

**PITTSBURGH & ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

**CELEBRATE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADA**

From May through August 2015, the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with a series of community-wide events recognizing the landmark law that has transformed lives by removing barriers to civic participation, housing, transportation, employment, arts and recreation, education and more.

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County ADA 25th Anniversary Celebration is one of several scheduled throughout the nation this year, including a major celebration in Washington D.C. on the July 26 anniversary with attendance expected to be in the thousands.

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County ADA 25th Anniversary celebration will highlight local accomplishments and champions, as well as next steps for our community. Like most of the nation, as many as 18 to 20 percent of City and County residents of all ages have some type of disability.

The key messages of the anniversary celebration are:

* The ADA is the most important civil rights legislation of the past 25 years. It has transformed the lives of individuals with disabilities, their families, and the community.
* Accessibility and inclusion benefit everyone in the community.
* A disability-friendly community addresses the *spirit* of the ADA, not just the *letter* of the law.
* An inclusive community champions diversity of all kinds, including differing abilities.
* Universal design concepts and advanced technology hold promise for increasing access and inclusion for everyone.
* The ADA encompasses more than just physical access (e.g. wheelchair ramps) – it promotes accommodation for a wide range of disabilities in a variety of settings.
* Although the ADA has created a more inclusive American society, significant inequities remain, especially in employment. People with disabilities who can and want to work continue to face barriers.