

Universal Design News

A quarterly newsletter update from UniversalDesign.com

Volume 13, No. 4
October 2013

Award Winners Issue

Contents

Links:

- 1 Public Spaces
- 1 Residential Projects
- 2 Perspiration vs Inspiration
- 6 Technology
- 8 Products for the Built Environment
- 9 Lifestyle Products
- Reg/Leg Watch.....3
- World Update..... 7
- New Media.....10
- Aha! Moments.....11
- Design Tip.....11
- Calendar.....12

Award-Winning Public Spaces

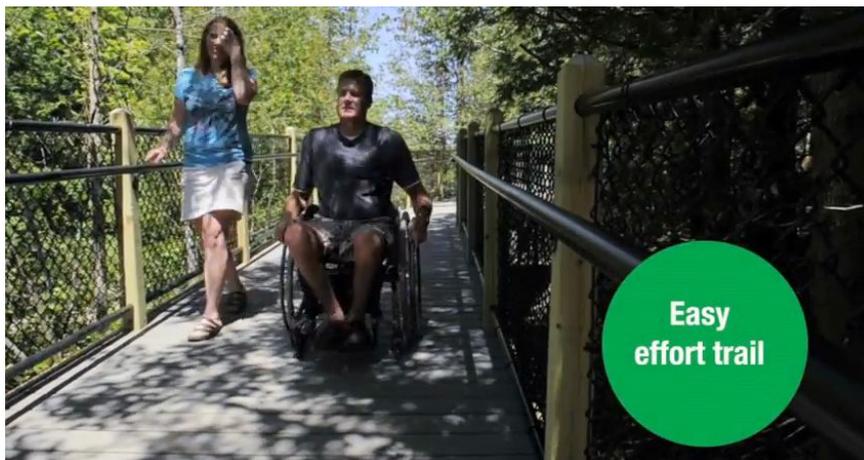
by Lindsey Scherloun

Ocqueoc Falls Bicentennial Pathway

Designers: [Department of Natural Resources](#) and Accessibility Advisory Council

Award: [2013 Da Vinci Award](#) – Environmental Adaptation Category

Paid for by grants from the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund, the Recreation Improvement Fund and the Recreational Trails Program, the improvements to the Ocqueoc Falls Bicentennial Pathway allows visitors of all abilities to experience the first truly universally accessible waterfall in the nation.



An ADA compliant ramp leads down to the falls.

[See Award-Winning Public Spaces, page 4](#)

Visit us online at:
www.UniversalDesign.com



Award-Winning Residential Projects

by Jennifer Eckel

“On a Mission” Kitchen

Designer: Sandra Tierney of [Cabinets by Design](#), Escondido, CA

Award: [2013 Universal Design Award from the National Kitchen and Bath Association](#)

The kitchen in this 1920s Storybook Mission home was redesigned to make the space more accessible to the client who uses a wheelchair.

Some of the kitchen’s Universal Design features include front controls on the cooktop, a single lever faucet handle, a two-tiered sink with the drain



Modern accessibility meets vintage style in this beautiful renovation.
Photo Credit: Cabinets by Design

[See Award-Winning Residential Projects, page 5](#)



Perspiration vs Inspiration

As a finale to the 20th Anniversary of Universal Design News, this, our annual awards issue, shares a harvest of excellence in Universal Design. These

are not awards that we (at UniversalDesign.com) have given, but rather a collection of what we think are notable awards from around the world, given by other organizations for Universal Design excellence over the last year. Our coverage does not include the Better Living Design 2013 Forward Thinker Award that I received for my "Home for the Next 50 Years," but does include projects in the fields of Lifestyle Products, Products for the Built Environment, Public Spaces, Residential Projects and Technology. There were so many exciting award-winning projects that we could only include a short summary of each. For a more complete discussion of these projects, we urge you to visit the links in the articles and learn about these wonderful demonstrations of Universal Design.

It also reminds me, however, of the potential pitfall that we may run into in trying to popularize the concept by recognizing glitzy projects for their Universal Design features. Recently my mentor and colleague Harold D. Kiewel AIA wrote the following letter to Metropolis magazine after reading their article applauding Michael Graves for the "ground breaking" design of his Wounded Warrior houses for the US Army, in Fort Belvoir, VA, implying that those well designed buildings were the first of their kind.

Mr. Havenmeyer

The tone and insinuation of this article is an outrage and insult to 100s of architects who have been champions of design for all people, including people with disabilities, for 20, 30, 40, or more years. Some of this country's first work with disabled veterans dates back to 1950s, and resulted in the publication, in 1961, of the premier edition of the ANSI A117.1, the first model building code for accessibility. And the U.S. Dept. of Defense, through the Veterans Administration, published a plan book with dozens of designs for accessible homes in the 1970s. The basis of your February (2012) article may be Mr. Graves' first fully accessible home for a wounded veteran, but it is certainly not the Army's. And, if it is Mr. Graves' first, all I can say is 'for shame'.

