

Press Release

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS

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CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 06/14/2011

SACRAMENTO

California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA) Chairperson Margaret Johnson announced today the appointment of James V. Vitale as the Executive Director for the CCDA. Mr. Vitale will assume the position on June 20, 2011.

Included among Mr. Vitale's responsibilities, is to provide the CCDA with the leadership and management necessary for the CCDA to fulfill its statutory mandates. The CCDA was created by the legislature through Senate Bill 1608 (Statutes of 2008, Chapter 549) authored by Senator Ellen Corbett.

The Legislature in creating the CCDA concluded that despite the fact that state law has provided persons with disabilities the right to full and equal access to public facilities since 1968, and that a violation of the right of any person under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 also constitutes a violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Section 51 of the Civil Code) since 1992, that persons with disabilities continue to be denied full and equal access. The Legislature further concluded that businesses in California have the responsibility to provide full and equal access, but that compliance may be impeded by conflicting state and federal regulations, resulting in unnecessary litigation.

With a vision to developing recommendations that will enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to full and equal access to public facilities while facilitating business compliance with access requirements and avoiding unnecessary litigation, the Legislature created the California Commission on Disability Access. The Legislature intended that the CCDA broadly represent the ethnic, gender, disability and racial diversity of California. The CCDA commissioners must also have specific qualifications as detailed in the law.

Please welcome Mr. Vitale to the Executive Director position. A copy of Mr. Vitale's biography is included with this press release.

James V. Vitale, AIA, LEED AP, CASp

James V. Vitale will assume his role as Executive Director of the California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA) on June 20, 2011.

Mr. Vitale is an architect with over four decades of diversified public and private sector experience, an adjunct professor in the Construction Technology Department at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, a lecturer, curriculum development specialist, a Certified Access Specialist "CASp 007", expert witness and a Registered Construction Inspector. He joined the Division of the State Architect (DSA) as an Associate Architect in 2006 to assist in the development of the implementing regulations for SB1608, the Certified Access Specialist program (CASp) following his appointment by the State Architect as a subject matter expert (SME) to assist in the development of the CASp examination.

In 2007 Mr. Vitale was appointed Senior Architect, Access Compliance Section to the Riverside satellite office of the San Diego Regional office of DSA. Additional activities in support of DSA services have included serving as a syllabus developer and trainer for the DSA Academy and a (SME) to the CASp examination team.

Mr. Vitale's interest in all things related to the built environment and government service began at an early age, leading to studies in architecture, urban planning and interior design at Los Angeles Pierce Junior College, the Cal Poly Universities at San Luis Obispo and Pomona, and UCLA.

During the course of a forty-two year career, Mr. Vitale has been involved in the planning, design and construction administration of commercial and residential private and government projects including the FAA TRACON facility in Rancho Cordova and numerous K-12 schools and community colleges.

Mr. Vitale's public and professional service includes being an Eagle Scout, a past Cub and Boy Scout leader, a pro-bono architect for the Historic Italian Hall Foundation and the Altadena Library, secretary of the Californians for Disability Rights (CDR) Foundation, board member of ACIA and CSI-LA, and a professional member of AIA.

His personal interests include mentoring, training and sharing with staff the knowledge necessary with which to attain upward mobility and self improvement. In his private life Mr. Vitale and his spouse Dale are parents and grandparents. When he isn't working, you can find him maintaining their 1906 Craftsman home and tending to their award winning wine grapes, fruit trees, vegetables and roses.