



RAMP Celebrates 30 Years!

By Julie Bosma, Executive Director

The past 30 years have been ground breaking! This year marks thirty years that RAMP has been in existence, providing services and advocacy to people with disabilities in Northern Illinois, attempting to break down barriers and alter negative attitudes. With the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the landscapes of our communities have changed drastically. Power doors, curb cuts and accessible parking spaces are now the norm. Hiring practices, fair housing and educational equality are now in most people's consciences and the movements forward are noticeable where they were once barely perceptible.

Thirty years is a long time to be around and we feel we have accomplished so much yet fully realizing that we have just begun. While the integration of children with disabilities in our schools is at an all-time high, they are still dropping out twice as fast as their peers without disabilities. And while we cannot believe we have a 10+% unemployment rate in this country, we are devastated that for people with disabilities the unemployment rate soars to more than 60%!

Yes, we celebrate the accomplishments, the advancements and the progress. Yet we also recognize that until people with disabilities receive the same education, employment opportunities and housing options as their peers without disabilities, our celebration is short-lived. Please join us in continuing our fight, knowing that the next thirty years will bring about even more positive changes and alter lives forever!