



# Reach Out e-Diversity News

An Electronic Publication of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

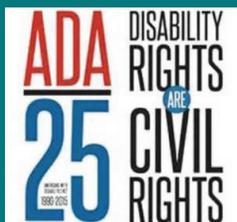
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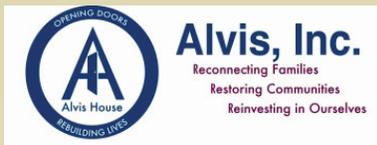
Read, Pass on to Friends, Family Members, Colleagues & Constituents

## Happy Anniversary to All of Us!



At the young age of 13, I began to understand that all the “impossibilities” associated with my disability could be altered. I had the power to be on a positive trajectory. The idea of walking independently never entered the minds of the doctors diagnosing me in 1977. Yet I represent an improbable making the impossible a reality and I am celebrating my 26th anniversary of walking independently and working the “impossibilities” placed against me so many years ago.

### Alvis: Building a Community



Alvis House is a leader in providing services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IIDD), with programs designed to create a family atmosphere and to promote independence and growth.



### Without Addressing Disability We'll Never Make Meaningful Progress In Ending Police Violence

What these individuals share in addition to the troubling ways they died might come as a surprise.

It's not race.

### Observable Clues to Vision Problems



Over 285 million people in the world are visually impaired, of whom 39 million are blind and 246 million have moderate to severe visual impairment (WHO, 2011).

The purpose of “Reach Out” e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



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## Happy Anniversary to All of Us!

*Mathew McCollough, Executive Director  
District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council*

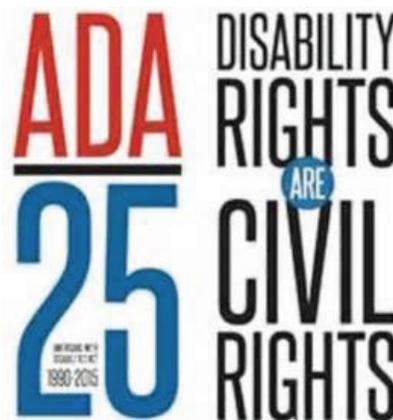
*Reprinted from Disability.Blog*

I begin this narrative by honoring the following significant individuals and recognizing that my mother, father and grandfather instilled in me to lead a life with a great sense of humility, respect, honor and integrity. I am a Filipino American with cerebral palsy. My father served in the United States Air Force and my mother is an educator. Her father – my grandfather – was part of the “Greatest Generation” who served in the Marine Corps during World War II. My grandfather acquired his disability during the war and the gentleman served as the most influential mentor during my childhood.

*Happy Anniversary to all of us!* July 26, 2015 represents 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition to the 25th anniversary of the ADA, many of us identify the 4th of July as “Independence Day” for the United States. However, this month always holds a significant meaning to me. I celebrate an anniversary of my own and this date represents an entirely different level of “independence” for me.

Twenty-six years ago on July 4, 1989, I took my first steps, walking independently without the support of my arm braces, walker or wheelchair. I was 13 years old at the time. I was uncertain of my capabilities, yet my parents always had a way of challenging me. They did not know if I had the ability to walk independently; however, they were going to push me to try.

Upon receiving my diagnosis of cerebral palsy at the age of two, my parents were told by the doctors that being toilet trained was the best they could possibly hope for their son. Yet my long-term development might improve if I received physical, occupational, and speech therapies as soon as possible. This prognosis was made in 1977. Willing to defy the odds, my parents enrolled me in early intervention and other integrated, community-based services immediately afterward. Unknowingly, my mother and father appropriately placed me on the path to independence, empowerment and self-



reliance. Their efforts of raising expectations provided me with opportunities to exceed my own potential.

At the young age of 13, I began to understand that all the “impossibilities” associated with my disability could be altered. I had the power to be on a positive trajectory. The idea of walking independently never entered the minds of the doctors diagnosing me in 1977. Yet I represent an improbable making the impossible a reality and I am celebrating my 26th anniversary of walking independently and working the “impossibilities” placed against

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me so many years ago.

