



**DISABILITY  
RESOURCE  
DIGEST**

**Volume 8 Issue 7 July/Aug. 2008**

# CONTENTS

## SELECTED TOPICS

<u>ACCESSIBILITY</u> .....	Page 2
<u>ADVOCACY</u> .....	Page 2
<u>EDUCATION</u> .....	Page 3
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u> .....	Page 4
<u>GENERAL INTEREST</u> .....	Page 6
<u>GOVERNMENT</u> .....	Page 7
<u>HEALTH/WELLNESS</u> .....	Page 9
<u>LEGAL</u> .....	Page 10
<u>MEDIA</u> .....	Page 11
<u>MEDICAL</u> .....	Page 12
<u>POLICY/RESEARCH</u> .....	Page 13
<u>REHABILITATION</u> .....	Page 15
<u>SELF-HELP</u> .....	Page 16
<u>SPORTS/RECREATION</u> .....	Page 17
<u>TECHNOLOGY</u> .....	Page 18
<u>CONFERENCES</u> .....	Page 20

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.ca](mailto:info@smd.ca). Readers are also invited to send comments and suggestions regarding the DRD to this same e-mail address.

## ACCESSIBILITY

**Just Published: Universal Design in Higher Education** – "DO-IT has a new book titled Universal Design in Higher Education: From Principles to Practice. It was published by Harvard Education Press and developed as part of the AccessCollege project, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education (grant #P333A050064). This book showcases the perspectives and expertise of forty-one students with disabilities, practitioners, and researchers that represent twenty-six postsecondary institutions and other organizations. They illustrate how the application of universal design can create inclusive instruction, student services, physical spaces, and information technology. The broad scope of experience shared by the authors makes this book appropriate as a guide to campus leaders and as a textbook for college and university courses that explore current disability, diversity, design, special education, and related topics."  
<http://www.washington.edu/doi/Newsflash/nf.06.05.08.html>

**New ADA Technical Assistance CD-ROM Available** – "This free CD-ROM contains a complete collection of the Department's ADA materials. It includes the Department's regulations, architectural design standards, and technical assistance publications. Designed for easy use on laptop computers in the field, or other computers that lack high speed Internet access, the CD-ROM will make searching documents and identifying appropriate ADA information easier and more efficient."  
<http://www.ada.gov/cdorderform/adatacd1.htm>

**New EU rights for disabled passengers** – (*yourable*). "A law protecting the rights of airline passengers who suffer from reduced mobility will come into effect this Saturday (July 26). Under the new EU legislation, it will become the responsibility of airport regulators to ensure that all disabled people are given appropriate assistance once they arrive at the terminal. That means measures must be put in place to facilitate disabled access to all stages of air travel, from checking-in through to boarding the aircraft. Current rules place the onus on airlines, prompting complaints from some carriers that certain airports are inadequately placed for meeting legal requirements."  
<http://www.youreable.com/TwoShare/getPage/01News/01Current/July2008/new%20rights>

**U.S. Unveils 2009 Louis Braille Silver Dollar with Readable Braille** – (*Abledata*). "On July 2 2008, the U.S. Mint unveiled the design of the 2009 Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar at the National Federation of the Blind's annual convention in Dallas, Texas. The Braille Silver Dollar is the first coin minted in the United States to feature readable Braille characters. The coin will go on sale in the spring of 2009, the bicentennial anniversary of Louis Braille's birth."  
<http://www.abledata.com/abledata.cfm?ksectionid=160164&pageid=85474&newsid=189813>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## ADVOCACY

**ADA: No Compromise** - by Tim Gilmer (*NewMobility*). "Rumor has it that the disability and business communities are trying to agree on a compromise version of the ADA Restoration Act. Have we forgotten our past? Here's a chunk of mine: In 1968, when looking into teaching,

I learned the Los Angeles County Board of Education prohibited hiring teachers in wheelchairs. Blatant discrimination was common in those days — some say it still is."  
<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11175>

**Harriet Johnson, 50, Activist for Disabled, Is Dead** – by Dennis Hevesi (*New York Times*).

"Harriet McBryde Johnson, a feisty champion of the rights of the disabled who came to prominence after she challenged a Princeton professor's contention that severely disabled newborns could ethically be euthanized, died on Wednesday at her home in Charleston, S.C. She was 50."

<http://tiny.cc/Xs7KS>

**Spokesman's Son, Disability Groups Oppose Washington Assisted Suicide Prop** – by

Steven Ertelt (*LifeNews.com*). "The Initiative 1000 measure that would make Washington the second state, following Oregon, to legalize assisted suicide, is drawing expected opposition from pro-life groups and medical professionals. But the son of the proposal's spokesman and disability groups are opposed as well. Booth Gardner the millionaire former governor of the state, is the lead spokesman for the I-1000 assisted suicide proposal. Gardner suffers from Parkinson's disease, which is incurable but not fatal and he would not qualify to use the assisted suicide measure to take his own life. However, it prompted his desire to speak up for those who may want to take advantage of the grisly idea."

<http://www.lifenews.com/bio2484.html>

**Historic Presidential Forum Unites Thousands in Disability Community - Forum to be Held on 18TH Anniversary of Landmark Americans with Disabilities Act** – "Thousands of

Americans with disabilities from across the country will join together at The National Forum on Disability Issues, a non-partisan presidential forum organized by the Ohio Disability Vote Coalition (ODVC) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, July 26, in Columbus, Ohio. AAPD is the largest cross-disability membership organization in the country. ODVC, a political advocacy collaborative, includes nearly 30 organizations from throughout Ohio that represent the interests of people with disabilities."

<http://www.aapd.com/News/aapd/pr080714aapd.htm>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## EDUCATION

### HIGHER EDUCATION

**National Federation of the Blind Praises Passage of Higher Education Opportunity Act** –

(*NFB*). "The National Federation of the Blind, the oldest and the largest nationwide organization of blind people in the United States, praised the United States Congress today for passing the Higher Education Opportunity Act. The legislation establishes a commission to study ways that higher education textbooks in accessible formats such as Braille, audio, or electronic text, depending on the preference of the student, can be provided at the same time that sighted students receive their course materials."

<http://www.nfb.org/nfb/NewsBot.asp?MODE=VIEW&ID=344>

**Preserving the Right to Deny** – (*InsideHighered.com*). "Expanding protections for disabled students is fine with higher education officials, so long as accommodating those students doesn't erode academic standards, according to testimony given to a U.S. Senate committee Tuesday. But, as the hearing revealed, some are concerned that 'standards' could be defined to exclude the very students federal laws are designed to help. Terry Hartle, senior vice president of the American Council on Education, told lawmakers in a Tuesday hearing that colleges and universities welcome a proposed broadening of the Americans With Disabilities Act. In broadening the Americans With Disabilities Act, as some lawmakers aim to do, students would still be classified as disabled, even if they controlled symptoms with medication or other treatments."  
<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/07/16/disability>

**Uneasiness In Uncharted Waters** – (*InsideHighered.com*). "Heralded as a modern-day extension of the civil rights movement, the pioneering degree program for developmentally disabled students at Bellevue Community College has a loyal fan base and a history of great press. But some parents — and a former instructor at the college — now say there have been efforts to force out students who face some of the biggest challenges."  
<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/07/21/bellevue>

## PRIMARY/SECONDARY

**Participation and Activity Limitation Survey: Education experiences of children with disabilities** – "More than 40% of Canadian children with disabilities aged 5 to 14 received some form of special education during the 2005/2006 school year, roughly the same proportion as reported in 2000/2001, according to a new report. The report, based on data from the 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), assessed the educational experiences of children aged 5 to 14 with activity limitations ranging from learning disabilities to mobility activity limitations. Survey data showed that 163,730 children with disabilities attended school in 2005/2006. Of this group, 43.1%, or 70,600, were attending special education classes. The majority, 62.4%, attended these classes on a part-time basis, while the remainder attended on a full-time basis. The vast majority of parents reported learning disabilities as the most common condition requiring special education for their children."

**DRD Editorial Note:** There was major increase in the number reporting a disability in the 2006 PALS relative to the 2001 PALS. Due to the significant change in the population between the two surveys, considerable caution is required in making comparisons in results.  
<http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080527/d080527a.htm>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## EMPLOYMENT

**'America's People, America's Talent... America's Strength!' is 2008 National Disability Employment Awareness Month theme** – "U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao today announced that "America's People, America's Talent... America's Strength!" will be the official 2008 theme for National Disability Employment Awareness Month, which is observed in October nationwide. The 2008 theme captures the accomplishments highlighted in the 2007 progress report on President Bush's New Freedom Initiative for people with disabilities. 'Full

access to community life for Americans with disabilities is an imperative and this year's theme conveys the tremendous contributions that these Americans can make in the workplace,' said Secretary Chao."

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/odep/odep20080993.htm>

**Disability 101: The ADA and employment** – by Sandy Lahmann (*Summit Daily*). "One of the biggest areas of discrimination people with disabilities encounter is in employment. Readers with disabilities have been sharing their stories with me and I've discovered common themes."  
<http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20080805/COLUMNS/709789552/1057/AE&parentprofile=>

**E-Mentoring** – "The E-Mentoring Program is a contemporary and innovative program that matches students with disabilities with mentors who have college and/or career experience. Students and mentors communicate through e-mail in this program. The students complete an online course which helps prepare them for their transition to work and/or college."  
<http://nisonger.osu.edu/Transition/EMentoring.htm>

**Opening doors for employees with disabilities** – by Terrence Belford (*the Star*). "Tom Proszowski, 56, director of employment equity and diversity at CIBC, is more than just another mid-level banking executive. As he rolls his wheelchair through the bank's Toronto headquarters, he is a symbol of the progress Canadian banks have made when it comes to hiring people with disabilities and not just in the low or mid-level ranks. 'We did an informal survey recently and it showed 5 per cent of all those men and women in the executive levels of the bank report they have a disability,' he says. Overall, about 4 per cent of CIBC's 40,000-plus Canadian employees have a disability, says Sharon Wingfelder, vice-president, human resources."  
<http://www.thestar.com/Business/article/443008>

**Participation and Activity Limitation Survey: Employment** – (*StatisticsCanada*). "Labour market performance was strong for people with activity limitations between 2001 and 2006, resulting in reduced gaps with Canadians without such limitations, in employment, labour force participation and unemployment. People with activity limitations posted strong growth in their employment rate, from 49.3% in 2001 to 53.5% in 2006, narrowing the gap to the population without activity limitations with an employment rate of 75.1% in 2006. Labour force participation for people with activity limitations rose from 56.9% in 2001 to 59.6% in 2006, again reducing the gap with people without activity limitations. The unemployment rate for people with activity limitations dropped from 13.2% in 2001 to 10.4% in 2006, narrowing the gap by roughly one-third with those without activity limitations."

**DRD Editorial Note:** There was major increase in the number reporting a disability in the 2006 PALS relative to the 2001 PALS. Due to the significant change in the population between the two surveys, considerable caution is required in making comparisons in results. Such caution is adequately not reflected in the comparisons of labour force measures above.  
<http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080724/d080724a.htm>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## GENERAL INTEREST

**Anita Kaiser and her husband are beating the odds and setting positive example for other couples facing disability** – by Andrea Gordon (The Canadian Press). "About 36,000 Canadians are living with spinal cord injuries, according to the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, which supported Kaiser's education through a scholarship. Roughly 100 new cases occur each year, and most are among people in their child-bearing years. While some are already parents, a growing number are choosing to start families post-injury. Kaiser says that's the result of improved social acceptance and accessibility as well as the growth in specialized fertility and obstetrical services for the disabled."  
<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/article/334721>

**Astral Media makes \$1 million commitment to MS Society of Canada** – (MSSociety). "Astral Media Inc. and the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada today announced a partnership where Astral Media will donate more than \$1 million in advertising space to the MS Society. The pledge has been made to help draw attention to the MS Society's work in funding research to end multiple sclerosis and to raise awareness of the most common neurological disease which affects many Canadians."  
[http://www.mssociety.ca/en/releases/nr\\_20080716.htm](http://www.mssociety.ca/en/releases/nr_20080716.htm)

**Disability 101: Are you really willing to help?** – by Sandy Lahmann (*Summit Daily*). "You say you want to help, but how willing are you really? When I'm out in the community you bombard me with offers to push my wheelchair, open the door, or reach the item on a high shelf. You want to be friendly to my guide dog or help me across the street. You want to donate to Jerry's Kids or to the MS Walk. But do you really want to help or do you just want to help if it's convenient?"  
<http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20080722/COLUMNS/459051345/1078&ParentProfile=1055>

### **Disability 101: When to offer help** –

by Sandy Lahmann (*Summit Daily*). "Previously I have belabored the point that able-bodied people should not go overboard trying to help people with disabilities. Nevertheless, the fact remains that sometimes people with disabilities do need help. How does an able-bodied person determine when it is appropriate to help and when it isn't? I offer three rules.

1. Only offer help if it looks like the person with a disability is struggling.
2. Only offer help after you have allowed the person enough time to try doing it for themselves.
3. Always ask the person if they want help."

<http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20080610/COLUMNS/491707942/0/FRONTPAGE>

**Helen Keller** – (AFB). "On June 27, 2008, the world celebrated the 128th anniversary of Helen Keller's birth. Deaf and blind from infancy, Helen Keller played a leading role in most of the significant political, social, and cultural movements of the 20th century. Throughout her lifetime (1880-1968) she worked unceasingly to improve the lives of people who were blind and deaf."  
<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=1>

**Henson Trust** – (*Reena*). "Caring for a family member with a disability, and planning for their support for a whole lifetime, is a big responsibility. It poses special problems and challenges. A trust can be an ideal solution if you want to provide some money for a relative. With a trust, your loved one can continue to receive ODSP benefits. The trust money can help with extra expenses such as items and services they need, and holidays."

<http://www.reena.org/news.html>

<http://www.reena.org/pdfs/hensontrust.pdf>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## GOVERNMENT

### U.S.

**Congress Overturns President's Veto of Medicare Bill; H.R. 6331 Becomes Law** – "Today, the homecare community scored a hard-fought victory when the Congress enacted H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, over the objection of the President. By approving the legislation, Congress agreed to delay competitive bidding in order to allow some critical process reforms, quality improvements, and other reforms to the bidding program and HME policy. The House and Senate both voted today to overturn the President's veto of H.R. 6331, the Medicare package that includes the bidding changes and the physicians' pay adjustment."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=1799>

**House Votes to Expand Civil Rights for Disabled** – by Robert Pear (*NYTimes*). "The House passed a major civil rights bill on Wednesday that would expand protections for people with disabilities and overturn several Supreme Court decisions issued in the last decade. The bill, approved 402 to 17, would make it easier for workers to prove discrimination. It would explicitly relax some stringent standards set by the court and says that disability is to be 'construed broadly,' to cover more physical and mental impairments. Supporters of the proposal said it would restore the broad protections that Congress meant to establish when it passed the Americans With Disabilities Act that President George Bush signed in 1990."

