



CINCINNATI TO CELEBRATE SILVER ANNIVERSARY OF ADA

Americans with Disabilities Act Has Made a Huge Impact on U.S.

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Cincinnati will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the world's first comprehensive civil rights law protecting people with disabilities, the Americans with Disabilities Act, on July 27, 2015 in Downtown Cincinnati.

The public is invited to join the celebration, first on a march from City Hall to Fountain Square, then at a party on Fountain Square with speakers, awards, entertainers and exhibitors.

The inaugural Disability Pride March will leave City Hall at 9:30 am and follow a six-block route on the sidewalks. The Fountain Square festivities will be held from 10 am to 2 pm.

“The ADA anniversary is a time when we can reflect positively on a law that has made a great impact on the lives of people with disabilities, our city and our nation,” said Kat Lyons, co-chair of the 25th Anniversary Planning Committee. “It is also an opportunity to address the important work that lies ahead to promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities.”

The committee, which has been working on the event for nearly a year, is composed of more than two dozen representatives of Cincinnati area human service agencies, including people with disabilities who have first-hand experience about how the ADA has changed lives.

After overwhelming bipartisan support from Congress, President George H.W. Bush signed the ADA into law with a goal of creating equal opportunities for people with disabilities through inclusion in the workplace, in schools, and in the community. Bush declared: “Let the shameful walls of exclusion finally come tumbling down.”



Speakers will include:

- Amanda Young, Ms. Wheelchair Ohio USA, who is vying for Ms. Wheelchair USA on a platform of showing people that health and wellness can be achieved despite obstacles.
- Charles "Chip" Gerhardt, III, of Cincinnati who lobbied Congress and the Ohio Legislature to pass the ABLE Act, which allows tax-free savings accounts for people with disabilities. He did so on behalf of the National Down Syndrome Society, where he serves on the board, and his daughter, Anne, who has Down Syndrome.
- Cincinnati Council Member Kevin Flynn, who will talk about how local and state government can do a better job of implementing the ADA.
- Former state Senate Minority Leader Eric Kearney, a Cincinnati attorney.
- And Mayor John Cranley, who will help to kick-off the half-mile walk by issuing a proclamation on the City Hall steps.



Amanda Young, Ms. Wheelchair Ohio USA

Awards will be presented to individuals and organizations that have supported full inclusion and participation for people with disabilities. The winners of a writing contest also will be honored for expressing how the ADA has impacted them or someone they know.

Entertainment will be provided by two Cincinnati area groups: Steel ‘n Jon, an acoustic duo, and Melodic Connections, which provides music therapy to people with learning disabilities.

Said co-chair Debbie Moorehous: “This inspirational event will be a call to action for the people of Cincinnati – an invitation to do even more to empower and include people with disabilities.”

Main sponsors are Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries, Metro and Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services. About two dozen other sponsors are supporting the event.

For more information, search for “Cincinnati ADA 25th Anniversary” on Facebook or contact committee co-chair Debbie Moorehous at dmoorehous@cilo.net or 513-241-2600, ext. 123.

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