

## CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS SUMMER SCOOP NEWSLETTER 2024

### **CCDA OC LISTENING FORUM JUNE 26, 2024**

The CCDA Listening Forum: “Disability Compliance at Places of Business to Improve Access for All,” took place in Orange County. The listening forum focused on compliance in local businesses and featured a presentation from the state architect, as well as a panel Q&A discussion. CCDA Executive Director April Dawson Rawlings welcomed everyone and provided an overview for the listening forum.

Commissioner and State Architect Ida Clair gave a presentation titled, “Accessibility Resources and Tips for Businesses” that outlined maintaining accessible features, educating employees, and keeping detailed records of compliance efforts. The panel discussion, “How Do We Remove Barriers and Achieve Accessibility for All?” featured Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce President Steve Rosansky, Lead Youth and Information Coordinator Nelly Gomez, from the Dayle McIntosh Center; Certified Access Specialist (CASP) Rick Martin from Marx Okubo Associates, Inc.; and Commissioner Clair. CCDA Operations Manager Phil McPhaul, moderated the panel Q&A session, which addressed questions on reasonable accommodations, accessible parking, second-floor space accessibility, landlord responsibilities for ADA compliance, and strategies for enhancing accessibility and disability awareness in restaurants.

### **UPCOMING COMMISSION EVENTS**

Legislative Committee | August 14, 2024 | 1:30 - 3 p.m.

Checklist Committee | September 4, 2024 | 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Executive Committee | October 2, 2024 | 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Full Commission | October 23, 2024 | Time TBD

### **34TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990. This legislation banned discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. This year marks 34 years that the ADA has been making a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. The

ADA consists of five titles: Title I addresses employment, Title II ensures access to public services, Title III is accessibility in public accommodations, Title IV covers telecommunications, and Title V is miscellaneous. These titles aim to eliminate barriers and ensure equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities. CCDA focuses on Title III: accessibility in public accommodations. The ADA raises awareness about disability rights and helps to create a more accessible society for all.

## **NOTEWORTHY ALLIANCES – DISABILITY WORKS CALIFORNIA**

The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), part of the California Health and Human Services Agency, is rebranding as Disability Works California. This change aims to better reflect the DOR's mission of supporting employment and independent living for individuals with disabilities. An Employment First Office will be created and focus on developing statewide policies to enhance job opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. DOR Director Joe Xavier stated that the term "rehabilitation" often fails to convey the agency's focus on employment, good wages, and equity. Disability Works California will continue partnering with state departments to enhance employment and developmental services to make a more accessible California for all.

## **CUTTING EDGE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY – ENABLETECH**

EnableTech is a nonprofit organization that works to empower individuals with disabilities through innovative technology solutions. A group of engineers and healthcare professionals founded this organization to help bridge the gap between technology and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Some of their technology solutions thus far include mobility aids and communication devices that connect to software applications that can help support cognitive and sensory functions. The organization hosts workshops, training sessions, and hackathons to inspire the next generation of innovators and raise awareness about the importance of accessibility. EnableTech focuses on developing assistive devices and software that enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities, promoting accessibility and inclusion for all.

## **COMMISSIONERS IN THE COMMUNITY – ASHLEY LEON-VAZQUEZ**

Commissioner Leon-Vazquez is a small business owner of Horchateria Rio Luna, a coffee shop offering items rooted in Latino and Mexican culture. Starting in 2018, she and her family had a goal of bringing a taste of their heritage to their local community. Horchateria Rio Luna has two stores in southern California, and

they demonstrate the importance of ADA compliance and community engagement within the stores' local communities. Her storefront businesses incorporate features such as wheelchair ramps and accessible seating arrangements, ensuring accessibility for customers with disabilities.

Commissioner Leon-Vazquez's commitment to accessibility in her California businesses shows how inclusive practices can be beneficial in business operations. Horchateria Rio Luna hosts events that feature local talent, which encourages local engagement and support from the community. These events provide a platform for local artists and create an accessible, welcoming space for all members of the community.

Commissioner Leon-Vazquez's dedication to access compliance creates spaces where everyone feels welcomed and included. Her businesses show the positive impact that inclusive, community-focused business practices can have. By ensuring disability access and promoting inclusivity, small business owners like Commissioner Leon-Vazquez can make a positive impact on their community and provide equal opportunities for all.

## **2024 ADA WEBINAR COLLABORATION SERIES**

The 2024 Webinar Collaboration Series hosted by CCDA and Pacific ADA Center focuses on understanding the ADA. Part 1: *ADA Opportunities for Small Businesses Webinar* and Part 2: *Disability Rights in Today's World: Celebrating 34 Years of ADA and 25 Years of Olmstead* have been an educational success. The third and final part of the 2024 series will be happening Thursday, September 5 and registration is open.

CCDA Executive Director April Dawson Rawlings and Deputy Director of ADA Programs Jan Garrett, from the Pacific ADA center are the speakers for the webinar series. Part 1 provided an overview of the ADA Titles, focusing on Title I (Employment) and Title III (Public Accommodations). They covered effective communication, physical accessibility, and the role of service animals. Also, they discussed the interactive process between employers and employees with disabilities. Part 2 celebrated 34 years of the ADA and 25 years of Olmstead by discussing the evolution of the ADA and several landmark court cases that have help solidify a path to accessibility for all.

The 2024 Webinar Collaboration Series offers information for businesses to enhance ADA compliance and learn more about why the ADA is important. To end the series, Part 3 plans to cover customer service, focusing on accessibility for customers with disabilities during the upcoming busy holiday season and will be featured live on Thursday, September 5 from 12 – 1 p.m.

## **CCDA SCOOP RESOURCES**

- [OC Listening Forum: Disability Compliance at Places of Business to Improve Access for All | June 2024 | YouTube](#)
- [Department of Rehabilitation \(DOR\) | Disability Works California](#)
- [Enabling Technologies Associates, Inc | EnableTech](#)
- [REGISTER NOW! Last Part of the 2024 Webinar Collaboration Series](#)

## **CCDA CONTACT INFORMATION**

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