

Voice



Closing the Gap on Digital Accessibility



Digital accessibility refers to ensuring products and environments can be accessed by all, including people with disabilities. To reach a full audience and meet shifting industry standards, organizations need to be equipped to address digital accessibility now and in the future.

The Internet Age has levelled the playing field for some of the most underserved populations in America and abroad, and access to information, education, and services has never been more equitable. However, as the number and complexity of digital environments and services have proliferated, the needs of one key segment of people have been largely ignored. Digital accessibility has become one of the most important issues affecting people with disabilities globally, as more and more people utilize computers, smartphones, and the internet to get things done.

Digital accessibility means building those digital environments and services universally, so that all people, of all levels of ability, can utilize them. Doing this allows students to use eLearning applications and independently complete schoolwork, employees to operate internal documents and applications to conduct work, customers to shop and manage their accounts on websites and apps, residents to participate in their communities, and parents to access resources for their children. Digital

accessibility enables equitable participation in the modern world.

Addressing digital accessibility is part of the roadmap for thousands of organizations, but many more have yet to think about it. Making documents, webpages, applications, and video content accessible isn't a burden — it's good business. Companies that were early adopters of accessibility have reaped the benefits in the form of increased market share, decreased maintenance and retrofitting costs, and social responsibility credibility.

Making the world more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities is at the core of The Viscardi Center's mission. The Viscardi Center has recently launched a comprehensive suite of services to help public and private organizations meet evolving industry standards and ensure customers, students, and employees with disabilities get the most out of digital media.

Learn more about our Digital Accessibility Services by calling 516.465.1596 or visiting ViscardiCenter.org.

57 million Americans have a disability

That's 1 in 5 people.

3% have a vision impairment

Many rely on a screen magnifier, a screen reader, or have a form of color blindness. This doesn't include aging populations that use assistive technology without a diagnosed impairment.

12% have trouble hearing

Nearly 90 percent say they use captions when watching video content.

6% have difficulty lifting or grasping

This may impact use of a mouse or keyboard.

23% don't go online

Compared with just 8 percent of those without a disability.

Data sourced from U.S. Census Bureau, 3Play Media, and Pew Research Center.

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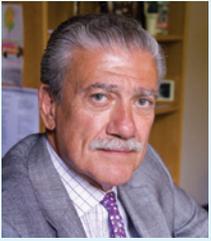
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Your Lasting Impact





Global Awards Honor Leaders with Disabilities



We are soaring right into 2019, thanks in part to your support of our Together We Soar campaign aimed at raising funds to expand existing programs

and launch new ones that let us continue to enhance our mission to educate, employ, and empower children and adults with disabilities locally, nationally and internationally.

We have already:

- Begun our Bridge Day Hab without Walls program for young adults over 21;
- Planned the renovation of our Independent Living House to feature SMART home technologies;
- Formulated a resource center for budding entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Now, we're focused on improving our community's well-being and the construction of a fully-accessible Health & Wellness Center that can truly be transformative by addressing the needs of the whole person. Through a completely renovated indoor pool, adapted equipment and universal programming, we'll cover nutrition, fitness, mental health and more.

Good health affects our ability to attend school, be present in the workplace and partake socially. Individuals with disabilities too often experience premature death as a result of a lack of exercise, poor diet, barriers to oral and overall health care, and the absence of health-related education.

We've heard the need expressed by our alumni and are seeing it daily through our work. Now, we invite you to take an active role in this initiative. For more information, call Lauren Marzo at 516-465-1593.

John Henry
President & CEO

Ten influential men and women with disabilities from around the world were recently recognized in December at The Viscardi Center's **2018 Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards**. The group represents six different countries and a variety of distinguished backgrounds, including academia, entertainment, government, technology, and the non-profit sector.

2018's recipients are impacting change on an international level by designing ATMs for the low vision population in Switzerland; coaching aspiring musicians with disabilities in Zimbabwe; fighting for the safety of people with albinism in Malawi; impacting human rights policies in Pakistan; bringing disability issues to the foreground in the Knesset in Israel; revolutionizing accessible transportation solutions here in the U.S.; guiding our wounded veterans back into civilian life; and more. Collectively, they're encouraging future generation to harness their skills and tackle challenges in their own communities.

First bestowed in 2013, the Awards carry on the legacy of the Center's founder, Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr., who himself wore prosthetic legs. These annual awards honor exemplary leaders who, like Dr. Viscardi, Jr., are using their professional expertise to shift societal perceptions and improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. The selection committee was co-chaired for the sixth consecutive year by former Senator Bob Dole and Sherwood "Woody" Goldberg, Esq., retired U.S. Army Colonel and current Senior Advisor for Asian Affairs at the Center for Naval Analysis.

2018 VISCARDI AWARD RECIPIENTS



Prof. Dr. Alireza Darvishy
*Zurich University of Applied Sciences/
Institute of Applied Information Technology
Switzerland*



General (Ret.) Frederick M. Franks, Jr.
*Retired Four-Star U.S. Army General
Naples, FL*



Ilan Gilon
*The Knesset
Israel*



Thomas A. Hoffer
*Regional Health Command – Pacific
Tumwater, WA*



Prudence Mabhena
*Prudence Mabhena Music
Zimbabwe*



Bonface Ophiyah Massah
*Association of Persons with Albinism in Malawi
Malawi*



Jawaid Rais
*Disabled Welfare Association
Pakistan*



Maria Town
*Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities,
City of Houston
Houston, TX*



Glen W. White, Ph.D.
*Delta Air Lines Advisory Board on Disability
Lawrence, Kansas*



Mohammed Yousuf
*EquallyAble Foundation/
U.S. Dept. of Transportation
Washington, DC*

Mark your calendar: Nominations for the 2019 Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards will open on May 10. Get the full scoop on the recipients of the 2018 Henry Viscardi Achievement awards and how you can nominate an extraordinary leader in the disability community this year at ViscardiCenter.org.

