



National Network

Information, Guidance, and Training on the
Americans with Disabilities Act

2016 PROFILE



1-800-949-4232

www.adata.org



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This report provides an overview of the ADA National Network and information about the activities of each of the ten ADA Regional Centers.

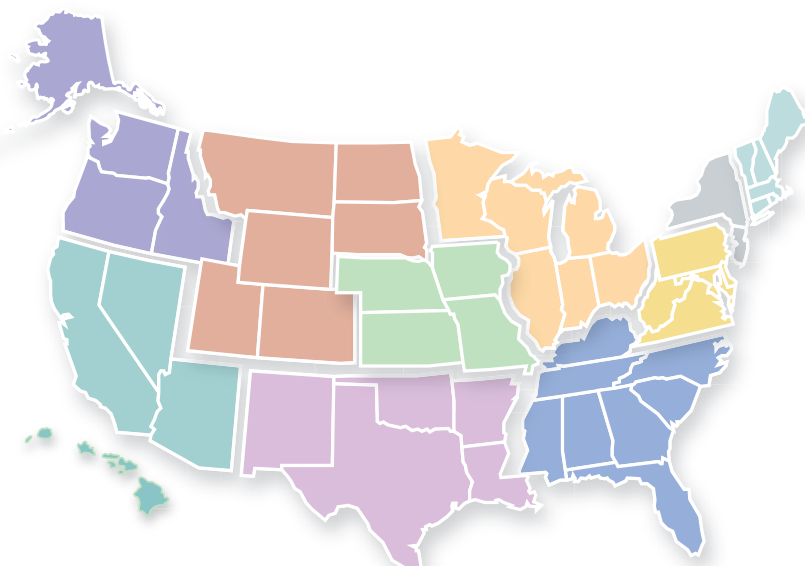
About the ADA National Network

The ADA National Network provides information, guidance and training on how to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in order to support the mission of the ADA to “assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”

Funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, the network consists of ten Regional ADA Centers located throughout the United States and an ADA Knowledge Translation Center.

Each Regional ADA Center focuses on its region’s unique needs. This regional focus is critical to ensuring that ADA National Network services meet the needs of a diversity of populations and stakeholders throughout the country.

Over 56 million people in the United States have a disability.*



What is the ADA?

The ADA is the first comprehensive civil rights act for people with disabilities. It was passed by Congress and signed into law by President George H. W. Bush on July 26, 1990. The ADA protects people with disabilities from discrimination in all aspects of employment, in access to public programs and services such as transportation, and in access to public places like businesses, restaurants, stores, hotels, places of entertainment, and other service establishments.

* The Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2010. See www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p70-131.pdf

Why is the ADA Important?

The ADA has empowered people with disabilities by banning discrimination on the basis of their disability and by making it possible for them to participate more inclusively in their communities.

Although there have been significant changes since the ADA was passed in 1990, people with disabilities continue to encounter barriers that affect their ability to live, work, and recreate freely in their communities.

Whom does the ADA National Network Serve?

Since the ADA National Network was started in 1991, it has served all sectors of society, including those with responsibilities under the ADA such as businesses, employers, state and local governments, architects, disability organizations and individuals with disabilities whose rights are protected under the ADA.

What services are provided by the National Network?

Information and Guidance from an ADA Specialist

ADA specialists in each of the ten Regional ADA Centers provide individualized information and guidance to anyone requesting ADA information through 1-800 calls, emails, and in-person consultations.

ADA specialists address complex questions on a wide range of ADA topics such as reasonable accommodations at work, building codes for construction projects, accessible housing, service animals, and accessible communication.

ADA specialists also address questions about other disability laws such as the:

- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act;
- Rehabilitation Act.

Providing Useful and Accurate ADA Information

In collaboration with the ADAKTC, Regional ADA Centers develop evidence-based factsheets and guidebooks on high priority and timely ADA topics such as service animals, effective communication, accessible parking, and how to plan accessible events.

ADA Centers also develop and provide information specific to their state laws and regulations, and offer an extensive network of regional referrals.

Over 250,000 people are directly served by the ADA National Network each year.

Training and Outreach

The ADA National Network offers a variety of training, from basic to advanced, on all ADA topics such as:

- Accessible information technology and assistive technology;
- ADA and education (pre-K through post-secondary);
- Accessible architectural design;
- ADA and employment;
- Accessible health care;
- Emergency preparedness;
- ADA and hospitality.

Training is provided in-person or through distance technology such as webinars, podcasts and web courses.

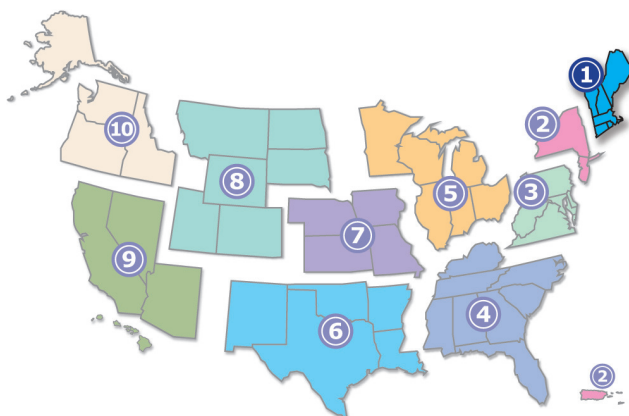
The majority of training activities are conducted at the local, state or regional level and are tailored to meet the needs of each specific audience.



**To contact an ADA specialist, call the toll free number
1-800-949-4232.**

Region 1 New England ADA Center

www.newenglandada.org



The New England ADA Center serves Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

The New England ADA Center is located in Boston at the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). Our work uniquely balances expertise in legally required accessibility and best practices in human-centered design.

Architectural Accessibility Web Course

This new free web course is available 24/7 and introduces an overview of four major federal laws that require accessibility in new construction or alterations:

- 1) the ADA;
- 2) the Architectural Barriers Act;
- 3) the Fair Housing Act;
- 4) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

At the end of the course, participants are able to determine which laws apply to different projects.

For more information, visit
<http://learn.newenglandada.org/>

"Excellent overview web course! I wish someone had shown this to me when I was hired three years ago. I will recommend to my boss that this course be part of training for new employees." (Participant)

The ADA Field-Based Training Day for Cities and Towns

This hands-on training puts the power of accessibility into the hands of citizens!

Training participants learned how to use the ADA Checklist to conduct an accessibility review of a facility of their choice. Participants also identified short, intermediate and long term barriers to accessibility.

Participating municipalities receive \$1,000 towards improving accessibility of the facility.

To read about a town that participated in the field-based training and has started implementing changes, visit
<http://NewEnglandADA.org/blog>



The 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

A hallmark example of our dissemination activities was the multi-layered, multimedia one-day event on the Boston Common that informed the public about the 25-year anniversary celebration of the ADA. We took the leadership role in the coordination, cooperation and collaboration of over 33 disability organizations and individual Massachusetts stakeholders in the planning and the implementing of this grassroots celebration. The day kicked off with 800 marchers and realized the effectiveness of our dissemination activities when 2,000 people, 45 exhibitors, the Attorney General of Massachusetts, the Lieutenant Governor along with grass roots leaders came to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the ADA on the Boston Common!

Watch a video of the highlights at <http://www.newenglandada.org/ada25boston>

The 25th Anniversary of the ADA Celebration on Boston Common, July 22, 2015

Radio Public Service Announcements on the ADA

Americans with visual and print disabilities can now listen to two-minute Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) covering topics such as the ADA and service animals, inaccessible websites, and voting.

These PSAs are aired on the Talking Information Center Radio Show (TICNetwork.org), and can also be heard on the New England ADA Center's website (NewEnglandADA.org/audio).



