



## A Time for Solidarity

Happy Anniversary, ADA. On July 26, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the most important piece of legislation for people with disabilities. It is **your** civil rights legislation and **your** movement for equality.

While the fight must continue, the ADA has brought about better access and visibility for people with disabilities. It has become the template for countries around the world for creating physical and societal accessibility, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of People With Disabilities. Without the ADA, the United States Supreme Court could not have ruled that institutions were a form of segregation and we would not have the *Olmstead* decision.

This edition of *Making a Difference* celebrates this historic event. It reports on the many events that happened in Atlanta during this anniversary year tying together the ADA and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights (*see previous edition*). It seems like the ADA Legacy Tour Bus was in and out of Atlanta every week. You can read about my experiences with Tom Olin on the bus with our stops in Johnson City and Knoxville, TN.

There were national conferences and local celebrations in Augusta and Gainesville, and the ADA25 Georgia Legacy Parade was held in Atlanta in June. We had ample opportunities to show our solidarity. So why am I feeling that last month's ADA25 parade was a big missed opportunity for Atlanta's disability community?

The strength of our numbers and activism simply wasn't on display that day. We could have marshaled a bigger crowd for a city of four million people that was the center of the Civil Rights movements in the 1960s and played a role in successful passage of the ADA. Maybe a thousand marchers parading to the booming percussion of the Shiloh High School Drum Corps would have forced someone from CNN to walk across the street and ask what was happening.

With a thousand or so in attendance, we just might have made the news and the public would have learned that Claudia Gordon of the US Department of Labor and former White House advisor came to deliver a rousing keynote. They would have discovered author, disability activist and filmmaker Simi Linton's most provocative reading from her book, *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity*.

Larger attendance would have brought well-deserved attention to the ADA Legacy Tour Bus and Disability Rights Museum on Wheels that were staged at the parade site and remained for two days. For the marchers and onlookers along the parade route to Centennial Park, joined by those who were attending the Society for Disability Studies Conference here, it was a truly incredible occasion.

This edition is dedicated to all individuals who have fought for the rights of people with and without disabilities. Let us remember that people with disabilities are also people of color, men and women, straight and gay, lesbian or transgender, Jewish, Christian, Islam or whichever faith they choose or not choose to believe in. Each has had to fight for equality and to be recognized for what they are – human beings.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of *Making a Difference*. We want to hear from you. Let us know by writing our Editor-in-Chief Valerie Meadows Suber at [valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov](mailto:valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov).

*Eric E. Jacobson*  
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Tell us your thoughts about the magazine or what topics you would like to see addressed by emailing us at [valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov](mailto:valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov), subject line:

**Letters To The Editor.**

GCDD VIEWPOINT

### Letters to the Editor

Letters should include the writer's full name, address, phone number, and may be edited for the purpose of clarity and space.

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