

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

National Organization on Disability 2003 Annual Report

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON
DISABILITY
www.nod.org



**Reverend Dr. Harold Wilke
(1915-2003)
N.O.D. Board Member and Founding Director.**



The Rev. Harold Wilke, without arms, accepts with his foot a pen from President George Bush following the 1990 bill signing ceremony for the Americans with Disabilities Act on the south lawn of the White House.

We are honored to dedicate the 2003 National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.) Annual Report to the Reverend Harold Wilke. A founder of our organization, and a person with a disability having been born without arms, Dr. Wilke was a life-long champion of people with disabilities throughout the world. Dr. Wilke was a pastor, teacher, writer, and advocate for people with disabilities everywhere. For his enthusiasm, self-acceptance, grit and twinkle, he was an unforgettable role model.

Dr. Wilke had a distinguished career in four areas of service: the church, rehabilitation medicine, teaching, and government. Ordained over 50 years ago as a Minister of the United Church of Christ, Dr. Wilke served on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in New York and lectured at many other seminaries.

Harold Wilke was an active leader of the U.S. Council for the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), N.O.D.'s predecessor organization. He was a founding director of N.O.D. in 1982, and in 1988 he initiated N.O.D.'s Religion and Disability Program to ensure that people with disabilities are welcomed and included in their congregations.

On July 26, 1990 Rev. Wilke offered a blessing at the White House bill signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. His stirring words will long be remembered: **"Today we celebrate the breaking of the chains which have held back millions of Americans with disabilities. Today we celebrate the granting to them of full citizenship and access to the Promised Land of work, service and community."**

When our Honorary Chairman, former President Bush proudly signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law on July 26, 1990 he stated, "We will not accept, we will not excuse, we will not tolerate discrimination in America." Since that euphoric moment, much progress has occurred, but there are disconcerting clouds on the horizon.

In 2003, once again, the National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.) commissioned the Harris Poll to survey public support for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The survey found that while the majority of Americans are supportive of the ADA's key tenets, such as access to buildings and no discrimination in employment, this support has eroded in recent years. People with disabilities have far less chance to join the workforce, to receive an education...The list goes on.

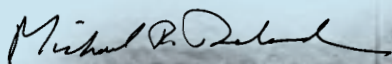
While it is enormously challenging to live with a disability, it is equally challenging for N.O.D. to meet its fundamental mission. Guarantees we thought we had won over a decade ago are now being questioned. One egregious example is a recent case, "Tennessee v. Lane", which reached the Supreme Court of the United States and for which N.O.D. prepared an amicus brief in 2003. A defendant in this case was a wheelchair user who was forced to crawl up the stairs to the second floor of the courthouse when the judge refused to move the case to an accessible courtroom. This is not the America promised in the ADA.

In the face of continuing discrimination, N.O.D. has dedicated itself for over 22 years to expanding the participation of America's 54 million men, women, and children with disabilities in all aspects of life. There has been progress and N.O.D. has been at the center of it. There are two N.O.D. programs that merit special mention: the Emergency Preparedness Initiative (EPI) and the Start on Success (SOS) program. EPI was developed to ensure that people with disabilities have means of escape in man-made or natural disasters, and also to engage their special set of experiences in the planning process. Due to the magnitude and success of this undertaking, the N.O.D. Board voted unanimously to seek government funding for the first time ever. We are pleased to report that in 2003 N.O.D. received a \$1 million congressional appropriation for the EPI.

The SOS program demonstrates how teenagers with disabilities in the inner-city can enter and remain in the workforce. In April 2004, N.O.D. will celebrate the tenth anniversary of this program and the 1,000 interns who, thanks to the paid internships N.O.D. has provided, have completed the SOS program and have gone on to productive lives.

For these young people and for all people with disabilities we must keep alive the ADA promise of full and equal participation. Thus we pledge to continue our work with heightened resolve. It is thanks to the generosity of our donors, the visionary leadership of our Board members and the dedication of our outstanding staff that we can make this commitment.