<http://tiny.cc/HFZwN>

**Unimpaired Rights - The House votes resoundingly to recognize civil rights for the disabled.** – (*WashingtonPost*). "The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990, was supposed to level the playing field for the disabled. It ended up helping some more than others. If you had an incurable disease, such as epilepsy, that affected your everyday actions but could be treated with medication, you were not disabled, the Supreme Court determined, and you did not deserve the accompanying rights. That soon may change, thanks to a remarkably cooperative effort by businesses and advocates of protections for the disabled. The House recently voted overwhelmingly to expand those protections, and the Senate is expected to follow suit. Although President Bush has expressed concerns that excess litigation may ensue, he is unlikely to veto the bill, nor should he."

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/05/AR2008070501356.html?sub=new)

[dyn/content/article/2008/07/05/AR2008070501356.html?sub=new](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/05/AR2008070501356.html?sub=new)

**U.S. seeks to vastly improve access for the disabled** – by Robert Pear (International Herald Tribune). "The Bush administration is about to propose far-reaching rules that would give people with disabilities greater access to tens of thousands of courtrooms, swimming pools, golf courses, stadiums, theaters, hotels and stores in the United States. The proposal would substantially update and rewrite U.S. standards for enforcement of the Americans With Disabilities Act, a landmark civil rights law passed with strong bipartisan support in 1990. The new rules would set more stringent requirements in an effort to meet the needs of an aging population and growing numbers of disabled war veterans."  
<http://www.ihl.com/articles/2008/06/16/america/disabled.php>

**Law, Policy & Politics - Political News: Barack Obama** – "Recently hundreds of people from the disability community participated in the national Obama Disability Policy Conference Call to learn more about Barack Obama's Plan to Empower Americans with Disabilities. The sponsors were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and excitement in our community for Barack Obama. The sponsors want to make sure that everyone has a chance to participate in our continuing discussion of issues important to the disability community."  
<http://www.atechnews.com/politicalnews.html>

**Legislation Brings Hope for People with Disabilities Left Out Of New Communications Technologies** – (AAPD). "The Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT) is delighted that Representatives Edward Markey (D-MA) and Heather Wilson (R-NM) have introduced "The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2008" (H.R. 6320). The bill would amend the Communications Act to ensure that new Internet-enabled telephone and television services are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities and closes existing gaps in telecommunications laws."  
<http://www.aapd.com/News/telecomm/080623coat.htm>

**U.S. reluctance to sign treaty on disabilities is painful, puzzling** – by Dick Thornburgh and Paul Steven Miller (*seattletimes*). "A treaty that takes effect this month could benefit one quarter of humanity: the 650 million people, as well as their families, who live with disabilities. The U.N. International Treaty on the Rights of People with Disabilities is also the first international treaty that guarantees the rights of such people to equality and self-determination. People with disabilities are the world's largest minority, yet the United Nations reports that only 45 countries have disability-rights laws. The U.S. has not signed the treaty, either, but it should. As former officials of two different presidential administrations, one Republican and one Democratic, we strongly believe that this treaty is consistent with American law. Indeed, the U.S. pioneered rights for people with disabilities with the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Some objectors say disability rights are most appropriately addressed as domestic concerns, given the complexity of issues. But since most countries do not have such protections, international pressure is necessary."  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008015343\\_disabop25.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008015343_disabop25.html)

## CANADA

**B.C. should not abandon its disability support system** – by Michael Prince and Tim Stainton (*the Sun*). "The recent provincial cabinet shuffle and associated restructuring of ministries shatter the vision for providing an integrated, lifelong set of services for people with

developmental disabilities. To appreciate the depth of shock, dismay and anxiety by individuals and families over the loss of this long-term vision, some background is necessary." <http://www.canada.com/vancouver/news/editorial/story.html?id=efcf9fc2-7dbd-4ae3-a83c-0ac5b19de7a6>

### **Government Response to the THIRD Report of the Standing Committee on Human**

**Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities** – "Canada has one of the most educated working-age populations in the world. However, growing demand for highly-skilled workers will put pressure on the need for increasing the skill levels of all Canadians. Some segments of the population are less likely to have post-secondary credentials or be participating in the labour market – notably Aboriginal Canadians, older workers and people with disabilities. Enhancing the participation and skill levels of these groups are central to our country's efforts to address the challenges of population aging and skills shortages. In Advantage Canada, released in Fall 2006, the Government of Canada set out its plan for creating the best educated, most skilled and most flexible workforce in the world"

<http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/cmte/CommitteePublication.aspx?SourceId=245647>

[http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/committee/392/huma/govresponse/rp3599503/392\\_HUMA\\_Rpt03\\_GR\\_PDF/392\\_HUMA\\_Rpt03\\_GR-e.pdf](http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/committee/392/huma/govresponse/rp3599503/392_HUMA_Rpt03_GR_PDF/392_HUMA_Rpt03_GR-e.pdf) (pdf version only. HTML is not available yet)

### **The Government of Canada helps Canadians with disabilities find meaningful employment**

– "Forty London residents with intellectual disabilities will receive personalized counselling and assistance to help them get into the work force. The Honourable Vic Toews, President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, today announced federal support for the training and development project led by Community Living London."

<http://tiny.cc/W8QtY> (tiny url)

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## **HEALTH/WELLNESS**

**Breakdown: Canada's Mental Health Crisis** – (*Globe and Mail*). "In Breakdown, The Globe and Mail documents the enormous, unaddressed cost of mental illness to Canadian individuals, families and society. The series closes with a search for solutions."

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/breakdown>

**Disabilities and Sexual Health Program** – "We envision a society in which wherever there are research, education, services and policies regarding sexual health, and there is substantial recognition of persons with disabilities and persons with chronic conditions. Wherever there are research, education, services and policies regarding persons with disabilities and persons with chronic conditions, there is substantial recognition of sexual health."

<http://www.msm.edu/x838.xml>

**Health literacy and harm: Who is at risk? What is the fix?** – by Allan Frankel, MD (*CMAJ*).

"The study by Bartlett and colleagues on the risk of preventable adverse events among patients with communication problems admitted to acute care hospitals in this issue of CMAJ

highlights major known flaws in how health care is delivered. It also reminds us of 2 types of needed improvements in health care: those that are simple but hard to do, and those that are complex and disruptive. The authors chose to focus on patients with communication problems, but they also have shone a broader light on the risks to all patients. The results of this study revealed that some patients' communication problems predisposed them to a 3-fold increased risk of a preventable adverse event and identified a segment of the patient population worthy of extra scrutiny and effort."

