



**Janet A. Neal
President
2nd District**

Commissioner Janet A. Neal is the President of the Commission, and was appointed by Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite-Burke in July 2003. Since her appointment to this Commission, she has held the office of Vice Chair in 2004-05 and Chair for two consecutive years in 2005-2007. Commissioner Neal brings to the Commission a background in education and community service as well as expertise in a variety of disciplines including consulting, media and entertainment, and music. Commissioner Neal has served on many councils, committees and commissions that address disability rights issues, including serving as a former member and President of the Los Angeles City Commission on Disability.

Commissioner Neal was born and raised in Los Angeles. During her professional career, she worked for over fourteen years in early childhood education and development, where she served as an administrator, director, and teacher in various pre-schools throughout Los Angeles County.

Commissioner Neal is the current host of the Commission's monthly talk show program, the "Disability Network", on KTYM Radio Station 1460 AM. She is a highly charismatic and caring program hostess, promoting disability awareness, community outreach, and providing a medium for open discussion on a range of topics and issues that affect people with disabilities and their families.

Commissioner Neal served as the former President of the Southern California Chapter of the Ehlers-Danlos Foundation, a position that she feels very passionately about, because she also has this disease. Now retired, Commissioner Neal works continuously to fight the realities of her disease while effectively serving on the Commission and advocating to improve the quality of life, increase opportunities, and raise the level of self-esteem for people of all ages with disabilities.



John B. Troost
1st Vice President
2nd District

Most recently reappointed by Supervisor Burke, Commissioner John Troost has served the Commission on behalf of the Second District since 1977. During his time on the Commission, he has served as Vice Chair, 1980 -1982 and Chaired the Commission from 1982 –1984 and has been the Chair of the Education Committee, 1978 to present. He has served as a member on two, Handicapped Advisory Committee's for two Community Colleges, Los Angeles Southwest College, and Los Angeles Trade Technical College. He also represented the Commission from 1978 – 1982 as a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee for the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Dept., during the planning stages of the Kenneth Hahn Regional Park & Recreational Area in Baldwin Hills. He has served the City of Culver City as a member of their 504 Ad-hoc Committee and their Disability Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Troost holds an AA in History from El Camino College, and a BS & MS in Education from the University of Southern California. From 1989 to 1992, he worked as a Handicapped Specialist / WorkAbility III Program Coordinator at LA Trade Technical College. Since 1995, he has been a member of the Culver City Optimist Club, a Service Club that donates toys to hospitalized children.

Over the past four decades, Commissioner Troost has worked as a vocational counselor for various independent living programs, and has spent several years working within California's higher education system as a researcher, fundraiser, and teacher.



John R. James
2nd Vice President
2nd District

Commissioner John R. James was appointed to the Commission on Disabilities September 15, 2009. He is a Professor of Counseling and Assistance Director of the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOP&S) at Pierce College.

He is very knowledgeable on the American on Disabilities Act and has been working in the Disabled Student Service programs at Los Angeles Mission and Pierce College for over 18 years.

Commissioner James has earned a Masters in Education from the University of Southern California and Bachelors in Geography and Urban Studies from California State University in Long Beach.

He is also a member of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges and a member of the Pierce and Mission College Advisory Board on Disabilities.



Alexia Teran
Treasurer
1st District

Commissioner Alexia Teran was appointed to the Commission in 2006 by 1st District Supervisor Gloria Molina. She is an active member of the community, with a strong, heartfelt dedication to advocating on behalf of the disabled and disadvantaged. She believes that everyone has the right to equal access to parks, libraries, and City and County buildings and events.

In addition to holding a seat on this Commission, she is an active Board member of the Greater Cypress Park Neighborhood Council and President of the Friends of the Cypress Park Branch Library. Commissioner Teran also participates in the *Selected Planning Areas* (SPA), and is a member of SPA 4 where she assists families of special needs children by providing accessibility to resources.

Commissioner Teran continues her education at the Los Angeles City College, majoring in Child Development.

She believes that educating the people without disabilities about people with disabilities will improve communication and understanding for both.



