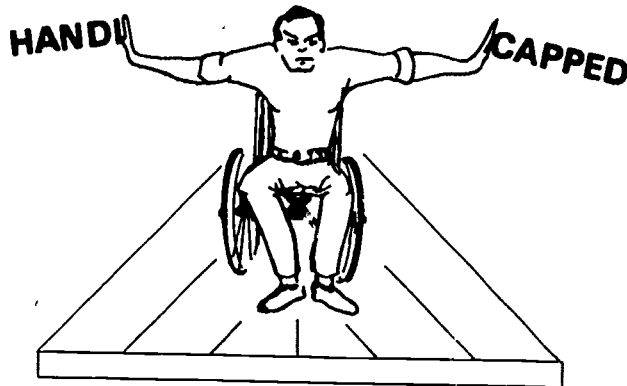


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S.O. F.E.D. U.P.

Student Organization For Every Disability United for Progress



*HANDBOOK FOR
THE DISABLED
STUDENTS OF
BROOKLYN
COLLEGE
C.U.N.Y.*

EC 050 966 E

WRITTEN BY FREDERICK L. FRANCIS

About The Author

Frederick Francis is an above knee bilateral amputee who graduated from Brooklyn College in June of 1971. Along with Arthur Lefkin, Mr. Francis founded S.O. F.E.D. U.P. and was elected the first President. He is now attending New York University's graduate program in Rehabilitation Counseling as an R.S.A. trainee.

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PREFACE

The essence of this short discourse is the theme of our entire program at Brooklyn College: It is the necessity for all to form a coalition of disabled and non-disabled individuals, in a united effort for activism, in order to secure the inalienable rights that are essential for the disabled to function as independently as possible.

There have been isolated accomplishments and achievements across this nation, on the part of brave and persistent individuals and progressive and highly committed organizations, that are praised and set up as models of inspiration for the disabled, to work harder, achieve more, and strive to surmount above average obstacles in pursuing their goals. They have had their affect upon us. They have succeeded in their efforts. They have fulfilled their purposes. They have influenced us to become better motivated, better trained, better educated, and because of this, better people.

But what happens to us now that we have worked to become this way? When we attempt to seek higher education, we are, forced to select a school according to its architectural accessibility, rather than if its degree program, and academic accreditation meet the standards of our individual professional and educational goals, or achievement caliber. When we go to look for a job, to put what we have been educated and trained for into operation, are we judged for the job on an equal basis as our non-disabled peers? When we do get a job, can we support ourselves, or our families, on the salary we earn after the exorbitant expenses for transportation to and from work are deducted from our paychecks (since we cannot use what is publicly provided for all)? When we can support ourselves comfortably in a nice apartment, are we able to live where we want, if we can't get through a door that is not wide enough to enter the building or get into the bathroom?

What then happens to our motivation? Are we to be teased by lucrative programs and independent efforts that are dangled in front of us and give us the incentive to work harder and to try to build a better life for ourselves, only to find, blocking our way, what appears to be insurmountable obstacles that are created by the apathy of bureaucratic administrators and the selfish unconcern of our own people, who feel they have made it and do not concern themselves with the problems of their fellow men?

The reason I am presenting these rhetorical questions, is to make you realize that individual, or isolated accomplishments are not truly complete if the overall society and structure are not affected by it, and -till remain apathetic to the needs of the masses.

The policy of inspiration must now be replaced by a policy of *activism*. We must expand and fulfill our rehabilitation methodology to include a concern as to what happens to the disabled person after he is trained or motivated to the specific standards of a program where success is based solely on his securing remunerative employment.

We must make the hierarchy of education aware of the necessity to abandon the psychology that forces an institutionalized alienation of disabled individuals into isolated specific programs and classes for the *handicapped* only, and instead, make all schools and colleges architecturally accessible and bureaucratically non-inhibitive for the *disabled* so that they, and the non-disabled can interact with each other.

The disabled must have the same opportunity to attend any college of their choice as the non-disabled. They should not have to compromise their professional and educational goals because architectural barriers prevent them from gaining access to the school of their choice.

We must end the blatant discrimination that employers and administrators have for the disabled, by forcing Federal, State and Municipal intervention and legislation to protect our rights. And equally important and necessary, we must educate them to the fact that the disabled are capable of many qualities that will outweigh their physical limitations, so that they, as employers, will be able to judge us as prospective employees, free from the bigotry of the social stigmas attached to the disabled, which are not valid or fair.

We must make the individual and the independent organizations for the physically disabled, aware of the necessity to join together as an activist nationally collated force united in their efforts to bring down the walls of apathy, oppression, and discrimination.

We must make the disabled individual aware of the fact that only he, as a single entity of such a force, is the kinetic energy responsible for giving it the power to work. And, I say "*Disabled Individual*", rather than *Handicapped* because handicapped is the terminology favored by those who, through their ameliorative efforts and tedious apathy, create or strengthen those, *until now*, insurmountable walls that are the obstacles and barriers responsible for handicapping us. Until now, I say, because we are tired of these walls being taken apart by the tedious brick by brick process as practiced by those, who can do no more, but only dole out to us concessions and conciliations in the name of charity and ameliorative programs to placate their own consciences.

