



"On TRAC to Success" Grant Award Transition and Rehabilitation Advocacy Center

In October, STEP received a grant award from the U.S. Department of Education division of Rehabilitation Services Administration. It is a five year grant to serve all 34 counties of East TN. The focus is to assist individuals with challenging disabilities and their families to plan for and effectively transition from school to independent living including employment, self-determination, home ownership, and full participation in their community. Although the focus will be students who are transition age, STEP will provide

several of the services to individuals who are no longer school age.

The On TRAC (Transition and Rehabilitation Advocacy Center) project will work to make a difference in the mountains of East



Tennessee through independent living forums, day-long training institutes, peer mentors, community volunteers, training workshops, and Transition and Employment Facilitators.

Linda Burrows is the Project Coordinator. She, and two part-time staff will provide many of the services. Linda can be reached at: (423) 639-0125 or (800) 280-STEP.

We look forward to working closely with schools, independent living centers, rehabilitation counselors, adult service providers, employers, and families.

President Bush's Education Initiative No Child Left Behind

A New Law for All Students

In January 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (PL107-110).

The NCLB Act is the most sweeping reform of the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) since it was enacted in 1965. It redefines the federal role in K-12 education and will help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. It is based on four principles:

Stronger accountability for results; Increased flexibility & local control; Expanded options for parents; and Emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work using scientifically-based research.

Furthermore, this landmark legislation proposes to:

- *Get every child ready for school;
 - *Get every child reading by the end of the fourth grade; and
 - *Get every child to graduate from school able to succeed in life.
- Additionally, the Act suggests that every child has health insurance and enjoys a life free from poverty, hunger, neglect, and violence.

This law, which stands to greatly improve the lives of our nation's children, is divided into key sections that are summarized for your review. For a complete copy of the NCLB Act, go to: www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/beginning.html

"When it comes to the education of our children... failure is not an option."
President George W. Bush

1. Address the pressing health care needs of children through the Health Title to:

- **Ensure health care coverage for all 9.2 million uninsured children.
- **Simplify and coordinate the Medicaid program and CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program).
- **Improve access to health care for all children.

2. Environmental Title to:

- **Protect children by establishing a national policy for environmental pollution standards that must safeguard children.

**Shield children from environmental hazards at school and strengthen the parental right-to-know laws.

3. Parenting Title to:

- **Offer parenting supports by requiring that each Governor establish a State Parenting Council, (or use an existing one) which must conduct a needs and resources assessment for their State. It also provides grants that the Councils can use to fund services that help families and promote the education and healthy development of their children.
- **Include Parenting Support and Education Resource Centers, offering such comprehensive services as respite care and 24-hour consultation and advice.
- **Extend parental leave beyond the current federal Family and Medical Leave Act and establish demonstration projects that would offer paid leave upon the birth or the adoption of a child.
- **Encourage supports for noncustodial parents through grants to States for services to low income noncustodial parents (mostly fathers) so that they can contribute in positive ways to their children's healthy development.

(Continued on page 4)

STEP WORKSHOPS ACROSS TENNESSEE

If you want to attend a workshop in your area, would you help us by letting us know so we can schedule one for you? Call (800) 280-STEP or e-mail us at information@tnstep.org

Workshop Schedule

Preregistration is required for all workshops (see contact number). Basic Rights is a three-hour basic special education training workshop: "First STEP: A Parent's Introduction to Special Education." Additional workshop topics include: IEP, Evaluation, Inclusion, Section 504, Communication & Conflict Resolution, Transition, LRE, and Early Childhood. (E=East TN, M=Middle TN, W=West TN)

