About the Authors

Jim Thatcher

Dr. Jim Thatcher received his PhD from the University of Michigan in 1963, one of the first PhDs in Computer Science. Together with his thesis advisor, Dr. Jesse Wright, Jim then joined the Mathematical Sciences Department of IBM Research, where he stayed until 1996.

His research area was mathematical computer science, including automata theory, semantics, and data abstraction. Jim began moving away from the abstract and toward the practical when he and Dr. Wright, who is blind, started working on an "audio access system" for the IBM Personal Computer.

This work culminated in the development of one of the first screen readers for DOS in 1984-85, called IBM Screen Reader. (Such access systems are now known as "screen readers"!) He later led the development of IBM Screen Reader/2, the first screen reader for a graphical user interface on the PC. Jim was intimately involved in the development of IBM Home Page Reader, a talking web browser for the blind and visually impaired.

In 1996 Dr. Thatcher joined the IBM Accessibility Center in Austin, TX, where he led the effort to include accessibility in the IBM development process. A key part of that effort was the establishment of the IBM Accessibility Guidelines specifically for use within IBM's development community.

Jim served as Vice-Chair of the Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee (EITAAC), which was empanelled by the Access Board to propose standards for Section 508; he chaired the subcommittee on software standards. Later he wrote the course on Web Accessibility for Section 508 for ITTATC, the Information Technology Technical Assistance and Training Center, which was funded in support of Section 508.

Dr. Thatcher received numerous awards for technical work over his 37 year career with IBM. He received a Distinguished Service award from The National Federation of the Blind in 1994 and the Vice President's Hammer Award for his work with the Department of Education on the development of Software Accessibility Standards in 1999. Jim retired in March, 2000, becoming an independent consultant in the area of accessibility.

Paul Bohman

Paul Bohman, M.S. is the Technology Coordinator for WebAIM (Web Accessibility in Mind), a project at the Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University. He specializes in training Web developers and IT professionals in accessible web design skills. Over the years, he has provided web accessibility training at numerous universities, colleges, conferences, corporate settings, media events, and workshops. He has also written a broad range of documents, tutorials, articles, checklists, guides, and other materials, many of which are featured on the WebAIM site (*www.webaim.org*).

Michael Burks

Michael Burks currently serves as AT&T Network Product Manager and Expert on Accessibility of AT&T Web-Based Products and electronic and information technology.

He is also the Webmaster and Public Information Officer of the International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet (*http://www.icdri.org*), a non-profit organization dedicated to presenting disability resources and information to those who are dealing with disability issues.

He works with the Internet Society (*http://www.isoc.org*) on disability issues and has made presentations and taught tutorials on web accessibility and disability issues around the world.

He is married and has a 15 year old son.

Shawn Lawton Henry

Shawn Lawton Henry (*www.uiaccess.com/profile.html*) helps organizations develop and implement strategies to optimize design for usability and accessibility. For over a decade, she has worked with international standards bodies, research centers, government agencies, non-profit organizations, education providers, and Fortune 500 companies to advance user interface design. Shawn developed accessibility resource *http://www.UIAccess.com*.

Bob Regan

Bob Regan is the product manager for accessibility at Macromedia. In that role, he works with designers, developers, and engineers from around the world to communicate existing strategies for accessibility as well as develop new strategies. He works with engineers and designers within Macromedia to develop new techniques and improve the accessibility of Macromedia tools.

Bob has a Masters degree from Columbia University in Education. He is currently a doctoral student in Education at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. His dissertation research looks at accessibility policy implementation strategies.

Bob spent six years as a teacher and technology leader in Chicago and New York City. Working with teachers and students across a range of ages and subject matter, he has extensive knowledge of elementary and secondary education. Bob spent two years teaching web design and accessibility at the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Sarah Swierenga

Dr. Sarah Swierenga is both an experienced researcher and a practitioner, who has almost 20 years of experience in the scientific study of users in both commercial and military environments. She has extensive skills in user interface design, data collection tools, and methodologies including usability tests, questionnaires, and focus groups.

Additionally, Sarah led a corporate accessibility compliance initiative, providing technical consulting on over 50 products, creating an organizational strategy for implementing Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act standards, developing technical guidelines for applying the regulation, and raising company-wide awareness of accessibility compliance issues.

