

Disability Awareness

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March 28, 2024



When it All Began: Acts of Advocacy

Disability advocacy started in the 1800's and became more prevalent in the 1900's

- 1920 - Vocational Rehabilitation program established
- 1930 - Fighting for employment during the Great Depression
- 1940 - Formation of "We Are Not Alone" movement for the mental health population
- 1946 - President Truman forms the National Institute of Mental Health
- 1953 - Establishment of the National Association for Retarded Children (now The Arc of the United States)
- 1959 - Dr. Carolyn Vash, living with quadriplegia, starts advancing people-first language

Want to Learn More?

[Timeline of Disability Rights in the United States | Resources | Accessibility.com](#)

[Guide to Disability Rights Laws | ADA.gov](#)

[When the 'Capitol Crawl' Dramatized the Need for Americans with Disabilities Act | HISTORY](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, As Amended | ADA.gov](#)

[The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by WIOA \(PDF\) \(section508.gov\)](#)

- 1961 – President Kennedy appoints a presidential panel to examine issues around intellectual disabilities
- 1964 - Civil Rights Act - Title VII created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- 1972 – Ed Roberts founds the Center for Independent Living in Berkeley, CA
- 1980 - Granite State Independent Living Foundation is formed
- 1985 – Protection and Advocacy for Mentally Ill Individuals Act is passed
- 1988 - People-first language begins to come into use by advocacy groups in the US

The "Capital Crawl"



A group of people with disabilities led by 8-year-old Jennifer Keelan crawl up the steps of the U.S. capitol in Washington, to draw support for a key bill pending in the house that would extend civil rights to disabled persons.

Photo by: Jeff Markowitz/AP

On March 12, 1990, over 1,000 people marched from the White House to the U.S. Capitol to demand that Congress pass the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). When they got there, more than 60 of them got out of their chairs, threw down their canes, crutches and other mobility aids and crawled up the Capitol steps.

Dubbed the "Capitol Crawl," this was a physical demonstration of how inaccessible architecture impacts people with disabilities. It also highlighted the urgency behind the need to pass the ADA, which had languished in Congress since its introduction in 1988.

"Some people may have thought it was undignified for people in wheelchairs to crawl in that manner, but I felt that it was necessary to show the country what kinds of things people with disabilities have to face on a day-to-day basis. We had to be willing to fight for what we believed in." - Michael Winter, Former Director of the Center for Independent Living, Hawaii and Berkeley, California

Finally...

President George H.W. Bush signing the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990.



Sitting beside President Bush from left to right are Evan Kemp, Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Justin Dart, Jr., Chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Standing behind him from left to right are Reverend Harold Wilke and Swift Parrino, Chairperson, National Council on Disability.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990



Title I – Employment



Title II – State and local government activities (public services)



Title III - Public accommodations and services by private entities



Title IV – Telecommunications relay services

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- **Section 501** – requires affirmative action and nondiscrimination in employment by Federal agencies of the executive branch
- **Section 503** - requires affirmative action and prohibits employment discrimination by Federal government contractors and subcontractors with contracts of more than \$10,000
- **Section 504** - creates and extends civil rights to people with disabilities, provides opportunities for children and adults with disabilities in education and employment and allows for reasonable accommodations
- **Section 508** - requires Federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities (added in 1998)

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 1979 - Personal Care Attendant services begin in New Hampshire.
- 1980 - GSIL (at the time referred to as the Granite State Independent Living Foundation) begins operation with 4 staff members and 38 consumers. The annual budget is \$41,800. Its first location is 53 Elk Drive, Bedford, NH.
- 1981 - The first edition of the Granite State Independent Living Foundation newsletter is printed.
- 1983 - GSILF's Advocacy Program offered Information & Referral 338 times on legal rights & services, seven training sessions on problem solving techniques, five presentations on the rights & needs of individuals with disabilities and counseled 48 individuals on issues of personal need.

