupational therapy at UPMC as his physicians monitor him closely for signs of rejection, says the statement. Although surgeons from around the world have performed hand transplants successfully, they have used a traditional protocol of multiple immunosuppressive medications to prevent rejection of the grafts, increasing the risk of diabetes, infections, hypertension, and other disorders, according to the statement."  
[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-20\\_02.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-20_02.asp)

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## POLICY/RESEARCH

**2008 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress** – July 2009 report from the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) that provides the latest counts of homelessness nationwide--including individuals, persons in families, and special population groups such as veterans and chronically homeless people. The report also documents disabilities among people who are homeless. This link opens a PDF document.  
<http://www.hudhre.info/documents/4thHomelessAssessmentReport.pdf>

**European Research Agendas for Disability Equality (EuRADE)** – (*Access for All*). "The European Disability Forum (EDF), and its partners -Leeds and Maastricht Universities-

organised a seminar in June to identify next collaborative opportunities between Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) and academic researchers over the project 'European Research Agendas for Disability Equality' (EuRADE). For the first time in the history of disability, DPOs worked together with the key stakeholders in academic research including researchers from European Universities, research policy-makers, funders, and promoters showing interest for disability research and collaboration. As Yannis Vardakastanis, President of EDF stressed out: 'This unique cooperation between NGOs and the academic community enabled DPOs to identify their own research priorities to gain knowledge about research methods and communicating their ideas to demonstrate their capacity to participate in research, and at initiating new research collaboration in Europe. The UN convention already set the paradigm shift from medical to a social approach. This must be translated in a new approach to research'."

<http://www.accessforall.eu/index.php/archive/european-research-agendas-for-disability-equality-eurade/>

**Staggering Cost of Vision Loss Underscores Urgent Need for National Vision Health Plan, Says Landmark Report** – (CNIB). "Groundbreaking new research released on June 23, 2009 by CNIB and the Canadian Ophthalmological Society (COS) places the total financial cost of vision loss in Canada at \$15.8 billion per year – significantly higher than previously estimated. The study's proponents say these costs, which are expected to increase dramatically in the years ahead, underscore the urgent need for Canada to develop a comprehensive national vision health plan. The \$15.8 billion price tag for vision loss includes \$8.6 billion in direct health-related costs – the highest of such costs of any disease category in Canada including diabetes, all cancers and cardiovascular disease. It also includes \$7.2 billion in indirect costs, including lost productivity and earnings, care and rehabilitation and assistive devices."

<http://www.cnib.ca/en/research/covl/Default.aspx>

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## REHABILITATION

**Rice University Team's Award-Winning Device Could Benefit Treatment of Hand Injuries** – (*RehabManagement*). "A team of bioengineering students from Rice University, Houston, who invented a device to measure intrinsic hand muscle strength, has recently won two prestigious honors for their patent-pending creation, PRIME, says the university. The device could help revolutionize the diagnosis and treatment of hand injuries and neurological disorders, specifically carpal tunnel syndrome, according to a statement from the university."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-08\\_01.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-07-08_01.asp)

**University of Alberta scientists use video games for innovative therapy** – by Richard Warnica (*EdmontonJournal*). "Thirteen months ago, Ginny Bockman's spine was crunched in a highway crash. The power of the blow left Bockman's legs useless and her arms not much better off. She couldn't unclench her hands, she couldn't hold a glass, she couldn't turn a key. Today, thanks to an innovative therapy developed by scientists at the University of Alberta, Bockman, 32, is relearning all those actions and more. After a few months of five-day-per-week sessions with the technology, known as ReJoyce, Bockman has seen her grip strengthen and her control improve markedly."