<http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/178/12/1573>

**The health of nations: the value of a statistical life** – (*Access Economics / Australian Safety and Compensation Council*). "Australians born today live more than 20 years longer than their counterparts a century ago. This gain in our longevity has been achieved through a variety of incremental improvements in health and aged care expenditure, occupational safety, environmental interventions (in particular in relation to water and sanitation), and technological advances driven by research and innovation, together with concern for public welfare and social justice. Such investments reflect the value we place on life, health and wellbeing."  
[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.chtml?filename\\_num=223186](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.chtml?filename_num=223186)  
[http://www.ascc.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/131C0E8A-AE89-4925-B03B-B1EC88BEB999/0/Health\\_national\\_value\\_Statistical\\_life\\_full\\_version.pdf](http://www.ascc.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/131C0E8A-AE89-4925-B03B-B1EC88BEB999/0/Health_national_value_Statistical_life_full_version.pdf) (Report)

**Neglected infections of poverty in the U.S. are disabling hundreds of thousands of Americans every year** – (*NewsMedical.net*). "An analysis published June 25th in the open-access journal [PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases](#) highlights that diseases very similar to those plaguing Africa, Asia, and Latin America are also occurring frequently among the poorest people in the United States, especially women and children. These diseases - the 'neglected infections of poverty' - are caused by chronic and debilitating parasitic, bacterial, and congenital infections. While most Americans have never heard of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), the analysis estimates that these infections occur in hundreds of thousands of poor Americans concentrated primarily in the Mississippi Delta (including post-Katrina Louisiana), Appalachia, the Mexican borderlands, and inner cities. These diseases represent a major cause of chronic disability, impaired child development, and adverse pregnancy outcomes, yet many of them are preventable."  
<http://www.news-medical.net/?id=39405>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## LEGAL

**Federal Court overturns Rights Tribunal ruling** – by Patrick Dare (*OttawaCitizen*). "A Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision that ordered the National Capital Commission to make the huge York Steps accessible for the handicapped has been overturned by the Federal Court of Canada. In 2006, Ottawa resident Bob Brown, a quadriplegic, won a tribunal decision over the NCC's grand York Steps, an award-winning \$1.7-million pedestrian link between ceremonial Ottawa and Lowertown, descending from Sussex Drive by the U.S. Embassy. The tribunal found that the 45-step project was discriminatory because the steps were not accessible to

the disabled, and ordered the NCC to work out a solution at the site. Building an elevator at the site was estimated to cost at least \$427,000."

<http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=abd685b5-c145-44af-97dd-d577a180d11e>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## **MEDIA**

**FOXsexpert: Can Disabled Be Sexy? You Bet!** – by Yvonne K. Fulbright (*Fox News*). "Last week, the [Center for Excellence in Sexual Health](#) at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta hosted a conference titled "Wounded Troops and Partners: Supporting Intimate Relationships." With former Surgeon Generals Dr. David Satcher and Dr. Richard Carmona among the speakers, as well as former Senator Bob Dole, this effort is a glimmer of hope that America is finally ready to deal with the issue of sex and disability."

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,363531,00.html>

### **The Game of My Life: A True Story of Challenge, Triumph, and Growing Up Autistic (2008)**

– by McElwain, Jason & Paisner, Daniel (*NCPAD*). "The Game of My Life is one of the few books written by an author with autism and tells the incredible true story of how one high school student became nationally known for his determination to prevail over the challenges of autism as well as his opponents on the basketball court. On February 15, 2006, in the final game of the season, Jason McElwain (J-Mac) was sent in with four minutes left on the clock and a comfortable lead for his Greece Athena Trojans. J-Mac, a student with autism as well as the team manager, ended up scoring 20 points in only 4 minutes, also setting a school record of six three-pointers. He was carried off the court on his teammates' shoulders, and the game footage quickly made its way into our homes and offices via computer and television screens. An inspiration to everyone, Jason McElwain's remarkable accomplishment was broadcast nationwide, inspiring all of us with his courage and determination."

<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=78&section=1167>

**International Call for Videos about Disability** – "WebbyTalents, new video site networking for disabled people launched ... by going international! Disabled people, Filmmakers, Organizations or Associations, from anywhere in the world, are invited to upload for FREE their videos or their trailers on [www.webbytalents.com](http://www.webbytalents.com), whether fiction, documentary testimony or animation, on the theme of disability. WebbyTalents is a Free video hosting designed to break down barriers for the world's disabled. WebbyTalents is a site of talent and entertainment. It is also the space for creation, exchange, and sharing for people with disabilities."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=6&list=1780>

### **The Lens Stares Back - His Disability Gives 'Rolling' Photographer A Fresh Perspective** –

by Rachel Beckman (*Washington Post*). "Photographer Kevin Connolly is used to people staring at him. The 22-year-old Montana native was born without legs, and he gets around on a skateboard, propelling himself with his hands. 'Before pity, empathy or sympathy, there's a moment of shock and curiosity,' Connolly says. 'It's mostly just slack-jawed: What's that?' In 2007, Connolly traveled around the world and took 32,728 pictures of people staring at him."

Fifteen of his photos are on display in the Kennedy Center's Hall of States. He calls it 'The Rolling Exhibition'."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/02/AR2008070203220.html?hpid=sec-artsliving>

**My Country** – "In this one-hour documentary, symphony conductor James DePreist, who contracted polio as a young man, profiles three people with disabilities whose lives have been shaped by the struggle for equal rights. Mr. DePreist is the nephew of African American contralto Marian Anderson, who in 1939 was prevented from singing at Constitution Hall. He draws parallels between racial barriers and the barriers faced by people with disabilities."  
[http://www.ada.gov/videogallery.htm#my\\_country](http://www.ada.gov/videogallery.htm#my_country)

**Of wheelchairs and 'wannabes'** – "Writer-director Carlos Brooks began conceptualizing his feature film debut, "Quid Pro Quo," which opens Friday, some eight years ago. 'I wanted to write a different story, something unusual,' he explains. 'I had an idea for somebody who was impaired in some way. He would get some sort of talisman that would help him overcome the impairment, and in return, I thought, he would have to help the person who impaired him in the first place.' His initial idea, the filmmaker admits, didn't tread water. 'The first outlines are really horrible, as you can imag[in]e,' he says, laughing. Then he realized that perhaps he didn't feel as comfortable with 'wheelchair culture, the culture of the disabled,' as he thought he did. So he set out one early morning on the Internet and began Googling that culture. That's when he learned about what he calls 'wannabes' – people who desire to be disabled."  
<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jun/09/entertainment/et-weekmovie9>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## MEDICAL

**Cognitive behaviour therapy effective in treating chronic fatigue syndrome** – (*NewsMedical.net*). "Cognitive behaviour therapy is effective in treating the symptoms of chronic fatigue syndrome, according to a recent systematic review carried out by Cochrane Researchers. Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is a potentially long-lasting illness that can cause considerable distress and disability. Some estimates suggest it may affect as many as 1 in 100 of the population globally. There is no widely accepted explanation for the disease and patients are currently offered a variety of different treatments. Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) uses psychological techniques to balance negative thoughts that may impair recovery with more realistic alternatives. In treating CFS, these techniques are combined with a gradual increase in activity levels."  
<http://www.news-medical.net/?id=40036>

**FDA Approves Diaphragm-Pacing Device** – "The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today announced that it approved the NeuRx DPS RA/4 Respiratory Stimulation System, an implantable electronic device that stimulates the diaphragm and allows certain spinal cord injury patients to breathe for at least four hours a day without a mechanical ventilator. Spinal cord injuries can cause paralysis, which can impact the muscles of the chest and abdomen, including the diaphragm-the lower abdominal muscle essential for breathing. Normally, a

person inhales when the diaphragm contracts and the lungs expand with air-a person exhales when the diaphragm relaxes and the air flows back out of the lungs."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=6&list=1779>

**How best to treat chronic pain? The jury is still out** – (*NewsMedical.net*). "How best to alleviate chronic pain, a leading cause of disability and employee absenteeism, continues to perplex both patients and their doctors. A review of recent studies on pain medicine appearing in the June 2008 issue of the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* reports that while various approaches and combinations of therapies to treat pain have advantages and disadvantages, researchers don't yet know how to determine which is best for individual patients."

