

25th anniversary: Reflecting on a year of celebration, lessons of history

by [Access Press Staff](#) // December 10th, 2015

People with disabilities can reflect on the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as 2015 winds down. In Minnesota and across the nation, many celebrations were held to mark this important legislation and its impacts on our community. Most celebrations were held on or near July 26, the anniversary date, including the celebration at the Minnesota History Center. A number of events took place in Washington, DC where the ADA was signed into law by President George Herbert Walker Bush.

Before the 25th anniversary year draws to a close, it's worth acknowledging all of those who came before us and were active in the disability rights movement. Many of the original activists have passed away but their contributions are worthy of recognition.

It's also worth noting the many history resources for those interested in learning more about the ADA and the events leading up to its passage and the 2008 passing of the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA). Our partners at the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities have been generous in sharing stories about ADA history, through the council's participation in the ADA Legacy Project. The project celebrates the impact of the ADA on disability rights, and honors the contributions of individuals with disabilities and their allies who persevered in securing the passage of this landmark civil rights legislation.

In July 2012, the council was asked to participate in the ADA Legacy Project. Over a 2½ year time period, a monthly Moment in Disability History feature was posted on its website, marking important happenings and recognizing some of the many, many leaders across the country who contributed to the passage of the ADA.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, Perspectives on the 25th Anniversary is a compilation of those history moments. It provides an opportunity to learn about this history, gain a better understanding of the immensity of the efforts that led to July 26, 1990, and continue the work that remains in order to fully realize what was envisioned when the movement began.

It is available in pdf or epub format and can be found [here](#). Look under the heading for the ADA Legacy Project. The book is almost 140 pages long. It includes detailed footnotes, which can guide readers to further information on a particular topic. Its section feature events before the ADA, events tied to the ADA's passage and after the ADA.

Some of the information used to compile the book is from Georgetown University's ArchiveADA. It, too, is a great source of information. ArchiveADA can be found at www.law.georgetown.edu/archiveada/.

The archive contains interviews, court cases, articles and other useful documents for anyone interested in specific aspects of ADA history.

Access Press is interested in reader submissions for the monthly History Note column, to complement the articles written by Luther Granquist and other contributors. Submissions must center on events, people and places in the history of Minnesota's disability community. We are interested in history that focuses on all types of disability topics, so long as the history has a tie to Minnesota. We are especially interested in stories from Greater Minnesota. Please submit ideas prior to submitting full stories, as we may have covered the topic before. Contact us at access@accesspress.org or 651-644-2133 if you have questions. The History Note is a monthly column sponsored by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities.