



## ADA Awareness Day



# A Celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of The Americans with Disabilities Act Monday July 26, 2010

## Sponsored by



Local architects, disability advocates and City officials are collaborating to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) civil rights law. The Act was signed into law by George Bush on July 26, 1990. July 26, 2010 has been proclaimed by Mayor Tom Leppert as ADA Awareness day in the City of Dallas and ADA Celebration Day by Mayor Phil Dyer in the City of Plano .

The Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Texas Registered Accessibility Specialists Association have put together a day of programs to enhance awareness of the momentous civil rights law for the disabled community . The Civil rights law is an effort to eliminate the architectural and cultural barriers that exist for our disabled citizens.

The ADA as Federal Law is landmark legislation that opens up services and employment opportunities to the 43 million Americans with disabilities. The law was written to strike a balance between the reasonable accommodation of citizens' needs and the ability of private and public entities to respond. The legislation establishes a clear and comprehensive prohibition of discrimination on the basis of Disability providing free access to government, business services, entertainment and employment.

Our hope is to explore the effect of the act on the built environment as well as those whose lives have been enhanced by improved access to jobs, education, recreation, services and goods previously denied them by physical barriers or discrimination. This is a day for awareness and for celebration that free access to government, business services, entertainment, and employment are shared by all.

### ADA Awareness Day Kick-off and Proclamation announcement

On October 26, 1974, during a hard fought Alabama-Texas Christian University football game, TCU star running back Kent Waldrep ran into a wall of Alabama tacklers and landed head-first on the artificial turf. His life as a star athlete was finished. Unable to move, Waldrep was taken off the field on a stretcher with an injury to his spinal cord. Attempts at rehabilitation were tried and found

useless, and the medical doctors regretfully informed Kent that his paralysis was permanent. Quadriplegia and a wheelchair would now dominate his life. But Kent is a fighter and was not willing to accept the verdict.

Kent's trip to Russia to seek treatment in the middle of the cold war resulted in a great uproar from the medical community. Fueled by his appearance on the "Today Show" and in Time, Look, and People magazines, an enormous groundswell of public interest arose. Constantly asking why paralysis was the one condition labeled incurable by medical experts, Kent Waldrep raised the awareness of the nation.

At age 25, Kent formed what became the American Paralysis Foundation. Ronald Reagan appointed him to the National Council on Disability. Kent as a vice-chair helped draft the Americans with Disabilities Act. Recent progress in spinal cord injury has proven out his belief in the possibility of healing, and athletes like Dennis Byrd are able to walk again today partly through Waldrep's efforts. The fight goes on for a final cure, and Kent Waldrep has dedicated his life to help bring this about

Kent Waldrep will honor us with his participation as our Kick-off speaker to the ADA Awareness Day in Dallas. He will speak at the Dallas City Hall Flag room at 10:00 a.m. on July 26<sup>th</sup> 2010. His inspiring journey will give us an idea of how the ADA has benefited our country and the disabled community.

DARS will also be present to discuss what services they provide to the disabled community.

This event is open to the public. For more information contact Marcela Abadi Rhoads at 214-403-8714 or marhoads@abadiaccess.com

**12 noon – 1:00 pm Tour of the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind**  
**4306 Capitol Avenue, Dallas, 75204**

Founded in 1931, the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind, a George Dahl architect designed historic building, focuses on improving and enhancing the lives and opportunities of the visually impaired in North Texas. Their guiding principle is the belief that with knowledge, training and motivation, people who are visually impaired can succeed and thrive in any workplace, live productive and meaningful lives, and be important contributors to their communities.

By providing jobs, job training and offering community services, the Lighthouse strives to empower and encourage its clients toward living independently.

The Lighthouse's *Industrial and Sewing Centers*, where more than 150 people are employed, and the *Technology Lab*, which offers adaptive business skills training to provide enhanced upward mobility opportunities for employment in a variety of office environments, will be in full operation for this 30-minute guided tour. Find out how the Lighthouse is making a real difference in our community and how you can help. This tour is open to the general public, and reservations are not required, but a response to ensure your space on the tour would be appreciated.

For additional information, call Jo Baker at 214-821-2375, ext. 116.

### **Texas Discovery Gardens: An Accessibility Case Study**

Texas Discovery Gardens, a butterfly exhibit at Fair Park, was renovated by Oglesby Greene Architects. The original building is historic from the 1936 Centennial Exposition, as the House of Horticulture. What is now the Butterfly House was originally a conservatory. An addition was completed in 1971. The historic building was not originally accessible and with the remodel it was updated to meet the State and Federal requirements in a very sensitive and effective way. The tour will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will be led by the project architect and accessibility inspector.

This tour will be \$10 for AIA and TRASA member and \$20 for non-members and it is worth one hour of barrier free HSW CEU. RSVP to the AIA since there is a limited number of spots. Please RSVP to the AIA at 214.742.3242 or [info@aiadallas.org](mailto:info@aiadallas.org)

### **The City of Plano Proclaims July 26 as ADA Celebration Day**

The City of Plano joins communities across the country in recognizing the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act into legislation. The City is proclaiming July 26 as an annual ADA Celebration Day in the City of Plano. The Honorable Mayor Phil Dyer will present the proclamation during the regular city council meeting on Monday, July 26. Kent Waldrep will be a distinguished guest partaking in the proclamation event.

#### **Plano Proclamation Presentation**

Monday, July 26, 7 p.m.  
Plano Municipal Center,  
1520 K Avenue  
Plano, Texas 75023

**Sponsorship opportunities available**

**Contact Marcela Abadi Rhoads, RAS at [marhoads@abadiaccess.com](mailto:marhoads@abadiaccess.com)**