<http://www.news-medical.net/?id=38975>

**Nanotech Treatment Shows Promise against Spinal Cord Injury in Mice** – by Daniel Stimson, Ph.D – "Several experimental treatments for spinal cord injury involve a relatively simple idea: implant a 'scaffold' at the site of the injury to support the regrowth of severed connections. Unfortunately, many kinds of scaffolds - from pieces of living nerve tissue to artificial polymers - have been tested in animal models of spinal cord injury, and they tend to produce disappointing results. Typically, damaged nerve cells will grow into a scaffold, but then fail to extend through it and beyond, where new connections could truly improve functional outcomes. In a study reported in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, scientists describe a new kind of polymer scaffold, designed using nanotechnology. They show that the polymer stimulates axons - the nerve cell extensions that run up and down the spinal cord - to regrow all the way across a spinal injury. In mice, a single injection of the polymer given one day after a spinal cord injury led to functional improvements that would be 'life-changing' in humans, said John Kessler, M.D., the study's senior investigator and the chairman of neurology at Northwestern University in Chicago."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=6&list=1758>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## **POLICY/RESEARCH**

**ACOSS submission to the Minister for Employment Participation and Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services National mental health and disability employment strategy Australian Council of Social Services** – (*Australian Council of Social Services*). "ACOSS's submission to Ministers on the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy deals with the causes of poor employment outcomes for people with disabilities (less than 40% of people with disabilities are employed with little progress made over the last 15 years) and policy recommendations to improve them including reform of social security payments, a workplace adjustment package, and action to prevent people with disabilities from becoming jobless long term. It argues that the problem has been defined too narrowly in the past as reliance on disability pensions and that Welfare to Work policies that shifted people to lower payments have led to greater financial hardship without resolving the underlying problems."

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=221222](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=221222)

[http://www.acoss.org.au/upload/publications/submissions/4571\\_acoss%20disability%20employment%20sub-final.pdf](http://www.acoss.org.au/upload/publications/submissions/4571_acoss%20disability%20employment%20sub-final.pdf) (Report)

**Disability support and services in Australia** – by Janet Phillips (*Information and Research Services, Parliamentary Library*). "Commonwealth, state and territory governments share the responsibility for providing disability support services in Australia. Governments also provide a range of mainstream services that indirectly impact on people with disabilities, for example, various health programs. This mix of mainstream and disability-specific services at the local and federal level makes it difficult to get a clear picture of disability support, funding and services across the country. This Background Note provides an overview of government provided disability support and services in Australia."  
[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=217401](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=217401)  
<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/BN/2007-08/DisabilitySupportServicesAustralia.htm>  
(Report)

**European Research Agendas for Disability Equality (EuRADE)** – "The EuRADE project is funded by a grant from the EU Framework 7 'Science in Society' programme and is a collaboration between the European Disability Forum (EDF), the University of Leeds and the University of Maastricht (Netherlands). The principal academic researchers are Professors Mark Priestley (Leeds) and Lisa Waddington (Maastricht). The purpose of the project is to build the capacity of European disabled people's organisations for participation in the Framework 7 research programme and other relevant initiatives."  
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/projects/eurade/index.htm>

**It's about ability** – (*UNICEF and Victor Pineda Foundation*). "This publication explains the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to children. Its main purpose is to empower children, with and without disabilities, to play their part in challenging discrimination and promoting the Convention's principles."  
[http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrsrcs\\_crru\\_full.shtml?x=118060&AA\\_EX\\_Session=5669c6490fdbd4c7984f4a8ee94d2506](http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrsrcs_crru_full.shtml?x=118060&AA_EX_Session=5669c6490fdbd4c7984f4a8ee94d2506)  
[http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Its\\_About\\_Ability\\_final\\_.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Its_About_Ability_final_.pdf) (Report)

**Journal Of Disability Culture And Literature** – (*Heath*). "'Breath & Shadow' is a monthly journal of disability culture and literature. A project of AbilityMaine, 'Breath & Shadow' is the only online literary journal with a focus on disability. It is also unique in being the sole cross-disability literature and culture magazine written and edited entirely by people with disabilities. In 'Breath & Shadow' you will find poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, drama, and other writing that examines the human experience of living with disability."  
<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/934>

**Maths disability more common than dyslexia** – by Richard Gray (*The Telegraph*). "A learning disability that leaves sufferers unable to understand mathematical symbols affects up to six per cent of children, according to a leading neuroscientist. Dyscalculia, the mathematical equivalent of dyslexia, is more common than its literacy counterpart, which affects between 2.5 per cent and 4.3 per cent of children. Professor Brian Butterworth, who conducted the new study on dyscalculia, believes the condition does not receive enough attention from teachers and education authorities. He said that sufferers need special teaching in a similar way to dyslexia."  
[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?view=DETAILS&grid=&xml=/earth/2008/06/07/sci\\_dyscalc107.xml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?view=DETAILS&grid=&xml=/earth/2008/06/07/sci_dyscalc107.xml)

**Research/ Intellectual Disabilities: Resource Allocation and the Supports Intensity Scale: Four Papers and Approaches** – (Heath). "New research is published on the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) assessment tool developed by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). The research focuses on four major areas: Resource Allocation, Individualized Service Planning, Reliability and Psychometric properties, and International implementation, and is published at [www.siswebsite.org](http://www.siswebsite.org) in the form of four White Papers in PDF format edited by SIS authors, Robert L. Schalock, Marc J. Tassé, and James R. Thompson. The title of each White Paper and the individual URLs to the PDFs are below. Visit these web links below and post your comments on the discussion board associated with each of these White Papers. Knowledge is cumulative, so the more you share, the more we learn about best practices in using the Supports Intensity Scale!"  
<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/940>

**The nature and impact of caring for family members with a disability in Australia** – by Ben Edwards, Daryl J. Higgins, Matthew Gray, Norbert Zmijewski and Marcia Kingston (*Australian Institute of Family Studies*). "It is estimated that in 2003 there were 474,600 primary carers providing care to a person because of disability or old age. In coming decades, as the Australian population ages, the number of carers is projected to increase. Despite the large number of carers in Australia and the likely increase in their numbers, relatively little is known about the impact upon families of providing care."  
[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=217897](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=217897)  
<http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/resreport16/main.html> (Report)

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## REHABILITATION

**Aquatic Exercise for Children with Cerebral Palsy** – (NCPAD). Abstract written by: Nekram Upadhyay Kelly. "This article reviews the research and developing theories that encourage therapists to consider water-based exercise rather than land-based exercise for children with cerebral palsy (CP). Over the years, much research has been conducted on improving overall health of children with CP. Most of this research has stressed developing land-based aerobic and progressive resistance exercise for non-ambulatory children with CP. The results achieved from these studies have shown significant increases in muscle strength as well as walking speed, wheelchair endurance, physical appearance, and gross motor functions."  
[http://www.ncpad.org/yourwrites/fact\\_sheet.php?sheet=628](http://www.ncpad.org/yourwrites/fact_sheet.php?sheet=628)

**Focus On Independence Program Offers Vision Correction Surgery to Quadriplegic Patients** – "Refractive Surgeons Robert K. Maloney and Daniel Durrie have teamed up to help launch a national program, called Focus on Independence, in which eye surgeons provide LASIK or vision correction surgery at no charge to quadriplegics. This program was recently highlighted in *New Mobility*, a publication for the physically disabled. According to Dr. Maloney, 'For many people glasses are a real nuisance, but to quadriplegics glasses are an actual disability. With the Focus On Independence program, we aim to make day-to-day life a little bit easier for these patients.' The Focus On Independence program is intended for patients over the age of 18, who have suffered a traumatic spinal cord injury and have lost the

use of their hands and/or arms, making it difficult or impossible to put on or take off their glasses without assistance."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=6&list=1015>

**Getting Equipment Gets Harder** – by Tim Gilmer (*NewMobility*). "Wheelchair users in the United States are finding out that getting the durable medical equipment they need — and getting it when they need it — is getting harder and costlier. Restrictive documentation policies as well as outdated 'in-the-home' language that governs claims decisions in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are creating hassles for DME dealers and consumers. What's worse, power wheelchair reimbursements made by Medicare — already reduced by 27 percent in January 2007, will be reduced by another 19 percent on July 1 due to Medicare's national competitive bidding program. Since private insurance companies follow CMS' lead, these new policies portend a growing nightmare of denials, delays, red tape, and economic hardship for DME dealers and end users alike."

