



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Tiffany Devon

[tdevon@comliveserv.com](mailto:tdevon@comliveserv.com)

734.722.7185

## **Just Because You're in a Wheelchair Doesn't Mean You Can't Be Part of Society**

*As Americans with Disabilities Act Marks its 18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

**WAYNE, MI – July 21, 2008** - Can you imagine being treated like you were damaged goods? Being made to feel inferior because you were “different?” Life used to be this way for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act has and still is changing that as people across the country celebrate its upcoming anniversary.

Dearborn Heights resident, Pauline Hardeman, remembers what it was like before the ADA. “Years ago, I was in an institution and I had no freedom. The staff told you what to do and when to do it. I was excluded from many activities because of my disability. Now I have a job, I can go to the movies and the mall and I have a lot of independence! Just because you're in a wheelchair doesn't mean you shouldn't be able to do what the rest of the world can do!”

Eighteen years ago, legislation was created to make society more accessible to people with disabilities. The American Disabilities Act was signed into law July 26, 1990. It is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability.

Several groups were instrumental in passing the ADA and a very local and vocal group also saw to it that most Michigan institutions were closed forever. Co-founder of Parents and Advocates and Plymouth resident Alice Saules, was elated when the doors were shut for the last time. “We used to rescue people from the institutions where they had no control over their lives. People with disabilities should not be treated as outcasts. They have just as much right to participate in society as anyone else. They just need a little help sometimes.”

Pauline is supported by Community Living Services. A non-profit organization that provides supports and services to more than 3,000 people in Wayne County and is funded through the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency. For more information, visit our web site at [www.comliveserv.com](http://www.comliveserv.com)

##