

When Grassroots Advocacy Sparks Grassroots Preservation

Working alongside Advocates, Archivists, and Curators to Document
the Historic Experiences of People with Disabilities

SAA Austin
August 2019
Sierra Green
Heinz History Center

Heinz History Center



Heinz History Center, 2012
Photo by Rachellynn Schoen

Heinz History Center's Detre Library & Archives



Detre Library & Archives Reading Room, July 2019

Western Pennsylvania Disability History & Action Consortium



"Western State Strikers Bear Parental Wrath," Pittsburgh Press, April 30, 1975

Western Pennsylvania Disability History & Action Consortium Founding Members

- ACHIEVA
- Community Living and Support Services (CLASS)
- Institute on Disabilities at Temple University
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Polk Center
- Senator John Heinz History Center
- Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL)
- United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania

Western Pennsylvania Disability History & Action Consortium Mission

The mission of the Western Pennsylvania Disability History and Action Consortium is to preserve and honor the historic struggle of Western Pennsylvanians with disabilities to attain human and civil rights. The Consortium educates the public about disability history in order to improve community access, participation and equal opportunity, and to ensure disability rights through existing and new policies and laws.



Top: Western Pennsylvania Disability History & Action Consortium (WPDHAC) Logo

Bottom: WPDHAC mission: "Using Disability History to Ensure Disability Rights"

Western Pennsylvania Disability History & Action Consortium Governance

Governance

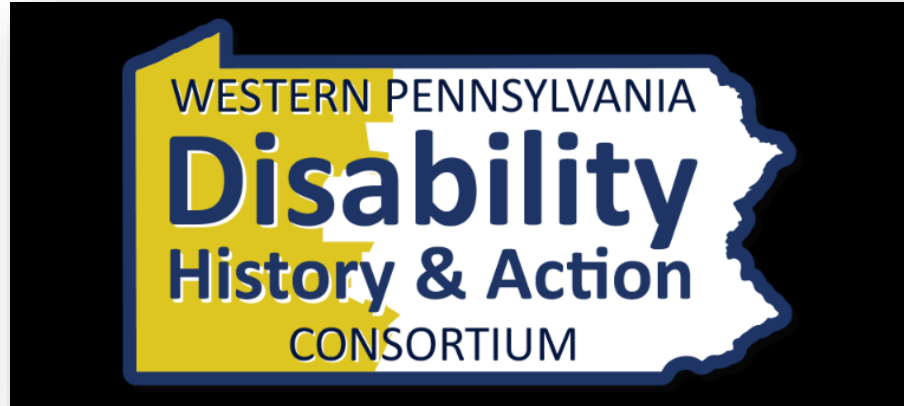
- Project Director: Mary Hartley
- Steering Committee: Founding organizations + community members
 - History Center staffers: Anne Madarasz (Curatorial Division Director) + Emily Ruby (Curator)
 - **Cross-disability membership**

Award-winning

- Hervey B. Wilbur Historic Preservation Award from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in 2019

Themes that have Emerged

Pursuing Preservation and not Collecting as Goal



10. Type of Historic Materials

Please indicate the types of historic materials held by you or your organization. Check all that apply.

- ☐ **Personal Writings** (e.g. diaries, published and unpublished works, correspondence).
- ☐ Materials related to the **founding and operation** of a residential facility or care establishment, such as constitutions, mission statements, meeting minutes, annual reports, newsletters, correspondence, photographs, and other administrative records.
- ☐ Materials related to the **founding and operation** of a community service agency or advocacy group, such as constitutions, mission statements, meeting minutes, annual reports, newsletters, correspondence, photographs, and other administrative records.
- ☐ **Audio or visual recordings** of speeches, presentations, panel discussions, trainings. Interviews with individuals, families, service workers.

11. Populations Represented in Historic Materials

Please indicate which of the following disability groups are represented in the historic materials held by you or your organization. Check all responses that apply.

- ☐ People with developmental or intellectual disability.
- ☐ People with physical disability.
- ☐ People with mental health disability.
- ☐ People with vision disability.
- ☐ People with hearing disability.
- ☐ People with speech disability.
- ☐ People with medical conditions that have largely been eradicated, such as polio, scarlet fever, tuberculosis.
- ☐ People who were incarcerated or placed in institutions by the criminal justice system.
- ☐ Other (Please Specify)

12. Use of Historic Materials

Have you or your organization used historic materials related to people with disabilities within the last 10 years? Check all responses that apply.

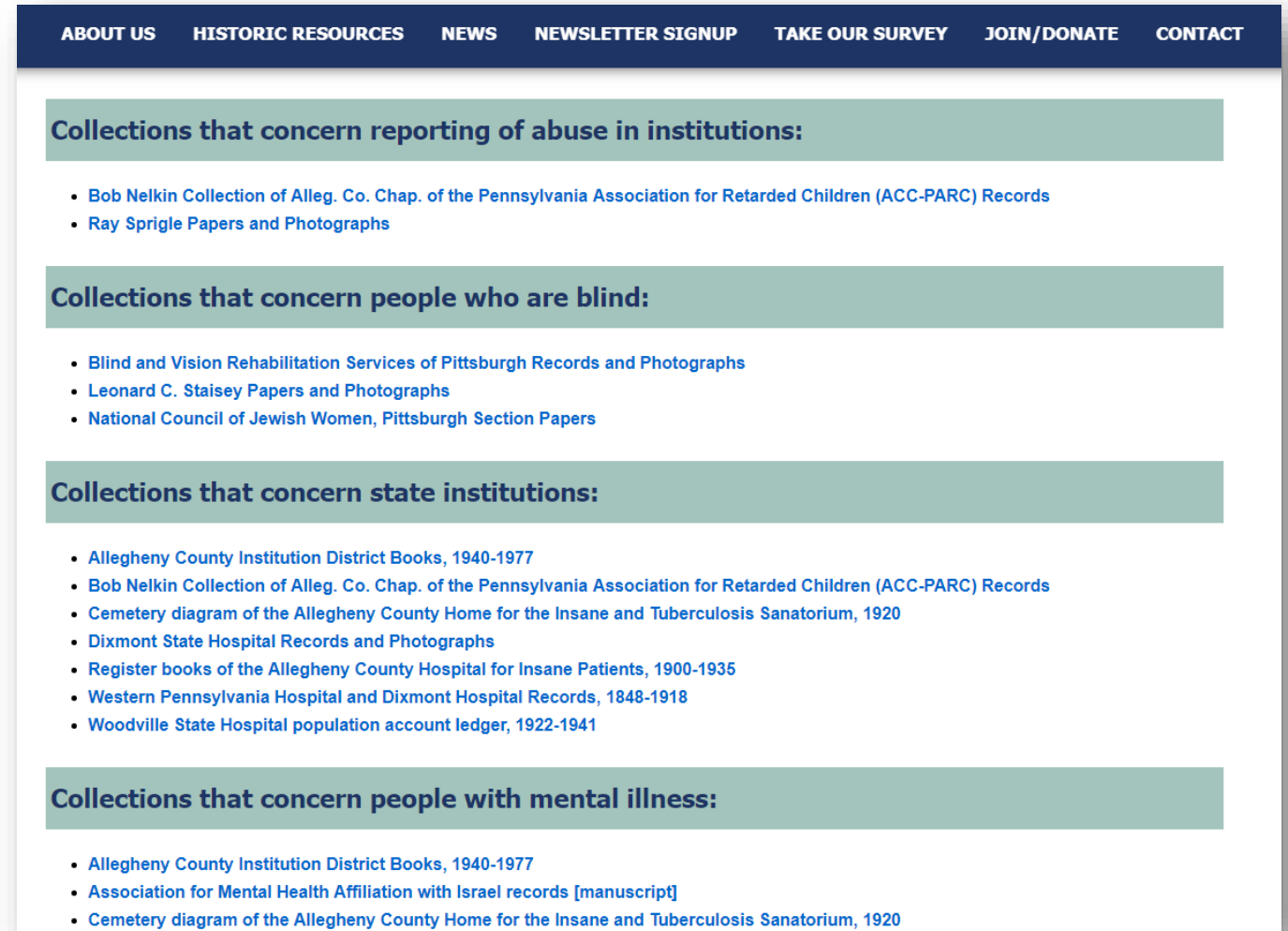
- ☐ As part of **public education, community outreach, media relations, or advertising**.
- ☐ Available for **research** purposes to researchers or the general public.
- ☐ Available to people doing family roots/**genealogy** research.
- ☐ As **appointments** that decorate organizational offices, meeting rooms, and/or hallways.

■ Gathering and Sharing Information about Collections

Selected Questions from WPDHAC Survey

Pursuing Preservation and not Collecting as Goal

- Gathering and Sharing Information about Collections



Partial View of WPDHAC Online Bibliography

Pursuing Preservation and not Collecting as Goal

- Preserving Collections according to Community Members' wishes



Bridget Malley, Shannon McCarty (CLASS), Sierra Green, and Emily Ruby (curator) during visit to Community Living and Support Services (CLASS), June 2019
Photo by Tina Calabro

Coordinating amongst Repositories

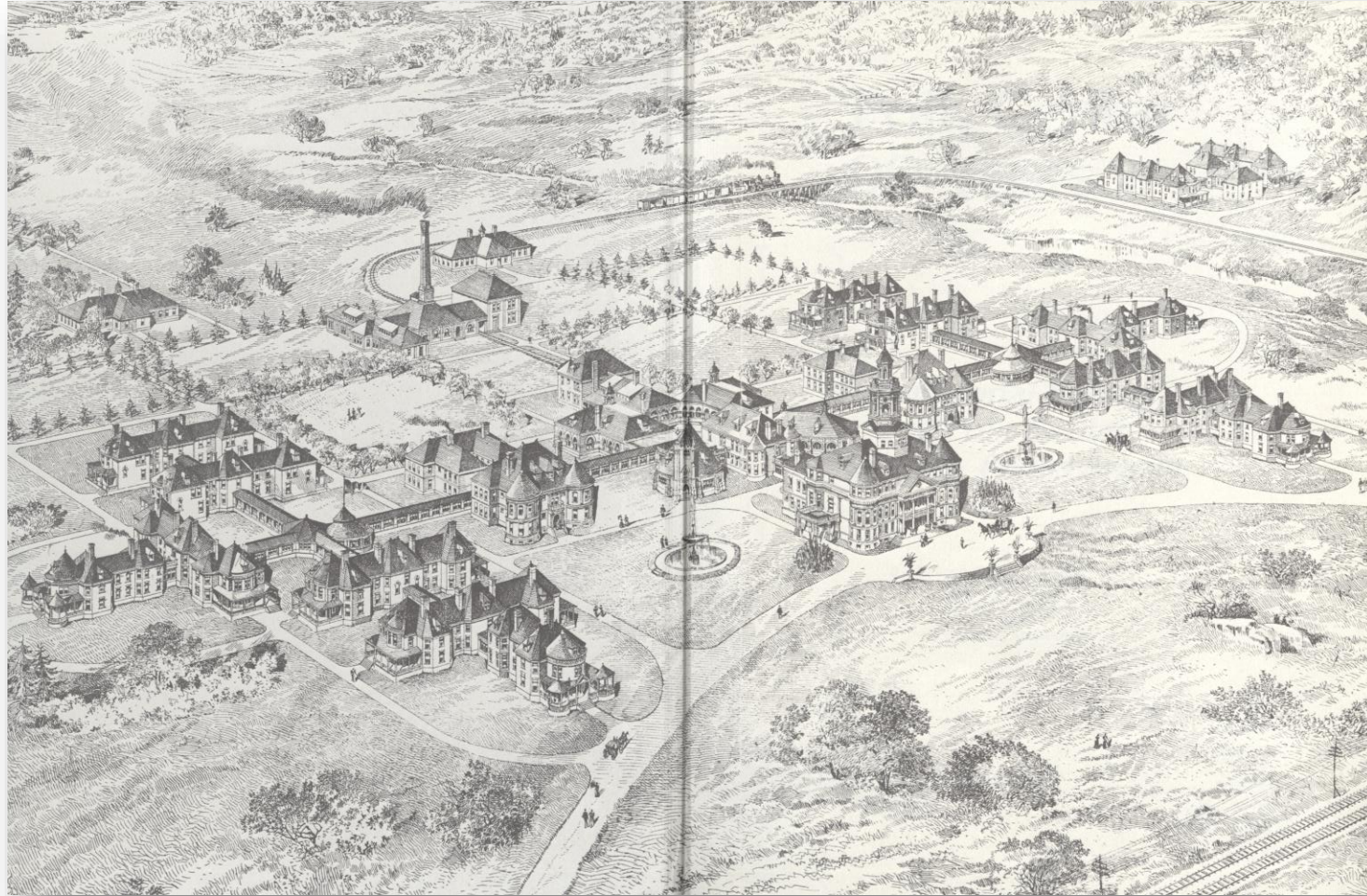


Illustration of Polk Center grounds

Polk Center, 90 years : a pictorial history of Polk Center in Polk, Pennsylvania

Coordinating Amongst Repositories

Copy Ink. FORM A. F. R. 42-B. S. 6564, 12-04, 2m. (QES 68723)

Statement No.

The Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway Co.

Peck Station *Sept-30* 190*5*

SUMMARY OF CHARGES due this Company from *State Institution*
for Transportation, as per accompanying Freight Bills.

Pro. No.	WAY-BILL		CAR		FROM	WEIGHT	Rate	CHARGES
	Date	No.	No.	Initials				
1707	8/2	4 10268	CAC	Clark's Mills	Potatoes			110
C-220	Aug 30	475 67458	NYS	Pittsburg	Aug.			150
"	"	"	"	"	St. Louis			200
"	8/1	5 12289	MOS	Hadley	Butter			20
1704	" 2	30 5786	L.V.	Oil City	Grapes			34
1710	" 1	94 10632	NYS	Cleveland	Bran			192
5-2	Aug 28	543 60703	Wab	Jersey City	Fertilizer			960
C-221	" 31	490 13647	NYS	Pittsburg	Papers			20
"	"	"	"	"	Goods			70
C-250	8/1	8	"	"	Polish			20
C-251	" 1	9	"	"	Pickles			80
"	"	"	"	"	Hawes			20
1713	" 5	7 22702	N.S.	Clark's Mills	Peaches			40
"	" 1	2 3080	W.O.	Chicago	Ohio			40
E-7	Aug 25	4 71788	C.R.R.	Martinsville	Chairs			110
A-201	8/2	1 40503	NYS	Stafford	Wheat			920
1718	" 6	45 45859	"	Stallboro	Sp. Spon.			37
C-252	" 2	36 93511	"	Pittsburg	Sp. Spon.			40
1724	" 6	80 12666	"	Oil City	Cass			30
1726	" 2	237 44968	"	Chicago	C. Food			100
1732	" 1	9 7922	L.E.N.	Dunkirk	E. Ware			470
C-253	" 6	80 17831	NYS	Pittsburg	Paint			130
"	"	"	"	"	Chairs			80
1740	" 5	380 3560	Om.	Chicago	E. Ware			50
D-28	" 1	7058 4240	CCC	Phila	Leather			150
1743	" 9	75 80143	Eni	Stoneboro	Soap			20
1744	"	165 91982	DL	E. Buffalo	Manure			250

Rail-shipped food receipt, 1905
Polk Center Receipts, MSS 1181

George A. Kelly Company
Wholesale Druggists
Chemicals, Dry Goods, Paints, Oils, Varnishes, Druggists' Sundries,
Hospital Instruments & Appliances
Pittsburg, Pa. 9/23/05

Shipped via STATE INSTITUTION FOR FEEBLE MINDED
POLK, PA.

1/2	✓	RED IODIDE MERCURY 'BT. 07	3.98	2	06
50	✓	PURE VASELINE 52'S CHESEBOROUGH	1.12	6	25
5	✓	OXALIC ACID	1.10	50	50
1	✓	POTASSIUM CITRATE 1 PKG	1.40	2	40
1	✓	F.E. GENTIAN CO. KY.	1.50	1	10
2	✓	TINCT. GUAIAC BT. 10	1.25	94	94
1	✓	F.E. NUX VOMICA PD. 25%	1.65	1	30
1	✓	F.E. LIQUORICE KYS	1.90	90	90
1	✓	F.E. SINGER KY	7.50	5	63
1	✓	F.E. OPIUM P.D. CONGT 25%	4.25	4	25
1/2	✓	IPECAC KY	1.85	70	70
5	✓	" ASSOFETIDA PD. 25%	1.20	1	00
5	✓	GREEN SOAP	1.48	2	40
1	✓	ZINC OXIDE OINT.	1.55	44	44
1	✓	CALOMEL TAB. 1/8 GR. PD. 20%	1.65	52	52
1	✓	STRYCH. SULPHATE TAB. 1/30 PD. 20%	1.60	60	60
2	✓	BLAUDS TABLETS 5 GR. P.D.	MAIL		
2	✓	ANTI CONSTIPATION PINK 663 PD.	1.35	2	16
1	✓	IGRAIN TAB. PD. 355 20%	1.85	1	11
1	✓	BROWN TKT. TAB. 100 MIN PD. 20%	3.40	2	72
2	✓	DIARRHOEA TAB. 136 PD. C.O. 20%	2.35	3	59
1	✓	CORYZA TAB. M.L.F. 25%	3.15	2	52
1	✓	NEURALGIA TAB. BROWN #35 20%	1	50	
1	✓	CO. CATH. PILL KY	1	90	
1	✓	QUIN. SULPH. 2 GR. PILL KY	2.25	1	80
1/2	✓	DOVERS PWD. TAB. 5 GR. PD 20%	1.45	59	
1	✓	CORRECTIVE TAB. 738 PD. 20%	4.25	3	40
1/2	✓	RHEUMATIC TAB. 1825 PD. 20%	1.90	76	
200	✓	STOMACH 675 PD. 20%	1.25	2	00
1	✓	PHENACETINE & SALOL TAB. 114 PD. 20%	1.25	4	00
25	✓	ICHTHYOL MERCK	1.25	6	25
10	✓	ADH. PL. 12 IN. RUBBER JJ-5	1.30	3	80
5	✓	POTASSIUM BROMIDE 55	1.12	60	
2	✓	CALCIUM CHLORIDE 55 CANS	1.25	1	40
1	✓	" " " " " " " "			

Medicinal supplies receipt, 1905
Polk Center Receipts, MSS 1181

Coordinating amongst Repositories

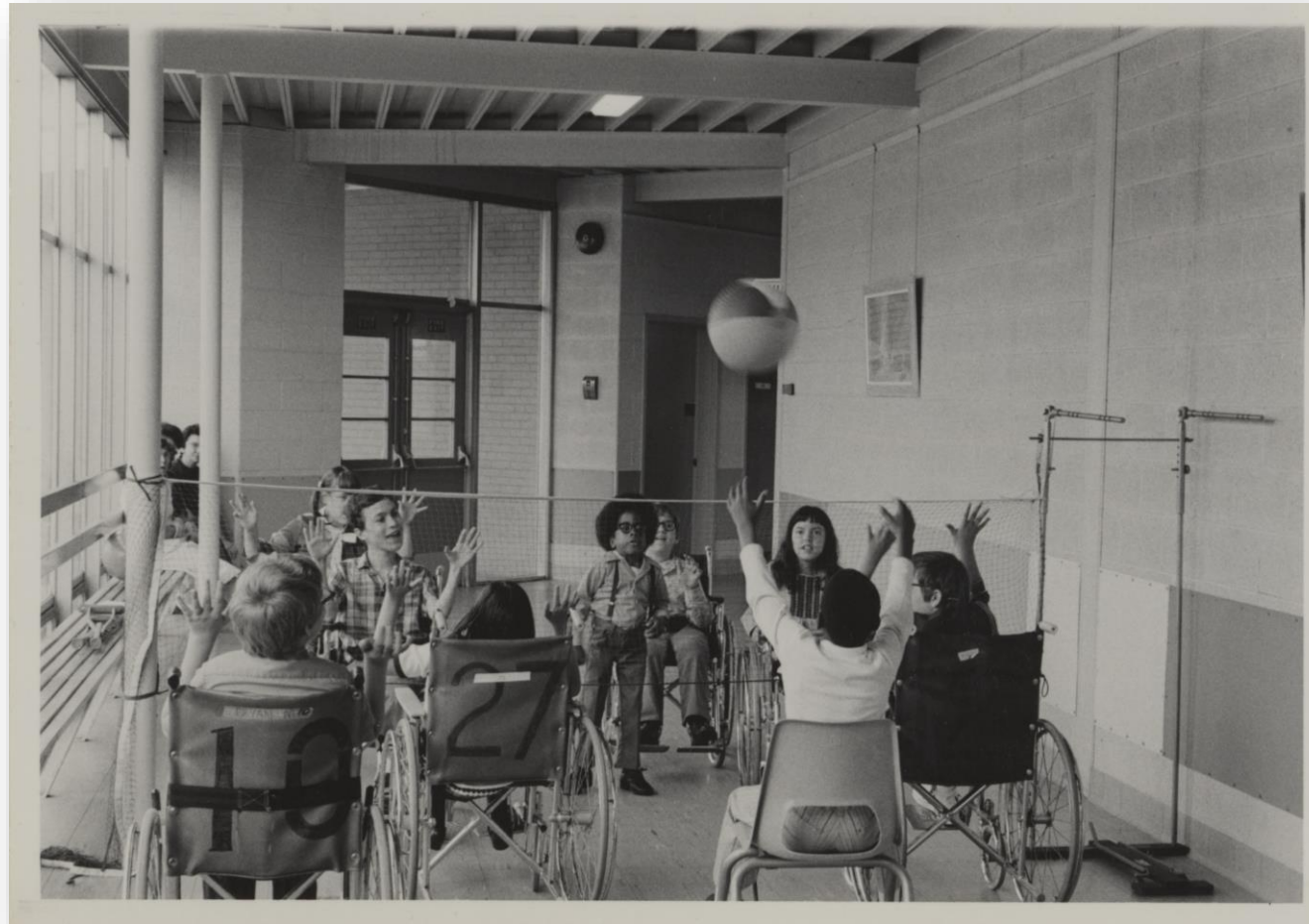


Before



After

Learning how Community Members See and Describe Themselves and Their Records



Pioneer Education Center students playing volleyball, 1972
Pittsburgh Public Schools Photographs, MSP 117

Offering Our Institutional Strengths, Even When They Expose Our Shortcomings

- Strengths

- Space
 - Meetings
 - Events
- Megaphone
 - Exhibits
 - Publications
 - Public Programs
 - Learning Programs
- Collections
 - Care
 - Curation
 - Access

- Shortcomings

- Space
 - Accessibility challenges:
 - Programming
 - Exhibits
- Megaphone
 - Exhibits
 - Publications
 - Public Programs
 - Learning Programs
- Collections
 - Accessibility
- Progress made, progress needed

Offering Our Institutional Strengths, Even When They Expose Our Shortcomings



John Paul Deley speaking at Treasures in the Archives with ASL interpreter and open captioning, November 2018
Photo by Kat Neidig

Offering Our Institutional Strengths, Even When They Expose Our Shortcomings

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Born of, Led by Community Members



www.wpdhac.org



Western Pennsylvania advocates for the right to education, services, access, and equal opportunity

Western Pennsylvania holds an important place in the fight for disability rights.

Today's advocates build on the work of those who fought injustices of the past.

"As a mother, as a parent, as an advocate, you never rest."
Ginny Thornburgh, disability rights advocate



Using Disability History to Ensure Disability Rights



www.wpdhac.org

What we do:

- **Preserve and share** the efforts of Western Pennsylvanians with disabilities to attain human and civil rights.
- **Educate the public** about existing issues and solutions.
- **Provide resources** for historic preservation and research.

We tell the stories of disability rights in Western Pennsylvania. Do you have a story to tell?

Affiliated with ACHIEVA, Senator John Heinz History Center, Temple University Institute on Disabilities, and other organizations in Western Pennsylvania.



www.wpdhac.org



Western Pennsylvania helped end segregation in institutions

In the early 1970's, advocates from ARC Allegheny (now ACHIEVA/The Arc of Greater Pittsburgh) made unannounced visits to institutions across Pennsylvania.

Finding overcrowding and dehumanizing practices, they demanded action from state officials and pushed for community services.

"We entered a large day room in which many were tied to their benches."
Report from January 24, 1973, visit to Polk State School and Hospital, Venango County.



Pop-up display banners produced by Consortium

Conclusion

When a museum has the honor of building trust within a community, committing to collaborative, long-term preservation benefits everyone. This type of preservation begets a rich and deep knowledge exchange- one that values lived experiences alongside professional expertise.