- Harold Kiewel AIA, NCARB, CSI, CCS

Harold's words stand as a stark reminder of the fact that beautiful Universal Design doesn't come from some individual's inspiration alone. It comes from the perspiration of thousands of users and designers who have struggled for years to understand and share how to best fit the environment to the human condition.

The awards we showcase in this issue are some of the flowers that our Universal Design garden is now beginning to produce after 50 years of trial and error. We are pleased to share them with you and look forward to seeing a bumper crop, next year! ●

jsalmen@UDConsultants.com

Universal Design News

Universal Design, Accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Copyright 2013 **UniversalDesign.com**.

Authorization to copy items for the internal or personal use of specific subscribers is granted by **Universal Design News**. Any other reproduction in any form is prohibited without express permission from the Publisher.

Universal Design News is published quarterly by UniversalDesign.com LLC., 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912-4324; 301.270.2470 (v/tty); 301.270.8199 (fax).

E-Mail: jsalmen@UniversalDesign.com.

Home Page: <http://www.UniversalDesign.com>.

Publisher: John P.S. Salmen, AIA; **Editor:**

Daria Rogers; **Writers:** Jennifer Eckel, Daria Rogers, Lindsey Scherloum; **Consulting**

Editor: Elaine Ostroff, Hon. AIA, Irene Bowen, JD; **Layout:** Brittany Ruffin.

Universal Design News is published by **UniversalDesign.com**, a philanthropic website for Universal Design information, commerce and professional networking. With the help of advertisers, there will be profits to support Universal Design education and research.

UniversalDesign.com LLC is a subsidiary of Universal Designers & Consultants, Inc., which provides expert design review, facility evaluation and litigation support services for ADA, FHA, and other accessibility regulations.

Mail subscription rates:

Free online at UniversalDesign.com. [Click here to subscribe](#). One year \$25 (US), B&W hard copy with second-class postage paid at Takoma Park, MD. Postmaster: Please send address changes to **Universal Design News**, 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912-4324, or jsalmen@UniversalDesign.com.

For information on advertising rates or obtaining alternative accessible formats, please call, write or contact the **Universal Design News Publisher**.



Moreover, it is gratifying to see the large number of organizations that are now presenting Universal Design awards as part of their normal design recognition programs. When Universal Design News started publication 20 years ago, few people even understood the term. Now it has become recognized as a category of design excellence. This is dramatic indication of the way that the field of Universal Design has grown into the mainstream of design over the last two decades.

Access Board Extends Comment Period for Passenger Vessels

The Access Board held a public hearing on July 10 to accept comment on guidelines it recently proposed for passenger vessels under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Board members heard testimony from trade groups including the Passenger Vessel Association and the Cruise Lines International Association; advocacy groups such as Easter Seals, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Hearing Access Program; and vessel operators including the Golden Gate Ferry System.

The proposed guidelines would apply to newly built or altered cruise ships and other vessels that carry over 150 passengers or at least 50 overnight passengers. They would also cover ferries designed to carry 100 or more passengers and tenders that carry 60 or more passengers. Speakers provided mixed feedback on this scope of coverage. Some commenters recommended that the threshold for coverage of ferries be raised to the level of cruise ships, while others advised that the scope of the rule should be broadened to cover smaller vessels.

As a result the Board has extended the deadline for public comments on accessibility guidelines for passenger vessels. Comments on the guidelines, which were released in June, are now due on January 24, 2014, as indicated in a published [notice](#). The extension will more than double the allotted time for comments and is responsive to concerns raised by interested parties on the need for additional time to review the rule and prepare feedback, including responses to questions posed by the Board. For further information, visit the Passenger Vessels [homepage](#) or contact Paul Beatty at pvag@access-board.gov, (202) 272-0012 (v), or (202) 272-0072 (TTY).

DOJ and DOT Issue Guidance on Street Resurfacing Projects

Under the ADA, new or altered streets and roadways must incorporate accessibility features such as curb ramps where pedestrian circulation routes are provided. Some types of street resurfacing projects are considered an alteration and require the installation of curb ramps where pedestrian walkways intersect resurfaced streets. The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) recently issued joint guidance to further clarify when curb ramps are required as part of roadway resurfacing projects in response to inquiries on the topic from state and local jurisdictions. Even when not touching the sidewalk or curb ramps, resurfacing of a road from intersection to intersection requires

installation of accessible curb ramps, or when a cross walk is resurfaced, curb ramps at both ends are required. For the complete technical assistance document see: [\(ADA\)/Section 504 - Civil Rights | Federal Highway Administration](#).



A curb ramp in Detroit.

ICC/ANSI A117.1 (2013)

The A117 Standard Committee met during the week of July 15, 2013, and considered over 400 comments on proposals to change the A117.1 Standard. The Committee then confirmed their actions by ballot. Public review and comment on the First Draft Standard is scheduled to start October 25, 2013.

