

Visit us online at:
www.UniversalDesign.com

Opening Doors in Corning, NY

Grant Pays for Accessible Store Entrances

Merchants in the historic district of Corning, NY are opening their doors to a previously untapped market with the help of a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant.

The grant, the work of Access to Independence and Mobility (AIM) Executive Director Diane DeMuth and Corning's Director of Planning and Economic Development Jim Goodling, was awarded in early 2006 and has paid for the installation of automatic door openers and ramps for nearly half of the 125 shops along historic Market Street.

Working with the Market Street Restoration Agency, a non profit historic preservation organization, DeMuth and Goodling classified the 125 store fronts on Market Street into

one of five categories: 1) already accessible; 2) could be made accessible with an automatic door opener; 3) could be made ac-

See Corning, page 6



Store front on historic Market St. in Corning, NY.

Judge: US Currency Violates the Law

The US Treasury Department's failure to create paper currency that can be distinguishable by people with visual impairments violates the Rehabilitation Act, according to a federal judge.

Of the more than 180 countries that issue paper currency, only the United States prints bills that are identical in size and color in all their denominations, according to the court document.

In the lawsuit, *American Council of the Blind, et al v. Henry M. Paulson, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury*, ACB alleges that the Treasury Department's repeated and continuing failure to design and issue paper currency that can be effectively used by people with visual impairments is a violation of the law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in government programs.

In the ruling issued Nov. 28, Judge James Robinson of the US District Court for the District of Columbia rejected the government's claims that changing the currency would interfere with the ability of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) to guard against counterfeiting or that changes could undermine the international recognition and acceptance of the US currency. He

See Currency, page 6

CONTENTS

1	Opening Doors in Corning, NY
1	Judge: US Currency Violates the Law
2	One Can Hope & Act
4	Steinfeld Stays Focused on the 'Ultimate Client'
8	Universal Design Comes to Life
8	A New Kind of Accessible Taxi

Design Tip.....	2
Reg/Leg Watch.....	3
World Update.....	5
New Media.....	7
New Products.....	9
Calendar.....	12



One Can Hope and Act

The New Year always brings opportunities, questions and hopes for changes for the better. In our time of change, we can't help but wonder aloud what impact the following issues will have on the development of the Universal Design movement and accessibility for people with disabilities.

Will the ANSI Committee overcome its differences in development of the ICC/ANSI A117.1 2008 Standard on Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities version and resolve the technical difficulties surrounding the real world integration of people with disabilities into the buildings and facilities we construct around us? Watch the Reg/Leg Watch column of this newsletter to learn what transpires.

Will the shift from a Republican to Democratic majority in both the US House of Representatives and the US Senate also result in a change in funding priorities to include the Center for Universal Design? Will there be monies to support research, technical assistance and prototype projects that find new cost effective methods of providing accessibility through universal design?

Will the US Department of Justice (DOJ) finally issue new standards for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act that have been in the works since 1996? The Notice of Proposed Rule Making to adopt the new standards is scheduled to be published in August 2007 for a 60-day comment period, according to

Barnes & Thornburg, attorneys in Washington, DC. Will the change to the technical provisions incur penalties on existing buildings that have previously undergone barrier removal measures or that comply with the existing standards?

Will projects like the "Standard Taxi" (see the article on page 8) or universally designed homes like the project constructed in Prince William County, Va. (see the article on page 8) be accepted by the general public and begin to replace both non-accessible and "accessible" designs with universal solutions?

And internationally, will our new leaders have the wisdom and strength to find an equitable, long term solution that supports peace and the interests of all the people in the mid-east? We can both hope and do our part toward achieving positive changes in all of these areas and endeavors.

jsalmen@UniversalDesign.com

Salmen Honored by Architects

Universal Design Newsletter Publisher John P.S. Salmen, AIA was honored in October by the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for his life long efforts to educate architects about the importance of designing for all people. He was awarded the Paul H. Kea Medal for Service to the Profession.

Copyright 2007 UD&C - Authorization to photocopy items for the internal or personal use of specific subscribers is granted by *Universal Design Newsletter*. Any other reproduction in any form is prohibited without express permission from the Publisher.

Universal Design Newsletter is published quarterly by Universal Designers & Consultants, Inc., 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912-4324; 301.270.2470 (v/tty); 301.270.8199 (fax). E-Mail: publisher@UniversalDesign.com. Home Page: www.UniversalDesign.com.