<http://www.chtv.com/ch/chcanews/story.html?id=1706567>

**Wii-hab May Enhance Parkinson's Treatment, Study Shows** – (*RehabManagement*). "The Nintendo Wii may help treat symptoms of Parkinson's disease, including depression, says a researcher from the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, Ga, in a statement released by the facility. Nathan B. Herz, OTD, OTR/L, program director and assistant professor in the School of Allied Health Sciences Department of Occupational Therapy theorized that the popular computer game console, which simulates various sports and activities, could improve coordination, reflexes and other movement-related skills, but he found additional benefits also, according to the facility. 'The Wii allows patients to work in a virtual environment that's safe, fun and motivational,' said Herz, in the statement. 'The games require visual perception, eye-hand coordination, figure-ground relationships, and sequenced movement, so it's a huge treatment tool from an occupational therapy perspective.' In an 8-week pilot study, 20 Parkinson's patients spent an hour playing the Wii three times a week for 4 weeks, according to Herz. The patients, all in a stage of the disease in which both body sides are affected but with no significant gait disturbance yet, played two games each of tennis and bowling, and one game of boxing-games entailing exercise, bilateral movement, balance, and fast pace, says the facility."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-06-22\\_01.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-06-22_01.asp)

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## SELF-HELP

**Disability resource exchange** – "Welcome to the Disability resource exchange hello my name is Rudy I am the administrator of this social network. I have a disability called cerebral palsy and I am in a wheelchair. I hope this can become a place of vibrant discussion about disability issues from the prospectives of both those with disabilities and those people without disabilities I am 31 and I have been disabled all my life I hope this can be a place where we share ideas, stories, help and support one another."

<http://www.disabilityresourceexchange.com/>

## **SPINAL CORD CENTRAL is New Resource for People Living with Paralysis** –

(*Spinalcord.org*). "National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA) and United Spinal Association are proud to announce the launching of [SPINAL CORD CENTRAL](#) , a new web-based resource on all things related to paralysis. Operated jointly by both founding organizations, SPINAL CORD CENTRAL is the destination for members of the spinal cord injury/disease (SCI/D) community who are seeking information and resource referrals related to SCI/D. SPINAL CORD CENTRAL will serve people with paralysis as a result of spinal cord injury, disease or dysfunction, their families, friends and others who have a strong interest or involvement with them, including health care and other professionals, direct service providers, and businesses focused primarily on serving this market."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2285>

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## TECHNOLOGY

### **Author and founder of abledbody.com Suzanne Robitaille shares her knowledge of**

**Assistive Technology** – "Suzanne Robitaille, a profoundly deaf writer, blogger and disability

advocate, is the main force behind [Ablebody.com](http://www.abledbody.com). She has written extensively on the topic of disability and assistive technology for The Wall Street Journal and BusinessWeek, among other top publications. Her new book, *The Illustrated Guide to Assistive Technology*, due out in late 2009 chronicles new devices and gadgets for people with disabilities in the workplace and livespace."

<http://www.508portal.com/?q=node/669>

**Fluid Infusion 1.1 released!** – "Infusion 1.1 is here! This release introduces a handful of new features and bug fixes to the framework and components, building on the solid foundation of our [infusion 1.0 release last month](#). Infusion 1.1 is an incremental upgrade and preserves backwards compatibility for all production-grade components. Fluid Infusion is an application framework for building usable and accessible user interfaces with JavaScript. Built on top of jQuery, Infusion takes a different approach to client-side development. At heart, Infusion is an open architecture designed to put you back in control of your application's user experience. It includes a growing collection of UI components—reusable interactions that go deeper than most widgets. Created by a community of developers and interaction designers, Infusion components are built from the ground up with accessibility in mind. All of our designs can be used with assistive technologies, are fully controllable with the keyboard, and can be transformed to suit your users' personal needs. The Fluid Infusion 1.1 release includes a collection of our UI components, tutorials to help you get started, solid APIs to help you dive in, and the community to lend a hand."

<http://fluidproject.org/news/31/144/Fluid-Infusion-1-1-released/>

**Navigaitor Device Helps Patients Walk Again** – (*Rehab Management*). "Severe stroke victims and other acutely ill rehabilitation patients are learning to correct their unsteady and unsafe gait sooner and without the fear of falling by using a new therapeutic device that allows them more freedom of motion to walk again, says the inventor. 'The device, called Navigaitor, helps patients who are unstable or too weak to walk without fear of falls and injury and without depending on several physical therapists for support,' said inventor Avital Fast, MD, chairman of rehabilitation medicine at Montefiore Medical Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York. The computer-driven device holds patients up with a standard harness attached via a cable to a sensor on a sturdy, overhead frame made of steel beams, he said, via a statement released by Montefiore. The device physically supports, responds to, and follows the patient as he/she walks safely in all directions—forward, backward, sideways and up and down inclines, Fast says."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-06-19\\_01.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-06-19_01.asp)