Date	Time	Workshop	TN	Location	Contact
03/13/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	E	Knoxville/Knox Co.	(865) 524-9896 x129
03/13/03	6:30 p.m.	Communication	E	Maryville/Blount Co.	(865) 984-1212
04/02/03	8:45 a.m.	Basic Rights	E	Knoxville/Knox Co.	(865) 689-9020
04/10/03	6:00 p.m.	Transition	E	Knoxville/Knox Co.	(865) 524-9896 x129
05/05/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Follow Up	E	Knoxville/Knox Co.	(865) 406-6440
05/08/03	6:00 p.m.	504	E	Knoxville/Knox Co.	(865) 524-9896 x129
03/19/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Nashville/Davidson Co.	(615) 936-5120
03/20/03	11:00 a.m.	Basic Rights	M	Tullahoma/Coffee Co.	(931) 393-5917
03/22/03	9:00 a.m.	Basic/IEP	M	Hendersonville/Sumner Co.	(615) 826-6003
03/27/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Pulaski/Giles Co.	(931) 424-1816
03/28/03	9:30 a.m.	Basic Rights	M	Crossville/Cumberland Co.	(931) 484-9669
03/29/03	10:00 a.m.	Basic Rights	M	Cookeville/Putnam Co.	(931) 372-3561
04/08/03	1:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Gallatin/Sumner Co.	(615) 452-1054
04/08/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Portland/Sumner Co.	(615) 323-1781
04/08/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Clarksville/Montgomery Co.	(615) 269-7091
04/10/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Shelbyville/Bedford Co.	(931) 684-5222
04/10/03	5:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Nashville/Davidson Co.	(615) 322-8200
04/24/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Murfreesboro/Rutherford Co.	(615) 898-2458
04/25/03	6:00 p.m.	Communication	M	Nashville/Davidson Co.	(615) 385-2077
04/29/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Clarksville/Montgomery Co.	(931) 358-0117
05/01/03	3:30 p.m.	Early Childhood	M	Springfield/Robertson Co.	(615) 382-3104
05/13/03	5:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	M	Fayetteville/Lincoln Co.	(931) 438-0337
03/18/03	6:00 p.m.	IEP	W	Germantown/Shelby Co.	(901) 755-0244
03/25/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic (Part 1)	W	Memphis/Shelby Co.	(901) 448-3737
04/11/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic Rights	W	Selmer/McNairy Co.	(731) 934-7199
04/29/03	6:00 p.m.	Basic (Part 2)	W	Memphis/Shelby Co.	(901) 448-3737

This is **NOT** a complete list of workshops, it's a list of the workshops scheduled prior to this printing. For a more up-to-date list, please be sure to check our Web Page at www.tnstep.org You can contact your Regional Training Coordinator, or call the STEP Parent Information line at 1(800) 280-STEP -- Workshops **ARE** being added to this list daily!

New E-mail Addresses for STEP

East TN	Karen Harrison	karen.harrison@tnstep.org	Information	information@tnstep.org
	Connie Bonner	connie.bonner@tnstep.org		ginger.pinata@tnstep.org
Midd TN	Loria Hubbard	loria.hubbard@tnstep.org	OnTRAC	linda.burrows@tnstep.org
	Alena Sampson	alena.sampson@tnstep.org		janet.caldwell@tnstep.org
West TN	Jenness Roth	jenness.roth@tnstep.org	Business	donna.jennings@tnstep.org
	vacant	wtoc@tnstep.org	Director	nancy.diehl@tnstep.org



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Nancy Diehl, Executive Director, 712 Professional Plaza, Greeneville, TN 37745.
Telephone: (423) 639-0125 or (800) 280-STEP. Text: (423) 639-8802 E-mail: information@tnstep.org

We Can't Afford to Sit This One Out!

IDEA Reauthorization

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the Federal law which requires that every child with a disability who is eligible for special education receive a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.

It seems only yesterday that the IDEA amendments of 1997 were signed into law. Now, here we are four years later and reauthorization is once again looming. Reauthorization occurs almost every five years and is a process that Congress uses to take a look at a specific piece of legislation to see if changes need to be made. Any changes to IDEA, whether they are positive or negative changes, may impact special education for children. It is critical that each of us takes the responsibility to advocate for our children by getting involved in the reauthorization of IDEA.

The current IDEA was signed into law on June 4, 1997 after two years of debate, hearings, meetings between administration and Congressional staff and input from parents, disability organizations, and education groups representing teachers, principals, and state/local school board members. It contained the most significant changes to the law since its enactment in 1975.

During its next session, Congress will once again take on the reauthorization of the IDEA. Already, national policy makers are saying that the IDEA is "due for a major overhaul." While we do not know all that this means, various groups are making their lists which include these and other issues:

- ◆ Discipline of students with disabilities and giving school administrators the same authority to suspend/expel students with disabilities and without disabilities. This could mean a push for giving school administrations suspension/expulsion authority that would bypass the IEP team.
- ◆ Cessation of educational services when students with disabilities are suspended/expelled.
- ◆ Correcting over-representation and misclassification of minority students in special education.
- ◆ Addressing the continuing increase in the number of students being labeled LD and ADD, and finding ways to determine if these students really have a disability, or if they have just not been taught well.
- ◆ Improvements in professional training, recruitment and retention.
- ◆ Use of research-based strategies in determining a child's disability, for helping children learn to read, and for early identification of disabilities in children to avoid special education placement, where possible.
- ◆ Reducing access to attorney's fee reimbursement when parents prevail in due process hearings or court, stronger mediation to resolve disagreements between schools and parents and limiting the issues upon which a due process hearing can be requested.
- ◆ Using research-based strategies to ensure successful placements in the least restrictive environment.

