

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



March 7, 2011

Reply to Attn of:

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity *Cert. Mail No.: 7007 2680 0001 2215 8852*

Mr. George Sparks
President
Denver Museum of Nature and Science
2001 Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80205

Dear Mr. Sparks:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has completed a compliance review of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS), a recipient of NASA financial assistance. The review was conducted pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and its implementing regulations at 14 C.F.R. Part 1251, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs receiving financial assistance through NASA. A copy of the regulations is enclosed.

Based on an evaluation of data provided by DMNS, on-site interviews and an architectural accessibility review, we find DMNS to be in substantial compliance with NASA's Section 504 regulations. However, our review revealed a number of compliance concerns. Some of these concerns pertained to Section 504 procedural requirements, such as the need to develop and implement a self-evaluation to ensure that programs, services and activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities, as well as the need for revised internal grievance procedures to comport with Section 504 requirements. Others pertained to DMNS's program accessibility, particularly architectural accessibility. The report of our compliance review provides recommendations and a proposed implementation plan as a means of strengthening existing compliance efforts and addressing specific barriers to program participation observed during the review. A copy of our compliance report is enclosed.

In addition, the report identifies promising practices at DMNS for ensuring equal opportunity regardless of disability. For example, DMNS partnered with Very Special Arts of Colorado (VSA), an affiliate of the International Organization on Arts and Disabilities, to provide training of DMNS staff to help them understand the daily needs of people with disabilities who visit DMNS. VSA was also invited by DMNS in 2007 to conduct a "walk-thru" of DMNS's facility to identify architectural barriers to individuals with disabilities. DMNS has used this analysis to implement accessible programs, services and facilities for individuals with disabilities.

NASA staff will contact DMNS in one year to follow up on DMNS's progress in implementing NASA Section 504 compliance recommendations.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it may be necessary to release the report and related records on request. If NASA receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personal information which, if released, could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Mr. Robert Cosgrove, External Programs Manager, Program Planning and Evaluation Division, at 202-358-0446 or robert.cosgrove@nasa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda R. Manuel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brenda R. Manuel
Associate Administrator for
Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Enclosures

cc:

Maria Hannon