**PEAT helps authors identify seizure-inducing content** – (*Trace*). "A new, and significantly improved, beta release of the Photosensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT) is available for download from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Trace Center. PEAT is a free, first-of-its-kind resource that developers can use to identify seizure risks in their web content or computer software. The software was developed specifically for web and computer applications and can be used to evaluate content for conformance with requirements in [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#), related to seizure prevention. 'As web content gets more dynamic and web pages begin to resemble television it is important that we not start inadvertently triggering seizures in people with photosensitive seizure disorders.' Said Gregg Vanderheiden, Director of the Trace Center and co-chair of the W3C Web Content

Accessibility Guidelines working group. 'This free tool can help prevent that.' About one in four thousand people are diagnosed with photosensitive epilepsy and are subject to seizures triggered by certain types of flashing in web, computer or television content where large areas of the screen rapidly flash on and off repeatedly. The condition, known as photosensitive epilepsy, usually begins before the age of 20 years and is most common between the ages of seven and 19."

<http://trace.wisc.edu/news/archives/000262.php>

**Separate but Equal from an E&IT Standpoint** – by Steve Jacobs (*ICDR*). "When I became involved in the information technology (IT) industry (over 35 years ago), I subscribed to the principles of universal design without realizing it. Universal Electronic and Information Technology (E&IT) design describes the process of designing and developing E&IT in a manner that makes it usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Someone recently asked my opinion about the consequences of using two systems simultaneously, one that is inaccessible and was designed for people without disabilities and a second to accommodate the 'special' access needs of individuals with disabilities. My thoughts are as follows. Organizations that opt to use inaccessible systems in parallel with another system designed to handle the 'special' access needs of people with disabilities unintentionally help developers of inaccessible E&IT products and services justify doing absolutely nothing to accommodate the access needs of people with disabilities. Unfortunately, 'parallel system' strategies support and reinforce the development and use of inaccessible E&IT."

[http://www.icdri.org/Articles/Separate\\_but\\_equal.htm](http://www.icdri.org/Articles/Separate_but_equal.htm)

### **Technology Collaborative Launches Online Game to Exercise Brain Power of People with Multiple Sclerosis**

– (*Assistive Technology News*). "The MS Technology Collaborative has created a new way for people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) to exercise their brain power. The Collaborative, an alliance of Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals, Microsoft, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, announced the launch of MyBrainGames, a free suite of online cognitive games for the MS community. . . . The games challenge the player's processing speed, working memory, attention, and task switching ability."

<http://www.atechnews.com/>

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## **CONFERENCES**

### **(🌸 New Conferences)**

#### **CANADA**

- 🌸 **17th National Conference on Learning Disabilities** – September 24-26, 2009 | Whitehorse, Yukon. "For the 2009 Minds of Gold Conference hosted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, we expect to attract over 400 delegates made up of persons with learning disabilities, parents, teachers, administrators, early childhood educators, students, health professionals, social and justice workers, and others interested in the field of learning

disabilities. The conference program includes dynamic speakers presenting innovative ideas, information and techniques on the following themes:

- Effective Instruction
- Advocacy
- Research & Technology
- Community Partnerships"

<http://lday.leafsolutions.ca/home.asp>

- ✿ **26th International Seating Symposium** – March 10-13, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "This international symposium addresses current and future developments in the areas of seating, positioning and mobility. Topic areas include service delivery, product development, research and evaluation. The format for the symposium will include plenary, poster, instructional and paper sessions. Extensive opportunities are provided for networking with colleagues."

[http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/26th\\_Seating.htm](http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/26th_Seating.htm)

- ✿ **International Society for Gerontechnology 7th World Conference** – May 27-30, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "Internationally recognized experts in gerontechnology will share their knowledge and experience through lectures, symposia, workshops, papers and posters. Topics to be addressed will include rehabilitation engineering, robotics, telemonitoring, telecare, ICT, biomechanics and ergonomics, assistive technology, inclusive design and usability, smart homes and smart fabrics, sensor technology, and cognitive aging and computer games."

<http://www.sfu.ca/isg2010/about/index.html>

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## U.S.