I view the importance of the ADA in similar light. The historic legislation doesn't only protect the civil rights of our citizens with disabilities. The ADA exists to provide opportunities for tens of millions of people with disabilities to defiantly breaking through the visible and unseen institutionalized discrimination placed before them, altering their circumstances and placing themselves on a more positive path to what all citizens strive to obtain – *a good life!*

Let us truly embrace the silver anniversary of the ADA and celebrate its significance with our families, community members, friends and colleagues this month and throughout this year. As such, I have quite a few *happy anniversaries* to offer, so let me begin:

- *Happy Anniversary* – Justin Dart, Jr., Judy Heumann, Ed Roberts and so many other disability rights leaders who dedicated

their time and stayed the course as the ADA successfully passed through the U.S. Congress leading up to the summer of 1990.

- *Happy Anniversary* – Representatives of the family movement from the 1950s and the self-advocacy and independent living movements from the 1960s and 1970s for shaping the integrated, community-based supports and services that we have today.
- *Happy Anniversary* – The U.S. Department of Justice; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; the U.S. Judicial System; and all the state and local governments committed to implementing and enforcing the ADA.
- *Happy Anniversary* – Human resource specialists and supervisors actively participating in the interactive process and reasonably accommodating their qualified employees with disabilities.
- *Happy Anniversary* – State vocational

rehabilitation agencies that are dedicated to offering all citizens with intellectual and other significant disabilities integrated, competitive employment opportunities at prevailing wages instead of segregated placements.

- *Happy Anniversary* – Developmental disabilities services agencies that are dedicated to offering all citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities integrated, community-based services and supports instead of institutionalized and segregated care.
- *Happy Anniversary* – School administrators, teachers and coordinators who have properly prepared their students to actively participate in their own Individualized Education Programs so they can effectively advocate for their needs when they become adults and their rights are protected under the ADA.
- *Happy Anniversary* – Restaurants and other retail businesses that truly value their customers with

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disabilities by providing accessible main entrances, restrooms and pathways of travel within their establishments.

- *Happy Anniversary* – Financial institutions that recognize customers with disabilities are part of the economic mainstream and are committed to assisting all citizens with disabilities the opportunity to achieve “economic self-sufficiency”.
- *Happy Anniversary* – Government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and private companies that actively and consistently recruit and retain individuals with disabilities for employment because the employers recognize the potential talent this community possesses.
- *Happy Anniversary* – Medical physicians and doctors who own their private practices and possess accessible medical diagnostic equipment (i.e.: adjustable examination tables, wheelchair weighing scales, etc.) because they

recognize that their patients with disabilities should receive equitable health care.

- *Happy Anniversary* – Parents, guardians, siblings and other family members who push for higher expectations and full inclusion of their daughters, sons, brothers, and sisters with disabilities in their communities on a daily basis.
- *Happy Anniversary* – Advocates with disabilities that use their voices to influence change, remove discriminatory laws and practices and remind our policy-makers and the general public that we possess strong political will and power beyond measure. And finally;
- *Happy Anniversary* – to my wife! She and I celebrated our one year anniversary this month! We are both working professionals with disabilities providing valued contributions within our communities.

All of these *happy anniversaries* represent the significant feats and accomplishments that led to or occurred as a result of the ADA. These positive outcomes are certainly causes for celebration. Upon finishing up with our celebration, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that we have a lot of planning and work to do for next 25 years, because the ADA has yet to be fully realized. I have always known that I was born into a world that wasn't meant for me. I'm willing to participate in this world because of the existence of the ADA and in hopes of making the path easier for other citizens with disabilities following closely behind me. My legacy lies in the actions that I take to improve my community. Yet, the question remains: ***Who is with me along for the ride?!!!***

But, for now – I welcome all of you to “[Raise Your Glass](#)” and celebrate 25 years of furthering equality, inclusion, community integration, economic sufficiency, independence and self-determination!

