



# County of Santa Cruz

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 500, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4069  
(831) 454-2200 FAX: (831) 454-3262 TDD: (831) 454-2123

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THIRD DISTRICT

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FOURTH DISTRICT

JEFF ALMQUIST  
FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 2/8/00

January 28, 2000

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is the **Annual** Report of the Commission on Disabilities for calendar year 1999. I recommend that the Board accept and file this report and direct the Chair to thank the members of the Commission for their efforts on the County's behalf.

Sincerely,

MARDI WORMHOUDT, Chair  
Board of Supervisors

MW:ted

cc: Commission on Disabilities

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Commission on Disabilities

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

Email [commissions@co.santa-cruz.ca.us](mailto:commissions@co.santa-cruz.ca.us)  
Website: [www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us](http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us)

701 Ocean Street, Room 30. Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
ph# 631-454-2355 fax# 831-454-2433

January 28, 2000

Chair Jeff Almquist  
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Chair Almquist:

On behalf of the Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities, I am submitting the 1999 Yearend Report of Activities for your review.

I would also like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to serve the Board of Supervisors and persons with disabilities in Santa Cruz County.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Smith  
Women's Commission Coordinator

1ST DISTRICT  
R. Freiler  
R. McGaw

2ND DISTRICT  
J. Daugherty  
J. Lewis

COMMISSIONERS  
3RD DISTRICT  
R. Northcutt  
V. Everlove

4TH DISTRICT  
P. Green  
P. Spence

5TH DISTRICT  
T. Ferr  
C. Adams



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# County of Santa Cruz Commission on Disabilities 1999 Yearend Report

## I. Roles of the Commission

The Commission on Disabilities is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on issues concerning persons with disabilities. The Commission was established to (a) Review existing County policies that affect persons with disabilities and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding proposed changes; (b) Review Sections 503 and 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations and advise the Board of Supervisors on any actions necessary to bring the county into compliance with the federal requirements and to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities; (c) Review the provision of access for persons with disabilities to public places within the County and recommend improvements where needed; (d) Review the County's Affirmative Action Plan and policies and recommend to the Board of Supervisors and Affirmative Action Commission any revisions which may be necessary to eliminate employment discrimination against persons with disabilities; (e) Review the County's Personnel rules and job descriptions and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and to the Civil Service Commission, as necessary, to assure that any unnecessary barriers to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are removed; (f) Advise the Board of Supervisors on any other appropriate programs and actions which would increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities; (g) Evaluate services provided to persons with disabilities in the County and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors based on their conclusions; (h) Review requests by persons with disabilities or organizations for County assistance and advise the Board of Supervisors; (i) Investigate citizen complaints related to concerns of persons with disabilities and make appropriate recommendations for action to the Board of Supervisors; (j) Review Federal and State Legislation of interest to persons with disabilities and advise the Board of Supervisors of their recommendations; and (k) Exercise other responsibilities related to the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities in the County.

## II. Meetings Dates, Time, and Location

The Commission meets the second Friday of each month from 12:00 noon to 2:00 P.M. at 1400 Emeline Street, Building K, Room 206. The mailing address is 701 Ocean Street, Room 30, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

## III. Commission Structure

The Commission on Disabilities is comprised of ten members representing five districts. The Board of Supervisors appoints two Commissioners for each district. The Chair and/ or Vice-Chair who are elected every January facilitates commission meetings. This year the Chair was Michael Bush (2<sup>nd</sup> District) and the Vice-Chair was John Daugherty (2<sup>nd</sup> District). The Commission members, as of December 31, 1999 are:

District	Commissioners
1 <sup>st</sup> District	Robert McGaw, Robert Freiler
2 <sup>nd</sup> District	John Daugherty, James Lewis
3 <sup>rd</sup> District	Rebecca Northcutt, Victor Everlove



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4 <sup>th</sup> District Green, vacant	
5 <sup>th</sup> District	Tom Ferr, Cynthia Adams

The following Commissioners either completed their terms, resigned, or were replaced in the last year: Michael Bush and Angelee Dion.