Among the most significant proposed changes are new sizes for wheelchair clear floor space, turning, T-turn dimensions and maneuvering clearance at doors. Previous dimensions were based on research from the mid-70's, which analyzed data from about 40 manual wheelchair users. That research was recently updated by the IDeA Center at the University of Buffalo, New York, to include 500 wheeled manual and powered mobility device users. The results of that extensive study indicate that the former 60" turning diameter is inadequate. The new standard proposes a 67" minimum turning diameter. The dimensions for T-turns also increased, and a range of versions are now offered depending upon the type of turn anticipated (section 304.3.1 and 304.3.2).

Both acoustic standards for schools (Section 808 and 809) and how to measure contrast and glare in signage (701.1.2) have significant comments. Descriptions of these proposed standards were reviewed in the [July 2013 issue](#) of Universal Design News. Watch UniversalDesign.com for announcement of when the public review draft is available for comment. ●

Among the most significant proposed changes to the A117.1 Standard are new sizes for wheelchair clear floor space, turning, T-turn dimensions and maneuvering clearance at doors.

Award-Winning Public Spaces, from page 1

Finished in June 2012, the improvements began with the enlargement and resurfacing of the parking lot for easier access. The paved pathway from the parking lot to the falls was enlarged so that groups of people can walk together, individuals can move with a caregiver and sign language conversations can easily occur while walking. Benches were added along the pathway, and adequate clear space was provided alongside each bench to allow for side-by-side seating for people who use wheelchairs and those who do not. Two of the picnic areas were surfaced with crushed limestone that can be easily rolled over and outfitted with accessible picnic tables that provide knee clearance.

The easiest route down to the falls is provided by an ADA compliant ramp made from recycled plastic. The ramp includes viewing platforms and is lined by a black chain-link fence that fades into the background so as to provide spectacular views from a seated eye level. The ramp ends at a transfer station made of a series of rock platforms, which blend into the natural setting and allow visitors to transfer from a wheelchair and descend into the water.

Those people looking for a more adventurous route to the falls can navigate the rock climb. Transfer platforms at the top and bottom of the rock climb allow people to transfer from a wheelchair onto the rocks. The tiered rocks are arranged at heights of 4"-8" and are smooth, wide and level enough to allow for movement between tiers while seated or crawling. This allows children with a wide range of mobility to enjoy the rock climbing experience.

Nugent Residence Hall

Architect: [BLDD Architects](#)

Award: [2012 Barrier Free American Award from The Paralyzed Veterans of America](#)



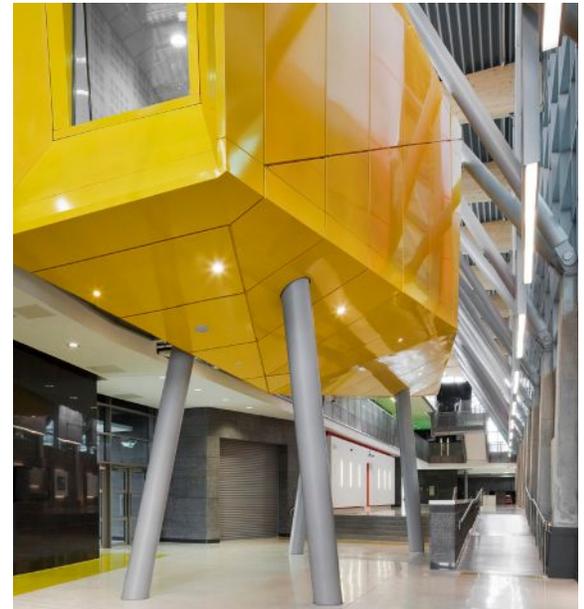
Height adjustable furniture can be customized to students' needs and matches the aesthetics and functionality of furniture provided in other dorm rooms.

This building includes proximity readers for access to each bedroom instead of a swipe card or key entry, a lift that provides ease of mobility between bed and bathroom, adjustable accessible furniture, a wireless paging system that notifies staff when assistance is needed and window blinds that darken at the push of a button.

University College Dublin Student Center

Architect: [Fitzgerald Kavanagh & Partners](#)

Award: [2013 Irish Architecture Award](#) - Best Universal Design Category, EcoWAN 2012, Irish Building and Design Awards 2013, International Green Apple Award - Sustainability



Traditional corridors are replaced with open spaces and brightly colored areas, like the yellow room pictured here. Photo Credit: Photo by Donal Murphy; courtesy of Fitzgerald Kavanagh and Partners

This 118,400 sq.ft space houses facilities for athletics and other activities for the student body, who participated in the design process through a consultation that allowed them to define their desires and aims for the building. The students asked for a space filled with natural light and color that contrasts with much of University College Dublin's existing architecture. The use of color, material choice and simplicity of design were named by The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland as deciding factors in the building's usability. The building replaces traditional corridors with an open layout of "interconnected volumes" that provides a visual connection across different spaces. Different colors and materials were used to help differentiate spaces, create repeated patterns throughout the building and improve wayfinding. ●

Award-Winning Residential Projects, from page 1

positioned at the back, a raised dishwasher and wall oven within accessible reach range. In addition, bead board covers the walls under the cooktop, counter and sink, enhancing the look of the clear knee space and tying it together with the rest of the space.