Publisher & Managing Editor: John P.S. Salmen, AIA; **Editor:** Denise M. Hofstedt; **Consulting Editors:** James DiLuigi, AIA, CSI, and Elaine Ostroff.

Universal Design Newsletter is published by Universal Designers & Consultants, Inc., which is frequently engaged by plaintiffs and defendants for consulting and expert witness services in ADA litigation, design review and facility evaluations.

Mail subscription rates: One year \$75 (U.S.). Second-class postage paid at Takoma Park, Md. Postmaster send address changes to *Universal Design Newsletter*, 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912-4324, publisher@universaldesign.com.

For information on advertising rates or obtaining alternative accessible formats, please call or write the *Universal Design Newsletter* Publisher.

DESIGN

TIP



PROBLEM: Placing toilet paper and other dispensers around grab bars can obstruct use of the bar.

TIP: When using recessed units, it is important to insure that the unit is mounted and remains flush to the wall. Offsets and projections of as little as 1/2 inch of the doors or edges of the unit can obstruct the gripping area and can cause problems with use of the grab bar.



Web Accessibility Challenged

A federal district court judge in California ruled in September that a retailer may be sued if its website is inaccessible to people with vision impairments. The ruling was issued in a case brought by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) against Target Corporation. In the suit, NFB claims that Target's website, www.target.com, is inaccessible to people who are blind and, therefore violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the California Unruh Civil Rights Act, and the California Disabled Persons Act. Target asked the court to dismiss the case, arguing that no law requires Target to make its website accessible. The judge denied Target's motion to dismiss and held that the federal and state civil rights laws apply to websites such as www.target.com.

The judge noted that the ADA applies to the services of a place of public accommodation, not services in a place of public accommodation. "To limit the ADA to discrimination in the provision of services occurring on the premises of a public accommodation would contradict the plain language of the statute," she wrote.

Following the ruling, NFB President Marc Mauer said, "This ruling is a great victory for blind people throughout the country. We are pleased that the court recognized that the blind are entitled to equal access to retail websites."

"Target.com is committed to providing an online experience that is accessible to all of our guests," according to a statement issued by Target in October. "Despite the lawsuit brought forward by the National Federation of the Blind, we have always and will continue to implement new technologies to our website. We are in the process of making online enhancements that will benefit all of our guests, including those with disabilities. These enhancements will occur regardless of the outcome of this lawsuit."

Courthouse Access Reports Prefers Ramps

When it comes to exteriors and interiors of courthouses, ramps are a better access solution than lifts, according to a report from the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) Courthouse Access Advisory Committee.

In its report "Justice for All: Designing Accessible Courthouses," issued Nov. 15, the Advisory Committee made its case for incorporation of ramps in court house and court room design. According to the report, "Interior ramps require more space

than lifts, but if designed into new construction are integrated without problems. They generally cost less than lifts, and are easily constructed. Ramps require minimal maintenance, and require railings only if the level change is greater than 6 inches. No power source is required, nor are mechanical parts involved. When built according to [Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act (ADA/ABA)] standards, liability is minimal. Most importantly, ramps permit all users, including people who use wheelchairs, to use the element independently, with no disruption to court proceedings. Ramps are always useable in case of emergency evacuation, and require no assistance."


The report, which provides design guidance and best practices recommendations, noted that the initial cost, liability and the maintenance requirements of lifts make them less desirable than ramps. In deciding whether to install a permanent ramp or a lift in an existing facility, "...installation and maintenance cost, space allocations, liability, user preference, maintenance, secondary power supply, effect on proceedings, and staff involvement must be considered."

For more information on the report, visit www.access-board.gov/caac/index.htm.

GSA Releases Survey Checklist for Leased Facilities

The General Services Administration (GSA) has released a checklist based on new accessibility standards that take effect for federally leased facilities in February.

The Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABA-AS), which are based on Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADA/ABA-AG) issued by the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board), contain provisions specific to leased facilities. The standards address access to joint-use areas, accessible routes to primary function areas, restrooms, and other spaces and elements. The checklist provides a tool to assess compliance with the standards for newly leased space. The new standards will apply to facilities leased by GSA through solicitations issued after Feb. 6, 2007.

The standards took effect for new construction and alterations on May 8, 2006 and for constructed-for-lease projects on June 30, 2006. For more information, visit: www.gsa.gov/leasing. 

"...Ramps are always useable in case of emergency evacuation, and require no assistance."

