

1986

## Disabilities Awareness Committee Report 1986

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openworks.wooster.edu/campuscouncil>

---

### Recommended Citation

"Disabilities Awareness Committee Report 1986" (1986). *Campus Council Records*. 61.  
<https://openworks.wooster.edu/campuscouncil/61>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at Open Works, a service of The College of Wooster Libraries. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus Council Records by an authorized administrator of Open Works. For more information, please contact [openworks@wooster.edu](mailto:openworks@wooster.edu).

THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER  
CAMPUS COUNCIL  
DISABILITIES AWARENESS COMMITTEE  
REPORT  
1986

The Problem

Not many of us know what it's like to be physically disabled. We fly through our busy college schedules with little thought about obstacles that may inhibit our performance. We take our health for granted. Perhaps we get a taste temporarily of what a disabled person's lifestyle is like when we break an arm or a leg, but the arm and leg heal, and we're off and running again. The memory of any hardship fades quickly, and we bury ourselves again in our own huge problems--what to wear to Ichabod's, how to mend the nail I broke while typing my I.S., where the next keg of beer is coming from. Do we ever stop to think about what it would be like to be permanently disabled?

Physically disabled people are no different than the rest of us. They have their ups and downs, their failures and successes, but they do have one obstacle that the rest of us do not. They are surrounded by ignorant people who think everyone in the world stands between four and six feet tall and has two arms and two legs. What makes us so special? What happens when someday the tables turn, and we find ourselves in a wheelchair or find ourselves as a parent to a disabled child who can't go to the college she or he wants to attend because the facilities do not meet the needs of the disabled?

We, the members of the Disabilities Awareness Committee, want to do something about the facilities for the disabled on this campus. The College provides facilities for the disabled that place it within State requirements, but this

is not enough. No one can say that life for a disabled person on this campus would be easy. It is time to stop assuming that everyone has the same needs. It is time to take the challenge to do something for the members of our own species who need our help to get the most out of life. It is our responsibility to change this campus to benefit all who ask for an education. It is with this intent in mind that we present to all who are strong enough to listen, our report on the facilities at Wooster for the disabled, the successes, the failures, and the improvements that we feel are necessary to enable everyone to have a fair chance of survival here at the College.

## THE DISABILITIES AWARENESS COMMITTEE

### HISTORY

The Disabilities Awareness Committee (DAC) was set up in November 1985 as a task force committee under Campus Council. The DAC was formed because of a concern that the College facilities did not provide proper accommodations for the physically disabled. It should be emphasized that the College falls comfortably within State Code 504 which outlines the State's requirements for building accessibility useability for the physically disabled. The DAC relied, in part, on information supplied by Deb Hilty. This information consisted of background material on physical disabilities, pertinent State codes, and the findings of a campus study conducted in 1977.

The goals of the DAC were as follows:

- 1) To heighten student awareness of "the problem." We addressed this issue in several ways: by writing letters to the editor of the Voice, submitting articles, and placing reminders on cars parked illegally in areas designated for the disabled (see attached example).
- 2) To conduct a functional study of campus facilities. A "wheelchair tour" of campus was conducted to investigate the accessibility of buildings on campus. It was a follow-up of the 1977 report, and the findings are included in this report.
- 3) To establish immediate and long term means of enacting upon the committee's recommendations for structural improvement. Campus Council approved the spending of \$2,565 to renovate two restrooms, one mens' and one womens', in



Lowry Center. This renovation was contingent upon the College accepting cost overruns, with the understanding that Bogner Construction's quote was firm. The renovation is also contingent upon building codes which stipulate the number of toilets a building must have. The long term means of enacting the committee's recommendations will be outlined in Section A of the recommendations.

**SHOW RESPECT FOR THE DISABLED  
BY NOT PARKING IN THIS SPOT**

The Disabilities Awareness Committee  
Campus Council

## Findings

### Dormitories:

The accessibility in dorms is limited to physically able individuals. The halls are generally wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass, with the exception of Compton Hall. However, the phones in all dorms are either closeted or are too high for anyone in a wheelchair to reach them. In addition, drinking fountains are, with a few exceptions, too high to reach. It is impossible for an individual in a wheelchair to get above the first floor of a dorm, if s/he is lucky enough to get in the dorm at all. The outside doors are heavy and difficult to manage. Once inside, the handicapped person is faced with few choices: steep steps, unmanageable elevator doors, small elevators, and steep or nonexistent, ramps.