<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11187>

**Virtual Reality - New Steps in Stroke Rehabilitation** – (*brainblogger.com*). "Cerebrovascular accident (CVA or stroke) is one of the leading causes of death and disability in the USA; each year about 700,000 people sustain a stroke across the country. Based on the location and size of the lesion, there may be severe and permanent loss of function. The most significant residual effects of a CVA are related to paralysis (hemiplegia), speech disabilities (apraxia, aphasia), and neglect of the affected side. Unilateral neglect is a condition where the patient is unable to identify or respond to any sensory on the affected side of the body; and is more common is a right-sided CVA."

<http://brainblogger.com/2008/07/19/virtual-reality-new-steps-in-stroke-rehabilitation/>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## SELF-HELP

**Fibromyalgia Disability Application Issues: How to Be Your Own Expert Medical Witness** – by Richard Podell, MD (*ImmuneSupport.com*). "For someone with Fibromyalgia, it's a difficult step to apply for disability. That's true here in New Jersey and throughout the country. How upsetting it then feels if an insurance company representative appears not to believe that you are actually very ill. But don't be put off. You can improve your Fibromyalgia disability claim, if you imagine yourself in the insurance examiner's place."

<http://www.immunesupport.com/library/showarticle.cfm/ID/8941>

**New Online Disaster Preparedness Resource for People with Disabilities** – "A new Web site, [www.disability911.com](http://www.disability911.com), has been launched by Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) to help people with disabilities prepare for the 2008 hurricane season in the event they have to leave their homes or shelter in place. The hurricane season runs from the beginning of June through the end of November. The Web site includes hurricane planning tips for people with disabilities, their family members, and caregivers, as well as information for emergency planning and response officials."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=1786>

**Popular Website *Disabled World* Opens New Disability Community** – (prweb). "On-line community for persons with disabilities, Disabled World, announced today the opening of their new on-line community for people with disabilities and health problems. The Disabled World website was first opened in 2004 when owners Ian and Lynn Langtree, a husband and wife team, saw the need to provide people with disabilities a website where the disabled of all ages and from all walks of life could unite on common ground completely free from membership fees and charges, share experiences in the disability chat rooms, exchange information, and provide tips of assistance to the newly and life long disabled. Today Disabled World receives millions of visits per year from all parts of the world. The owners of Disabled World, Ian and Lynn Langtree, are excited about the new addition to their very popular website. Ian, originally from Darwin Australia, now resides in Montreal Canada. Speaking from their Montreal office Ian explained the benefits of a community area where people with similar disabilities can meet and discuss health problems that only fellow sufferers could understand."  
<http://www.prweb.com/releases/disabilities/community/prweb1091934.htm>

**Second Life: Disability charity sets up virtual advice service** – by Quin Parker (*The Guardian*). "A charity that helps the parents of disabled children contact each other and access services has set up an office in the virtual world of Second Life. The charity, [Contact a Family](#), is using government funding to create the digital office to support its work giving parents information and mutual support."  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jun/10/secondlife.disability>

**Toy Industry Foundation Offers Recommendations and Assistance to Those Selecting Toys for Children with Special Needs** – (AFB). "The Toy Industry Foundation (TIF) is pleased to announce the revision of its publication Let's Play: A Guide to Toys for Children with Special Needs. With support from the Toy Industry Association and its members, TIF partnered with the Alliance for Technology Access (ATA) and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) to determine the best toys for children with all types of special needs including visual, physical, and hearing impairments, learning disabilities, and developmental disorders. Toys included in the Guide were tested by more than 100 'toy experts'—children with a variety of special needs—at ATA and AFB testing centers all over the country."  
<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=47&DocumentID=4204>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## SPORTS/RECREATION

**Adaptive cycles let disabled experience joy of biking** – by Elizabeth Shaw (*The Flint Journal*). "John Waterman was in his first year as a special education teacher in 1987 when a student's tragic cycling accident changed the course of his life as well as those of countless people with disabilities. The student was hit by a car while riding his bicycle home from school. The head injuries he suffered in the accident transformed what had been a mild cognitive impairment into a serious cognitive disability. 'What shocked me was the community reaction. Instead of talking about ways to increase safety, everyone just wanted people with disabilities to stop riding bikes,' said Waterman, 44. Waterman's own reaction was to jump headfirst into creating a safety training program for cyclists with special needs."  
[http://www.mlive.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2008/07/adaptive\\_cycles\\_let\\_disabled\\_e.html](http://www.mlive.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2008/07/adaptive_cycles_let_disabled_e.html)

**Bodies in Motion** – by Bob Vogel (*NewMobility*). "Golf has come to Disabilityville. Thanks to adaptive golf carts — properly called 'cars' in the industry — wheelers are now able to join the

ranks of rock stars and pro athletes who have become golf fanatics. Today's adaptive golf cars can traverse the entire course, including the greens. Tests show that adaptive golf car wheels do no damage to a well-drained green. On a pounds per square foot basis, adaptive golf cars exert less pressure than an average man's footprint."

<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11210>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## TECHNOLOGY

**Bionic hand wins top tech prize** – by Jonathan Fildes (*BBCNews*). "The world's most advanced, commercially available, bionic hand has clinched the UK's top engineering prize. The i-LIMB, a prosthetic device with five individually powered digits, beat three other finalists to win this year's MacRobert award. The technology has been fitted to more than 200 people, including US soldiers who lost limbs during the war in Iraq. The device started life in Scotland in 1963 as part of a project to help children affected by Thalidomide. The complex device finally went on sale in July 2007. It is produced by a company called Touch Bionics based in Mid Calder, Livingston."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7443866.stm#top>

**Don't Hold Your Tongue: New Assistive Technology Uses Tongue Movement to Control Computers, Wheelchairs** – "A new technology developed by engineers at the Georgia Institute of Technology allows people with severe disabilities to control their environments with their tongue. Called a tongue-drive system, this device was created with the help of standards for dental adhesives and wireless communications devices. The innovative technology relies upon small magnet implanted in the tongue; movement of the tongue is then detected by magnetic sensors attached to a headset or orthodontic brace. The sensor output signals are wirelessly transmitted to a portable computer, which can be carried on the user's clothing or wheelchair."

<http://news.thomasnet.com/companystory/547470>

**For Your Eyes Only: Custom Interfaces Make Computer Clicking Faster, Easier** – "Insert your key in the ignition of a luxury car and the seat and steering wheel will automatically adjust to preprogrammed body proportions. Stroll through the rooms of Bill Gates' mansion and each room will adjust its lighting, temperature and music to accommodate your personal preference. But open any computer program and you're largely subject to a design team's ideas about button sizes, fonts and layouts. Off-the-shelf designs are especially frustrating for the disabled, the elderly and anybody who has trouble controlling a mouse. A new approach to design, developed at the University of Washington, would put each person through a brief skills test and then generate a mathematically-based version of the user interface optimized for his or her vision and motor abilities. A paper describing the system, which for the first time offers an instantly customizable approach to user interfaces, was presented July 15 in Chicago at a meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence."