**IV. Commission Staff**

The Commission is supported by a twenty hour per week staff person – the Commission Coordinator. The Coordinator takes minutes, prepares correspondence, and represents the Commission in some of the Commission activities, From January to March 1999, the Coordinator **was** Becky Mathews, who filled in on a temporary basis. From July to December 1999, the Coordinator was Andrea Smith.

**V. Attendance**

Name	1	2-6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Robert Freiler	A	NR	X	A	X	A	A	X
Robert McGaw	X	NR	X	X	X	X	X	X
Michael Bush	X	NR	X	X	A	X	X	X
John Daugherty	A	NR	A	X	X	A	X	X
James Lewis	-	NR	-	-	-	-	-	X
Rebecca Northcutt	X	NR	X	X	X	A	X	X
Victor Everlove	-	NR	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pat Green	-	NR	A	X	X	A	A	X
Tom Ferr	A	NR	X	A	X	X	X	X
Cynthia Adams	X	NR	A	A	X	X	X	X
Angelee Dion	X	NR	-	-	-	-	-	-

X= present    A= absent    L=leave of absence    dash (-) =not on commission  
 NR=indicates no records available to verify attendance

**VI. Annual Goals and Accomplishments**

The goals of the Commission are set annually and are developed utilizing the Commission mandate, the vision statement, and emerging needs as expressed by the community and identified by Commissioners.

*The Commission serves as the eyes, ears, and voice to our County leaders. Our vision is for all people with disabilities to experience Santa Cruz County as a community free of **barriers** to independent living.*

In 1999 the Commission's activities concentrated on issues of accessibility, employment, awareness.

ACCESSIBILITY

In response to citizens' complaints, the Commission contacted the City of Santa Cruz Public Works Department and requested that customers not be instructed to place



recycling containers on the sidewalk thereby obstructing a clear path of travel for persons with disabilities. This initiated a change in policy and patrons were instructed to allow a three feet clearance around the containers in the street, allowing better accessibility.

- Resulting from the Commission's 1998 investigation of SCCHO (now known as the Central Coast Alliance for Health), two positions were created to remedy problems with service delivery to its members - the Members Advocate Position, which serves as an objective party to assist persons with disabilities when confronted with problems obtaining services through SCCHO and the Disabilities Liaison position, which works in-house to assist members with disabilities with any health care issue they may have. This year the Commission monitored the hiring process and outreach plans for both positions. Commission representatives also worked with the Legal Aid Society, the agency funded to employ the Member Advocate Position, on improving accessibility to their site in Santa Cruz. Also resulting from the investigation, due to a streamline of their procedures affecting repairs and the purchase of durable medical equipment, SCCHO members now experience a much shorter turnaround time for service delivery.
- The Commission alerted and advised the San Lorenzo School District on the misplacement of the hydraulic lift chair at the new public swimming pool located at the High School. The lift was installed contradictory to manufacturer's recommendations and installed in the shallow end of the pool, risking serious injury to persons with mobility problems. The chair was relocated on the advice of the Commission.
- In response to citizens' complaints, the Commission alerted the City of Santa Cruz of the serious safety and accessibility problems that exist on the Soquel Avenue Bridge since its reconstruction. The walkways have a cross-slope in excess of the ADA mandated 2% and the crosswalk button exceeds an 18" reach. Also, the traffic lights were timed so that cars had a green light to proceed while pedestrians were still in the middle of the crosswalk on the blind corner turning onto River Street. Persons using wheel chairs would be virtually invisible to cars proceeding over the bridge. The City responded with the intention to correct the cross-slope and reduce the reach to the crosswalk button. They fixed the traffic light immediately.
- The Commission has received numerous complaints regarding violations of accessible parking throughout Santa Cruz County. We have heard at an increasing rate that persons requiring the use of accessible parking spaces are finding these spaces used by non-disabled individuals or blocked by dumpsters, shopping carts, or merchandise.

