



MOVING FORWARD, LOOKING BACK

MEMBER NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE MUSEUM OF DISABILITY HISTORY

SPRING 2015: VOLUME 14



The Americans with Disabilities Act: 25 Years Later

By Dave Mack-Hardiman, Associate Vice President, People Inc.



The Museum of disABILITY History proudly hosted a two day commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) legislation. The ADA Legacy bus, promoting the theme, *Disability Rights are Civil Rights*, rolled into Buffalo on the evening of April 28. The ADA25 Legacy Tour is a cross country trip raising awareness about the 25th anniversary of the ADA.

We were honored to have Tom Olin, renowned disability rights photographer and director of The Disability Rights Center, visit the Museum and be part of our event as he is a celebrated person in the history of disability rights.

“The Museum is proud to be part of this national tour.”

To help prepare for our reception, Corey Cauley, Tom’s co-pilot, placed riveting photographs and exhibit panels throughout the Museum. Tom regaled visitors with tales from the early days of self-advocacy.

More than 150 visitors to the Museum streamed through at lunch time for the next two days. On the evening of April 29, a large celebration was held in honor of this legislation and the tireless advocacy from which it was created. The ADA was signed into law on July 26, 1990. Modeled after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ADA has played a pivotal role in creating equal opportunities for people who have disabilities. The act prohibits discrimination and promotes inclusion, independence and accessibility.

Rhonda Frederick, president and chief executive officer, People Inc.; Shannon Patch, WNY regional director for Senator Charles Schumer; and Mark Schroeder, comptroller of the city of Buffalo discussed the extraordinary impact of the legislation on individuals who have

continued on page 3



Mark J.F. Schroeder, comptroller, city of Buffalo

Message from the Director



I'm glad that even with the extreme winter weather, with your help, the Museum was able to continue setting new attendance records for our events and daily visitation.

Part of that success can be attributed to the tremendous appeal of our new exhibit entitled, *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic*. In 1995, at the time of closing of the Willard Psychiatric Center in the Finger Lakes after 126 years of operation, more than 54,000 people had been treated there. If not for the discovery of 400 suitcases filled with patients' belongings in the hospital's attic, their lives would have been lost to history. In "The Lives They Left Behind," the contents of 10 of these suitcases are used to create a "group portrait" of 20th century treatment of mental illness. The Museum hosted a catered opening reception on February 27, attended by over 60 people who enjoyed several guest speakers as well as touring the exhibit. We did receive good news! The exhibit is now part of our permanent collection! Please see the article on page 4 for more details.

Another well attended exhibit event was held on March 21 when author Darby Penny explained her book of the same above exhibit name that provided the impetus for the traveling exhibit. If you have not taken the opportunity to visit the Museum to see "The Lives They Left Behind," we certainly encourage you to put us in your day planner.

On April 1, the Museum welcomed movie producer/director, Regan Brashear, who presented her film, *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement*. The one-hour documentary questions commonly held beliefs about disability and normalcy by exploring technologies that promise to change our bodies and mind forever. Following the screening, there was a discussion and a Q&A session.

We were excited to host the ADA25 Legacy tour in April. Even though the nation is still coming to grips with this 1990 legislation, we know that it has provided millions of Americans with a better chance at completing their American dream. This was brought home by the legislation's author, President George Bush, who said, "...every life is a gift, every life has a purpose, and every life has a right to seek their fullest potential..."

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Dialogues on disABILITY event featuring anthropologist Rosanne Higgins, PhD on May 29. In the spring of 2012, she was invited to join the Erie County Poorhouse Cemetery project, undertaken by the Department of Anthropology at the University at Buffalo. While writing her dissertation in the mid-90s, Rosanne had gotten to know many of the inmates of institutions mentioned she pieced together what little could be told of their lives while researching their deaths. For over 20 years, she had a desire to tell a side of the story in a way that would be accessible to more than just the scholarly community. Rosanne's need to tell their tale has resulted in her first novel, *Orphans and Inmates*, which is a first in a series chronicling fictional accounts of poorhouse residents inspired by the historical data. The book is followed up by her latest novel, *A Whisper of Bones*.