Sincerely yours,



Michael R. Deland
Chairman



Alan A. Reich
President



Adapted from the N.O.D. State of the Union on www.nod.org

State of the Union: Americans

At the beginning of each year, the President of the United States delivers a State of the Union Address. This speech covers a myriad of topics, but seldom touches on disability issues, despite the fact that one in five Americans has a disability, and many others count people with disabilities among their family, friends and coworkers. Because of this, the National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.) issues its own State of the Union for Americans with Disabilities, to ensure that the needs and concerns of the nation's 54 million men, women and children are not ignored.

A Harris Poll commissioned by N.O.D. in late 2003 found that Americans with disabilities have serious concerns about the state of union. One thousand people both with and without disabilities were interviewed, and only 45 percent felt "good about the state of the nation", compared with 69 percent in a similar Harris survey conducted in 2001. Among people with disabilities, only 38 percent felt "good about the state of the nation", down from 58 percent in 2001.

The 2003 Harris Poll also asked if they "felt good" about five more specific items. As outlined in the paragraphs that follow, more needs to be done in order for people with disabilities to enjoy a quality of life on par with their non-disabled counterparts.



40 percent of Americans with disabilities feel good about their future financial security, down from 51 percent in 2001

Employment is a key to expanding the participation of Americans with disabilities in the life of their communities. They have a devastatingly low rate of employment, with only 32 percent working full or part time. Also, people with disabilities are twice as likely

to live in poverty as other Americans. Without good, secure employment, financial security is a constant concern. America's 54 million citizens with disabilities are determined to participate fully and equally in national and community life.



Only 29 percent of Americans with disabilities who are employed say they feel good about their jobs, compared to 65 percent of those without disabilities

Unemployment is a massive problem for people with disabilities, and so is underemployment. Too many people with disabilities find they are only offered entry-level jobs. They also report lacking job security and being passed over for promotions. Settling for a job does not breed enthusiasm for it. Entry-level jobs may not even pay enough to cover medical, transportation, and accessible housing costs.



62 percent of Americans with disabilities feel good about their health, down from 67 percent two years ago

Affording health insurance that covers their needs is critical for people with disabilities, who are three times as likely as other Americans not to have received needed health care on at least one occasion in the previous year. They are more than twice as likely to postpone seeking health care because they cannot afford it. Medical advances, new treatments, and assistive technologies can greatly improve lives, and are urgently desired by those who would benefit.

with Disabilities 2004



41 percent of Americans with disabilities feel good about their children's future, compared to 54 percent of those who don't have disabilities

In these challenging times, terrorist threats, the tight economy, and dangers from drugs, guns and gangs weigh on parents' minds. Parents who have disabilities often have less income to help their children with their needs, and therefore have greater worries.



Good news: 84 percent of people with disabilities say they feel good about their quality of life

There are many improvements in quality of life thanks to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and other legislation. Technology also opens new doors every day. Computers let people who are deaf to instant message, while people who are blind have their mail read to them electronically. Artificial limbs carry people through their days and onto playing fields. Wheelchairs are lighter and faster. The more independently people are able to live, the more they are able to contribute to society and their communities. For this reason, N.O.D. supports passage of the Medicaid Community-Based Attendant Services and Supports Act.

A critical moment in history for Americans with disabilities

The year 2004 finds our country engaged in a war that has cost billions of dollars and hundreds of American lives. Thousands of people who experienced injuries in this war are returning with disabilities.

America must rededicate itself to ensuring rights and opportunities for its many veterans with disabilities from recent and past conflicts.

Homeland security remains a major concern, as people with disabilities are the most vulnerable during an emergency with less than half reporting they are ready for an emergency in their communities. N.O.D.'s Emergency Preparedness Initiative strives to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are taken into account in emergency planning.

There are other threats. The Supreme Court case of *Tennessee vs. Lane* challenges the constitutionality of the ADA. Tennessee says citizens should not be able to sue a state because they are unable to access a court. The plaintiffs say access to a public building is guaranteed by the ADA. The ADA was indeed passed to ensure such access, and the Supreme Court's decision later this year will have great bearing on the law's effectiveness.

