Franklin Roosevelt
1882 - 1945
Franklin Roosevelt served for 3 terms as President of the United States and helped pull the country out of the depression through social programs. He also led the U.S. through World War II. Due to polio, FDR could not walk unassisted. Unfortunately, because of the times, he felt he had to hide the extent of his disability from the American public.

Disability Awareness Month

Harriet Tubman
1820 - 1913
Tubman was a slave born on a plantation in Maryland. When she was thirteen years old she threw herself between a fellow slave and the plantation overseer who was about to whip him. The overseer struck her on the head. For the rest of her life she had a form of epilepsy. Tubman escaped slavery at age 29 and dedicated the rest of her life to rescuing slaves and to civil rights, including women’s suffrage.

Disability Awareness Month

Frida Kahlo
1907 - 1954
Born in Mexico, Frida Kahlo is known throughout the world for her unusual, colorful, and sometimes disturbing paintings. Her disabilities stemmed from childhood polio and a horrible bus accident when she was eighteen. Many of her paintings reflect the physical pain she suffered through most of her life.

Disability Awareness Month

Stephen Hawking
b. 1942
Hawking grew up near London and received his doctorate in theoretical physics from Cambridge. Since 1979, he has held the Lucasian professorship in mathematics at Cambridge, the chair once held by Sir Isaac Newton. He has been compared to such great intellects as Newton and Albert Einstein. Since the early 1960s he has been the victim of ALS, a progressive and incurable motor neuron disease that confines him to a wheelchair. Of his illness, Hawking has said that it has enhanced his career by giving him the freedom to think about physics and the Universe.

Disability Awareness Month

Judy Heumann
b. 1947
From 1993 to 2001, Heumann served as Asst. Secretary to the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services at the U.S. Department of Education. Heumann who contracted polio at the age of 18 months states, "Disability is not a tragedy but a normal part of life. It is a tragedy when disabled people are excluded from opportunities which would enable them to be part of the economic mainstream of society. I have committed my life to enabling disabled individuals and their families to have the same hopes and dreams as we have for nondisabled people."

Disability Awareness Month