"Justice for All: Designing Accessible Courthouses," Access Board Courthouse Access Advisory Committee

Steinfeld Stays Focused on the 'Ultimate Client'

Four Decades of Work in Human-Centered Design

by Denise Hofstedt

Dr. Edward Steinfeld, ArchD, AIA, is in the fourth decade of his career and shows no signs of acting like a staid, settled, "resting on his laurels" college professor. The Director of the Center for Inclusive and Environmental Access (IDEA Center), Steinfeld remains an academic entrepreneur and energetic visionary who holds onto the same enthusiasm for design for all that he had when he began studying architecture in the 1960s.

Steinfeld, who is a Professor of Architecture and an Adjunct Professor of Occupational Therapy at the State University of New York – Buffalo (SUNY-Buffalo) and the Director of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Universal Design and the Built Environment, was one of the developers of the seminal Principles of Universal Design. During his career he has directed more than 30 sponsored research projects and has an extensive publication record.

Many of his publications are considered fundamental references in the fields of accessible and universal design. He has received two Progressive Architecture Awards for Applied Research and a Research Recognition Award from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2003, he was honored with the Distinguished Professor Award from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture.



Ed Steinfeld and his grandchild

With the 10th Anniversary of the development of the Principles of Universal Design approaching, Steinfeld is leading a collaborative effort to revisit the principles and decide what, if anything, should be done to ensure their future. [See adjacent article.]

Steinfeld is driven by the desire to make a difference in the lives of people who use the built environment. "To me this is the highest calling of a design professional and my commitment to universal design is due to this personal belief." His interest in and commitment to disability and aging issues is based on a personal philosophy that has guided his professional development from his undergraduate days. He recalled that in the 1960s he came to believe that much of the motivation behind design professionals was self-centered and more for the benefit of the designer than the ultimate client – building inhabitants. "I wanted my career to be community centered," he said. "This was based on values I learned from my parents regarding social justice and the role of the individual in society. Their philosophy, while not religious in nature, was part of a long Jewish tradition of practicing 'Tikun Olum,' or healing the world. I've tried to put that principle into practice in my career as an educator, researcher and practitioner."

Early On

From two generations of construction tradesmen, Steinfeld was destined to go into something

See Steinfeld, page 10

"Their philosophy... was part of a long Jewish tradition of practicing 'Tikun Olum,' or healing the world. I've tried to put that principle into practice in my career..."

Edward Steinfeld,
Arch D, AIA

Revisiting the Principles of Universal Design

With the 10th Anniversary of the development of the Principles of Universal Design approaching, Ed Steinfeld, AIA, ArchD, is pulling together interested parties to revisit the principles and help determine what, if anything, should be done to ensure their future.

The first formal discussion of the subject occurred in June 2006 in Atlanta. A new website, called UD E-World, is currently being built to document the discussions and to generate the involvement of a wider group of people. According to Steinfeld, the new website, which is expected to be live soon, will have several important functions, one of which will be to carry on further dialogue about the principles.

"There are a lot of concerns about the original principles and a lot of different directions proposed, including no changes at all," he says. "I think that if we do not revisit and revise them, they will become irrelevant as everyone goes their own way in redefining universal design. We certainly would have to develop an alternative conceptual scheme to the principles in order to support our own work if they are not revised, because they don't work for us. The need for consensus should be obvious. The more consistency there is on the definition and tools to communicate it, the less difficult it will be to convince people to adopt universal design. That is what research on innovation has demonstrated. But, as only one participant, all I can do is help to facilitate a discussion and hope that a consensus on the need to change will be reached. Then, the next step is what changes we make."



JAPAN
2nd International Conference on Universal Design

In October, more than 1,400 people attended the Second International Congress on Universal Design in Kyoto, Japan organized by the International Association for Universal Design (IAUD). The program included 320 sessions.

The membership of IAUD is comprised of more than 150 companies, including Yamaha, Toyota, Toshiba, Nissan, Panasonic, Pioneer, Mitsubishi, Konika, Fujitsu, Hitachi and Honda.

The inaugural International Congress on Universal Design took place in 2002. The IAUD was formed the following year. The stated goal of IAUD members is to benefit from the added value that Universal Design provides to their products and services. Universal design is understood as an improvement in quality and customer attention and as a formula to make friendlier products that increase the size of their target markets.

SPAIN
The “Build for All: Public Procurement for an Accessible Europe” Seminar

The first-ever Build for All: Public Procurement for an Accessible Europe Seminar took place at the Design for All Foundation in November. Build for All is a European Union (EU) supported work team whose goal has been to develop a manual to facilitate the application of Design for All in local government public procurement procedures.