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District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council*

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### About Mathew McCollough

*In addition to working closely with self-advocates, community members and colleagues to improve the services and supports for people with disabilities, Mat loves spending time with family and friends, going to the movies, listening to rock music and supporting his beloved Chicago Cubs in*

*hopes that they will win a World Series someday! Mat has either been appointed or elected to several commissions and boards with emphasis on health equity and human rights, including the [Mid-Atlantic Regional Health Equity Council](#), District of Columbia Commission on Human Rights, TASH Board of Directors and the [National](#)*

*[Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Board of Directors](#). In 2011, he was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the [U.S. Access Board](#), an independent federal agency devoted to establishing accessibility standards that promote the full integration and participation of people with disabilities*

## Did You Know?

**With more than 30 years of experience impacting national and state public policy, Mark E. Seifarth has held a wide variety of positions in both Ohio and Washington, D.C. He has worked on both the original Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, several reauthorizations of the Rehabilitation Act/Workforce Investment Act, and numerous federal and state laws affecting the daily lives of people with disabilities. Mark currently is Chair of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC).**

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## Alvis: Building a Community

By Denise M. Robinson, President & CEO  
Alvis House, Inc.



Alvis House is a leader in providing services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IIDD), with programs designed to create a family atmosphere and to promote independence and growth. On the road to learning how to make good choices, clients are supported by staff that teach, assist and encourage. Our skilled staff have a passion for serving this special population. Their expertise in the area of behavioral and clinical services is what makes Alvis House programs for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities

The foundation of our programs is The FISH! Philosophy, which includes four simple, interconnected practices:

1. Be Present is being emotionally present for people. It's a powerful message of respect that improves communication and

strengthens relationships. Being fully present is not daydreaming or on the phone but interacting and engaging with our clients.

2. Play taps into your natural way of being creative, enthusiastic and having fun. Play is the spirit that drives the curious mind, as in "Let's play with that idea!" It's a mindset you can bring to everything you do.

3. Make Their Day is finding simple ways to serve or delight our clients and each other in a meaningful, memorable way. It's about contributing to someone else's life, not because you want something out of it, but because that's the person you want to be.

4. Choose Your Attitude means taking responsibility for how you respond to what life throws at you. Once you are aware that your choice impacts everyone around you, you can ask yourself, "Is my attitude helping my team or my customers? Is it helping me to be the person I want to be?"

Through The FISH! Philosophy, we build stronger relationships with the team members we work with, the individuals we serve, the clients we teach and the people we love.

At Alvis House, we also encourage a sense of community. Building a sense of community takes place not only at social gatherings, but also when staff demonstrate that they care about our clients as individuals. We also support each client in finding a purpose in their lives, which can be realized through jobs, friendships and staff who can serve as mentors to the clients. Interestingly, when a sense of community is established, clients



Denise Robinson

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with challenging behaviors often will look to their community for answers to some of their most pressing questions: Will my behaviors push staff away from me? Am I good at anything that matters to others? Am I valued as a person?

Additionally, the consumers in our programs enjoy a range of activities with their Alvis House family, like playing cards, bowling, and playing baseball. One of the favorite activities is the Path Conquerors hiking club. Every Saturday, snow, rain or shine, as many as 40 clients go to a park, nature preserve, or somewhere else to hike together. Their hiking adventures range from walking on the flat trail at The Ohio State University Horseshoe (the favorite location to date) to more challenging trails marked "steep, rugged and unimproved" at the local metro parks.

*The following piece was written by one of our clients, Cory C., after a hike with other Path Conquerors.*

### Beautiful Trails

It was a clear, sunny day...the most beautiful joyful day I had ever seen. As we entered the Highbanks Park, the three of us smiled. I walk the trail with my family, Devon, who is to the right of me, and my friend, William, who is to the left of me.

As we go down the long road through a spirit of holiness with

the trees, birds and the leaves, I knew spring was here...all around us. We stop in the middle of the woods to have a break, we sit on a bench to breathe, this great air of the world. We start our journey again, what appears to be hours of walking but knowing it is good for our health and our spirit. Time seemed to fly by with the cool breeze against our face, we talk, we laugh and before we knew it the hike was at its end.