Currently Sarah holds a joint appointment at the University of Dayton with the Department of Psychology and the Research Institute's (UDRI) Human Factors Group. In the Psychology Department she teaches courses on human-computer interaction and human factors psychology. At UDRI, Sarah provides expertise in usability and accessibility testing for commercial applications. Her research programs focus on e-learning environments and accessible web design issues.

Sarah received a Ph.D. in Human Factors Psychology with a concentration in human-computer interaction from the University of South Dakota, and a B.A. in Psychology from Calvin College. She is also a Certified Professional Ergonomist (C.P.E.). She can be contacted on *sarahswierenga@yahoo.com*.

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Mark D. Urban

Mark D. Urban of Raleigh is Chairman of the North Carolina (USA) Governor's Advocacy Council for Persons with Disabilities.

He is currently chairman of the board of directors for the International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet (*http://www.icdri.org*), and vice-chairman of the InterNational Committee for Information Technology Standards, V2 (IT Access Interfaces).

He is the author of several papers and presentations worldwide on IT access in government and industry, and is active in the US federal Accessibility Forum, as well as the W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative. He worked as senior information technology architect for accessibility with North Carolina's Information Technology Services and served on the Information Resource Management Commission work group on accessibility. Urban was chairman of the Board of Selectmen (mayor) for the town of Shutesbury, Mass from 1992-1994. He served as a member of the United States Navy Reserves as a Fleet Marine Force corpsman until his diagnosis with Type 1 Diabetes in 2000.

Mr. Urban currently does private consulting on accessibility matters with federal, state, and local agencies and the businesses that supply them.

Cynthia Waddell

In the world of accessibility, Cynthia D. Waddell, JD, is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in the field of electronic and information technology as well as employment and construction. As the Executive Director of the International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet (ICDRI), Cynthia Waddell combines disability law, policy, and technology to lead ICDRI'S Accessibility Oversight Consulting Services for government, university, and private sector clients.

As the author of the first accessible web design standard for US local government, Cynthia Waddell's accessibility efforts in the international arena have included participation on the Portuguese International Accessibility Board, an effort that led to Portugal's adoption of the Portuguese Accessibility Guidelines for web sites. She also serves as the United Nations expert in accessible technology transfer, having served as Rapporteur for the Manila outcome document calling for accessible information communications technology, and provided input for the draft convention on rights of people with disabilities.

In 2003 she participated in the Bush Administration UK-US seminar exchange on employment and universal standards for accessible technology, following her participation for several years in the "Boosting the UK Digital Economy- A Virtual Think Tank." A frequent writer and speaker, she presented at the "Global Everyone Access" INET 2000 in Yokohama, Japan, at INET 2002 in Washington DC and recently at the 2003 "Accessibility for All" European Union Standardization body conference as part of the "Design for All" initiative.

Cynthia Waddell combines her expertise in disability legislation and technology to provide education and professional consulting services for access to electronic and information technology for persons with disabilities. In May 2003 she was the recipient of the first *Government Technology Magazine* award for "Leadership in Accessibility Technology and for Pioneering Advocacy and Education." She was the subject of a feature story "Enabling Technology" in the February 2001 issue of *Government Technology Magazine*. In addition, as one of the world's leading experts, she was the sole US speaker at the 2001 "Design for All European Day of Disabled People" at the invitation of the European Commission and the European Disability Forum. Recently in the US, the National Council on Disability cited her influential paper "Applying the ADA to the Internet" in their impact report *The Accessible Future*.

Cynthia Waddell participates on the federal US General Services Administration Section 508 Accessibility Forum. She is an ADA Mediator for the US Department of Justice Key Bridge project and a member of the National Task Force on Technology and Disability. She also serves on the National Committee for Information Technology Standards (NCITS) V2 IT Access Interfaces Technical Committee. Current appointments include State of California Building Standards Commission Access Code Committee and the Area VII Developmental Disabilities Board. She is Vice-Chair of the Internet Society Disability and Special Needs Chapter and an active participant on the World Wide Web Consortium Web Accessibility Initiative Interest Group.

Cynthia Waddell is a Lecturer in Law and holds a Juris Doctor from Santa Clara University School of Law where she was designated a Public Interest Disability Rights Scholar and a Dan Bradley Fellow at the Employment Law Center in San Francisco, CA. In addition, she was a Rotary International Foundation Fellow at Exeter University, England, as well as an USC-Cambridge University Scholar at Cambridge University, England. She received her B.A., *Cum Laude*, from the University of Southern California.