



THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

ADDRESSING CITIZENS' CONCERNS

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 2 JUNE 2010

ADA 20th Anniversary Celebration



Inside This Issue:

Max to Get New Para Transit Busses	2
ADA Departmental Training	2
Seeking Accessible Businesses in the City of Birmingham	3
Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities has a New Addition	3
Service Animal Discrimination	4

HAPPY SUMMER



July 26, 2010 marks the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, landmark legislation that protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities and ensures more than 54 million Americans receive the same basic freedom, independence, equal access, and inclusion that's afforded to every citizen in our country.

The City of Birmingham will be celebrating the 20th Anniversary with several activities culminating with a festival on July 24th at the McWane Center from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The festival will include accessible activities, and a host of vendor information booths. The activities, such as the new Access Ability Exhibit, designed to show what it's like to live with a disability, are all accessible so that everyone can participate. The booths will provide examples of new accessible technology and adaptive equipment that can be used to assist in everyday life. In addition to equipment, there will be an area featuring accessible mobility equipment, such as scooters and wheelchairs, as well as an area to showcase modified vehicles for persons with mobility impairments.

To help culminate the anniversary event, Mayor William Bell will issue a proclamation to raise awareness of the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act signed in 1990. The Mayor will also recognize the work of the ADA Advisory Committee during City Council meeting to honor the committee's voluntary commitment shown to make the City of Birmingham more accessible.

Addressing Citizens' Concerns

MAX to Get New Para Transit Buses

It's well known that Birmingham has a large population of citizens that depend on public transportation. History has shown that, due to the uncertainty of public transportation, the disabled population constantly worries about issues such as getting to doctor and therapy appointments, dialysis, or life saving chemotherapy.

The Transit Authority will be purchasing new buses due to funding from the City of Birmingham and these fears will soon be eliminated. As stated by William Copling, Director of Operation and Maintenance, and past interim Director for the Jefferson County Transit Authority, 30 new Para transit vehicles and 12 new fixed

route transit busses will be purchased by MAX in July of 2010. According to Copling, "In the next 12 to 18 months you will see a significant change in our fleet and an improvement in the reliability of our busses." He went on to say, "The Para transit busses will be equipped with advanced technology that will include GPS, automatic vehicle locators, and MAX will be updating all the scheduling software to allow for improved scheduling, and on time performance." The big winners are users of MAX Para transit resulting in shorter wait time and the assurance that vehicles are on schedule and on time.



ADA Departmental Training

At least every two years The Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities request department directors or their liaison meet to be updated on changes and trends in ADA accommodations in a training seminar. These refresher seminars are also held to discuss updated department's policies and to show how these accessible accommodations may be implemented to better assist citizens. Moreover, it gives everyone a chance to see what other departments have implemented in their policies, what has been done to increase accessibility in other areas, and a forum for open discussion about ADA. In



conjunction with the updated policies, the seminar will cover a number of topics, including a brief history of the ADA and its purpose, as well as reviewing various types of disabilities and how they are defined. Most of all, the ADA Accessibility Training Seminar will re-educate and refresh front-line rep-

resentatives on sensitivity awareness. Information is taken back to be shared by representatives so that all departments can work together to make our city more accessible for all citizens. By working together, the City of Birmingham can become an example of accessibility for others.

The ADA Departmental Training is scheduled for **June 18, 2010, in Linn Henley Library Auditorium from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.** All departments and city agencies are encouraged to send a representative. To register please email Rudy Roussel, Jr. rudy.roussel@birminghamal.gov

Seeking Accessible Businesses in the City of Birmingham

The City of Birmingham is looking for businesses that have gone **above and beyond** in providing access to the disabled community. Birmingham recognizes the importance of making sure the entire city is accessible for all citizens, including those with disabilities. Therefore, the city would like to recognize businesses who have gone **above and beyond** to provide accessible service to the disabled community with the, "Above and Beyond Business Accessibility Award."

The business selected for this honor would meet the following criteria:

- The business adapted their business policies, practices and procedures above and beyond what the law requires, and/or;
- The business has gone above and beyond to successfully remove barriers to accessibility for disabled citizens, and/or;
- The business has gone above and beyond in making Public accommodations for disabled customers.