An Empowering Tool Now in the Hands of Cities and Towns: The ADA Checklist!

Cash strapped cities and towns throughout New England are taking accessibility into their own hands with the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities.

The checklist is a popular, easy-to-use tool for surveying the accessibility of facilities such as:

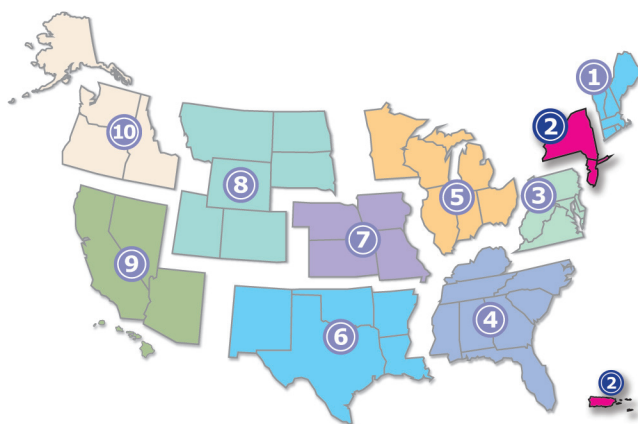
- town halls;
- libraries;
- and recreation areas.

Based on the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design, the checklist can be found at ADAChecklist.org.



Region 2 Northeast ADA Center

www.northeastada.org



The Northeast ADA Center serves New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Northeast ADA Center is housed in the K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability, at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in Ithaca, New York. We work closely with partners and affiliates to address the diverse and varied cultural, economic and informational needs of the stakeholders across our region.

Empowering Individuals through the ADA Trainer Network

The Northeast ADA Center's ADA Trainer Network (TN) is a capacity-building initiative aimed at helping TN members implement the ADA in their local communities. Our more than 125 active members come from all walks of life; they are professionals, disability service providers, individuals with disabilities and allies. TN members who attend orientation training receive access to an expertly designed and easy-to-use curriculum that they can use to deliver trainings in their communities.

The goal of this training is to:

- Equip TN members with current, relevant information about the ADA and disability inclusiveness;
- Prepare TN members to present this information in a manner that fosters change and collaboration;
- Link TN members with others who can partner in bringing about change;
- Engage TN members in a process of continual environmental scanning to identify emerging needs.

Nearly 90 percent of surveyed members agree that TN membership has provided professional development opportunities that have prepared them to be a key resource for ADA and disability-related issues in their local communities.

- A counselor at the University of Puerto Rico said the network materials "have helped me guide the faculty as well as my students, their parents, and the employees of my institution."

- A Community Outreach Coordinator with a Center for Independent Living in New Jersey reported that volunteers and staff of a local performing arts center received “information to gain understanding about people with disabilities that enter into places of business and how to properly serve them” and “the need and importance of attitudinal barriers and how to overcome them.”
- The Territorial Executive Director of the Virgin Island Developmental Disability Council said the TN has encouraged the “development of a collaborative partnership with nonprofits that represents the consumer and the public transit system.” As a result, public transit drivers have received “driver training to sensitize them to the needs of their consumers, particularly those with disabilities and/or mental illness.”

Advancing Organizations through Training and Education

In addition to our monthly webinars and on-demand trainings, the Northeast ADA Center provided 15 in-person trainings to over six hundred New York City Board of Elections employees. The trainings covered ADA requirements affecting polling place workers on election day, including physical accessibility requirements for polling locations and effective and respectful communication techniques.

One employee reported having “become more cognizant of what structural changes need to already be in place or modified . . . to make the voting process more inclusive

to people with disabilities.” A legal professional stated, “the physical location of my workplace will now look to maintain the premises to ensure compliance from transient barriers.”

An ADA coordinator said, “we are currently making all our 1,240 poll sites accessible.”

Putting the ADA to Work with the Just-In-Time Toolkit for Managers

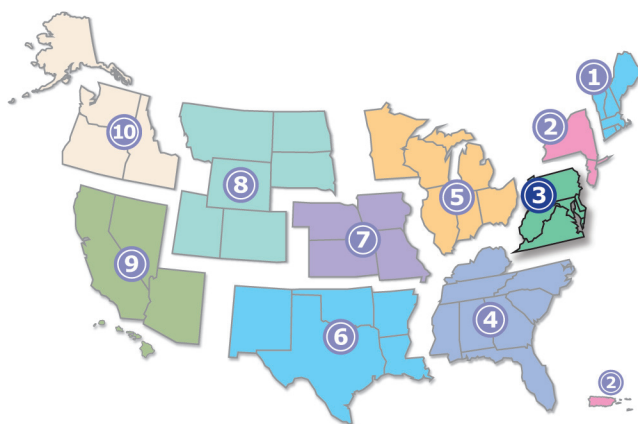
The Northeast ADA Center, in partnership with the ADANN, developed, implemented, and is currently evaluating the Just-in-Time (JIT) Toolkit. JIT enables employers to more fully implement the ADA and inclusive practices within their organizations. It is designed to educate mid-level managers and supervisors about how to better manage and include individuals with disabilities in their organizations.

As of January 2016, we have fully implemented the JIT within fourteen organizations, including four government agencies and 10 private sector companies, many of whom are federal contractors. A multi-national electronics company manager stated, “It is the front line managers who make or break the culture within an organization around disability with the first conversation they have with an employee who may have a disability.”

By educating managers, employers hope to create a culture that is truly accepting of all types of diversity, as well as an “always available” resource on company policies and practices for managers.

Region 3 Mid-Atlantic ADA Center

www.adainfo.org



The Mid-Atlantic ADA Center serves Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

The 25th Anniversary of the ADA

The Mid-Atlantic and Southeast ADA Centers took the lead on promoting the anniversary and the pledge drive nationally. Almost 9,000 entities (individuals, businesses and non-profits, and state and local governments) signed the pledge to recommit to the ADA goals (visit <http://adaanniversary.org/pledgeon>).

The Center developed an ADA timeline display for anniversary events around the Mid-Atlantic region (<http://adata.org/ada-timeline>).

Hospitality

The Mid-Atlantic ADA Center created two new resources to enhance customer service and the accessibility of meetings, events and conferences. A 20 minute film titled "At Your Service" features individuals with disabilities discussing how they would like to be treated as customers. The film and short preview are available in English, Spanish, captioned and audio described versions.



The Accessible Meetings, Events and Conferences Guide is a free online tool that describes requirements and best practices to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities at meetings and events.

Both resources are available on ADAinfo.org and <http://www.adahospitality.org/>

Training

The Mid-Atlantic ADA Center provided in-person trainings for several groups in the region, including One Stop Centers in Virginia, the Virginia Independent Living Conference, the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disabilities Conference, ADA coordinators in the state of Maryland, and the ADA Leadership Network. The greatest demand was for training on an overview of the ADA, Title II, and disability awareness.

The Center attracted national audiences with its “ADA In Focus” webinar series that. The most popular sessions included “Strategies for Effective Interaction with People with Intellectual Disabilities” and “Effective Practices for Employment Preparation and Support for Youth with Disabilities.”

In June, the Center hosted a one-day conference called “ADA In Focus Pennsylvania” in Harrisburg. The conference drew 130 participants including state and local government employees, educators, and consumer advocates. Highlights included a plenary panel session featuring representatives from Federal agencies and a keynote address by C. Scott Wyatt of Carnegie-Mellon University. There were 12 breakout sessions on employment, access and design, Title II, and education.