The lack of ramps, elevators and lavatory facilities that are accessible and properly equipped, presents insurmountable barriers to the physically disabled. We, the members of S.O. F.E.D. U.P. have succeeded at Brooklyn College in

eliminating these inhibiting factors that deny the physically disabled the freedoms of independent performance in an atmosphere conducive to learning and understanding. However, what we have accomplished is but a foundation for what is to follow, as determined only by you, yourselves. It is your responsibility, as well as mine, to add to what we have begun for you, by utilizing what experiences and knowledge you gain at Brooklyn College, and actively adapt it to the overall community. Until all facilities, be they public, private, university, business or housing, are completely accessible to the disabled, society is guilty of handicapping us in our efforts to achieve our rights. Until we, the disabled, begin to become *future*, as well as *now* oriented, in our thinking, we will continue to be as much a handicapping factor ourselves, as the intolerance and apathy of our institutions. The key for success, status, and recognition in our society is education. Therefore, we as students, who are physically disabled, must be realistic about our situation when choosing a college. Of course, until universal renovation is a reality, we must choose a college that is physically accessible to us—but equally as important and critical is the vital necessity for us to choose a highly accredited institution that will compliment our own academic qualifications and goals, so that the coupling of these two variables will afford us the maximum credentials possible for graduate school acceptance and professional placement.

This is essentially what we are offering you at Brooklyn College—an investment in your future.

* * *

My most sincere thanks to Elaine Pomrantz and Eileen Cruz, who helped me to research the information which appears in this handbook, and especially to Arthur Lefkin whose dedication and contributions have made S.O. F.E.D. U.P.'s success possible.

Frederick L. Francis

Frederick L. Francis
Founder, and First
President of
S.O. F.E.D. U.P.

Part I

Student Organization For Every Disability United for Progress

HISTORY

S.O. F.E.D. U.P. was founded during the Fall semester of 1970 by Frederick L. Francis, and Arthur Lefkin, both disabled students, because they recognized the tremendous need for a united effort for activism on the part of the disabled of Brooklyn College, in order to eliminate the architectural barriers, and those curricular and bureaucratic procedures which inhibited their educational performance and initiative.

Our initial role was to act as a collective agent for the disabled. However, it was not too long before we were forced, out of necessity, to assume the role of a "pressure group", in order to secure our demands and recommendations made to the administration, because of their tedious apathy in response to them. As a result of our efforts, we were able to meet with President John Kneller, and successfully secure definite commitments on his part to make Brooklyn College architecturally accessible to the disabled; and to establish a "Dean's Committee on the Disabled", made up of various college Deans, faculty, and disabled student leaders, whose purpose would be to act as an implementing board in the various critical areas of admissions, curricular planning, campus facilities and counseling. We had also secured, from President Kneller, the assurance that the newly constructed additions to the present campus would be completely accessible to the disabled student.

Within a month these commitments were fulfilled, and S.O. F.E.D. U.P. then began to make the administrators of the college aware of the necessity to provide various support services, needed for all types of disabilities; and began to escalate their important role of providing social, educational and recreational activities for the disabled and non-disabled members of the college community.

PHILOSOPHY

In general, we emphatically state that what we have accomplished and tend to build on the Brooklyn College Campus is not an isolated "college ghetto" for the disabled in City University, nor do we have, or will we ever become a health conservation college program. What we highly endorse is the interaction between disabled and non-disabled individuals in an integrated community for the purpose of attaining a better understanding of each other based upon who they are as individuals...not what their disabilities or limitations...brand them as.

We firmly believe that there is a critical need for a shift in the consciousness and awareness of the disabled from being influenced and dictated to by others who are domineering and overprotective, to seeking a more active role in determining what directly affects them.