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080715152316.htm>

**Leaders in Assistive Technology** – "Ray Kurzweil was the principal developer of the first omni-font optical character recognition, the first print-to-speech reading machine for the blind, the

first CCD flat-bed scanner, the first text-to-speech synthesizer, the first music synthesizer capable of recreating the grand piano and other orchestral instruments, and the first commercially marketed large-vocabulary speech recognition. Ray has successfully founded and developed nine businesses in OCR, music synthesis, speech recognition, reading technology, virtual reality, financial investment, cybernetic art, and other areas of artificial intelligence. All of these technologies continue today as market leaders. Ray's Web site, [KurzweilAI.net](http://www.kurzweilAI.net), is a leading resource on artificial intelligence."

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

**Lotus Symphony 1 freely accessible to all** – "Lotus Symphony is the office productivity suite embedded into Lotus Notes. Lotus Notes is a product that is bought in large numbers by many enterprises. This means that Symphony has the full engineering excellence—reliability, usability, support and maintenance—that we expect of any enterprise product, especially one from IBM. The good news is that Lotus Symphony 1 is now available as an independent product that can be downloaded for free. This must make it an attractive option for anyone who needs a well engineered office product but does not want to pay a lot of money for it. Further because it is a brand new product and, as IBM has always been in the forefront of accessibility technology, you can be sure that it has been designed and tested with people with disabilities in mind."

<http://www.it-director.com/business/compliance/content.php?cid=10592>

**NUDGE: Strikefighter and Strong Arm Fishing Rod Holders – Achievable Concepts** – (*ncpad*). "Using standard fishing gear, the Strikefighter transfers the main work of pumping a fishing rod from the arms to the legs and hips. The work is done by shifting body weight from one foot to another or just slightly raising the leg to which the Strikefighter is attached. The Strikefighter holds your rod firmly so that you can reel one-handed. It works while lowering downrigger, standing, wading, trolling, baiting, striking, fighting, netting, and removing fish. It keeps the rod at your fingertips, giving sensitivity for bite detection."

<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=78&section=1169>

**Participation and Activity Limitation Survey: Assistive aids and devices for adults** – (*StatisticsCanada*). "Roughly 6 out of every 10 Canadian adults aged 15 and over with disabilities used or needed technical aids or specialized equipment to help them perform one or more daily activities in 2006. New data from the 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) show that just over 4.2 million people (16.6%) aged 15 and over had some form of disability. An estimated 2.7 million people, or about 63% of this total, used or needed technical aids or specialized equipment to help them perform one or more daily activities. Data showed that 61.3% of this population of 2.7 million had all the equipment they needed, that is, all their needs were met. About 28.9% used such equipment but needed more aids, while 9.9% had none of the equipment required."

<http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080603/d080603b.htm>

**Victor Reader Stream** – "The Stream is HumanWare's most portable, powerful DAISY/NISO and MP3 player. It is a hand-held (117 x 66 x 22mm) player using an SD flash memory card for storing content. It connects to computers as a USB device to transfer book and music files. The Stream also has an embedded text-to-speech capability to play text only or synchronized full text/full audio DAISY books, simple text and html files. Variable speed playback is

supported for all recorded and text formats. Other advanced DAISY features including Go To Page, Go To Heading, simple bookmarks, highlight bookmarks, and processing skippable elements. It also built-in voice recording capability for recording voice notes, audio bookmarks, etc."

<http://www.daisy.org/tools/tools.shtml?id=106>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## CONFERENCES

### (🌟 New Conferences)

- 🌟 **Internet Event - The RERC on Telerehabilitation - State of the Science Conference** – November 17-21, 2008 | Internet – "You are invited to join us each day for live, interactive sessions on current issues related to telerehabilitation. Each morning we'll host an on-line whitepaper presentation and open discussion with an invited panel of experts immediately following. Of course, your participation in these discussions is possible from the location of your choice via the World Wide Web."  
[http://www.rerctr.pitt.edu/RERC\\_TR\\_SOS/](http://www.rerctr.pitt.edu/RERC_TR_SOS/)

## CANADIAN

- 21st RI World Congress - Disability Rights and Social Participation: Ensuring a Society for All** – August 25-28, 2008 | Quebec City, Quebec. "The international community is facing a unique opportunity to drastically improve the living conditions of hundreds of millions of people with disabilities by implementing the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This treaty provides the framework for the development of good policies, actions and projects which can have a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities all over the world. People with disability, their family and friends, human rights advocates, experts, government representatives, service providers and civil society leaders from all over the world will gather in Quebec City, Canada from August 25-28, 2008, for the 21st RI World Congress to discuss key disability issues and build partnerships."  
<http://www.riquebec2008.org/>

- Third ICOH Conference on Psychosocial Factors at Work** – September 1-4, 2008. | Quebec City, Quebec. "The Third ICOH-WOPS international conference "Psychosocial Factors at Work: From Knowledge to Action" will take place in Québec City, September 1-4, 2008. The two first International ICOH Conferences on Psychosocial Factors at Work were held in Copenhagen in 1998 and in Japan in 2005. Both conferences were highly successful attracting more than 300 international researchers in the field. The 2008 conference will address four major themes: Preventive interventions; Disability management and Return to work; Psychological harassment at work; and Public policies on mental health at work. Papers will include mental health, musculoskeletal and cardiovascular diseases; quantitative and qualitative methodology. We hope that you will attend the Conference and it will be a pleasure to welcome you."  
<http://www.icoh-wops2008.com/Afficher.aspx?langue=en>

- 23rd year of the Canadian Seating & Mobility Conference** – September 24-26, 2008 | Toronto Ontario. "This year's program promises to offer an exciting and interesting variety of topics for

all of us who work in the area of assistive technology. The Conference program consists of educational workshops, paper and poster presentations as well as keynote speaker. Our theme this year is 'Life is a Highway ' and the Conference incorporates international speakers, issues and ideas to compliment the theme."

<http://www.csmc.ca/>

#### **Tenth International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility –**

October 13-15, 2008 | Halifax, Nova Scotia. "The ASSETS series of conferences is aimed at providing a technical forum for presenting and disseminating innovative research results that address the use of computing and information technologies to help persons with disabilities."

<http://www.sigaccess.org/assets08/>



**Guide Dog Users of Canada - 2008 Conference and AGM** – November 1, 2008 | Montreal, Quebec. "Guide Dog Users of Canada has historically held all of its annual general meetings in Toronto. This year, we would like to try something a little different, and to that end, our annual conference and general meeting will be held in Montreal."

<http://www.gduc.ca/en/about/agm/2008>

#### **The 3rd National Spinal Cord Injury Conference and the 16th Interurban Spinal Cord Injury Conference –**

November 6-8, 2008 | Toronto, Ontario. "Toronto Rehabilitation Institute is pleased to announce that the 3rd National Spinal Cord Injury Conference and the 16th Interurban Spinal Cord Injury Conference will be held as one national event on Spinal Cord Rehabilitation: Innovation, Impact and Future Directions at the Hilton Toronto Hotel on November 6, 7, 8, 2008. The conference will include a pre-course, plenary sessions, poster displays and concurrent workshops that are intended to promote collaboration and exchange among attendees in a variety of formats."

<http://www.torontorehab.com/education/scic08index.htm>



**NEADS Conference 2008 - "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow."** - November 14-16, 2008. | Ottawa, Ontario. "The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) is pleased to announce our 2008 national conference, "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow." It will take place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites from November 14-16, 2008. The conference will focus on solutions to drive change. This year's event will be an exciting opportunity for students, consumer advocates, service providers, employers and all others interested in exploring key issues of equal access to post-secondary education and employment for students and graduates with disabilities. We welcome delegates from across Canada and around the world. The 2008 conference is being organized by a Conference Planning Committee, comprised of NEADS board members and chaired by Agnes Tomkow, NEADS Alberta Representative. The 2008 conference will welcome guest speakers including Steven Fletcher, Member of Parliament and Sandi Bell, Canadian Human Rights Commissioner."

