**Stephanie Cook ADA Oral History Interview Transcript**

MARY MURRAY: Hello, my name is Mary Murray, and today I'm here interviewing Stephanie Cook for the ADA in Tennessee Oral History Project. The date is May 30th, 2025. And we are in Nashville, Tennessee, and Stephanie is joining us from Knoxville, Tennessee via Zoom. Stephanie, I'm happy you're here! The major goal of the project is to contribute to the historical understanding of disability and experience and the ADA in Tennessee. So let's get started, and you can tell me a little bit about yourself.

STEPHANIE COOK: Okay, happy to. Um, well, I am a Knoxville native. Um, so I have seen, um. The biggest part of my world is here in Knoxville and in East Tennessee. Um, and so, uh, I came in. Let's see… to the disability world, 14 years after I entered the world, so I wasn't born with a disability. I had a spinal cord injury. Um, as a result of a gunshot wound, um, when I was a teenager, so… Um, that's how I entered the world of disability, being a member of that community. And, um, I also thought. When I was asked to talk about the ADA, I thought, wow, you know. The ADA wasn't even law when I became a person with a disability. And I was only able to go back to my high school as a result of a bad situation. They got remedied. There was a fire, um, set at that high school two years before I would enter it. Um, and it was… unfortunately, it was arson, you know, and so… but to take care of the renovations after that arson. It required that they put an elevator in that high school that had previously no elevator. Um, and so if not for that. Tragic situation. Uh, then the elevator wouldn't be there, they wouldn't have given me accidental access to go to high school. So, I thought that that was pretty, pretty interesting. You know, and then, of course, later. You start to learn about the laws that, um, that come into play after you learn that maybe you faced a facility that wasn't accessible, or somebody treated you with absolute no regard as a human, because you just needed accessibility, so…You tend to learn these things along the way, and then you also get to meet other people that have disabilities that know more than you. And that allows you to grow from their experiences, um, how they reacted or responded to an issue. How maybe they were able to influence positive change. Um, and so I think we… we learn and grow from each other over the years, so I've… I've learned a lot about the ADA, both from a person who needed it. Um, to be able to just participate in life, and from a person who now accepts complaints or grievances from others that they feel need better access or better treatment.

MARY MURRAY: So as a young person, and having experienced not having the ADA and then having the ADA, do you think in terms of it having an impact on a personal life, your education, your work, your personal life, how has that made a difference?

STEPHANIE COOK: Absolutely. Well, with your personal life, now you are the one kid in the group that has a physical disability, and so if you go out somewhere to eat, to the movies, skating rink, wherever. You know, somebody's gotta haul that chair. Um, so it definitely impacts your social life, especially back then, when accessibility wasn't… viewed as, um, required or necessary. Um, and it wouldn't really impact that many people, so why prioritize it? You know, that sort of thing. Um, fortunately, I was able to continue to go to some of the regular places that we would attend, just like I mentioned, movies out to eat, things like that, but Um, but it wasn't until much later when the ADA started influencing the physical design that you realized you you could go to more places, but… It always took a ton of beforehand planning. You know, to make sure that wherever the group was going, or wherever the two or three friends were going, that, you know, Steph would be able to get in And that sort of thing. So it impacts personal, social, all of it. And I've also said, when disability happens, it doesn't just happen to the individual that gets that diagnosis. It actually happens to the whole family. You know, such as in my case, when I had to start using a wheelchair before. Uh, I had been able to walk. Or when before I had been able to walk, you know, now everybody has to consider, oh my goodness, what about the house we live in? You know, three stories over a creek and steps everywhere, you know, so… Um, you have to think about how you travel. How am I going to get to school? That sort of thing. And so, yeah, it impacts every person, not just that individual.

MARY MURRAY: Did you, um, have any experiences where you had discrimination related to that? Where you didn't get?