- ◆ Fully funding the IDEA.
- ◆ Eliminating short-term objective or benchmarks.
- ◆ IEPs no longer being annual but at "significant transitions" such as elementary, middle school, & high school.

Those of us who were around for the 1997 reauthorization remember the hard-fought battle to protect even the most basic IDEA guarantees. In spite of the battle, or maybe because of it, the basic protections remained in place, and many good protections were included. There is every indication that the upcoming reauthorization will require even more intense advocacy, if all that embodies the free appropriate public education for children with disabilities is to be preserved.

However, throughout the last reauthorization, Congressional members and U.S. Department of Education officials repeatedly reported that they did not hear from parents on important issues, including least restrictive environment, identification, independent educational evaluation, private school placement and services, attorney fees, and discipline of students with disabilities.

It is time for parents to become informed, to begin to add their concerns and suggestions to the discussion and to discuss their issues with Congress. Once the work of reauthorization begins, parents will want to stay informed and active, so that their voices are heard.

How can parents keep up with what is happening in Congress? Where can parents go to find out about the changes that are suggested, considered, and debated? How can parents be sure that their ideas and concerns are heard? The following are just a few web sites that may serve as important sources of information about current events, discussions, and ways to have input into the decisions Congressional members will be making about the reauthorization of the IDEA.

Center for Law and Education
www.cleweb.org

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
www.dredf.org

The Action Starts Here
www.tash.org

Learning Disabilities Association
www.ldanatl.org

Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders
www.ccbd.net

The Arc of the United States
www.thearc.org

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Network
www.adap.net

United Cerebral Palsy
www.ucp.org

National Education Association
www.nea.org

No Child Left Behind

(Continued from page 1)

Expand Child Care and Head Start Title to:

- **Strengthen programs to improve the quality of childcare. The Act expands the amount of money for improving the quality of childcare from 4 to 12 percent of total funds for improving compensation, professional development initiatives, resource and referral programs.
- **Ensure safety and competence in publicly funded childcare programs.
- **Expands supports for Early Head Start programs so that 25 percent of eligible infants and toddlers are served.

4. Education Title to:

- **Increase accountability and ensure that children receive a quality education.
- **Require that States establish "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) goals and timetables that ensure all students meet or exceed the proficiency level.
- **Require that all States, no later than December 2004, ensure that low-income children and minority children have instructional materials, curriculums and fully qualified teachers at levels comparable to those of other students.
- **Require States to issue individual school report cards.
- **Require stronger corrective steps to deal with failing schools. (The 1994 law requires States and local districts to identify any school that fails for two years in a row to make adequate yearly progress.) Under the Act students enrolled in failing schools would be allowed to transfer to another public school. Districts of failing schools have to submit plans for corrective action.
- **Reduce classroom size for kindergarten through third grade.
- **Establish loan forgiveness program for teachers and for individuals who have committed to become State-certified

teachers in elementary or secondary schools; this will allocate funding for States to pay federal student loans from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

- **Provide support to recruit, prepare, and place career-changing professionals as teachers in targeted local education agencies.
- **Provide for competitive grants for teacher quality improvement and professional development services for principals.
- **Provide resources for school repair, modernization and community involvement.
- **Provide for para-professional training & right to request teacher qualifications.

6. Juvenile Justice Title to:

- **Ensure that children are never locked up with adult inmates.
- **Require States to provide for the basic needs of incarcerated youths. To include recreation, medical care, and education.
- **Strengthen efforts to combat disparate treatment of minority youths.
- **Increase accountability to hold youths responsible for their actions.
- **Promote access to treatment. The Act would authorize the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment grant program to ensure that youth offenders get the mental health and drug treatment they need, as well as after-care services to make a successful transition back to their community and to prevent youths from re-offending.

7. Gun Safety Title to:

- **Promote safe storage and trigger locks
- **Limit age of firearms possession to persons twenty-one years or older.

(Source: Adapted from Children's Defense Fund publication on NCLB Act.)

