

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF GROWING GREAT PARKS



NEWS RELEASE

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Oakland County to mark 36th Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act

Public event to feature inspirational guest speakers, inclusive activities and yard games

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI – Aug. 3, 2026 – Oakland County will commemorate the 36th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by hosting a public celebration from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 20 at the Oakland County Circuit Court Courtyard.

The ADA, passed into law in 1990, provides protections for individuals with disabilities from discrimination. It is considered a landmark piece of civil rights legislation because it ensures people with physical, mental and cognitive disabilities equal access in employment, government services, public accommodations and more.

“The Americans with Disabilities Act was a transformative moment in our nation’s history and Oakland County remains committed to upholding its spirit and intent,” Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter said. “This event honors the strength and contributions of the disability community and reaffirms our pledge to equity and access for everyone.”

Coulter is scheduled to speak at the ADA Celebration Event, which will also feature Oakland County Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer Harry Weaver; keynote speaker Erica Coulston, president/co-founder of Walk The Line Recovery Therapy; a spoken word performance by Jo Banooni, a poet and disability advocate whose work explores their lived experience with disability; and emcee Mary Skvarce.

Weaver has been a champion in the DEI space for more than 20 years, working at the Chippewa Valley School District in Clinton Township, as the Education Director and Certified Trainer at the Anti-Defamation League, Michigan Region and as an independent DEI consultant.

“The ADA laid the foundation for making America more accessible to individuals who live with disabilities, like me,” Weaver said. “As we mark 36 years, we need to continue to create spaces where people of all abilities are respected, empowered and included.”

Coulston was just 23 years old in 2001 when she sustained a C6/7 spinal cord injury during a car accident. Walk The Line applies neuroplasticity principles across various disciplines and diagnoses, providing hope and opportunity to clients.

“This year as we celebrate the 36th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was enacted to prohibit discrimination based on disability and guarantees equal access for people with disabilities, we are reminded of the need to remain vigilant in protecting these rights. With crucial government programs in jeopardy, the disabled community calls on our neighbors, local businesses and government officials to protect our right to equal access. The time is now for us to unify our voices to celebrate and safeguard this essential law - The ADA,” Coulston said.

“Our speakers are very passionate about protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and they have many lived experiences to share,” Oakland County Parks Recreation Program Supervisor Sandy Dorey said. “Their personal stories are compelling and will demonstrate ways that all of us can help support inclusivity for everyone.”

The ADA Celebration Event will also include:

- Inclusive activities and adaptive sports demonstrations
- Yard games for all ages and abilities
- Food trucks
- Meet-and-greet tables with local organizations that support individuals with disabilities

In addition, the celebration offers an opportunity for participants to learn more about Oakland County’s Adaptive Recreation that provides year-round socials for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, sports programming for people with physical disabilities and unique recreation opportunities featuring Disability Dirt Day with off-roading rides at Holly Oaks ORV Park and Dreams and Wings which offers airplane rides.

Access for All is presented in partnership with the Oakland County Parks Adaptive Recreation Team and SHiNE, Oakland County’s Employee Resource Group dedicated to advancing disability advocacy, inclusion and accessibility.

For more information about the ADA Celebration Event, visit OaklandCountyParks.com.

About Oakland County Parks

Oakland County Parks offers destination experiences across the county with more than 100 miles of trails and 7,000 acres. OCP operates 17 parks that align with its mission to provide equitable access, conservation, recreation and health and wellness benefits.