- 2009 National Disability Sports Conference** – September 10-12 | Kennesaw, Georgia. "The 2009 National Disability Sports Conference will be held September 10-12 on the campus of Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Georgia. Next year's Conference is expected to be the best ever, with more than 30 interactive sessions on topics ranging from coaching to recruitment and program development. These sessions will be lead by the nation's top sports professionals; elite coaches and Paralympic athletes will share their cutting edge training techniques with attendees. Wheelchairs and other sporting equipment will be on hand to ensure a hands-on learning experience. Additionally, Conference attendees will have access to one-on-one consulting on fundraising, risk management, public relations, grant writing, and more. Continuing education credits are available. This is an excellent chance to meet the best minds in disability sport from across the country! "

<http://www.blazesports.org/>

- USBLN 2009 Annual Conference** – September 15-18, 2009 | National Harbor, Maryland. "The 2009 Annual Conference, 'Connecting The Dots: Business Solutions' is the preeminent national event for business, community leaders and BLN affiliates that have an interest in hiring, retaining and marketing to people with disabilities. This year's event promises to provide informational and educational opportunities of the highest quality."

<http://www.newworkforceconference.org/>

**Southwest Conference on Disability** – September 30-October 2, 2009 | Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Main Conference Theme: Disability in America: Inalienable Rights for All Co-Sponsored by the American Association on Health and Disability. For many years, stakeholders in the disability community have identified significant inequalities in many areas between people with and without disabilities. These disparities hinder many people with disabilities from fully enjoying the rights guaranteed to all Americans under the Constitution and prevent them from becoming actively contributing members of their communities. The 2009 Southwest Conference on Disability is soliciting presentations that

- document or explore disparities in a particular area, including education, independent living, economic status, employment, housing and access to services, or among people with particular disabilities or
- focus on solutions to overcoming inequality through innovative policies or programs that reduce or eliminate inequality based on disability and which contribute to creating a country in which disability is no longer a barrier to equal rights.

We welcome contributions from the policy, academic, healthcare and advocacy communities which address a general perspective, or which focus on particular types of disabilities or populations, including veterans, women, or ethnic minorities."

<http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf/proposal.asp>

✿ **ACRM Annual Conference - Building the Evidence Base for Rehabilitation Interventions: From Research to Clinical Care** – October 7-11, 2009 | Denver, Colorado. "The ACRM–ASNR Joint Educational Conference is the world's largest forum focusing on interdisciplinary rehabilitation research. Our meeting attendees are providers and clinicians in the field of rehabilitation science who are dedicated to delivering best practices, and support advocacy efforts that ensure adequate public funding for research endeavors. These are project directors from many of the traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury model systems, principal investigators from leading medical centers around the world, and leaders of major government agencies that fund rehabilitation research."

[http://www.acrm.org/annual\\_conference/Sponsor\\_Information.cfm](http://www.acrm.org/annual_conference/Sponsor_Information.cfm)

✿ **Eleventh International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility** - October 26-28, 2009 | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. "The ASSETS conference explores the use of computing and information technologies to help persons with disabilities and older adults. ASSETS is the premier forum for presenting innovative research on the design and use of both mainstream and specialized assistive technologies. This includes the use of technology by and in support of:

- individuals with hearing, sight and other sensory impairments
- individuals with motor impairments
- individuals with memory, learning and cognitive impairments
- individuals with multiple impairments
- older adults
- professionals who work with these populations

All contributions are peer-reviewed by an international Program Committee. Accepted papers, posters and demonstrations will be archived in the ACM digital library. Selected technical paper authors will be invited to submit to a special issue of the journal ACM Transactions on Accessible Computing, and the best paper of the conference will receive the ACM SIGACCESS Best Paper award. Mentoring is available for first time authors."