*Devon, Cory and William, all members of the Path Conquerors Hiking Club, take a rest during a spring hike at a Columbus Metro Park.*

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### Without Addressing Disability We'll Never Make Meaningful Progress In Ending Police Violence

*By Rebecca Cokley and Lawrence Carter-Long via Trice Edney News Wire Special Series*



**Freddie Gray, Eric Garner, Kajieme Powell, James Boyd, and Ethan Saylor** were all killed in controversial and ultimately tragic interactions with law enforcement. Odds are the first four names are more familiar to most people, but what these individuals share in addition to the troubling ways they died might come as a surprise. It's not race.

All five individuals were disabled.

Freddie Gray, who died in the custody of Baltimore police was reported to have an intellectual disability due to lead poisoning. Eric Garner, died at the hands of Staten Island police, and was asthmatic. Kajieme Powell, fatally shot by the St Louis Police Department, had a history of mental illness. James Boyd, shot and killed by Albuquerque Police, also had a history of mental illness. Ethan Saylor, who had

Down syndrome, died of asphyxia after an incident with off duty officers moonlighting as security guards in Frederick, MD. The medical examiner ruled Saylor's death a homicide though no charges were filed.

"Disability is the hidden variable in so many of both the day-to-day and worst-case violent interactions between citizens and law enforcement in the United States. Looking at disability allows us to see the intersections among incidents otherwise divided by race, class, gender, weapons used, and outcomes," said David M. Perry [<http://www.thismess.net/p/about-me.html>], who has dropped more words on the topic of police violence and disability than any other journalist. "If we don't get a handle on disability issues," Perry concludes, "we will not make meaningful headway in solving the problems of police violence and lack of trust in law enforcement in America."

A September 2014 review of San Francisco officer-involved shootings between 2005 and 2013 by KQED found that a whopping 58 percent of people killed by law enforcement had

"mental illness as a contributing factor."

A year before the Bay area investigation, a 2013 report by the Treatment Advocacy Center and National Sheriffs' Association estimates that half of the people shot and killed by police in the U.S. "have mental health problems."

Much like how racial disparities in educational discipline reveal implicit biases that show how disability discrimination contributes to the School to Prison Pipeline, it is critical that we look deeply into disability issues within communities of color as they relate to law enforcement.

There's much to do, but we can begin by addressing these factors:

Obtain accurate and up-to-date information. Currently, those monitoring police incidents with disabled people are largely restricted to using media reports for details which are often sketchy and incomplete at best. One way to correct this is to include disability data in the Death in Custody Act and track disabilities

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that have been acquired while in police custody. Gaining access to information being collected identifying race and gender, while adding disability and related subcategories would go a long way toward giving us an accurate accounting of the situation.

Non-compliance isn't automatically criminal. If law enforcement understood that, and acted accordingly, we could minimize the occurrence of police-related violence in all communities. The issues go beyond mental health. Diabetics experiencing insulin reactions have been mistakenly perceived as threatening or intoxicated. Deaf individuals have been pepper sprayed, tasered or worse because police officers didn't know American Sign Language.

People with cerebral palsy, which often causes speech difficulties and involuntary muscle tremors, have been inaccurately arrested for drunk driving. Some might assume mandatory CIT or Crisis Intervention Training would address these concerns, but there is precious little accountability or even agreed upon standards for assessing the long-term value

of these programs. Community involvement can positively influence the CIT experience for all concerned, but to date, there remains no agreed-on standard for gauging or assessing what works.

We need to end the use of solitary confinement as punishment and practice in detaining youth and people with disabilities. The ACLU contends that "solitary confinement can cause extreme psychological, physical, and developmental harm. For children, who are still developing and more vulnerable to irreparable harm, the risks are magnified – particularly for kids with disabilities or histories of trauma and abuse."

The systems and structures that sustain police violence against communities of color, people with disabilities, and people of color with disabilities are the same. There's no reason the common ground that inescapably and undeniably connects our communities shouldn't be stronger than fear or other factors that, in the end, only support the status quo by keeping us apart.

**Rebecca Cokley** is the Executive Director of the National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent agency that advises the White House and Congress on national disability public policy. She joined NCD in 2013 after serving 4 years in the Obama Administration.

