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## Universal Design News and Information Roundup

Highlighting What You May Have Missed...

*The recent US Department of Justice changes to the ADA seem to have triggered a great deal of interest and activity. Many of us are receiving so much information across our desks and computers on a daily basis, that it's easy to miss something important. UDN Direct has pulled together highlights of recent stories and information that we believe are important and may be of interest for you.*

### NPR Series: Aging at Home

The week of August 23, National Public Radio (NPR) featured *Aging at Home: Helping Seniors Stay Put*, a series of reports from reporter Jennifer Ludden, which examined trends of an aging America. Segments airing on *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered* and *Weekend Edition* highlighted Universal Design, technological advances to help monitor elderly people as they age in their homes, and telecaregiving. One report even examined what it feels like to be old, with Ludden trying on a suit that simulated the strain and stiffness of an aging body.

*Aging: Universal Design*, which initially aired August 24, focused on the growing trend of elderly people wanting to remain in their homes despite illness and/or disability, and how homes can be modified to adapt to meet physical challenges. The online coverage of this report featured a link to Universal Designers & Consultants' (UD&C's) [Home for the Next 50 Years](#), a showcase for how Universal Design can be applied to an existing home to make it more livable, thereby extending its life for the homeowners.

### **Mazz to Receive Brown Leadership Award**

Marsha K. Mazz, senior accessibility specialist and technical assistance coordinator for the US Access Board, will receive the 2010 Ronald H. Brown Standards Leadership Award September 23, during the US Celebration of World Standards Day. Named for the late US Secretary of Commerce, the Brown Award recognizes demonstrated leadership in promoting the important role of standardization in eliminating global barriers to trade. Mazz was nominated by the National Fire Protection Association for her outstanding contributions to the use of standardization to improve access for persons with disabilities to structures worldwide, including office buildings, sporting arenas, train

and subway stations, cruise ships, recreational vehicles, manufactured housing, airport terminals and courthouses.

At the Access Board, Mazz is responsible for the continued development of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines, overseeing the technical assistance program for the ADA and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), and representing the Access Board to model code organizations. She has worked tirelessly to coordinate and harmonize federal criteria for accessibility.

### **A State-of-the-Art Dorm for College Students with Disabilities**

As their children go off to college for the first time, most parents worry how their children will get acclimated and settle into their dorm rooms. For parents of children with disabilities, this worry is often magnified, although a new dorm at the University of Illinois—the most user-friendly dorm in the country for students with severe physical disabilities—may alleviate some of the worrying.

Already recognized as a front-runner in providing services for students with disabilities, the University of Illinois' Nugent Hall will allow students with the most severe physical disabilities—all use motorized wheelchairs or scooters—to get the personalized care they need while integrating fully into the college experience. Sinks, thermostats and light switches are at an accessible height; the window blinds can be closed with a button; dorm room doors can open with the wave of a wireless card; and faucets are sensor-activated. The dorm also has personal assistants (PAs), students who live in the dorm and help Nugent residents shower, use the bathroom and hook their backpacks on their chairs before heading to class. And through the program, students will learn to hire, schedule and manage their own PAs.

### **Settlement to Ensure Greater Access at Mount Vernon Estate**

A settlement recently reached between the US Department of Justice and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union (MVLA), which owns and operates George Washington's home, Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens, will ensure greater access to this historic property by people with disabilities. The Association agreed it will continue to bring Mount Vernon's structures and facilities into compliance with ADA accessible design standards, as well as provide effective communication of the content of its audiovisual presentations, exhibitions, public programs and other offerings for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or have low vision.

Among the modifications/adaptations called for in the settlement are: modifying and making the primary walkway to Mount Vernon's main visitors' entrance more accessible; completing installation of an accessible surface along the gravel walk connecting new facilities with the historic mansion; providing a shallower entry ramp and completing other modifications to the route into and out of the ground floor of the historic mansion; and providing an accessible walk to, and a level landing at, the entrance of the shops, food court and Mount Vernon Inn.

### **Coming Soon: *Universal Design Handbook, Second Edition***

Nearly 10 years after its groundbreaking first edition, the second edition of the *Universal Design Handbook* will be released in October. A one-stop professional reference to designing products and facilities for older adults, people with disabilities and children, the second edition, compiled by Editor in Chief Wolfgang Preiser and Senior Editor Korydon Smith, encompasses vision, touch and hearing, as well as cognitive and motor impairment. In addition to completely updated chapters and illustrations, the *Handbook* features:

- Global coverage of policies, requirements and case studies, including coverage of the latest Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) design requirements;
- Presentation of the full scope of universal design, from urban scale to multimedia;
- Examples of standards and guidelines that architects and designers can use to create more universally accessible and usable environments; and
- Coverage of accommodation issues in case studies on residential, commercial, transportation and educational facilities.

For more information, visit <http://www.mhprofessional.com>.

### **Events on the Horizon**

- **September 2, 2010: [DOJ's 2010 ADA Accessibility Standard Webinar](#)**, 1:30-4:00 pm ET. Sponsored by the US Department of Justice and the US Access Board.
- **September 16-17, 2010: [Mid-Atlantic ADA Update Conference](#)**, Baltimore, MD. Sponsored by the DBTAC: Mid-Atlantic ADA Center
- **September 29-October 1, 2010: [US Access Board Meeting](#)**, Chicago, IL.
- **October 7-8, 2010: [ADA & ABA Training with the US Access Board](#)**, Albuquerque, NM. Sponsored by the Southwest Disability Conference and New Mexico Governor's Commission on Disability. Contact [Hope.Reed@state.nm.us](mailto:Hope.Reed@state.nm.us) for more information.
- **October 9-12, 2010: [Universal Design Summit 4: Creating Universal Homes & Communities](#)**, St. Louis, MO. Sponsored by The R.L. Mace Universal Design Institute and the Starkloff Disability Institute.