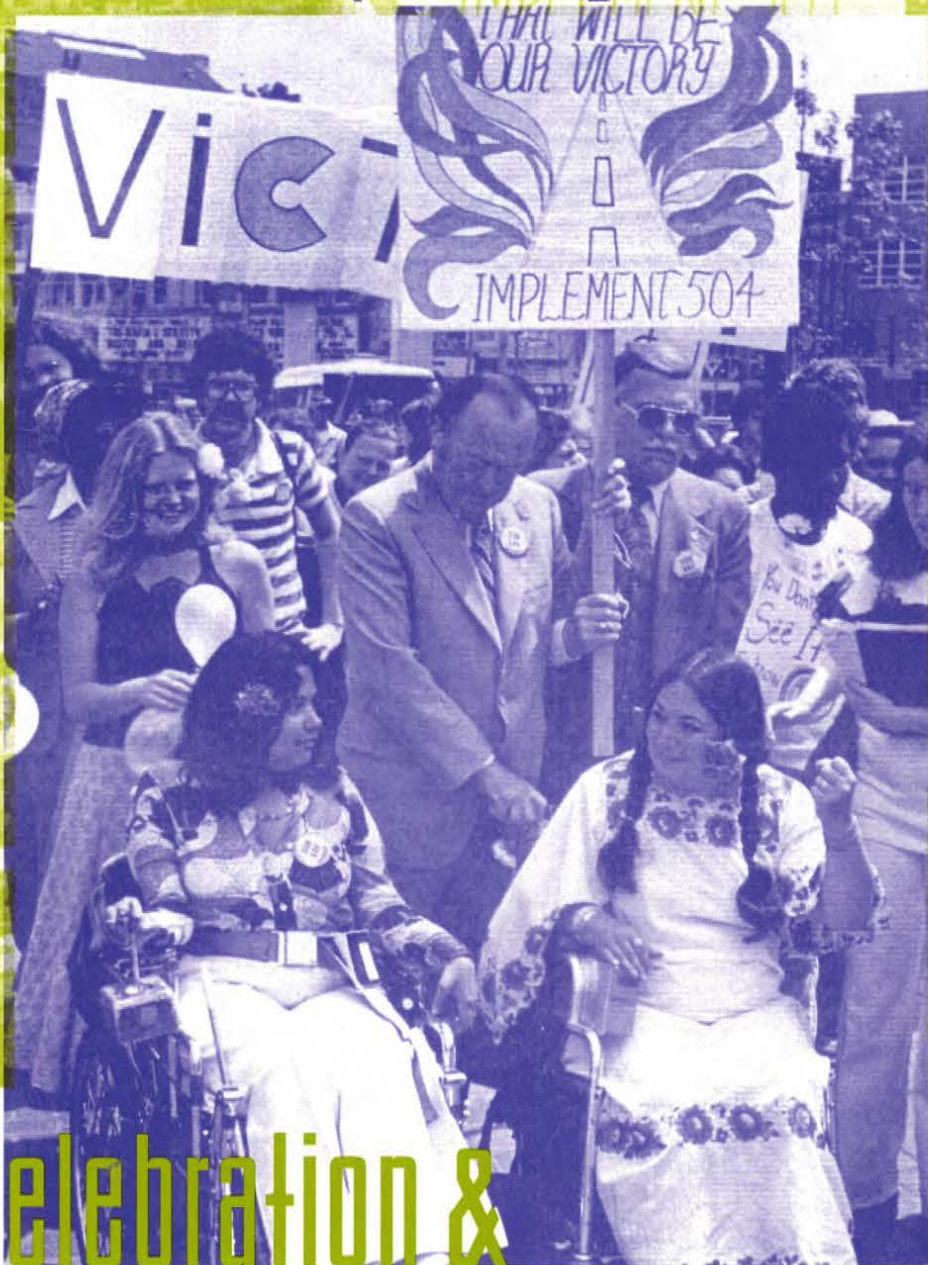


20th Anniversary
Victorious 504 Sit-In
for Disability Civil Rights

5
0
4



**Celebration &
Commemoration**

June 1, 1997 ■ San Francisco

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	
3	Open Letter — Ken Stein
4	Greeting — Congressman George Miller
5	Greeting — San Francisco Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr.
6	Greeting — Berkeley Mayor Shirley Dean
7	Update Sharon Bonney
8	Our Demands—1977 Charles Raisch
9	504 Historical Overview
26	Remembering 504 Evan White
29	Personal Stories from 1977 Participants
44	Songs from the Protest
46	Our Fond Farewells
54	Those Who Made It Happen
56	Acknowledgements

The Black Panther, May 7, 1977
Pressure Forces Califano To Sign 504 Regulations

**HANDICAPPED
WIN DEMANDS-
END H.E.W.
OCCUPATION**



Those of us who
participated in the 504 sit-in;

Those of us who have
shared in the growth
and development
of any of the multitude of
independent living, disability access,
and disability rights organizations;

Those of us who have participated in and supported public policy
development and advocacy, or who have demonstrated for
the rights of persons with disabilities over the past three decades;

All of us have reason to be proud and reason to celebrate.

It is no exaggeration to say that we each have
participated in, and have been an integral part of,
one of the greatest and most successful
“people’s movements” of the 20th century.

Ken Stein, Chair

*504 Sit-in 20th Anniversary
Celebration and Commemoration*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

GEORGE MILLER
7TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

June 1, 1997

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to join in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Section 504 sit-in. This 28-day occupation of the Health, Education and Welfare office in San Francisco captured the attention of our nation and was a critical juncture in the struggle for civil rights for persons with disabilities.

As a young member of Congress, it was an honor for me to play a small part in this historic event. However, the people truly deserving of our accolades are the thousands of civil rights advocates, both disabled and non-disabled, who joined in the protests, the marches and the sit-ins. Who put themselves and their ideals on the line, and refused to allow their rights to dignity and equality to continue to be ignored. These individuals are the true heroes, and this celebration is their salute.

Since April 5, 1977, the disability rights movement has grown into a powerful coalition that continues to impact our public policy, and demonstrates daily the power of collective activism.

Congratulations and best wishes,

Sincerely,

George Miller

George Miller
Member of Congress
7th District, California



GREETINGS FROM THE MAYOR

June 1, 1997

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to join in the celebration commemorating the 20th anniversary of the section 504 sit-in.

As an original signer of the April 12, 1977 letter urging President Carter to direct Secretary Califano to issue the Section 504 Rehabilitation Act (1973) regulations, I continue to strongly support disability rights today. At the time our Assembly letter was written, disabled Americans had already waited too long for the implementation of laws to guarantee their equality. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended and thoughtfully drafted by Congress, was a landmark towards guaranteeing these rights. I am proud to have played an integral role in this process.

My appreciation to the 504 Commemoration Committee whose efforts to educate us all about disability rights and the Independent Living Movement are exemplary. Best wishes for a successful celebration and commemoration of this special anniversary.

With warmest regards,

Willie L. Brown, Jr.

Willie L. Brown, Jr.
Mayor



Anniversary Celebration Commemorating the Signing of Section 504 of the Implementing Regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

By City of Berkeley Mayor Shirley Dean

From the very beginning, the City of Berkeley has been on the cutting edge of the disability rights movement. Long before other cities were thinking about accessibility, the City of Berkeley was putting in curb cuts. By 1970, the City had committed \$30,000 a year to remove street corner barriers, and in 1972 the Center for Independent Living (CIL), the first independent living center in the entire state, opened its doors in Berkeley. The goal of CIL was to ensure that all persons with disabilities had access to all of the facilities and amenities enjoyed by the general population. It was the disability activists involved in CIL who made accessibility and discrimination against persons with disabilities a nationwide issue.

In 1974, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was passed by congress and signed into law but never enforced. Berkeley activists in the disabled community were incensed by this lack of action on the part of the federal government, particularly since President Carter had said the issue would be a priority for his administration. On April 5, 1977, over 100 persons with disabilities, led by activists from CIL, took over the San Francisco regional office of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) demanding enforcement of civil rights laws for the disabled. These activists camped out at the HEW office for 28 days; until the Secretary of HEW, Joseph Califano, Jr., signed Section 504 implementing the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This great victory was supported by the City of Berkeley, then San Francisco Mayor George Mascone, State representatives Phillip and John Burton and George Miller, the San Francisco Council of Churches, the Black Panthers and the Teamsters. The legendary Ed Roberts, a leading Berkeley disability activist and Chief of the California State Department of Rehabilitation, showed up at the demonstration to cheer on the protesters. He said, "I think they [federal officials] have underestimated the commitment of this group."

The implementation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 opened up life for persons with disabilities throughout the nation. No longer could government buildings be inaccessible, in fact, every program receiving federal dollars had to adhere to the Act. In Berkeley, then Mayor Gus Newport began the Mayor's Task Force on Persons with Disabilities, a group which eventually evolved into the Commission on Disability. The City also passed two ordinances, AR1.90 and AR1.91, designed to enforce Section 504. The first ensured access to all public meetings, while the second was a non-discrimination policy in City hiring. The City began to provide local funding for CIL and programs that serve persons with disabilities.

The City of Berkeley has always welcomed persons with disabilities. The value of Section 504 was that it wrote into law the fundamental beliefs that Berkeley residents have always fought for and lived by. Berkeley is a community that honors independent thinking and independent living. We want Berkeley to be a place where persons of all backgrounds can thrive and succeed. We have a long way to go to fulfill the promise of Section 504 in our parks, our buildings and our work force. With the help of our Commission, CIL and persons with disabilities everywhere, we **will** succeed.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Center 2180 Milvia Street Berkeley, California 94704
Tel: (510) 644-6484 Fax: (510) 644-6255 e-mail: shd1@ci.berkeley.ca.us



U

P

D

A

T

E

UPDATE by Sharon Bonney

On Wednesday, April 30, 1997, twenty years to the day that demonstrators marched out of the HEW offices in victory, they again entered the building—this time to celebrate the anniversary of the passage of Section 504 with a press conference.

Reverend Cecil Williams of Glide Memorial Church, who supported the sit-in, said that people with disabilities who participated in the sit-in "demonstrated leadership by putting your bodies on the line. You educated America."

Associate Director of CIL, Gerald Baptiste, pointed out that the sit-in affected people throughout the United States and that 25 state and national disability laws were passed within 13 years of the signing of 504. The Americans with Disabilities Act, signed in 1990, was the ultimate legislative success. As a result of the sit-in, private citizens and government officials have come to CIL from all over the world wanting to know how to start programs in their own countries.

Eddie Jauregui, with Project Hired, said that closed-captioning on TV has opened news, movies, and sports programs to people with hearing disabilities and the TDD and the California Relay System have provided telephone and 911 emergency access. Kaiser Hospital is the first in the country to provide interpreter services for those who need them.

Kitty Cone of DREDF drew contrasts between life twenty years ago and today. "When I started working in Chicago, I drove by wheelchair down State Street dodging cars and buses. There were no curb cuts. I have always struggled to find a place to live,



Photo by Ken Stein
Press conference, April 30, 1997; (l-r) Jadine Murello, Gerald Baptiste, Reverend Cecil Williams, Kitty Cone, Eddie Jauregui

sometimes spending every day for weeks trying to find accessible housing. When I was called for jury duty, there was no place for me to sit." After Section 504, people with disabilities can vote, serve on juries, access fixed-route and public transit, find accessible housing, get an education, and find jobs.

Cone pointed out that, "Although Section 504 identified disability as a legitimate civil rights issue, established disability as a class, and made it clear that problems for persons with disabilities can be remedied through social policy reform, there is still a long march ahead. High unemployment and work disincentives, segregated educational settings, lack of health care coverage, limited or no life, health, or mortgage insurance, and lack of enforcement of ADA provisions still impede the full participation of 49 million people with disabilities in society."

Daily American,
April 17-18, 1977

**Disabled
lead new
civil rights
movement**

OUR DEMANDS - 1977

by Charles Raisch

The two week old sit-in by about 100 handicapped people at the San Francisco office of the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare has attracted a lot of attention in the local media. Most of the coverage, however, has been of the human interest variety, or has focused on assorted luminaries who have dropped by to visit the demonstrators, such as Phillip Burton, Julian Bond and George Moscone. The reports have usually acknowledged that the demonstrators are demanding that HEW Secretary Joseph Califano sign new regulations establishing certain rights for the handicapped, but the specific content of the regulations has gone largely unreported here.

The regulations in question would implement Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act passed by Congress in 1973, which says a handicapped individual cannot "solely by reason of his handicap be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Drawn up under the Ford administration, the implementing regulations had not yet been signed when Califano took office; it was his delay (in order to study and revise the regulations) that led to the sit-ins at HEW offices in 11 cities, called by the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities (ACCD). Here are the main areas of dispute, which have not yet been fully laid out in the local media:

Drug addicts and alcoholics: This is the most controversial area. As the regulations are written, the term 'handicapped' would include alcoholics and drug addicts. The proposed changes under Califano would eliminate these people from the definition. The Washington Post singled out this section in an editorial last week commending Califano for not signing what the Post called "terrible regulations, confusing, prolix, complicated, fuzzy and bound to do far less for the disabled citizen seeking fair play than for the lawyer seeking a guaranter (sic) annual income." Under the regulations, the Post said, "it isn't clear that employers might not end up with some obligation to hire a drug addict." The ACCD claims, however, that the intent of the regulation is merely to protect reformed alcoholics and drug addicts, so their employment and educational records would not make it impossible for them to proceed (with their lives).

Architectural Accessibility: The...regulations would require that any program receiving federal money be situated in a building accessible to the handicapped. This section would presumably require renovation of old buildings as well as apply to new buildings. HEW claims the cost would be enormous and it isn't clear who would foot the bill.

Colleges and universities: The...regulations would require that all educational institutions that receive federal money would have to be accessible to the disabled. The current administration wants to allow the institutions to enter into coop-

erative agreements with other institutions such that one college could have an accessible biology department, another an accessible language program, and so on. The ACCD says such an arrangement would amount to segregation and would only be acceptable if it applied to able-bodied students as well as the disabled.

Grievance Procedures: The...regulation would spell out what handicapped people can do if they feel discriminated against...

Whatever the outcome of the present demonstration here and the final form of the regulations, one thing is clear: that handicapped people, like other minority groups that have battled for their rights in the last two decades, have become aware of the possibilities of organized action for achieving social change. As one demonstrator in the HEW office here told me, "We need full civil rights now. You know some people think we belong locked up in institutions. But that stereotype of the disabled who is forced to sell pencils on the streets wasn't formed because he cannot work. It was formed because no one would allow him to get a job or an education."

This article is reprinted from the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, April 12, 1977.



H

I

S

T

O

R

Y

504

HISTORICAL
OVERVIEWS

HISTORY OF 504 PASSAGE

by Sharon Bonney

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 says:

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

This 41 word statement was included in the language of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 without fanfare, hearings or discussion by federal law-

Common Sense, June 1977



makers. It took five years, three changes of administration and nation-wide demonstrations to get it passed into law. Here is the history of this landmark civil rights legislation for people with disabilities.

Background

The strength of Section 504 as the first civil

rights legislation and ultimately the springboard for the Americans with Disabilities Act lies in its underlying premise. For the first time, access to employment, education, buildings, and society in general was taken out of the realm of a government "benefit" and put into the context of a "civil right." Segregation, employment discrimination, and "separate but equal" facilities could no longer exist under the guise of

good will or charity. The government can cut benefits but it cannot violate civil rights.

Writing the Legislation

In 1972 Senator Hubert Humphrey and Congressman Charles Vanik introduced legislation to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of physical or mental handicap in federally assisted programs. They were unsuccessful.

At the same time, the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare studied the Rehabilitation Act for reauthorization. Changes in the reauthorization act created new programs for disability groups with special problems, and the eligibility definition was expanded to bring in more severely disabled into the vocational rehabilitation program. The word "vocational" was removed from the title as the focus shifted from emphasis on preparing clients for work to a more general rehabilitation program that would promote independent living for those not capable of regular or perhaps any employment. The Independent Living Movement, soon to emerge in Berkeley, was nurtured by this expansion of the definition and by the promotion of independent living. This version of the Rehabilitation Act did not include Section 504.

Late in the summer of 1972, the marked-up bill was discussed for revision by legislative staff members Lisa Walker, Robert Humphreys, Jonathan Steinberg, Roy Millenson and others. Motivated by an understanding of discrimination towards people with disabilities and their previous work in the deinstitutionalization movement, they decided that language should be included prohibiting discrimination towards people with disabilities in federally assisted programs. They inserted the provision, to become known as Section 504, which is comparable to Title VI of the Civil



Photo by Hollynn D'Uli
Tom Hayden speaking
at 504 rally

Rights Act of 1964 and to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Throughout consideration of the reauthorization of the Act there is no indication in official records to indicate that Congress or the President took any notice of Section 504. There were no debates, no house reports, little

indication of legislative history, and no indication on the intent of Congress for including the language. Additionally, there were no projections on the likely costs of the provision. These facts become significant later.

Passage into Law

President Nixon refused to sign the bill not because of Section 504, but because of costs for new programs and the advisory structure which established the Architectural Barriers Compliance Board. The bill was reintroduced in early 1973 and, again, vetoed by President Nixon. The bill was reintroduced for a third time and on September 26, 1973 was signed into law.

The Presidential vetoes instigated some of the first demonstrations in Washington by people with disabilities. One demonstration coincided with the 1972 conference of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Organized by members of Disabled in Action, an advocacy group from New York, and led by Eunice Fiorito and Judy Heumann, nearly 200 people with disabilities held an all night vigil at the Lincoln Memorial. A second demonstration was held the following year, but neither event appears to have influenced the legislative process. The disability community was not yet well organized and most legislative advocacy was done by service providers who lobbied to expand benefits rather than establish and advance civil rights. Within the next four years, this would change.

While there may be disagreement, House and Senate committee staffs believe they laid the groundwork for the dis-

ability rights movement by initiating the writing and inclusion of Section 504 into the reauthorization act. They point out that it was not done at the request, suggestion, or demand of outside groups. Some critics say that its passage was a fluke and its impact unanticipated. Congressional staffers agree that the implications were not known at the time, but they all agreed that it would have a profound effect on the lives of people with disabilities.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) was assigned responsibility to implement Section 504. To do that, HEW had to interpret Congress's intent when it wrote the law and write the implementing regulations.