An Addition for Multigenerational Living

Contractor: [Custom Craft Contractors, Inc.](#) from Lansdale, Pennsylvania

Award: [2013 NARI Universal Design Recognition Honoree](#)



The wet room style shower includes a fixed overhead and a handheld sprayer. Photo Credit: Custom Craft Contractors, Inc.

Michael Foerning, CAPS, of Custom Craft Contractors Inc., described how his client had sought a residence near her son and grandchildren and found that the solution was to build an independent but attached addition onto her son's house. Though the client doesn't currently require wheelchair access, she is realistic about physical aging and wanted her home to be ready for anything.

To that end, Custom Craft Contractors, Inc. designed a gently sloping sidewalk to the home that terminates in a zero-threshold entrance and wide doors. The bathroom floor was framed 2" below the first floor level in order to allow for a zero-threshold transition at the bathroom door, and the wet room style shower includes a fixed deluge head and a handheld sprayer. This is the second year Custom Craft Contractors, Inc. has been recognized for their Universal Design projects. In 2012 they received a regional NARI award for one of their remodeled bathrooms.

Stoneham Housing Authority

Architect: [Abacus Architects + Planners](#)

Builder: MCM USA, Inc.

Award: [AIA/HUD Secretary's Award](#), Accessible Design Award from the Boston Society of Architects



Careful grading eliminated the need for ramps and handrails. Photo Credit: ©Bruce T. Martin

This public housing project located in Stoneham, Massachusetts combines accessible design with green features. Phase 1 of the project consists of two duplex homes designed to meet ADA and state accessibility requirements, as well as high standards for energy efficiency.

The buildings back up to a wooded area and accessible built-in terraces provide a connection to the outdoors. The site was graded to ensure that inclines were less than 5%, eliminating the need for ramps and railings which would have made the homes "seem cut off from the surrounding landscape."

UD features include knee clearance at kitchen counters, pull-out storage, maneuvering space in laundries, turning space in bathrooms, grab bars, tubs with transfer areas, roll-in showers and operable hardware, switches and outlets located in an accessible reach range.

To the designers, climate considerations were as important as accessibility regulations. High-density foam insulation, high-performance windows and radiant heating in the concrete floors keep the units comfortable and minimize energy usage. Shade from trees and deep overhangs minimize the heat of the summer sun, though the units are still bright enough that they require no artificial lighting during the day.

The AIA/HUD Secretary's Awards Jury praised the project saying, "This is an extraordinary building. What a great step forward it would be if every housing accessibility group modeled their projects after this one." ●

"This is an extraordinary building. What a great step forward it would be if every housing accessibility group modeled their projects after this one." - AIA/ HUD Secretary's Awards Jury on Stoneham

Award-Winning Technology

by Lindsey Scherloun

Access Glasses

Manufacturer: [Sony](#)

Award: [2013 Access Award from the American Foundation for the Blind](#)



Sony's Access Glasses provide closed captions and audio description for movie theaters.

Regal Entertainment Group was honored for their use of Sony's new Access Glasses in theaters nationwide. These glasses and headsets deliver closed captions and descriptive audio to moviegoers in a way that is individualized, adjustable and unobtrusive.

Access Glasses connect to a receiver that generates closed captioned text with holographic technology. The closed captions appear to hover in the air in front of the viewer and overlay the movie image, giving the appearance of watching a movie with burn-in subtitles. Access Glasses display captions directly in the wearer's line-of-sight, unlike other technologies that require viewers to shift between the movie screen and a separate display unit.

The glasses weigh less than 3 ounces and can be programmed to display bright closed caption text in a choice of six languages. Customers who are blind or visually impaired can use the glasses paired with headphones that provide descriptive audio tracks throughout the movie. This technology allows people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired to enjoy the same theater experience as everyone else, without the inconvenience of separate screening times or special seating.

So far these glasses have been distributed to 6,000 screens nationwide and Regal has plans to supply them at all of their digital theaters in the near future.