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 1984 - New Hampshire adopts a Constitutional Convention Amendment to provide accessibility to all registration and polling places, though disability advocates find that the act is difficult, if not impossible, to enforce.
- 1985 - Transportation problems faced by New Hampshire residents with disabilities discussed at a conference sponsored by the Governors Commission for the Handicapped , Granite State Independent Living Foundation and the Public Transportation Division of the State of New Hampshire, Department of Public Works and Highways. The conference provided a forum whereby citizens with disabilities and transportation officials could cooperatively seek solutions to the public transportation problems faced by 90,000 New Hampshire citizens with disabilities.

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 1986 - Benefit Basketball enables Granite State Independent Living Foundation to purchase a handicap-accessible van. The Union Leader vs. Channel 9 benefit basketball game raised \$2,764 for GSILF.
- 1987 - GSILF offers accessibility assistance, suggestions and recommendations to Presidential Primary candidates on improving accessibility for all citizens during their campaigns. This includes physical access, language interpreters and Large Print materials.
- 1988 - GSILF organizes a 5K Wheel-A-Thon to raise funds for accessible transportation.
- 1989 - A demonstration in July brings attention to the lack of accessibility on new city buses in Concord, conducted by wheelchair users and led by Larry Robinson, co-chair of the GSILF.

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 1990 - GSIL celebrates its 10 year anniversary. There are 20 full-time staff, 15 part-time staff and volunteers. Membership is now 350 consumers strong.
- 1994 - The GSIL "Electronic Bulletin Board" goes online in the month of November.
- 1995 - GSIL opens satellite offices in Franconia and Portsmouth, NH.
- 1998 - A ground-breaking ceremony is held at 21 Chenell Drive in Concord. Completion of GSIL's new office concludes the following spring.
- 1998 - GSIL introduces a new transportation voucher system on a first-come, first-served basis. Trips covered are medical appointments (not covered under Medicaid), social events, recreational activities, family events & shopping trips.



The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 2000 - GSIL celebrates its 20th anniversary with an Open House event, which includes the burying of a time capsule.
- 2002 – New Hampshire establishes the Personal Care Services Provider program, providing care to individuals on the Home and Community Based Care for the Elderly and Chronically Ill (HCBC-ECI) Medicaid waiver program.
- 2004 - GSIL sponsors a Disability Town Hall Meeting. Candidates Joe Lieberman & Wesley Clark attend. Representatives for John Kerry, John Edwards and Howard Dean attend on their behalf. Vendors displayed the latest electronic voting equipment to allow persons with disabilities to vote privately and independently. Attendees were given opportunities to test out the new equipment.

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 2004 - Access04, New Hampshire's largest exposition of technology and resources for independent living, took place in June at the Whittemore Center on the UNH Durham campus. Nearly 20 organizations and businesses joined GSIL in planning and implementing this event. Over 80 exhibitors displayed resources, equipment and technology to hundreds of visitors from all over New England. The event also included educational workshops, interactive art, a job fair and live music.
- 2004 - GSIL offers comprehensive employment services to people with disabilities with the addition of Bancroft Employment Services.
- 2007 - GSIL hosts a Presidential Candidate Forum on equality, opportunity & access. Candidates addressing the forum include Joe Biden, Chris Dodd, Hillary Clinton and Dennis Kucinich.

The History of Granite State Independent Living

- 2009 - The Access Modification Program (AMP) at GSIL assists individuals with disabilities in becoming more independent by overseeing home modification projects such as ramps and lifts. GSIL assisted 44 consumers with these projects.
- 2010 - July 26 marks the 20th anniversary of the ADA. Celebrations are held across the country. GSIL is a co-sponsor of the Concord, NH event. A keynote was made by former GSIL employee Andy Washburn, now with the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Disabilities Rights Section. Many awards were presented to organizations and individuals who promote accessibility.
- 2010 - GSIL celebrates its 30th anniversary! We've come far, but there's still work to be done!

THANK
YOU!



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