In response to these complaints, the Commission has researched and recommended to the Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff, a solution. Since 1996, the City of Fremont has a program which works in partnership with law enforcement and community members. This program utilizes volunteers to enforce accessible parking and to cite businesses for non-compliance of accessible parking ordinances, The program has proven to be successful and has generated over \$130,000 in revenue over a twelve month period.



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The Commission is currently working in collaboration with representatives from the Sheriff's department, County Council, Planning, and the County Administrator's office to determine what is needed to implement a similar program in Santa Cruz County.

### DISABILITY AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

- In 1999, the Commission on Disabilities (COD) maintained its commitment of assisting all persons and organizations in Santa Cruz County in understanding disability issues by investigating complaints and/or by providing information and guidance whenever possible. The COD also acts as a referral and information resource for issues of concern to persons with disabilities and extends to private businesses and agencies as well as to governmental organizations.
- Commissioners tended a booth at the Ability Awareness Fair sponsored by Shared Adventures at the Louden Nelson Community Center. The event was well attended and provided an opportunity to share the Commission's work with the community.
- Commissioners attended a Disability History Seminar featuring Dr. Paul Longmore, a professor from San Francisco State University. Dr. Longmore provided a history of the disability movement and shared his own experiences.
- The Commission has developed an informal policy on language use when referring to persons with disabilities. The term "handicap" has been deemed unacceptable when referring to persons with a disability. Although the term "handicap" has been used interchangeably with disability for many years, due to its origin – it's both inaccurate and degrading. The word originated from the use of a cap (hat) to collect hand-outs and implies that a disability automatically means a person is unable to work or must beg for their keep. The Commission recommends putting the person first – as in "person with disability." And when referring to buildings, bathrooms, and parking – use the term "accessible".

### EMPLOYMENT

- The Commission responded to the County's 1998-2000 Equal Employment Opportunity Report with recommendations and an offer of Commission cooperation in meeting the goals to employ persons with disabilities.
- The Commission also reviewed the hiring process of the Commission Coordinator with County representatives to identify areas of improvement for reaching persons with disabilities.
- The Commission tended a table at the County's Access Job Fair at the Coconut Grove. The event was well attended and provided opportunity to network with other services offering support to persons with disabilities trying to get into the job market.

#### Guest speakers welcomed by the COD in 1999:

Richard Gallo, Central Coast Center for Independent Living



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Barbara Flynn, Senior Health Services Manager of SCCHO  
Angelique Milhous, Provider Relations of SCCHO  
Denita Carlson of SCCHO  
Susan Seip of SCCHO  
Connie Harrigan of the American Chronic Pain Association  
Scott Bugenthal of Food and Nutrition Services Lift Line Services  
Ajita Patel, Santa Cruz County EEO  
Charles Bruscano, Association for Injured Workers  
Rayna Juarez, Central Coast Alliance for Health (formerly SCCHO)  
Foster Anderson, Shared Adventures  
James Lewis, community member  
Peter McLean, community member  
Christine McGuire, DA's office  
Suzanne Koebler, In-Home Care Integration Project  
Dave Donohoe, community member  
Wayne Haygood, County Office of Education  
Sallie Johnson, HICAP  
Jody Harris, Long Term Care Commission

**VII. Future Goals and Recommendations**

- Continue working with the Sheriff's department on the volunteer parking enforcement through its implementation.
- Advocate for children with disabilities in Santa Cruz County and recommend that Prop 10 funds be allocated to services for children with autism and other disabilities.
- Launch the COD's new **webpage** in January 2000.
- Work with the County to increase employment for persons with disabilities.
- Work with the County to eliminate the term "handicap" from county ordinances and other documents.
- Continue to work with the Central Coast Alliance for Health on insuring equity of services to person with disabilities.
- Explore ways to comprehensively address ADA non-compliance in the private sector.
- Plan a celebration for the ten-year anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Continue to serve as a referral and information resource for the community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea Smith  
Commission Coordinator

Approved by the Commission on Disabilities on 1/14/00