Specifically, the mission of Build for All is to develop European Commission policies to promote accessibility criteria in services and public works, according to the EU, 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC directives.

Participants developed lists of recommendations for government officials and private companies for moving the concept of Design for All forward. Among the recommendations were:

For governments

- Define in specification sheets the accessibility and Design for All requirements.
- If the procurement officer doesn't know them, ask some other administrations and/or organizations for advice (www.ceapat.org, www.cermi.es, www.designforall.org)
- Use experience in accessibility and Design for All as a criterion to include or select a company.

• Demand external audit or certification of accessibility and Design for All for all the products and services hired. And have the contractor make all the proper arrangements, if necessary.

For companies:

- Improve the accessibility and Design for All knowledge and skills within the company.
- If the company doesn't meet the requirement of having at least 2% of employees with disabilities, it must hire the services of a Special Workshop or donate to foundations that work for the social and professional integration of people with disabilities.

• Seek external advice, and if appropriate, certifications of accessibility and Design for All of products and services.

- Suggest to public administration customers that they include accessibility and Design for All criteria in their calls for proposals, directly or through the corporation.

At the conference, Francesc Aragall, a member of the Design for All

Foundation, said, “It's worth starting this action plan, not only because of solidarity but also selfishness, because one day or another we will suffer from disability in old age.”



“Use experience in accessibility and Design for All as a criterion to include or select a company.”

Build for All Procurement Seminar recommendation



“Build for All, Public Procurement for an Accessible Europe” Seminar

“World Update” is compiled by Elaine Ostroff, founding director of the Adaptive Environments Center, and Denise Hofstedt, Editor of *UDN*. If you have information about international universal design efforts that you would like to have published in Universal Design Newsletter, write to us at: 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912; or contact publisher@universaldesign.com.

Corning, *from page 1*

cessible by replacing an existing ramp or with a new ramp; 4) could be made accessible with a ramp that extended into the store; or 5) couldn't be altered for historic reasons.

In the first phase of the project 52 door openers were installed to make 48 stores accessible at a cost of \$5,000 to \$7,000 each. Phase Two of the project involved the installation of exterior ramps and automatic door openers at seven other stores.

Not only has the project attracted new customers to the stores, the effort has also raised the accessibility awareness of the merchants, according to Kimberly Walters, executive assistant with AIM, a local independent living center.

Goodling found the property and store owners extremely cooperative and supportive of the project. Only two declined to participate. According to Goodling, now at least one of every particular service offered on Market Street is accessible. For example, if there were three


"The first goal of the project was to increase accessibility on Market Street. The second goal was to prove it could be done in an historic downtown."

Jim Goodling,
Director of Planning &
Economic Development,
Corning, NY



The project made this store entrance accessible.

women's clothing shops, now two of them are accessible, he said.

"The first goal of the project was to increase accessibility on Market Street," said Goodling. "The second goal was to prove it could be done in an historic downtown." Mission accomplished. 


Currency, *from page 1*

noted in his decision, that the costs related to changing the design of the currency would not

be an undue burden as they represent "only a small fraction of BEP's annual expenditures."

"Plaintiffs have demonstrated that they lack meaningful access to US currency," wrote the judge. "They

have put forth several potential accommodations that are reasonable on their face. The government has not sustained its burden of showing that any of them would be unduly burdensome to implement."

The judge stop-ped short of telling the Secretary of the Treasury how to fix the problem, but ordered a status conference to be set within 30 days of the order. 

Currency Features

Currency issuers around the world include features that make their notes distinguishable by people with visual impairments, according to Judge Robinson's order. Below are features of the currencies cited by the court.

Euro. Varies in size based on denomination: the greater the value of the note, the greater the length. The €5, €10, €20, €50 and €100 notes also vary in height. Each bill also includes a large, raised numeral and a foil feature designed to be perceptible to touch. The foil feature on the €5, €10, €20 is a different shape and location than those on the large notes.

Swiss Franc. Includes intaglio digits and a perforated numeral that can be indentified by touch.

Japanese Yen. Includes a distinct tactile feature on the ¥10,000, ¥5,000, ¥1,000, respectively, is rougher to the touch than the rest of the bill.

Canadian Dollar. A tactile feature on the upper right corner on the face of each bill is a series of raised symbols separated by a smooth surface which differs according to denomination.

Australian Dollar. Denominations differ in color and size.

English Pound. Denominations differ in color and size and contain tactile symbols.