Community Networks

The Mid-Atlantic ADA Center expanded outreach in communities around the region by providing training, resources and networking opportunities to targeted groups. The Community Partners Network includes advocates and others who are active in their communities in sharing information about the ADA. The Title II Network consists of ADA coordinators and others in state and local government who work to ensure implementation of the ADA. Two new networks are the Corrections and Law Enforcement Network and the Transit Network, whose members share unique concerns in implementing the ADA.

The Center’s ADA Leadership Network (ADA-LN) continued to expand in 2015. In 2015, 205 people from across the region

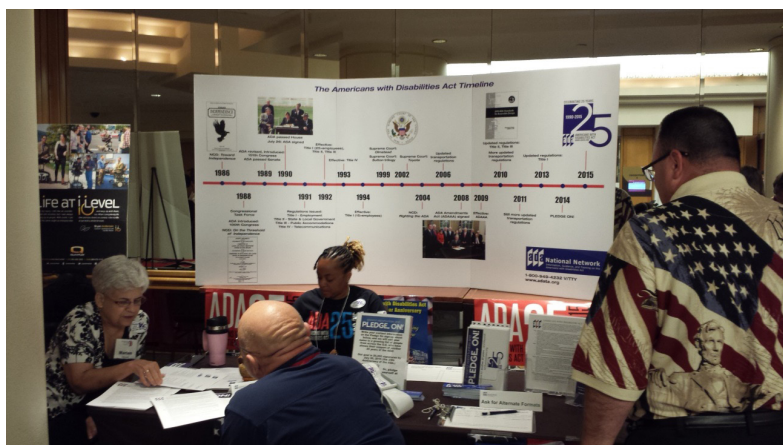
participated in ADA-LN two-day Train-the-Trainer Seminars.

These 205 trainers completed 40 in-person trainings,

reaching an additional 550 people. Each ADA-LN trainer has access to the Northeast ADA Center’s 50 module curriculum, training support and advice, networking through quarterly trainings and an email listserv, as well as additional incentives. Trainers are supported to attend the Mid-Atlantic ADA Update Conference each September to further enhance their knowledge of the ADA.

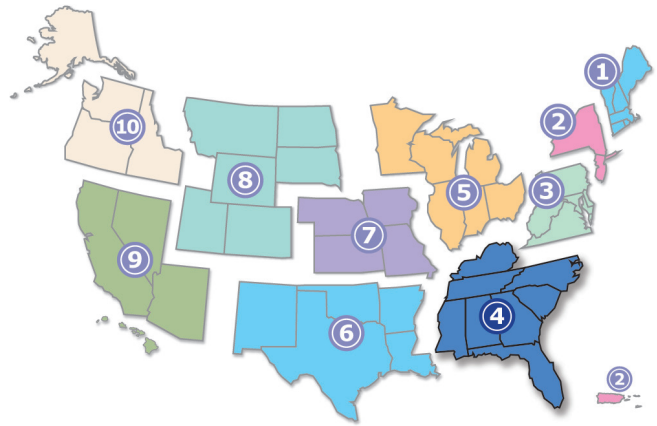
There were three ADA-LN Train-the-Trainer Seminars held in 2015. The second seminar was hosted by a major corporation, “corporate only”, and held March 31 - April 1. In August, the ADA-LN collaborated with Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to build their capacity to partner with employers by training their Business Service Representatives. These trainers plan to offer the ADA

and disability awareness training to businesses throughout Pennsylvania. In November, training was held for 15 new ADA-LN trainers.



Region 4 Southeast ADA Center

www.adasoutheast.org



The Southeast ADA Center serves Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Our region includes large urban centers, such as Atlanta and Miami, as well as the rural areas of northern Mississippi and eastern Kentucky. To meet the varied needs of stakeholders in this diverse region, the Southeast ADA Center funds an eight-state Affiliate Network to promote voluntary compliance with the ADA through outreach, training and dissemination of accurate ADA information. The Affiliate Network consists of state and local groups and organizations that represent the interests of individuals with disabilities and family members.

WADA ADA Live!

ADA Live!, the Center's internet-based radio station (www.blogtalkradio.com/wada-se), airs from 1:00 - 1:30 pm ET on the first Wednesday of each month. ADA Live! reaches an average of 700 listeners each month. Listeners can post questions and download



resources for each of the 27 shows to date at www.adalive.org, a fully accessible and interactive website.

ADA Training and Information

"ADA Basic Building Blocks" (www.adabasics.org), is one of four fully accessible online courses developed and maintained by the Southeast ADA Center for state and local governments in the region. Users include the City

of Jacksonville, Florida; New Mexico Department of Children, Youth and Families; Volusia County (FL) Division of Corrections; State of Alaska Department of Administration; and the South Florida Workforce.

In addition, Kansas Works and the Seminole County (FL) 911 use the online course, "At Your Service: Welcoming Customers with Disabilities" (www.wiawebcourse.org), for ongoing staff training.

Family Education

Parent to Parent (P2P) of Georgia is the Center's newest State affiliate. Its mission is supporting families and individuals with disabilities from birth to age 26.

In 2014, P2P collaborated with the Southeast ADA Center in the delivery of two webinars: "ADA Basics" (215 registered) and "Youth Transition to Employment" (161 registered).

Community Accessibility

Trained volunteers and staff from two state affiliates, Disability Rights and Resources (Alabama) and LIFE of Mississippi, have conducted nearly 250 ADA accessibility site surveys of local businesses and government facilities. In 2015, Disability Rights and Resources also surveyed accessible parking at Birmingham businesses. The most common problems were a lack of signage at parking spaces and failure to identify the closest accessible entrance. To date, 30 percent of the entities surveyed have voluntarily made accessibility changes.

Program Access

Two North Carolina state affiliates, the Alliance of Disability Advocates and the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities, worked with individuals with intellectual disabilities to create and pilot a publication called "The Leader's Guide: Starting the Conversation with A Business." This guide can help groups of individuals with disabilities successfully work with businesses to make one or two readily achievable accessibility changes. Tennessee and Mississippi affiliates have also piloted this tool. Surveyed sites are using this information to make changes.

Access to Voting

The Southeast ADA Center's Tennessee state affiliate, the Tennessee Disability Coalition, collaborated with the Tennessee Secretary of State and Disability Rights Tennessee to develop a video called "Accessible Elections for Tennessee Voters." It shows how to make the polling place and voting process accessible.

This resource is posted at: http://youtu.be/k_8Bc7RXYaw and at:

<http://www.tndisability.org/article/accessible-elections-tennessee-voters>.

The video was shown at the June 8, 2015 Annual Meeting of the Association of County Election Officials.

ADA Training for Veterans

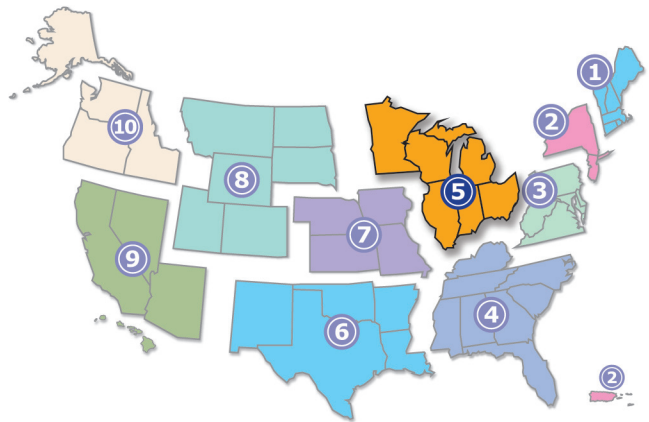
The southeastern region of the U.S. has 82 military bases and is home to nearly 30 percent of all veterans. Approximately 25 percent of the veterans from the current wars have a service-connected disability.