Writing Regulations

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) within HEW was charged with responsibility for writing the regulations. This decision was important because OCR staff stressed legally established rights and procedures, sought formally established protections, and did not view civil rights as fair game for compromise or questions

of cost. John Wodatch, an OCR attorney, was assigned the day-to-day responsibility. The regulations drafted under his leadership were grounded in legal precedent and took a civil rights approach with no room for waivers, phased-in services, or cost considerations. The draft regulations were finished in April 1975 and sent to Secretary Casper Weinberger with a recommendation to publish them in the Federal Register in proposed form for comments. Weinberger left office shortly thereafter and David Mathews became the new Secretary. It would take two years before the regulations were published.



Photo by Hollynn D'Uli
Deborah Kaplan and Ralf Hotchkiss
testify at 504 hearing

Fighting for Passage

The Office of Civil Rights did not include many disability advocacy groups or recipients in discussions while drafting the regulations, but began a vigorous review of the regulations with "outsiders" while trying to get the regulations published. Recipients of federal funding finally took notice of Section 504 and what it meant for their institutions. Objections by colleges and universities were raised mostly around architectural barrier removal and the excessive costs they would incur. Mathews ordered an internal and an external cost analysis. Both came to the same conclusion that costs would not be exorbitant.

Gazette, April 19, 1977

Protest by the disabled goes to Washington

Nineteen cross-disability organizations joined and the disability movement gained momentum.

Disability advocates hoped to speed up the process of approving the regulations through court action. In June 1975, *Cherry v. Mathews* was filed in federal court. Within the month, a judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that the Secretary was required to issue the regulations but not by any given date.

Interminable delays to publish the regulations saw networks develop between disability groups, OCR staff and legislators like Senators Harrison Williams and Randolph Jennings. OCR staff consulted with disability rights activists more frequently and ACCD lobbied Congress. In the spring of 1976, the first demonstration toward passage occurred in Secretary Mathews' office where the demonstrators threatened to picket the 1976 Republican Convention. The result was publication in the Federal Register not in the traditional proposed form, but in the highly unusual an intent to



Photo by Hollynn D'Uli
Debbie DiNardo at 504 rally

publish proposed rules format. Another delay tactic. Finally the proposed rules were published in July 1976 with a 60 day comment period.

Disability advocates met regularly to develop strategies, divide up lobbying tasks, and develop a party line. They worked out differences and established what they were willing to accept in the way of compromises. Frank Bowe, Deborah Kaplan, Reese Robrahn and Daniel Yohalem were key figures in strategy development. By fall 1976, many people in the disability movement were aware of Section 504 and its importance and were poised to take action.

On January 20, 1977 Califano was appointed as the next Secretary of HEW and he inherited the proposed regulations which Secretary Mathews refused to sign before leaving office. The newly established executive director of ACCD, Frank Bowe, sent Califano a letter asking for immediate approval of the regulation. Califano decided to study the regulations and rewrite a shorter, simpler version. OCR staff continued to educate HEW staff and recommend approval of the proposed regulations—to no avail.

Frustrations mounted within the disabled community. A lot of disabled advocates had campaigned for Jimmy Carter, in part because he supported Section 504 in a speech in Warm Springs, Georgia. They were angry that he had done nothing to implement the regulations after several months in office.

The ACCD board called for the regulations to be issued by April 4 in the form prepared before Califano took over or non-violent protests would be staged. On April 4 disability advocates met with Califano who started by explaining the delay. The advocates again demanded that the regulations be issued without delay and walked out of Califano's office.

The Sit-in

The next morning the disability advocates held a press conference to announce the demonstrations. Three hundred people with disabilities began a sit-in in Califano's office in Washington and hundreds of other people did the same in eight regional offices across the country. Staff members of OCR and congressional committees were involved in planning for the sit-ins and provided information about activity within HEW before and during the sit-in. They were just one of many individuals and groups who supported the sit-ins and helped make them successful.

Secretary Califano stayed in his offices the first night and made the decision to cut off phone service, to prohibit anyone from entering or leaving, and to prohibit food for the demonstrators. In the morning he did allow each person to have one doughnut and a cup of coffee. After 28 hours, the demonstrators left Califano's office feeling they had made their point. The San Francisco sit-in was a different story, related throughout this volume in the voices of many who remember those days.

On April 15, 1977, Congressmen George Miller and Phillip Burton held an ad hoc meeting of the House Education and Labor Committee to take testimony from disability activists and HEW official Gene Eiderberg who floated a "separate but equal" trial balloon and 18 issues that would be reviewed before passage could occur. Ed Roberts, Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation, said that Califano's proposed changes were "a blueprint for segregation." Representative Miller said that as far as he was concerned "the goddamn thing is not negotiable." And Representative Burton, visibly shaken, said "I only wish all of my colleagues had heard this." Senator Alan



Photo by Hollym D'Uli

George Miller (l) and Phillip Burton conducted the hearing while Joseph Quinn conveyed their words in sign language

Cranston sent a telegram in support of the demonstrators' goals, and Mayor George Moscone, in attendance, said "Anyone who doubts the energy and resourcefulness of the handicapped should come here and see what's going on."

On Tuesday, April 18, demonstrators from San Francisco were selected from the membership to go to Washington to rendezvous with other activists to increase pressure on the federal government. Senator Alan Cranston met with the activists to discuss the 18 issues raised by Califano. Ann Rosewater of the Children's Defense Fund had worked with the activists to develop responses to the 18 issues and they easily answered legislative questions. The Washington trip is highlighted in other pieces in this volume.

On April 28, 1977 Califano announced the signing of the final regulations which, he said, would "open a new world of equal opportunity for more than 35 million handicapped Americans." On May 4, the regulations were published in the Federal Register.

On Saturday, April 30, the Washington contingent had returned to the Federal Building and a victory march and rally signaled the end of the longest sit-in of a federal building in the history of the United States. Victory at last!

NOTE: Special acknowledgment to Richard K. Scotch, author of from Good Will to Civil Rights, without whom this history could not have been written. I am especially grateful for chapters 3, 4 and 5 from which I heavily borrowed. Further acknowledgment goes to the San Francisco Chronicle and to the San Francisco Examiner for their coverage of the sit-in.

San Francisco Examiner, April 16, 1977

"Separate but equal" facilities

HEW's blueprint for handicapped

KEYS TO VICTORY by Kitty Cone

I believe the San Francisco sit-in succeeded because it was an exemplary coalition effort; it was built, sustained and supported by a number of coalitions. The American Coalition of Citizens With Disabilities, the national organization that had been working to get 504 regulations signed and which called for sit-ins when it was clear that HEW was going to water down the proposed regulations, was a coalition of organizations run by and for deaf people, people with vision impairments and people with physical, psychiatric and developmental disabilities.

The organizing efforts in San Francisco leading up to the April 5 demonstration were carried out by the 504 Emergency Coalition, which reached out to and was made up of organizations representing people with all types of disabilities and parents of children with disabilities.

A very broad coalition of community organizations, ranging from the Central Labor Councils to San Francisco NOW and NAACP, helped build the April 5th demonstration and lent support until the victory. It was certainly one of the broadest coalitions I had ever seen, and it really functioned to sustain the sit-in on a day-to-day basis by building demonstrations outside the federal building, and, by showing that the whole community was behind the sit-in, making it very difficult for the federal marshals or police to bring us out or starve us as they did in Washington.

I said in my speech at the victory rally that no one had given us anything, that we had fought a tremendous struggle at the highest levels of government and relying on our own strength, had won. That is certainly true in terms of the administrators and politicians who were trying to change the regulations. But we were given a great deal in terms of support that enabled us to continue the sit-in and send the delegation to Washington.

The breadth of support is astonishing: from the American Legion to the Socialist Workers and Communist Parties, from the San Francisco gay organizations to the San

Francisco Council of Churches. We were given food by Glide Church, Delancey Street, the Black Panther Party, Safeway and McDonalds, and transportation, food and an organizing headquarters in Washington by the International Association of Machinists. Many organizations and individuals contributed money. Our local congressmembers held a hearing inside the building and the local of the American Federation of Government Employees representing the employees in the San Francisco federal building passed a resolution endorsing our cause.

Another factor that was crucial to the success of the sit-in was the exceptional organization of the demonstrators. The 504 Emergency Coalition had active committees organizing outreach, media, fundraising, program, monitors, medics, leading up to the sit-in, that continued to function inside the building with added participation from other demonstrators. And new committees were formed inside such as meals, cleanup, religious services, indoor-outdoor committees. This allowed everyone to be an active contributor, develop new skills, and kept their commitment and interest alive in difficult conditions.

The leadership of ACCD deserves great credit for their strategic thinking in choosing a date by which they expected HEW Secretary Califano to respond to their demand to issue the regulations unchanged, instead of waiting until a watered-down version of the regulations was issued and then responding. Because disabled leaders around the country were prepared to sit in, and had laid the groundwork, the power moved from the hands of HEW to the demonstrators.

Credit must also go to them for the fact that they understood that they could not rely on and indeed, had to go head to head publicly with the Carter Administration, which many of them had probably campaigned to elect.

The Militant, August 26, 1977



Kitty Cone,
demonstration organizer

My impression that I was involved in a truly transforming experience the likes of which I'd never seen before, grew daily as the sit-in went on. Those of us with disabilities were imbued with such a new sense of pride, strength, community, and confidence. And certainly, society began to view us differently; these demonstrators for civil rights were hardly the Jerry Lewis objects of charity and pity that was the prevailing image of our people at the time.

One pivotal experience from the Washington, DC activities that illustrates this confidence is the discussion we held in the Capitol with Senator Alan Cranston, who was one of the original sponsors of the legislation, and who up until that point had been supporting the Carter Administration position. Cranston, at that time possibly the most powerful man in Congress, raised the Administration's objections to the "unchanged" 504 regulations one by one. Each objection was answered by a different member of our delegation, and answered very thoroughly.

It was a testament to the group's self confidence and total understanding of the contested issues, that issue by issue Cranston was turned around, in front of national TV cameras and other media. We were all extremely tired and sleep-deprived and yet everybody managed to marshal their wits to carry out this extremely important political discussion. Frank Bowe, who I believe spoke last, made such eloquent remarks, in which he said, "Senator, we are not even second class citizens, we are third class citizens," that we all began to cry.

Ultimately the most important thing about the 504 sit-ins, rallies and meetings is the fact that they achieved federal civil rights coverage for Americans with disabilities for the first time, and the basis was laid for the ADA years down



Machinists' leader supports Washington demonstrators

the road. But, there are important lessons that can be learned from history; just as we learned from the organizing experience of the civil rights movement of the 60's, so others may learn from ours.



Washington rally

THE DYNAMICS OF EMPOWERMENT

by Judy Heumann

Judy Heumann is Assistant Secretary of Education for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services. She helped develop regulations for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and helped design federal and state legislation that led to the creation of more than 200 independent living centers nationwide.

We in the Disabilities Rights Movement can learn important lessons by studying the campaign to win implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The regulations to implement the law were signed April 28, 1977, after 25 days of a sit-in at the offices of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare at UN Plaza in San Francisco. However, the sit-in (which ended two days after the signing) would not have been successful if it had not been for the dynamics that formed the context for the event. It is the dynamics that we should study.

Winning implementation took four different types of efforts, which came together in the sit-in:

- years of involvement in policy-formulation and politics;
- building and demonstrating self-sufficiency, self-pride, and self-empowerment;
- building a cross-disabilities movement;
- gaining allies in all segments of society.

Similar efforts are needed today. Our society has a long way to go before it is truly inclusive, and before discrimination against disabled persons can be remembered as an historic aberration.

The Importance of Section 504

With Section 504, we were able to show America that our society could become accessible. Through outlawing discrimination against disabled people in all institutions



Judy Heumann, demonstration leader

receiving federal funds, we set the stage for building inclusive institutions everywhere in our society, be they public or private. We set the stage for the ADA.

A few years ago, many of us could not easily use public sidewalks, enter many public buildings, eat in restaurants, enjoy the theater or television, or even go the bathroom while traveling. Years ago, as I traveled around the nation, I was often blocked from conducting the most basic of all human functions—it was rare I was able to use a bathroom in restaurants, movie theaters or shopping centers. I got angry, but there was no law to protect me, so I had limited expectations for being treated as a human being.

But today, thanks to the four types of efforts I mentioned above, we have Section 504, the ADA, IDEA, and other laws that mandate accessibility. Children with disabilities have access to equal educational opportunities and are being integrated into regular educational systems. We have curb cuts, ramps, captioned TV shows, sign language interpreters, audio descriptions, and widespread use of braille.

Years ago, society kept too many of us hidden away in institutions or in sheltered workshops. Society justified this by saying that people with disabilities needed to be "protected" and "cared for" as if we were objects of pity and charity. Today, this attitude has been labeled for what it is: blatant discrimination. In 1967, there were virtually no public buses accessible to disabled people. By the year 2002, all public buses in urban areas will—in all probability—be completely accessible.

These changes in society mean that disabled people and non-disabled people have greater opportunities to get to know each other, which in turn means it will be easier

"We know we will not negotiate. We don't know about the other groups."

Judy Heumann, 1977

504

Courtesy of Hollynn D'Ul

to eliminate the attitudinal barriers that have too often prevented disabled people from becoming meaningfully employed.

However, the fight is far from over. Today we must work to make sure society is fully accessible to all disabled individuals, not just to those with visible disabilities. In fact, the majority of disabled people have invisible disabilities.

We must continue to fight to make sure that all barriers come down that prevent people from participating in all aspects of life. For example, we must make sure employers understand that individuals with psychiatric, cognitive, and learning disabilities can—and want to—work. And we must make sure that there are programs that serve our needs at the recreation halls, schools, and public buildings that have become accessible.

Most important, today, we must fight to make sure that disabled people have the means to afford the supports they need to live a full life. For example, we need a healthcare system that works for everybody. We need universally obtainable personal assistance services.

For guidance in meeting the challenges of today, let us look to the efforts to win implementation of Section 504.

Political Involvement

Section 504 became part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 largely due to the growing strength of the Disabilities Rights Movement. The measure made it illegal for any recipient of federal funding to discriminate against anyone “solely by reason of...handicap.”

For four years during the Nixon and Ford Administrations, the government considered options for implementing Section 504. Officials held hearings and received input from every sector of American society, including the

disabilities rights community. The result was a proposed set of regulations. Many disabled people campaigned for Jimmy Carter because he pledged to sign and implement this proposal unchanged.

Nevertheless, when the Carter Administration took office, Joe Califano, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, delayed implementation. He said that HEW was “clarifying the regs.” The American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, which I helped establish, worked carefully and tirelessly within the political arena. There were meet-

ings, petitions, lobbying sessions and appeals of all sorts. Through these

activities, we in the ACCD built strong support for Section 504 across the country—but still no action was taken in Washington.

In fact, through involvement in the political process we learned that the government was pushing for 22 changes in the proposed regulations that would, in effect, set up separate but equal facilities for person with disabilities. For example, the changes included a proposal to have some disabled children educated in special schools rather than in regular schools that were made accessible. There were also suggested exceptions to requirements that hospitals and schools have ramps and other means of free access.

But I and the other members of the ACCD Board of Directors felt strongly against accepting any form of segregation. Because of the public support we had built, we were convinced that demonstrations in favor of implementation of the originally proposed regulations would be politically effective. We held demonstrations and sit-ins at federal buildings across the country.

In San Francisco: East Meets West at the Sit-in

I moved from Brooklyn, New York to Berkeley, California in 1973. I observed that disabled people in both Brooklyn and

San Francisco Examiner, April 15, 1977

New liberal rallying point: S.F.'s handicapped sit-in

Cross-disability Activism
About 150 people took

Berkeley faced similar problems. In both places, disabled people had dreams we wanted to bring into reality.

But the Eastern approach to overcoming the challenges that faced us was different from the Western approach. Back East, we were fighting more aggressively than in the West for our civil rights. Our demonstrations were more frequent. Our anger was greater because discrimination had been a greater part of our lives.

California had systems in place that did not exist in New York. For example, there was a personal assistance program called In Home Support Services, which enabled disabled people to pay someone to assist them. As a result, persons with disabilities were able to rely on more than just volunteers or family members—and were enabled to get out of their homes and enjoy more independence.

Another contrast between Brooklyn and Berkeley was that in Berkeley, the Disabilities Rights Movement was able to establish the Center for Independent Living. With the CIL, we were able to work toward building a stronger Disabilities Rights Movement through working to have the ability to be more personally independent.

When rallies and demonstrations were being held elsewhere to promote Section 504 implementation, we transplanted Easterners and native Westerners came together in the Bay Area. Our sit-in was the most effective in the nation. Our

San Francisco Examiner, April 24, 1977

A protest and a discovery of self-worth

demonstration was not just a protest. We created a community built on the firm foundations of equality and dignity. Through the sit-in, we turned ourselves from being oppressed individuals into being empowered people. We demonstrated to the entire nation that disabled people could take control over our own lives and take leadership in the struggle for equality.

part in the sit-in. The event was a continuation of the efforts of the CIL and other Bay Area Disability Rights organizations to bring together people with different types of disabilities. Blind people, deaf people, wheelchair users, disabled veterans, people with developmental and psychiatric disabilities and many others, all came together. Some of the participants were “ordinary” non-disabled citizens. A few were children with disabilities, and some were parents of disabled children. We overcame years of parochialism.

Self-empowerment

At the start of our demonstration at the HEW offices, officials treated us with condescension, giving us cookies and punch as if we were on some kind of field trip. When we refused to leave the building, the officials refused to let in food, cut off the telephone lines and barred entry to attendants.

But we demonstrated our pride and dignity for all to see. Even though many of us were risking our health and our lives to be without catheters, back-up ventilators and attendants, we were not deterred. We came together in mutual determination that we were no longer satisfied to be treated as second-class citizens by society.

We spent hours getting to know each other. We discussed the barriers to full inclusion that confronted us in society. We mapped plans for overcoming those barriers.

We gained a sense of pride in ourselves and in our accomplishments. We helped each other see that being disabled was just part of life, was just a way of being. We gained a deeper understanding that being disabled is natural, healthy, and “normal.”

We communicated with people outside the building through banners and messages we threw out of the windows.

Because of the work the Disabilities Rights Movement had done over the years in the Bay Area, we began our demonstration with a high level of public support. That support grew during the 25 days we were in the building.

Mayor George Moscone ordered that food be allowed into the building. Safeway Stores, McDonald's, unions, civil rights groups, gay rights groups, and the Black Panthers brought meals and other types of aid to us. Religious leaders helped fulfill our spiritual needs. The head of the San Francisco Council of Churches held services every Sunday. We were even helped by many HEW employees.

California Governor Jerry Brown sent us air mattresses.

Congressional Representatives Phil Burton and George Miller held hearings in the building which brought to light the plans to weaken the proposed Section 504 regulations by including provisions for "separate but equal" facilities.