An on-line version of the Desk Reference for the No Child Left Behind Act is available at:

www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/reference.html

Students with disabilities are protected under NCLB.

OSEP News

PASTERNAK COMPARES THE DREAM TO THE NIGHTMARE

Speaking to the annual conference for the Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers, Assistant Secretary Robert Pasternack, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, noted the differences between a parent's hopes and the reality of provision of special education services. He also stated that there is no talk of diminishing the support for parents in the upcoming reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

While supporting the notion that parents should dream for their children, Pasternack mentioned that while the dream might be a qualified teacher for the child, the reality is often an unknowledgable, untrained teacher. The dream for a diploma is often shattered by the lack of one. And ultimately, the hope for meaningful employment is dashed as 70% of young people with disabilities exit school to unemployment. Pasternack discussed lack of trust between systems and parents, lack of vision on the part of the business community, and the extra paperwork burdening teachers and administrators as intrinsic barriers to the realization of student and parent dreams.

Pasternack received applause for his stated position that children with disabilities and discipline problems need to have their special education services continued. He ended his talk by mentioning that we all need to be focusing on methods for keeping the best and brightest teachers, and by thanking Parent Training and Information Centers for all we do to train and support parents *and* teachers.

Bullying -- What is It and Who is Doing It?

Kids: "Don't Bully Me!"

By-- Beth Wohlberg

Rachel has run out of schools for her son. The 13-year-old has been to three different schools in two years, but none has offered what the family considers a comfortable, accepting environment.

Rachel says some of the students at these schools are not supportive. They tease one another. Their comments are sarcastic. Some students are physically abusive-her son was pushed on the football field and shoved down school stairs. This thoughtful, sensitive boy became angry and depressed, and by March, he didn't want to go to school anymore. He stayed in school almost until the very end-but eight days before the last day, he refused to go anymore.

"He absorbed all of the negative comments," Rachel says. "He personalized it. Then the kids victimized him more because they saw it affected him."

Rachel doesn't blame the teachers or the students. The teachers control the classroom environment, but they couldn't possibly see everything that happened in the lunchroom or during recess, she says.

Rachel's son is still in school, and she hopes that this third school will prove to be better than the first two. She says she doesn't blame the other students in her son's classes, but she wants school administrators to recognize the insensitive behavior among students.

Call it whatever name you want-bullying, teasing, harassment, violence-the result is the same for many children: They stay home from school, become angry or consider moving to another school.

In the 2000 Minnesota Student Survey, only 19 percent of students said they felt "very safe" at school-the lowest level ever reported since the survey began in 1994. Another 19 percent of students reported that violence at school makes them feel less eager to attend school; 12 percent said violence makes them think about changing schools; and 30 percent said it makes them angry.

Students need to learn respect, acceptance, compassion and cooperation, many experts say.

"The way they feel in school is going to make a huge difference in their lives," Rachel says.

The Parent Information and Training Centers know that many children face bullying in school, and the centers offer assistance to parents of special needs kids who request it.

How to Survive Bullying

- Stay with other children-it's harder to bully someone in a group
- Walk away from the bully-most bullies pick on people who get upset
- Tell an adult about the bullying
- Join a club or sport to make good friends and to build confidence
- Be strong-the bully is the one with a problem, not you

Teachers: "Are You a Bully?"

By-- Two school districts in Connecticut who think you could be: Avon and Hartford, Connecticut, are believed to be the first districts in the nation to include teacher behavior in their anti-bullying policies.

One Hartford administrator, however, expressed doubt about that inclusion, claiming it would be hard to distinguish between bullying behavior and classroom management strategies.

I beg to differ! Classroom management, according to education expert Harry Wong (See Speaking of Classroom Management: An Interview with Harry K. Wong), is the "practices and procedures that allow teachers to teach and students to learn." Bullying, according to Dictionary.com is the practice of being "habitually cruel or overbearing, especially to smaller or weaker people." In other words, those who can, manage their classrooms. Those who can't, manage their students. The former are educators; the latter are bullies. And, believe me, you can tell the difference!

Educators let students know they care.
Bullies let students know who's boss.

Educators teach self-control.
Bullies exert their own control.

Educators set ironclad expectations.
Bullies rule with whims of steel.

Educators diffuse minor disruptions with humor.
Bullies use sarcasm to turn disruptions into confrontations.

Educators privately counsel chronic discipline problems.
Bullies publicly humiliate chronic misbehavers.

Educators are judicious.
Bullies are judgmental.

