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Wrap Up: 2010 National ADA Symposium

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Jim deJong (right), Director, Great Plains DBTAC and Bill Botten, Access Board, at the 2010 National ADA Symposium in Denver.

In late June, the 15th National ADA Symposium was held in Denver. Almost 600 attendees participated in 50 different presentations on a wide range of topics dealing with all aspects of inclusion for persons with disabilities. Represented were forty-eight states and several countries (i.e., Guam, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Canada, and Japan). Participants included persons with mobility impairments, hearing impairments, vision impairments and cognitive disabilities as well as some people that are temporarily able-bodied.

Issues included were of interest to ADA coordinators, enforcement officials, architects/designers, lawyers, advocates, communities, employers and service providers. Jay and I, both International Code Council (ICC) Senior Staff Architects, gave five presentations at the four-day event.

The Great Plains and Rocky Mountain Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC) hosted the 2010 National ADA Symposium. The DBTACs are 10 regional centers that provide technical assistance and training on the Americans with Disabilities Act. Each DBTAC covers several states, providing ADA information, interpretation and training. A National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) grant funds the DBTACs. These 10 centers are great resources. You can reach them at 1-800-949-4232 or www.adata.org.



Jay Woodward at the 2010 National ADA Symposium in Denver.

Jim deJong, director of the Great Plains DBTAC, shared a comment from one participant:

“The symposium included such a variety of participants that attendance helped me get a new view of concerns. Being able to discuss accessibility with designers, enforcers and advocates provided a variety of viewpoints that I do not get when I attend meetings with just persons in my specific area of expertise or with my specific disability.”

Speakers for the symposium included representatives from the U.S. Access Board, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Forest Service, DBTACs, ICC, etc. While attendees could attend any session, tracks were recommended for ADA coordinators, building design and code compliance for accessibility, laws and regulations, community issues; employment issues, and recreation facilities.

Minimum requirements as well as good design practices were discussed. For example, Jay and I gave a presentation on green and sustainable building issues, how they work with accessibility requirements, and the concepts of universal design. Other presenters addressed emergency evacuation concerns – both specific to buildings through my presentation regarding fire and lockdown emergencies, and another by Marcia Roth of FEMA regarding issues that arise during regional disasters such as floods, storms or earthquakes.

New requirements were covered. Jay spoke about the revisions to the 2009 ICC A117.1; Bill Botten of the Access Board covered recreational facilities; and Dave Yanchulis, also with the Access Board, addressed the 2004 ADA/ABA Accessibility Guidelines.



Marsha Mazz (left) of the Access Board, and ICC's Kim Paarlberg giving a joint presentation on the coordination efforts between the Access Board and ICC regarding the accessibility requirements in the IBC, ICC A117.1 and ADA/ABA Guidelines.

Some great news shared at the symposium was that there was a strong possibility of the 2004 ADA/ABA coming out of the Office of Management and Budget in time for the 20th Anniversary of the ADA in July. This did happen, and now that the guidelines have been published the DOJ can start using the 2004 ADA/ABA rules for enforcement in six months. There will be an overlap permitted between the new and old standards. All projects must comply starting in 18 months. They are now being called the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design (Read related article, [2010 Accessibility Standards adopted by the DOJ](#)).

[by the DOJ](#)).

Marsha Mazz of the Access Board, and I gave a joint presentation on the coordination efforts between the Access Board and ICC regarding the accessibility requirements in the IBC, ICC A117.1 and ADA/ABA Guidelines. These are just a few examples of the many options offered.

The Code Council would like to thank Richard Sternadori from the Great Plains DBTAC for suggesting and supporting ICC's involvement in a symposium about the ADA. ICC has been involved in the last five symposiums, thanks to Rich and the support of his director, Jim deJong. Rich was a code official in Missouri and Kansas

before becoming the Nebraska coordinator for the Great Plains DBTAC. His experience allowed him to embrace the idea that the code official can have a positive influence on accessibility.

By enforcement of the building codes during plan review and inspection, the code official can assist the designer with early compliance with accessibility issues. Catching problems during these building phases is much more cost effective for the building owner than later retrofits or corrections. In addition, the benefit for the community is that accessible buildings are constructed, thus providing everyone access to places to work, live and play.



Rich Sternador was a code official in Missouri and Kansas before becoming the Nebraska coordinator for the Great Plains DBTAC.

“We were thrilled to be able to help host the ADA symposium in Denver,” said Jana Burke, director of the Rocky Mountain DBTAC. “We are really looking forward to participating again next year.”

For information on next year's symposium, [check this link](http://www.adasympoium.org) for updates: [www.adasympoium.org].