At the hearings, I testified that:

"It is very difficult for [disabled people] to sit here allowing discussions to go on which, in our opinion, really violate the intent of the law. Whether [or not] there was a Section 504, whether [or not] there was a Public Law 94-142, whether [or not] there was a *Brown vs. Board of Education*...the harassment and the lack of equality that has been provided for disabled individuals—is so intolerable that I can not put it into words. I can tell you that every time you raise issues of separate-but-equal the outrage of disabled individuals across

the country is going to continue. We want the law to be enforced. We want no more segregation. We will accept no more discussions of segregation."

During the hearings, I told an HEW official that: "I would appreciate it if you would stop shaking your head in agreement when I do not think you know what we are talking about."

The Victory

Twenty of us traveled with TV reporter Evan White and members of the Machinists Union from the sit-in to Washington, DC. Other disabled people from around the country joined us, including disabled veterans. During the day, we met with HEW officials urging them to help get the regulations signed. At night we were housed in a church.

I was in Washington when HEW Secretary Califano finally ordered that the implementation regulations be signed. It was an

exciting moment, but I've always regretted not being at the sit-in at the very end.

The sit-in was a focal point for winning implementation of Section 504. But the victory was not won in the UN Plaza. It took years of hard, persistent work in city halls, state houses and congressional offices.

The victory could not have been won without support from our political allies and the general public.



California contingent demonstrates outside DC HEW headquarters

"I might seem second class to them, but I'm a person like anyone else...It's terrible to be labeled Mentally Retarded. It makes you speechless."

Denise Darenbourg

Courtesy of Hollynn D'Ul

San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle,
May 1, 1977

A Sit-in Record By the Disabled

Our Movement Today
To meet the challenges
of today, we must

assure that we have a movement whose voice can be heard day in, day out, year in, year out. Our movement must be based on people who have a feeling of self-esteem. With self-esteem people can feel they have rights and deserve to have rights; people can get angry and do something about it.

Our movement must build a sense of pride among disabled people. This pride is the cornerstone of the newly emerging disabilities culture. We must all nurture this culture and help it grow. If we do, it will help sustain us.

Furthermore, we must never let our day-to-day, individual struggles alienate us from one another. No matter what our disability, we all face similar struggles. We must have patience with each other.

We need to reach out to newly disabled people to join the Disabilities Rights Movement. We need to encourage parents of disabled children to join as well.

No one should feel reluctant to express their own opinions within the Disabilities Rights Movement. Aside from our overall vision of a fully accessible, fully equal society, there must never be a "politically correct" standard imposed on us. If there is, we'll drive people out of the Movement, and we can't afford that.

As disabled people, we must stay involved in the political process. Dropping out just leaves the way open for those who would undermine our rights. The most urgent task before us today is to build political involvement among disabled people. To insure our movement effectively meets the needs of today

and the coming century, we must first make sure every disabled person in America is registered to vote, and exercises their right to vote.

I am convinced that if we all work together, overcome the barriers disabled people feel to speaking out, overcome the barriers that separate us, build inclusive, effective messages, and—most important—get involved in the political arena and stay involved, we can make sure that our movement is prepared for the future.

130 handicapped vow to maintain HEW sit-in here

San Francisco Examiner, April 7, 1977



504 protest rally

FROM SECTION 504 TO
THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

by Mary Lou Breslin

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely on the basis of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (29 U.S.C. Section 794).

When Congress enacted Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, it firmly established the equal citizenship and constitutional rights of individuals with disabilities, and it launched a social policy revolution that has resonated throughout society for the past two decades. Based on the language of previous civil rights laws protecting women and minorities, Section 504 recognized that society had historically treated people with disabilities as second class citizens because of deeply held fears, myths and stereotypes. Such attitudes had translated into persecution and pity of people with disabilities in early history, and later into policies and programs based on paternalism. Only with the enactment of Section 504 was the role of discrimination against people with disabilities finally legally acknowledged and were penalties established for civil rights violations as they had been established for discrimination based on race and gender. Senator Hubert Humphrey said of Section 504's inclusion in the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, *The time has come to firmly establish the right of [disabled] Americans to dignity and self-respect as equal and contributing members of society and to end the virtual isolation of millions of children and adults.*

From Law to Regulations 1973 - 1977

But the promise of 504 remained unrealized. The principle of discrimination on the basis of disability was new, and undefined. Before the 504 regulations were issued in 1977,

the Federal courts had only the plain language of the law to guide them in determining whether discrimination had taken place. Without guidance, they offered up contradictory rulings. In one case involving the right of individuals with disabilities to ride public buses, the federal court said discrimination had not taken place if drivers simply opened the vehicle door as they would for any passenger. A wheelchair user was welcome to board the bus though to do so meant crawling up the steps. In a similar case, the judge recognized that the bus steps prevented people with certain disabilities from boarding, an early acknowledgment that affirmative measures such as installing a wheelchair lift would sometimes be necessary to assure that people with disabilities had an equal opportunity to participate. These cases emphasized the need to define non-discrimination in the context of disability, and to identify differences as well as similarities with race and gender discrimination.

People with disabilities themselves were not accustomed to thinking about the issues they faced in their daily lives as the product of society's stereotypes and prejudice toward them. For decades charity, rehabilitation and paternalism—all elements of the medical model—dominated national disability policy. Before Section 504, if we were asked to identify the problem a wheelchair user faces who wants to register to vote in her inaccessible county court house, our answer might have been "she can't walk." The responsibility for the consequence of disability was perceived as resting solely on the person who was disabled; society bore no

The New York Times,
Associated Press, April 11, 1977



Jubilant demonstrators after
504 victory announcement

San Francisco Examiner, April 11, 1977

Disabled at sit-in
— no one's leaving

responsibility for its barriers, misconceptions and prejudice about disability and disease. Now, twenty years after 504 and seven years after the enactment of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), our answer to the same question about the court house will probably be a resounding "the building isn't accessible." Being unable to walk is not the problem, the lack of a ramp is the problem, the built environment is the culprit. This dramatic recognition of disability as substantially a social construct owes its birthright to Section 504, and the independent living and disability civil rights movement.

The story of the 504 regulations and their lasting impact on U.S. social policy and law signifies this profound and fundamental shift in point of view. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the demonstration that culminated in the signing of the 504 regulations, we also celebrate the legitimacy and impact of disability as a civil rights cause now recognized nationally and internationally.

Between 1973, when Congress enacted Section 504, and 1977, when Joseph Califano, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, finally signed

regulations implementing the law, the grassroots independent living and disability rights movement gained momentum and power. Emboldened by the legitimacy and appeal of the civil rights analysis and their commitment

to advancing independent living opportunities and equal citizenship, leaders with disabilities objected to HEW's repeat-

ed delays by calling for the immediate publication of regulations interpreting Section 504. Without regulations, recipients of federal funds (e.g. schools, hospitals, state and local governments) had no guidance or direction about their obligations under the new law. As a practical matter most recipients were ignoring the law altogether or were taking only limited steps to accommodate people with disabilities because community activists demanded they do so. The 504 regulations were vitally important because they would provide a coherent and consistent interpretation of 504's legal intent, jolt the inert compliance process into life, and trigger an administrative enforcement mechanism so people who had experienced discrimination would have an alternative to going to court to seek a remedy to discrimination.

HEW, charged with responsibility for developing regulations, stalled, mired in disagreement and conflicting opinions about how to translate the equal opportunity/equal citizenship mandate set forth in Section 504 into practical steps for entities required to comply with the law. Disgusted with the endless delays, national disability organizations notified HEW that nationwide demonstrations were being planned if regulations weren't published by early April 1977. Unmoved by the threats, HEW ignored the notice. Committed to the tactic of civil disobedience, people with disabilities in cities across America took to the streets to focus attention on HEW's failure to issue 504 regulations. In the longest takeover in U.S. history, activists in San Francisco occupied the Federal Building for 25 days. Circumstances surrounding the demonstration evoked the character of the disability movement and Section 504 itself. People with diverse disabilities and parents and families of children with disabilities sat in, confirming that their issues and concerns sprang from common experience, transcending race, gender, age, class and diagnosis. Public and political support was broad based and enthusiastic. After public hearings, national media attention and an escalation of pressure by a delegation sent to Washington from the San Francisco



Victory march from the building

Photo by Hollynn D'Lu

San Francisco Chronicle, April 16, 1977

Emotional Plea for Handicapped

sit-in, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano signed the long sought-after regulations. The disability community had sustained a profound and historic victory.

504's Impact

The new regulations set the stage for thirteen years of legal advocacy, community activism and empowerment culminating in the enactment of the landmark 1990 ADA. As people with disabilities became familiar with the specific provisions of 504, they also began to analyze their personal experiences in civil rights terms. Section 504 became a fundamental tool available to activists to remedy certain acts of discrimination. The promise of a legal solution replaced the only tactic previously available, reliance on good will and voluntary efforts. While the federal government never widely enforced 504, the law nevertheless served a vital community education and empowerment role, and its provisions were affirmed and defined in the courts in the 1980's, eventually being extended to the private sector by the ADA.

San Francisco Chronicle, April 16, 1977

Hearing at Protest Site

504's Operational Principles HEW's Section 504 regulations established basic operational principles that are accepted today as the platform for legal compliance with the ADA. Section 504's goal is integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities. The law and the regulations recognized that people with disabilities experience discrimination, and that such discrimination is the root cause of their second class status. Thus, non-discrimination is the fundamental civil right established by 504. Discrimination can take the form of exclusionary policies and practices as well as an inaccessible built environment. Central to 504 is the principle that

affirmative conduct may be required to remove architectural and communication barriers and provide accommodations. Section 504 also acknowledged that people with disabilities experience discrimination as a class, irrespective of diagnosis. Based on this class analysis 504 established a three-pronged legal definition of disability, rather than a medical one. This definition includes people with physical and mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activity, those who have a record of such an impairment, and those who are regarded as having such an impairment. Section 504 also established a principle specific to disability rights law: the individual's right to be free of discrimination must be balanced with the cost to society to effect a remedy. As with other civil rights laws, 504 also established the right of an individual who has experienced discrimination to seek an administrative remedy with the appropriate federal agency, and to go to court.

The reach of the HEW regulations was broad. They became the template or guideline used by each federal agency when writing regulations applicable to their recipients of financial assistance. An almost identical version of the guideline also applied to the operation of each of the federal agencies themselves when 504 was extended to them by later amendments to the Rehabilitation Act.

From 504 to the ADA — 1977 to 1990

The thirteen-year period between the victory celebration following HEW's issuance of the 504 regulations on May 4, 1977, and the signing of the ADA into law by President George Bush on July 24, 1990, witnessed the expansion and maturing of the independent living and



Demonstrators Mary Lou Breslin and Kitty Cone working out of Director Maldonado's office

disability civil rights movement. But the road to the ADA was fraught with attacks on the new 504 regulations from the Reagan Administration, federal agencies such as The Office of Management and Budget, the Federal courts, and trade associations such as the American Public Transit Association which opposed 504's accessible transportation requirements.

In 1979, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on its first 504 case. In *Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, denying the right of a woman who was deaf to attend nursing school, the Court held that she wasn't qualified to become a nurse because they argued that accommodating her disability would require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the educational program. Responding to this serious challenge to the fundamental principles of accommodation established in 504, activists throughout the country called for community events and public education activities that

San Francisco Examiner, April 24, 1977

The disabled: Through with silence and shame

would reaffirm 504's principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

While the *Davis* decision didn't halt the march toward the ADA before it had begun, the ruling did identify the issues that would dictate the policy debate throughout the 1980's. These issues are deeply imbedded in 504's development and interpretation; they also resonate in the ADA.

In 1978, the Department of Transportation issued 504 regulations applying to publicly operated transit districts nationwide. In order to fulfill 504's non-discrimination requirements, transit authorities would be required to provide lifts on buses and take specific steps to provide access to other public transit systems such as subways and



Nighttime in the HEW building

light rail. Over the next several years the American Public Transit Association, which opposed the access rules because of perceived cost, filed a lawsuit to overturn the DOT 504 regulations and lobbied Congress behind the scenes to weaken the requirements through legislative amendments. Astronomical estimates to retrofit older transit systems such as the New York City

subway were persuasive to the Federal court, though advocates charged that the cost estimates were deliberately inflated. The Court overturned the DOT transit regulations in 1980.

In a pitched battle with APTA, disability advocacy groups such as American Disabled for Accessible Public Transportation (ADAPT) dogged APTA's meetings, demanding accessible transportation. Using classic civil disobedience tactics, ADAPT blocked buses, demanded to speak at meetings, and sustained numerous arrests during the 1980's. When the ADA was being drafted, an opportunity presented itself to revisit the transit issue, finally placing the decision about transportation access back in the hands of the Congress. The long defunct Department of Transportation 504 regulations were resurrected. They became the basis for crafting new accessible transit requirements now contained in the ADA.

Early in 1982, the first year of the Reagan administration, then Vice President George Bush established the Task Force on Regulatory Relief. With a broad mandate to cut back on all Federal Government regulations deemed unduly burdensome, the Task Force targeted 504 for reform. Section 504 was considered the least controversial, and thus the most vulnerable, because the Administration anticipated little community opposition. In a powerful showing of unanimity the disability community nationwide launched a campaign to save the regulations from being gutted. Letter writing campaigns, candlelight vigils and meetings with

White House and Justice Department officials kept the community's opposition to any changes in the 504 regulations at the forefront of the debate. The Administration had miscalculated the strength of the disability community's commitment to its first civil rights law, as well as its capacity to develop effective political strategy. After a two year campaign the disability community once again celebrated victory. The Administration announced its decision to leave the 504 regulations unchanged.

During the 1980's the disability community also established strong and lasting ties with the broader civil rights community, an alliance that proved invaluable during the process of enacting the ADA. The decade witnessed legislative and judicial struggles that set the stage for the ADA. In response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision narrowing the applicability of all civil rights laws, the disability community worked in coalition with the organized civil rights community for the passage of legislation to restore the laws banning discrimination on the basis of race and ethnic minority status, gender and age as well as Section 504 covering people with disabilities. Disability rights activists in every state rallied their communities to respond to each step of the legislative process. Throughout the lengthy struggle, the disability community displayed a passionate and unwavering commitment to preserving 504 and to joining forces as full-fledged members with the other civil rights groups during the legislative battles. Clearly more than just the words on the page, 504 had come to symbolize the goals of the disability movement itself. After a four year struggle, the 1988 Civil Rights Restoration Act was

San Francisco Examiner, April 11, 1977

A long night of protest at HEW offices

"We are glad to lock arms and hands in the struggle...I will testify tomorrow and make our support clear."

Joe Hall, President,
San Francisco, NAACP

504

enacted. Another step had been taken in preserving the scope of Section 504 and paving the way for the ADA.

In a 1984 Supreme Court case, *Consolidated Rail v. Darrone*, the Court affirmed HEW's authority to have written the 504 regulations. While the case involved the right of a railroad engineer to continue working after he had lost an

arm, the important effect of the ruling was to acknowledge that the principles established in 504 were necessary and appropriate to assure non-discrimination for people with disabilities. The 504 regulations were again preserved and another crucial step toward the ADA was taken.

In 1987, in *School Board of Nassau County v. Arline*, the Supreme Court ruled that a person with a contagious disease was covered under 504 against discrimination in employment. Widely viewed as determining whether people with HIV/AIDS would be covered by 504, the ruling also showed that the Court had undergone a profound transformation in its point of view about disability since the *Davis* case. In an opinion quoted in the legislative history of the ADA, the Court said, "*Society's accumulated myths and fears about disability and disease are as handicapping as are the physical limitations that flow from actual impairments.*" Not only affirming the right of individuals with HIV/AIDS to be protected from discrimination under 504, the Court's ruling reflected the view long held by the disability community that discrimination is the root cause of the exclusion, isolation and second class status of individuals with disabilities. *Arline* represents another pivotal victory in the march to the ADA.

The 1980's also saw Independent Living Centers established throughout the country. The disability movement's philosophy of independence and self determination spread along with the centers. As the centers grew and prospered, a

powerful coalition of independent living centers also grew into national prominence. At the grass-roots level disability organizations urged people with disabilities to vote and demanded accessible public transportation invoking 504's equal

opportunity mandate. Parents of children with disabilities formed advocacy organizations to advance educational opportunities for their children, adding to the critical mass needed to press for passage of the ADA. Public awareness of disability rights issues grew during the decade as demonstrations at Gallaudet College opposing the appointment of a hearing president riveted news viewers.

By 1988, the national disability community was angered by the failure of the Federal government to enforce 504, and was mindful of the fact that Federal non-discrimination laws based on race, ethnicity and gender had significantly broader application than 504, which applied only to entities receiving federal financial assistance. The 1964 Civil Rights Act provided protection from discrimination against women and racial and ethnic minorities not only by entities that received federal assistance but also by the private sector, and banned discrimination against minorities in public accommodations. Recognizing this fundamental inequity, the National Council on Disability created and circulated

draft legislation intended to provide equivalent coverage to people with disabilities. The concept of the ADA was born.

Throughout numerous drafts and revisions of drafts, the proposed legislation remained true to the principles established in the 1977 Section 504 regulations, and relied on 504's record in the courts and in communities nationwide for its legitimacy. For the first time, 504's promise of equal citizenship, and the hard-won principles it had established, would come full circle. The promise of comprehensive equal protection under the law could, finally, become a reality. On July 24, 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law.



Photo by Hollym D'Lit

George Miller (r) talks with protesters



Photo courtesy of Lucy Muir

John Edmonds talks to 504 crowd

Remembering 504

by Evan White

When newsrooms in San Francisco first heard there was a sit-in taking place in the Federal Health, Education and Welfare Building, they responded as they would to any protest. The Bay Area had been scene to demonstrations for years, and we know they carried drama, confrontation, tension and good visuals. And since this sit-in involved people with disabilities, the visual value was even greater than usual.

As it became apparent this sit-in was not going to be short-lived, coverage began to vary. Television's "short attention span syndrome" kicked in and the other stations limited air time to "new" and "dramatic" events, such as then Mayor George Moscone bringing in portable showers so people could

bathe, and Congressman Phillip Burton holding Congressional hearings inside the

building. My boss at the time, Pete Jacobus, proposed we stay on the story and look for ways to convey the hardships endured by people with disabilities.

In an attempt to do that, I spent part of a day in a wheelchair in a variety of situations. Since at the time there were no environmental modifications for peo-

ple with disabilities, it made a strong visual point and I found it impossible to cross the street with no curb cuts, and ended up rolling down the street in traffic looking for a driveway. I couldn't even negotiate the entrance to my own station.