Wan Chun Chang
Commissioner
State Department of Rehabilitation

Commissioner Wan Chun Chang was appointed to the Commission on Disabilities in July 2007 and represents the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). She is currently a District Administrator for DOR in the Van Nuys/Foothill District where she contributes positively as an administrator. Commissioner Chang began her career with DOR in 1977 as a Vocational Rehabilitation trainee and became a Rehabilitation counselor in 1978. She was promoted to Senior Rehabilitation Counselor in 1987 and to Rehabilitation Supervisor at the East Los Angeles office in 1996.

Commissioner Chang is a strong consumer advocate, active community partner and inspiring leader with over 30 years experience in serving people with disabilities, and outstanding working knowledge with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, she is experienced in establishing and maintaining community liaisons with organizations, such as the *Goodwill Industries, Salvation Army, LAUSD-TPP, Department of Mental Health*, and community colleges. Furthermore, Commissioner Chang brings experience from working on three local Work Source Centers: *Metro-North, Chinatown* and the *Chicana Center*.

Commissioner Chang has served on the LA City Commission on Disabilities and the Advisory Board for Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling at *Cal State University at Los Angeles*.

She received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from *Fu Jen Catholic University* and a Masters Degree in Guidance - Industrial and Community Services from *Eastern Kentucky University*. In 2006, Commissioner Chang was granted Rehabilitation Counselor Certification status.

The Los Angeles City Council has recognized Commissioner Chang for her contributions to careers and technical education in the city of Los Angeles and the Mayor of Los Angeles has given her recognition for her services to the community.



Kecia B. Weller
Commissioner
3rd District

Commissioner Weller is the President of the Commission, and was appointed by Supervisor Yaroslavsky of the 3rd District in January 2002. During her five years with the Commission, President Weller held the Office of Treasurer from 2003 to 2007. She has been a professional disability rights advocate for the past ten years. She represents consumer advocates in local and state agencies and organizations to pave the way for people with disabilities to gain access to employment, health care, dental insurance and paid vacations.

Commissioner Weller was the very first writer for People First of California State Advocacy Reporter, in which she covered self-advocacy news statewide. She is devoted to helping people with disabilities achieve equity and civil rights. Commissioner Weller is on the People First of California Board of Directors representing Los Angeles County.

Commissioner Weller participates with the Association of Regional Centers Agencies as a strong legislative advocate, and sat on the Steering Committee for the Unique People's Voting Project. She served on both the Santa Monica Disability Task Force and the Santa Monica Disability Community Accessibility Committee to advocate for the Santa Monica Disabilities Commission, where she served as founding Vice-Chair for one year. Commissioner Weller is a professional member of the National Association for Dual Diagnosis, and an Americans with Disability Act trainer. She has worked with and written several articles for the *National Self-Advocacy Board* newsletter, *Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered*, and served as its Region's 2nd Alternate. In addition, Commissioner Weller is an accomplished public speaker on a variety of topics.

Most recently, in late 2007, Commissioner Weller accepted a position as a teacher's assistant in one of UCLA's Extension Programs, the *Pathway Program* which is a new two-year certificate program designed for students with developmental disabilities, where she currently assists in an American Government Course.



Sheila D. Wright
Commissioner
3rd District

Commissioner Sheila D. Wright was originally appointed to the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities in 1996 by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, of the Third District. She is an active member of the community, with a strong, heartfelt dedication to advocating on behalf of the disabled and disadvantaged.

Commissioner Wright is a member of the Afro-American Parent Group for Handicapped Children, and served as the President of the parent group at Rancho Del Valle of the Crippled Children's Society. In addition, she is a former member of the Board of Directors' President for the North Los Angeles County Region Center, where she served for six years.

Commissioner Wright has been married to Andrew Sr. for the past twenty-two years and serves as President of Wright's Technical Institute and Wright Trucking, Inc. Mr. and Mrs. Wright are the proud parents of two children, Adriana and Andrew. Commissioner Wright is an active member of her local Parent and Teacher's Association, and serves as a board member at the school her children attend. She has also served as a member of the Monroe Instruction Cabinet of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Commissioner Wright is a devout Christian and a member of the Calvary Baptist Church in Pacoima, where she is very involved in the Sunday school program for younger children. She also serves as Chairperson of the Nominating Committee and is a member of the Board of Trustees.