Thank you all for your continued interest in the Museum of disABILITY History. I hope you stop by soon. Your support is crucial to helping us achieve our mission of increasing understanding, acceptance and independence of people with disabilities.



Doug Farley, Museum Director

Every Vote Counts - Yours Matters

An Accessible Voting Training Event

Monday, June 1, 2015

10:30am - 2:30pm

**Museum of disABILITY History
3826 Main Street, Buffalo**

FREE Community Event!

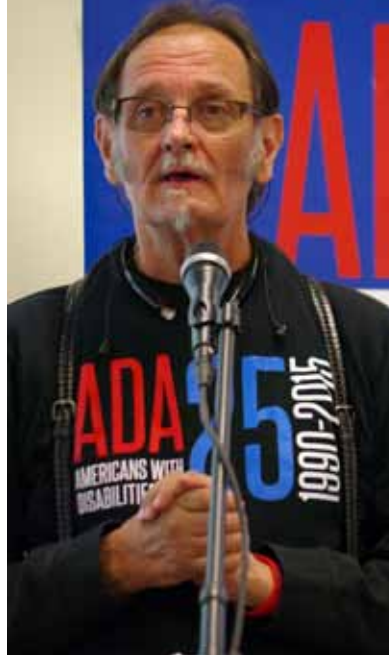
Learn how to use machines that make voting possible for those who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise unable to mark a traditional ballot. Feel comfortable casting your vote with a machine provided by the Erie County Board of Elections!

For more information, contact B.J. Stasio at 716.517.3552 or Darren Jackson at 716.517.3654.
To register for the event, call the Museum of disABILITY History at 716.629.3626.



“ I enjoyed being a part of celebration at the Museum. One of the things I enjoyed was getting the opportunity to sit by the bus with the signs for my picture to be taken. I also enjoyed hearing everyone’s presentations. I would like to thank the Museum for offering this opportunity to celebrate such a great milestone in our disABILITY history.”

- Charles Degraffenried, Self-advocate and docent, Museum of disABILITY History



“ Here we are, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the ADA and we are coming together so inclusively. There are so many different faces and so many different facilities, so many who make up our community.”

- Tom Olin, renowned disability rights photographer and director of The Disability Rights Center



“ There have been incredible strides in employment, public accommodations, accessibility and communications. Do we all have more work to do? Absolutely! I am sure in 2040 - at the 50th anniversary of the ADA - the successes will be incredible!”

- Rhonda Frederick, president and chief executive officer, People Inc.

“ADA: 25 Years Later” continued from page 1

disabilities. B.J. Stasio, self-advocate, shared his personal experiences with employment and accessibility. Museum Docents Maria Bell, Charles Degraffenried, Isaac Cote and Israel Cruz premiered their videos produced by Homework Hotline. Photojournalist Tom Olin also shared remarks regarding the history of the disability rights movement.

The Museum is proud to be part of this national tour. The excitement continues as a photo from our event is scheduled to be featured on the cover of a national magazine called *New Mobility* in its July 2015 issue.

The Museum’s Self-Advocacy Traveling Exhibit complements the tour as the ADA25 Legacy project spreads awareness, preserves the past and celebrates the achievements of individuals with disabling conditions. The exhibit’s four-panel banner stand traces the self-advocacy movement from early educational facilities to the development of organizations established for and by individuals with disabilities.

Thank you to all of the sponsoring groups who assisted the Museum in making this huge celebration a success: the ADA Legacy

Tour, the Disability Education and Advocacy Network of WNY, University at Buffalo and the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access.

The tour will travel to other states and join disability community leaders in Washington, DC on July 26.

Grant News

The Museum of disABILITY History is pleased to announce grants that were recently received. We thank our community partners for their generous support.

National Fuel awarded \$1,000 for the development of the Museum of disABILITY History Theater Room. The funds will be used to purchase the projection equipment. Construction is underway to re-use existing space to create a small theater and interactive exhibit for visitors, students and organizations to utilize.