As this is an election year, we recall the words of the late advocate Justin Dart, "Vote as if your lives depend on it - because they do." People with disabilities voted in larger than usual numbers when 41 percent turned out for the 2000 presidential election, which was a tremendous increase from 31 percent in 1996, but still well behind the more than half of the total electorate who cast ballots. This year, thanks in part to the 2002 Help America Vote Act, which promised to increase access to polling places and confidential ballots - the disability vote should be at an all time high.

With dedicated efforts by government, businesses and communities, people with disabilities can enjoy the promises of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" afforded to all Americans. This, ultimately, is America's disability agenda.

Communications

Telling the World about America's Disability Agenda

The National Organization on Disability exists in a mass communications society and needs to send its message to the leaders, opinion makers and advocates who can advance our agenda for the full participation and contribution of people with disabilities. We want to ensure that a large and diverse array of people become aware of and commit to this effort.

Website Continues as a Prime Source of Disability News, Information and Resources

N.O.D.'s website www.nod.org won the California Governor's Media Access Award for New Media in 2002. In 2003, the site was improved and upgraded to improve usability and accessibility. The site has gained a considerable following and has been highlighted as a "web site of the month" in a number of publications, such as *New Mobility* magazine.

The website offers data from recent N.O.D./Harris surveys, as well as continuously updated disability news, resources, and original articles. Regular contributors include award-winning technology writer John Williams, and disability survey research expert and N.O.D. Senior Policy Advisor Dr. Gerry Hendershot.

The website is a model of accessibility. It is designed so that visitors who cannot see, or hear, or have limited mobility, can access the important information they need about disability issues. The website meets the highest standards for accessibility, and complies with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.



In 2003, the Emergency Preparedness section of the website was expanded to include a Products & Services Directory, a Research Findings Directory, Video Clips, and a Bulletin Board for emergency management professionals and others interested in emergency preparedness for people with disabilities.

N.O.D./Harris Polls Reveal Key Issues Facing Disability Community

N.O.D. continues to work with the Harris Poll to document areas of concern for people with disabilities. At a July 2003 event at the U.S. Capitol to celebrate the thirteenth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, N.O.D. presented results of a N.O.D./Harris Poll that found support for certain tenets of the ADA.

Percentages of people who support the following statement:

Employers may not discriminate against someone who is qualified to do a job just because they have a disability	1991	1999	2003
	95%	94%	85%

Base 1,011 adults ages 18+
Source: N.O.D./Harris Survey on the ADA 2003

At the end of 2003, N.O.D. updated an emergency preparedness survey conducted in November 2001, and found people with disabilities remain largely unprepared for emergencies.

The media and our colleagues in the field of disability continue to rely on and frequently cite the 2000 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities. This quadrennial survey will be conducted once again in spring 2004 and will provide for the nation the status of people with disabilities in key areas of life - employment, education, income, access to health care, socializing, political participation, transportation, and religious life - as compared to their non-disabled counterparts. For the first time, N.O.D. will include assistive technology as a new gap area of study in the survey.

As 2004 is a presidential election year, N.O.D. will work with the Harris Poll to track presidential candidate preferences of voters with disabilities. In addition, N.O.D. will survey people with disabilities on whether the candidates are addressing their issues of concern, and if they have experienced barriers to voting.

N.O.D. Partners with Sprint

N.O.D. continued its partnership with Sprint, and its Project Connect, a nationwide program that collects used wireless phones. Donated phones are either recycled or resold, with proceeds benefiting N.O.D., Easter Seals and the Wireless Foundation.

In 2003, with the assistance of N.O.D., Project Connect held a wireless phone collection event at the U.S. Capitol. N.O.D. Intern Lorne Beitler spearheaded a collection at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Hundreds of phones were collected at these events.

The second year of Sprint Project Connect found record numbers of used wireless telephones being donated to this program.

[N.O.D. helped Sprint organize a Sprint Project Connect wireless phone collection at George Washington University in November 2003. Proceeds from the recycled phones benefit N.O.D.](#)



Involving the Business Community

N.O.D.'s CEO Council is comprised of leading companies and their Chief Executive Officers, who are committed to increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Their membership sends a strong message of encouragement for all businesses that working with staff, customers, and clients who have disabilities is good business.