The dormitory bathrooms also pose a problem. Mirrors, towel dispensers, and sinks are too high for adequate use from a wheelchair. The stalls are not wide enough for a wheelchair to fit through, and for the most part, there are no bars in stalls. The showers are totally inaccessible.

Immediate, and fairly simple, action can be taken to alleviate two of these problems. First, phones could be lowered. Secondly, drinking fountains could be lowered. Long range changes could include providing for ramps, widening bathroom stalls, mounting toilets from the wall, lowering mirrors and towel dispensers, and making doors more easy to manage.

### Library:

The library is also fairly inaccessible. In the first place, there is no provision for parking for disabled persons.

Because the library doors are at the top of a staircase, there is no way for someone in a wheelchair to enter. The stairs are steep, and the doors are difficult to open. The elevator is too small. The water fountains and phones are too high. In the bathrooms, the towel dispensers and mirrors are too high. Finally, the book shelves are too close together to allow enough room for a wheelchair to get through.

#### Lowry Center:

Lowry is partially accessible to disabled persons. The doors are wide, as are the hallways. The elevator is wide and easily manageable. The stairs are slightly steep, but do have handrails. However, the phones, drinking fountains, and bathroom facilities are unavailable to wheelchair users. Food counters in Mom's and the cafeteria are too high. The counter in the bowling alley is too high. Finally, bookstore shelves are too close together to allow a wheelchair to pass through.

#### Mateer and Severance:

There are no parking spaces behind the buildings designated for handicapped persons. The elevators are wide enough; however, there is virtually no access to either building for a disabled person. The ramp leading to the back of Severance is much too steep for safe use, as is the ramp between Severance and Mateer. Steps leading to the front doors of both buildings prevent wheelchairs from entering. The lab tables and sinks are too high for safe use. The bathroom facilities and drinking fountains are inaccessible. In Mateer auditorium, there is no space provided for those in wheelchairs.

#### Kauke Hall:

Kauke shares many of the problems of Mateer and Severance. The parking facilities are inadequate for the handicapped.



Drinking fountains and restrooms are inaccessible. The elevator is key operated, and is therefore, restricted to key holders. Classrooms are cramped and cannot accommodate wheelchair occupants. The doors are generally too heavy for use by the handicapped.

Freedlander Theater:

There is handicapped parking behind Freedlander. However, there is no elevator in the building, phones are too high, and mirrors and towel dispensers in the restrooms are too high. The aisle in the main theatre is too steep for wheelchair users. There is no space for wheelchairs in the small theater.

Scovel and Taylor:

Scovel and Taylor are highly accessible for the handicapped. There are only two problems: 1)There is no parking space for the handicapped near Scovel, and 2)The phone on the second floor of Taylor is too high for a wheelchair occupant to reach.



## Recommendations

The Disabilities Awareness Committee was set up by Campus Council to examine the extent to which campus buildings are accessible to the handicapped. Several buildings were inspected for the minimum legal requirements. The recommendations that follow are submitted keeping not only the legal but also the financial aspect in mind:

A- Establishment of a fund which would enable the College to phase in the recommendations set forth by the DAC. The Alpha Gamma Phi Club, who were very helpful in the building inspections, have pledged their commitment to the fund by allocating the proceeds from their annual fund raiser with the provision that the College matches the Club's contribution. The exact details for the fund and its finances shall be decided by the president of the Alpha Gamma Phi Club and seek the approval of Mr. Bill Snoddy.

B- Gradual provision for the following facilities be made, so that the campus buildings are easily accessed by the disabled:

(i) Doors- Many of the main entrance doors in buildings are too hard to open if one is a wheelchair user. The ramp entrance door beneath the steps of Kauke Hall, for example, is too heavy. An attempt should be made to replace doors such as this one, so that it is easily operable by the disabled. The committee also recommends the installation of automatic door-openers in frequently used buildings like Lowry Center.

(ii) Parking Spots- There are hardly any reserved parking spots on the College campus. The committee feels that such

parking spots in front of Kauke, Severance Art building, etc., are absolutely needed. It is also recommended that Security increase its vigil of those misusing these reserved spots for their convenience.

(iii) Restrooms- Very few restrooms on this campus meet the basic requirements as laid out by law. Though in many cases, some alternative probably exists, it continues to be a problem in the main campus buildings like Andrews Library. The height of toilet bowls, grab bars, sinks, mirrors, etc., is too high. The committee suggests a renovation of such restrooms beginning with the main buildings.

(iv) Ramps- This is an area that needs reconstruction. The ramps in Severance and Mateer are too steep to be used at all. The library has no ramp provisions at all. An alternate access way to McGaw is also badly needed. The committee feels that steps to improve this must begin as soon as possible, starting with the important buildings.

(v) Phones- It is required by law that every building have at least one public telephone that is low enough for use by the disabled. This is a requirement that is severely lacking in all the campus buildings. The committee feels that a gradual improvement in this area is very necessary.

#### Wheelchair and Crutch

Provisions- The number of crutches and wheelchairs in Hygeia is very small. The committee recommends the purchase of at least one additional wheelchair and more crutches based on frequency of use.

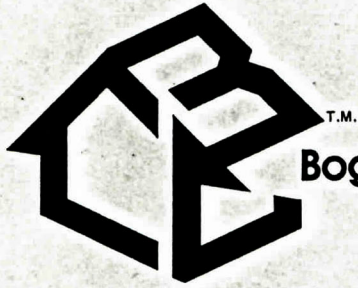
#### Braille Plates

and Signage- Though this is not a problem in the newer campus buildings, yet others like Andrews Library need Braille plates, in the elevator, for example.

Since this project is not likely to involve a great deal of expense, the committee recommends that this be acted upon as soon as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,  
The Disabilities Awareness Committee  
Andy Wert, Chair  
Arvind Balasundaram  
Karin Connolly  
Shireen M<sup>c</sup>Spadden  
Joanna Putney  
Jane Shipman  
Leslie Winter





**Bogner Construction Company**

February 6, 1986

College of Wooster  
Wooster, Ohio 44691

ATTN: Don Fisher

Re: Lowry Restrooms

Gentlemen:

We submit this quotation to renovate existing restrooms at Lowry for handicap use. We include the following:

1. New toilet partitions with grab bars, paper dispensers as detailed on enclosed drawing. Partitions equal quality as Taylor and Scovel.
2. Grab bars at one urinal location.
3. Remove one toilet in each restroom for College pickup.
4. Place wrist blades on existing faucets, lavatories will remain at present height and location.
5. No signage included.
6. Patch ceramic tile with leftover tile, or a close match.

Submitting the above for your consideration, we remain

Sincerely,

BOGNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

*William B. Gantz*  
William B. Gantz, P.E.

WBG/md

**General Contractors Since 1913**

Office and Warehouse • West Mulberry Street • P.O. Box 899 • Wooster, Ohio 44691-0899 • (216)262-6730



# BOGNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

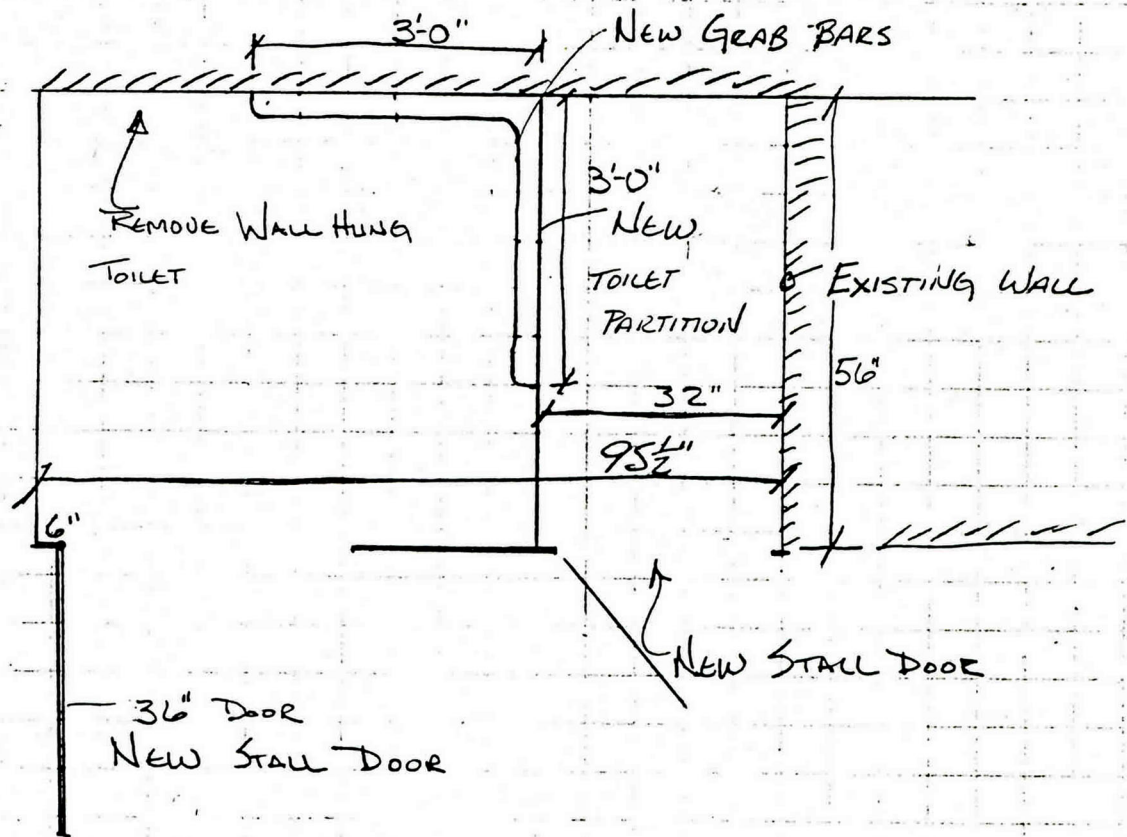
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

216/262-6730

WOOSTER, OHIO 44691

BOGNER'S — the only contractor you will ever need!!

RESTROOMS AT LOWRY CENTER  
COLLEGE OF WOOSTER



MANUFACTURERS

SANYMETAL PRODUCTS

HENRY WEIS Mfg. Co.

AMERICAN SANITARY PARTITION Co.

58\" HIGH

BAKED ENAMEL FINISH

PROPOSAL:

I would like to propose that Campus Council support the designation of three parking facilities for protected use by the physically disabled. The three parking areas would be

1. On University St. between McGaw and Kauke
2. On College Ave. in front of Hygeia
3. Behind Mateer.

REASONING:

Due to the nature of the Wooster campus, accessibility to some of its major buildings are severely restricted for those confined to a wheelchair, unless parking areas can be assured near ramps. By designating reserved parking areas close to crucial buildings, some of the barriers of access will be eliminated allowing for more comfortable mobility.

PROPOSAL:

I would like to propose that Campus Council allocate \$2,565.00 of its \$11,494.06 carryover fund for the renovation of two restrooms in Lowry Center. The two main restrooms would be designed to accommodate the special needs of the disabled. The quoted price would allow the following alterations:

1. New toilet partitions with grab bars and paper dispensers. Partitions of equal quality to those in Taylor and Scovel.
2. Grab bars at one urinal location.
3. Removal of one toilet in each restroom.
4. Placement of wrist blades on existing faucets.
5. Patch ceramic tile.
6. Installation of mirrors of deeper proportions.

REASONING:

The changes are necessary so that disabled members of the College Campus and the Wooster community can relieve themselves. It is important that Campus Council approve this undertaking as it displays Council's commitment to improving the college environment, acting on issues of social concern, and maintaining an open environment which is conducive to the use of this institution.