Two Center affiliates, MLM Associates, Inc. (KY) and Boley Centers, Inc. (FL), worked with military and veterans groups to identify the specific needs of this population and provide ADA information.

- MLM Associates trained National Guard troops at Fort Campbell, KY and developed the "Guide for Veterans: Know Your Employment Rights Under the ADA," available at adasoutheast.org/publications/ada/Employment_Rights_Under_ADA_Vets.pdf.
- Boley Centers, Inc. provided ADA and employment training for homeless veterans who are seeking jobs. Nearly three-quarters of the veterans who participated in the training are now successfully employed. Participants reported that "learning I did not have to reveal my disability" and "understanding what accommodation I could ask for" were key benefits from the trainings.

Region 5 Great Lakes ADA Center

www.adagreatlakes.org



The Great Lakes ADA Center serves Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

The Great Lakes ADA Center is a program of the Department of Disability and Human Development under the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Quality Indicators in Assistive Technology for Post-Secondary

The Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology in Post-Secondary (QIAT-PS) education gives institutions the ability to self-assess and more effectively direct their limited resources to increase the effectiveness of outcomes for students with disabilities. The QIAT-PS project offers tools and resources on quality implementation of assistive technology (AT) in the post-secondary educational environments. QIAT-PS is a collaborative effort of hundreds of professionals from a wide variety of higher education and K-12 schools and based on the successful implementations of AT indicators in K-12 public schools.

This project is sponsored in collaboration with the Southwest ADA Center with contributing partnership from the Easter Seals Arkansas, Adirondack Accessibility, and the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). For more info, go to www.qiat-ps.org.

Punch-in Project

Punch-in is an interactive website and social network for young adults with disabilities to navigate the Americans with Disabilities Act, assistive and accessible technology options, and groundwork skills necessary to find and keep employment. The site is fully accessible and features over 40 captioned videos, tutorials, and employment event opportunities. There is also a free, online moderated course under development.

This project is sponsored by our center with contributing partnership from employment and disability professionals in the Great Lakes ADA Center region and nationally. Formal collaborators include Niche Movement, MN Star Program, The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, PC Coaches, and University of Illinois Chicago Career Services.

For more information, go to www.punch-in.org.

ADA Case Law Database & Digest

Our center developed the ADA Case Law Database and Digest to cover significant and recent rulings under the Employment (Title I), Local and State Government (Title II) and Places of Public Accommodations (Title III) provisions of the ADA and make it easily accessible to the general public. The searchable database contains significant court cases, settlement agreements, and consent decrees that help interpret the ADA. The Digest features recent cases added to ADA Case Law Database each quarter. There are over 5,000 individual accounts established to date. For more information, go to www.adacaselaw.org.



ADA Audio Conference Series

The ADA Audio Conference Series is designed to support professional development of an individual, an entire department, or an entire agency that aims to increase knowledge and awareness of regulations and trends of the ADA.

Each audio conference is led by a leading expert in the topic area, is 90 minutes, and offered in multiple formats. Continuing education credits are also available upon request.

Recent conferences include:

- Disclosure of Disability under the ADA and its relationship to Section 503 Regulations;
- Implementing Olmstead: The Status of Enforcement Efforts.

For more information, go to www.ada-audio.org.

AccessibilityOnline

AccessibilityOnline is a series of webinars and audio conferences that are coordinated by the Great

Lakes ADA Center. The program represents a collaborative training program between the ADANN and the US Access Board.

Sessions are held on a monthly basis and cover a variety of topics concerning accessibility to the built environment, information and communication technologies, and transportation. Continuing education credit is offered to architects, engineers, planners and code officials. The sessions are recorded and archived to allow individuals to reference this information on an as-needed-basis. Examples of topics include:

- Accessible Hospital and Medical Facilities;
- Accessible Playground Surfaces.

For more information, go to www.accessibilityonline.org.

ADA Legal Webinar Series

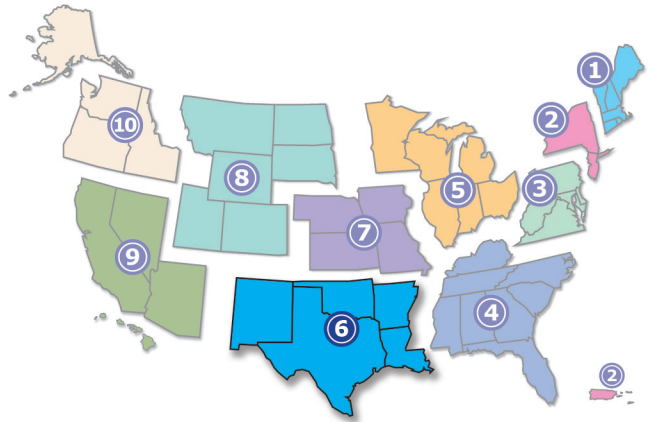
This program is designed for individuals who have a working knowledge of the ADA and are familiar with its basic elements. Sessions are intended to support continued learning and increase understanding of how the federal agencies and the courts are interpreting the law and subsequent regulations.

Legal experts synthesize the case law as it applies to different industries or specific elements of the law including employment, accessible technology and access to programs and services.

For more information, go to <http://www.ada-audio.org/Webinar/ADALegal/>.

Region 6 Southwest ADA Center

www.southwestada.org



The Southwest ADA Center serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Region 6 is diverse in climate and demographics, with large populations of ethnic minorities and people with disabilities dispersed throughout the five states in both urban and rural settings. Six of the 20 largest American cities are in region 6, and the region is heavily invested in the health care, energy and tourism industries.

Service Animals

The Southwest ADA Center's publication on service animals continues to garner substantial public attention. The guide currently ranks second among all pages on the ADA National Network website, with 56,180 views online between September 2014 and December 2015.

Attention to this issue remains high in Texas due to confusion over House Bill 489, "Bootz's Law," which drew national attention to common issues faced by returning veterans who own service animals for assistance with post-traumatic stress disorder.



Accessible Transportation

On October 14, 2015, Houston City Council approved the recommendations from the Houston Transportation Accessibility Task Force for implementing an accessible private transportation system in the city. The Southwest ADA Center provided extensive consultation and training to the task force, which

recommended that within three years transportation providers either adopt a minimum number of wheelchair accessible vehicles or an average response time of 20 minutes or less to provide an accessible transportation option.

The task force also recommended mandatory disability etiquette training and accessible point of sale terminals in vehicles.

Strengthening Regional Partnerships

On September 29, 2015, a leading disability expert and activist, Lex Frieden, served as a featured speaker during the grand opening plenary session titled “ADA 25: From Compliance to Competitive Advantage” during the US Business Leadership Network’s national conference in Austin, Texas.

Frieden and National Council on Disabilities Executive Director Rebecca Cokley discussed the Impact of the ADA 25 years later and about how accessibility offers businesses a key factor to compete in today’s markets.

The Southwest ADA Center continues to provide training and technical assistance to the:

- Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to ensure their clients receive information and resources regarding their employment civil rights;
- State vocational providers at the Lower Valley Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and EARN annual Employment and Rehabilitation Network (EARN) Forums in October.

Emergency Preparedness

Texas continues to serve as a hub for training on inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency preparedness. In August 2015, we partnered with Portlight Strategies Inc. and Texas and Houston government agencies to hold the “Getting It Right” conference on disaster preparedness in Houston. The two-day conference brought together over 100 government officials along with disability-stakeholders and related organizations throughout Texas to discuss pivotal issues in inclusive preparedness. The primary focus areas included emergency shelter access, effective communication strategies, service animal issues, and issues involving separation/segregation of persons with disabilities in disaster settings. With shelter access at the forefront of issues, the Southwest ADA Center partnered with legal advocates and the Texas State Bar Disability Issues Committee to produce a public service video titled *The Rights of People with Disabilities in Shelters and Transitional Housing*. The video provides practical guidance on the laws and rights of persons with disabilities in temporary shelter and transitional housing. The video is available at:

<https://youtu.be/ryiXbQsYkJK>.