This award is presented by the Mayor's office on Americans with Disabilities in partnership with the Birmingham Business Alliance and Operation New Birmingham. If you are interested in nominating a local business, please complete a nomination form located in the ADA office or by sending a nomination letter to:

Help Wanted

**The City of Birmingham
Seeks Accessible Businesses**

Must have gone above and beyond in providing access to disabled citizens.

Apply online at: www.birminghamal.gov
or by mail to the
Mayor's Office on Americans With Disabilities
710 North 20th Street
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Linda Coleman, Director - Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities.

The deadline for applications is Wednesday, June 30, 2010 at 5 p.m. If you have further questions, please feel free to call Bacarra Mauldin (205) 714-8683 or Linda Coleman 254-2079.

Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities Has a New Addition



Bacarra Sanderson Mauldin joined the Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities on March 22, 2010. She comes to us with a diverse background, which includes several years in the legal field; five of which were in the area of ADA law. In addition, Mrs. Mauldin is an experienced event planner and project manager. She has a Bachelor of Business Administration from Faulkner University, a paralegal certificate from Samford University and a Master's of Science in Management from Faulkner University.

Mrs. Mauldin has always loved to work in the community and is currently a member of the UAB Minority Health Research Center Young Professionals Board, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. – A public Service Sorority and the

Birmingham Urban League Young Professionals. She is excited about working in the Mayor's Office on Americans with Disabilities because "Working here gives me the opportunity to merge my desire to work in the community with my daily professional existence." Since joining the ADA division Bacarra has been instrumental in working in conjunction with IMS to develop a system that will track ADA projects with departments where requests might originate and those directly responsible for implementing accessible accommodations. The benefits are improved monitoring and status of ADA projects and providing accurate data in reporting to the Department of justice "Project Civic Access."

We are on the web!

**Office On American with
Disabilities**

How to contact us:

Linda Coleman, ADA Director

Phone: 205-254-2079

Rudy Roussel, Jr., ADA Coordinator

Phone: 205- 297-8013

Bacarra Mauldin, ADA Tech Program Administrator

Phone: 205-714-8683

Fax: 205-254-2926

E-mail: linda.coleman@birminghamal.gov

www.birminghamal.gov

**The ADA Committee meets every
Second Friday, 10:00 AM 2nd
Floor City Hall Rm. 215**



ADA Advisory Committee

Chair – John Duplessis—Easter Seals, Navigator Program

Vice Chair - Lorne Kelly—MAX Transit (VIP Para transit)

Committee Members

Xaveria Anderson—Ms. Wheelchair Alabama 2007

Trisstun Burrows—Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005

Twanna Carter—VA Medical Center

Walter Daniels—Retired Educator

Cindy Jones—Alabama Industries for the Deaf & Blind

Shirley Hollis—Manager, Birmingham Parks & Recreation Centers

Dan Kessler—Director, Independent Living Resources, Birmingham

Mike Norris—Independent Living Resources/Greater Birmingham

Charles Priest—Director, Alabama Head Injury Foundation

Graham Sisson—ADA State Coordinator, Alabama Rehabilitation

Ron Talley—ASSISTECH Group

Staff

Rudy Roussel, Jr.—ADA Program Coordinator

Bacarra Mauldin—ADA Technical Program Administrator

Linda Coleman— ADA Director

Service Animal Discrimination

Two landlords in Poughkeepsie, New York are being charged with violating the Fair Housing Act when they allegedly refused a Vietnam-era veteran's right to have a therapeutic service dog in his apartment. Even though the service dog is used to help alleviate the tenant's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, the landlords have threatened to evict the owner of the service animal as retaliation for filing a housing discrimination complaint.

The resident alleged that the landlords denied his request for reasonable accommodations when they refused to allow a, doctor prescribed, service animal in their apartment building. In addition to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, the resident was diagnosed with depression and seizures. One of the landlords stated that he heard that service animals were used to treat these disorders, but because of the building's "no pets" policy, the landlords still refused the request for a therapeutic service dog. Adding insult to injury, the tenant was told he would need to start looking for another place to live due to the discrimination complaint. The HUD charge will be heard by a United States Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) unless any party to the charge elects to have the case heard in federal district court. If an ALJ finds after a hearing that discrimination has occurred, the ALJ may award damages to the complainant for the damages suffered as a result of the discrimination.