Thanks to the enthusiastic support of *BusinessWeek* President and Publisher Bill Kupper, Council members are saluted in donated public service advertisements in national and regional editions of *BusinessWeek* magazine several times each year.

N.O.D. keeps CEO Council members informed on key issues for people with disabilities, especially regarding survey research and programs that relate to the business world.

N.O.D. Takes a Stand

N.O.D. weighed in on some of the top disability-related issues of 2003. N.O.D. came out in support of the Medicaid Community-Based Services and Supports Act (MiCASSA), championed by Senator Arlen Specter and N.O.D. Congressional Sponsor Senator Tom Harkin. This important legislation will ensure the right of people with severe disabilities to live in their communities where it is possible, rather than in institutions. N.O.D. Vice Presidents Nancy Starnes and Brewster Thackeray joined Senators Harkin and Specter in addressing a major MiCASSA rally in September.

N.O.D. also expressed support for the plaintiffs in the U.S. Supreme Court case, *Tennessee vs. Lane*. This case will determine the right of people with disabilities to access courts and many other public places, and thus will greatly impact the ADA. A decision is expected in 2004.

As 2003 ended, the 2004 Presidential election was beginning. N.O.D. contacted the Democratic candidates and President Bush, asking them to share their platforms and statements about disability. Their statements were made available on the N.O.D. website.



Public service advertisement donated by *BusinessWeek*.

54 million Americans have disabilities. Two-thirds of those of working age do not have jobs. It is a mistake to ignore these talented individuals who prove their capacity to overcome challenges each and every day.

Our goal is for people with disabilities to fully participate in all aspects of life—including the workplace. The following leaders of our CEO Council help us fulfill this mission. They realize that hiring people with disabilities is not just a good thing to do, it's good business.

Millennium Circle

Aetna, Inc., John W. Rowe, M.D.
BusinessWeek, William F. Kupper, Jr.
Sprint, Gary D. Forsee

Trustees' Circle

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Towers Perrin, Mark V. Pictor
WR. Grace & Co., Paul J. Norris

N.O.D. and BusinessWeek salute the members of the CEO Council for believing in the idea that it's ability, not disability, that counts. Please send questions, comments or tax-deductible contributions to the National Organization on Disability, 910 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20006, or call us at (202) 293-5960, TDD (202) 293-5968, FAX (202) 293-7999.



N.O.D. is a 501(c)(3) organization. This is a donated public service ad.

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Emergency Preparedness Initiative

Program sponsored in part by

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People with Disabilities Must be Included in Preparedness Planning

Compelled by the attacks of September 11, 2001, the N.O.D. launched the Emergency Preparedness Initiative (EPI) to ensure that emergency management professionals address disability concerns, and that people with disabilities are included in the emergency planning process. N.O.D. seeks to increase communication and cooperation between emergency managers and the disability community, and to educate people with disabilities about what they can do to be prepared. EPI reaches out to public officials, including governors, mayors, county executives, federal cabinet secretaries, and leaders of major disability groups.

National Attention in Conferences and in the Press

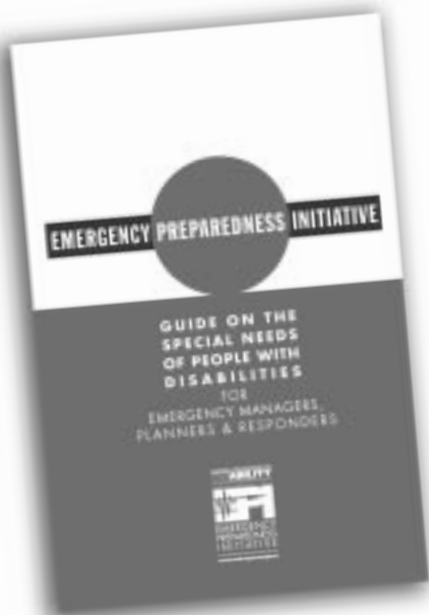
Articles in both disability and emergency management periodicals have helped to spread the word. In 2003, EPI was mentioned in *Homeland Protection Professional* newsletter, *Buildings* magazine, and *Volta Voice*, the nation's leading magazine for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, among others.