<http://www.sigaccess.org/assets09/>

- ❁ **2nd UCLA Technology & Aging Conference** – October 30, 2009 | Los Angeles, California. "The event will be limited to 400 attendees. [Early Registrants](#) (until August 15) will get \$25 off the \$150 registration fee. UCLA students, staff, and faculty can register for \$75 with UCLA ID. Group rates are available for seniors-related organizations by [registering 5 or more attendees](#) or by contacting [agingtech@maremel.com](mailto:agingtech@maremel.com) for more information. [This one-day conference](#) will bring together academic and industry leaders to discuss how the latest technologies in the medical, consumer and lifestyle fields will help older adults live better, longer lives. Its breakout sessions are designed around two track themes:
  - *Aging In Place*, which will focus on technologies that will enable older adults to continue to live longer and better in the comfort and safety in their own homes, and
  - *Aging Healthier Longer*, which will focus on cutting-edge developments in disease management and treatment, adaptive and assistive devices and techniques, emotional health, and function/sensory enhancements."

<http://www.aging.ucla.edu/TechAgingConference.html>

#### **The Second IASTED International Conference on Telehealth and Assistive Technology:**

**TAT 2009** – November 4-6, 2009 | Cambridge, Massachusetts. "The healthcare industry is constantly changing to incorporate new advances in science and to address new needs within society. Recent developments in communication technology have greatly facilitated the exchange of information and expertise. Telehealth is an emerging field in which health services are transmitted over a long distance using technologies such as videoconferencing, the Internet, store-and-forward imaging, streaming media, satellites, and wireless communications. Telehealth promises to impact the ways that clinical healthcare, health-related education, public health, and health administration are approached."

<http://www.iasted.org/conferences/cfp-663.html>

**2009 AUCD Annual Meeting & Conference** – November 8-11, 2009 | Washington, DC. "The 2009 AUCD Conference is centered around the network members and the disability community gathering together to address the opportunities and challenges presented by current changes in the economic, political, social, and environmental climate. With a growing membership of UCEDDs, LENDs, and IDDRCs along with international affiliates, AUCD has become a key disability organization. This annual meeting offers you a chance to interact with policymakers, researchers, administrators, families, students, and advocates across these types of organizations and across disciplines."

<http://www.aucd.org/template/page.cfm?id=641>

**60th Annual IDA Conference** – November 11-14, 2009 | Orlando, Florida. "The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) is a scientific and educational nonprofit organization concerned with dyslexia and related language and learning difficulties. The IDA Annual Conference focuses on the latest advances in these and related fields. IDA is interested in a broad spectrum of research and practical presentations along these lines. The objective of the conference is to bring up to date information to a diverse audience that includes educators, researchers, physicians, psychologists, social workers, speech language pathologists, administrators, parents, persons with dyslexia, and others."

<http://www.interdys.org/CallForPapersOrlandoTest1.htm>


**WFN XVIII World Congress on Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders** – December 13-16, 2009 | Miami Beach, Florida. "Celebrate 50 Years of Scientific Advancement in Parkinson's Disease. In 2009 the WFN XVIII World Congress on Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders celebrates half a century as a leading international summit for clinicians, researchers, and allied healthcare professionals worldwide seeking real solutions to improve the long-term outcomes for Parkinson's patients. Over 3,000 participants are expected to attend this biennial Parkinson's Disease congress – the eighteenth organized by the World Federation of Neurology (WFN) 'Research Group on Parkinsonism and Related Disorders'." <http://www2.kenes.com/parkinson/Pages/Home.aspx>

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## OVERSEAS

**AAATE 2009 Conference - Inclusion between past and future** – August 3-September 2, 2009 | Florence, Italy. "As technology develops rapidly and an Information Society is approaching, the concept of Assistive Technology seems to be moving away from adopting the most appropriate device/s for each user in order to overcome the limitations to her/his activity to the design and set up of the total environment in which people live, supported by suitable functionalities (services) and, when necessary, by additional support devices integrated within the environment. At present, these two perspectives are deeply intertwined, from both a technological and a social point of view. The relationship, coexistence and transition between them currently represent the first challenges for the world of Assistive Technology. This is coherent with the WHO-ICF model, which describes disability as resulting not only from a person's intrinsic attributes but also from the context. Therefore, according to the emerging technological perspectives, inclusion of all citizens can be pursued by the creation of inclusive living environments in which the abilities to carry out necessary tasks are redefined, particularly with reference to the accessing of information, interpersonal communications, and environmental control. From this perspective, this approach is also coherent with the definition of eInclusion, as approved in the 2006 Riga Ministerial Declaration: 'e-Inclusion means both inclusive ICT and the use of ICT to achieve wider inclusion objectives'." <http://www.aaate2009.eu/>