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes, I did, but, you know, before you understand. That the ADA provides you certain expectations when it comes to going out in the community, or… Um, affords you certain rights and protections. You don't even realize that it is discriminatory. You just think, oh, wow, this is an old facility. You know, um… They don't have great access, or I can park and get in, or I can be dropped off and get in. Um, but don't eat or drink much, because you can't go to the bathroom, you know, and then I am the one who was continually adjusting my participation, you know, and if… Some place, say Dollywood. Oh my gosh, Dollywood is a beautiful experience for anybody. But back then, it… it's still hilly, very hilly, but back then, they didn't have a lot of opportunities for people in wheelchairs, so… Um, at the time, they afforded, uh, free. Entry, you know, free ticket if you had a disability, but… Later, they continued to make improvements, and they got some pushback from the disability community on free access, because, you know, sometimes When you have… no, you don't have to pay, you don't have to put any skin in the game. Then it's okay for them to offer you lesser access. You know, and some people felt like it would be better if we all paid the same, which I agree. Um, so that we can get equal access and not special treatment. Um, so that's sort of evolved over the years, but yeah, back in high school. Forget the field trips. Most of the locations weren't wheelchair accessible, so I got to stay back at at school, you know. So, it definitely impacts each person and each stage of their life.

MARY MURRAY: Lots of barriers you experienced.

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes.

MARY MURRAY: What about attitudes?

STEPHANIE COOK: Oh my goodness, attitudes. Um, well, some people… who know you before you become disabled. Um, don't think they know you after you've become disabled. I was the same person. You know, just physically got around differently. You know, couldn't do maybe some of the same sports or recreational activities that we had all enjoyed together previously, but… Um, but they didn't change who I was. You know, so yeah, I saw… I saw friends fall away, you know? I saw… My close friends become closer friends, you know, and didn't care what obstacles we faced. If we went Uh, if we rented a cabin in the mountains for 3 days, and there were 3 steps up there, they were the first ones to volunteer to haul me. And the chair up those stairs. You know, no biggie. Um, but you definitely learn. Um, who's comfortable around you, and who isn't, and even to this day, I will get total strangers to walk up and ask some really interesting, none-of-their-business questions, you know.

MARY MURRAY: Really?

STEPHANIE COOK: But I've always tried to take that with a sense of humor, because I don't want to completely… I don't want to… bite somebody's head off when they're just genuinely trying to make small talk with a new individual that is a little different from them, but I've been known to give some smart aleck answers. For instance, um… A frequent question that I get from a total stranger is. How long you been in that wheelchair, young lady? And I will look at my watch, and I say, since about 5.30, 6 o'clock this morning, and I just keep rolling to the entrance of my destination. Um, get a lot of looks, but, you know, that's my way of trying to be lighthearted, and it also explained that how long I've been in this wheelchair has nothing to do with my purpose here, or who I am, and so I just leave it at that.

MARY MURRAY: And you find that sometimes people don't talk to you?

STEPHANIE COOK: Definitely. Oh, definitely. And… parents will often tell their children. "Shhhhh" You know, Mommy, look at that, her wheels are purple! "Shhhhh" You know, don't talk about that lady. Um, you know, it's okay. And I'm like, yes, my wheels are purple, you want to know why? Because purple is my favorite color! You know, and I'll strike up a conversation, and then usually, you know, the kids… kids do not care. What our differences are. If they see something that you have that's shiny and purple, and they want to talk about it, they're going to talk about it, and they don't care. Who you are, what your color is, how you get around, you know? So, that's my way of, if I can gauge that kid. Then it shows mom, hey, it's okay. It's okay to talk about that person who has a wheelchair with purple wheels.

MARY MURRAY: So you… it sounds like you are educating on a regular basis.

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes, yes, always you know, others advocated and educated long before I even became disabled, and I have greatly benefited from their advocacy and ensuring that laws were passed, and laws are enforced, and so I feel like that's partly my job, too. You know, everywhere they went, they had to explain why access was important, and why Inclusion mattered, and why they mattered as a human being, and so I just feel like it's part of their legacy that I, and others in disability community must carry on.

MARY MURRAY: That's a… that's a very good approach. And so, how did that affect your work life?