Educators, aware of the power they wield over their students, choose their words and actions carefully.
Bullies wield their power recklessly, frequently resorting to anger and intimidation.

Educators help all students feel successful.
Bullies punish students for being unsuccessful.

Educators address misbehavior.
Bullies attack the character of the misbehavers.

Educators see each student's uniqueness.
Bullies compare children to one another.

Educators treat all students with respect.
Bullies make it clear that not all students deserve respect.

Educators highlight good behavior.
Bullies make examples of poor behavior.

Educators are proactive; they create classroom environments that minimize student misbehavior.
Bullies are reactive; they blame students for the lack of order in their classrooms.

Educators educate.
Bullies humiliate.

Educators exude confidence in their ability to maintain order in their classrooms.
Bullies barely conceal their terror of losing control.

STEP's Annual Conference Mark Your Calendar!

STEP's annual conference is moving to Nashville to accommodate more families' needs. This year STEP will join the numerous organizations who are sponsoring the **MEGA CONFERENCE**. The Mega Conference is a first ever conference where over 50 disability organizations are working together to plan one large conference. This is possible because all the resources that go to individual conferences are being pooled to present one well rounded Tennessee conference for families and the professionals that work with them. Hold these dates: **June 19 through June 22** June will be an exciting time for the Tennessee Disability community! Over 50 disability-related organizations are coming together for the **"Sharing Our Strength Disability Megaconference"** which will be held at the TN Franklin Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.

Register by May 29th - visit www.tndisabilitymegaconference.org or e-mail to: info@tndisabilitymegaconference.org. You can also call toll free to (800) 835-7077 or call us for more information.

Inside STEP - Positions Available

We are searching for qualified individuals for several positions. Preference will be given to individuals who are either a parent/family member of an individual with a disability or are an individual with a disability :

Northeast TN	District Parent Trainer (contract - 2x month)
East TN-(Knox)	Transition Facilitator (part-time - 20 hrs)
all East areas	Transition Coaches (contract - 2x month)
West TN	Outreach Coordinator (part-time - 20 hrs)
all areas	IEP Mentors (contract - helping 2 families a month)

Please send a resume and a cover letter which outlines what makes you uniquely qualified for the position you are applying for and your background/experience in the field of disability advocacy to:

*Nancy Diehl, Executive Director
STEP, Inc
712 Professional Plaza
Greeneville TN 37745*



Advocate of the Year Award

This year STEP honored Coral Gitano with the "Wayne Parker Advocate of the Year Award". At STEP's Annual Conference, Coral was recognized for the skillful, persistent, and collaborative advocacy for her young son with autism. She was selected among all of Tennessee's parents who have turned to STEP for information and support in their efforts to improve the educational experience and outcomes for their child. We are all delighted to work with this amazing family.

DD Council Announces Opportunities

The TN Council on Developmental Disabilities is seeking applicants for two free leadership programs coming soon:

Partners in Policymaking Leadership Institute is for adults with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities.

Youth Leadership Forum is training for 10th-12th grade students during the summer.

Deadlines are soon so call Ned Soloman at 615.532.6556.

Frequently Asked Questions

What rules apply to reevaluation? I think the school may be trying to determine that my child is ineligible for special education services.

It depends... First, here are the rules if three years have past and it is time for the triennial evaluation.

Tennessee Rules, 05201-1-9-.05

(6) Each school system shall ensure that an individual evaluation of each child eligible for special education is conducted every three years or more frequently if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation.

(7) On reevaluations, a meeting may not be required if members of the IEP team decide that no additional data is necessary. However, if additional data are needed or the parent(s) request an evaluation, the local school system shall obtain consent or document attempts to obtain consent to evaluate the child.

(8) An IEP team meeting shall determine if the child continues to be eligible for special education. At this time, an IEP may be reviewed and/or revised and placement will be determined based upon the child's unique educational needs and various options of services considered.

If it is not time for the three year evaluation and the school system is requesting to reevaluate the student, the parents need to ask why. The school system cannot reevaluate simply because there is a new eligibility standard. Unless there is a sound reason why the school is asking permission to evaluate before the triennial date, the parent could refuse consent. The TN Rules state that in this case 05201-1-9-.05 (4) "If consent for an evaluation is refused by the parents, the local school system may pursue an evaluation through mediation and/or due process." They would then have to present evidence of the necessity of the early reevaluation to a hearing officer.

