

September, 2015

Issue No. 16

In This Issue

[Welcome New Members](#)

[Have Technical Questions?](#)

[Do You Want to Hire a
Specialist?](#)

[APA Committees Need You](#)

[APA Scholarship Program](#)

[Your APA Board](#)

[Regional Training 8/7/15](#)

[APA Specialist Certification
Program](#)

[Readily Accessible - A Personal
Story](#)

[Jim Boyce Scholarship Fund
Campaign](#)

[Accessibility Links](#)

[ADA & U.S. Access Board: 25
Years of Progress](#)

[News From the Governor's
Office](#)

Save the Date

January 20-22, 2016

Save these training dates where 16+ CE hours will be offered. Watch your inbox for Constant Contact emails from APA. Check our [website](#) for more details.

Welcome These

President's NEWS

By the time this goes out, we will be nearly through the summer, but still with the prospects of several more hot days. I hope each of you have had an enjoyable and prosperous summer. Construction still remains strong across most of the state and from my conversations, many of you have more work than you can handle.

APA membership is slightly down; however, it may pick up as we near the end of the year and next year's annual meeting. The membership and marketing committee are always looking to recruit new members.

The education committee is hard at work in developing a great program for the conference. Look for more about this in coming months. Be sure to pass the word to your clients, especially the design professionals about the conference and the opportunity for great training and networking. Also, reach out to other RAS nonmembers and encourage them to attend. The conference is not just about meeting your continuing education for TDLR. It is where you can delve deeper into issues regarding accessibility at the local, state and federal level.

We will be offering training at the annual meeting so that APA members can become an APA ADA Specialist. A team of volunteers lead by our treasurer Jack McClellan have been working diligently to develop this training and recognition of an individual's knowledge and understanding of the broader aspects of ADA. Our plans are to take this to an eventual national certification. [Read more in this newsletter.](#)

As always, I want to recognize our management staff, Shirley and Nina for all of their hard work in making our association a success. We could not function without them.

[Carroll Lee Pruitt](#), FAIA, NCARB, APA
2015 APA President

New APA Members!

Click on the member's name to view his or her profile in our Member Directory.

Otis Johnson

Houston, TX

Arthur J. Cole

Redstone Arsenal, AL

Joseph L. Cassiere

Monroe, LA

Have Technical Questions?

It is easy to ask via the APA member-only [Forum!](#)

*Just log in and access your member profile.

*Under the Forums heading select Forum Memberships.

*Choose the forums and threads that interest you.

*You may opt-in for any or all discussions.

Sign up for [Job Opportunities](#) and [Member News!](#)

*Even if you have previously joined the Forum, and "opted in for all discussions", you must go back to you preferences and opt in for any new discussions.

Don't forget that we also have [FAQs](#) for members only!

[Walter Qualls](#), Chair Technical Standards

Do You Want to Hire a Specialist?



Register for the October 16th Regional Training in Houston, TX

The regional training programs provided by the APA are the most up to date and trustworthy source for Barrier-Free continuing education for architects, accessibility professionals and facility managers. Each program is presented by an APA member with the professional experience to bring clarity to confusing and changing standards. If you are seeking education that goes beyond the basics, the APA Regional Training is your best option.

Continuing Education topics include:

- **Difference between TAS and ADA Standards**
- **Accessible Toilet and Bathing Facilities**
- **Retail Stores and Spaces**
- **Accessible Kitchens and Kitchenettes**

If you are seeking networking opportunities in addition to education, consider attending the 2016 APA Conference in Round Rock, TX, January 20-23, 2016. Hear the latest from local and national educators and professionals. Mark your calendars.

[Jeromy Murphy](#), Education & Events Chair

APA Specialist Certification Program

In the last 25 years since the American with Disabilities Act "ADA" became the law of the land, many things have changed. The built environment is more accessible than ever before. However, there are still many more opportunities for making the built environment more accessible and better for persons with disabilities. While ADA covers many needs of people with disabilities from employment to building access and even internet access, more products are being developed, barriers are being removed and opportunities are being created so that the disabled community can enjoy a more productive and inclusive lifestyle. With all the advances in our culture and all the opportunities that have been provided, there is still a lot to

Looking for a specialist to help with planning your building designs and/or inspections? If so, we have Registered Accessibility Specialists (RAS) on our website. [Check Hire A Specialist for a complete directory](#) by name or location.

