



G OVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

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In November of 2015, the Department of Corrections (DOC) presented at the Architectural Barrier Free Design Committee to request a Letter of Opinion regarding accessibility. Several barriers to access were recommended for improvement by



Ms. Colleen Durkin-Blackburn, Accessibility Specialist of the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD). Director Michael McAlister, Division of Field Services for the DOC,

was receptive to the findings of the Committee and quickly made all physical changes requested. In addition, Director McAlister went above and beyond the findings of the Committee. He not only made changes to the facility under review, he purchased eleven additional assistive listening devices, one for each of the buildings he oversees.

DOC Commissioner Bill Wrenn developed a New Hampshire DOC Policy and Procedure Directive which ensures persons with disabilities will have equal opportunity to participate in all programs and services available in a field of-

fice. GCD Executive Director, Charles J. Saia states, "I applaud the efforts of the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Wrenn's dedication to the ADA is an example for the State of NH. The Commissioner's initiative and commitment to accessibility is noble and refreshing."



"REMOVING BARRIERS TO EQUALITY"

A Message from the Executive Director

I always tell people, "I enjoy my job." Every day I wake up and realize that New Hampshire's commitment to ensuring Access for All is very real and I get to be a part of that.

The Governor's Commission on Disability holds a unique position in our State's government. It is non-partisan, and is recognized as a colleague, educator, and mediator when addressing the myriad of issues surrounding the lives of people with

disabilities.

Striving to guarantee that those with a disability experience rewarding and meaningful lives in New Hampshire requires the effort of many. The Commission's chairman and commission members volunteer their time and leadership to further the goal of the GCD.

Moreover, whatever issues those with a disability may be facing, full collaboration and support between

the Governor's office and the Commission have always been present.

I have had the pleasure to serve under former Governor Hassan, and the Commission and I are grateful for all that she and her diligent staff did to further the mission of the GCD. Now we are looking forward to collaborating with Governor Sununu on behalf of the needs of the individuals whom we serve. Onward 2017!



Charles J. Saia, Executive Director of the GCD.

A New Year with the GCD Legislative Committee

The 2017 Legislative Session is underway and the Senators and Representatives have been sworn in and have begun to process the Legislative Service Requests (LSR's) that have already been filed.

The Governor's Commission on Disability takes an active interest in any legislation that could positively or detrimentally impact the disability community and has organized itself into a Legislative

Committee. The committee makes recommendations on issues related to the disability community. This is accomplished through monitoring proposed legislation to ensure they respond to the changing needs of New Hampshire residents living with disabilities.

The GCD is a dynamic, statewide agency that supports the mission to re-

move barriers that bar people living with disabilities from participating in all facets of society.

In addition to advising the Governor, Legislature and other state agencies regarding disability-related issues, the GCD provides assistance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and other disability law.



L to R: Charles J. Saia, Ellen Keith, Chairman Paul Van Blarigan

one4all Voting System Helps Those with Disabilities



Commission Member Nancy Druke displays the one4all system

While voting may be a right for everyone, for people living with disabilities, casting a ballot privately may be a challenge. In an effort to change that, New Hampshire has rolled out a new accessible voting system called "one4all." In 2014, the New Hampshire Secretary of State's Office identified open source software that Dr. Juan Gilbert and his Prime III team had made availa-

ble to the public. An electronic voting system, one4all offers security, integrity, and a user-friendly interface that helps people regardless of ability.

New Hampshire has adopted this tablet-based ballot system so voters can use a touch-screen while listening to the candidates' names being read. As voters hear the candidate they

want, they can press enter, or enter a voice command.

Former Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Manning, a GCD Commission Member, has worked diligently since its inception to bring one4all and accessible voting to New Hampshire. one4all is based on open source technology, and according to Manning, with no software fees, the tablets, printers, headsets and keyboards will pay for themselves in a little over a year.

GCD: We're about the ADA and Access for All

The Governor's Commission on Disability stems from a long line of state and federal legislation. RSA 275-C, The Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law over 26 years ago, are all key pieces connected to the GCD.

While the GCD takes on

many tasks, its primary duties are to advise and inform the governor, state agencies, and the public on disability-related issues. It also provides assistance to state departments in the development of services and programs.

The Commission is comprised of 30 members that are appointed by the gov-

ernor. Charles Saia, Executive Director of the GCD, works closely with Paul Van Blarigan, Chairman, as well as the other Commission members.

The GCD assists employers and employees with any questions regarding disability rights within the workplace. Moreover it works with architects and

city planners to ensure all buildings adhere to federal and state accessibility standards.