N.O.D. also brought special needs of people with disabilities to the attention of emergency managers in nationwide conferences. Of particular note was N.O.D.'s involvement in the December 2003 U.S. Department of Labor Disability and Emergency Preparedness Seminar led by Secretary Elaine Chao. N.O.D. was a major participant in this conference, with N.O.D. Vice President and EPI Program Director Elizabeth Davis leading two key sessions. EPI also played an important role at the 2003 National Institutes of Health (NIH) conference, which for the first time devoted a session to emergency preparedness and disability. Ms. Davis conducted the session and contributed her findings from the session to the final NIH conference report presented to Congress on funding priorities.

Resources Provided through Publications and the Web

Throughout 2003, N.O.D. distributed 35,000 copies of its 28-page *Guide on the Special Needs of People with Disabilities for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders*. This guide is also available on the N.O.D. website (www.nod.org/emergency) along with other emergency-related information for the emergency management and disability community. A second edition of this guide will be available with an updated resource section.

Thanks to a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the EPI section of the N.O.D. website was revised in 2003, and now includes new features such as a research area, video clips and product listings.

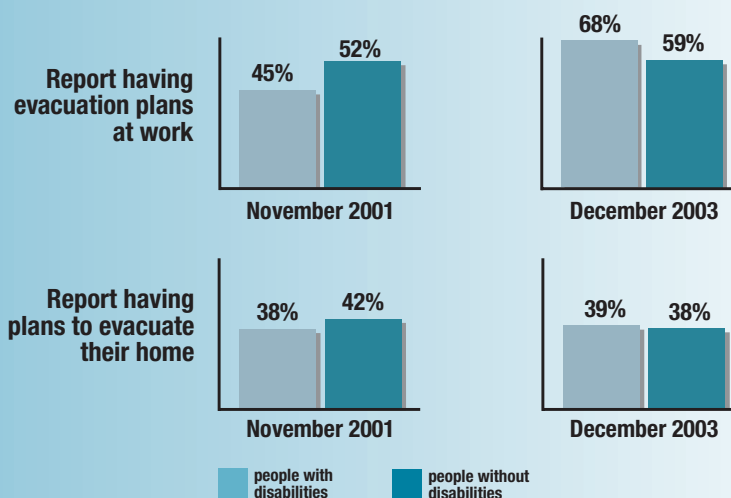


N.O.D.'s Emergency Preparedness Initiative published this guidebook to answer emergency responders' concerns.

N.O.D./Harris Polls on Emergency Preparedness

According to two Harris Polls commissioned by N.O.D., Americans with disabilities remain insufficiently prepared at home and at work in the event of an emergency.

Base: 2001 Survey 1,000 adults 18+
2003 Survey 993 adults 18+



New Funding, and a Major Program Conference

A major initiative for EPI in 2004 will be a conference in the fall for emergency management professionals, disability specialists, healthcare providers, and the private and public sectors. The conference will emphasize the integration of emergency-specific needs of persons with special needs into emergency management planning. The conference will be developed in partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Information on the planning of this conference will be periodically posted on N.O.D.'s EPI website. Major topics to be covered in the conference will include: working with the disability community; defining special needs and related fields and issues; designing plans that address the disaster-specific issues for persons with special needs; understanding how specialized equipment can assist; and education and outreach.

Thanks to a congressional appropriation, the program will grow in 2004. Additional program services will include new publications, increased outreach, and training.

N.O.D. officers met with Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge to discuss emergency planning for people with disabilities. Left to right: N.O.D. President Alan Reich, N.O.D. Chairman Michael Deland, Secretary Ridge, N.O.D. Vice President and Director of the Emergency Preparedness Initiative Elizabeth Davis.



Community Partnership Program

Program sponsored in part by

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“N.O.D. has so much to offer communities, and it was great to receive first-hand information... Your message is right on and the strategies you have provided are most useful.”