As media coverage began to wane, the organizers of the sit-in realized continued press was vital to their success. They became proactive. Judy Heumann, Ed Roberts, and Kitty Cone and the others showed impressive leadership qualities, and they excelled in organizational and management skills. They invited reporters inside the occupied building to show the hardships of sleeping in hallways, bathing in sinks and getting access to medicine. Health issues were sometimes critical, and the Federal Security Guards received conflicting instructions on how uncooperative to be with the demonstrators. At first, the demonstrators had the freedom to go in and out of the building, but that didn't last long. The Federal officials tightened the noose by disallowing anyone who left the building from returning. (This was actually more humane than in other cities where demonstrations were being held simultaneously: in Seattle, Los Angeles, and some Eastern cities, the authorities intimidated the protesters into

giving up their sit-in by starving them out and by denying them medicine.)

We then learned that the San Francisco demonstrators were joining those from the other cities to continue the protest in Washington, D. C. I proposed, and the News Director agreed, that I accompany the San Francisco contingent and continue covering the story from the nation's capital. My cameraman Ray Weiss and I were the only reporting team to go. The events that followed were among the most significant I've ever had the privilege of covering.

It began with the plane ride because at that time the airlines weren't used to disabled travelers, especially in large numbers. But with television cameras along, it's amazing how cooperative people can be.

When we got off the plane, everyone was herded into the back of a U-Haul truck, the wheelchairs and their occupants lifted by means of the hydraulic lift in back. When they were inside and the door was closed, they sat in pitch dark, hanging onto each other for dear life as the truck took off directly for the very exclusive neighborhood where Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano lived.



Evan White interviews Eddy Jauregui with his two daughters

Photo by Hollym D'Uli



Machinists and CRLA lawyers unload demonstrators from UHAUL truck

Photo by Hollym D'Uli

Around midnight, the truck pulled up in front of Califano's house at the end of a cul-de-sac. The truck's back door was rolled

up, and one by one, those inside, in wheelchairs, on crutches, with white canes, were lowered to the pavement. Each had a candle which they lit, and in a circular line in the street, they began a quiet, dignified demonstration, interrupted only with the occasional calling out of the Secretary's name, and an invitation to come out and talk about the 504 Regulations.

It probably didn't take more than 30 seconds for the lights in the neighboring houses to come on, and not more than three minutes for the first of three police cars to pull up.

It was an amazing thing to watch: neighbors who felt their security and privacy were being threatened, police who saw their job primarily to protect that security and privacy, and both facing the unbelievable sight of the feared intruders...the disabled with candles.

At first, the police talked, then begged, then radioed to headquarters for direction. Then they gave up, got into their cars, parked a few yards away and watched.

They were still there when the sun came up. About seven a.m. a group of demonstrators decided to go to Califano's front door, with the police quickly at their sides. Someone answered the door and politely said the Secretary wasn't there. In fact a neighbor later told that while the disabled were at the Secretary's front door... Presidential Cabinet member Joseph Califano was high-tailing it out his back door and running through the woods behind his house to a waiting car, just to avoid talking with those at the vigil.

Berkeley Barb, April 22-28, 1977

Making War In A Wheelchair

Satisfied that their trip to Washington was off to a good

start, the group got back in the truck, went to the basement of a church that would be their home for the duration of their stay and settled in. Before going to bed, they held their first of many strategy meetings. They talked and argued about their plans of attack at great length. There were as many points of view as there were participants, and while they never ended with everyone happy, they always ended with consensus.

With each day, there was a new plan, a new target and another ride in the back of the truck, with no tie-downs, no handles, no bars...the chairs being whipped back and forth inside as the truck negotiated city traffic. Once,

they tried to ride with the door open so they could have some air and light, but it proved too dangerous, too easy for a chair to ride right out the back of the truck.

Among the images from those days: Judy Heumann, leading a group of eight or ten people in wheelchairs, attempting to enter the Health, Education, and Welfare Building to see Secretary Califano, only to be met by the huge glass front doors locked and blocked by a half dozen very large, very tough-looking security guards.

Heumann's response was to assault the doors. She and the others would

get a rolling start and go smashing into the doors with their chairs. At first, the guards reacted with astonishment, then frustration. They didn't really know what to do. Finally, they decided to kick the chairs as they approached. It was an amazing sight, the demonstrators, vulnerable in their chairs, being kicked by armed and uniformed guards.

After making their point, and providing absolutely awesome television news footage, the group left H.E.W. and circled the other Federal buildings in the area, making sure that as many people as possible knew they were there and what their message was.

Photo by Hollym D'Uli

Demonstrators bed down



Photo by Hollynn D'Ul

Candlelight vigil outside Califano's home

Then there was the day that we learned Joseph Califano was giving a luncheon speech. The demonstrators weren't allowed into the hotel restaurant where the speech was being held, but my cameraman and I couldn't be kept out because we had press credentials. Unfortunately, Califano and his staff knew who we were, so during the question and answer period, they refused to take my questions, and when I butted in anyway, I was ignored.

Califano's entourage tried to get him out of the building quickly, blocking our exit while they put him in an elevator just ahead of us and the doors closed. We stood in front of our missed opportunity when Fate stepped in, thumbed her nose at Califano and blessed us. For whatever reason, the car returned to our floor with Califano in it, the doors opened and there we were, our camera rolling. I was informed in less than polite terms that I was breaking Washington Press Corps protocol. It seems you're not allowed to chase a Cabinet member or ask questions unless called on. I asked anyway but got no answer. It was very good television.

Perhaps my favorite moment occurred after the entire contingent walked, limped, and wheeled the ten blocks to the church where President Carter and his family worshipped, and where he taught Sunday school. When we arrived, we were kept across the street

from the front of the church. There was one other reporter there, a network correspondent whose job it was to wait out in front of the church just in case something "important" happened. He didn't consider the disabled's cause "important".

Weiss and I stayed across the street with the disabled demonstrators. When the President arrived, he had gone in the front door of the church. When he left, he went out the back door to avoid us. But his car still had to come out of the driveway, turn and pass in front of us, and when it did, Rosalyn Carter, to her credit, looked out her side window, leaned forward and waved. The President, however, sat far back in his seat where he couldn't see our ragtag group of people with disabilities. And he didn't wave.

Eventually, the demonstrators' persistence paid off, and they were invited to the Executive Office Building to meet with a top Administration official. Weiss and I were not allowed in with them. They had their meeting, feeling they had at least had an audience, although nothing was promised.

All during that time, there was a strike at ABC, and since I worked for their

San Francisco owned and operated station, the strike affected us as well. On the plus side, we were allowed to feed all our material daily, not just to San Francisco, but to every ABC affiliate in the country. As a result, the demonstration got a lot more exposure than it would have, had there not been a strike. On the negative side, however, no systems were in place in San Francisco during the strike to keep the video feeds, and none of the raw film was kept in Washington. So today, not one frame of those remarkable days exists.

But for Ray Weiss and myself, those events produced a lifelong admiration and respect for that group who decided that nothing was going to happen on their behalf unless they

made it happen. And they did make it happen. Those disabled demonstrators take their place alongside the Civil Rights activists, the Women's Rights activists, and later, the Gay Rights activists, in changing history, and impacting for the better the lives of everyone in the civilized world. No small achievement.



Photo by Hollynn D'Ul

California demonstrators in front of White House

San Francisco Examiner, April 18, 1977

Handicapped still wait

504

Personal Stories from 1977 Participants

Adam & His Mom Sit-In

by Beverly Bertaina

We first heard that people with disabilities were sitting-in government buildings all over the nation to try to force Secretary of HEW Califano to sign the regulations implementing Section 504 before they could be weakened. Then we heard that the sit-ins had ended in all but San Francisco and maybe one or two other cities. We were thrilled to see this happening and wanted to help.

My son Adam was 4-1/2 years old that summer. He'd sustained severe brain damage (we didn't know the cause then) when he was 4 months old and my husband and I had been learning to be advocates since that time. In those years, I had begun meeting other "radical" parents like Diane Lipton, Pam Steneberg, Connie Lapin and Lynn Gray

as well as advocates like Judy Heumann. They were fighting

The New York Times, April 29, 1977

Califano Signs Regulations to Ban Discrimination Against Disabled

the same battles for kids as we were but they had expectations for what the kids were entitled to and could accomplish far beyond anything we had dreamed of. God, it was an exciting time.

My family, including Adam, my husband Al, my daughter Lara, age 10, and my two nieces, Teri, age 14, and Kathi, age 8, all lived together in San Francisco then. We all went down to a rally at the HEW building the first weekend after the sit-in started. We marched around with everyone yelling something like "Sign 504 Unchanged." We were having a great time.

I think Judy Heumann had been inside the building and had come out for the rally. She came over to us and said that they needed more people "inside," especially children. It hadn't occurred to us to actually enter the building to sit-in. I didn't think the building security guards would let us

in and I had never put myself or my son in a position to get arrested. Before Adam was born, I had been a sweet, quiet, unassuming thing who didn't much challenge authority (except for a quiet opposition to the Vietnamese War). Adam changed all that and I was learning to be assertive most of the time, aggressive when needed and plain bitchy when nothing else worked.

I couldn't take Adam inside without the support of the family. I looked at Al and he said sure, go on in. He was going to get the fun job of delivering clothes, diapers and medications to us from the "outside" as well as taking care of the girls. I asked Teri, Lara and Kathi if they would be OK without me for awhile. I don't remember exactly what they said but there is a vague memory that they couldn't wait to get rid of me. (Recently, Lara told me that she couldn't understand why I was putting Adam through this "ordeal." Her 10 year old mind saw us chaining ourselves to the doors or something drastic like that. When she found out that no chains were involved, she forgave me and thought what we were doing was pretty neat.)

Right then and there, I pushed Adam in his wheelchair with his diaper bag into the building with Judy. The guards let us through with no problem. We went up the elevator and onto a floor which was full of people in chairs, with dogs, signing, talking loudly, all moving fast and paying no attention to us. I had never been around adults with disabilities much, just kids. It was a little scary but exhilarating.

I was assigned to work in the "kitchen." This turned out to be the Director's office which was very large and had, shortly before, been well-furnished. Someone had converted the air conditioner (in San Francisco?) into a refrigerator



Photo by Ken Stein

Adam Bertaina

using sheets of cardboard and plastic. There was food stored on tables and on the director's desk under the plastic and water was soaking the carpet.

I don't recall that we actually prepared meals but we made sandwiches and coffee or something. A buffet type table was set up at meal times and we served out the food to the long line of people. Everyone took their food back to whatever area they were occupying to eat. One young man (I was 35 and felt very mature) and myself made friends and worked together much of the time. I don't remember his name.

Adam and I slept on a sofa or the floor in one of the conference rooms or larger offices. We washed in the bathrooms which were rigged for showers. I accidentally walked in on a guy showering one day and got an ear full. Most everyone seemed to get along but tempers flared occasionally.

Everyone doted on Adam who looked like one of those plump-faced angels with blond curls. I don't recall there being any other children inside during the time we were there so he was kind of the sit-in mascot. People were very helpful in feeding and diapering Adam and watching him when I was working or busy somewhere else. A woman in a chair named Lucy was particularly terrific. One time, I got so caught up in an activity, maybe it was the sign language class, that I forgot about Adam until after time to eat. Lucy fed Adam for me and didn't make me feel guilty about it.

Al often came by the HEW building after work and always found people outside who were supporting those inside and reminding the world that we were still in there. He got acquainted with some of the guards who were very helpful in passing clothes, diapers and medication up to us in the building. Al found out that the guards were at risk of losing their jobs for being so helpful.

There were periodic meetings inside to discuss our progress in getting the regs signed, events at other sit-ins, and what was happening at our sit-in. At one point, we

were told the police were probably going to come in and arrest us. By that time, my only concern was what the police were going to do with Adam?

For years, my most vivid memory of the sit-in was the hostility I encountered from some of the sit-inners. As the mother of a disabled child, I seemed to represent to some young adults with disabilities their own parents who they believed had been over-protective and too willing to accept inferior services. They were very angry that they had not been allowed the same freedom as their siblings and friends, that they had been put in classes for the retarded ("I was blind/deaf/physically disabled/etc., not retarded" always said with such exasperation), that they had been put in institutions or nursing homes or that they had been kept at home long after they were ready to go off on their own. They blamed their parents for making little effort to understand their feelings and discouraging their aspirations.



Bev Bertaina testifies at 504 hearing

This hostility made me mad because Al and I weren't like "those" parents. We had taken on the medical system to get Adam the best care there was. We had battled with the regional center to get the services our family needed to keep Adam at home and out of the State

Hospital. We had fought and used the new special education law to get Adam the best school services available. We were much better than "those" parents.

It wasn't until later that I realized that most of the parents who were so resented had been raising their disabled children in an inhospitable world at a time when there was no help available. There were no family services, no government funded disability agencies, there were few and really god-awful educational programs and not a civil rights law in sight. Those parents didn't have much of a chance, but they must have done something right. Their kids weren't withering away in a closet at home or strapped to a bed in some institution. The people at the sit-in were "those" parents'

kids, striving to make a difference in the lives of others with disabilities and using everything they had been taught, however badly, to take on the able-bodied world.

It was at the sit-in that I also began to learn about the hierarchy of disability. Although Adam was cute, as a person with retardation he was at the bottom of the disability totem pole, just above those with mental illness. Those with physical disabilities, blind/deaf/paras/quads, were at the top of the pole and did most of the talking. They are seen, and sometimes see themselves, as somehow "better" than those with mental or emotional disabilities ("I can't see/hear/walk/etc., but at least I have a mind"). The disability community has never gotten away from that and often still does not well represent the needs of those at the "bottom of the pole." We've helped society clean up its anti-disability language except for "idiot, moron, crazy, retard, etc."

San Francisco Examiner, April 24, 1977

Adam and I sat-in for a week. That was as long as we could take it inside and the family could take it outside. We left the next weekend, not knowing if we had accomplished anything but knowing that we had had one of the defining experiences of our lives. We all came back for the final rally the last weekend when everyone came out and the sit-in ended. There were a lot of tears and sad good-byes. I never saw most of them again.

I've forgotten the sign language I learned at the sit-in except for most of the alphabet and my sign name. Much of my identity was tied up with being Adam's mother in those days. The name they gave me is the right hand making a letter B next to the right cheek, indicating the sign for mother. I still use that sign name when introduced to people who sign.

Adam died in 1992 and took a big chunk of our lives with him. Rehashing the sit-in has brought back some fun and funky memories of our time together. I always meant to sit down and write up my thoughts about the sit-in. Thanks for this opportunity to re-live an incredible and wonderful time. I still miss the excitement sometimes.

One of Many

by Bill Blanchard

I wondered how many people were at the demonstration. And if anyone would be arrested. Would the "media" show up? All I knew was that I wasn't there...not yet anyway.

It was April 5, 1977 and a group of not-too-happy people with disabilities, along with their non-disabled supporters, were staging a demonstration at the Health, Education and Welfare building in San Francisco's Civic Center. So what do you do when enough is enough already and you want something to happen? Well, you "take it to the streets"...or, in this case, to the HEW building.

I, however, was not going to the demonstration that morning. Instead, I was scheduled to interview for an internship position in sexuality counseling sponsored by the University of California at San Francisco. The demonstration, however, was on my mind and my intention was to go to the Civic Center

after my interview. But "time waits for no man", and the demonstrators were sure-in-hell not going to wait for me. By the time my interview was over and I arrived at the Civic Center, a large contingent of disabled and non-disabled people had entered the HEW building and essentially took over the fourth floor. I had heard rumors that this might happen, but I was still surprised and impressed that they had pulled it off...at least so far.

Taking over a floor of the HEW building upped the ante. The message was clear—people meant business. But they were inside...and I was out. I'm not what you consider a "political radical" or, as far as that goes, even "political", but this was an important issue and as a person with a physical disability I wanted to do my part...as small as it may be. I wanted in the building. The police wanted to keep me out. They were, however, allowing clothes and supplies to be brought in for people who needed them. This, I felt, may be my ticket in.

I had heard that one of the leaders of the demonstration-turned-occupation needed some clothing brought to her. I made arrangements to be the one to bring her clothes to the building the following morning.

Early the next morning, with suitcase in hand, I went up to the front door of the HEW building. I was met there by a police officer who instructed me to wait by the door while he went to get someone to bring the suitcase up to the occupied floor. Now it's not my habit to disobey authority, or at least I didn't take great pleasure in it, but as soon as he was far enough away, with his back turned to me, I nervously took off for the elevator and rode it up to join the rest of the demonstrators. I figured the police wouldn't attempt to find me and drag me out because it would make for terrible publicity. This was all very exciting! At least for the moment.

So there I was. Among what seemed to be a couple hundred disabled and non-disabled demonstrators, most of whom I did not know. I then realized I had no idea how long I was going to be there, or how I was going to get food, or where I was going to sleep, or who would help me with my bowel and bladder routine, or help me bathe, or dress, or whatever. I wasn't prepared because I wasn't sure what to prepare for.

All of a sudden excitement turned to concern. WHAT THE HELL WAS I THINKING?!

WHAT WAS I DOING HERE?!

I was a spinal-cord injured quadriplegic after-all. And a quad who likes comfort at that. My idea of "roughing it" is having to watch black and white television. And that's while in the comfort of my own warm bed. Now I had the option to sleep in my not-meant-to-be-slept-in-wheelchair or to sleep on the floor. Great! What wonderful choices. I prayed this was going to be a very brief occupation. Surely Califano would sign in a day or two.

So much for prayers. Or, at least, my prayers. We were in for a long stay. It should go without saying, but I'll say it anyway, this was not an easy way to live. Although, after 20 years, my memory is a bit hazy, I seem to remember spending the first couple of nights sleeping in my chair because it meant less transferring and less having to ask strangers for assistance. I had to scramble to find people to do my

attendant work, relying on some people I didn't even know. I eventually took to sleeping on the floor...sometimes in someone's office, sometimes in a stairwell, sometimes in the hallway.

These first few days were especially interesting because employees of the building were still coming into their offices to collect their belongings and move them to their new temporary offices located, I supposed, somewhere else in the building. And there I was sleeping on their office floors, sometimes engaged in personal care routines, often butt-nekkid. There's nothing like having a condom catheter slipped on your penis while strangers are walking by. Privacy, at times, wasn't an option. I was not alone though. Every morning you could come across people involved in various forms of personal care activities and in various stages of dress and undress.

As time went on the physical discomfort became somewhat less, though it was always far from ideal living conditions. Attendants were allowed to enter and leave the building, so I had some of my own attendants assisting me...along with my girlfriend at the time. We were able to bring in regular and egg-crate foam mattresses on which to sleep.