Australian currency includes notes of different colors and sizes.

California Access Compliance Reference Manual

The Division of the State Architect in California has compiled the state's architectural accessibility statutes and regulations into one publication. The downloadable 515-page book includes relevant state statutes, Title 24 regulations, policies, interpretations of regulations and checklists. The manual can be found at www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/UniversalDesign/ud_accessmanual.htm. It includes an excellent checklist for evaluating design documents.

Best Practices in Universal Design: A Global Review

The International Best Practices in Universal Design: A Global Review is a new resource document that provides technical specifications comparing the accessibility codes and standards from 16 international jurisdictions, including the US, Mexico, Uruguay, Sweden, Ireland, Spain, South Africa, Bangladesh, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and Lebanon (UN) and the new standards from Canada.

This document will be of interest to people in both the private and public sectors; designers and architects, international and national codes and standards organizations, building developers and managers, municipal planning departments, and organizations of people with disabilities.

A Global Review builds on the successful first comparative study of accessibility criteria from around the world, the *International Best Practices in Universal Design: A Comparative Study* which was distributed to more than 40 countries.

The New Study

International Best Practices in Universal Design: A Global Review compares the technical data for 31 key design elements of the built environment; from standard elements such as doorways, ramps and washrooms to evolving areas such as communications, wayfinding detectable indicators and fire safety. The report was prepared by Betty Dion Enterprises Ltd. and funded by a consortium lead by the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

A panel of internationally recognized leaders in the field of universal design and accessibility selected the technical specifications that would


meet the needs of the greatest number of users, while taking into consideration the practicality of implementation.

International Best Practices in Universal Design: A Global Review was presented at the United Nations (UN) World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada, and at the UN in New York in conjunction with the 8th Ad Hoc Meetings on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by Betty Dion, who has recently taken on the position as Chair of the Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES).

The document is available in print or CD format, and in the alternate DAISY audio format, and can be shipped anywhere in the world.

The document is currently available in English and French, and is being translated into Spanish and Arabic. Please contact order@bdel.ca for more information.

New Training Course on Accessible Play Areas Available

A new training course on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) accessibility guidelines for play areas has been developed by the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The three-hour course, made available through NRPA, will be used to train park and recreation professionals, designers, landscape architects, manufacturers, operators, and others concerned with ensuring access to play areas. It covers all sections of the play guidelines, including ramp and transfer access to elevated play components, the number of play components required to be accessible, play surfacing, and other topics. For more information, contact NRPA at 703-858-2148 or visit its website at www.nrpa.org/npsi. 



The Review includes many illustrations and images.

Universal Design Comes to Life

Virginia County Builds Home to Educate Residents

When you incorporate universal design features into your home, you will be able to enjoy it for years to come, is the message Prince William County, VA is conveying to the visitors to its Universal Design Demonstration House.


The house, a cooperative effort by Prince William County government, a local coalition, Devereaux Architects and Centex Homes, is a "hands-on" educational tool to permit developers, designers, contractors and potential homeowners to see how Universal Design features can be easily, cost effectively and seamlessly incorporated into a living space.

Prince William County is in the center of growth for the Washington, DC area. Between 2000 and 2005, 25,000 new housing units were built. It has one of the fastest growing senior populations in the state. For years, the county's Aging in Place Committee had kept its Board of Supervisors informed about the county's changing demographics. The local leaders listened. They saw rapid growth of the population, knew the expansion was likely to continue because more land was available and realized the impact they could have on the county's housing stock for years to come.

In 2005, a cross community coalition was

formed. According to Leon Harper, chair of the Greater Prince William Coalition of Housing and Universal Design, groups representing older people and people with disabilities realized that however different, they all had a stake in the future housing options in the county. "We saw we all had a similar interest," he said. "Building a coalition was the next logical step."

The demonstration house project is the first step toward achieving the Prince William County Board of Supervisors goals of educating the community about the benefits of Universal Design in housing and increasing these features in the housing stock. The concept includes hosting tours for residents and community groups to see the variety of universal design features in a real setting. The hope is that informed consumers will demand similar features from the industry in the future.

A difficult task in selecting the features and products in the house was to not promote any one feature as "the answer." "We wanted to put in different solutions," said Harper "Instead of just focusing on one product, we wanted to include other options that fit within the concept of universal design." Tours of the house began in December 2006 and will end in the Spring 2007. 

