Human Rights Celebrated on USU Campus

Center for Persons With Disabilities

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HUMAN RIGHTS CELEBRATED ON USU CAMPUS

January 16, 2012 by cpehrson

What better time to review the history of America’s disability rights movement than during the week of Human Rights Day, a nationally recognized holiday combined with Martin Luther King’s Day.

Since before the Civil War, the fight for equal access and opportunity for the disabled in this country has been fought by people who demanded to be treated as full and dignified human beings and citizens.

The PBS film, Lives Worth Living, traces the progress of these pioneers who realized that in order to change the world they needed to work together. This film is an oral history, told by the movement’s mythical heroes themselves, and illustrated through the use of rare archival footage. Thanks to their efforts, tens of millions of people’s lives have been changed.

A screening of Lives Worth Living, co-sponsored by the Center for Persons with Disabilities and the USU Disability Resource Center, will be held on Friday, January 20th from 1-4 pm in room 154 of the USU Merrill-Cazier Library.

The screening will be followed by a panel discussion on “The Disability Rights Movement: Past, Present, and Future.” Panel members include disability advocates from around the state:

Sachin Pavithran holds a Masters degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and is currently the interim director of the Utah Assistive Technology Program at the CPD. Sachin is a strong advocate for persons with disabilities and serves on several national boards, including the Research and Development Committee for the National Federation of the Blind.

Andrea Pitts has been involved with various advocacy projects at the CPD for several years. She has most recently worked with the Becoming Leaders for Tomorrow focus group, promoting independence and healthy lifestyles for individuals with disabilities. Andrea holds a Masters degree in Social Work and currently serves on the Utah Independent Living Council. She recently accepted a position as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Ogden, Utah.

Kellie Babcock has a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work and works as an education coordinator and peer mentor at the Tri-County Independent Living Center in Ogden, Utah, teaching classes to others who have disabilities. She was the 2010 Ms. Wheelchair Utah and is a motivational speaker, encouraging others to “keep on rollin’” when life gets hard.

Tom Brownee has been a strong self-advocate for many years. Tom serves on several boards, councils, and committees and is a local and national speaker, advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities. He is the current Chair of the CPD Consumer Advisory Council.

Tina Peck has worked with people with disabilities for many years and is a strong self advocate and advocates for all people with disabilities. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work and is currently working on her Master’s degree. Tina has worked for the Disability Resource Center at USU for seven years.

Scott Ferre learned American Sign Language after serving a British Sign Language mission, the first deaf culture exposure that he had ever experienced. Scott holds degrees in Psychology and School Psychology and currently works as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Salt Lake County.

Andy Curry has worked in the field of disability since for many years and has considerable experience advocating for both federal and state legislation promoting civil rights, services, and independent living programs for persons with disabilities. Currently, Andy is the Chair for the Utah Healthcare Subcommittee, a member of the Technology, Housing, and Transportation Committees, and is the State coordinator for the National Council on Independently Living (NCIL). He also serves on several other boards and committees at the local, state, and national level, all surrounding disability issues. Andy has been the Executive Director of the Tri-County Independent Living Center in Ogden, Utah since 2004.