The days, however, were long and the nights cold. I spent most of my time aimlessly wandering the halls, or searching for windows with sun shining through so I could bask in its warmth. I avoided the media's bright lights like a plague, read whatever I could get my hands on, and pretty much kept to myself. Again, I didn't really know a lot of these folks and I was not one of the political insiders. I saw myself as just one of the "grunts"; one body to be counted among the many.

Over time, however, our numbers began to dwindle. For various reasons, people had to leave. After all, people were putting at risk their health, their jobs, and who knows what else. At the same time, there remained a strong core of folks determined to stay as long as necessary. I went along for the ride.



Photo by Hollym D'Uli
Frank Moore and companion in the building

Eventually, we had television sets brought in and set up so we could monitor the news reports on our occupation. I was one of the people given a particular television station to monitor...to keep track of favorable and unfavorable or inaccurate reporting. I, also, joined some others in fasting, drinking only fruit juices. I lasted about a week, then the lure of hot meals took hold of my soul. The whole experience, however, was a great way to lose weight. I could use another sit-in.

The leaders of the sit-in/occupation were bright, involved, dynamic people with disabilities. Everyone was kept informed on a regular basis as to what they were doing and how Washington, DC was responding. And although there would be some struggle over methods, and people would split off into different factions of political thought, we were still united under a common purpose...to get 504 signed.

The sit-in even took on some aspects of being a "camp". Not that I ever went to camp. But there were sing-alongs organized in the evenings, small performances, talks/discussions. All those things I understand you do at camp—just sans the campfire. Although we did have a demonstrator set his mattress and himself on fire with a discarded cigarette. He had to be taken out of the building but was apparently all right. I never heard what happened to the mattress.

Finally, after, in my case, 24 days of sleeping on floors, wandering the halls, talking to myself and exposing myself to strangers, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act was signed. A small group of our leaders had gone to Washington, DC to press the issue, while other demonstrations had been springing-up throughout the country, until finally the government saw the light...or more likely the handwriting on the wall...and signed 504 into law.

As I look back on it, the 504 sit-in was an exhausting, uncomfortable, often boring, wonderful experience. I lost weight, didn't really develop any new friendships, lost out on my internship with U.C.S.F., and generally threw my life

into temporary disarray. But, given the same circumstances, I would do it again in a heartbeat. It felt so right to be one of the tiny cogs that helped drive the big wheel. The discomforts I experienced meant nothing in comparison to the importance of 504 being signed...of people with disabilities having their rights recognized and protected. With this in mind, I would like to thank our fearless leaders for their

fortitude and strength, the many non-disabled supporters who put their bodies, time and energy on the line, and to all my fellow grunts, who may be faceless, but, nevertheless, made it possible.

The Inside Story

by Joni Breves

I feel privileged to claim that I was part of a magnificent group of people that took the nation by surprise, changed the course of civil rights history, and profoundly changed my life.

Before the 504 sit-in, I held a position as Assistant to the Director at Sonoma State College Disabled Students Services. After experiencing seizures as a result of a history of substance abuse, I coordinated a support group for students with seizure disorders.

After I relocated back to the Bay Area, I worked for my dear friend Kitty Cone, as an attendant. She requested that I volunteer for an innocuous job of driving a few protesters to a demonstration in her van. Little did I know that the second call from Kitty suggesting I pick up a bundle of picket signs from CIL's paralegal office the night before would determine my destiny...at least for the next 20 years.

I walked towards a woman sitting at a desk, looking as if she knew what she was doing.



Photo by Hollym D'Uli
Nancy D'Angelo inside looks at Michael Williams outside the building

"I'd like to thank you for renewing the consciousness of your fellow human beings."
Congressman Phil Burton, D-California

Courtesy of Hollym D'Uli

"I'm here to pick up signs," I announced.

Without looking up the woman tapped a flyer on her desk and commanded, "Take this down to Krishna Copy Center and make 500 copies."

That was my first assignment from Judith Heumann. Life hasn't been the same since.

The final phone call from Kitty warned me that the group may stay overnight if necessary. I hadn't prepared for an overnighter; after all I was the driver and could come back in the morning for demonstrators.

By the time I dropped everyone off at the UN Plaza and found parking, protesters were filing into the San Francisco Federal Building. Elevators were crammed with people going to the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare on what would become the famous fourth floor. I will never forget the amazing scene when the doors opened. Protesters in wheelchairs, on crutches or with canes, were spilling out of the HEW Regional Director Jose Maldonado's office. Female employees timidly maneuvered their metal carts filled with manila folders through groups of demonstrators. Inside Maldonado's office, a contingency of deaf people watched Joe Quinn, interpreter, sign the booming voice of Judy Heumann as the cheers of protesters demanded that 504 be signed.

By 5 p.m. when the demonstrators were asked to leave and refused, I was wearing a white band around my arm. Somehow Jim Pechen with the Vietnam Veterans group, Swords to Plowshares, persuaded me to be one of the three monitors that would negotiate with the HEW officials. Elevated from van driver to liaison between the demonstrators and the Federal agents in only an afternoon was beyond my wildest imagination. Quickly I took a crash course in 504.

After discovering we had no intention of leaving, Jim Hayes of the Federal Protective Agency warned the monitors, "You know it will only take us ten minutes to get your group out of the building."

This was a national demonstration; disabled people were protesting in major cities. Our group was always one step ahead and knew that the orders to evict us would have to come from Washington, but that was not about to happen after their embarrassing ordeal of starving out disabled demonstrators in DC. After reporting to the group that we may be physically removed from the building, the monitors were told to respond with four words. "Go ahead, arrest us."

Now the problem was theirs; how were they going to get rid of us?

Three nights later around midnight a security guard summoned me from my "suite" located in the hall near the freight elevator. I was told there was a bomb in the building and to wait for a call from Jim Hayes to advise me how everyone would be evacuated. Twenty minutes later Hayes's call informed me that a bomb squad would be arriving shortly. He suggested I wake everyone but not move them until I was given further instructions. They did not want to move people into an area that may contain a bomb. An hour later after conferring with Judy Heumann who held court in the freight elevator where she resided, I told Jim Hayes not to wake us again until the bomb went off. The squad never did arrive but I was awakened again with a request to wake another monitor so we could sign a bomb report for HEW records. True bureaucracy. A bomb may go off any minute but they wanted two signatures.



Eating Off of Director Maldonado's Desk
Protest in Federal Building, San Francisco

Another tactic, to wear us down, was to bring garbage cans up on the freight elevators around four in the morning. Security knew that people occupied the passageway and elevator on the fourth floor. To bring garbage cans up, some of the demonstrators would have to roll up their sleeping bags or call for an attendant, get dressed, get in their wheelchairs and move so the garbage cans could be brought on to the floor. For the nights that this continued it was exhausting. Then we gained national attention and life in the building began to change.

The Washington Post, May 9, 1977

Newly Militant Disabled Waging War on Discrimination

Monitors met three times daily with HEW officials on negotiating issues. For a week, attendants were allowed access to the building if they were on the personal care list. One day we were told attendants would not be allowed in anymore. Security hoped the protesters who needed personal care would leave. I informed officials that the demonstrators were determined to remain in the building; therefore, a hygiene disaster would occur without attendants. I assured them that their Federal employees, and custodians, would not want such a mess on their hands. The doors remained opened. Bob Chang, Assistant Director of HEW Administration, gave the guards strict orders that anyone I identified as an attendant be allowed to enter the building. Our attendant pool doubled.

What the Federal agents did not realize was the protesters' enormous resolve to risk arrest and health to gain their basic rights. In attempts to wear us down they exhausted all their possibilities as we grew stronger. The 504 siege climbed to unprecedented heights gaining support from the larger community. This was absolutely exhilarating to us.

The 504 sit-in provided an opportunity for groups that normally would not even think of joining forces to come together. The Butterfly Brigade, a group of gay men, smuggled in walkie talkies while churches, synagogues and unions, along with McDonalds and the Black Panthers provided food.

The nation was watching and listening; the handling of disabled protesters was a concern. Alleged bomb threats ceased, 4 a.m. garbage detail terminated and Federal employees befriended demonstrators. Clandestine help from employees and security guards spiced our daily routine from gifts of food to sending messages to the outside. Every night our friends and families across the country could watch us on their news station.

The news media captured Mayor Moscone phoning Regional Director Maldonado requesting that shower heads be installed. The famous response from Maldonado, "We are not running a hotel here," was echoed throughout the halls. But due to the brilliance of the organizers' planning and determination to stay as long as necessary, we built with our supporters an infrastructure that resembled not a hotel but a town.

On the fourth floor meetings similar to town meetings were held daily. Congressmen, assemblymen, and community leaders were invited. Representative Phillip Burton demanded three pay phones be installed. More cots and air mattresses appeared, medics volunteered, cash was collected, a budget was developed, a treasurer appointed and shower heads, over Maldonado's objections, were installed. Priests, ministers and rabbis held services; recreation rooms were established for music, entertainment and a 24 hour poker game. Some people slept in tents. Not everyone was celibate or drug free.

The HEW officials were not pleased as our political clout increased. The security guards who had come to respect us, granting us privacy by not patrolling the fourth floor, were suddenly transferred. In the middle of the night new guards stomped across the floor in their military boots, shaking their enormous keys, walkie talkie blasting, opening and slamming doors. They were on a mission but so were we. As tired as we were we refused to go home to our comfortable beds. Tension mounted as Secretary Califano proposed changes to the regulations.

A contingency of demonstrators representing all disability and minority groups went to Washington, DC and embarrassed Secretary Califano by picketing in front of his house. The rest

of us had remained in the building and on victory day when the regulations were signed, we poured out of the building exhausted but jubilant. We knew we had achieved something incredible for our history books.

The four week siege resulted in the signing of 504. For the 150 protesters and their supporter's life was never the same. We knew what enormous possibilities there were for every disabled person. The 504 demonstrations were the conception of the nation-wide Disability Rights Movement that would claim other significant civil rights victories. To empower and educate every young disabled person, it is critical that we commemorate this historical event and acknowledge the other civil rights movements from which we learned.

The San Francisco Chronicle, April 19, 1977

Handicapped Spurn Offer By HEW Chief

The 504 Party

by Hollynn O'Lil

The 504 Demonstration and take over of the Federal Building in San Francisco was our birthday party. It lasted for 25 days. We each came with the question, "Who am I," and there we created ourselves. We told each other, "You are an equal human being."

We created a new citizen for this country. We created us: We People with Disabilities. Reading my notes, and the detritus of paper and rhetoric I kept (flyers, letters, news clippings, instructions for being arrested, pleas for food, supply lists, and schedules) my eyes fill with tears. I am so grateful to have been a part of that glorious coming together, that conception.

For about a year, I had been wading into the shallows of the Disability Rights Movement. I was still apologetic for being disabled. I didn't know what a 504 regulation was. I thought it was my fault that I couldn't take classes at the university, visit the library, or attend a city council meeting. Then, in April of 1977, I was caught in a tide of events so profound that my life has never been the same. The 504 Demonstration taught me what "Disability Rights" means, and propelled a major upward thrust from the core of my being. I made many life style changes in 1977, but they were only the tsunamis from that profound new concept: I am a whole human being, entitled to respect and equality of opportunity.

Equality of opportunity. What an enormous concept. In those final days before the signing of the first 504 regulations, we fought to keep the concept of equality of opportunity intact. Few now realize how precarious the situation was. The Secretary of the U. S. Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) Agency, Joseph Califano, was under tremendous pressure to make major changes that would drastically weaken the 504 Regulations.

As I read my journals from that time, I am struck by the difficulty of our task, and our amazing unity of purpose. Across the country, the disability community was desperate

to get the 504 regulations into place. We were under tremendous pressure to "take what we could get." Other organizations within the disability community pressured the California activists to support Secretary Califano's changes. Weary of sleeping on the floor, missing our families and our lives, exhausted by continuous deprivation and relentless pressure, we refused to accept "separate but equal" schools. We adamantly opposed major loopholes based upon cost. We demanded the inclusion of people with histories of drug and alcohol abuse. Meetings that lasted until 3:00 and 4:00 a.m. ended with unanimous votes to continue the fight, stay another day, to hold the line.

What is so apparent now was not so obvious then. How would the Americans with Disabilities Act look today if we had accepted the idea of "consortia," or separate but equal facilities for schools? What if we had allowed people with histories of drug and alcohol use to be excluded from the protection of 504? If cost had become the determining fact in our civil rights, what would that have done to the entire concept of civil rights?

It seems so easy now to glibly say, "Yeah, we took over the fourth floor of the Federal Building in San Francisco for three and one half weeks. We stayed there until the 504 regulations were signed." In reality, those three and one half weeks were some of the most difficult in our lives. Every day was an agonizing struggle to decide whether to abandon the cause, and all that it represented, or to continue to abandon their families and their "normal" lives.

"Can you stay just one more day?" we asked each other. "Just one more day. Okay, I know you need to get home; but decide tomorrow. Stay one more day."

Discomfort and anxiety was the order of our day by day existence. Everyone faced these questions, How can I get my meds? Where will I sleep? What about food? What about knocking a wall down in the restroom? How long can I go without a bath? I need to call my husband, my wife, my school, my children, my parents, my friends, my boss."

The San Francisco Chronicle, April 29, 1977

The Disabled Win Fight With HEW

The New York Times, April 17, 1977

Disabled in San Francisco Vow to Continue Sit-In

We were exhilarated to be part of a major historical event and uplifted to be so supported by the community. We also found it to be incredibly boring, tedious and frustrating. We sat in an austere office building day after day, wondering if we had lost our minds, wondering if all this effort would come to anything.

Everyone who was there has a personal 504 story. Love affairs began and ended. Friendships bloomed, and enemies were made. Children were conceived. Careers ended, and began.

My story centered on my children. Though I needed to take care of my two grade schoolers, I passionately wanted to be part of the demonstration. Once anyone left the building, the guards would not let them back in. I devised a way to be able to come and go. A friend who was a professional photographer loaned me his Nikon. It was a nicked and scratched workhorse of a camera that purred a little symphony of encouragement. I contacted Ms. Magazine, told them about the demonstrations taking place across the country, and received an assignment. Being "press" allowed me past the guards. Every morning I drove to San Francisco from Sonoma to take my place inside the building and to photograph the events. A few times at the beginning, before the HEW guards took a tougher stance, I brought my children into the building with me.



Michael Williams outside Press Club, Washington, DC

I joined the delegation of Californians to Washington, DC and continued my photo coverage there. Each day we spent there is still a vivid memory—the meetings with Senators Williams and Cranston and the meeting in the White House.

Then there was the Sunday service at the Baptist church attended by President Carter. I sat in my wheelchair on the outside of the fixed pews in the only space where I could be seated. Outside and across the street, my comrades held a candlelight vigil. I looked across the church and caught the gaze of the President. "Look at us," I said with my

eyes. "Know we are here. Know we are your fellow human beings."

Like everyone who gave so much to that effort, I played my part. All of us found a niche, and filled it. It's what you do when the chips are down. It's what we Americans do best. Now we can say "We Americans," for we demanded our rightful place in this country, in the best democratic tradition. We declared our independence and we fought a war to win it. We Americans, We People with Disabilities.

Love and the Sit-In

by Maureen Fitzgerald

In 1975 I worked at CIL in the administration department. I answered phones, did typing, building maintenance, attendant work and whatever else came up as everyone involved did at that time. Doing these commonplace tasks, I became swept up in the Disability Rights Movement which changed my life. At CIL I learned about wheelchair repair, sign language, sex and disability, community organizing, and I fell in love.

I met Dale Dahl while I was working at the reception desk and Dale was coming to CIL for assistance in finding housing and attendants. Falling in love happened

soon after. Dale went on to volunteer to set up Deaf Services at CIL and I went on to work as Patient Advocacy Coordinator at the Berkeley Women's Health Collective; but through Dale and other friendships I stayed involved with CIL. When the 504 demonstration flyer came out I naturally joined the ranks headed to the Federal building.

I remember marching on that April day, watching the sign language interpreters and the excitement of the day. Having been in college in the 60's and Berkeley in the 70's this was one of the countless demonstrations that I took part in. I

never thought to take a picture or to write down my thoughts. Another day, another demonstration. I went home and watched the take-over of the building on the news. A few days later Dale called me and asked me to bring him some personal items from his apartment. I went back to the Federal building with changes of clothing for Dale and ended up staying there several days myself. After that I went between the sit-in, home and work—losing track of the days.

At that time community groups were expert in the art of demonstration; each demonstration had a first aid or medics group. Because of my experience with attendant work and job at the Berkeley Women's Health Collective I was enlisted to work in the medical area. Mostly what I did was to keep track of medicine that needed to be refrigerated and dispense aspirin and Band-Aids when necessary. The

Berkeley Women's Health Collective supported my participation in the sit-in so I was paid my regular salary as I spent quite a bit of time at the Federal building. Because I was considered a medic, I was able to go in and out of the building which was a privilege not afforded to everyone.

I remember with amazement the way people worked to set up a community inside the building. There was a food committee, attendants, publicity, strategists, security, and even an entertainment committee. Everyone was high on the political

clout and public awareness this action was generating. It was hard to watch as everyone marched triumphantly out of the building on April 30, 1977. No one wanted to see the end of that experience of community and power. But anyone who was there never completely left the building. The experience of being there has remained inside all of us as much as it has changed the externals of our society.

A Song in Washington

by Olin Fortney

I first heard about the 504 protest from Dale Dahl, a Deaf Peer Counselor at CIL who was also a paraplegic. He was making the event seem to be the most important thing going on at the time, and even though I had a vague understanding

of the whole issue, I had enough faith in Dale to make certain that it was worthwhile enough to get involved in.

Dale is the person who initiated me into the whole Disabled People's Movement, solely by his own example of gaining independence and dignity after becoming disabled in a car accident. His story is not something I could describe in a few words, except that it is "awefully" inspiring.

It was probably Dale who made sure that there would be interpreters available at the demonstration, as well as a good turn out of deaf people. I cannot clearly recall the numbers, but there

seemed to be somewhere around 20 deaf people at the demonstration; and when it turned into a take over, there were probably five of these left who stayed inside the building the first night. Over the next three weeks, some left and others came into the building. There was a core group: Dale, myself, Steve McClelland, Lon and Linda Kuntze, Ed Corey and several others who remained inside and made efforts to involve the outside Deaf Community in the sit-in.