STEPHANIE COOK: Um, well, in my work life, it's interesting Because… As I mentioned earlier, that… that peer support aspect of getting to know other people with disabilities really impacted my work life And the way that happened is, um, well, I had gone to school. Um, at a community college, Pellissippi State, and then later to UT Knoxville. And, um, Pellissippi was newer campus, and so the access there was much, you know, pretty easy there. Um, UT Campus, however. Of hundreds of… or 100 years plus old wasn't so easy to get around on, and so I had different experiences there. But in each location, I was involved in groups that focused on improving access, or improving inclusion through diversity and equity initiatives, and so… Um, being around those individuals and joining in their educational efforts just led me to more type voluntary roles, and um… a friend of mine, when we got to UT, a friend of mine had been a student for… I think he had gone there for two different degrees at two different times, also a wheelchair user. And a big Volunteer fan, just like myself. And we were both students at the time of a renovation to Neyland Stadium. It's where we play a little football in the fall. And so, there had been renovations, and as students, we had gone, and we had… sat in the newly made accessible student section. Oh my goodness, it was… It was placed under the awning, so that was good, you know, out of the elements, if you cared about that. Um, and it was closer to the concessions and the restrooms, and that, that was good. Um, but where we were sitting. Um, when anything happened, and, you know, if you go to one of these games, you know, most people spend time on their feet rather than on their rear ends, because they're cheering, and they're excited. Um, so when that happened, 90% of the ballgame, all we could see were the rear ends of the individuals standing in front of us, so… Um, it wasn't the most pleasant experience. And Tim and I requested, um, after that, a meeting with then athletic director Doug Dickey. And he agreed to meet with us, and we spoke to him about the access. And I will never forget him looking at me. Hence saying, well, you know, we put that seating there under the awning for you people, so you wouldn't get… wet or snowed on in inclement weather. And, um, my friend Tim didn't say anything, because I jumped in and says, well the thing about us people. Is that we're fans of the team and the sport, and we know there's gonna sometimes be rain, or snow, or wind, and we tend to come dressed prepared for that. You know, but we want to see the field and the sport being played, and we really don't want to spend the game looking at the rear ends of the people in front of us. So. Um, shortly thereafter, they re-renovated and made the accessible seating better by removing some rows, um, and doing a little setback of our seating, so… We could actually see the fields and the game being played. And that led to the creation of what we called a student with disabilities group on campus called ACT or Accessible Campus Today. And, um, since then, there have been different iterations of that group, um, but they, you know, have worked steady to work alongside the administration, and the faculty and fellow students. Um, just to continually improve campus and make it more inclusive and accessible for all people. So, that was cool. Um, and then as a… also, as a student, I was invited to, um try to join what was called then the Knoxville Advisory Council for the Handicapped. And I hate that word. Um, so I joined that, and it was, um, an advisory council to the city of Knoxville. That would work on letting the city know if they knew of some area that needed to be improved, maybe better access, or just made accessible. Um, access to sidewalks, things like that, programs. And that body… Um, I was on it for a few years. It was actually created 41 years ago next Friday, June 6th. 2025. It will be 41 years old. Today, we call it the Mayor's Council on Disability Issues. And I'm super, super proud of that body, because I've seen the evolution of how the city has gotten better more accessible, more open and welcoming to all people of all ages and abilities. And, um, and that body really helps to guide that process. Um, when I became chair of that body. At the time, the staff member in the mayor's office, who was liaison to to that advisory council. Um, was moving into a different position, and so the position of policy analyst in the mayor's office was going to be open. And we were let know about it, and… Some of us thought, you know, people with disabilities should apply for that job. It's a role in the mayor's office that works directly with individuals with disabilities. And, um, so I applied for that, and eventually was hired for that position. May 26th of 1998. So, this past Monday was my 27th anniversary with the City of Knoxville. It's been a great ride.

MARY MURRAY: Congratulations. So, when you were in Neyland Stadium, was that your first time with activism?

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes. Uh, yes, it was. I mean, I was young, and um… I had never, you know, kind of led a discussion Um, in an advocate role, but I had supported others, you know, when Um, they were talking to maybe student disability services about improving this, or adding that to a restroom or something, but but that was the first time where I was one actively doing the talking, and uh… just the whole… “little lady” kind of attitude, I guess, is maybe what spark that in me, and um… I can be sort of fiery sometimes, and so… I was just myself that day, and, you know, nobody got angry, nobody… Um, slammed each other. We just had a respectful conversation where um, facts needed to be relayed so that we could make some positive change.

MARY MURRAY: So you've had some experience with advocacy and activism, but it just sounds like it just came naturally to you.