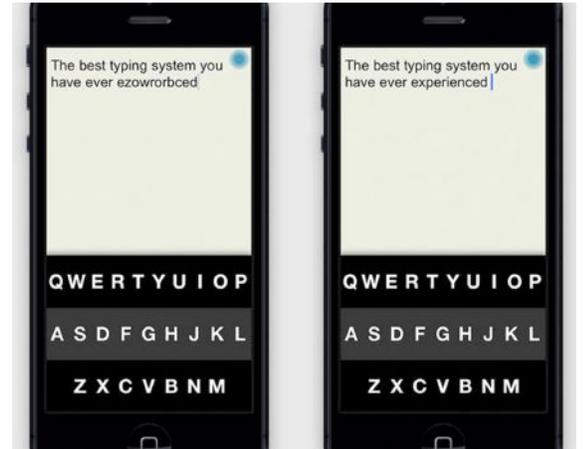
Fleksy

Designers: [Syntellia](#)

Award: [CES 2013 Innovation Award - Accessibility and Universal Design Category](#)

Fleksy is a new smartphone app that improves typing accuracy. The makers of Fleksy conducted market research that identified typing as one of the most frustrating smartphone tasks, due to typing mistakes, lack of physical buttons and small screens.

Using predictive text, Fleksy analyzes a wealth of data about a user's typing and can detect the correct word to input even when someone misses every single key. The app speaks aloud as users type, so that they can confirm that the message has been typed correctly without needing to look at the screen. Swiping gestures replace traditional punctuation buttons, making typing up to five times faster than on traditional touchscreen keyboards.



Fleksy makes typing on a smartphone so easy that there is no need to even look at the screen.

Recent collaboration with Sensus, a new app-enhancing smartphone case, allows the back of the phone to become the keyboard, freeing up valuable space on a smartphone's small screen. Lauded by technology reviews as an excellent innovation in smartphone technology, this app has been tested by thousands of blind and visually impaired users and is now making typing on a smartphone a better experience for everyone.

U-verse Easy Remote App

Designer: [AT&T](#)

Award: [CES 2013 Innovation Award - Accessibility and Universal Design Category](#)

This app converts a iPad or tablet into an accessible television remote control. When used on an iPad, the remote is much larger than traditional TV remotes, making it easier to use for people with low vision or fine motor impairments. The app provides different options for the screen color, button size and font size, so that users can customize the screen to work with their vision needs, plus the app works with Apple's VoiceOver screen reader technology to provide audio feedback. The app also uses AT&T's WatsonSM speech recognition technology, so that users can perform a variety of commands simply by talking into the device. ●

Access Glasses provide closed captions and audio descriptions, without the inconvenience of separate screening times.



Accessible

Home Modifications by
GLICKMAN DESIGN/BUILD

Exceptional Solutions for Independence

- Accessible Kitchens & Baths
- Ramps, Lifts, Elevators
- In-Law Suites
- Entryways



301-444-HOME
safer-home.net

SERVING THE WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA



SPECIALIZING IN INVISIBLE VISITABILITY

- *Maximize Independence by Removing Barriers to Mobility*
- *Minimize Stigma by Incorporating Solutions into Home Design*
- *Enhance Value by Combining Utility and Appearance*

301-444-HOME

safer-home.net



GERMANY

Berlin Wins City Access Award

This year's European Commission's [City Access Award](#), designed to recognize cities of 50,000 or more inhabitants that are making exceptional accessibility efforts, went to Berlin, Germany. This formerly divided city systematically implemented accessibility features during the unification of the two separate municipal and transportation systems, and it also incorporated design features that make navigating the city and using its public spaces easier and more inclusive for all. An accessible pedestrian system has been in place since 2011, while a tactile guidance system at street crossings and audible crossing signals have made the roads safer for people with sensory disabilities. The city's web based service [Mobidat.net](#), which is maintained by the Federal State of Berlin, was designed to help people with sensory, mobility and cognitive impairments, gain information about options and services in Berlin and encourage independent exploration of the city. Additionally, by 2020 the city plans for all underground train stations to be accessible.

UNITED KINGDOM

Building a Better Ambulance

A design team, assembled by The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design in partnership with the Vehicle Design Department at the Royal College of Art, the University of the West of England, Bristol, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and the London Ambulance Service, has [redesigned the modern ambulance](#) to better meet the needs of paramedics and patients alike. The project won the [2013 Design for All Foundation Award for Projects Undertaken by a Not-For-Profit Organization](#).

The layout and storage in existing ambulances makes them difficult to clean and stock. With no standard ambulance design, paramedics have to adjust to different working environments, and equipment and materials are difficult to exchange between ambulances with different storage configurations. The traditional layout makes it difficult to access both sides of the patient's body, and poorly designed storage makes it difficult to quickly access equipment and materials.

Gianpaolo Fusari and Yusuf Muhammed, Research Associates at The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, accompanied ambulance crews on several 12 hour shifts, documenting events and interviewing paramedics, health care providers and patients. They identified key areas of improvement and created a

mockup out of foam and cardboard that health care professionals then tested in a lab.

