



District of Columbia

March 2018 Office of Disability Rights Newsletter

District of Columbia sent this bulletin at 03/08/2018 03:35 PM EST



March 2018

30th Anniversary of Deaf President Now

Did you know this month is the 30th anniversary of Deaf President Now. The original Deaf President Now (DPN), put on by student activists from Gallaudet University in March of 1988, led to the University's first Deaf President in its 124 year old history.

DPN helped to bring about a systematic change not only socially across the United States but within legislation. After DPN, new bills and laws were passed that protect and promote the rights of people who are Deaf, DeafBlind and hard of hearing.

For upcoming events related to the celebration of DPN please visit Gallaudet University's [website](#).



Upcoming Events

Winter Paralympics 2018: Pyeongchang

The 2018 Paralympics Opening Ceremony Watch Party.

Friday, March 9th 7:45 - 9:45 PM. The 2018 Winter Paralympics begin this Friday. We are excited to cheer on our country's athletes as they compete for gold. We want to recognize Noah Grove, from our neighboring state of Maryland, who will be competing this year in sled hockey. This will be Grove's first time competing in the Paralympics. Good luck Noah and all of team USA!



Also, follow and promote the hashtag **#EqualMedalPay** to promote policy change so that Paralympic athletes receive equal medal payout to their Olympic peers. Currently, Paralympic athletes only receive one-fifth of what their Olympic peers make.

Hidden Army, a local networking group for young professionals with disabilities in the DC area will be hosting a watch party Friday night. The event will take place at 130 M Street NE at 7:45 PM. The opening Ceremony begins promptly at 8 PM.

See Me for Me: 2018 Celebration



See Me for Me: 2018 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Celebration. Tuesday, March 20th 4-6 PM. The DC Developmental Disabilities Council in partnership with the DC Department on Disability Services (DDS) invites you to celebrate this year's Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

The event will have an array of performers and speakers including Mayors Muriel Bowser and DDS Director Andrew Reese. To register for this free event and to find further details go to [eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

Join Today: Commission on Persons with Disabilities



Join the Commission on Persons with Disabilities. Are you interested in actively participating on a DC advisory body to inform and advise the District on programs, services, facilities, and activities that impact the lives of residents with disabilities in the District of Columbia? If so, join the Commission on Persons with Disabilities today. Contact Julia.wolhandler@dc.gov for more information.

Upcoming Commission Meetings: March 22nd, 10:00 AM. 441 4th Street NW, 11th Floor. Further details can be found at ODR.DC.GOV

ReelAbilities Film Festival



The ReelAbilities Film Festival in our neighboring Northern Virginia begins this Saturday, March 10th. The ReelAbilities Film Festival presents award-winning films by and about people with disabilities.

For information on this film festival and how you can attend please visit the Northern Virginia's ReelAbilities [website](#).

Verbal Description Tour: Library of Congress

Verbal Description Tour of the Library of Congress

Thomas Jefferson Building. Visitors who are Blind or low vision are invited to experience a walking tour of the Thomas Jefferson Building. The Touch History tour is led by a specially trained docent, who uses vivid language to describe the building. Upcoming tour dates:

1. Saturday, March 10 at 9:30 AM
2. Tuesday, April 3 at 9:30 AM
3. Saturday, April 14 at 9:30 AM



Tours can also be requested. To sign up or for more information contact Visitor Services at VSO@loc.gov or call 202-707-9779.

Resources and Information

Join NFB-Newsline



Anyone who is blind or visually impaired is eligible to sign up for NFB-Newsline. If you sign up for NFB-Newsline, you will have FREE access to many newspapers and magazines. Additionally, you will be able to hear them read, because you will use your phone, your computer or a stand-alone player like the Victor Reader Stream to access them.

If you are interested in doing so, please email me at Nfb.newsline@dc.gov. Or call the DC Public Library Center for Accessibility at 202-727-2142.

Bringing Autonomous Vehicles to DC

Mayor Bowser and Deputy Mayor Kenner announced new efforts to explore an autonomous vehicle (AV) program by establishing the Interagency AV Working Group to proactively prepare the District for AV technologies and ensure that AV deployment will benefit District residents and visitors. The working group is comprised of District agencies focused on transportation, disability rights, environmental issues, and public safety. Additionally, the Bowser Administration is partnering with the Southwest Business Improvement District (SWBID) to release a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) for a AV pilot program on 10th Street, SW.



ODR Spotlight

International Women's Day



Happy International Women's Day from some of our staff! International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. #IWD2018

Performance Oversight Hearing of ODR



On February 14th, the Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on Human Services held the oversight hearing for the Office of Disability Rights. Our Director, Mat McCollough, spoke on the performance outcomes achieved by ODR in FY 2017 and FY 2018.

A recording of the Performance Oversight Hearing is now available through [video](#).

Welcome Julia Wolhandler



ODR is pleased to welcome Julia Wolhandler as our Public Affairs Specialist. As a person with multiple disabilities, Julia Wolhandler has worked in various capacities as a disability rights advocate both nationally and internationally. She comes to us from FEMA where she worked as a Disability Integration Advisor working with survivors with disabilities and access and functional needs affected by disasters.

As ODR's Public Affairs Specialist, Julia's role includes outreach to the greater Washington Metropolitan Area with regards to communication access, inclusion, public involvement, event planning and coordination, trainings on disability rights laws, and emergency planning and preparedness.

For Information about ODR's Newsletter call (202)724-5055 or visit the web at odr.dc.gov.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the District Office of Disability Rights (ODR) is to ensure that the programs, services, benefits, activities and facilities operated or funded by the District of Columbia are fully accessible to, and useable by people with disabilities. ODR is committed to inclusion, community-based services, and self-determination for people with disabilities. ODR is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the City's obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as other disability rights laws.



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