**Suellen Jackson-Boner,
Executive Director, Indiana
Governor's Planning Council for
People with Disabilities**

N.O.D.'s Flagship Program for Over Twenty Years

Since N.O.D.'s founding in 1981, the Community Partnership Program (CPP) has helped create a more accessible America through its work with towns, cities and counties. Because the most important places to improve the lives of people with disabilities are the communities where they live, the CPP has been the flagship program of N.O.D. for over twenty years.

Throughout the year, the CPP works with mayors and other locally elected officials as they implement plans to increase the participation of people with disabilities in the life of their communities. The CPP provides ongoing support to these member communities through timely and important information and postings on the N.O.D. website.

Accessible America Competition Honors Communities

Each year, the CPP conducts the Accessible America Competition, which is sponsored by UPS. This annual nationwide contest selects a community that best represents a model of physical accessibility, welcome and opportunity for other communities across America. The competition received national attention when Dear Abby spotlighted it in her nationally syndicated column, in response to a letter from N.O.D. Vice Chairman, Christopher Reeve in July 2003.

The 2003 winner, Phoenix, Arizona, was selected from a field of sixty-four diverse community entries for its innovative approach to inclusion. The Award, which includes a \$25,000 cash prize for a local disability program, is presented to the mayor in a ceremony in the winning community. Past winners include Venice, Florida and Irvine, California. N.O.D. Vice President and Director of the CPP, Nancy Starnes, presented the Mayor of Irvine, California the Accessible America Award. Television star and new N.O.D. Board member Robert David Hall joined in the ceremony.

In 2004, there will be a continued effort to enlist more communities, so that N.O.D. can help additional American towns and cities to become disability friendly.



N.O.D. Vice President and Director of the Community Partnership Program Nancy Starnes (center), presented Mayor Larry Agran of Irvine, CA (right) and Lisa Heideman, District Human Resources Manager, South California District, UPS, with the N.O.D./UPS Accessible America Award at a City of Irvine City Council Meeting.

National Partnership Program

Program sponsored in part by

Aetna
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Xerox Corporation

“The General Federation of Women's Clubs is very pleased to be a part of the National Partnership Program and intends to continue its commitment to expanding the participation of people with disabilities in communities across the nation.”

**Gabrielle Smith, Executive Director,
General Federation of Women's Clubs**

National Organizations Share Commitment for Full Participation

N.O.D.'s National Partnership Program consists of forty major national non-disability organizations that share N.O.D.'s commitment to advancing the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in community life. These National Partners represent a combined membership of seventy-five million people.

N.O.D. works with its National Partners to help them incorporate programs that will increase outreach to people with disabilities in the communities they serve, while encouraging greater participation of employees, members and volunteers with disabilities throughout their organizations.

Through a grant in 2003 from Aetna, N.O.D. offered \$1,000 to each National Partner to conduct a cash award competition recognizing the outstanding disability programs of their local affiliates.

National Partnership Program Member Organizations

AARP	Big Brothers Big Sisters of America	National Association of Towns and Townships
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging	Boy Scouts of America	National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities
American Association of Museums	Boys and Girls Clubs of America	National Foundation for Women Legislators
American Association of University Women	Camp Fire USA	National 4-H Council
American Bar Association	Child Welfare League of America	National School Boards Association
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees	Evangelical Lutheran Church of America	Older Women's League
American Institute of Architects	General Federation of Women's Clubs	Pilot International Foundation
American Lawyers Auxiliary	Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.	Sister Cities International
The American Legion	League of Women Voters of the United States	TelecomPioneers
American Legion Auxiliary	National Association of Counties	Travelers Aid International
American Library Association	National Association of Elementary School Principals	The United States Conference of Mayors
American Red Cross	National Association of Home Builders	Women in Community Service
American Society of Association Executives	National Association of Secondary School Principals	YMCA of the USA
		YWCA of the USA

AARP members and guests in North Carolina celebrate receiving the N.O.D. National Partnership Program Award. Photo courtesy of AARP North Carolina



Religion and Disability Program

Program sponsored in part by

Evelyn S. Nef
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2003 That All May Worship Conferences

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Atlanta, Georgia
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Chicago, Illinois
Claremont, California
El Paso, Texas
Fall River, Massachusetts
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Greensburg, Pennsylvania
Lafayette, Louisiana
Lincoln, Nebraska
Lisle, Illinois
Louisville, Kentucky
Lyons, Michigan
McLean, Virginia
Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota
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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Potomac, Maryland
San Diego, California
Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania

Communities and Religious Leaders Work Together

N.O.D.'s Religion and Disability Program, which is in its 15th year, has helped thousands of congregations across America become more accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities. While houses of worship are exempt from the Americans with Disabilities Act, this program helps congregations understand their moral obligation to provide architectural and program access, and to welcome adults and children with disabilities into a full life of faith.