Harley D. Rubenstein Commissioner 4th District

Commissioner Harley D. Rubenstein was appointed to the Commission in 2001 by 4th District Supervisor Don Knabe. Commissioner Rubenstein is the current 2nd Vice President of the Commission, and serves on several of the Commission's committee groups. He has been elected Vice Chair of the Commission in 2001-02 and 2005-06 and Treasurer in 2002-03. Commissioner Rubenstein is a 1982 graduate of California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) and received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business Administration/American Studies. He has extensive experience advocating for people with disabilities. He began his business career as a Client Advocate at Disabled Resources Center. He was the Resource Coordinator at the Betty Clooney Foundation for Person's with Brain Injury, then he became a career counseling intern and WorkAbility IV Peer Counselor to Students with Disabilities at CSULB. Finally, he was a "Bus Tester: relative to the Flores, et al legal agreement with the MTA. He continues (and is presently) a Disability Consultant.

Since the inception of the Access Services Incorporated (ASI), Commissioner Rubenstein has been serving as a member of the ASI Community Advisory Committee (CAC). He also serves on the Long Beach Paratransit Committee, and is a former member of the MTA CAC.

Commissioner Rubenstein serves as a trustee for the Harbor Regional Center Foundation and a board member for Californian's for Disability Rights and Communities Actively Living Independently and Free.

He has been married to Susan since 1986. They have two children: Jacob Glenn and Ruth Amy.



Michael G. Gurekas
Commissioner
4th District

Commissioner Michael G. Gureckas was appointed to the Commission on Disabilities by former Los Angeles County Supervisor Deane Dana in 1972. He was Chair of the Commission from 2003 to 2004, and has diligently served on the Commission for over twenty-five years, offering guidance and expertise on many issues and legislative matters affecting the disability community. Commissioner Gurekas is also an advocate for the rights of paralyzed veterans, and has served on several key committee groups of the Commission directly responsible for making positive changes by providing ADA training; and improving accessibility to public transportation systems in Los Angeles County for disabled and senior patrons.

Commissioner Gureckas is a former United States Air Force Pilot and has been working as a Congressional Aide to Congressman Dana Rohrabacker for over fourteen years. He is a member of the California Paralyzed Veterans Association (CPVA), the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), and is actively involved with issues affecting individuals with spinal cord injuries, including quality health care, education, and increased funding for research.

In his leisure time, he is a very skilled member of the Amateur Trap Association. He travels throughout the country competing in events such as the PVA National Trapshoot Circuit, as an individual competitor as well as a member of the Cal-Diego Trapshooting Team.

Commissioner Gurekas will continue to lead the Commission in a positive direction that will be beneficial to the disabled constituents of Los Angeles County.



Wendy L. Welt Commissioner 4th District

Commissioner Wendy Welt was appointed to the Commission on Disabilities in February of 1999 as its first member representing disabled youth. She served for two years as Chair of the Commission from 2000-2002 and then served as Vice Chair from 2002-2004. On January 30, 2007, Commissioner Welt left the Youth Seat of the Commission and was appointed to the Commission by Supervisor Knabe to represent the 4th District.

Born without arms or legs, Commissioner Welt was raised in Downey, California. With the love and support of her family, she has become the remarkable woman she is today. Her independent, fun-loving spirit keeps you smiling! A full-time student at Long Beach City College, Commissioner Welt is working to achieve her Master's Degree at UCLA and hopes to have a career in counseling or teaching.

Working with Life Management, Commissioner Welt utilizes her excellent communications skills to speak to people throughout the United States on success and being the best that they can be. She demonstrates how to have more effective communication in all relationships and helps people to release negative patterns and reinforce positive ones. This process empowers people to get to the core of who they really are.

Always willing to help others, Commissioner Welt is a role model for everyone. She doesn't believe in the word "can't" and will actively pursue any goal she sets for herself. In her spare time, she enjoys dancing, singing, photography and painting.

Commissioner Welt is committed to continuing the Commission's positive work and to encouraging youth and others to be involved in advocacy on behalf of the disability community.