**Techshare 2009** – September 16-18, 2009 | London, England. "Techshare is a series of international events which highlight the importance of digital technology in the lives of people with disabilities. Join us in exploring how new innovations in assistive technology can enhance education, work, and play." [http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/code/public\\_rnib004057.hcsp](http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/code/public_rnib004057.hcsp)

 **The European Ambient Assisted Living Forum 09 - "Innovative ICT Solutions for Older Persons – A New Understanding "** – September 29-October 1, 2009 | Vienna, Austria. "Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) aims at extending the time older people can live in their preferred home environment by increasing their autonomy and assisting them in carrying out activities of daily living. The aim is to enhance the quality of their lives by the use of ICT products and the provision of remote services including care services that will assist them to achieve the autonomy, independence and dignity appropriate to their needs and conditions. The AAL Joint Programme (AAL JP) is a new joint research and development (R&D) funding activity implemented by actual 20 European Member States and 3 Associated States with the

financial support of the European Community based on article 169 of the EC treaty. The overall objective of the programme is to enhance the quality of life of older people and strengthen the industrial base in Europe through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The motivation of the new funding activity derives from the demographic change and ageing taking place in Europe, which implies not only challenges but also opportunities for the citizens and the social and healthcare systems as well as industry and the European market."

<http://www.aal-europe.eu/news-and-events/aal-forum-2009>

**Confronting the Gap: Rights, Rhetoric, Reality?** – October 21-23, 2009 | Salamanca, Spain.

"Inclusion International and Inclusion Europe are organizing Confronting the Gap: Rights, Rhetoric and Reality? Return to Salamanca –A Global Conference on Inclusive Education, October 21-23, 2009, Salamanca, Spain. The conference will be co-sponsored by a number of organizations including the United Nation Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education; the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia de España; the Instituto Universitario de Integración en la Comunidad (INICO); and Confederación Española de Organizaciones en favor de las Personas con Discapacidad Intelectual (FEAPS). Fifteen Years have passed since The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education was adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and quality, (Salamanca, Spain, 10 June 1994). As the Convention on the Rights of Person's with Disabilities comes into effect, it is time to assess the progress made and set the agenda for renewed action in the years ahead."

<http://inclusion-international.org/en/calendar/2009/10/21/details.html>

 **OASIS 1st International Conference - Open architecture for Accessible Services Integration and Standardisation** – November 4-5, 2009 | Florence, Italy.

"How to support holistically the independent living and mobility of the elderly across Europe? How to connect services for the elderly in an one-stop-shop fashion and interrelate/ integrate them? What are the elderly and their families/ carers primary needs, concerns and expectations from the technologies and services arising? These, and much more, are to be presented in Florence, in the OASIS 1st International Conference. OASIS is a Large Scale Integrating Project – partially funded by the European Commission (FP7-ICT 215754) - with the aim to develop an open and innovative reference architecture, based upon ontologies and semantic services, that will allow plug and play and cost-effective interconnection of existing and newly developed services in all domains required for the independent and autonomous living of older people and their enhanced Quality of Life. The aim of the OASIS 1st International Conference is to serve as a forum to present current and future work as well as to exchange ideas in the field of Independent Living and Autonomous Mobility of the elderly."

[http://www.marie-curie-](http://www.marie-curie-bq.org/images/uploads/OASIS_International_Conference_Call_for_Papers.pdf)

[bq.org/images/uploads/OASIS International Conference Call for Papers.pdf](http://www.marie-curie-bq.org/images/uploads/OASIS_International_Conference_Call_for_Papers.pdf)

**12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010)** – June 2-4, 2010 | Hong Kong.

"The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation (HKSR) is proud to announce that the 12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010) will take place in Hong Kong in 2010. The theme of TRANSED 2010 is Sustainable Transport & Travel for All. Held every three years, TRANSED conferences are milestone events in the field of accessible

transportation, attracting researchers, policy-makers, transport operators, consumers and other specialists worldwide to share innovations and best practices in order to make transportation and mobility accessible to everyone."

<http://www.transed2010.hk/content/index.php?content=welcome>

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