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes, yes, yes. Um, well, as I mentioned before, learning more about the disability rights movement. Um, the history of how laws were passed. But never implemented in good faith, and so how… Um, it took a lot of sacrifice and effort. Of previous individuals with disabilities to get out there, put themselves out there. And be vulnerable, and share their stories, and explain how they or another individual with a disability needed to be able to feel as though they were just as American as anybody else, because our country has laws that provide that, and now it's time to implement them. And enact upon them. Um, if they hadn't done that, I wouldn't have been given opportunities that I've been given. So, we all have a role in advocacy, and you don't have to have a disability. To educate and advocate on behalf of those who do. Um, but boy, when you can put a couple of advocates in the room, and they get their heads together. They can usually make a very strong case for why it's always better to be more accessible. Um, and more obviously inclusive of individuals of every age and ability, because right now. People with disabilities are 20… 5-27% of the population? And that's not including individuals who are age 65 and older. Categorized as senior Americans. Um, and when you add those two populations, it's approximately 50% of our current population, so… We're way past time to make every facility fully accessible, let's create it with universal design principles, and… Um, make sure it works for everyone.

MARY MURRAY: And you've… you've been there a lot of years, so you're giving a lot of credit to the people before you, but when you think about what the years that you've put in, what would you say has been something you could look back on, and that you really made a difference in the community.

STEPHANIE COOK: Well, it's that word, community. I don't like to take individual credit for anything, because I really don't think that you know, if I've not been put in a situation where there was a case that needed remedy in case of Stadium seating. Um, you know, I wouldn't have had to speak up. I wouldn't have met other people, and I wouldn't have been maybe Connected to opportunities that were given to me, and possibly not others, but… I do know, first, um, in the bot, the lady that hired me. Um, said that one of the best things she thought was about her hiring me was the fact that I was seen seen in that building. That building is the seat of city and county government in Knoxville. So, every day. People who may not have had regular exposure to people with physical disabilities. Got it. You know, I was coming in and out, up and down the floors, and You know, so that was something, and… And I thought, you know, that's pretty astute to think that. Um, I wasn't considering, you know, hey, seeing me as advocacy or educating, but it really is. Um, and nowadays, it's not unusual to go into that building and see people with all kinds of disabilities, and getting around in different ways. Um, and the building is accessible, and it's welcoming, and it's works for all users, so…Maybe that's partly… Um, some things that I could have influenced as renovations were made, but it's also partly Um, because at that time in 98, you know, folks were getting more and more familiar with the ADA and the fact that they had responsibilities under the law to comply with it. Um, and so, I don't know. I still don't like to take individual credit, but… I am proud, I will say. Of, um, when in 20… let's see, 2003, we were about to have a change of administrations. We had had a mayor. That was there for four 4-year terms, unprecedented, but… Um, you know, there were term limits, and then he left office, and a new individual came in. And because staff in the mayor's office are appointed by that mayor. Um, and not guaranteed to stay when a new mayor comes in. I knew there was a chance that I'd be working elsewhere. Come Inauguration Day, and I just couldn't leave the city. Um, with the name of the Disability Advisory Body, including the “H” word. So, I did work with the then-mayor's office and city council. To change the ordinance, to call CATCH, now, the mayor's Council on Disability Issues, or CODI. As we refer to it. So, you know, language matters. Words matter. Um, they send both subliminal and overt messages, I believe. Um, so it was important to me to get that name changed for whoever would be doing my job. In 2004 and beyond. So, but… Fortunately, the next mayor who came in, Mayor Haslam, you may recognize his name. He also was governor of Tennessee. Um, but Mayor Haslam kept my position. He just, excuse me, changed the title from Policy Analyst to Disability Services Coordinator. And, um, covered it with civil service status, so I was no longer an at will of the mayor employee. So that was a very positive, very positive thing.

MARY MURRAY: Can you think of some other things you were proud of when you think back?