People Inc. Training Coordinator F. Paul Lounsbury works his artistic magic to create a mid-20th century mental institution within our new experiential theater, opening later this summer.

A **Niagara Falls Heritage Area** grant was received to create an interpretive exhibit that immerses visitors in the experiences of Dr. Platt Skinner's struggle for abolition in Niagara Falls, NY. Dr. Skinner established a school for African-Americans with disabilities in the shadow of the suspension bridge in 1860. Visitors to this exhibit will explore dozens of compelling and persuasive visual images, including excerpts from the school's publication.



Pictured L-R: Doug Farley, Museum of disABILITY History director; Stefan I. Mychajliw, Erie County comptroller and Dave Mack-Hardiman, People Inc. associate vice president. They stand next to our new outdoor sign to commemorate our building dedication to James M. Boles, EdD, founder of the Museum of disABILITY History.

Erie County Cultural Funding will support the Museum of disABILITY History to further develop resources and educational programs. Museum member and Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw recently visited with the first installment for 2015.

The Lives They Left Behind Exhibit finds a Permanent Home...with Us!

We are happy to announce that *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic* exhibit will be permanently displayed at our Museum of disABILITY History.

“With the generous support of the van Ameringen Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation, a 1,500 square foot traveling version of the suitcase exhibit was created in 2005: *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic*. Curated by Darby Penney and Peter Stastny for the Community Consortium, the exhibit was designed and produced by The Exhibition Alliance, which handled rental and scheduling. The goal of the exhibit is to bring the stories of the suitcase owners and a patient-centered view of the history of psychiatry to a wider audience.

For almost 10 years, the exhibit traveled the country from coast to coast, hosted by 30 venues in 11 different states, and was seen by thousands of people. As of April 2015, The Exhibition Alliance closed its doors, leaving the exhibit without a rental agent.

Fortunately, we found a permanent home for the exhibit at the Museum of disABILITY History in Buffalo, NY, the only museum in the country which focuses on disability history. The exhibit is thematically and visually compatible to the Museum's existing permanent exhibits, and we are very pleased with this outcome. We encourage you to visit.”

- The Community Consortium, Inc.

Libraries, Ledgers and Graveyards: Unearthing the Facts Behind Historical Fiction

Featuring Author Rosanne Higgins, PhD

Friday, May 29, 2015
7 - 8:30 p.m.

Museum of disABILITY History
3826 Main Street, Buffalo

Learn about Rosanne Higgins' *Orphans and Inmates* book series and the research that shaped its creation. Higgins' involvement with the University at Buffalo's Erie County Poorhouse Cemetery Project will be discussed, and how it inspired her second novel, *A Whisper of Bones*. Additionally, she will discuss the relationship between poverty and disability in the nineteenth century.



Dialogues on disABILITY
SPEAKER SERIES
Hosted by the Museum of disABILITY History

Registration encouraged.
RSVP to 716.629.3626.

New Book Focuses on Acceptance, Character Development

Mubu the Morph, the 19th book to be published by People Ink Press, offers lessons on self-image, self-confidence and character development. Suitable for grades K to 3, the book is a great tool for parents and teachers and a heartfelt read for anyone interested in hope and the gifts and talents that make each of us special.

Written by Stephen Nawotniak OTR/L and illustrated by Jeffrey Scott Perdziak, *Mubu the Morph* will be available soon at the Museum of disABILITY History store. A portion of the book proceeds will support the Museum of disABILITY History. A variety of family-fun activities will be held in the upcoming months. Learn more at mubuthemorph.com.



Guest Contribution

My Experiences

By Nancy Zheng, Student



My experience at the Museum of disABILITY History was a great learning opportunity. I was fortunate enough to be able to do my internship hours and I am extremely thankful.