Also, another group of deaf people remained outside but maintained close contact with the sit-

in efforts and kept the Deaf Community informed. These people were Ralph Jordan, George Attletweed, Eddie and Joanne Jauregui, Betty Bentz and many others. It is always amazing how the Deaf Community is informed through words of mouth, so to speak. When there were demonstrations in front of the building on several occasions during the sit-in, we always got a good show of support from the Deaf Community.



Photo by Hollynn D'U

Hale Zukas at Washington, DC church, the demonstrators' home

The San Francisco Chronicle, April 8, 1977

S.F. Handicapped Sit-In Grows

I, myself was totally green at that time, and had no real first hand experience in working with other disabled people. Dale got me started right away, and I kept going back to him with questions about how I should properly interact with other disabled people without making a fool of myself. I remember one of my first hands-on experiences that I got from people in wheelchairs was my participation in the late night wheelchair races down the halls. I would borrow a chair and get creamed in the races.

Dale and I were among the people who stayed in the building for the duration of the sit-in, except for the time when I was selected to go with the group that went to Washington, DC.

Mainly because of communication barriers, it would sometimes be difficult for the deaf participants to connect with the others, disabled and non-disabled. It was constantly a struggle for all of us, especially for those who did not sign or the deaf who did not have sufficient oral skills.



Photo by Hollynn D'U

Demonstrators outside President Carter's church

There was one particular event that occurred during the time when I was in Washington, DC. I went to Gallaudet University to pick up a speaker's platform that we needed for a demonstration in the park that is across the street from the White House. I went with the two IAM union organizers from SF—two large, African American men—people whom I had been working with for at least three weeks. Still, we had not yet found a connection to one another and it was usually kind of awkward for me to be around them without an interpreter at hand. After loading the platform on the truck, we went to the campus pub, the Rathskeller, for a drink. After sitting down with our beer, we started to relax for a change. It was a very quiet and slow time of the day, mid-afternoon, and the pub was almost deserted. Then all of a sudden, the front door opens and this flashy, deaf, black dude literally bursts in, as if he owned the place, and goes straight to the juke box. He

The San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle, April 10, 1977

State Rehab chief joins the protest

bends over the music machine, and starts feeding money into it. All this time, the three of us have our attention fixed on this character, wondering what in the world he is up to. The place must have been filled with speakers, because the joint exploded with sound, and the guy swings around with his arms coming out and starts singing in sign along with the Steve Miller song...Fly like an Eagle.

I turned to look at the two guys to catch their reaction, and by God! it was a touching sight. It looked as if they were witnessing the second coming. One of them looked like the character from the movie, *A Quest For Fire*, when he discovers that fire can be made and even transported. The two started reaching out and clinging to each other and to me, as if they did not want to let go of the moment, totally awe struck. The singer really was an amazing performer, going through the song with his whole body and so full of spirit. When the music stopped, they would lean forward to get up, then fall back down as soon as another song came on. I couldn't figure out what they were going to do until the music finally stopped. They rushed up to the guy, thrusting coins at him and pointing to the juke box, nodding, asking for more.

Somehow, something clicked between me and the two guys. From then on, they would look me in the eye as an equal, and make a sincere effort to try to communicate with me, and they seemed to be totally at ease around me from then on. Whatever it was that happened there in the Rathskeller, it broke down the invisible wall between us.

During the whole time in the building, we were all involved in many different activities, and the recruitment of interpreters was one of the major tasks in the beginning stages. After awhile, it seems that the interpreters themselves took care of the scheduling and to maintain contact with the outside by telephone, so that we were able to always have interpreters available for meetings which were going on around the clock. Some of the deaf people would make efforts to recruit interpreters who they worked with, those who would seem to fit in. The interpreters themselves seemed to be networking very well with each other, and they were recruiting the people who they knew. Overall, we got a lot of positive support from the interpreters in the Bay Area throughout the sit-in.

An Attendant's Perspective

by Avril Harris

I had been a personal assistant for two years, when I was asked to volunteer my time, April 1977, driving and assisting with attendant care for the day of the rally. After breakfast we loaded up the van and off to San Francisco we went. We

were surprised at the number of people that showed up, about 150, mostly people with disabilities from different backgrounds and cultures.

After a couple of hours I was told that we would be going inside the building. Little did I know

when we went through the door, that it would be 25 days before we came out. For me, the first week was the hardest. The first week, if you left the building, they wouldn't let you back in, so no one left. There were only a handful of attendants. We held attendant's training right there on the fourth floor. Everyone helped each other, even those who had never worked with a person with a disability. It was gratifying to see people with less severe disabilities assisting those who needed a hand eating, drinking, etc. There were blind people serving food, managing the phones. Everyone had a job. We became one big family with everyone doing what they could.

Assisting with personal care was quite a challenge. We were all away from our familiar surroundings. At 5 p.m. when the office staff had left for the day, we would use their offices. We woke up very early in the mornings, got our routines done, and made sure the offices were clean before the workers came in. (And thank you to those office workers who gave us their support by leaving their office doors unlocked—you know who you are!)

During the day we would scavenge for tape, cardboard, pencils and anything else we could find that could be used to

make the radios, hand held walkie talkies and phone accessible. For example, the inset of a toilet roll, shaped and taped in a certain way made a great adaptive device for someone who is quadriplegic.

During the second week, people were allowed into the building, a few at a time—what a great help that was. Our pool of attendants doubled and we all received a change of clothing for the first time in a week!

April 30th, the day we came out of the building, was such an exciting time. We felt so over-joyed that the 504 regs had finally been signed. It was also my 29th birthday!! For this, my friends draped me in toilet paper. Those 25 days changed the course of my life. Things would never be quite the same.

Random Remembrances

by Mary Jane Owen

For those who don't remember, it might be appropriate to remind ourselves that early on, before the actual sit-in took place, we had to learn to take charge and responsibility for ourselves. The separation of the disability movement from the medical professionals was not an easy task and was still in process. "They" had seen us as their responsibility...It must be remembered this effort was being planned as independent living programs were rather slowly becoming institutionalized and current patterns of oversight by federal regulations still awaited the firm influence of today. The fact that a previous CIL director, Ed Roberts, had moved into the state bureaucracy, appointed by the new and controversial governor, Jerry Brown, to head his department of rehabilitation, gave us a certain credibility other projects lacked. These connections were critical to our success...We were free to help and assist each other and needed to look to our own resources to meet the needs of our colleagues. We had grown used to a supportive representative from the state rehabilitation services who seemed to understand quite well what this de-emphasis on ourselves as patients or victims meant to us.

The rally was well designed to include every possible segment of the disability and social service organizations and entities. A good sound system had been acquired and a small platform was brought in so all could see those in wheelchairs as they addressed the crowd. We knew how to "stage" an event which would be powerful and appeal to the media.

We notified BART that lots of people in wheelchairs and with other disabilities would be going to the United Nations Plaza in front of the old federal office building on April 5...We sent out press releases to everyone we could think of and took fliers to every social agency or organization anyone had ever heard about...No suggestion was ignored. We plastered San Francisco's agencies and organizations with information about our intent.

We'd been told a memorandum had been circulated to the staff at HEW which noted that we would probably try to enter the building after our rally and that we should be given punch and cookies before we were sent home. In fact, such a message tended to cause an increase in the desire of many previously unsure of their need to stick around. Uncertain, people realized they'd better stay to make the point we were not children to be patted on the head and sent away. This was about civil rights. We were serious.

It was interesting to me that over the weeks ahead...talking and strategizing about what we would do if we were arrested or how we might better educate our fellow citizens, make better use of our developing network of support or get the media coverage which was essential, it was usually our participants with developmental disabilities who would suggest when the discussion got too abstract: "But aren't we here to get Secretary Califano to sign 504?" And we

would all be brought back to the reality of what our goal was. It

was during those days that the last vestiges of intellectual bigotry, acquired from my past imagining of what being developmentally disabled meant, faded and were replaced

"We greet you as fellow outcasts. It's time to take to the streets again."

Howard Wallace,
Chair, Gay Action League
of San Francisco

Courtesy of Hollym D'Ul

5
1
4

with the knowledge that I had much to learn from my more concrete minded friends and associates. Over the weeks ahead I would learn that all people with all sorts of disabilities have much more in common than we have to divide us. That was the biggest lesson of the sit-in for me.

I spent most of that first afternoon...in the offices of Bruce Lee, the deputy regional director, who turned out to be a true friend of the sit-in. As a black man who was...gay, it became increasingly obvious he understood, on a personal level, what discrimination meant to the human spirit. He usually wore rather elegant tailored jump suits often with a big pin. He told us...that if he wore the pin on the other side of his chest from its usual place, we could expect the police had been asked to come in and arrest us. We had other signals and came to trust him and were dedicated to not allowing others to know of his apparent support for our goals.

When I got home (from the sit-in), Bruce and I would do "stand-up" informative and rather humorous presentations of the meaning of the sit-in. Most of these were arranged due to Bruce's being asked to tell various organizations and agencies about what had happened and how to handle similar "uppity-advocates". We did mock combative confrontations: questioning and answering; retorting and recounting. It was great fun! Both of us had a certain dramatic flair and presented the events with humor while making serious points about civil rights and human dignity.

One activity which I remember fondly was forming a massage "snake" down the halls in the evenings. Everyone got down on the floor, even those who used wheelchairs. We formed a line of people snaking down the long corridor, each one giving the one in front of them neck and back rubs. It felt good and such activities brought us closer together.

I clearly remember the reporter from *Pravda*, the official Russian newspaper. I felt that he wanted to humiliate America for its treatment of disabled people. Somehow I didn't want the Communists to be in a position of using "us" to get at the American way of life.

Photo by Hollym D'Ul



Jadine Murello, Deborah Kaplan, Debbie Norling,
Dennis Billups, Judy Heumann, Eunice Fiorito

The San Francisco Chronicle, April 29, 1977

The Victors

The 504 sit-in meant to the Disability Rights Movement what the Montgomery Bus Boycott was for the African-American movement. I believe that to my core.

One image still has the power to move me to proud tears and inspires so much of what I write about today. Those of us on the hunger strike confirmed to ourselves and others our commitment to stay at any cost. One night, we each decided to make a wish which might be granted. Several of us wished for a favorite food; others that Jimmy Carter would direct that our 504 regulations be signed immediately. The last one to present her wish slept on a mattress just beyond the reach of my toes in our cramped sleeping room where we lay surrounded by piles of desks and office chairs. I knew her well. She was a bright and perky young woman who wore her reddish hair in long braids down her back. She wore braces and used Canadian crutches. What she said has inspired me many times in the intervening years: "If I'd been asked before to make a wish, it would have been not to be a cripple anymore. I wanted to be beautiful. But now I know I'm beautiful just the way I am." I can never remember that evening without the passion rising up into my throat and swallow as I may, the lump remains. She remains a powerful hero in my memory.

504 Memories

by Raymond Uzeta

Twenty years ago when we were gathered at CIL one evening discussing our plans to stage a sit-in at the HEW building in San Francisco, I thought perhaps we would be in there for two, three days at the most. Was I ever wrong!! Twenty-plus days later, we were still camping out in one of the longest occupations of a Federal building in U.S. history.

What kept us there? So many things. First, our anger that the Feds were going to mess around with the draft 504 regulations and weaken them. I guess we should have been more understanding; after all, it was only four or five years

since the original legislation was enacted under the Nixon Administration!!! We were patient enough; now it was time for ACTION. You can only take so much jerking around, then it's time to make your move. We did.

Second, once inside there was this tremendous bonding together and commitment. I have never in my life felt such energy and commitment from people. People ready to sacrifice anything for what we truly believed in. And once inside, no one wanted to leave the building. So much was happening every day, that if you left, you were afraid that you would

miss out on something incredible. Few people knew it, but my apartment was only four blocks away from the building, so every few days I would sneak out for a much needed shower and then return, quite refreshed. But when I was outside, I had this tremendous anxiety; I needed to get back as soon as possible.

Every night, we all gathered around the television to watch the news, cheer ourselves on, and hope that the Carter Administration would capitulate and sign the regs the way we wanted them. Every day we had a group meeting to keep ourselves motivated and informed about the latest developments. And we knew we were going to win. Every couple of days, some high level politician like Congressman Phil Burton, Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy or some one else (all Democrats of course) would come by to give us their encouragement and ENDORSEMENT!! It was that external encouragement along with our commitment to ourselves that kept us going.

After awhile, we decided to expand our campaign to all the workers in the building. We were on the fourth floor, so all the other levels were operational. Each morning, we would take turns being in the main lobby of the building to greet everyone with a charming "good morning". After all, we weren't terrorists, just advocates!! We probably won some supporters, but still had our detractors within the employees—oh well.

The darkest hour came after we sent a contingent to Washington, DC to take the battle right to the White House.



Ed Roberts testifying at Congressional hearing in building

Photo by Hollynn D'U

That's when Cece Weeks and I were left in charge of the group. Perhaps people felt more vulnerable with fewer numbers, but I think that it was just the toll that time was taking on us. Sleeping on floors every night, no showers, never knowing when the Feds might charge in and bust us. Those things prey on your mind, and it was starting to get to us. But we held our own and finally, we were victorious.

I'll never forget the day the pay phone rang with the news!! It was absolute delirium for us. Everyone's energy level went right through the roof. We were ecstatic, hugging and yelling. What a high. I have never felt that way since, and perhaps, it was one of those once in a lifetime experiences.

Was it worth it—absolutely. It was the greatest media exposure that the disabled community ever got, and we won an incredible political victory against the odds: David v. Goliath. Would I do it again? Only if we take over a building with showers in it!!

An Army Marches on its Stomach

by Hale Zukas

One of the reasons the 504 demonstrators were able to pull off the longest sit-in in US history is that we were well fed. Not for nothing do they say "an army marches on its stomach". Yes, I must concede that some of the credit goes to McDonald's and Safeway, which donated some of their products. It was the Black Panther Party, however, that played the biggest role in sustaining us nutritionally.

At the time, the Black Panthers were operating a program which provided free meals before and after school to hun-



Rally outside San Francisco HEW building

Photo by Ken Okuno

dreds of children in the Bay Area. Among the group occupying the HEW building were two Panthers, Brad Lomax and his non-disabled colleague, Chuck Jackson (who later became my attendant

when a group of us went

to Washington). I don't know who got the bright idea first, but it was not many days after we marched into the building that the Black Panthers started delivering one or two wonderful meals every day for all the demonstrators in the building.

This is one example of how a group of "poor, helpless cripples" was able to carry out such a protracted action. Yes, getting fed had to be planned and arranged, but many of the people in the building had had to plan and arrange getting fed for most of their lives already. In short, any significantly disabled person needs to develop a certain degree of organizational ability to live.

It is no doubt true that our image as "poor, helpless cripples" also worked to our advantage. The authorities could have arrested us the first afternoon, or failing that, they could have simply starved us out by preventing anyone from coming in. But that would have been a public relations disaster.



Hale Zukas doing his thing at the protest Federal Building, San Francisco

Drawing by Lucy Muir

SING A SONG OF PROTEST

Protesters inside the building sang songs in the evening and welcomed the federal employees to work in the morning with a medley of civil rights songs.

Two songs, *504 Has Got To Be Signed* and *When We Win Our Civil Rights*, were written

by Steven Handler-Klein who stayed inside the federal building for the 25 days. The words to the third song, *Hold On*, were written by Jeff Moyer with music adapted from Alice Wine.

This song was sung at the rallies held outside the building.



Jeff Moyer, Bob Allamand and other demonstrators, first day of demonstration

504 Has Got to be Signed

(Sung to the tune of the Battle Hymn of the Republic)

I have seen the regulations that were drawn four years ago,
To bigotry and discrimination it says a certain "No,"
All that its awaiting is the signature of Joe,
And I hope to hell he signs it soon.

Chorus: 504 has got to be signed,
504 has got to be signed,
504 has got to be signed,
as of January twenty-one.

Republicans created it, though it seems to be a dream,
But things are not always exactly what they seem,
It sat and sat in someone's drawer and almost wasted away,
and it never saw the light of day.

Chorus

Califano wants to mess with it, and add his alterations,
And if he does, the changes made will be a sad negation,
We want him to sign immediately and end all our frustration,
Because we've waited too damn long.

Chorus

Black and gays and women are all attaining civil rights,
Now we want liberation and an end to all our strifes,
For this we took the Federal building and
stayed there days and nights,
We're gonna break our chains.

Chorus

When We Win Our Civil Rights

(Sung to the tune of When Johnny Comes Marching Home)

When Califano does what he should
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano does what he should
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano does what he should for disabled people
it can only be good
And we'll all be free when Joseph does what he should.

When Califano gets out his pen
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano gets out his pen
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano pulls out his pen then there'll be freedom
for women and men
And we'll all be free when Joseph pulls out his pen.

When Califano signs 504
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano signs 504
Hurrah hurrah
When Califano signs 504 we'll all be in danger no more
And we'll all be free when Joseph signs 504.

(To be sung SLOWLY)

When we all win our human rights
Hurrah hurrah
When we all win our human rights
Hurrah hurrah
When we all win our human rights we will be happy
both days and nights
And we'll all be free when we win our human rights.



Jeff Moyer and Lucy Muir sing freedom songs in building



Hold On

Civil rights were knocking on our door,
But Carter wouldn't stand on 504.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!
Hold on, hold on —
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

After four years of delay,
We've come to claim the ground we've gained.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!
Hold on, hold on —
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

A movement standing strong and tight,
With one dream to win, our civil rights.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!
Hold on, hold on —
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

For 28 days unafraid,
150 people boldly stayed.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!
Hold on, hold on —
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

We won't stop until the battle's won,
And enforcement of the law's begun.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!
Hold on, hold on —
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

OUR FOND FAREWELLS



RALPH SANTIAGO ABASCAL
1935-1997

Ralph Abascal, one of three lawyers who went to Washington with the Section 504 contingent, died in March 1997 of cancer. He was 62.

Ralph was general counsel of the San Francisco based California Rural Legal Assistance when he died. A graduate of Hastings College of Law, Ralph began as a staff lawyer for California Rural Legal Assistance in Salinas where he worked with Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta.

Ralph's reputation was as a champion for the rights of poor people, farmworkers, welfare recipients, elderly and people with disabilities. He defended over 200 cases during his 30 year career. Most notable were a 1969 suit that led to the ban on the pesticide DDT, a 1975 suit that banned the use of the short handled hoe in California fields, and the recent challenge to Proposition 187 which prompted a judge to block the exclusion of illegal immigrants from public colleges.

In the 1970's, Ralph supported the disability rights movement by working against Governor Ronald Reagan's attempt to cut in half the state's allowance for attendant care.