Photos and descriptions of universal design from the Prince William County Demonstration House can be found on

www.UniversalDesign.com

New Kind of Accessible Taxi

A new automaker is reinventing an old transportation business – the taxi industry. The "Standard Taxi," manufactured by the Vehicle Production Group, was designed and engineered by professionals from the automotive industry who utilized extensive input from the taxicab industry across North America. It was built to meet the industry's need for a cost-efficient taxi that addresses all of the concerns of taxicab owners, operators, drivers and the riding public.

While the typical taxi fleet vehicle is a retrofit of a mass-market passenger model, the Standard Taxi was built from the ground up to only be a taxi.

With a focus on accessibility for all, the Stan-

dard Taxi provides seating positions for four passengers in the rear compartment, and additional space for a common wheelchair or scooter which is compliant with the vehicle standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). The vehicle is equipped with a low floor, high roof and a 56-inch door opening height. To help passengers with mobility issues board easily and quickly, the taxi features an integrated recessed ramp which allows everyone to "slide and ride." The forward facing wheelchair/scooter space can also be used for baby strollers, luggage, packages, walkers and more.

Features such as interchangeable door panels, fenders and bumpers minimize service and collision repair costs. Other replacement parts (headlights, tail lights, tires, brakes, exhaust, oil filters) are available at most major auto parts retailers. The Standard Taxi is designed with anti-lock brakes, a strong frame and body structure, and energy-



The Standard Taxi

Walk-In Tub

The Escape Walk-In Tub from Best Bath Systems, provides a walk through door and lounge seating. The tub includes a safety bar for balancing and a non-skid floor for footing. At 17 inches high, the contoured, molded in seat is intended to assist the user in sitting down and standing up more easily. The manufacturer offers a “no-leaks” guarantee. Decorative valves and fill spout with hand held shower are available. The design includes removable panels at both ends that facilitate access to the plumbing, pump and jets. A flip up seat is also available.



Walk in tub

The design includes removable panels at both ends that facilitate access to the plumbing, pump and jets. A flip up seat is also available.

Accessible Taxi, from page 8

absorbing bumpers. The easy-to-maintain interior helps to ensure that passengers will have clean seating surfaces and floors. In addition, the extra-large trunk space is big enough to carry four hard-case golf bags and a full-size spare tire.

For drivers, the Standard Taxi has been specifically engineered to take into consideration long hours behind the wheel, so it is equipped with an ergonomically designed upright drivers seat to prevent sore backs. Other driver benefits include a “safety partition” which separates the driver from passengers; an easy-to-read dashboard display with taxi-specific message center; an office style console layout; and driver-controlled door locks with separate left and right unlock control that is integrated with unique passenger exit lighting.

Three optional fuel systems are offered for the taxi: gasoline, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and compressed natural gas (CNG).

Based in Troy, MI, The Vehicle Production Group LLC is an original equipment manufacturer of the Standard Taxi. Vehicle production is scheduled to begin in late 2007.

Detectable Warning Plates

Made from cast iron, Detectable Warning Plates from East Jordan Iron Works Inc. are durable and low maintenance. The slip-resistant textured plates readily install in wet concrete.

Sizes include: 12” x 24”, 18”x 24” and 24” x 24”. Radial designs and custom sizes are also available. Finish choices are: natural iron, yellow, red and black.

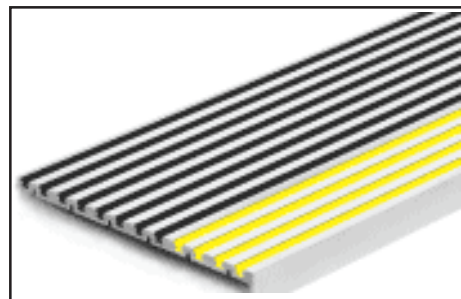


Cast iron detectable warning plates

Photoluminescent Stairway Marking System

Zero International has introduced a full line of Photoluminescent Stairway Marking Systems to facilitate safe emergency exits during building evacuations when power and back-up power systems have failed. The new Zero systems are designed for compliance with Building Code Standard RS 6-1/1A of New York City Building Code Section 27-383(b) for photoluminescent exit path markings adopted in May, 2005, for both new construction and renovations. The NYC standard calls for luminescent signs and markings to show outlines of egress path,

stairs, handrails and obstacles. Zero’s solutions to these



Photoluminescent stair treads

requirements include a variety of self-adhesive signage and marking systems designed for specific uses, as well as non-slip Traction Tread™ Glow stair nosings featuring profiled grooves with rubber inserts for both sure footing and aesthetics. Photoluminescent material is charged by exposure to ambient light and emits luminescence after the activating light source is no longer available.