APA Committees Need You

It is never too late to help an APA committee - either as a member or doing a special one time task. Contact anyone below to discuss:

Communications

- Mark Morley

Education & Events

- Jeromy Murphy

Jim Boyce Scholarship

- Jimmy Bell

Legislative & Legal

- Robert Ronson

Membership & Marketing

- Tom Ellis

Technical Standards

- Walter Qualls

Your Scholarship Program - A chance to give back

Jim Boyce Memorial Scholarship was established by the Accessibility Professionals Association (APA), to honor and recognize our friend and colleague, Jim Boyce. [Click here](#) for applications, donations to Silent Auction and general donations.

be done. Unfortunately, there are still misinterpretations that occur by owners, designers, users, and others in the application of the standards. While the Texas Registered Accessibility Specialist "RAS" program has created a large number of individuals with in-depth knowledge of the standards directly benefitting those served by providing access to someone who can assist them with questions, the majority of the rest of the country do not have this service. One exception is California that does have the California Accessibility Specialist Program which has a significantly more intense test than that in Texas. Nonetheless, most of this country does not have a process for review of the built environment and there are few to consult on ADA, but even if people find a consultant that they would like to use, there is no way to know if that person really understands the guidelines. So it is truly a "buyer beware".

Accessibility Professionals Association would like to change all that. We are proposing a certification process which will create experts in ADA. However, the actual certification program is still sometime in the future due to cost constraints. The eventual program will certify individuals in potential ADA areas and perhaps provide certifications for FHA Specialists, ADA Expert Witnesses, National Accessibility Specialists and International Accessibility Specialists.

This eventual certification program will be a win-win for everyone. APA will gain national notoriety and recognition, and at the same time, certificate holders will be able to use their certification to expand their business and their sphere of influence.

In the mean time, APA is developing an "APA Specialist" designation program which will be awarded to individuals who attend specific ADA training and pass a written test. The designation will be limited to members of APA. We hope the development of the actual certification program will happen in the near future; however, we will need to follow specific national standards in the development of this program. An actual certification program carries great responsibility in both the development and administration of the program which is beyond the reach of APA at this time. Former APA president Mike Love is heading the committee to search for funding for the certification program. It is hoped that this first step of developing an APA Specialist designation will assist in that endeavor.

The first training for the ADA Specialist designation will take place at the annual meeting in January of 2016. Look for more information as the date draws closer and the annual meeting is announced.

Jimmy Bell, 2015 JBMS Chair

[Our Website](#)

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View our profile on **LinkedIn** 

Join Our Mailing List!

[Sign up for membership today!](#)

If you have any articles for our next Newsletter please submit your articles to

ninapaquette@gmail.com

APA Board of Directors

Meet your **2015 Board of Directors**

Carroll Pruitt - President

Peter Grojean - President - Elect

D. Clark Teel - Secretary

Jack McClellan - Treasurer

Robin Roberts - Board Member

Sharon Massey - Board Member

Leslie Marrero - Board Member

Chris Schexnayder - Past President, Ex-Officio

Vision Statement

Marcel Abadi Rhoads, AIA RAS

For more information on the specific courses of study, click [here](#)

Readily Accessible - A Personal Story

Though we have all read the phrase "readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities"; how many of us have thought about what it can mean to our clients, to the public and yes, to ourselves?

Most of us envision a request to convert a unit, a space, even a residence, to being accessible, often by a nameless unknown entity. A conversion that will need to be completed by some ambiguous later date, with plenty of time to locate, order, design and install or convert the elements needed to meet the needs of new tenant. This need is not always so impersonal. It can be a loved one, a member of your own family and not something that will be needed at some later date, but needed now, with no advance warning.

If you haven't prepared, you will be spending your time addressing these accessibility needs while your loved one is trying to cope with their illness or injury, and not with you by their side for comfort, encouragement and support. Don't wait until accessibility is preventing your loved ones from coming home. Prepare and plan ahead to ensure that they can return to their home; their place of refuge and security, when all else is falling apart around them. [Continue reading.](#)

Walter Qualls, Technical Standards Chair

Jim Boyce Scholarship* Fund Campaign

We would like to announce a new FUND CAMPAIGN for our Jim Boyce Memorial Scholarship! Please consider making a cash donation to support this APA scholarship. Any dollar amount is welcomed. Our overall campaign goal for this year is \$2,500.