STEPHANIE COOK: Um, yes, I'm also proud of, um, the mayor… the next mayor, Mayor O'Hara. Um, she created the Disability Services Office, where I currently work. Um, and she also created a part-time position in there for office assistant, so that I could finally be a… no longer be a one, you know. army, one-person army. Um, for all those years, because part of my role Well, my role is vast, but it is working with constituents, if they have a question, concern, or a complaint. Um, and I get to work through them, provide them information, refer them to the nonprofit or the other government little agency that can assist them. Um, I need to drill down. I have a limited time to drill down to any complaint and ensure that we respond, and fix what was broken, or… apologize if we did something wrong, or create access where it isn't. Um, you know, I work with any employee, and the city currently has approximately 1,600 employees. Who, at any given time, no matter the department or their role, should they need an accommodation due to a disability or medical condition. I lead the charge to process that accommodation request. Um, and I was also the staff liaison to, as we've spoken about. Um, the Council on Disability Issues. I was responsible for being, um. Closely connected to the disability community, so I'm sitting on various advisory boards or councils, local or state level, that are disability Um. What's the word? Disability, um, focused. And so just tons and tons. Of… of… I used to say balls in the air, but now it's more like balloons, because sometimes you… you can't even… hit them, or you try to get them to, you know, hit them, and they're just everywhere, so… Um, it's a big job, and I absolutely love what I do. But having my part-time person has been an immense help. And she's just single-handedly taken on the role of expanding Um, CODI and its reach into the community. Um, our current mayor, Mayor Kincannon, asked us early in her administration you know, let's… can we expand the reach into the disability community? And, you know, make sure we're being Um, more inclusive of what's going on, and their ideas and things, and sure, yes. And so, CODI then expanded from just Um, being the 21-member body to, um, and having 3 regular committees to. Um, being the backbone to lead to our 20… excuse me, 2018 designation. As being an age-friendly network city by the World Health Organization. They created subgroups that dealt specifically with some of the domains of livability that is strongly supported. By AARP, and we've… the city's partnered with AARP now since 2017, I think. Um, so we're trying to be super inclusive of both the disability community and the senior community, because we understand When you put those two groups together. Half the population is impacted. So. I have said for many decades now, you know. It's not that we're creating accessibility for the wheelchair users, you know, because those are… obvious disabilities, we recognize need. Certain things, larger restrooms, larger parking spaces, ramps, or elevators. We are creating a community, a society. That is able to be used and enjoyed by anybody! Short, tall, children, older individuals. Um, somebody that might have a cane, or walk with a white cane for a visual disability, somebody that can't hear or doesn't hear well. Um, you know, we're building this for everybody. That person who has the occasional… knee. That just aches and aches. Because of the weather. Uh, you know, we're building a community that works for everybody, and every ability. And that's just really become the philosophy, I believe. Um, and I've always, always worked very closely with Knox County's ADA coordinator. Um, our system is… is distinctly two different governmental systems, city and county. So, um, like, for instance, the county has control of all of the libraries and the schools. Um, and the city doesn't have, you know, libraries or schools. Um, but there are libraries and schools certainly located within the city limits, so… Um, we work across the board to increase access or connect transportation, that sort of thing. Um, in the city and the county. So, it's always been good, um, to have that relationship amongst the ADA coordinators.

MARY MURRAY: What about… have you ever, because it's with, um, institutional places where you have to interface, have you ever experienced backlash when you're trying to do your advocacy?

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes. Yes.

MARY MURRAY: You want to tell me more?

STEPHANIE COOK: Steph has a saying. Steph has a saying, she gets her hand slapped sometimes. But that's okay, she got another one. You know, um, yes, I have, and… And that's okay, because I believe my job, my duty, and my personal calling is to educate. You're going to say no. You're going to push back on some wild and what you think is in… ridiculous. Um, question or request Until you better understand why that question was asked, or why that request was made. So, if I ask for us to consider making one entrance of a facility more accessible. By doing it this way. And the pushback is, okay, but we already have an accessible entrance. And then I say, but that entrance is off the loading dock. Which is an exactly main entrance, and nobody wants to go by the stinky trash cans in 90 degree weather. We need a more, you know, like everybody else, main entrance experience. Okay, okay. I get that. I get that. So then we talk about how we're going to design that new ex… new access to that entrance. And Steph may say, hey, this is the latest and greatest, most expensive thing we can do, and it's gonna look pretty. And we'll put a bow on it. Let's do it that way. Steph's being a little ridiculous, even then. And so, if there's pushback, okay, Steph, but we do this way, and we're still fully accessible. Much more inclusive. It's an obvious, welcoming main entrance for anybody. And it costs just a little bit less. How about that? Sure, we're good. That's how my job works. You know, I don't take personally. When somebody says no. You know, um, I don't, um… I don't hold it against… I don't hold anybody's ignorance against them. I teach them, you know. Now, if they don't want to listen. I can be pers… I can be pretty pushy. You know, and I can just be the squeaky wheel, and Um, eventually, they will call me, you know, they will stop by my office, or I'll set up a meeting with them. And we'll talk through what it is. I am a team member. I'm an a family member here at the city. And I understand my role is unique. I understand it may not be fully understood by all, but as I understand it. My job is to educate and advocate, and that's in my job description, and so I feel like that's both internally and externally, and for 27 years, I've had the privilege of being able to do that. And I appreciate the city of Knoxville for that.