The new design provides 360 degree access to the patient, is easy to clean and includes a dedicated hand sanitizing station. Equipment packs containing all the materials needed for specific types of treatment are hung along one wall of the ambulance, allowing paramedics to quickly access what they need. This makes it easier to restock supplies and reduces the number of storage surfaces that need to be touched, limiting the spread of infection. A new digital diagnostics and communications system was also designed to allow information to flow more easily between dispatch, paramedics and the receiving hospital.

UNITED KINGDOM

Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors (I'DGO)

The [I'DGO Consortium](#), an academic project exploring how access to outdoor spaces can improve the quality of life for older adults, was an outstanding finalist in the [2013 Design for All Foundation Award for Not-For-Profit Organizations](#). The research project spanned nine years, included over 4,000 participants over the age of 65 and demonstrated that access to outdoor spaces significantly improves older adults' quality of life. Subjects were asked when and how they used outdoor spaces. Physical audits of the subject's neighborhoods were also conducted to identify accessibility features and barriers. The research found that people who feel comfortable going outside were twice as likely to get recommended levels of exercise regardless of sensory or mobility impairments. The study also found that typical street conditions often include a number of physical and preferential barriers that reduced older adults' use of outdoor areas. For instance, common problems include a lack of car-free paths, seating, public toilets and attractive green spaces. The research also showed that residential outdoor spaces have been declining in 21st century housing developments, and that tactile pavement was often counterproductive for ambulatory older adults.

The research was funded by the United Kingdom's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and included researchers from [OPENSspace](#), [SURFACE Inclusive Design Research Centre](#), and [WISE](#) (Wellbeing in Sustainable Environments). I'DGO has released [design guidelines](#) based on their findings, which explain the ways in which urban design can improve the quality of life for older adults regardless of ability or background. ●

**I'DGO's
Researched
found that
tactile pavement
was often
counterproductive
for ambulatory
older adults.**

Products for the Built Environment

by Jennifer Eckel



Kohler's Sensate provides a touchless faucet for the kitchen.

Sensate Faucet

Manufacturer: [Kohler](#)

Award: [Best in Show at the 2013 International Builders Show](#)

The faucet's state of the art sensors allow users to turn the faucet on or off simply by waving a hand or utensil through the sensor area. The faucet quickly responds to gestures within 20 milliseconds. Other innovative features of the Sensate include a two-function sprayhead, a magnetic docking system that securely locks the sprayhead into place, a swivel ball joint in the sprayhead that allows it to be angled and rotated, an AC power source that eliminates the hassle and expense of crawling beneath the sink to replace batteries and optional manual operation that offers homeowners flexibility of use and ensures that the faucet works during power outages.

Kohler's Sensate

1-800-456-4537

<http://www.us.kohler.com/us/>

Busch-MasterLight

+49 2351 956-1600

<http://www.busch-jaeger.de/en/motiondetectors/masterlight.htm>

STOOP

DRIM Studio, Korea



The Bursch-MasterLight is a nightlight, path light and emergency light all in one.

Busch-MasterLight

Manufacturer: [Busch-Jaeger Elektro](#)

Award: [Universal Design Consumer Favorite award from Universal Design eV](#)

This economical LED wall sconce provides a gentle nightlight, bright pathway lighting and emergency lighting in one. At dusk, the fixture's integrated sensors can automatically turn on the night light feature, setting the light to approximately 15% of its maximum brightness. The light can also be turned up to 100% brightness by manually flipping the light switch. A separate panic button activates a red and white flashing emergency signal, which helps emergency personnel identify the correct house or apartment when dispatched on an emergency call.



The Stoop charging station allows users to choose the console height that works best for them.

STOOP

Designers: Seung Yeon Ryu, Byung Soo Kim, Hye Joo Back

Award: [Universal Design award from Universal Design eV, 2012 Spark Award Concept](#)

Stoop is a hybrid charging station for electric cars and electric wheelchairs. Though not yet in production, the designers hope that by 2020 Stoop will remedy current charging station design problems. The dual height Stoop utilizes "angle and height" to accommodate both standing and seated users. A retractable cord keeps unwieldy cables off of the ground, and an RFID payment system makes payment easy for everyone. It is anticipated that by using new technology developed by JFE Engineering, users would be able to achieve a 50% charge in three minutes. A corresponding mobile app will help users locate and navigate to a Stoop. ●

Lifestyle Products

by Jennifer Eckel

Viera TC-L50E60 HDTV

Manufacturer: [Panasonic](#)

Award: [CES 2013 Innovation Award - Accessibility and Universal Design Category](#)

Panasonic's latest smart TV includes features such as voice recognition that allow users to adjust the channel, volume or search for content using their voice; voice guidance that reads aloud the on-screen options; access to the internet and the ability to interface with smart phones and computers. Each user can build a personalized "home screen," a useful feature for those with cognitive differences or reduced vision. The TV can even use face recognition technology to automatically select the personalized home screen of the current user.



The TV's voice guidance feature reads aloud the written options on screen.

