



# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Director's Report

Last week, a number of Access Boardmembers, staff, provider employees and customers attended the Disabled Resources Center's 46th Annual Awards Event hosted by Executive Director (and Access Board Secretary) Dolores Nason. Founded in 1976, DRC is an Independent Living Center in Long Beach whose mission is, "To empower people with disabilities to live independently in the community, to make their own decisions about their lives and to advocate on their own behalf."

A great time was had by all at the first in-person DRC fundraiser since the pandemic began. The DRC presented a number of awards and scholarships to inspirational community leaders and students. I was honored to accept the Civic Leadership Award on behalf of Access Services for our work helping the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to thank Secretary Nason and the DRC Board of Directors for recognizing the hard work of Access staff and provider employees during this challenging time. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with DRC and other Los Angeles County ILCs to help people with disabilities live independently.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

## Access to host Virtual Community Meeting

Access will host a Virtual Community Meeting, using Zoom, on Saturday, August 6, 2022. There will be one meeting with Spanish Language translation and closed-captioning available. The meeting will begin at 12:30 pm and conclude at 2:00 pm.



The purpose of our annual Community Meeting is to provide a forum where Access staff can engage with Access riders and service providers, while exchanging information and promoting public

involvement and participation. The meeting agenda includes an Operations service overview; updates to the Where's My Ride App; an Eligibility and Renewals update; and an overview of the Operations Monitoring Center (OMC). At the same time, Access riders will have the opportunity to ask questions directly to Access staff and service providers.

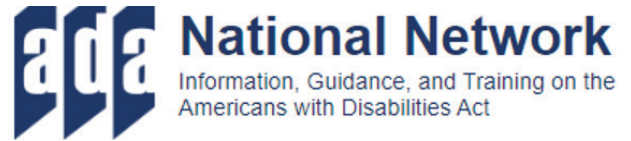
For more information on this and other events, please visit Access' website at [accessla.org](https://accessla.org) and scroll down to the News and Access Events section on the left side of the page. You can then click on the Virtual Community Meeting event for further information. In addition, if you would like to stay up to date on all planned events and customer information, please sign up for alerts through our website or contact our Customer Service department at 800-827-0829 (Option 5) for assistance.

As always, we are looking forward to the Community Meeting as a great opportunity to engage with our riders.

**Randy Johnson**  
*Director of Government Affairs & Outreach*

## The 2022 National ADA Symposium

I recently attended the National Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Virtual Symposium. I began putting together my thoughts and quickly discovered that to write about all the sessions and ideas surrounding the event, there was too much to cover in only one article. So, this is the first of two installments. I will provide a quick overview of the symposium's highlights and give you my insights and impressions regarding the key concepts.



Since I'm already certified as an accredited ADA Coordinator, I attended this year's symposium to learn about: up-to-date matters concerning the ADA; the impact of delivering ADA Paratransit goods and services; current legal issues regarding the ADA (and their ramifications); and finally, to see where the trends in federal regulations are heading.

The sessions I attended included: "How the COVID-19 Pandemic has Impacted the World of Disability"; "Establishing a Network of ADA Coordinators in California"; "Disability and Inclusion Issues"; "Disability Language and Etiquette: Improving Awareness to Overcome Able-ism"; "ADA Compliance at Temporary Events"; "Approaches for Delivering ADA Compliant Paratransit on Demand"; "Civil Rights Protections & How to Plan for Persons with Disabilities Before, During & After Emergencies"; "Workers with Long-Term COVID-19 and the ADA"; "Top Court Cases: Titles II & III"; "Audio Description as an Aesthetic Innovation"; and "Website Accessibility Overlays: More Expensive Than Magic Wands, But Just as Effective."

The theme of this year's symposium was set by one of the ADA's original co-collaborators and principal advocates, Dr. Lex Frieden. He stated that symposium participants needed to fight and change the ADA so that it meets new challenges and remains relevant and effective. Thirty-two years have passed since its signing, and he pointed out that many new things like Uber and Lyft present equity challenges for persons with disabilities. These on-demand ride hailing services didn't exist back then — but they do now. And given many of the accessibility and equity issues involving the disability community and these services, they should be answerable to ADA regulations.

His battle-cry to the audience was "Equity!" Participation in matters where people with disabilities are concerned should be at the forefront of consideration rather than an afterthought. He urged that advocates and practitioners apply pressure by using the ADA in areas that were not around in the past.

**R. P. Martindale-Essington**  
**ADA Coordinator for Customer Relations**

## Commendations

"My driver Gusto Estrada was very helpful, polite, and nice on my ride today. The least I could do is file a smile for him."

**Minoo Shabanfar**  
**Rider since Feb 2008**

"I am filing a smile for my driver, Richard Franco. Richard was such a sweet driver and was professional with each passenger. I also appreciated that he cleaned the van after every rider. Thank you, Richard!"

**Gloria Hymes**  
**Rider since June 2020**