Best Bath Systems

(Walk In Tub)
4545 Enterprise
Boise, ID 83705
Phone: 800.727.9907
Fax: 800.627.0929
www.best-bath.com

East Jordan Iron Works Inc.

(Cast Iron Detectable Warning)
301 Spring St.
East Jordan, MI 49727
Phone: 800.626.4653
www.ejiw.com

Zero International
(Stairway Marking System)

415 Concord Avenue
Bronx, NY 10455

Steinfeld, *from page 4*

building-related. "Construction is in my bones," he says. His father approved of his choice of architecture as it was an "inside job." He holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Carnegie Mellon University, as well as a masters and a doctorate degree in architecture from the University of Michigan. While at Michigan he had the opportunity to study architecture and gerontology – at the time few schools were combining the study of a social science with architecture -- which was a good fit with his interests in human-centered design.

After graduating, he took a job as a research architect with the National Bureau of Standards. It was then that he participated in a meeting of the leading figures in the accessibility movement, including Ron Mace, when the concept of Universal Design, yet unnamed, was conceived.

In 1973, he was hired by Syracuse University where he spent half his time in the architecture department and half in the gerontology department. There he began working on a project to encourage attention to aging in design and developing educational resources for design for aging. While there, he sent an unsolicited research proposal to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD opened a competition on the topic and Steinfeld won, receiving funding for his study that would form the empirical basis for ANSI A117.1-1980 Standard on Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities. It was that effort that solidified his reputation.

History of Collaboration

Perhaps it was his history of interdisciplinary study and frequent academic border crossings that proved to Steinfeld the power of collaboration. He has built the IDEA Center, established in 1984, into a research powerhouse by inviting the best and brightest faculty at SUNY-Buffalo to participate in the Center's projects and programs. His team includes an environmental psychologist, an information designer, an industrial engineer/human factors researcher, a rehabilitation/occupational therapist/industrial engineer, a technology transfer and business practices expert, an urban planner and an industrial designer. That team is complemented by full time staff usually made up of former graduate students who are developing into professionals leading their own initiatives. Currently the Center has three full time staff mem-

bers: an architect, an urban planner and an industrial engineer/anthropometrist. They also rely on a network of consultants.

The Secret of His Success

The life blood of any research center is funding. Steinfeld, who has clearly been successful in securing funding, claims there is no "trick" when it comes to shaking the money tree.

"In a knowledge-based world, having deep expertise is an advantage and we have a multi-disciplinary team that is deep in a lot of areas, not just one or two," he says. "One can be successful over the short term simply through networking and relying on the influence of friends. But over the long haul, one's record of accomplishments and commitment is what establishes your reputation. Although we do not receive even half the projects for which we apply, we do get our share, based on our expertise and our record and because we keep at it. Having a core set of full time tenured faculty allows us to stay committed even if we don't receive enough project funding because faculty do not have to look elsewhere to stay employed. Our commitment also shows in our high standards. Finally, we try hard to understand what the sponsors want and know how to communicate our ability to address their needs rather than just doing what we think is best. Every project is a collaboration with the sponsor. They know they can rely on us to accomplish their goals and produce leading edge work, making them look good in the process."

Colleague Beth Tauke, MA, MFA, an Associate Professor at SUNY-Buffalo, who has worked with Steinfeld for the past 21 years, appreciates his vision and believes he is "ahead of his time." "He has the ability to focus on the big picture and the design needs of the future," she says. "Because he considers his team to be a 'catalyst of change', he is willing to propose ideas that might be a bit radical or unpopular. He understands how systems of change work, and can present his proposals in ways that persuade others of their importance in improving people's lives. He always grounds these innovative ideas with a strong research agenda and a solid plan on 'how to get there'. The result is most often an exciting proposal that generates enthusiasm

See Steinfeld page 11

"One can be successful over the short term simply through networking and relying on the influence of friends. But over the long haul, one's record of accomplishments and commitment is what establishes your reputation...."

Edward Steinfeld,
Arch D, AIA,
Director,
the IDEA Center

Steinfeld, *from page 10*

among those providing the funding. Equally important is his track record. He takes on each project with great energy, and, as a result, sponsors are guaranteed quality deliverables that surpass their expectations.”

Long time colleague William Mann, PhD, a Professor and Principal Investigator for Rehabilitation Engineering Research at the University of Florida, praises Steinfeld and says he is “creative, bright and thinks outside the box.”