Continuing the Viscardi Legacy



Seven-year-old Stella had long heard stories about her great-grandfather, Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr., and the powerful impact he made in the disability community. So, as her birthday approached last fall, Stella came up with an idea. In lieu of presents, she would ask for donations to The Viscardi Center, the organization Dr.

Viscardi founded over 65 years ago to provide access to education and employment for people with disabilities.

Stella did just that, and after raising over \$400, she and her father toured the campus for the first time to learn more about The Viscardi Center. They viewed the dozens of framed photographs, awards, and mementos displayed on the walls inside a replica of Dr. Viscardi's office, each chronicling a life devoted to the national disability rights movement. Dr. Viscardi, who himself wore prosthetic legs, served as a disability advisor to eight U.S. presidents and, under the urging of his friend Eleanor Roosevelt, started what would become The Viscardi Center in 1952.

In classrooms at the Henry Viscardi School at The Viscardi Center, Stella caught a glimpse of Dr. Viscardi's enduring legacy for children with severe physical disabilities. Second-graders, many of whom are medically fragile, demonstrated how technologies in the classroom like SMART boards and screen readers help them access the curriculum like other students their age. Stella, also in second-grade, bonded with fellow students when they discussed their favorite subjects.

"It's a lot like my school here because the kids are doing the same math and reading the same books as me," she said.

Stella concluded an eye-opening look into her family history with some goodies from the student-run store in the lobby. When asked what sets the Henry Viscardi School apart from her school, she struggled to think of any major differences, but eventually arrived at an answer: "Mine doesn't have a school store!"

out & about



During an intimate gathering last fall at the Washington, D.C. office of Alston & Bird, The Viscardi Center's President & CEO John D. Kemp and his wife, Sam, honored veteran and disability rights leader Senator Bob Dole for a lifetime of public service and his ongoing dedication as co-chair of The Viscardi Center's Henry Viscardi Achievement Awards.

To commemorate Senator Dole's unwavering commitment to disability rights, a scholarship in his name will be given each

year to one graduating senior at the Henry Viscardi School who has demonstrated exceptional interest in advocacy and disability leadership.

(Pictured above: John and Sam Kemp meet with Senators Bob and Elizabeth Dole.)

NewsBytes



New on YouTube: Check out how Viscard's programs and services are transforming lives by providing Alexa with the tools to succeed in college, Oscar with the confidence to find employment, and Nasir with a realistic plan for adulthood.

Watch these video clips and more by tuning in at @ViscardiCenter.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES



Barbie Vartanian, Executive Director of The Viscardi Center's Project Accessible Oral Health initiative, received the Spirit of Advocacy Award at the

Long Island Business News Achievements in Health Care event last December. The awards promote excellence in health care by identifying people and organizations who work tirelessly to ensure the well-being of everyone on Long Island.

Project Accessible Oral Health launched in 2017 to address an unmet crisis facing millions with disabilities — unequal access to competent oral health care. Vartanian heads a collective of experts across medical, dental, education, political, and public sectors set on finding solutions to the crisis.

The initiative recently hosted its first "Take A Dental Health Day – Screening and Education for the Disability Community" here at the Center, where over 75 dentists, dental residents, and dental students were able to educate and treat 200 young people with disabilities.



Calling All Employers!

Don't miss this opportunity to meet qualified job candidates with disabilities.

Reserve your booth at our Career Fair for People with Disabilities on April 26 at The Viscardi Center. No fee to register. Call 516.465.1546.

You're

I N V I T E D

Reach for a Star Luncheon

**9 APR | Crest Hollow Country Club
Woodbury, NY**

Let's do lunch! Join us for an uplifting afternoon featuring Jenn Colella from Broadway's *Come from Away*.



Celebrity Sports Night

**16 MAY | The Viscardi Center
Albertson, NY**

Meet and mingle with sports legends! Cocktails, dinner, and unique auctions. Special guests TBA.



For tickets, sponsorships, and details, visit ViscardiCenter.org or call 516.465.1595.

YOUR LASTING IMPACT

The Viscardi Center's stage is, in many cases, the place where everything we do comes together. It's where students from Henry Viscardi School perform talent shows and spring concerts after weeks of practice, graduates receive diplomas and begin a new chapter in their lives, and dozens of professional athletes gather for the Center's annual Celebrity Sports Night event to raise funds for education and employment programs and services for people of all ages.



Now, it will memorialize First Long Island Investors President and COO Ralph F. Palleschi and his wife, Lucy, for supporting these and other activities for more than two decades. The stage has been named the Ralph and Lucy Palleschi Family Foundation Stage in recognition of their ongoing commitment.

"Lucy and I are extremely grateful to have been associated with The Viscardi Center for over 25 years," Ralph said. "We have been blessed to enjoy success both personally and professionally in our lives and are very dedicated to sharing that success by doing what we do for the many served by Viscardi."

A long-time board member, Ralph also serves on the Celebrity Sports Night Committee and co-chairs Viscardi's Together We Soar Campaign, which raises funds to enhance and develop programs that

could potentially benefit a greater segment of the disability population.

Even with their names on display above the stage, Ralph says he and Lucy prefer to shine the spotlight on young people at Viscardi. "There is no greater joy than watching children succeed and prosper. It's not about the two of us — it's about the children."