History Center to Host Virtual Program Exploring Accessible Transportation in Western Pa.
- The program is held in partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Disability and Action Consortium -

PITTSBURGH, Sept. 28, 2020 – The Senator John Heinz History Center will trace the roots of advocacy, innovation, and change that led to accessible transportation in Western Pa. as part of a virtual program, Exclusion to Autonomy: The History and Future of Accessible Transportation, on Thursday, Oct. 8 at 6 p.m.

Presented as part of an ongoing partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Disability and Action Consortium, the program will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which was signed into law on July 26, 1990 and prohibits discrimination based on disability.

Following an introduction by John Tague, a decades-long advocate for people with disabilities, panelists representing multiple eras of transit advocacy will reflect on the unique innovations in accessible transportation that were forged in Pittsburgh.

Nationally recognized researchers and scholars will then discuss current and future challenges and opportunities in accessible self-driving car development and the larger quest for autonomy in transportation.

Panelists will include:

- **Rory A. Cooper, Ph.D.**, FISA Foundation & Paralyzed Veterans of America Distinguished Professor at the University of Pittsburgh; Founder-Director and VA Senior Research Career Scientist of the Human Engineering Research Laboratories at VA Rehabilitation R&D Center; adjunct professor of Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University; and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences.
- **Holly Dick**, former ACCESS Community Liaison and noted disability advocate.
- **Rebecca A. Grier, Ph.D.**, UX (user experience) researcher; member of the executive council for the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society; and chair of the SAE Taskforce on Identifying ADS-DV (Autonomous Driving System – Dedicated Vehicle) User Issues for Persons with Disabilities.
- **Karen Hoesch**, Executive Director of ACCESS Transportation Systems.
• **Paul W. O'Hanlon**, former disability rights lawyer and Senior Housing Attorney with Neighborhood Legal Services Association in Pittsburgh.

• **Aaron Steinfeld, Ph.D.**, Associate Research Professor at The Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University.

The program will also include the premiere of the Consortium’s short film about late Western Pa. transportation advocate Paul Dick, whose papers and photographs are housed in the collections of the Detre Library & Archives at the Heinz History Center. The film highlights the transportation limitations Paul faced after he was diagnosed with polio in the 1950s and his role in shaping Allegheny County’s ACCESS Transportation Systems.

This program is free, and advance registration is required. [Click here to register.](#)

This program is made possible by support from the **Edith L Trees Charitable Trust**.

**The Senator John Heinz History Center**, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city’s Strip District. The History Center’s museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at [www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org).
Western Pa. transportation advocates Paul and Holly Dick in front of their 1966 Chrysler Newport, which was adapted for Paul's use in 1966. A short film about Paul's life will premiere during Exclusion to Autonomy: The History and Future of Accessible Transportation, a virtual program hosted by the Heinz History Center and Western Pennsylvania Disability and Action Consortium on Thursday, Oct. 8 at 6 p.m. (Holly and Paul Dick Family Papers, MSS 1177, Detre Library & Archives at the History Center)

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