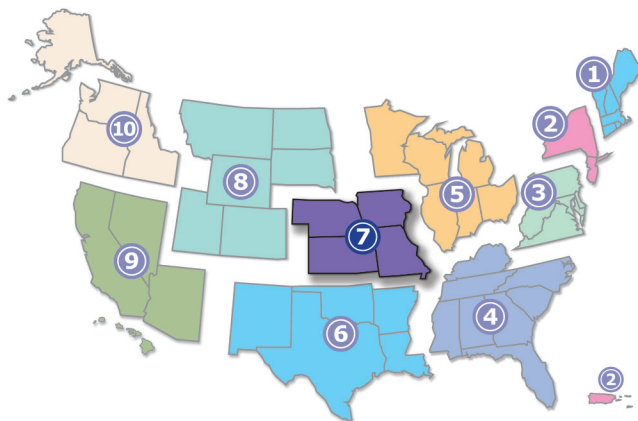
Training for Those Who Serve and Protect

National attention aimed at relations between law enforcement agencies and their communities remains at an all-time high. Our center worked with The Arc of Louisiana and Access to Justice to train a variety of law enforcement and legal professionals on issues such as wrongful arrest and understanding and dealing with persons who have intellectual or mental health impairments.

Additional disability specific fact sheets for criminal justice professionals are being added to the project website (www.idlr.org).

Region 7 Great Plains ADA Center

www.gpadacenter.org



The Great Plains ADA Center serves Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

The Great Plains (GP) ADA Center is part of the University of Missouri School of Human Environmental Sciences Architectural Studies Department. Our service region stretches over 1,000 miles and consists primarily of rural communities, but also includes the major urban areas of St. Louis, Kansas City Metro, Des Moines, Quad Cities, Omaha, and Wichita.

The GP ADA Center emphasizes capacity-building and ADA implementation strategies. Two main focus areas of our service efforts are:

1. Working with communities and businesses to appoint ADA Coordinators and to ensure these coordinators have access to adequate training, support, and resources, and
2. Providing trainings that bring together the disability community, state and local government officials, the design community, business personnel and educators.

ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program

The ADA Coordinator Training Certification Program (ACTCP) certifies that participants have completed quality training, which provides the knowledge base and tools necessary to be effective in the role of an ADA Coordinator.

The ACTCP provides five major services:

- Establishes a knowledge base essential to the role of an ADA Coordinator;
- Provides professional support to members;

- Verifies quality sources of training and content;
- Verifies completions of training credits (40 required);
- Provides an examination to demonstrate mastery of content.

Upon completion of the program requirements, participants receive certification for three years. Currently, 708 participants are working toward certification requirements and 140 individuals have received certification.

"Everyone who holds the title of ADA Coordinator needs to have at least a base set of knowledge.... They will be taken more seriously. They will be empowered and they will be more apt to make changes."

~Liz Stanosheck, Former ADA Coordinator, Nebraska Dept. of Corrections

National ADA Symposium

The National ADA Symposium is a four-day comprehensive conference on the ADA that has been held annually for the past 19 years. The conference offers 72 breakout sessions; preconference, keynote, and advanced discussion groups; and networking activities. Breakout sessions cover topics designed to meet the needs of the diverse group of professionals involved in ADA implementation.

Sessions are presented by nationally recognized experts, including representatives from the key agencies involved in ADA implementation, such as the EEOC, U.S. Access Board, and U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor and Education.

The ADA Symposium is attended by approximately 700 participants from across the United States. Attendees are involved in all areas of ADA implementation and include advocates, ADA coordinators, architects, business community, code officials, educators, employers, government officials, individuals with disabilities and service providers.

Evaluation data shows that the National ADA Symposium has increasing impact on local ADA implementation. Fully 100% of attendees (up from 96% in previous year) surveyed reported that they learned new information, strategies and skills that they use on the job and in their communities.

CityArchRiver Project

As highlighted on Page 27, the GP ADA Center is assisting the City of St. Louis and the U.S. Park Service as it plans major renovation of the St. Louis Arch to make sure people with disabilities have access to all elements of this major project, including the arch, museum and educational centers.

Outreach to Building Code Officials

Building code officials are critical to successful implementation of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design in newly constructed buildings and renovations. As a member of the International Code Council (ICC), the GP ADA Center has successfully reached out to this target group through collaboration with the ICC that develops the International Building Code. These collaborative efforts have included working closely with ICC members to develop and present a "learning track" designed specifically for design officials at the National ADA Symposium. This track has become a feature at the National ADA Symposium and is promoted by the ICC to the building community.

The GP ADA Center has also developed an in-depth training on the

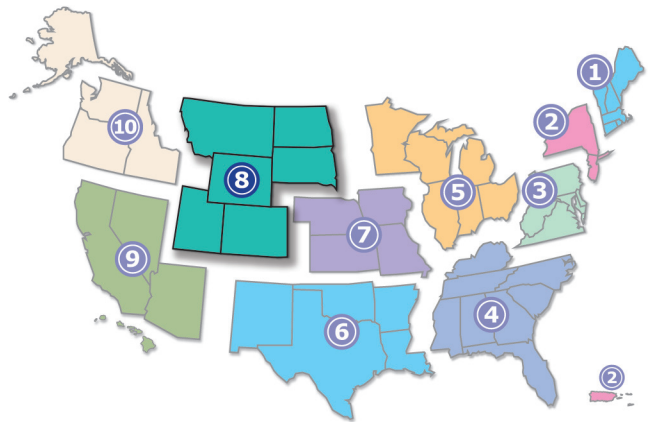
2010 ADA Standards for Accessibility specifically for building code officials. The course has been approved for ICC continuing education units and is promoted through the ICC to its members. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) recently approved these courses and promotes participation to its members as well.

This continuing collaborative effort has significantly increased the quality of accessibility training available to the design community at all levels. Support from the ICC and AIA has increased the number of design officials who have received in-depth training and validated that following accessibility codes and standards is professional practice.



Region 8 Rocky Mountain ADA Center

www.rockymountainada.org



The Rocky Mountain ADA Center serves Colorado, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The Rocky Mountain ADA Center (RMADA) is operated by Meeting the Challenge, Inc. (MTC) (www.mtc-inc.com), a for-profit small business located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Our focus during the past year has been to foster regional ADA implementation through our ADA Center services, as well as MTC fee service offerings. In addition to the core services of the ADA Center—technical assistance (TA), training, outreach, and materials dissemination—MTC offers customized extended services, such as:

- ADA policy and procedure reviews;
- Transportation system accessibility consulting;
- Facility accessibility audits;
- Self-evaluations and transition plans;
- Architectural plan reviews;
- Park and recreation accessibility assessments.

Examples of assistance we provided include:

- helping create an ADA Coordinator position;
- assessing physical barriers;
- improving communication systems;
- training employees in disability awareness;
- and making recommendations to overcome ADA infractions.

Additionally, RMADA is heavily involved with the ADA National Network and its projects.

Through these efforts, RMADA helps individuals, institutions and businesses understand their rights and responsibilities under the ADA, and supports implementation of the ADA.

Access Reviews of Title II Programs to Support ADA Implementation

MTC continues to receive requests from state and local government agencies (Title II entities) for advice and direction on the best ways to meet their obligations under the ADA. In response, MTC has created collaborative relationships with these Title II entities to help them fully integrate the ADA.

