



Cynthia D. Waddell, Juris Doctor  
Executive Director  
Law, Policy and Technology Subject Matter Expert  
International Center for Disability Resources on  
the Internet (ICDRI)

**Contact Information**

E-mail: [Cynthia.Waddell@icdri.org](mailto:Cynthia.Waddell@icdri.org)  
Telephone: (408) 691-6921

In the world of accessibility, Cynthia Waddell is an internationally recognized expert in the field of electronic and information technology as well as employment and construction. She is the author of the first accessible web design standard in the United States in 1995 that led to recognition as a best practice by the federal government and contributed to the eventual passage of legislation for Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards (Section 508). A frequent keynote speaker, she serves as the ICT Accessibility and Government Services Expert for the United Nations Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs at [www.g3ict.com](http://www.g3ict.com).

In September 2007, the International Communications Union commissioned her to write a background paper on meeting information and communications technology (ICT) access and services needs for people with disabilities. The ITU paper is entitled "Major Issues for Development and Implementation of Successful Policies and Strategies" and has been well-received. She is also the co-author of a soon to be released UNESCO publication addressing access to the built environment and accessible ICT for telecentres and multimedia centres: ***Accessibility Guidelines for Multimedia Centres.***

Cynthia Waddell is the co-author of two books: ***Web Accessibility: Web Standards and Regulatory Compliance*** (Apress 2006) and ***Constructing Accessible Web Sites*** (Glasshaus 2002, reprinted Apress 2003). These best practices and technical resources include the first global surveys of laws and policies in countries addressing accessible web design. Her most recent book was selected by the Japanese Industrial Standards Working Committee for translation into Japanese for an ICT training event.

The free CynthiaSays™ web accessibility tool and portal was named after her and endorsed by the American Council of the Blind. The CynthiaSays™ portal at [www.cynthiasays.com](http://www.cynthiasays.com) is a joint educational project of ICDRI, The Internet Society Disability and Special Needs Chapter, and HiSoftware. The tool enables web developers to post content on the web that is accessible to assistive computer technology utilized by people with disabilities as well as alternate Internet access devices such as cell phones, palm pilots and personal digital assistants.

Her seminal paper, "***The Growing Digital Divide in Access for People with Disabilities: Overcoming Barriers to Participation***" was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Commerce and the National Science Foundation for the first national conference under President Clinton on the impact of the digital economy. It has been translated and cited by governments, businesses, universities, and entities around the world, including an IMF/World Bank Summit and the World Economic Development Congress. A collection of her papers are posted on her website at [www.icdri.org](http://www.icdri.org)

A frequent writer and speaker, her papers have been translated and cited by organizations including the National Council on Disability, an independent advisor to the US President, in their 2001 report ***The Accessible Future***.

Cynthia Waddell is a Lecturer in Law and holds a Juris Doctor from Santa Clara University School of Law. She was designated a Public Interest Disability Rights Scholar and a Dan Bradley Fellow for the Employment Law Center in San Francisco, California. 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 where she received Honors at Entrance.

### **Memberships & Affiliations**

- Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (Founded by ITU)
- Vice-Chair, The Internet Society Disability and Special Needs Chapter
- Accessibility Forum, U.S. General Services Administration (Section 508)
- Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Voting Standards Working Group IP1583
- National Task Force on Technology and Disability
- Global Alliance for Accessible Technologies and the Environment (GAATES)
- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative Interest Group
- Past Chair of Santa Clara County Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Former California Governor Appointee to Area Board on Developmental Disabilities

## **Selected Consultancies**

**United Nations** - Ad Hoc Committee Expert on Accessible ICT and Access to Built Environment, Convention (Treaty) on Rights of Persons with Disabilities; 2007 ICT Expert for International Telecommunication Union (ITU) "Access to telecommunication services for people with disabilities," Geneva; 2007 Speaker for Internet Governance Forum in Rio de Janeiro; UNESCO co-author of ***Accessibility Guidelines for Multimedia Centres***- a GAATES 2007 project; Participant in "UN Meets Silicon Valley" Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UN-GAID) 2007; Speaker, World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis 2005; Rapporteur for Pacific Rim Manila Declaration 2003; Participant, Latin America Quito Declaration 2003 in Quito, Ecuador

**European Union** - Speaker for 2003 "Accessibility for All" conference in Nice, France for EU Standardization bodies; Speaker for 2001 "Design for All" European Day of Disabled People in Brussels at invitation of European Disability Forum and European Commission

**Argentina**- 2007 "eGovernment for Everyone" Keynote Speaker at Congress in Buenos Aires for Seminar "Web Without Barriers for People with Disabilities;" sponsored by Congressional Commission on People with Disabilities, Argentina Capitol Chapter of The Internet Society (ISCO) and ISOC Disability and Special Needs Chapter

**Canada, Province of Ontario**- 2008 and 2006 Advisor for Ministry on regulatory effort and standards for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

**Japan** - 2004 Keynote Speaker for Tokyo Launch of Japanese Industrial Standards web requirements and private meeting with Diet regarding accessible ICT; Speaker for several Yokohama ICT events including INET 2000

**Norway**- 2007 Keynote Speaker for First International Conference on Technology for Participation & Accessible eGovernment Services, Kristiniansand, Norway

**Portugal**- Advisor on Portuguese International Accessibility Board that led to adoption of Portuguese Accessibility Guidelines in 1999

**Serbia**- 2007 Keynote Speaker for "Digital Age for Everyone" in Belgrade and expert consultant for Serbian Cabinet Ministries

**United Kingdom** - Advisor to US/UK IBM project for e-government 2006; Contributor to "Boosting the UK Digital Economy- A Virtual Think Tank" 2001

**United States** - Accessible Technology Expert for President Bush Administration UK-US seminar exchange on employment and technology 2003; Speaker for President Clinton's first national conference on the impact of the digital economy in 1999; Speaker on accessible web and voting for National Association of Secretaries of State; Ongoing Speaker for many US government agencies including NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and the US General Services Administration Section 508 programs; Lecturer on accessible web for a number of US universities; Project Manager and Accessibility Subject Matter Expert for award-winning accessible ICT projects for the State of California, the County of Santa Clara and other government entities; Consultant for development of Accessible ICT policy and procurement practices under Section 508 for government, universities and private sector; Section 508 Trainer of electronic and electrical engineers on technical requirements for accessible design of technology; Accessible Web Expert Witness in US litigation; Lecturer-in-Law, Disability Rights, Santa Clara University School of Law, Santa Clara, California

### **Selected Awards**

- 2004 State of Florida Davis Productivity Award- Governor Jeb Bush Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Working Group
- 2003 Government Technology Inaugural Award for Leadership in Accessible Technology and for Pioneering Advocacy and Education
- 2002 Commendation by Board of Supervisors, County of Santa Clara, for Decade of ADA Work and Service as Chair of the County Advisory Commission for Persons with Disabilities
- 1998 "Top 25 Women on the Web" by Webgrrls, International
- 1997 Helen Putnam Grand Prize for Excellent by the California League of Cities for development of Accessible Web Design Standard