MARY MURRAY: And as you described, the mayor's change and staff changes in your… so it's a constant.

STEPHANIE COOK: Yes, every 8 years. Um, one has to go back and introduce herself to the new staff, you know, um… Get to know that new staff. Sometimes, individuals from previous administrations stay in that role. Or maybe they stay in a different role. Um, but there's always plenty of new people. Coming in. And if you think about it, there are probably a hundred other people similar to me, who want to get the ear of that person, who want to share, hey, this is what I do. Because they may be coming in new. To local government. So, um, yeah, but we do this every administration, and I'm proud to do it because I'm proud of what I do, and I'm happy to be in the role that I have, and I think that with this role, you know, so many people in so many other departments now Understand what the ADA is. And what it means to their departments. And so, um… They can also educate new departmental leaders or new staff that come along, so It's kind of like we dropped a rock in the pond many years ago, and the ripples are still happening. As a result of that.

MARY MURRAY: Well, we have about 10 minutes left. Is there anything specific that you wanted to… add, or is there anything related to hopes and dreams for the future for the ADA?

STEPHANIE COOK: Oh, goodness, um… The implementation… of the ADA, I think, was probably one of the greatest days in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Um, I know I was proud. I was proud to be there in DC in 2010, when President Clinton signed the 10-year anniversary. Um, you know, and I think it's important that we always go back and look at the videos of the Capitol crawl. Of the sit-in that Judy Heumann led. Um, because no matter how much better and more accessible we are today. It's not going to happen on its own. It is not going to happen on its own. We've got to continue to have people with disabilities at the table. When decisions are being made. When project scopes are being brainstormed and, um, architectural and construction plans are being, you know, tapped out or rearranged and edited. We've got to be the voice. There, representing 50% of the population. And that population's only gonna grow. Every day in the U.S, Individuals turn age 65 or older at the rate of 10,000. Every single day. That began around 2000… 2002, And stats say that that's not going to end until about 2030. So, one used to joke about the senior tsunami. You know, 20, 30 years ago Listen, that's been here, done that. So, no community, I don't believe, is fully prepared to say they're fully accessible to everybody, all ages and abilities. But I'm hopeful that every community is working towards improving that. Um, no matter if it has to do with buildings, sidewalks, transportation, policies. In offering programs that include every type of person. Um, because that's what's important, that's what the ADA is about. And I think one also One thing I want to leave you with is The ADA is a huge Civil rights law, and I'm grateful for it. It has 5 titles. Employment, state and local government, public transportation, public accommodations, which means Anything that is, um, impacts commerce from shopping to seeing a movie, restaurants, doctor's offices, all of that. Effective communication, basically, for anybody that may have a barrier to communication, whether it's language, it's… their vision, it's their hearing, that sort of thing, or an intellectual disability. And Title V. Title V is called miscellaneous. And I think too many people skip that one. Or they don't care to learn more about it, but I believe Title V to be probably the most important title of the ADA. And the reason is, it's the title that explains This is federal civil rights law. Which gives individuals with disabilities or advocates on their behalf. The right… to advocate for themselves. To request accommodation. To file a complaint, or the worst case scenario, a lawsuit. In advance of their rights. And they are guaranteed. Not to be intimidated. Harassed, coerced. Or retaliated against in so doing. I think too many people with disabilities need to learn that particular chapter better, or Title better. Because I think fear of being seen as a rabble-rouser. Or not being friends anymore. Or fear of losing the job, or fear of being banned from that restaurant. You know, keep some people from speaking up. Don't be afraid to speak up. If we're afraid to… if we… advocates were afraid to speak up historically we wouldn't have the rights and the laws that we do today. So, advocacy cannot stop. Education must be non-stop, and we've just got to keep moving forward, because you know, we've lost a number of some of our strongest disability advocates. Justin Dart, Judy Heumann, Um… Ed Roberts, and so we've got to keep that torch burning. And I've been doing this for a long time. I'm not going to be able to do it forever, so… Those that I meet, and hopefully positively impact along the way, they're carrying it on. For me, in my retirement, and for the rest of us coming along. Behind me.

MARY MURRAY: Wow, well, I think that I have just met at one of the gems of the Knoxville, Tennessee.

STEPHANIE COOK: Oh, thank you, Mary.

MARY MURRAY: Thank you for your time. I really appreciate it.