

ADA Celebrates 25 Years

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After many years of providing people with disabilities with equal rights, this year the Americans with Disabilities Act is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

The ADA became a law in 1990 and was the first law to establish a clear ban on discrimination on the basis of disability.

Sachin Pavithran, director of the Utah Assistive Technology Program, has worked to improve the rights for people with disabilities for many years with the help of the ADA.

“The law ensures equal access,” Pavithran said. “It allows people with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities, as well as equal access to public areas and information.”

Allowing for equal employment opportunities among all job candidates has been an important contribution to the fight for equal rights for people with disabilities.

“Unless the person is unable to do the functions necessary for the job, under the ADA, the employer cannot deny employment based on disability alone.” Pavithran said.

In addition to preventing discrimination in the workplace, Title One of the act ensures persons with disabilities the necessary assistive technology needed to do their job.

“In Title One, it talks about the reasonable accommodations,” Pavithran said. “If accommodations can be provided, they should be.”

Although the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act is helping to improve the rights of people with disabilities, there are still plenty of problems to be solved and further legislation that can be passed to lessen discrimination.

“The ADA has been around for 25 years but is still not perfect,” Pavithran said. “More legislation can be passed to help persons with disabilities, we still have a long way to go.”