After these Title II entities implement their ADA changes, RMADA continues to be involved with their work in ADA compliance by providing ongoing technical assistance and ADA training.

RMADA is pleased to report that the full circle of technical assistance to implementation to lifetime relationships has been realized many times over.

National Parks: Two-Day Accessibility Workshop

In October 2015, RMADA offered a two-day workshop that covered concepts of ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and the ABA Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) and the application of these laws and regulations to park sites, programs, and other areas relevant to the management and operation of national parks.



Law Enforcement Effective Communication Training

RMADA has worked closely with two local organizations to educate law enforcement personnel who routinely interact with persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf/blind.

The organizations are:

- Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- Deaf Overcoming Violence through Education.

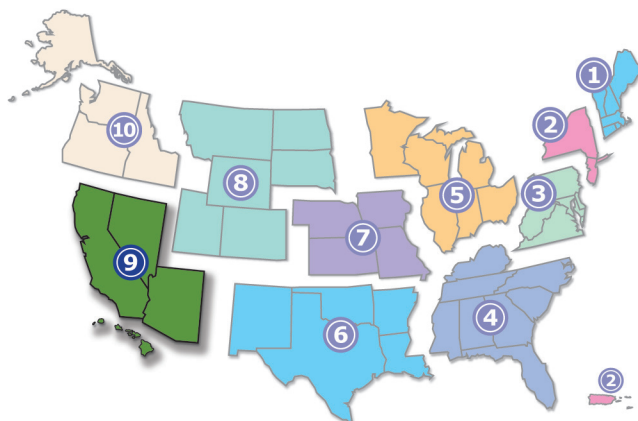
RMADA provides training to various law enforcement personnel that enables them to apply ADA information in day-to-day contacts. Additionally, RMADA's work with law enforcement personnel at some of the highest levels helped to effect policy changes ensuring that steps are in place before contact is made with people from the disability population.

We are very proud to have been part of the team producing video vignettes involving real-life scenarios faced by and between law enforcement and deaf citizens. These video vignettes included actual law enforcement personnel so that audiences could more easily relate to the scenarios being enacted.

RMADA has also been involved in training for tenured county and city staff, as well as to police academy students.

Region 9 Pacific ADA Center

www.adapacific.org



The Pacific ADA Center serves Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Basin Territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

This region covers almost 1 million square miles of land mass and has a population of 50 million. In light of the large geographic area—as well as the ethnic, cultural and language diversity—the Pacific ADA Center’s staff and large network of affiliates play a significant role in reaching the region’s stakeholders.

Customized ADA Training

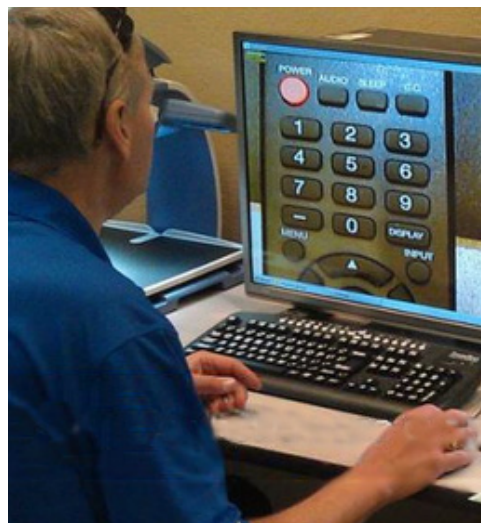
Throughout 2015, the Pacific ADA Center provided in-depth ADA training to over 1,500 individuals at numerous large businesses and professional organizations.

Topics explored in these trainings include reasonable accommodation in employment, disability awareness and etiquette, service animals, academic adjustments, effective communication, movie theater captioning and audio description services, and the 2010 ADA Accessibility Standards.

Our center provided training to:

- American Library Association;
- American Institute of Architects Chapters in Region 9;
- State and local entities throughout the region;
- Chambers of Commerce;
- Major hotels;

- Movie and performance theaters;
- Individuals with disabilities, family members and professionals;
- San Jose and Los Angeles Abilities Expo Fairs and other professional workshops;
- Architects, ADA Coordinators, educators, and consumer advocates.





Emergency Preparedness

Emergencies and disasters can be particularly of concern to people with disabilities. Successful outcomes for people with disabilities in disasters will depend on how inclusive the plans are.

The Pacific ADA Center is leading the efforts to disseminate information about emergency preparedness and management on behalf of the ADA National Network. A major part of this has been designing and hosting the Emergency Management and Preparedness-Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities webinar series. The free webinars focus on key strategies and approaches at federal, state, and local levels for including people with disabilities in emergency management and preparedness.

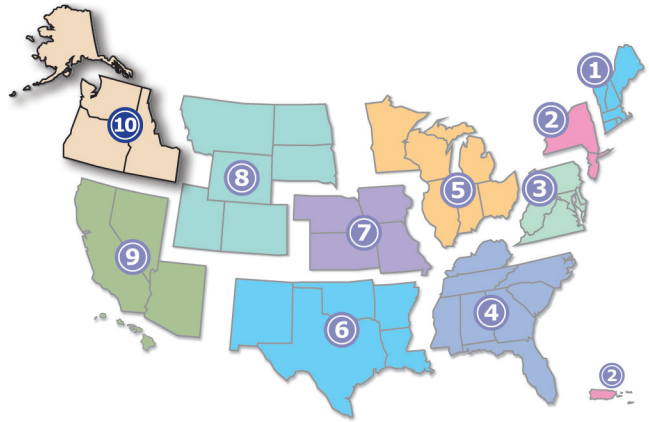
In October 2015, the Pacific ADA Center worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Office of Disability Inclusion and Coordination (ODIC), the State of California Office of Emergency Services, and the City of Oakland to host the Great American Shake Out to prepare for earthquakes in the region.

The Center offers monthly ADA National Network Learning webinars on emergency preparedness and management and "FEMA Promising Practices". Examples of webinars offered in 2015 include:

- Whole Community Inclusion Emergency Preparedness Planning at the State Level;
- Closing Gaps in Local Emergency Plans and Grassroots Emergency Planning;
- Preparedness Planning for People with Respiratory Issues and those with Intellectual Disabilities;
- Communication Outreach and Toolkits.

Region 10 Northwest ADA Center

www.nwadacenter.org



The Northwest ADA Center serves Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Partnership with Washington State Department of Corrections

Since 2013, the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) has partnered with the NW ADA Center to provide advice, consultation, and technical assistance with a comprehensive Title II survey all programs and facilities within the prison system.

The NW ADA Center staff created a customized comprehensive accessibility audit checklist for corrections and detention facilities and assisted in audits of 9 of the largest prisons in Washington State.

The Center also provided training and on-site assistance in the larger physical facility surveys and consulted and advised on program access matters in several facilities.

Surveys of all 13 prison facilities were completed on time and on budget.

The ultimate goal of the project is for DOC to create a comprehensive, statewide ADA Title II Transition Plan.

The DOC appointed a NW ADA staff member to be part of the WA State DOC ADA Steering Committee to review any related ADA issues, progress, and improvement projects.

The NW ADA Center and the Center for Technology and Disability Studies at the University of Washington are collaborating with WA DOC on a five-year, NIDILRR-sponsored project that aims to:

- increase awareness and knowledge of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) by front line staff;
- improve interactions between front line staff and offenders with TBI;
- and improve interactions between community corrections officers and offenders with TBI during transition to community.



Partnership with Aging and Disability Services Resource Network

The NW ADA center joined a new partnership with Community Living Connections (CLC) Network in 2015. CLC is the Washington chapter of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), a federal initiative led by the Administration for Community Living and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The main goal of the CLC is to provide easy access to information, referral, one-on-one counseling, care coordination, and public programs for older adults and people with disabilities.