We would like to continue building the fund, so that we may award more or larger amounts in the future to deserving students. Remember, this scholarship, and our memorial to Jim Boyce, is only possible because of you, the membership.

Thanks to a generous \$1,000 kick-off donation from one of our members, the JBMS Fund Campaign is off to a great start! See our APA website [home page](#) for progress and [click here](#) to join in the donation program. This fund campaign is not replacing the

Further develop a national association of professionals with knowledge and expertise in pursuit of compliance with accessibility codes and standards related to the built environment.

APA Mission

- Support membership needs and organizational growth at a national level.
- Enhance professional development including specialized and advanced certifications.
- Actively promote the services provided by our members.
- Hold our members to a high standard of professionalism and ethics.
- Facilitate consistency in the application of accessibility codes, rules and standards.
- Present a unified voice in our industry.
- Actively participate in the development, interpretation and adoption of accessibility codes, standards and regulations.
- Promote the value of certified accessibility specialists and consultants.

[CLICK HERE FOR PAST ANNUAL REPORTS](#)

* The APA Newsletter is provided to share general accessibility information and other resources that may be of interest to our

annual Silent Auction. You may also make a pledge to donate an item for the Silent Auction for January 2016 [here](#).

The JBMS Committee would like to thank the APA membership for your continued generosity. The Jim Boyce Memorial Scholarship is set up as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and all cash donations to the Jim Boyce Memorial Scholarship are tax deductible as charitable gifts.



[Jimmy Bell](#), Chair JBMS Committee

Accessibility Links

The APA Communications Committee is looking for your input. If you have not already noticed, the "Accessibility News" web page menu title was changed on the APA website to "Accessibility Links" to more accurately represent the content on that page. On this web page you will find the United States (and APA!) divided into regions, and within each region you will find links to helpful accessibility resources. The Communications Committee would appreciate your contribution of websites that you use to help us populate the page for the benefit of the APA. We are looking for accessibility regulatory code or reference sites, and product webpages. Please don't hesitate to submit your suggestions to either mark@aesupport.com or ninapaquette@gmail.com.

[Mark E. Morley](#), Chair Communications Committee

ADA & U.S. Access Board: 25 Years of Progress

July 26th marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a landmark law protecting the civil rights of people with disabilities. The statute assigned the U.S. Access Board the critical task of establishing accessibility guidelines for the built environment and transportation covered

members and constituents. While the APA Newsletter is published by the Accessibility Professionals Association, it is not intended to draw legal conclusions nor does it substitute the advice of an attorney. The APA Newsletter does not speak for and does not represent the U.S. Department of Justice interpretation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) nor the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) interpretation of the 2012 Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

by the law. Leaders of the U.S. Access Board reflect on the legacies of the ADA and the work of the Board. Read the [full article](#).

[Tom Ellis](#), Membership and Marketing Chair

News From the Governor's Office

The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities is proud to announce the winners of this year's [Lex Frieden Employment Awards](#)! Please join us in congratulating the recipients of the awards this year; the ceremony will be held at the Fort Worth Convention Center on **Wednesday, October 21, 11:00am-1:30pm**, hosted by the Fort Worth Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities. If you can, please join us there to honor these winners and to show appreciation for all they do to ensure that our state provides full inclusion for all. A link for ticket purchases to the event and sponsorships is posted on the [Fort Worth Mayor's Committee website](#), and this year's winners will be updated on our website soon.

WINNERS of the 2015 Lex Frieden Employment Awards:

Governor's Trophy:

Brian East, Disability Rights Texas
Austin

Large Employer:

Bank of America
Statewide

Medium Employer:

Home Depot
Keller

Small Employer:

Sign Shares, Inc.
Houston

Non-Profit Employer:

Texas State Independent Living Council
Austin

Entrepreneur:

Thomas Schenk, Licensed Professional Counselor
Fort Worth

Marth Arbuckle Award for an innovative local committee project:

Greater Houston Business Leadership Network

Houston

Jo Virgil, Community Outreach and Information Coordinator
Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities