

# Biographies

**Andrew J. Imparato** is the first full-time President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), a national non-profit membership organization for the political and economic empowerment of all people with disabilities in the U.S. With more than 100,000 members, AAPD is the largest cross-disability membership organization in the U.S. and is based in Washington, DC.



Imparato recently organized and led a coalition of more than 200 disability, civil rights and employer organizations to enact the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act, which was signed into law by President Bush on September 25, 2008. Prior to joining AAPD, Imparato was general counsel and director of policy for the National Council on Disability, an attorney advisor with the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy, and a staff attorney/Skadden Fellow with the Disability Law Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Imparato graduated with distinction from Stanford Law School and is a summa cum laude graduate of Yale College. He lives in Baltimore with his wife and two sons, ages 15 and 10.



**Steven Brown, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor and Disabilities Scholar, Center on Disability Studies (CDS), University of Hawai`i; Affiliate Faculty, Political Science Department; and Co-Founder, Institute on Disability Culture. When discrimination because of his disability detoured Brown's academic career in history, he became an advocate. Author of *Movie Stars and Sensuous Scars: Essays on the Journey from Disability Shame to Disability Pride*, Brown teaches in the graduate, interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Disability and Diversity Studies at UH-Manoa. He is Coordinator of CDS's Teaching All Students, Reaching All Learners projects ([www.ist.hawaii.edu](http://www.ist.hawaii.edu)) and Principal Investigator for My Voice, My Choice ([www.cds.hawaii.edu/myvoice](http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/myvoice)), and Reviews Editor of the CDS journal, *Review of Disability Studies: An International Journal* ([www.rds.hawaii.edu](http://www.rds.hawaii.edu)).

**Susanne Grace Butte's** expertise is in disability rights. She has taught and researched this topic for more than fifteen years and her major areas of research have been the social and economic effects of charities on people with disabilities. At present she is working on her dissertation to be titled 'An Economic Disability'. The work will look at the living conditions of people with disabilities on social security programs. Once she has established that the living conditions are very difficult, she will present research on a



micro-economic educational community. It is hoped that this community will offer part-time employment in small businesses controlled and staffed by people with disabilities; to begin to curb the effects of poverty. These businesses will buy and sell each others goods and services, as well as serving the community. Secondly, this community will offer economic security by having access to attorneys that will temper concerns about working, should the Social Security Administration have objections. Third, the educational portion will offer critical education on life as we know it. It will offer in clear language, why things are the way they are, and what can be done about it.

Her educational career includes a Ph.D. in progress in Education at Walden University, a Masters degree in Social Responsibility from St. Cloud State University and a Bachelor's degree in English. She lives in Minneapolis Minnesota with her husband Mike and her two beautiful Labrador retrievers Chaucer and Joan of Arc.

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**Johnny Crescendo** is a singer songwriter, dad, and disability rights activist originally from the UK. He was probably one of the first to put disability rights into song and some of his songs like "Choices and Rights," "Tear Down the Walls," and "Pride" have become anthems for the disability rights movement around the world. Johnny is part of the history of the disabled people's movement in Europe. In the early nineties he organized the demonstrations which led to the end of the Telethon in the UK, changing forever the way disabled people were seen, and also came up with the immortal slogan "Piss On Pity."



He went on to found DAN the Disabled People's Direct Action Network, spending much of his time handcuffed to a bus or in jail. DAN helped to make the transport system accessible in the UK and forced a reluctant government to pass the Disability Discrimination ACT of 1995 and later on to set the agenda for legislation that would end institutions in the UK. Johnny has also spent over 17 years working with ADAPT in the US and has traveled extensively spreading the message of Disability Pride and encouraging the need to extend the struggle for Disability rights.



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**Charmaine Crockett** is Special Projects Coordinator at the Center of Disability Studies where she Co-Chairs the Pacific Rim International Conference on Disabilities and drums up good ideas for outreach and community participation. Previously, she worked in the area of human rights where she conducted human rights education trainings and enhanced the capacity of organizations in developing countries. She has co-chaired many international conferences, has written and edited articles and manuals on human rights and social justice, co-founded several non-profits, curates art exhibits and did an eight year stint as a research analyst at Goldman Sachs—a career, she is happily now removed from. She writes

fiction and makes art on the side.

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**Masayo Furui** is from Osaka Japan. Her lifetime of achievements include founding the Cerebral Palsied Association Osaka Green Grass, the West Union of Green Grass, and was Secretary General of the Japanese Cerebral Palsied Association Green Grass National Union. She also was founder of the National Disability Rights Movement Council. Recently, she initiated an on-going project, Secondary Condition Study, among Adults with CP for its prevention. She also has made an outstanding impact on expert professional academies all over the world such as AACPD, WCPT, and EACD by attending their Congress as the most knowledgeable co-presenter. She has made significant changes on those professional attitudes, focusing more attention to adult issues. She has three children and a re-educated husband.



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**Toru Furui PhD, PT**, is a Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy Osaka at Kawasaki Rehabilitation University. Toru Furui was a visiting faculty member at the Human Engineering Research Laboratories from Japan and since July 2004 and is a postdoctoral associate of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Pittsburgh. The Hiroshima Physical Therapist Association awarded Toru with the Physical Therapist Distinguished Service Award in 2001. Toru's research has included the retrospective study of the secondary functional deterioration in socially active adults with cerebral palsy in Japan and postural control by ergonomic seating in severe neurological cases. He has also studied the regional community support system for homebound elderly persons in Japan.



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**Deanna Gregorio** is the Sectoral Representative of the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Council of the Philippine National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), which advises the Office of the President on legislation and programs that concern the disabled sector. Last year, she has been awarded Outstanding Alumna at the University of the Philippines Centennial Celebration for her work on Poverty Alleviation. From infantile cholera at two years old to a life-long bout with multiple sclerosis, Deanna has dedicated her life to helping PWD's. She advocates for PWD rights and dream of the day when PWD's are finally set free and accepted in society.

Her most recent legislative advocacies include the 1% allocation of national government budget for PWD programs, the 20% discount for PWD's (similar to the Senior Citizens Act) and the establishment of offices for persons with disabilities at the local government units. All of these are anchored on her flagship program at NAPC popularly known as HELP (Health, Education and Livelihood for PWD's). She is also a Sports Commissioner and President of the Multiple Sclerosis Society (MS) of the Philippines. Aside from being a staunch advocate of PWD rights, livelihood and welfare in the Philippines, Deanna is a successful businesswoman and a champion of PWD

and women entrepreneurship.

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**Katherine Guernsey** is the Education and Outreach Director of the United States International Council on Disabilities. As a public international lawyer specializing in human rights, disability and development, she provided legal counsel to non-governmental and governmental delegations throughout the negotiations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Since the CRPD's adoption she has worked with disabled peoples' organizations, governments and international development organizations to promote the ratification and implementation of this important treaty. She is co-author of the disability and human rights manual "Human Rights. Yes! Action and Advocacy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities." Ms. Guernsey is also an Adjunct Professor at the American University School of International Service.



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**Romel Mackelprang** has been involved in the disability rights movement since 1981. He has worked and volunteered with Centers for Independent Living for 25 years, and currently chairs the Washington State Independent Living Council. He has been a professor at Eastern Washington University since 1987 where he is the Director of the Center for Disability Studies and Universal Access. In recent years he has been invited to present his work and consult on disability studies and universal access in multiple venues nationally and internationally including Europe, Africa, and Australia.

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**David Morrissey** is the Executive Director of the United States International Council on Disabilities. David Morrissey was a member of the inaugural class of the Clinton School of Public Service at the University of Arkansas where he earned his Master of Public Service degree in 2006. During this program he conducted fieldwork in Vietnam working with grassroots disabilities organizations and conducting a survey of the experiences of persons with disabilities in that country. He also trained in the Maternal and Child Health Bureau-funded Leadership Education In Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program and at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Partners for Inclusive Communities, a University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.



He has presented on the transition to adulthood for youth with spina bifida both nationally and internationally and maintains a role in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Expert Working Group on Transition at the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. He has also advocated in the area of emergency management and disaster relief and people with disabilities.

He has held management positions in several nonprofit organizations, including most recently,

the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, where was also the 2007 Disability Policy Leadership Fellow.



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**Dr Hazel Phillips** is of Ngati Mutunga descent. She has a background in Sociology of Education and is committed to the sustainable cultural, social, political, environmental and economic development of whanau/hapu/iwi that fulfils their aspirations to and expression of tino rangatiratanga. She is a senior lecturer based in He Parekereke, Institute for Research and Development in Maori and Pacific Education at Victoria University of Wellington, NZ. Her research interests include: the reassertion and reclamation of traditional knowledge and practices; the interface between indigenous knowledge and western science and especially the impact that this has on the construction of Maori identity, knowledge, practices and values; kaupapa Maori research methodologies and knowledge production; and the politics and practices of Trans disciplinary research and ethics.

Her PhD thesis submitted in 2003 was Te Reo Karanga o Nga Tauria Maori - Maori Students: Their Voices, Their Stories at the University of Canterbury, 1996-1998. She was awarded a National Maori Academic Excellence Award in 2004. She is a member of the Foundation for Research Science and Technology's Te Tipu o te Wananga Advisory Group. Her passion is working within Maori Communities.

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**Emily Cooper Pura** is a Staff Attorney with Disability Rights Washington. She is a graduate of Seattle University School of Law. She has spent her legal career addressing the issues impacting individuals with disabilities. She also serves as a pro bono attorney with King County Bar Association (KCBA) Volunteer Attorney for People with AIDS (VAPWA). She greatly enjoys being a part-time instructor for the Center of Legal Studies and teaches a Paralegal Certificate Course at Seattle Central Community College. Professional activities include serving on WSBA Committee for Diversity, WSBA Bar Examiners Committee, and WSBA GLBT Bar Association. Prior to attending law school, Emily earned a B.A. in English at University of Colorado.



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**Loretta J. Ross** is the National Coordinator of the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective; a network founded in 1997 of 80 women of color and allied organizations that work on reproductive justice issues. In 2004, Ms. Ross was National Co-Director of the April 25, 2004 March for Women's Lives in Washington D.C., the largest protest march in U.S. history with more than one million participants. As part of a 30-year history in social justice activism,



between 1996-2004, she was the Founder and Executive Director of the National Center for Human Rights Education (NCHRE) in Atlanta, Georgia. She was one of the first African American women to direct a rape crisis center in the 1970s. She lectures frequently on human rights, women's rights, hate groups and right wing organizations. She is a political commentator for Pacifica News Service, and has appeared as a political commentator on Good Morning America, The Donahue Show, The Charlie Rose Show, CNN, and BET. She is a graduate of Agnes Scott College and holds an honorary Doctorate of Civil Law degree awarded in 2003 from Arcadia University.

She is presently enrolled in the Women's Studies PhD program at Emory University in Atlanta. Ms. Ross is presently writing a book on reproductive rights entitled Black Abortion. Ms. Ross' papers are currently housed and accessible in the archives of The Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts.

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**Seema Shah** is a lawyer in Toronto, Canada. She has represented persons with disabilities and abused persons before the Social Benefits Tribunal and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. She has worked as a legal researcher with Disability Rights Promotion International-Canada, a multi-national project monitoring the implementation of the human rights of persons with disabilities. She has engaged in various legislative reform and public education efforts in areas of health law, policing and mental health. She helped to plan the 2002 International Women's Health Meeting.



She holds a law degree from Osgoode Hall Law School and a degree in business and health studies from McMaster University. She was called to the bar of Ontario in 2008. In 2006, she was recognized by the Government of Canada with the 27th Annual Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Person's Case for advancing the status of women in Canada through her advocacy for women with disabilities and abused women.



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**Dr. Robert A. Stodden** is a past president of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) board of directors. Professionally trained in Psychology, Special Education, and Rehabilitation, he has served more than twenty-five years as an international and national leader in the fields of special education, school to adult community living and transition, postsecondary education, and employment for persons with disabilities. Since 1987, he has served as the founding Director of the Center on Disability Studies (a University Center for Excellence) and professor of special education at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (prior to that appointment he served as a professor at Boston College).

Over the past 25 years, Dr. Stodden has served as principal investigator/director for more than 100 research and training projects focused upon improving the quality of life for all persons with

disabilities. He has been a keynote speaker and invited presenter for many international and national conferences, and has served as a consultant within numerous foreign countries and for more than 20 different states within the United States.

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**Dr. Samanmali Sumanesena** is a senior lecturer and a consultant pediatrician attached to the Faculty of Medicine, Colombo, Sri Lanka. She conducts a development clinic and an endocrinology clinic for children with congenital hypothyroidism at this hospital. She worked as a specialist registrar in the UK, at the Royal Free Hospital. Her experience included community pediatrics and assessment of children using Bayley III scales. Presently she serves in several national committees for children with disabilities, the special child programme, and the inclusive preschool education programme. Her research interests are in qualitative community based disability research.



## Facilitators



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**Thanit Hlek Kongkaew** is currently participating in Asia Pacific Leadership Program with East West Center. He holds a Master of Arts in Speech Communication and Bachelor of Business Administration from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. He worked as the Productivity Promotion Officer at Thailand Productivity Institute. In this role he applies his knowledge of finance, marketing and management with his teaching and communication skills to improve productivity in organizations and education sector. Most recently he led the Productivity Improvement in Ayutthaya Province project to improve productivity in 20 area factories. Mr. Kongkaew was selected to represent Thailand at the Honda-sponsored IATSS Forum for talented young business leaders from Southeast Asia and Japan.

He was also selected as one of Thai participants on the Ship for the Southeast Asia Youth 2003, which engages Asian youth in mutual understanding programs while traveling to Southeast Asia and Japan.

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**Mariko Miyahira** is a M.A. candidate in the Department of Political Science and simultaneously enrolled in the Graduate Certificate Program in Conflict Resolution. Mariko, a native of Okinawa, Japan is an East-West Graduate Degree Fellow and previously studied peace and conflict at the University of California at Berkeley.



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**Jared Tausz** is a lawyer from the UK studying for the Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution from the Matsunaga Institute for Peace at the University of Hawai'i. As well as his LLB, Jared has a B.A. in Philosophy and Theology from Durham University and is trained as both a mediator and facilitator.



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**Lisa Uyehara** is an attorney and arbitrator for the CAAPS program through the State of Hawai'i Judiciary. She has been a facilitator/instructor for ten years with the University of Phoenix. Lisa holds a B.A., M.A., J.D. and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Political Science department at the University of Hawai'i, specializing in indigenous politics and law and society issues.