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Subject: Independent Living: From Berkeley, to the ADA, to ILA

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Independent Living: From Berkeley, to the ADA, to ILA

By Jamie Kendall, Acting Director, Independent Living Administration

Before independent living was a program, it was an idea that sparked a social movement to advance the rights of people with disabilities.

The independent living movement embodies the idea that no one should be denied dignity, self-determination, or equal opportunity simply because they are living with a disability. And no one could be a greater expert on the needs of people with disabilities than a person with a disability...

Since the Berkeley CIL opened its doors just over fifty years ago, the independent living movement has been a cornerstone of so many disability rights milestones.

On Sunday, July 26, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of one of the greatest of these milestones, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For people with disabilities, the ADA extends critical civil rights protections and eliminates many barriers to inclusion and participation in the community. It should come as little surprise that many of the advocates leading the charge for the ADA were alumni of CILs. It is hard to imagine the passage of the ADA 25 years ago without the independent living movement behind it.

We are celebrating another anniversary this week as well. On July 22 last year, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law. WIOA transferred the Independent Living programs to ACL, creating the [Independent Living Administration](#).

[Read the full blog post for more on the history of independent living and the future of ILA at ACL.](#)

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