<http://www.neads.ca/conference2008/en/info.php>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## **U.S.**

**International Conference on Diverse Abilities & Innovative Supports 2008** – August 11-13, 2008 | Honolulu, Hawaii. – "This conference will take place August 11-13, 2008 in Honolulu, HI and is for family members, friends, professionals and people who have been labeled, segregated or otherwise marginalized because their abilities were different than other people's."

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

**Toward Culturally Responsive Disability Services: An International Conference** – October 6-7, 2008 | Niagara Falls, New York. Conference themes are:

- Cultural competency education and training (pre service and in service)
- Best practices in providing culturally responsive services in the disability and health services
- Acquiring and strengthening cultural competence through international experience
- Research on cultural competency

<http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/conference2008/index.html>



**The National Conference on Disability Inclusion and National Service: Acting Today to Shape the Future** - October 16-18, 2008 | Alexandria, Virginia. – "The National Conference on Disability Inclusion and National Service: Acting Today to Shape the Future, will take place October 16-18, 2008 at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria VA. This conference is designed to bring together key members for the national service network and the disability community to focus on issues related to the actively engaging people with disabilities in national service and community volunteerism. It is anticipated that this conference will draw more than 500 individuals from across the country. This opportunity will allow you to share information about your organization and connect with agencies with similar interests and goals."

[http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=ncd\\_ex\\_op](http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=ncd_ex_op)

**IDA 59th Annual Conference** – October 29-November 1, 2008 | Seattle, Washington. "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/AnnualConference.htm>



**11th Annual Accessing Higher Ground - Accessible Media, Web and Technology Conference** - November 11- 14, 2008 | Boulder, Colorado. "Disability Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder presents Accessing Higher Ground: Accessible Media, Web and Technology Conference for Education, for Businesses, for Web and Media Designers Accessing Higher Ground focuses on the implementation and benefits of Assistive Technology in the university and college setting for people with sensory, physical and learning disabilities. Other topics include legal and policy issues, including ADA and 508 compliance, and making campus media and information resources - including Web pages and library resources – accessible."

<http://www.colorado.edu/ATconference/>

- ✿ **The Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs (NATTAP) - Second Annual International Autism Training and Technical Assistance Conference** – November 19-21, 2008 | Columbus, Ohio. "The 2nd annual NATTAP Conference will gather educators, service providers and parents from across the United States and from around the globe. The objectives of the conference are to review current systems models for addressing the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), promote use of best practice in research and intervention and provide methods for capacity building – all of which contribute to the ultimate goal of improving outcomes for individuals ages 3-21. The 2008 NATTAP Conference will provide a forum for the continued exchange of ideas and promising practices that will provide common solutions to the common problems in ASD."

[http://www.nattapconference.org/view.php?nav\\_id=1](http://www.nattapconference.org/view.php?nav_id=1)

- ✿ **Assistive Technology: Improving Lives Daily - A conference for people with disabilities, families and professionals** – November 20, 2008 | Warwick, Rhode Island. "Assistive technology can play a critical role in the life of a person with a disability. A wide range of presentations and an exhibit hall offering product demonstrations and information will provide conference participants with the opportunity to learn what a powerful impact assistive technology can have in improving the lives of people with disabilities."

<http://www.techaccess-ri.org/Conferences/2008/2008Conf.html>

**Technology, Reading & Learning Diversity 2009** – January 22-24 2009 | San Francisco, California. "The mission of TRLD 2009 is "Opening Doors to Universal Learning." Universal Learning embodies the idea of equitable and flexible access to concepts and ideas for all students, all people. The digital age we live in creates a level playing field and multiple opportunities for all learners to achieve."

<http://www.trld.com/about/mission/index.html>

**ATIA 2009** – January 28-31, 2009 | Orlando, Florida. "The ATIA Conference serves as a leading conference for the Assistive Technology community offering attendees the opportunity to participate in discussions with industry experts, learn about new technologies, best practices, and a host of specialized services. Assistive Technology products and technologies will be represented in various presentations, demonstrations and/or exhibits. In addition, hands-on labs will provide an opportunity to experiment with and evaluate the latest assistive technology devices and software."

<http://www.atia.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3280>

[Back to Contents Page](#)

## OVERSEAS

**Disability Studies Conference** – September 2-4, 2008 | Lancaster University, United Kingdom. "The fourth international disability studies conference will take place at Lancaster University, UK. The purpose of the conference is to bring together researchers, practitioners, policy makers and activists to share and debate research, ideas and developments in disability studies. A call for papers and posters will be issued in January 2008. The closing date for abstracts will be 30th April. Submissions are particularly welcomed from students, activists

and first time presenters, activists and first time presenters. We seek to provide a supportive environment for people making their first conference presentations and to be as accessible as possible to all delegates."

<http://www.disabilitystudies.net/?content=3>

#### **7th ICDVRAT - International Conference Series On Disability, Virtual Reality And**

**Associated Technologies** – September 8-11, 2008 | Maia & Porto, Portugal. "For 2008, ICDVRAT and ArtAbilitation will be held as an integrated conference between 8-10 September at the Forum Maia and will conclude with a special session on the 11th September at the Casa da Musica. See Programme Overview and Call for Papers links for details."

<http://www.icdvrat.reading.ac.uk/>

#### **4th International Forum on Disability Management** - September 22-24 2008 | Berlin, Germany.

"The professional performance of employees is the engine of a healthy society. Maintaining this capacity to work is the goal of disability management. Valuable knowledge remains in companies, people maintain their standard of living and social systems are unburdened. The International Forum on Disability Management has developed into a movement that spans continents, and new alliances have been formed. The people who meet at these gatherings are making a difference, tearing down walls between the concerned persons and developing cross-border return-to-work strategies. Disability managers from throughout the world exchange experiences and can learn from each other."

<http://www.disability-manager.de/e/ifdm2008/index.html>

#### **AAATE Seminar 2008 Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice** – September 25-26, 2008 | Milano, Italy.

"Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for evidence of the cost-effectiveness of assistive technologies. Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services – within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved effective within the rehabilitation programme, useful for the client, and efficient in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organisations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion."

[http://www.aaate.net/uploaded/81/aaate\\_workshop\\_2008\\_draft\\_programme.doc](http://www.aaate.net/uploaded/81/aaate_workshop_2008_draft_programme.doc)



#### **Adaptive Content Processing Conference 2008** – November 6-7, 2008 | Amsterdam,

Netherlands – "We are delighted to invite you to the ACP '08 Conference to be held in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam on 6/7th November 2008. The conference is jointly hosted by the EUAIN Network, the ProAccess Project and the Federation of Dutch Publishers and is held as part of the Amsterdam World Book Capital celebrations. New technologies are changing the way in which we create, produce and consume content. Over the last few years, the publishing industry in Europe and beyond has been active in responding to the growing demand for more accessible, adaptive content. The publication of the recent green paper on Copyright in the Knowledge Economy demonstrates the central role of these issues."

<http://www.euain.org/?q=node/10>

**19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics** – July 5-9, 2009 | Paris, France.

"Every four years, the World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics represents a unique and irreplaceable event attended by experts from around the world to discuss the latest findings in the field of ageing. The 19th congress, which is taking place in Paris in 2009, is particularly important, as it coincides with an ideological u-turn. Lifespan extension and the growing number of elderly people, once considered as catastrophic, are now viewed as an indisputable progress."

<http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/site/view8.php>

[Back to Contents Page](#)