

# ADA Anniversary & Outdoor Classroom Event



Celebrate. Learn. Share  
**ADA34**  
Americans with Disabilities Act  
1990 - 2024



CTDOT honored the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 34th Anniversary on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at Walnut Hill Park in New Britain, Connecticut. This year's celebration broke down classroom walls, offering participants an outdoor experience to learn how individuals are improving accessibility in communities and what resources are available. This event had nearly 100 attendees and 15 exhibitors and was partnered with the ADA Coalition of Connecticut, WTS CT, and CT ITE.

Speakers covered initiatives from the local, state and federal levels and included from the City of New Britain Mark Moriarty, Director of Public Works, Erik Barbieri, Director of Parks & Recreation and Melody Rivera the Vice Chair of Commission on Person with Disabilities. CTDOT Deputy Commissioner's Karen Kitsis and ADA Coordinating Engineer Katie Hedberg and Federal Highway Administration Connecticut Division Administrator John McAvoy.



The event's keynote speaker was Phillip Magalnick who is an accessibility advocate and Co-Chair of the Stamford ADA Advisory Council. Mr. Magalnick highlighted the importance of accessible transportation as the foundation of independence for people with disabilities. He spoke about his personal experiences and challenges as a person with a vision impairment and how accessibility must be integrated from the start rather than being considered after. Magalnick closed the speech with a message to those with disabilities to have their voices heard and to challenge everyone to be **"accessibility champions"** and make an inclusive and accessible community for all.

In addition to ADA Coalition of Connecticut, WTS CT, and CT ITE, many others from the industry organized exhibit booths highlighting different resources available. For accessible transportation featuring Greater Hartford Transit District, New Horizons Village, and The Kennedy Collective. CT State Independent Living Council provided resources for individuals with disabilities and accessible voting. ADA product samples were provided by ADA Solutions, Detectable Warning Systems. UConn T2 Center provided resources and tools available to municipalities and provided their manual wheelchairs, goggles for various visual impairments, and walking canes so participants could gain a deeper understanding of the importance of accessibility and experience using a mobility device in the build environment. CTDOT featured several interactive displays, including Customer Experience, Safe Routes to School, the ADA Transition Plan, accessible parking, curb ramp construction and GIS database tools for curb ramps.