His success angered Governor Reagan who retaliated as President by drastically cutting funds to the Legal Services Corporation which funds legal aid programs. Passage of Section 504 and the ultimate passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act are part of his legacy of citizen empowerment and advocacy. Shortly before his death, Ralph obtained \$15,000 seed money to sponsor the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the signing of Section 504.

He was honored by the American Bar Association in 1995 with the Thurgood Marshall Award as a pioneer in the field

of environmental justice. Ralph also received the Kutak-Dodds Prize of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association and the Robert Kutak Foundation.

He is survived by his wife, Beatrice, and his daughter Pilar.

TOM AVILA

Tom Avila lived in Berkeley since the early 1970s. He was an active person in the community and was one of the people who started the sailing program for people with disabilities at Lake Merritt in Oakland. During the sit-in he did a variety of jobs from serving food, feeding people, and making phone calls. Whatever needed to be done, Tom was always ready to lend a helping hand. He stayed in the building for the entire 25 day sit-in.

JAN BALTER

A wonderful, beautiful, vivacious woman, Jan Balter had no tolerance for people who had little or no disability sensitivity. She was aware and involved in community activities as well as being a militant member when it was necessary to make political change. Jan was charismatic and was loved by almost everyone. She came West because she had been life-long friends with Judy Heumann and Nancy D'Angelo, both of whom had also come to Berkeley from New York City. Jan definitely brought her East Coast attitude with her. This was a strong part of her personality which carried over into her disability politics.

Jan brought her assertiveness to the 504 demonstration where she was an active participant who occupied the Federal Building.

Jan's tragic death touched everyone who knew her. Her loss to the community and to the disability movement cannot be measured.



SHELDON BERROL, M.D.
1930-1991

"There are people who lead, people who follow, people who teach. Sheldon Berrol is one of these unique beings who penetrates the soul and inspires." (Mayer, and Jacobs, 1992). The authors chose to write these words in the present tense to symbolize Shelly as a living spirit whose impact on patients, students, colleagues, friends, family, civic causes, and events remains indelibly imprinted.

A man of impeccable integrity both in his personal and professional life, he was at once a visionary and an activist. As an early advocate in the Independent Living Movement, he participated fully in the civil rights struggle for individuals with disabilities. A notable figure in the development of CIL, Shelly was an active board member, a frequent lecturer in the CIL education series, the primary medical consultant, a mentor, and a friend. During the 1970's newsworthy San Francisco sit-ins at the Federal HEW office—to prod the implementation of Section 504 regulations—he was on 24-hour call. Unfailingly available, Shelly was loved, respected and trusted by all those who knew and worked with him—a rare status during that period when the medical establishment was often perceived as unsupportive of and insensitive to the needs of the disabled community.

It was through his professional contribution in the field of traumatic brain injury that Shelly was most widely recognized and honored. Fondly referred to as the "guru of head injury", he is remembered best for his good-natured humor and warmth, openness and accessibility, and commitment to and concern for those with whom he came in contact. He could motivate people and organize groups, and set projects in motion and inspire others to see them through. The recipient of many awards: The Sidney Licht Lectureship Award (1983), the Distinguished Service Award (1984); Walter A. Zeiter Lectureship (AAPM&R, 1985); Physician of the Year Award (California, 1986); Thomas Jefferson Dean Award (Dallas, 1987), William A. Spensor Lectureship (Baylor, 1989); Jonas

Salk Award (Pittsburgh, 1990); and the Lewis A. Leavitt Lecturer Award (Baylor, 1991). Posthumously, he continues to receive numerous tributes and honors.

Shelly wore many hats, juggled many roles—e.g., leader, department head (rehabilitation, SF General Hospital), founding editor of the Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine, author, national and international consultant, conference organizer, board member of professional and community groups, chair of numerous committees. He made the difficult appear easy and the improbable a possibility. The multifaceted positions he filled with such apparent ease are now divided among many. Shelly's legacy lives on.

¹ Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation



ADAM MICHAEL BERTAINA
1972-1992

"Without saying a word or walking a step, Adam helped us find the strength in difference, the joy of risk and the love in our hearts." So read Adam Bertaina's obituary.

Adam died in his sleep at his home in Santa Rosa which he shared with five other young adults with disabilities and a very caring and exuberant staff. When Adam died, his housemates and staff planted a rose tree and placed a monument to him in their garden. Adam is survived by his parents, Beverly and Alan and sister, Lara.

Adam and his mother Beverly joined the sit-in early on and stayed for a week. Adam was four years old and Beverly worked as part of the food committee.

Adam's parents write: His sweet demeanor and total passivity inspired and allowed those that cared for him to be risk taking, demanding, non-compromising, and occasionally tyrannical with the world around him. Adam went places and did things just like any other member of the family—Yosemite; Orcas Island; Grand Canyon; camping every summer, places accessible and some not.

Regional center counselors, teachers and administrators reacted with unfounded fear when they heard Adam was to be in their program. When he arrived the status quo was going to be challenged and conditions would improve for Adam and others that they served.

Adam's impact continues to be felt.



Photo by Hollynn D'Uli

CONGRESSMAN PHILLIP BURTON 1926-1983

U.S. Representative Phillip Burton, described as a "champion of the dispossessed and the under-represented," died in April 1983. During his tenure in politics from 1964 to 1983, Burton was influential in passing legislation for miners who contracted black lung disease, passing Supplemental Security Income for seniors and people with disabilities, and expanding the federal park and wildlands system. He served in the California legislature before going to Congress.

Burton supported the demonstrator's demands for the signing of Section 504. During the sit-in on April 15, 1977, Representative Burton, along with Representative George Miller, held an ad hoc hearing at the sit-in site of the House Education and Labor Committee to hear testimony from the demonstrators and a representative of HEW from Washington. After five hours of testimony, Burton said "I only wish all of my colleagues had heard this. I don't think there is a human being in this country who isn't standing taller because of the protest."

In a biography of Burton, John Jacobs writes that "many were drawn to him by his utter incorruptibility and by his passion for the causes to which he devoted himself." Burton died before completing his term of office and he was succeeded in office by his wife, Sala.



Photo by Ken Stein

DALE MARTIN DAHL 1947-1985

Dale was born deaf in Chicago, Illinois in 1947. He attended the California School for the Deaf in Berkeley. At the age of 24 Dale was in a car accident which left him a quadriplegic.

Dale participated in the 504 sit-in and rallied the Deaf community to support the demonstration. As a deaf and physically disabled man, Dale was able to forge a link between the two communities. At the sit-in Dale served to provide a Deaf perspective to the demonstration and helped to relay to the grassroots Deaf community the significance of the 504 regulations.

Dale helped to establish Deaf Services at CIL in 1976 and became a beloved staff member and peer counselor. He had a unique ability to communicate with people at all language levels and was known for encouraging people who might not otherwise seek services.

Community involvement included: CIL Board of Directors; President of Deaf Students' Club, Laney College; City of Berkeley Task Force; BART/AC Task Force on Accessibility; testimony at Congressional Hearings on the needs of disabled citizens.

Dale's son Nathan Fitzgerald Dahl is currently attending Berkeley High.

NANCY D'ANGELO

Nancy D'Angelo was deeply committed to CIL and its mission. Appearing on the scene when both CIL and she were very young, Nancy both gave and derived a great deal of joy from being a part of the CIL family for many years.

During the 504 demonstration she was one of the people who was doing double duty. As a marcher outside the federal building, she leant her voice to the cry for civil rights. And as a counselor at CIL, she was in the office, making sure that people could still get attendants. Splitting her time, wanting to be more a part of the demonstration, but knowing she needed to be at CIL, she gave a great deal of herself during that time. She was one of the folks who came out day after day to support the people on the inside of the building, and to be counted among her friends and co-workers who had the courage and persistence to continue speaking out, until finally heard.

Nancy gave her energy and heart to the effort and took from it a sense of empowerment and accomplishment.



Photo by Ken Stein

PHIL DRAPER 1940 - 1992

Phil Draper was the Executive Director of CIL during the 504 Demonstration, and as such played a critical role during that time. Phil was a person whose leadership style was more about leading from behind rather than from in front. He was the provider of ongoing and steadfast support to the people both inside and outside of the federal building.

Throughout it all, his heart was inside the building sitting in, while his body was outside keeping the vigil. All day, everyday, Phil marched resolutely in front of the federal building with a picket sign firmly affixed to the back of his chair, sometimes poking out sideways from under a rain poncho. He took breaks periodically to check in at CIL — providing support to the few folks keeping the doors open and services available — and

then he returned to his march. Late at night he'd again turn his attention to CIL and the task of "taking care of business." And come morning, he'd return to support the supporters, leading followers from behind and keeping the faith.

His voice was seldom heard over a loud speaker, but it was always forcefully raised as part of the collective voice publicly crying out for civil rights and an end to injustice. And in all the years, his voice was never more dramatically heard than as part of the group that held the nation's attention focused squarely on that event, the issue and the powerful nature of those involved.

In so many ways, Phil was the keeper of the faith. He is loved for all that he shared. He is deeply appreciated for all that he made possible by empowering others to act on their own behalf as well as on behalf of others. And he is very much missed for all he had yet to share and still to accomplish.

STEVEN HANDLER-KLEIN

Steve was a volunteer at the Center for Independent Living in the mid-70's and a contributor to *The Independent*, CIL's national, quarterly publication. Steve was an artistic person with a love for photography. He died of multiple sclerosis.

During the sit-in, Steve wrote the lyrics to two disability civil rights songs set to the tunes of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* which are featured elsewhere in this program book. Steve stayed for the 25 day sit-in even though his health was not good. He spent much of the time lying on his mattress recording on audio tape what he observed around him. According to friends, Steve knew the sit-in was terribly important and he could not bear to miss being a part of it.



LYNN KIDDER 1950-1996

Lynn Kidder was the Public Relations Director at the Center for

Independent Living at the time of the 504 sit-in.

She immediately recognized the importance of the demonstration and knew CIL's opinion would be seen as important. Lynn put out press releases, ran back and forth to the UN Plaza in San Francisco, supported the sit-in in countless ways, and, in the process, established her lifelong interest in civil rights for people with disabilities.

In her three years at CIL, Lynn wrote articles on transportation, education, and architectural barriers. She drafted speeches, put out the newsletter, developed the Friends of CIL, coordinated a fleamarket and raffle, persuaded singer Malvina Reynolds to appear for a CIL benefit, and researched material for several television documentaries on disability. Not least, she set up the billing system for the wheelchair repair service.

Lynn left CIL in 1979 to work on her master's degree in Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley. She went on to be a reporter for *The Merced Sun-Star*, *The Antioch Daily Ledger*, *The West County Times*, *Contra Costa Times*, and by 1986 she was the education writer for the *Oakland Tribune*.

Lynn's intense interest in issues of justice surfaced frequently in her journalistic career. She disclosed earthquake hazards in schools, exposed corruption on school boards, reported on refinery waste-water disposal, burn plants, and San Francisco Bay pollution. She also continued to write about disability issues through the years. Fluent in Spanish and knowledgeable about Latin American culture, Lynn reported from the scene of a major earthquake in Mexico City, and covered migrant issues for 15 years.

In 1988, Lynn joined the Public Information Office at UC Berkeley. She tackled complex issues such as the debate over admissions policies and particularly enjoyed doing profiles of

visiting novelists, politicians, and journalists. In 1990, Lynn became a speechwriter again, this time for Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien, assisting him in his commitment to academic excellence and broad opportunity. Her work was published in *Newsweek*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times*.

In 1991, Lynn and her husband Kyle Heger adopted Luis Miguel, born in Peru. Luis brought great delight to them both.

Lynn died from breast cancer in July 1996, at age 46. Her memorial at the University was spoken in three languages, a moving tribute to the depth of her understanding and integrity. Her quick wit, wonderful laughter, and rich insight were gifts to us all.

The Black Panther,
May 7, 1977



BRADLEY LOMAX

Brad Lomax was a quiet, Oakland resident who was a member of the Black Panthers. In the summer of 1975, he approached Ed Roberts, then director of the Berkeley Center for Independent Living, to open a satellite CIL in east Oakland which would work in conjunction with the Black Panther Community Education

Program. The satellite was opened and reached out to the Oakland community until about 1977.

It was through Brad's influence that the Black Panther Party supported the 504 sit-in demonstrators by providing food nearly every day. Brad participated in the sit-in the whole time and was selected as a member of the Washington contingent.

Brad had multiple sclerosis.



JACK McCLOSKEY

Jack McCloskey, a wounded and much-decorated veteran of the Vietnam War who quietly spent the rest of his life trying to ease the pain from that war, died in February 1996 at the age of 53.

At the time he joined the 504 Sit-in, Jack was the Executive Director of the Vietnam Veterans organization, Swords to Plowshares. Jack was in the building during the entire occupation and was a member of the Washington DC delegation.

Jack had dedicated his life to making life better for others, particularly Vietnam veterans. He formed a number of veterans' organizations, among them Swords to Plowshares, Twice Born Men, and Flower of the Dragon.

Jack became active in the anti-war movement, particularly Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), but he also was a catalyst in the infant, early 1970s movement that dealt with such issues as the then-unrecognized post-traumatic stress disorder, alcoholism, suicide, joblessness and other problems Vietnam veterans were facing.

Author Jerry Nicosia, author of a book on the Vietnam veterans movement, credits Jack and a few others with forcing the medical establishment and the Veterans Administration to recognize post-traumatic stress and agent orange-caused diseases as service-related disorders.

Jack brought the perspective of veterans with disabilities to the sit-in, and his warmth and genuine love of people touched all of us.

EARL McKEEVER

Earl was a native of Orinda, CA who came to CIL in 1975 as an on-the-job training client with the Department of Rehabilitation. Friends remember that Earl came to CIL with one of the largest, individualized desks that anyone had ever seen. During his years at CIL, Earl undertook client intake and recordkeeping, contract administration, and data collection to write reports to funding agencies. He participated in the sit-in.

Friends describe Earl as a man with an outstanding twinkle in his eye and a glow which reflected his joy of life no matter how hard life may have been at the time. He had a great sense of humor shown by his love for puns and his constant use of them. Earl was a brilliant man with an orderly mind who supervised with a preciseness and a tidiness. He loved to play Scrabble.

Earl belonged to the Baha'i faith and was an active member of that community.

MAYOR GEORGE MOSCONE 1929-1978

George Moscone died in November 1978, while Mayor of San Francisco, after being shot by San Francisco Supervisor Dan White. Moscone served as a San Francisco supervisor and a state senator before being elected Mayor in 1975. As a state senator he pushed for a school lunch program against the wishes of Governor Ronald Reagan who refused to sign the bill. The bill was finally signed by Governor Jerry Brown.

Perhaps Moscone's greatest accomplishment was working for passage of California's gay rights bill.

During the 504 sit-in, Mayor Moscone visited the HEW offices several times in support of the demonstrators. He attended the ad hoc hearing of the House Education and Labor Commission sponsored by Representatives Phil Burton and George Miller to support the sit-in. Additionally, he met and confronted HEW

"I know if you say you're staying, you're staying."
Mayor Moscone,
San Francisco

Courtesy of Hollylyn D'U

"We are on the edge of a major explosion in this civil rights movement. As we struggle together, we free ourselves."

Ed Roberts
Director,
California Department
of Rehabilitation

Courtesy of Hollynn D'Ul

officials at the federal building to get shower heads installed in the restrooms. As Mayor, Moscone had the city purchase four shower hoses for \$31 a piece to be used on sink nozzles. Only one of the shower hoses was installed before the Regional Commissioner of HEW Joe Maldonado stopped installation. Moscone said

that was the biggest outrage of his 17 years in office. After contacting Washington about living conditions, Moscone relayed to the demonstrators that HEW's response was to let demonstrators leave (to go home and take showers) and come back with passes. The offer was unanimously declined.

Moscone has been described as "a man moved mostly by his deep sense of injustice needing to be righted" by Joel Gazis-Sax in *Tales from Colma—The Martyrdom of Mayor Moscone*. He remembered his modest up-bringing and tried to help the average citizen maintain his home, feed his children and get recognition for his contributions to the city of San Francisco.

EDWARD V. ROBERTS 1939 - 1995

Ed Roberts was President of the World Institute on Disability, which he founded in 1983 with Judy Heumann and Joan Leon, when he died suddenly in March 1995. He had a distinguished career in the disability field and received many awards not the least of which was a MacArthur Fellow awarded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Ed is survived by his son, Lee; his mother, Zona; and his former wife, Cathy.

At the time of the 504 demonstration Ed was the State Director of Rehabilitation where he was focusing his energy on transforming the vocational rehabilitation system from one



Photo by Lydia Gans

that was dominated by care givers to one where the client—the person with a disability—was a major force in policy and program.

Ed was an anomaly in the federal-state rehabilitation system—in its 50-year history he was the first state director to be disabled. He used his position to make some spectacular accomplishments. One that seems especially relevant to Section 504 is his totally innovative use of federal grants to start independent living centers in California, a step that led eventually to the inclusion of independent living services and independent living centers in the Rehabilitation Act and ultimately to the system today where there are ILC's in every state.

Another accomplishment was his support and assistance to the 504 demonstration. Ed was totally in sync with the group of disabled people who were occupying the Federal Building. His governmental position did not permit him to join them. But, even though he couldn't be inside in person, he found many ways to participate and contribute. They included convincing Governor Jerry Brown that a film of the demonstration would be an effective public education tool. He got clearance to use funds to shoot the film. He also reached out to other state agency directors, most notably to Dr. Jerome Lackner, Director of the Department of Health Services, and got their support and assistance for the demonstrators. Jerry Lackner came into the sit-in early on with mattresses and shower facilities to the great joy and relief of the demonstrators. He also encouraged several people on his staff including Jim Donald, who was Rehabilitation's chief attorney and a person with a severe disability, Phil Neumark, also an attorney who served as a special assistant to Ed and who played a major role in the Congressional hearing that was held in the Federal Building, and Joan Leon, who was Assistant Director and who worked with the filmmakers and functioned as a facilitator and resource developer on the outside.

Ed became very involved in the Congressional hearing that was held in the Federal Building. He and Jim Donald contacted Jim's old law school buddy George Miller, who was then (and

still is) a representative to the House of Representatives from Contra Costa County. Miller organized the hearing and involved Phillip Burton and other elected officials to participate.

GREGORY SANDERS 1950-1996

Gregory (Greg) Sanders died in June 1996 at the age of 46. Greg helped with pre-planning for the 504 Sit-in. He spent part of the first week in the HEW offices and then left to handle press reports and work with the media on the outside for the remainder of the sit-in.

An expert on Social Security work regulations, Greg helped hundreds of people with disabilities. As word of mouth spread about Greg's knowledge and ability, people came requesting help with writing PASS plans, maintaining benefits, and advocating for them with state officials. It was not unusual for Greg to negotiate with Social Security or Department of Rehabilitation staff in Sacramento on behalf of an individual. Greg lobbied in Washington and was appointed to state committees over the years. The California State Legislature adjourned for the day in Greg's memory upon learning of his death.

In the 1970's Greg lived in the Cowell Residence Program at UC Berkeley where he met Ed Roberts and connected with the Center for Independent Living. Greg was interim director of the Center for Independent Living for six months. An accomplished carpenter, Greg designed and constructed custom-made desks for the original employees at the Center for Independent Living. The desks were hailed as the first "reasonable accommodation" before the term was identified with the independent living movement.

THOSE WHO MADE IT HAPPEN



The Washington Contingent

It became apparent during the sit-in that additional activity would be needed to get Section 504 signed. The 504 demonstrators selected 17 people who had occupied the Federal building to go to Washington to put pressure on the Carter administration and to increase congressional support

to get the regulations signed without changes. Lawyers, interpreters and attendants went to Washington, also. The demonstrators lobbied congressional members, held candle-light vigils, met with administration representatives and, in the end, were successful in getting the regulations signed.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 - Ralph Abascal | 16 - Jack McCloskey |
| 2 - Dennis Billups | 17 - Larry Montoya |
| 3 - Kitty Cone | 18 - Jadine Murello |
| Peter Copleman | Lucy Muir |
| 5 - Bruce Curtis | 20 - Phil Neumark |
| 27 - Denise Darenbourg | 23 - Debbie Norling |
| 8 - Hollynn Fuller D'Lil | 21 - Bruce Oka |
| 6 - Jim Donald | Mary Jane Owen |
| 7 - Olin Fortney | 24 - Lynnette Taylor |
| 9 - Judy Heumann | 25 - Ron Washington |
| Chuck Jackson | Evan White |
| 11 - Joyce Jackson | 28 - Michael Williams |
| John King | 29 - Pat Wright |
| Bobbie LaNoue | 30 - Hale Zukas |
| Brad Lomax | |
| Steve McClelland | |

THOSE WHO MADE IT HAPPEN

The Demonstrators and their Supporters

The success of the sit-in was due to the determination and vision of the people who occupied the Federal building and to the hard work and dedication of people outside of the sit-in. The following is a list of the demonstrators, the occupants of the building, and individuals who supported the

sit-in and rallies in whatever way they could. The list is incomplete since there are no formal records of who participated in the activity or what they did. And memories fade after twenty years. We apologize to anyone whose name has been left off or is misspelled.

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Ralph Abascal | Dorothy Dillon | Eddy Jauregui | Jadine Murello | Steve Schultz |
| Bob Allamand | Jim Donald | Joanne Jauregui | Jeff Moyer | Daniel Smith |
| Tom Avila | Jim Donelson | John King | Lucy Muir | Kathy Smith |
| Jan Balter | Phil Draper | Bill Johnson | Phil Neumark | Connie Soucy |
| Linda Toms Barker | John Edmonds | Donny Johnson | Debbie Norling | Debbie Stanley |
| Sheldon Berrol, M.D. | Karen Emerson | Ed Joseph | Maryellen O'Grady | Ken Stein |
| Beverly Bertaina | Patty Finnegan | Deborah Kaplan | Dan Ohara | Tarri Tanaka |
| Adam Bertaina | Maureen Fitzgerald | Lynn Kidder | Bruce Oka | Lynnette Taylor |
| Dennis Billups | Olin Fortney | Kathy Kramner | Ed O'Neill | Sondra Thaler |
| Bill Blanchard | Nina Gelfant | Carole Krezman | Corbett O'Toole | Joan Tollifson |
| Michael Blecker | Gary Gill | Ann Kronenberg | Mary Jane Owen | Peter Trier |
| Tom Blockus | Judy Gill | Ray Landers | Michael Pachovas | Ray Uzeta |
| Jonathan Botelho | Linda Gill | Bobbie LaNoue | Bill Palmer | Valerie Vivona |
| Mary Lou Breslin | Jim Gonsalves | Jim Leinen | Karen Parker | Ron Washington |
| Joni Breves | Sally Gordon | Andy Lennox | Kathy Parsons | Cece Weeks |
| Elaine Brown | Lydia Radic Gutierrez | Joan Leon | Jim Pechem | Corey Weinstein, M.D. |
| Phil Chavez | Pat Hall | Herb Levine | Joseph Quinn | Barney Welton |
| Kitty Cone | Steven Handler-Klein | Brad Lomax | Franco Ramsay | Marie White |
| Bruce Curtis | Avril Harris | Tom Manley | Bonnie Regina | Jeanneanne Whitmer |
| Judith Dadek | Judy Heumann | Senator Milton Marks | Ed Roberts | Michael Williams |
| Dale Dahl | Ralph Hotchkiss | Steve McClelland | Dea Robertson | Jonathan Willis |
| Nancy D'Angelo | Erika Huggins | Jack McCloskey | John Roletti | Lynn Witt |
| John Darby | Paul Imperiale | Ursula McGuire | Karen Rose | Jane Wobengai |
| Denise Darenbourg | Dusty Irvine | Earl McKeever | Barry Ryan | Jerry Wolf |
| Stephen Dias | Chuck Jackson | John McLaughlin | Gregory Sanders | Pat Wright |
| Eric Dibner | Jane Jackson | Harvey Milk | Dick Santos | Hale Zukas |
| Debbie DiNardo | Joyce Jackson | Larry Montoya | Jan Santos | |
| Hollynn Fuller D'Lil | Susie Janda | Frank Moore | Jonathan Scheuer | |

THANK YOU ALL!

Sponsoring Organizations

Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Planning and Advisory Council
 Area Board 5 on Developmental Disabilities
 AXIS Dance Foundation
 Audio Vision
 Bar Association of San Francisco, Disability Rights Committee
 Bay Area Communication Access
 Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program
 California Council of the Blind, Berkeley
 California Council of the Blind, San Francisco
 California Foundation for Independent Living Centers
 Center for Accessible Technology
 Center for Independent Living, Berkeley
 Center for Independence of the Disabled
 Community Resources for Independent Living, Inc.
 Computer Technologies Program
 Consumers in Action for Personal Assistance
 Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County
 Disability Rights, Education and Defense Fund
 Disability Services Alliance
 Disabled Caucus, SEIU 790
 Disabled Students' Program, University of California, Berkeley

Glide Memorial Church
 Hearing Society for the Bay Area
 Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees Local 2
 Independent Living Resource Center, SF
 Lavender Caucus, SEIU 790
 Mental Health Association
 Mobility International USA
 Multiple Sclerosis Society
 Pacific Research and Training Alliance
 Paramedic Chapter, SEIU 790
 Pride at Work, SF Bay Area Chapter
 Resources for Independent Living
 Rose Resnick Lighthouse for the Blind
 San Francisco AIDS Foundation
 San Francisco Mayor's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities
 San Francisco Vocational Services
 Support for Families of Children with Disabilities
 Team of Advocates for Special Kids
 The Arc, San Francisco
 Toolworks
 United Cerebral Palsy of San Francisco
 World Institute on Disability

Steering Committee

Ken Stein, Chair	Avril Harris
Anita Baldwin	Eddy Jauregui
Gerald Baptiste	David Landes
Sharon Bonney	Tricia Leetz
Mary Lou Breslin	Joan Leon
Joni Breves	Susan O'Hara
Kitty Cone	Lorrie Beth Slonsky
Maureen Fitzgerald	Lynn Witt



Ron Washington

THANK YOU ALL!

Thank You to the Following Groups and Individuals for Their Help

ORGANIZATIONS

Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Planning & Advisory Council
 Area Board 5 on Developmental Disabilities
 AXIS Dance Company
 Bay Area Communication Access (BACA)
 Bay Area Outreach Recreational Program
 Berkeley Historical Society
 Center for Accessible Technology
 Center for Independent Living
 Community Resources for Independent Living, Inc.
 Computer Technologies Program
 Consumers in Action for Personal Assistance
 Delancey Street
 Disability Rights, Education and Defense Fund
 Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees Local 2
 Independent Living Resource Center - San Francisco
 Pacific Research & Training Alliance
 Planning for Elders in the Central City
 Rose Resnick Lighthouse for the Blind
 Senior Action Network
 Swords to Plowshares
 Toolworks
 United Cerebral Palsy Association - San Francisco
 World Institute on Disability

FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

California Wellness Foundation
 San Francisco Foundation/
 Disability Rights Advocates Fund
 True North Foundation

FOOD SPONSORS

California Culinary Academy
 The Cheese Board
 Jimmy Bean's
 Katrina Rozelle

Klein's Deli
 Noah's Bagels, Chestnut Street
 Safeway Stores
 Sweet Basil Catering

OTHER IN-KIND DONORS

Ann Kong's Bleach Bottle Pig Farm
 The Balloon Lady
 Blues Daddies
 Budget Signs
 Cafe de la Paz
 CFX Inc.
 Chez Panisse
 Gifted Productions
 Hobee's Restaurants
 Jane Jackson
 Just Desserts
 Daphne Muse
 Ruth's Chris Steak House
 Shelly Simon

Event Management: *JPD Communications*
 Art Direction & Graphic Design: Jill Davey & Debbie Dare, *JPD Communications*
 Development: Susan Freundlich, *The FM Group*
 Public Relations: Liza Pike, *Staton, Hughes & Shafer*

504 CELEBRATION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Ralph Abascal
 Bob Allamand
 Anita Baldwin
 Gerald Baptiste
 Michael Blecker
 Sharon Bonney
 Mark Breimhorst
 Mary Lou Breslin
 Joni Breves
 Phil Chavez
 Kitty Cone
 Patrick Connally
 Richard Curry
 Bruce Curtis

Common Sense, May 1977

The Power and Pride of Disabled People

THANK YOU ALL!

Lela DaVia
Jill Davey
Dorothy Dillon
Jim Donelson
Dan Drake
Sharon Draper
Nancy Ferreyra
Susan Ferreyra
Maureen Fitzgerald
Olin Fortney
Susan Freundlich
Nina Gelfant
Gary Gill
Avril Harris
Gordon Harvey
Judy Heumann
Paul Imperiale
Jane Jackson
Lynn Jaehle
Suzanne Janda
Edward & Joanne Jauregui
Carol Krezman
Lon Kuntz
David Landes
Bobby LaNoue
Joanna Lee
Tricia Leetz
Joan Leon
Suzanne Levine
Paul Longmore
Scott Luebking
Tom Manley
Steve McClelland
Jadine Morello
Lucy Muir
Jean Nandi
Susan O'Hara
Corbett O'Toole
Jana Overbo
Karen Parker

Joe Quinn
Lydia Radic-Gutierrez
Linda Rosen
Lorrie Beth Slonsky
Kathi Smith
Ken Stein
Belinda Stradley
Lynette Taylor
Linda Teixeira
Sondra Thaler
Terry M. Tibble
Karen Topp Goodwin
Matthew Wangeman
Julie Weissman
Michael Williams
Lynn Witt
Pat Wright
Hale Zukas

INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

Asata Iman
Cynthia Berrol
Beverly Bertaina
Phil Chavez
Hollynn D'Lil
Deborah Doctor
Deborah Drake
Nancy Ferreyra
Susan Ferreyra
Jennifer Formoso
Jackie Frank
Gordon Harvey
Janice Haugan
Judy Heumann
Paul Imperiale
Dana Jacobsen
Stephanie Johnson
Carole Krezman
Mary Lester
Jean Lin

Lucy Muir
Susan O'Hara
Linda Rosen
Stephen Rosen
Richard Skaff
Marjorie Sutler
Terry Tibble
Dan Veltri
Evan White
Rev. Cecil Williams
The Friends of CIL

BENEFACTORS & DONORS

Champions
Lucy Muir
Brenda Premo

Benefactors
Bank of America Foundation
Kitty Cone
Issue Dynamics
Arlene Mayerson
Joyce Norcini & Sue Stevenson
Brad Seligman
Ellice Sperber
Margaret A. Staton

Patrons
California Foundation for
Independent Living Centers
Ralph Black & Catherine Campisi
Alan Kalmanoff
Linda Teixeira
Lynn Witt & Sherry Thomas

Sponsors
Katherine Armstrong
Joni Breves
Kip, Hilary & Flynn Crosby
Katherine Forrest & Jo Hercus

Independent Living Resource Center
Jenny Kern
Lorrie Beth Slonsky

Friends
Jan Adams
Anita Baldwin
Rick & Barbara Bennett
Shelley Bergum
Erma Brim
Charles & Jan Brown
Bernard, Ann & Philip Cacho
Nancy Corporon & Doreen DiBiagio
Justin & Yoshiko Dart
East Bay Media Center

Lainey Feingold
Gerry Fleming
John Greener
Miriam Hawley & Pat Piras,
AC Transit Board of Directors
Lance Henderson & Peter Athnasio
Neil Jacobson
Marie Jobling
Susan Ketcham & Anne Casscells
Jerry Kuns
Vicki Laden & Linda Krieger
David Landes
Paul Longmore
Betty Medsger & John T. Racanelli
Jan Montgomery & Marya Grambs

Sandy Muir
Ed Nathan
David Roche
Rosen, Bien & Asaro
Professor & Mrs. R.A. Scalapino
Bev Scott & Courtney
Michael Sugarman & Kim Swain
Anthony Tusler & Lyndi Brown
Pat Wright

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc. DREDF

Celebrates
The 20th Anniversary of the
Victorious 504 Sit-In
For Disability Rights

*DREDF is a national law and policy center
dedicated to securing and advancing
civil rights for people with disabilities*

1629 "K" St. N.W., Suite 803
Washington, D.C. 20006
PH: (202) 986-0375
FAX: (301) 270-7655

2212 Sixth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
Voice/TTY: (510) 644-2555
FAX: (510) 841-8645

The **Computer Technologies Program** celebrates the 20th anniversary of the historic 504 Sit-in.

CTP provides job training for people with disabilities in computer programming and office systems.

Computer Technologies Program
2101 Milvia Street Berkeley 94704 (510) 849-2911 (V/TTY)



Independent Living
RESOURCE CENTER • SAN FRANCISCO

Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco
in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of
the 504 Demonstration.

We Shall Overcome.

JIMMY BEAN'S RESTAURANT & CATERING



1290 6th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710
(510) 528-3435 • Fax: (510) 527-3176
Other locations: Rincon Center S.F./U.C. Berkeley

Farcor Inc.

Access Systems

Consulting, Design & Construction



- Commercial Access Systems
- Access Resolution Services
- Residential Design & Construction
- Licensed Real Estate Broker
- Lic. General Contractor #733705

Address
470 Spruce St.
Berkeley, CA 94708

Telephone
(510) 528-9448
(510) 528-9492 Fax

Internet
www.farcor.com



Congratulations *and* Thank You *from the* Center for Independent Living

to all those who made this event possible
and to those who have assisted CIL in its many successes
as we celebrate our 25th year of service to the community.



VIA NOVA
CHILDREN'S SCHOOL
848 - NOVA
Ticia Casanova, Director
3032 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, CA 94703
Lic. # 010215719

THANK YOU! from the next Generation!

Wide Vision Productions

Visualizing Social Issues through Media

Suzanne C. Levine

Voice/Relay: (415) 387-0617
Fax: (415) 387-0583

P.O. Box 22115
San Francisco, CA
94122-0115, USA

E-mail: WideVision@waonline.com



is a shining
example of
what we can
accomplish
together

Congratulations!



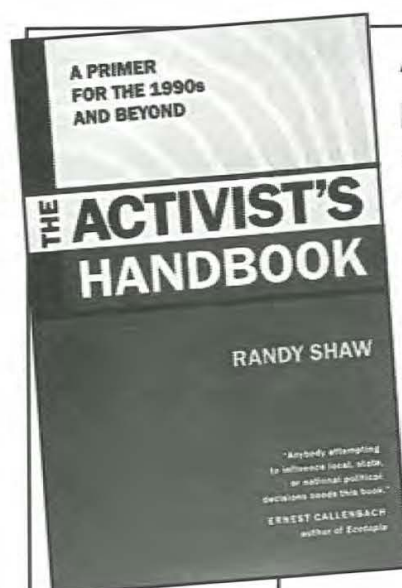
WORLD INSTITUTE-**DISABILITY**



We have created the world's
most treasured chefs...
Now let us create your
most treasured
moment with the
world's finest
cuisine.

California Culinary Academy
(415) 771-3536 Ext 238 • 625 Polk Street, San Francisco

with the support of
The San Francisco
FOUNDATION
 Disability Rights Advocates Fund



THE ACTIVIST'S HANDBOOK
A Primer for the 1990s and Beyond
 RANDY SHAW

www.igc.org/activist
 \$17.95 paper at bookstores
 or order 1-800-822-6657.
University of California Press

"The section in the book on the 504 demonstrations in 1977 is the most complete explanation and analysis of those important protests that anyone has written to date."

—Paul Longmore,
 San Francisco State University,
 Institute on Disability

"Could not have come at a more opportune time. . . . An invaluable tool."

—Ben Bagdikian, author of
The Media Monopoly and Double Vision

"A unique book, wise, realistic, and enormously valuable for anyone interested in social change."

—Howard Zinn, author of
A People's History of the United States



The Labor Movement of the San Francisco Bay Area proudly joins the heroic men and women of the Disability Rights Movement in commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the historic 25-day Sit-In at the San Francisco Federal Building. Your bravery and determination to win civil rights for the disabled enriched democracy in America and completed the promise of equal rights for all citizens.

Central Labor Council of Alameda County
Central Labor Council of Contra Costa County
San Francisco Labor Council
San Mateo County Central Labor Council

AFL-CIO

BATU 21/CWA/afl-cio

CONGRATULATIONS

from Health Care Workers Union, Local 250

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Our 40,000 members salute your historic accomplishment and pledge our continued support for quality IHSS and VNH services and health care reform.



Health Care Workers Union, Local 250, SEIU

Representing 40,000 health care workers in Northern California

Sal Rosselli
President

Shirley Ware
Secretary Treasurer

SEIU

504
Commemoration & Celebration

This book is available in audiocassette, large print and computer disk.

**Copyright ©1997 504 Sit-in 20th Anniversary
Celebration and Commemoration Committee
All Rights Reserved**

Reproduction of this material in any print or electronic format, by permission only*

***Contact Ken Stein, Chair, 504 Celebration & Commemoration Committee,
c/o DREDF, 2212 6th St., Berkeley, CA 94710, 510/644-2555**