Meeting and interacting with the docents was the most memorable part of my visits because each and every one of them are unique and talented in their own ways. It is really

eye opening to see the docents step out of their comfort zone to take part in the tour. The one thing that I learned from the docents is to not let the obstacles stop you from what you take pride in doing. Instead, be appreciative of this learning opportunity to make you shine in your own way.

Thank you so much for having me and giving me the opportunity to open my eyes.

**Unique Productions (UP!)'s
2nd Annual
Theme Tray Auction and
Film Screening Fundraiser!**

**Saturday, Aug. 29 2015
1:00 pm - 4:00pm**

**The Museum of disABILITY History
3826 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14226**

for more information email
uniqueproductionsup@gmail.com

**Admission
only
\$10!**

An illustration of two film reels and a film strip, rendered in a 3D style with blue and silver tones. The reels are positioned in the foreground, and the film strip is unspooled from one of them.

Support the Museum, Become a Member!

Want to support the Museum of disABILITY History? Membership opportunities are available! With five different levels available, you can choose the one that is right for you. All supporting membership levels are good for one year. **To become a member, please call 716.629.3626 or log on to our website at museumofdisability.org.** Click on the “Support Us” tab, click on “Membership,” and “Click Here to Become a Member.” Thank you for your support!

We are Members!



Darby Penney and Steve Periard



William L. Long Associates



Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns



Don Traynor



Senator Patrick Gallivan



Amherst Supervisor Barry Weinstein

New Members!

A warm welcome to our newest members who recently joined and renewed:

Individual/Student

Heidi Augustyn
Martina Balas
Cynthia Barber
Jack Bienko
Robert Colangelo
Barbara Fiorella
Denise Godinez
Councilmember Joseph Golombek, Jr.
Barbara Guancial
Barbara Jo Hard
Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns
Patricia Kibler-Fries
Christopher Killings
Theresa Koldziej

Anna Korus
Anitra Lahey
Darby Penney
Steve Periard
B.J. Stasio
Karen Koch
Linda Siragusa
Don Traynor
Barry Weinstein,
Amherst Supervisor

Family/Dual

April Kimball and Brian A. Rose
Richard Koterbus
Beth and Eric Ptak
Terese M. Scofidio

Jeremy Rockler
Linda Covell
Kathryn Lawton
Susan Spindler

Friend

Don Bach
Eric Bauer
Diane Bessel
Lisa Cunningham and Colleen Raimond
Robert Dunford
Senator Patrick Gallivan
Michael Modrzynski
Ronald and Diane Pokorski
Jeff and Trudy Sanderson

Joyce Sirianni
Thomas and Beverly Slichta-Cusick
Tracy Hullung
Peter Smiltins

Sustainer

Doug Farley
Nancy Palumbo

Corporate

William L. Long Associates

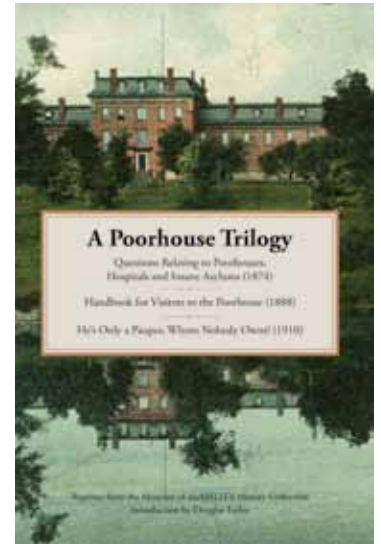
As a member, you receive free admission to the Museum and events, and a 10% discount in the Museum Store!

New Book in the Museum Store: A Poorhouse Trilogy

The Museum of disABILITY History and People Ink Press have combined three historic publications to create *A Poorhouse Trilogy*. These three reprints include: *Handbook for the Visitors to the Poorhouse (1888)* by Frederick Law Olmsted, *Questions Relating to Poorhouses, Hospitals and Insane Asylums* by John Ordronaux, MD (State Charities Aid Association Publication No. 3), 1874; and *He's Only a Pauper, Whom Nobody Owns!*, by James Oppenheim, written for the American Magazine, June 1910. We hope that this unique pairing of publications from the collection of the Museum of disABILITY History will provide a window in time to better understand the historical treatment of individuals with disabling conditions.