The NW ADA Center will provide Disability Language and Etiquette training to many of ADRC's staff Outreach to other Aging and Disability Resource Centers in the region is currently underway.

Community Engagement Initiative

The NW ADA Center Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) works with Centers for Independent Living (CILs) or similar organizations to focus on accessible healthcare in small towns.

Past CEI efforts took place in Grants Pass and Pendelton, OR. The Center wrapped up its latest CEI effort in Bellingham, WA in October 2015, and will begin another project in eastern Washington or Idaho in the coming months.



CEI events include town hall meetings and forums with individuals with disabilities and professionals to identify health care access issues in these communities. Each CEI effort has shown progress working with the community, and partnerships have been maintained.

For more information, read the ADA Implementation Highlight on page 26.

Washington State Libraries Training

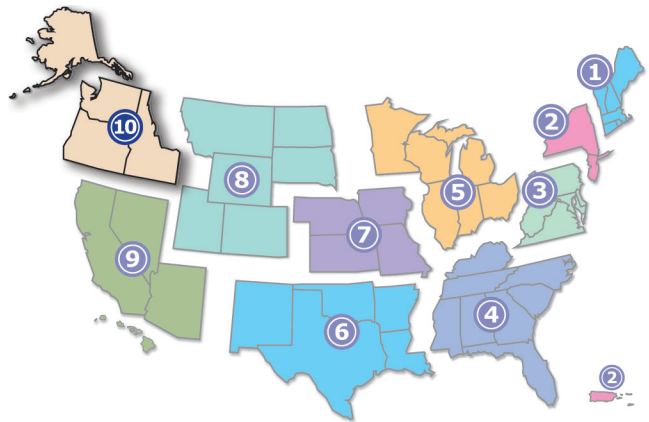
In 2015, NW ADA Center staff traveled to 11 libraries in the Washington State Library system to provide disability language and etiquette training to library personnel.

NW ADA Center also offers training on disability language and etiquette through a self-paced webcourse. This webcourse is suitable for staff within any type of organization that serve the public.

For more information, visit <http://nwadacenter.org/disability-language-and-etiquette>

ADA Knowledge Translation Center

adakt.washington.edu



The ADA Knowledge Center is based at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington

The ADA Knowledge Translation Center (ADAKTC) functions as a platform for knowledge translation on topics related to the ADA. It does this by working to accomplish the following three goals:

1. Optimize efficiency and impact of the ADA National Network's (ADANN) activities,
2. Increase awareness and use of ADA research findings to inform behavior, practices, or policies, and
3. Improve understanding of ADA stakeholders' need for and receipt of ADA Network Services.

Efficiency and Impact of the National Network

The ADAKTC develops centralized systems and conducts research to increase the efficiency and impact of the 10 regional ADA Centers that comprise the ADA National Network (ADANN).

The ADAKTC meets this goal through four main activities:

- centralized ADANN website with searchable databases;
- committee and meeting support;
- national product development;
- data management and knowledge translation research.

ADANN Website

The ADAKTC developed and supports the ADANN website (adata.org), which is designed to highlight the work of the ADANN and connect individuals and organizations to its services. The website includes nationally relevant publications created by the ADANN, a national and local events calendar, a portal to training opportunities offered by the ADANN, current ADA newsfeed, a searchable database of high quality publications created by relevant organizations (e.g., the Department of Justice), a searchable database of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the ADA, and profiles on ADA research conducted by the ADANN. The website also includes monitoring and quality control features (feedback form, usage tracking).

Committee and Meeting Support

The ADAKTC manages and supports committees to guide ADANN activities and increase collaboration between regional centers. Committees are in place in the following areas: Website, Outcomes Measurement System, and Knowledge Translation. Committees work to guide development of products, determine need for training, and develop standard operating protocols.

National Product Development

The ADAKTC coordinates development of ADANN products (consumer factsheets, booklets, promotional materials).

The Center, in collaboration with the regional centers, develops new materials or modifies existing ones for national dissemination. A protocol is in place for annual review and updating of these products to ensure relevance and accuracy. ADANN products are available in accessible formats and Spanish.

Knowledge Translation Research

The ADAKTC engages in research projects such as a project that investigates the work of ADANN technical assistance specialists to better understand how they address ADA information requests and to guide service delivery improvements. Another project involves an analysis of data collected in the Outcomes Measurement System to describe how ADANN services supports ADA implementation. The final project evaluates the role of the ADAKTC as a knowledge translation platform, in order to evaluate what structures support knowledge translation and what barriers impede translating policy (ADA laws) into implementation.



Awareness and Use of ADA Research

Research about the implementation of the ADA is fragmented and difficult to find. The ADAKTC supports awareness and use of ADA research by conducting systematic reviews and organizing an ADA State of the Science Conference.

- The ADAKTC is engaged in a five-year project to systematically review and translate existing ADA research findings and identify knowledge gaps (adata.org/national-ada-systematic-review).
- In May of this year, the ADAKTC will host a State of the Science conference on research about ADA implementation. Researchers from a wide range of disciplines related to implementation of the ADA will be invited to participate and findings from the ADA systematic review process will be presented.

Understanding Stakeholder's Needs

Another primary task of the ADAKTC has been to develop and implement centralized, efficient systems for collecting information about the work of the National Network to help understand the needs of ADA stakeholders (e.g., people with disabilities, business owners, architects, etc.) and to serve them better. Specifically, the ADAKTC manages the Outcome Measurement System (OMS), which collects information about the technical assistance, training, and other activities of the regional centers and supports implementation of an outcomes survey designed to measure ADA implementation. The ADAKTC provides quarterly reports of OMS and outcomes survey data to regional directors and NIDILRR.

ADA Implementation Highlights

Hattiesburg, Mississippi: Going Above and Beyond the ADA

Halfway between the Mississippi's Gulf Coast and its state capital of Jackson lies the thriving city of Hattiesburg, known as the Hub City of the South.

Hattiesburg's dedication to serve all of its citizens, especially those with disabilities, has been a consistent aim stretching back to the mid-90s, when it began working towards full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. City officials chose to go above and beyond the letter of the law to meet the spirit of the ADA as well.

"Hattiesburg is determined to be welcoming and fully accessible to people from all walks of life," notes Christy Dunaway of the Southeast ADA Center, "especially individuals living with a disability."

So how does a city surpass the minimum standards to become more fully accessible? By engaging the disability community to develop strong relationships capable of producing well thought out and lasting results.

Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE) of Mississippi has served as the state affiliate for the Southeast ADA Center since 1996.

The city's Director of Engineering Lamar Rutland, met with accessibility specialist Dwight Owens, an AmeriCorps member with LIFE of Mississippi, LIFE's ADA consultant Christine Woodell, and Christy Dunaway from the Southeast

ADA Center. Owens remembered that Woodell and Dunaway were "very pleased" to learn about the city's goals and proposed projects. Rutland informed the group that the city was planning to designate up to \$200,000 each year until 2027, to achieve the goal of full accessibility in Hattiesburg.

Starting in 2015, work began to ensure accessible paths of travel throughout the city by focusing on repairing and modifying any sidewalks that did not meet ADA standards.

"Our core belief is that everyone should be considered a vital part of the community," said Mayor Johnny Dupree. "If we are guided by that core belief, individuals—regardless of their physical ability—will be able to enjoy all the benefits that come with being a citizen of Hattiesburg."

Mayor Dupree has been "very enthusiastic and proactive" throughout the process, said Owens. He even spent the day navigating the city using a wheelchair, traversing the city's ramps and curb cuts, and riding its public transit buses. That personal experience allowed him to see firsthand why things like fixing cracks in sidewalks and proper slope angles were so important.