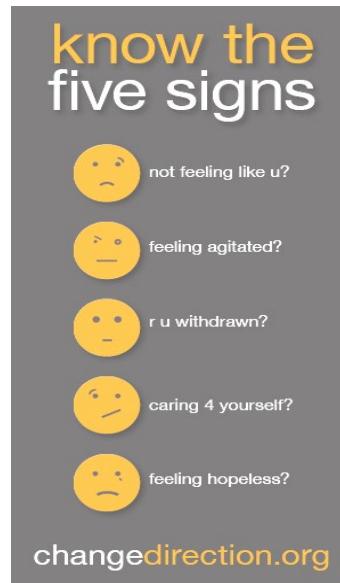
Also, the GCD is the designated state agency for the provision of the Client Assistance program. The GCD is dedicated to Access for All, so that equal protection of the law is afforded to all.

Campaign to Change Direction and the GCD Come Together

The Governor's Commission on Disability has partnered with former New Hampshire Chief Justice John T. Broderick Jr. to promote The Campaign to Change Direction. Spearheaded by the former Chief Justice, New Hampshire is the first state to join The Campaign to Change Direction. Former New Hampshire Governor Senator Maggie Hassan kicked off The Campaign to Change Direction NH on May 23, 2016, alongside members of

the US Senate and US Congress at the New Hampshire State House.

The Campaign to Change Direction is a coalition of citizens and leaders who have come together to change the culture in America about mental health, mental illness, and wellness. Information about the Campaign can be found at: www.changedirection.org.



GCD and DMV Roll Out a New Parking Law Flyer

The Governor's Commission on Disability has partnered with the DMV to develop an updated resource for educating the public about accessible parking and walking disability permits.

The new flyer is sent out with every walking disability plate or placard the DMV approves. It provides information about the proper use of accessible parking

spaces; as well as the access aisles, where many people park without knowing that the striped areas are for the use of accessible van ramps and that parking in them is prohibited. Parking violations often carry fines of \$250 or more.

The GCD is distributing this flyer through the Division of Motor Vehicles. In the interest of maximizing public

awareness, over 1000 flyers will be distributed each month as we work toward our goal of greater Access for All.

Winter is an opportune time to update the Parking Law flyer. According to the DMV, the number of walking disability placards increases significantly during the winter months, as injuries due to slippery

conditions become a lot more common.



Using UbiDuo for Communication Equality



The Governor's Commission on Disability is pleased to announce the purchase of an UbiDuo 2 Wireless system. This is the latest evolution of the world's foremost communication solution. This innovative tool is ideal for connecting people in need.

Bridging the gap in communication, the UbiDuo 2 consists of two wireless keyboards with two color screens.

Users can communicate with one another through typing and reading. The brightness of the screen can be easily increased or decreased and the size of the font can be enlarged or

reduced. This allows for greater customization for each individual. As always, the GCD strives toward maximum inclusion and greater access for all.

The UbiDuo 2 will be available for use at GCD public meetings, and upon request.

The New Hampshire Service Dog Brochure

A new brochure by the Governor's Commission on Disability may change the way the public views Service Dogs. The brochure, "The Law and Service Animals," was printed to answer the many questions people ask about Service Dogs each day.

"We get questions about Service Dogs all the time," said Bryan Connelly, Re-

search & Information Specialist for the GCD. "Most are about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how it applies to Service Animals."

Some of the information in the brochure highlights the characteristics of a Service Dog. Good behavior, discipline, training and acceptance of strangers are the hallmark of a Service

Dog, while those that are disruptive or growl at strangers may forfeit their right of access.



"REMOVING BARRIERS TO EQUALITY"

What is the Client Assistance Program?

The GCD is the designated state agency for the provision of Client Assistance Program (CAP) services as mandated by the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This significant act enabled the federal funding of programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Centers for Independent Living (CIL), programs which assist citizens with disabilities in obtaining and retaining integrated employment and community living. As such, the GCD's membership includes Lisa

Hinson-Hatz, Director of VR services, Bill Finn, Administrator of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and Clyde Terry, CEO of Granite State Independent Living (GSIL).

The CAP is a federally funded program providing advocacy and information to individuals receiving services from programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Centers for Independent Living Centers (CIL), or those with concerns relative to Title 1 (Employment) of the Americans with Disabili-

ties Act. Services are provided at no cost to the individual. CAP services are delivered to inform, guide, and empower individuals to foster their ability to make fully informed choices relative to available services. CAP will always seek to resolve differences at the lowest level of intervention possible.

CAP strives for open, honest, and mutually respectful interactions with all individuals and agencies with shared decision-making being driven by person-centered choices.

The GCD is actively involved within the disability community and in the lives of individuals with disabilities and their supporters.

Therefore, we invite you to also follow the GCD on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn where you will find timely updates on issues pertaining to those with a disability, as well as news regarding upcoming events, such as the Governor's Accessibility Awards, The Employment Leadership Awards, seminars and the like.

To learn more scan the code below!



A display table prepared by the GCD for the Annual Caregiver's Conference in Concord, NH



Former Chief Justice John T. Broderick Jr. speaks about Change Direction to the GCD



Charles J. Saia speaks with Larry Ashford during the 2016 GCD Open House