**Lawrence Carter-Long** is NCD's Public Affairs Specialist. He previously co-authored an article with David Perry on the topic of police violence and disability for [THE ATLANTIC in May 2014](#). This article is the third of an op-ed series on behalf of the Civil Rights Coalition on Police Reform. The coalition, convened and led by the national Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, is comprised of over 30 national civil and human rights organizations, faith and community leaders working to address the nationwide epidemic of police brutality and lethal shootings, claiming the lives of Black men, women and youth; and provide necessary reforms to change the culture of policing in America. For more information, please visit [www.lawyerscommittee.org](http://www.lawyerscommittee.org).

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## Observable Clues to Vision Problems

Over 285 million people in the world are visually impaired, of whom 39 million are blind and 246 million have moderate to severe visual impairment (WHO, 2011). It is predicted that without extra interventions, these numbers will rise to 75 million blind and 200 million visually impaired by the year 2020 (WHO, 2010).

- In the United States, one out of 20 preschooler aged children will have a vision problem that affects their ability to learn (Prevent Blindness America, 2010).
- More than 12 million children ages 5 to 15 are visually impaired due to uncorrected refractive errors as a result of near-sightedness, far-sightedness, or astigmatism (World Health Organization, 2009)
- The number of people with partial sight today -- 135 million -- is expected to double by the year 2020 (Vision 2020, 2000).
- About 80% of blindness is avoidable (preventable

or curable), and 90% of the world's blind live in a developing country (WHO, 2010)

One of the most important functions an individual can perform when assisting someone with vision loss is to help that person identify the problem and seek help. The following is a checklist that may give you some indication that a vision problem exists.

### APPEARANCE OF EYES

- One eye turns in or out at any time
- Reddened eyes or lids
- Eye tear excessively
- Encrusted eyelids
- Frequent styes on lids

### COMPLAINTS WHEN USING EYES

- Headaches in forehead or temples
- Burning or itch eyes after reading or desk work
- Print blurs after reading a short time
- Complains of seeing double (diplopia)
- Words move or "swim" on the page

### BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF



### VISUAL PROBLEMS

#### A. EYE MOVEMENT ABILITIES (Ocular Motility)

- Head turns as reads across page
- Loses place frequently during reading
- Needs finger or marker to keep place
- Short attention span in reading or copying
- Frequently omits words
- Rereads or skips lines unknowingly

#### B. EYE TEAMING ABILITIES (Binocularity)

- Repeats letters within words
- Omits letters, numbers or phrases
- Misaligns digits in number columns
- Squints, closes or covers one eye
- Tilts head extremely while working at desk
- Odd working posture at desk activities

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### C. EYE-HAND

#### COORDINATION ABILITIES

- Must feel things “to get the idea”
- Eyes not used to “steer” hand movements (extreme lack of orientation, placement of words or drawings on page)
- Uses hand as “spacer” to control spacing and alignment on page
- Repeatedly confuses left-right directions

### D. VISUAL FORM

#### PERCEPTION (Visual Comparison, Visual Imagery, Visualization)

- Fails to recognize same word in next sentence
- Reverses letters and/or

words in writing and copying

- Repeatedly confuses words with similar beginnings and endings
- Fails to visualize what is read silently or aloud
- Whispers to self for reinforcement while reading silently
- Uses “drawing with fingers” to discriminate similarities and differences

### E. REFRACTIVE STATUS

#### (Nearsightedness, Farsightedness, Focus Problems, etc.)

- Quickly loses interest in reading
- Blinks excessively at desk tasks or reading

- Holds book too closely; face too closed to desk
- Makes errors in copying from page to paper
- Rubs eyes during or after short periods of visual activity

### CONTACT for additional educational and research resources in vision:

Optometric Extension Program Foundation, Inc.

1921 E. Carnegie Ave. Suite 3L  
Santa Ana, CA 92705-5811

[www.OEPE.org](http://www.OEPE.org)

[OEP@OEP.org](mailto:OEP@OEP.org)

### Did You Know?

Every 7 minutes, someone in the United States loses their sight, often as part of the aging process (Braille Institute of America).

Every minute a child somewhere in the world goes blind (World Health Organization, 2009).



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