Hattiesburg's remarkable story shows what can happen when government and disability advocacy groups work together to go above and beyond the letter of the law to ensure access for all.

To read the full story, go to adata.org/Hattiesburg



The Pendleton Project: Making Health Care Accessible to All

The small town of Pendleton, located in the foothills of Eastern Oregon, might seem like an unlikely place to discover an example of how best to ensure disability rights for a community. But that's precisely what you would find after the local community came together with disability advocates from across the region to tackle the barriers to health care faced by people with disabilities.

This inclusive process was exactly what the Oregon Office on Disability and Health (OODH) had in mind when it initiated a new Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) called the Pendleton Project that sought to increase access to health care for people with disabilities.

"The intent of the Pendleton CEI was to initiate a transformational process that identified specific accessibility problems and strategies to address them," said Angela Weaver, a project coordinator at the OODH.

The NW ADA center is one of 10 regional ADA centers, all of which work with local organizations to provide information, guidance and training in order to support the ADA's mission to "make it possible for everyone with a disability to live a life of freedom and equality."

The Pendleton Project began in late 2013 when Weaver teamed up with John Dineen, a Training and Information Specialist with the Northwest ADA Center, to implement a CEI specific to health care-access in Pendleton. The NW ADA center is one of 10 regional ADA centers, all of which work with local organizations to provide information, guidance and training in order to

support the ADA's mission to "make it possible for everyone with a disability to live a life of freedom and equality."

Weaver and Dineen were joined by a third local partner, Darrin Umbarger, a long-time disability advocate. Umbarger, who is the chief executive officer of Clearview Mediation and Disability Resource Center, was familiar with the kinds of barriers people with disabilities encounter in Eastern Oregon.



Approximately 25 people attended the Town Hall discussion in October 2013, which included individuals with cognitive, mental, and physical impairments as well as parents and service providers.

Although regional disability advocates like Weaver and Dineen jump-started the initiative, the broad and lasting goals would not have been realized without the dedicated involvement of community members throughout the CEI process.

"Most of the hard work," Dineen said, "was accomplished by members of the community and Umbarger, which is the way it was supposed to work."

"The best people to make change in their community," Dineen said, "are those who live there and already have some power and influence" adding that his involvement throughout the process confirmed that "people care deeply about members of their community and are willing to try to help make improvements."

To read the full story, go to adata.org/pendleton-project

Renovating the St. Louis Arch Complex to Welcome Everyone

Scores of Americans visit this country's national parks and sites of interest every year. But for some, these visits can end up being an exercise in frustration as they try to navigate the accessibility barriers inherent in these historic sites. With this in mind, a community of forward-thinking citizens in St. Louis has been working together to make their landmarks more welcoming to everyone.

CityArchRiver 2015 is a comprehensive renovation project that seeks to transform the Arch of St. Louis—the city's iconic towering landmark—along with surrounding parks and museums into a more welcoming and accessible environment for visitors of all abilities. Because advocates of universal design were involved from the early stages of the process, the project has evolved into a remarkable example of how a space can meet the needs of everyone.

During the early stages of planning, David Newburger, the ADA coordinator of the city of St. Louis, was invited by Mayor Francis Slay to join the project's Technical Advisory Group. The group included an array of experts from the area, all of whom were able to interact with each of the designer candidates initially being considered for the project.

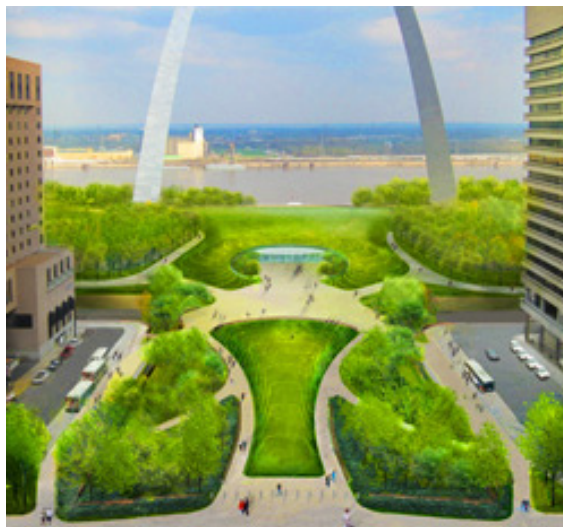
Newburger kept this momentum going by advocating for forming a committee of citizens that would work to incorporate the needs of people with disabilities and offer their input and advice on the designers' different ideas. This

committee was composed of people with disabilities who also had specific knowledge about how designs should be made universally accessible. A diverse array of disabilities and needs were represented on the committee, including people with tetraplegia (quadriplegia) and paraplegia, vision and hearing impairments, and psychiatric and developmental disabilities.

Chuck Graham, who served on the committee on behalf of the Great Plains ADA Center, said that the inclusion of the disability community during the beginning stages is what set the whole endeavor apart from the rest.

"It's been no small undertaking," Graham said, noting that this was a collaborative effort involving city, state, and federal entities that dealt with multiple buildings, parks, transit systems, business, and landmarks. The process was a monthly affair where the committee regularly interacted with the designers, often in ways that emphasized the very need for such a thorough process.

"This whole thing would not have happened had I not been able to obtain the support of the visionaries who are leading the project," Newburger said, which came from "a combination of support from the Mayor's office, relationship building, perseverance, making all communications diplomatic, and supporting the visionaries' personal goals."



To read the full story, go to adata.org/st-louis-arch.

Community Collaboration Ensures Access to Art for All

In the heart of Nashville's thriving arts scene lies the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, whose guiding vision is to "inspire people through art to look at their world in new ways." Realizing this vision meant that designers and staff needed to imagine and plan the Center in new ways so it would be a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible space for all.

When the founders of the Frist Foundation, one of Tennessee's larger philanthropic organizations, first envisioned the new Visual Arts Center that would open in 2001, they hoped to develop a world-class venue for the arts, as well as a collaborative undertaking bringing in the entire community. The founders exerted great effort to ensure the new Center would be available to "all," a vision that guided planning and design from the beginning.

The Southeast ADA Center became involved in the process of ensuring accessibility in September 2000 when the Frist Center for the Visual Arts contacted the Tennessee Disability Coalition (TDC) to help them make the new Center accessible to people with disabilities. The TDC is one of the Southeast ADA Center's eight State ADA Affiliates. Each State Affiliate receives extensive and ongoing training, information and technical assistance from the Southeast ADA Center so that all of the State Affiliates are fully competent and prepared to provide on-site ADA information, training and technical assistance.

Active participation of disability advocates early on in the planning and design process coupled with the Frist Center's ongoing commitment to full accessibility has created an attraction that serves the widest audience possible. The trust and collaboration

between the Frist Center and the Tennessee Disability Center as a local point of contact for information and technical assistance about the ADA has grown and developed through the years. As a result, the Frist Center has been able to take small steps that have yielded great results over time.

Through this early collaboration with the Southeast ADA Center's Tennessee State Affiliate, the Frist Center has become a shining example of how to create a



The Frist Center for the Visual Arts space that is accessible to all.

"We would not be the institution we are without the incredible relationship we have with the Tennessee Disability Coalition and Donna DeStefano who, with TDC and other advocates, have been real partners on this tremendously worthwhile journey," said Ellen Pryor, Director of Communications for the Frist Center.

"From the outset," wrote Director of Education Anne Henderson on the occasion of the opening of the Frist Center, "the founders of the Frist Center for the Visual Arts have said publicly and privately that the Frist Center exists to serve all of the people of this community.

To read the full story, go to adata.org/Frist-center



2016 Profile

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