

## Henry Claypool

**The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** has selected Henry Claypool as director of the



"My commitment to working on behalf of Americans with disabilities is a deeply personal one," says Henry Claypool, HHS Office on Disability director.

Office on Disability. Claypool has 25 years of experience developing and implementing disability policy at the federal, state, and local levels, and he has personal experience with the nation's healthcare system from the perspective of an individual with a disability.

Claypool sustained a spinal-cord injury more than 25 years ago. He relied on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which enabled him to further his education.

Following his initial rehabilitation at Craig Hospital (Englewood, Colo.), Claypool completed a bachelor's degree at the University of Colorado and spent five years working for the Center for Independent Living in Boulder, after which he became director of the Disability Services office at the University of Colorado-Boulder. He has held various advisory positions for HHS, including senior advisor for disability policy to the administrator of the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) during the Clinton administration.

As director of the Office on Disability, Claypool will be the primary advisor to the HHS Secretary on disability policy and will oversee implementation of all HHS programs and initiatives pertaining to Americans with disabilities.

*Portions of this article appear in Movin' On, Fall 2009. Used by permission.*

## Alyson Roth

**In 2000, Alyson Roth** was involved in a near-fatal car accident resulting in spinal-cord injury and paralysis from the waist down.

Two years later, she obtained a BS degree in music education at Samford University (Birmingham, Ala.). In 2005, she earned an MS in elementary reading and literacy from Walden University (online).

While at Samford, Roth established a "Disability Awareness Week" that opened eyes on campus and became a catalyst for further accessibility within the community.

After graduation, Roth taught music in the public and private-school sectors before joining Free Wheelchair Mission in 2007. The nonprofit organization distributes wheelchairs to the poorest people with disabili-

ties in 71 countries around the world.

Roth, who is from Irvine, Calif., was crowned Ms. Wheelchair California in April and placed second in the Ms. Wheelchair America competition in August. The pageants are competitions designed to select the most accomplished and articulate spokeswoman for the millions of Americans with disabilities. Roth has been



"I was truly honored to have been chosen and to represent not only women but all people with disabilities," says Alyson Roth, Ms. Wheelchair California 2009. She placed second in the national competition.

involved in advocacy work for nearly a decade.

In July, Roth became the first woman with a disability to surf in the Hurley U.S. Open of Surfing in Huntington Beach, Calif.

The Ms. Wheelchair California Pageant is almost 40 years old. The winner is the state's official spokesperson and representative of women with disabilities and the disability community. Eligible female participants must be 21–60 years old, use a wheelchair or scooter 100% of the time outside the home, and be U.S. citizens. All mobility-related disabilities are included, whether lifelong or acquired through trauma, military service, or illness.

Judging is based on contestants' activities as advocates for themselves and the disability community, as well as on their "platform." No talent or swimsuit competitions are involved.

The 2010 Ms. Wheelchair California Pageant will be hosted by and held at the Abilities Expo, at the Los Angeles Convention Center on April 9–10. Ms. Wheelchair America 2011 will be crowned in Long Beach, Calif., at the Renaissance Hotel on July 26–31. Platform speech presentations and the crowning event are open to the public. Ticket-sale dates will be on the Ms. Wheelchair California Web site below.

**Contact:** [www.mswheelchairca.org](http://www.mswheelchairca.org) / [www.mswheelchaircalifornia2009.blogspot.com](http://www.mswheelchaircalifornia2009.blogspot.com).

## Evan Piper

**An airplane accident in 2001** resulted in a T12/L1 spinal-cord injury that left Evan Piper paraplegic. Since then, he's lived his daily

uses a handcycle to bicycle with his family and friends, and enjoys RV-ing, water sports, scuba diving, and water-skiing. He designed, manufactured, and installed a custom lift system to

licensed general contractor. His mobility and mechanical skills were honed as a certified technician since his teenage years. He applies this skill set to modifying vehicles as well as the design and



Evan Piper is busy running a successful company in Florida, but he still has time to enjoy many outdoor sports, such as handcycling, scuba, tennis, and water-skiing.

life experiencing the issues that require the very services he provides.

Since 1979, Piper has been president, general manager, and lead technician of Piper Medical, Mobility & Accessibility; Piper Construction; and Piper Automotive & Marine Service, Inc., in North Miami, Fla. In addition, he is an avid wheelchair-tennis player,

enable him to fully access his boat. Using hand controls, he continues to fly his airplane for business and pleasure.

In the course of operating Piper Medical, Mobility & Accessibility, Piper has provided litigation support and expert testimony for various depositions and trials. His home-accessibility-related construction expertise stems from many years as a

function of other mobility devices. All this has been rounded out with substantial coursework and certification in medical, mobility, and accessibility equipment.

And, as if he's not busy enough, Piper is also a motivational speaker!

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