New York's history of caring for the poor, elderly and disabled began while it was still a colony of the British Empire and continued throughout the twentieth century. A wide range of helping services and institutions were created, and some – under different names and settings – are still operating today. As societal needs and attitudes changed and knowledge evolved, many institutions merged, reorganized, or closed their doors forever.

A Poorhouse Trilogy is available in our Museum store or online for \$5.95.



Can't stop in? Shop online! store.museumofdisability.org



Perspectives from an Advocate

Submitted by Jennifer Sims, Self-advocate

The Museum of disABILITY History inspires and empowers while educating visitors on the history of disability rights.

“The Museum is extremely informative,” said Jennifer Sims, a disability rights advocate from Bloomfield, NY. “It really shows the evolution of disability.”

Sims, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at age 11, and has been using a wheelchair for the past decade, is pushing the limits of disability rights first hand. “At the time I was the youngest person in the history of Strong Memorial Hospital to be diagnosed with MS,” said Sims. “Since then I’ve taken on many advocacy roles in the community.”

“...I know that the differences I make today will help change the future.”

Sims, who began her advocacy career in high school, currently campaigns for disability rights with different Rochester area organizations, such as the AI Sig! family of agencies, the Center for Disability Rights and the Rochester Center for Independent Living.

“I want the world to view people with disabilities as equals,” said Sims. “We’re just like everybody else. Just because I roll, doesn’t mean I’m any less of a person.”

Sims, who is busy improving disability rights for future generations, discovered the history of disability while visiting the Museum. “Going to the Museum was a very emotional experience and really opened my eyes,” said Sims. “I was impressed by the different people who, at the time, weren’t aware that they were playing an important part in the evolution of disability rights.”



Jennifer Sims/photo credit: Thompson Health

I know in my lifetime that I’ll probably never see the day where the disabled are fully accepted,” said Sims. “Even though I won’t be there, I know that the differences I make today will help change the future.”



Like us on Facebook! facebook.com/museumofdisability

Guest Contribution

Volunteering Provides New Experiences

By Reilly Sullivan, People Inc. Volunteer

I have been volunteering at the Museum of disABILITY History since this past October. My dream is to pursue advocacy for people with cerebral palsy as a career once I graduate from Amherst High School. Volunteering at the Museum will help me to achieve this goal.

I am working on a yoga project that is about my experiences and how I find it to be beneficial in helping me with stretching my muscles to maintain/improve my flexibility, as well as improving my mood. I hope that other people will check out my project and have the same good experiences I have doing yoga.

Additionally, I have helped work on a chapter for their upcoming publication about the Buffalo Psychiatric Center. This publication is about the current re-use plans and why it is important to restore the Buffalo Psychiatric Center.

I have enjoyed my experience as a volunteer. For my next project, I am hoping to learn what it is like to be a tour guide at the Museum of disABILITY History.



MUSEUM INFO

3826 Main Street, Buffalo NY 14226
716.629.3626
info@museumofdisability.org
museumofdisability.org
store.museumofdisability.org

MUSEUM HOURS

Monday-Friday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Sunday: Closed

ADMISSION

General Admission:

Museum Members.....	FREE
People Inc. employees.....	FREE
Adults.....	\$6.00
Students, Seniors, and Human Service Employees.....	\$3.50
Children ages 6-17.....	\$3.00
Children ages 5 and under.....	FREE

Group Tour Rates:

All groups (greater than or equal to 10 people): \$4 per person
Rental of the KeyBank Room (1st Floor, up to 20 people): \$50 fee added to the total amount per person
Rental of the Main Training Room (2nd Floor w/ elevator access, up to 80 people): \$100 fee added to the total amount per person



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Museum of disABILITY History advances the understanding, acceptance, and independence of people with disabilities. The Museum's exhibits, collections, archives and educational programs create awareness and a platform for dialogue and discovery.