Pass It On

Much of his work these days revolves around writing books and working with younger colleagues as they pursue other projects. He enjoys helping colleagues “come into their own.”

Tauke says Steinfeld puts his heart into his work and never just goes through the motions. “His expertise in innovative approaches to architectural research by itself cannot account for his uncommon effectiveness and success,” says Tauke. “To conduct long term research that positively affects our built environment requires an extraordinary dedication to work outside of the architectural ‘stardom’ realm. It requires not just scientific, design and intellectual acuity, but conscientiousness, wholeheartedness, and openness to new ideas and ways of working. Ed brings these qualities to his work in great measure. ...He always brings critical thought and fresh ideas to the table. He chal-

lenges not only me, but everyone with whom he works, and his challenges have resulted in intense ideas, diverse perspectives, and extraordinarily productive outcomes..”

Not satisfied to limit himself to book writing and number crunching research, Steinfeld can still be found influencing budding architects in the studio. In the Spring 2006 he taught a graduate architecture studio that designed a new cabin prototype for Cradle Beach Camp, an overnight camp on Lake Erie that serves children with disabilities and underprivileged youth. The Camp will shortly use the design to construct two of the cabins. Steinfeld plans to continue to work with the Camp directors to develop a master plan using universal design concepts.

From the big picture to his own backyard, Steinfeld continues to work for a world that includes everyone. “Through his work, he helps those in the architecture and design-related disciplines to put people first—and he never waivers in this pursuit,” says Tauke. 

“Through his work, he helps those in the architecture and design-related disciplines to put people first—and he never waivers in this pursuit.”

Beth Tauke, MA, MFA,
Associate Professor at
SUNY-Buffalo

Movements: Universal Design and Green

Dr. Edward Steinfeld shares his views of what universal design advocates can learn from the success of the green movement -- read about it at: www.UniversalDesign.com

Subscribe now to **Universal Design Newsletter**
and get free access to all parts of www.UniversalDesign.com

Send me 1 year (4 issues) of UDN for **\$25**
(Includes shipping)

2 years (8 issues) for **\$46** (\$4 savings)
(Includes Shipping)

Payment Enclosed

Renewal

Charge My Credit Card (Circle One) MasterCard VISA

Card No. - - - Card Expires: _____

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Signature of Card Holder

Universal Design Newsletter

6 Grant Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(v/tty) 301.270.2470; fax: 301.270.8199
Web: www.UniversalDesign.com

Please send me information about other publications and services available.

Jan. 16, 2007: *Extending Horizons: Accessibility to Next Generation Networks, London.* Organized by COST 219ter, this conference will explore new communications technologies impact on the lives of older people and people with disabilities. Contact: www.tiresias.org/cost219ter/extending_horizons_conference.html

March 12-14, 2007: *US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Meeting, Washington, DC.* Contact: www.access-board.gov/about/meetings.htm

April 2-4, 2007: *Include 2007: Involving the Consumer, Royal College of Art, London* The theme for this international conference on inclusive design is "working with people." Contact: www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk/programmes/include/2007/index.html

April 2-4, 2007: *Occupant Evacuation Using Lifts Workshop, Include 2007, Royal College of Art, London* This workshop will be one of the session in the Include 2007 Conference. Contact: www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk/programmes/include/2007/index.html

June 16-19, 2007: *Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology, Toronto, Canada.* Topics will include leading ideas on assistive technology, smart homes, intelligent systems, communication, self-care, mobility, recreation

and education and employment. Contact: www.ficdat.ca/

June 18-21, 2007: *TRANSED 2007, Palais des congres de Montreal, Montreal Quebec, Canada.* The 11th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons will review advances in research, profile international breakthroughs and explore perspectives for technological innovations. Contact: www.tc.gc.ca/transed2007

ANSI A117.1 Meeting Postponed

The ANSI A117.1 Standard on Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities Committee meeting which was scheduled for mid-January has been cancelled. "It does not appear that the task groups' work would be sufficiently completed and available for review to support an agenda for the January 2007 meeting," according to Jay Woodward, ICC Senior Staff Architect and Secretariat for the Committee. The meeting has been rescheduled for April 16-20 in Washington, D.C. "This will give the task groups ample time to complete their work and ample time for the materials to be available for public consumption prior to the April meeting," said Woodward.

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be submitted to the editor two months before the publication date.

Universal Design Newsletter

6 Grant Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Address Correction Requested