The Religion & Disability Program sponsors "That All May Worship" conferences throughout the country each year. These community-based conferences foster dialogue between disability and religious leaders as they work to improve physical and spiritual access in congregations of all faiths. In 2003, there were twenty-two conferences, bringing the total number of conferences held over the past fifteen years to nearly 200.

Award-Winning Publications Widely Distributed

Another key element of the program is the sale of publications developed by the Religion and Disability Program to people with disabilities and religious communities. The award-winning *That All May Worship*, as well as *Loving Justice, From Barriers to Bridges*, and *Money and Ideas*, have been widely distributed over the past decade.

Outreach to Congregations and Theological Schools Emphasized

The Accessible Congregations Campaign, a special initiative of the Religion and Disability program since 1998, has registered over 2,000 congregations across America. These congregations agree to identify and remove barriers of architecture, communications and attitudes that exclude people with disabilities. Committed congregations are listed by state on N.O.D.'s website.

Outreach to theological schools was emphasized this past year. The Religion and Disability Program co-sponsored five seminary conferences, which focused on theological and practical issues of disability. Also in 2003, an Interfaith Directory of Religious Leaders with Disabilities was compiled and posted on the N.O.D. website.

Highlights for the program in 2004 will be the 200th "That All May Worship" conference, a continued emphasis on outreach to congregations and seminaries, as well as promotion and sale of publications.

N.O.D.'s Religion and Disability Program Director Ginny Thornburgh and her husband former Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh, received the 2003 Henry B. Betts Award honoring their contributions to the quality of life of people with disabilities. Governor Thornburgh serves as Vice Chairman of N.O.D.'s World Committee on Disability. Their son Peter (left) introduces his parents at the award ceremony.



Start On Success Student Internship Program

Program sponsored in part by

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**“Now I have
 the experience and
 references I need
 for future jobs.”**

**Tamika Owens,
 SOS Intern, New Britain, CT**

First-Time Jobs for Students with Disabilities

N.O.D.'s Start on Success Student Internship Program (SOS) provides paid internships to high school students with disabilities so they can acquire the skills and confidence needed to succeed in an increasingly competitive job market. Most SOS programs are collaborations between inner city high schools and nearby universities, hospitals and corporations. Interns are paired with job site supervisors and work ten-fifteen hours a week for eight-thirty weeks per academic year. In the 2002-2003 school year, 226 students participated in SOS.

Beginning with three pilot internships in 1995, SOS has expanded to nineteen sites in five states – Alabama, Connecticut, Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania. More than ninety percent of SOS interns who have completed the program successfully have gone on to further employment, school, or job training.

Toward a Model for National Replication

In 2003, working with the Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Special Education, and drawing upon its ten-year learning curve, N.O.D. developed a cluster of SOS urban programs in central Connecticut. This new effort will test potential economic, administrative and impact advantages of regional collaboration. The longer-range objective is to develop a model for national replication.

1,000th Intern and Program's 10th Anniversary

In 2004, N.O.D.'s SOS will reach a milestone with its 1,000th intern, as well as the tenth year anniversary of the program. N.O.D. will mark this occasion in April 2004 with a conference and special event at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. to honor the teachers, administrators, job site mentors, students and parents who have made this program a success over the past decade.

SOS National Director Charles Dey meets
 with SOS intern Veronica Briscoe



World Committee on Disability

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FDR Award Winners:

Republic of South Korea
Canada
Ireland
Republic of Hungary
Kingdom of Thailand
Republic of Ecuador
Republic of Italy

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan
greets N.O.D. Vice Chairman
Christopher Reeve at the 2003
FDR International Disability Award
ceremony at the U.N.

Italy Honored with Seventh FDR International Disability Award

Each year, N.O.D.'s international arm - the World Committee on Disability - partners with the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute to present the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award. In 2003, the World Committee and the Roosevelt Institute honored the Republic of Italy as the seventh recipient of the Award at a ceremony at the United Nations.

Each year, permanent representatives, U.N. officials, N.O.D. Board members, and disability leaders attend the FDR Award ceremony. Following each Award presentation, the World Committee organizes and sponsors a luncheon in honor of the head of state receiving the Award. In 2003, H.E. Julian Hunte, President of the U.N. General Assembly provided the keynote address at the luncheon attended by 150 people.

Applications for the FDR Award are received annually from member nations of the U.N. The World Committee coordinates their review by judges, and provides recommendations to the Board of Trustees of the Roosevelt Institute. Through the Award, the World Committee encourages nations and their leaders throughout the world to make progress on disability issues a national priority.

Award Recognizes Progress on Disability

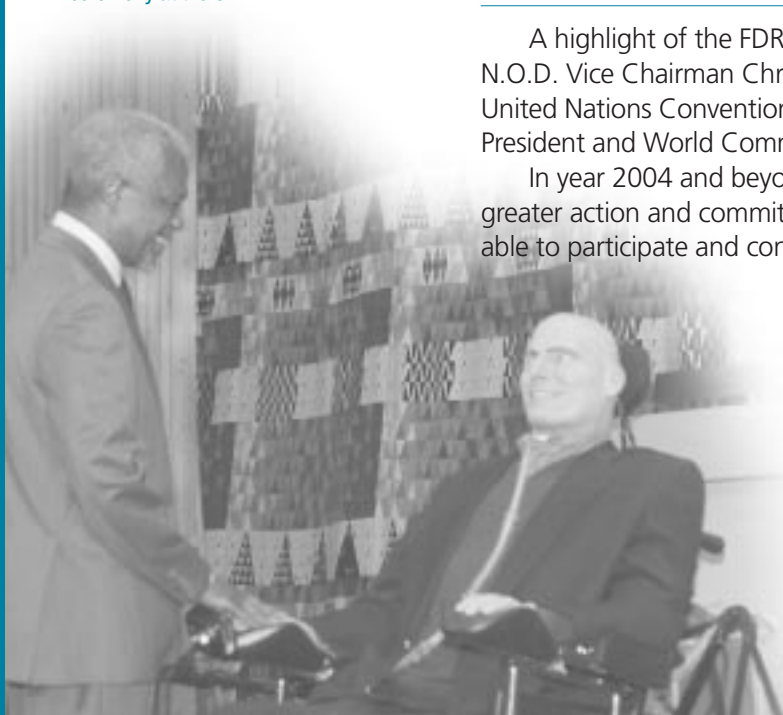
The winning nation is selected for making noteworthy progress toward the U.N. World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, which calls for the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, regardless of their nation's level of development.

The prize consists of a \$50,000 cash award from the Roosevelt Institute for a non-governmental disability organization in the winning nation. Starting in 2004, honored countries will receive a replica of the now-famous statue of President Roosevelt in his wheelchair at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Memorial in Washington, D.C. Previous winners received a bust of President Roosevelt by the distinguished artist Jo Davidson as well as the cash prize. For the past two years, the Award has been enhanced by a donation from the Wheelchair Foundation of 1,000 wheelchairs to people in need in the honored nation.

N.O.D. Vice Chairman Christopher Reeve Calls for U.N. Disability Convention

A highlight of the FDR Award ceremony in 2003 was the speech given by N.O.D. Vice Chairman Christopher Reeve, who took the occasion to call for a United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. N.O.D. President and World Committee Chairman Alan Reich echoed this call.

In year 2004 and beyond, the World Committee will continue calling for greater action and commitment by nations so that people with disabilities will be able to participate and contribute to life in their societies.



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Without the strong support of contributors who believe in our work, none of N.O.D.'s efforts could succeed. They make it possible for us to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

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