Viera TC-L50E60 HDTV

1-800-405-0652
<http://shop.panasonic.com/shop/viera-elevisions?selectedTopNavId=nav1>

Smart Care System (SCS)

Manufacturer: [Moneual](#)

Award: [CES 2013 Innovation Award - Accessibility and Universal Design Category](#)

The SCS device, which is worn like a watch, has the ability to distinguish sounds and alert the wearer via visual display and vibrating alert. The SCS has settings for indoor sounds including a baby crying, doorbell or phone ringing, a smoke alarm and even boiling water. On outdoor mode, the wearer can be alerted to car horns or other loud noises that may indicate danger. An emergency 911 mode can call 911 and request help on the wearer's behalf.



The SCS's vibrations and text alert wearers to a wide range of indoor and outdoor sounds.

Smart Care System (SCS)

1-866-399-0600
<http://www.moneualusa.com/store/home.php>

Match Cooking Prep System

516-695-0602
<http://www.amandasavitzky.com/>

Match Cooking Prep System

Designer: [Amanda Savitzky](#)

Award: [2013 Metropolis Next Generation Competition](#)

Inspired by her brother who has autism, Savitzky designed a cooking set for her thesis project in industrial design at Syracuse University. The set's measuring cups have ergonomic handles and each measuring cup is a different color and shape, making it easy to differentiate them. Organization is made easier by a wooden docking station that houses the measuring cups, which are attached with magnets. Another docking station houses three mixing bowls that are each labeled with one, two or three circles, to represent different steps in the cooking process. A corresponding app provides easy to follow recipes with pictures, and allows parents and caregivers to upload customized recipes. The app describes measurements not as fractions (i.e. ¼ cup) but rather as the color and shape of the appropriate measuring cup (i.e. blue circle.) While initially designed for people with autism, this cooking set could also benefit people with hand dexterity limitations, children, people who are blind or have low vision and anyone who wants a cute and easy-to-use cooking set. Savitzky is using the prize money to further refine her design in the hopes of bringing it to market. ●



Shape and color coded measuring cups are organized on a docking station.

A NEW E-BOOK FROM UNIVERSALDESIGN.COM

Universal Design Tips: Lessons Learned from Two UD Homes

This new electronic book from UniversalDesign.com is filled with tips and ideas that will help guide anyone through the process of designing and constructing their own Universally Designed home. The book was co-authored by John Salmen, AIA, the publisher of *Universal Design News* and founder of UniversalDesign.com, and Ron Knecht, whose durable, energy efficient, and Universally Designed house was featured in the [January 2012 issue](#) of Universal Design News.

The first section of the book deals with the planning process, providing insight on how to choose a location for the house, plan out spaces to reflect your daily activities, choose and work with design professionals, finalize a floor plan and develop a building schedule.

The rest of the book is organized according to different areas or elements of the home (i.e., exterior doors, bathing, and kitchen counters, just to name a few). Whether designing a whole house or simply remodeling one area, *Universal Design Tips* makes it easy to quickly refer to the relevant section and find valuable tips that ensure success. Each of these sections includes design tips, photos and important lessons that the two authors learned through their personal projects.

John Salmen has been working in the field of accessible architecture and Universal Design for over 30 years, and he put this expertise to good use when remodeling a historic property to create the Universally Designed house he and his wife hope to live in for many years. Salmen's "Home for the Next 50 Years" has been featured in various media outlets including *The Washington Post*, *Fine Homebuilding*, AARP's television show *Inside E Street* and the book *The Accessible Home: Designing for All Ages and Abilities*. Now, readers will be able to explore Salmen's home in even greater detail and apply his experience to their own Universally Designed home projects.

Ron Knecht's Universal Design project started after his wife of 46 years became ill with cancer. As her health worsened, Knecht learned first-hand the importance of accessibility for maintaining independence, safety and one's quality of life. Before Knecht's wife passed away, she extracted a promise from him that he would move to a Universally Designed house located closer to their daughter. Knecht was underwhelmed by both



Universal Design Tips

Lessons Learned from Two UD Homes



By Ron Knecht & John Salmen, AIA

This e-book from UniversalDesign.com is filled with tips for your Universally Designed home.

the houses that he saw on the market and the UD house plans that he found online; he realized that he would have to plan and build a custom house in order to fulfill his promise.

Knecht and Salmen were mutually impressed with the thoughtful Universal Design details present in each other's homes, and decided to co-author a book that would draw from their experiences to provide guidance for anyone planning to build or remodel a home for enhanced safety, comfort, independence, convenience and aging in place.

The eBook is available from UniversalDesign.com as a downloadable PDF, for \$20. A free short excerpt of the book is also available for preview. To buy the e-book or view the preview visit UniversalDesign.com. ●

The e-book is available from UniversalDesign.com as a downloadable PDF for \$20. A short excerpt of the book is also available for preview prior to purchase.



