OPENING DOORS TO ACCESSIBILITY: BEST PRACTICES IN CREATING INCLUSIVE EXPERIENCES

NEW JERSEY THEATRE ALLIANCE
CULTURAL ACCESS NETWORK
GROUNDS FOR SCULPTURE
ARTS ACCESS PROGRAM AT MATHENY MEDICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER
PRESENTERS

• Robert Carr, Director of Programs and Services/ADA Coordinator at the NJ Theatre Alliance

• John McEwen, Executive Director of New Jersey Theatre Alliance and Cultural Access Network

• Bonnie Brown, Director of Operations at Grounds For Sculpture

• Cassandra Demski, Curator of Education at Grounds For Sculpture

• Keith Garletts, Outreach Coordinator and Program Specialist, Arts Access Program at Matheny Medical and Educational Center
A CO-SPONSORED PROJECT OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS AND THE NEW JERSEY THEATRE ALLIANCE
HISTORY

- **In 1990**, John McEwen approached Council Chair, Elizabeth Christopherson.

- The Cultural Access Network Project (CAN), formerly the New Jersey Arts Access Task Force, was **created in 1992** to assist all cultural arts organizations in making their programs and facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- **In 1993**, a statewide conference, *IT TAKES MORE THAN A RAMP*, launched CAN and was attended by more than 300 people from across the state.
THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF CAN

- Susan P. Coen
  Consultant

- Janet Zoubeck Dickson
  McCarter Theatre Center

- Pamela Gaston
  New Jersey Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired

- Maureen Heffernan
  Young Audiences of NJ

- Wendy Liscow
  Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

- Michael T. Mooney
  Disability Advocate

- Arlene Romoff
  Hearing Loss Association of NJ

- Michael Schnoering, AIA
  Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC

- Thomas E. Shaw
  Mercer County Office for the Disabled

- Jim Thebery
  Bergen County Department of Human Services Division on Disability Services

- Jason Weiland
  NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Ina White
  Kean University

- Vanessa Young
  VSA Arts New Jersey

- John McEwen
  New Jersey Theatre Alliance

- Robert Carr
  New Jersey Theatre Alliance

Members Ex Officio

- Nicholas Paleologos
  New Jersey State Council on the Arts

- Don Ehman
  New Jersey State Council on the Arts

- Marilyn Dore
  New Jersey State Council on the Arts
SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

- The Cultural Access Network used the Ohio Arts Council’s Self Assessment Survey as a foundation for the formation of an assessment tool.
- The survey is divided into sections, has guidelines for each question and an appendix consisting of a wide range of resources.
- Organizations are encouraged to complete an ADA Self Assessment Survey prior to completing and submitting an ADA Plan.
ITEMS THAT ARE READILY ACHIEVABLE
YOU CAN DO THIS NOW!

- Board Approved Policy Statement
- Sensitivity Training for Staff and Volunteers
- Assigning an ADA Coordinator
- Establish or share an ADA Advisory Committee
- Non-Discrimination Policy
- Job Descriptions for Staff and Volunteers
- Grievance Procedure

“You are all your organization’s greatest accessibility asset.” — Betty Siegel, Director of VSA and Accessibility at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
OBSERVATIONS FROM ADA PLANS

• Areas of Growth
  • Policies & Advisory Boards
  • Program Development/Use of Access Symbols
  • Facility Improvements/Plans
  • Better Understanding of Developing Rider or Letter of Agreement with Outside Venues

• Areas that Continue to Be Challenging
  • Budgeting
  • Full integration among departments
  • Long term program planning
  • Target Marketing/Technology
FOCUS GROUPS/SURVEYS – FINDINGS

In 2005 a series of focus groups and surveys were conducted to evaluate the arts and cultural event participation among people with disabilities in New Jersey, as part of NJSCA’s Building Cultural Participation initiative in partnership with The Wallace Foundation.

Key Findings

- Inaccurate information on website or over the phone
- Apprehension about attending venues for first time
- Accessible information buried in marketing materials and websites
- Staff not fully trained in, or aware of, access programs/features
- Need for a concierge/one stop shopping
- Transportation Challenges
SIGN-INTERPRETATION & OPEN CAPTIONING

- Mini Grant Initiatives
- Listening Enhancement Equipment Loan
- Theatrical Interpreting Training
AUDIO DESCRIPTION

- Mini Grant Initiatives
- Listening Enhancement Equipment Loan
- Training

AD Training

Live Description

Sensory Seminars
MARKETING/OUTREACH

- Access Symbols
- Email Blasts
- Sample Press Releases
- Articles in Newsletters (i.e. Able News; Monthly Communicator)
- Offices on Aging
- County Offices Serving People with Disabilities
- NJ Commission for Blind, NJ Division of the Deaf
Cultural Access Network Project Resource Library

Short overview Vivamus orare elementum sollicitudin. Ut ultrices lorem et euismod volutpat. Proin accumsan lorem vitae elit blandit, sed accumsan sem commodo.

Search by keyword

Category
- Any -

Select a category

Resources

Test Prepping your Theater for Hearing Accessibility

ADA Policies & Practices / Deafness / Hearing Loss

Need Help with ADA Planning?