It is important to keep in mind that no child can be determined no longer eligible for special education without sufficient evaluations being completed. The only exceptions to that are the termination of a student's eligibility due to graduation with a regular diploma or exceeding the age of eligibility for FAPE. TN Rules 05201-1-9-.06(3).

For additional information see 34CFR Sec. 300.530-543.



Justin Dart, Jr., a leader of the international disability rights movement and a renowned human rights activist, died at his home in Washington D.C. He was widely recognized as "the father of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)" and "the godfather of the disability rights movement."

Dart was a leader in the disability rights movement for three decades, and an advocate for the rights of women, people of color, and gays. The recipient of five presidential appointments and numerous honors, including the Hubert Humphrey Award of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Dart was on the podium on the White House lawn when President George H. Bush signed the ADA into law in July 1990. Dart was also a highly successful entrepreneur, using his personal wealth to further his human rights agenda by generously contributing to organizations, candidates, and individuals, becoming what he called "a little PAC [political action committee] for empowerment."

Until the end, Dart remained dedicated to his vision of a "revolution of empowerment." This would be, he said, "a revolution that confronts and eliminates obsolete thoughts and systems, that focuses the full power of science and free-enterprise democracy on the systematic empowerment of every person to live his or her God-given potential." Dart never hesitated to emphasize the assistance he received from those working with him, most especially his wife of more than 30 years, Yoshiko Saji. "She is." He often said, "quite simply the most magnificent human being I have ever met."

Time and again Dart stressed that his achievements were only possible with the help of hundreds of activists, colleagues, and friends. "There is nothing I have achieved, and no addiction I have overcome, without the love and support of specific individuals who reached out to empower me... There is nothing I have accomplished without reaching out to empower others." Dart protested the fact that he and only

Justin Dart Remembered...

An Obituary by Fred Fay & Fred Pelka, written at Justin Dart's request

three other disability activists were on the podium when President Bush signed the ADA, believing that "hundreds of others should have been there as well."

After receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Dart sent out replicas of the award to hundreds of disability rights activists across the country, writing that, "this award belongs to you."

Dart is best known for his work in passing the American with Disabilities Act. In 1988, he was appointed, along with parents' advocate Elizabeth Boggs, to chair the Congressional Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Americans with Disabilities. The Darts toured the country at their own expense visiting every state, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the District of Columbia, holding public forums attended by more than 30,000 people. Every where he went, Dart touted the ADA as "the civil rights act of the future." Dart also met extensively with members of Congress and staff, as well as President Bush, Vice President Quale, and members of the Cabinet. At one point, seeing Dart at a White House reception, President Bush introduced him as "the ADA man."

After passage of the ADA, Dart threw himself into the fight for universal health care, again campaigning across the country, and often speaking from the same podium as

President and Mrs. Clinton. With the defeat of universal health care, Dart was among the first to identify the coming backlash against disability rights. He resigned all his positions to become "a full-time citizen soldier in the trenches of justice." With the conservative Republican victory in Congress in 1994, followed by calls to amend or even repeal the ADA and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Dart and disability rights advocates, Becky Ogle and Frederick Fay founded *Justice for All*, what Dart called "a SWAT team" to beat back these attacks. Again, Dart was tireless - traveling, speaking, testifying, holding conference calls, presiding over meetings, calling the media on its distortions of the ADA, and flooding the country with American flag stickers that said, "ADA, IDEA, America Wins." Both laws were saved.

Towards the end of his life, Dart was hard at work on a political manifesto that would outline his vision of "the revolution of empowerment." In its conclusion, he urged his "Beloved colleagues in struggle, listen to the heart of this old soldier. Our lives, our children's lives, the quality of the lives of billions in future generations hangs in the balance. I cry out to you from the depths of my being. Humanity needs you! Lead! Lead! Lead this revolution of empowerment!"





Justin & Yoshiko Dart

Always together and always focused on the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities.



"I am with you always. I love you. Lead on. Lead on."
Justin Dart, Jr.

Justin Dart, Jr.
Disability Rights Hero
August 29, 1930 - June 22, 2002

Presidential Medal of Freedom
President Clinton awarding the Medal of Freedom in 1998



He believed in the cause...

IDEA
ADA

"Get into politics as if your life depended on it. Because it does!"
Justin Dart

We will always remember...

we shall overcome!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Support & Training for Exceptional Parents, Inc.
712 Professional Plaza
Greeneville, TN 37745

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
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GREENEVILLE, TENNESSEE
37743
PERMIT 24

STEP **AHEAD**

