

JAMES C. DICKSON

Jim Dickson is Vice President for Governmental Affairs of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). He leads the AAPD Disability Vote Project, a broad coalition of 36 national disability-related organizations to close the political participation gap for people with disabilities. The project focuses on election reform, polling place access, voter registration and education and get-out-the-vote drives.

Jim played a central role with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) election reform task force. He now co-chairs LCCR's Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Task Force.

Before assuming his position at AAPD, Jim directed the National Organization on Disability's extremely successful VOTE! 2000 Campaign. The VOTE! 2000 Campaign exceeded its goal to increase the number of voters with disabilities by 700,000. In fact, over 2 million new voters with disabilities exercised their franchise in the 2000 Presidential election. He was part of the leadership team that wrote and secured passage of the "Motor Voter" law. This legislation makes it the government's responsibility to offer voter registration opportunities to citizens while receiving services from the Department of Motor Vehicles and disability agencies. Jim was co-founder of Project Vote!, a national, non-partisan voter registration and education organization that has registered over 3½ million African-Americans. He has organized and directed voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives in 23 states.

As director of the FDR in a Wheelchair Campaign, he created and led the coalition that placed the statue of FDR in his wheelchair at the entrance to his memorial. Jim has organized grassroots, multi-issue organizations in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and California. With the support of the Sierra Club, he organized the first grassroots congressional mobilization for the environmental movement, which resulted in the passage of the first Clean Air Act.

In 1987, Jim became the first blind person to sail a boat alone from Rhode Island to Bermuda. His objectives were to have a good time, and to stimulate public discussion on the abilities of people with disabilities.

Jim, a graduate of Brown University, resides in Washington, DC with his wife and daughter.