



March 6, 2023

Statement from the CCD Board of Directors on the Passing of Judy Heumann

The Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Board joins others around the world in mourning the passing of Judy Heumann, a lifelong leader, and fierce local, national and international disability rights advocate. Heumann passed away in Washington, D.C. on March 4th.

Judy's life story is well documented by herself and others. She studied from home and attended segregated schools until ninth grade. Judy earned a Masters and eventually became the first teacher in New York state to use a wheelchair. Judy had sued the New York Board of Education who initially refused to give her a teaching license. They feared she could not help evacuate students or herself in case of fire. Judy helped lead successful protests to get Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act implemented, served as D.C.'s first Director for the Department on Disability Services, led the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, and was appointed the first special adviser on International Disability Rights for the U.S. State Department.

Judy participated in the developing and implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Judy was also active in advocating at the local level, and this February provided moving and heartfelt testimony urging the D.C. Council to ensure wheelchair accessible taxi and rideshare service. In recent years Judy testified to the U.S. Department of Transportation demanding safe and equitable access to air travel and supporting the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act.

Judy's time as a counselor at Camp Jened, a summer camp for disabled youth, and the lives of fellow counselors and attendees is the subject of the award-winning documentary, [Crip Camp](#). Judy hosted a podcast, [The Heumann Perspective](#), and published her memoir, [Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist](#) and a Young Adult version, [Rolling Warrior](#).

Judy knew her worth and the worth of the disability community worldwide, and graciously mentored young and new advocates with disabilities. Judy devoted her life to disability rights, and was a friend, agitator and advocate until the very end. There will be a memorial in Washington, DC on March 8th at 10 a.m. ET. Attendees can attend in person or join a live-stream. [Details can be found on her website](#).

Additional Tributes and Articles about Judy Heumann

- American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), [Press Release: The World Mourns the Passing of Judy Heumann, Disability Rights Activist](#)
- Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, [In Memory of Judy Heumann \(1947-2023\)](#)
- Washington Post, [Judy Heumann, disability rights activist, dies at age 75](#)
- NPR, [Activist Judy Heumann led a reimagining of what it means to be disabled](#)
- The White House, [Statement from President Joe Biden on the Passing of Judith Heumann](#)
- Vice President Kamala Harris, [Twitter Statement](#)