Aha! Moments

Level Changes

When the ICC/ANSI A117 Standard Committee met during the week of July 15, 2013, one of the proposed changes under consideration was to clarify the language related to changes in level (Section 303). As currently stated, vertical changes in level of 1/4" high maximum are permitted, and beveled changes in level between 1/4" to 1/2" AFF are permitted if sloped no steeper than 1:2.

Door threshold manufacturers, among others, have assumed that these standards permit the use

of a 1/4" vertical level change on top of a beveled level change, as long as the overall height of both level changes is less than 1/2". Some members of the A117 Committee disagreed with this reading, arguing that the vertical level change can only occur at a maximum of 1/4" AFF and cannot be placed on the top of a beveled level change. If the standards are clarified to reflect this interpretation, many commercially available thresholds that are currently considered compliant with both ANSI and the ADA would need to be reevaluated. ●



A vertical level change that comes before/under a beveled level change is compliant.



A vertical level change that comes after/above a beveled level change would be noncompliant.

PROBLEM:

A sudden change in lighting levels can create difficulties for many people as they enter or exit a building.

TIP:

Lighting at entrances and lobbies should be carefully designed to provide a transition zone between the external and internal environment. Lighting within the transition zone should be adjustable depending on external conditions. For instance, more light will be needed on a sunny day to ease the transition

upon entering the building. At night, lighting will have to be bright enough to navigate by, but not so bright that it becomes difficult for people's eyes to adjust. Dimmable fixtures and window treatments at entrances and lobbies allow the lighting to be adjusted throughout the day. Programmable lighting can be set to change at various times of day and ambient light sensors can be used to automatically adjust artificial lighting depending on the amount of natural light available.

This design tip was adapted from information provided in the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design's *Building for Everyone* series. Visit their [website](#) to read the complete series, which is full of Universal Design guidance and tips. ●



This lobby would benefit from brighter lighting to ease the transition when entering or exiting the building on such a sunny day.

Calendar

Residential and Public Spaces Courses and Seminars

2013

October 16-18, 2013

- + Pre-show Education courses, Remodeling Show (NAHB) – Chicago, IL.
 - » NAHB courses include Marketing & Communications for Aging & Accessibility (CAPS I), Design/Build Solutions for Aging & Accessibility (CAPS II) and Universal Design/Build.
Details: <http://www.remodelingshow.com>

Oct. 21 – Nov. 17, 2013

- + Online Courses: from IDEa Center
 - » IDEa Center will be offering three courses during this period: Defining Universal Design, UD and Interior Environments and UD and Products. **Details:** <http://udeworld.com>

October 21-23, 2013

- + ASSETS: The International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility – Bellevue, WA.
 - » The ASSETS conference explores the design, evaluation, and use of computing and information technologies to benefit people with disabilities and older adults.
Details: <http://www.sigaccess.org/assets13/>

Nov. 4 – 7, 2013

- + National Association of ADA Coordinators 50th National Conference - San Diego, CA.
 - » A conference for those involved in making the ADA work in employment, higher education, access to facilities, and other programs and activities for those responsible for Title I (employment), Title II (state and local governments), and/or Title III (public accommodations) of the ADA.
Details: <http://askjan.org/naadac/>

November 4-8, 2013

- + 15th Annual Accessing Higher Ground – Boulder, CO.
 - » Accessing Higher Ground focuses on the implementation and benefits of Accessible Media, Universal Design and Assistive Technology in the university, business and public setting.
Details: <http://accessinghigherground.org>

Nov. 14, 2013

- + Webinar: Aging in Style Kitchens and Bathrooms - 9:00-11:00.
 - » From American Society of Interior Designers, this course provides a comprehensive overview of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and teaches designers how to design spaces that comply with those 2010 ADA Standards. **Details:** <http://bit.ly/12jFG0F>

November 19-21, 2013

- + ArchitectureBoston Expo (ABX) – Boston, MA.
 - » Formerly known as Build Boston. UD sessions include a discussion of the UD approach in Ireland, UD in housing and an interactive UD exhibit that will allow participants to walk through and compare two spaces, one of which is UD while the other contains common accessibility errors.
Details: <http://abexpo.com/>

December 12, 2013

- + Hotels: Weaving an Accessible Welcome Mat – 2:00 – 3:30 ET.
 - » This webinar hosted by the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center will cover a variety of topics addressed in the recent revisions of the ADA regulations. **Details:** <http://www.adainfo.org>

2014

February 4-6, 2014

- + NAHB International Builders' Show – Las Vegas, NV.
 - » This conference is the largest light construction building industry tradeshow in the country, attended by builders, remodelers, architects, contractors, dealers and distributors. Special events include a Universal Design Day and product tours and a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) Day and product tours.
Details: <http://www.buildersshow.com>

+ Do you know about an event not listed here? [Click here to let us know about it.](#)

+ For the latest, up-to-date calendar of UD education and training, visit UniversalDesign.com
