

# The National Office On Disability

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## CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

### BACKGROUND FOR 1982

The United Nations Proclamation of 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) inspired extensive activity by and for disabled persons in 129 countries. In the United States, partnership was the theme as disabled and non-disabled persons; the private sector and government at every level; and national, state and local organizations joined together to confront the challenges and realize the opportunities for 35 million disabled Americans. In programs developed and coordinated by the U.S. Council for IYDP, more than 1,850 communities, 270 major corporations, and 330 national organizations worked together toward long-term goals. All 50 governors supported the program.

While gratifying in itself, the momentum generated during the IYDP increased awareness of the reality that the problems of disability will not be solved within a year or even a decade. Responding to a nationwide call by IYDP participants for continuing this momentum, the National Office on Disability was formed as a direct outgrowth of the IYDP and the U.S. Council.

### THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE ON DISABILITY

The National Office on Disability will build on the solid progress achieved during the IYDP, especially by the Community Partnership Program. In cooperation with its national and state partners, it will stimulate and encourage organizations, corporations and others to support the community programs and activities started or reinforced during 1981. The organization also will promote awareness and disseminate information on disability programs and issues. It advocates partnership and self-help initiative.

### 1982 - THE NATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS

The growing momentum of 1982 as the National Year of Disabled Persons will maintain the public focus on disability issues and support the program thrusts of organizations committed to improving the lives of disabled persons. The U.S. Senate passed a bill in December, 1981, designating 1982 as the National Year of Disabled Persons; the bill is near passage in the House of Representatives. Responding to the encouragement of the National Office on Disability, the governors of Alaska, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, and Washington, as well as 50 mayors, have issued National Year proclamations in their respective states and communities.

### BUILDING ON THE IYDP NETWORK

In organizing and supporting community-based programs across the country, the U.S. Council cooperated with mayors and elected officials and developed a national network of IYDP Community Partner committees, each with a liaison to the Council. The National Office on Disability will use, strengthen and expand this still active, in-place network. Ongoing Community Partner Committees, exemplifying the partnership concept, meet the following criteria:

**Follow Through in '82: The National Year of Disabled Persons**

- Approximately half of its members are persons with disabilities or members of their families;
- The committee includes representation of both public and private organizations; and
- The committee is broadly representative of the community.

These committees provide community leadership in carrying out a local goal-setting program:

- assessing the still unmet needs of disabled persons in the community;
- setting goals to address these needs;
- developing and carrying out programs to meet those goals.

#### MISSION AND LONG-TERM GOALS

Like its predecessor organization, the National Office on Disability works with private and governmental organizations to strengthen awareness and public understanding of the still unmet needs and potential contribution of disabled Americans. The National Office on Disability promotes the following long-term goals furthered during the IYDP.

- Expanded Educational Opportunity
- Improved Access to Housing, Buildings, and Transportation
- Greater Opportunity for Employment
- Greater Participation in Recreational, Social and Cultural Activities
- Expanded and Strengthened Rehabilitation Programs and Facilities
- Purposeful Application of Biomedical Research Aimed at Conquering Major Disabling Conditions
- Reduction in the Incidence of Disability through Accident and Disease Prevention
- Increased Application of Technology to Ameliorate the Effects of Disability
- Expanded International Exchange of Information and Experience to Benefit All Disabled Persons

#### GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

The IYDP national awareness campaign developed by the U.S. Council and the Advertising Council reached many millions of Americans and resulted in millions of dollars of free exposure of the IYDP message through the broadcast and print media. The National Office on Disability has updated this award-winning campaign and has revised television and radio public service announcements. In addition, a print ad headlined "1981 Was The Year of Disabled Persons. What Do We Do Now?" will be seen in major daily newspapers. The campaign is directly supportive of the Community Partnership Program, urging viewers and readers to "get involved" by contacting their mayor or county commissioner.