NJTA offers expert ADA consulting services for theatres and other event venues:
- ADA Writing
- Equipment Rental
- Sensitivity Training
- Sed do eiusmod tempor
- Incididunt ut labore

Learn More

Featured Resources

[Resource] WCAG 2.0

[Resource] More
CULTURAL ACCESS NETWORK AWARDS

- Education
- Networking
- Inspiration
- Artist Showcase
- Recognition of Role Model Individuals & Organizations

Highlights from Past Cultural Access Awards

Attendees at the 2012 Cultural Access Awards

Pianist Matthew Whitaker playing at the 2012 Cultural Access Awards

Harpist Katherine Highet performs a piece at the 2011 Cultural Access Awards

Vocalist Alli Stroker sings at the 2010 Cultural Access Awards
OTHER SERVICES OF THE CULTURAL ACCESS NETWORK PROJECT

- Sensitivity Training
- Artist resources
- Technical Assistance
SPONSORS/PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to the support of The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Alliance receives support from the following sponsors/partners:

- Alliance for Arts and Health New Jersey
- Johnson & Johnson
- Kessler Foundation
- NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- NJ Commission for the Blind
- Springpoint Senior Living Foundation
- Wallerstein Foundation for Geriatric Life Improvement
LOOKING AHEAD

• Sensory Friendly Performances
• Another Round of Focus Groups
• Standard Language throughout the community in marketing and promoting access services
• Google Virtual Tours
GROUNDS FOR SCULPTURE
Grounds For Sculpture, Inc. (GFS) is fully committed to ensuring that accessibility guidelines and requirements as set forth by the federal government and state of New Jersey are implemented in as timely and efficient a manner as possible.

GFS has been consistently responsive to making the arts accessible for all people with disabilities and will continue to strive to provide the utmost accessible experience possible. Through GFS’s programming, design, and service, we continue to reach out to and provide assistance and appropriate accommodation.

GFS trains its staff and volunteers in order to encourage superior and effective communication and the practice of effective and sensitive techniques to serve members of the community with disabilities. GFS is also committed to exercising best practice and outreach in regards to employing persons with disabilities, both in artistic and administrative/operational areas.

GFS regularly reviews its policies and procedures to adapt, accommodate and address any issues or problems that might arise in regard to ADA compliance and will regularly assess its progress in achieving full compliance.

The Board of Trustees
Grounds For Sculpture

ADA SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Interpreters (available with at least two weeks notice, includes tours and lectures)
- Buildings have automatic door entrances for easy access
- A wheelchair accessible video screening room
- A Museum building exhibition space, accessible on the first floor (a digital photo frame of the second floor installation is available for viewing on the first floor)
- A fully accessible (Domestic Arts Building exhibition space, café and museum shop)
- An ADA rated vehicle that can accommodate a wheelchair and offers tours throughout the park for those with limited mobility

The assistance cart is available Tuesdays-Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on a first come-first serve basis or you may call in advance to schedule a tour.

A map indicating the most easily accessible pathways is attached to this brochure.

The Seward Johnson Center for the Arts is constructed on one level allowing easy access for everyone. There are two private restrooms available to visitors who may need an aide’s assistance.

As an outdoor venue, some pathways throughout the park may offer challenges to those with wheelchairs/ scooters. New pathways of crushed sand and composite are being constructed as funding allows. (See map for specifics)

Our Wellness Walls/Welness Talks program targets the mature adult population and encourages learning about healthy lifestyles while enjoying the benefits of exercise in the park.

- All of our staff and volunteers receive ADA training on an ongoing basis.

Grounds For Sculpture is dedicated to continuing to identify problems of accessibility and finding solutions and accommodations to ensure that everyone can experience all aspects of our programming.

For additional information: 609-586-6066 ext. 223 | To schedule cart rides: 609-586-9616 ext. 224
Funding for this guide was made possible by the Karma Foundation.
ACCESSIBILITY CARTS
MOBILITY DEVICES FOR RENTAL
To be a truly accessible organization, access needs to be considered by all departments.
ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS

GFS creates programing that can be adapted for special needs.
PARTNERSHIPS

exhibition of work created in the Enabling Creativity program

work from Education Gallery exhibition of participants from the Center for Creative Works
Successful access programs are designed with the interests and needs of special populations in mind.
WHAT DO VISITORS WANT FROM A MUSEUM EXPERIENCE?

• The only way to find out is to ASK!
• Hold a focus group! You will learn from your visitors and engage them in program development.
TOUCH TOURS

- Assistance in developing our first touch tour from the Talking Book and Braille Center
- Considered distance between each piece, scale, texture etc.
HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS
BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN A FACILITATED ARTS PROGRAM

VOICE OF THE VOICELESS
ARTS ACCESS

Multi-disciplinary Fine Arts Program

- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Literary Arts
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

(non-negotiable principles for artistic intermediaries)

- Freedom of Choice
- Neutrality
- Artists Assisting Artists
- No Preconceptions
STEWARD OF THE ART

(owning responsibility for the entire life cycle of the work)

- Exhibition
- Performance
- Marketing
- Sales
FULL CIRCLE 2015: PERSPECTIVES

Saturday November 7, 3-6pm


- Exhibition at Morris Museum

- Exhibition at Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission

- NJ Abilities Film Festival

- Exhibit at Outsider Art Inside the Beltway

- Stages Festival 2015 with New Jersey Theatre Alliance - partnered with Premiere Stages

- Exhibit at Moss Laboratory
“I want to dance to show people what I can do, so people don’t see my disability or my wheelchair – so they can see me.”

—Jessica E. Arts Access Participant
“When I look at my painting I need to decide if it needs my help or if it doesn’t need my help and it is done”

—Eric C. Arts Access Participant
CONTACT INFORMATION

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