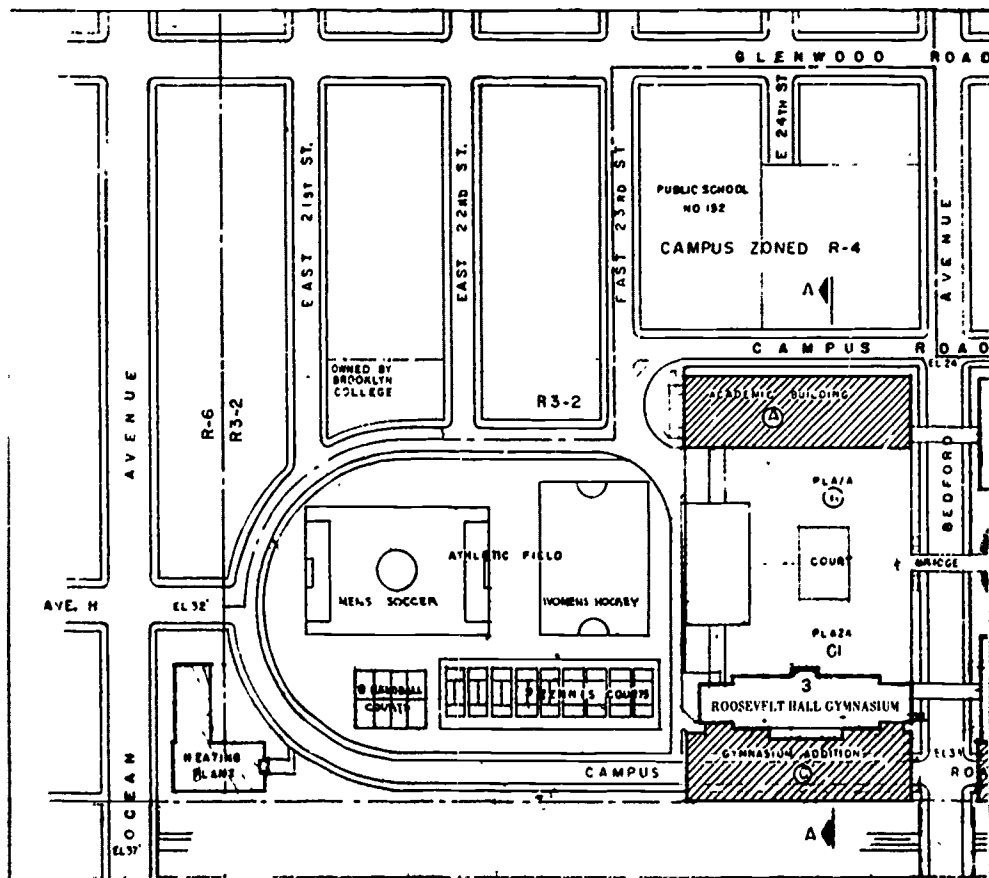
It is an immediate priority in order to attain this position that the disabled must secure what is necessary for them to function as independently as possible to the best of their capabilities.

It is through this self-reliant, self-determinant and activist philosophy that the disabled will be able to find his identity as an individual and an active member of a group respected because of its accomplishments. This above all else will enable him to earn the security and self respect of knowing that, though he may not be able to physically perform in the conventional manner, he is still accomplishing the task as an independent individual and is a contributing member of his community.

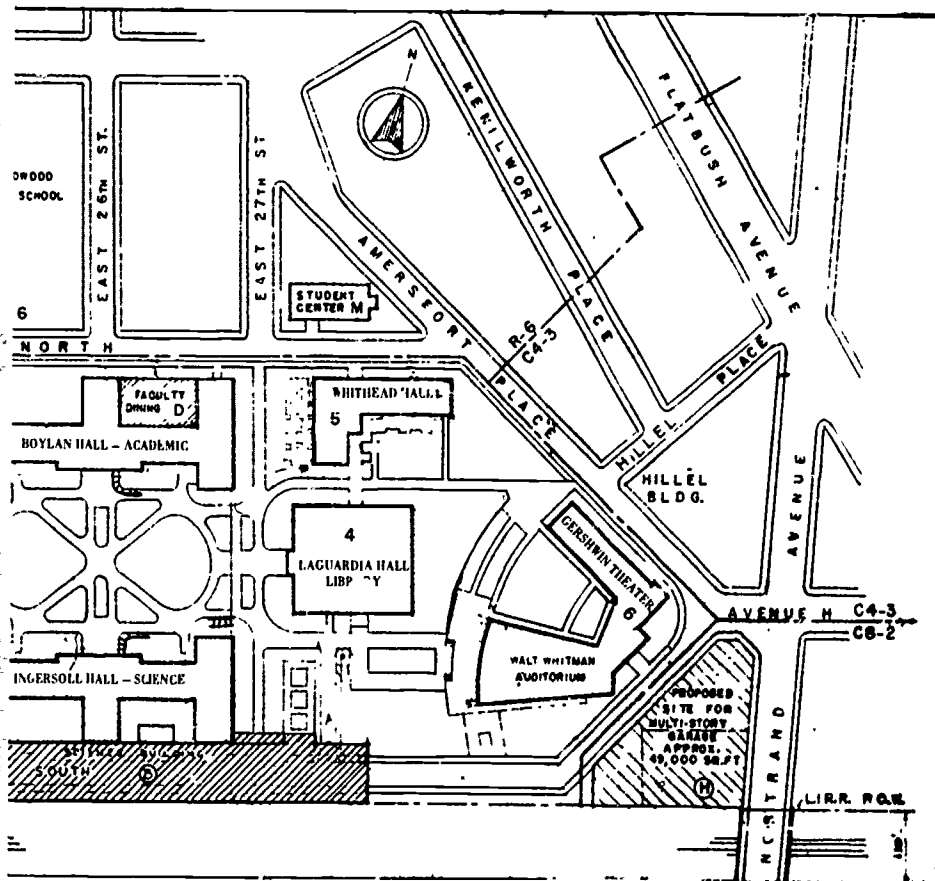
PURPOSE

It is the intention of S.O. F.E.D. U.P., as a chartered organization, through the Department of Student Activities to

- Provide social and recreational activities for the heterogeneous group of disabled and non-disabled student and faculty members of S.O. F.E.D. U.P. on the Brooklyn College campus in an atmosphere where they can encounter each other as respected individuals.
- To retain our initial role as a collective agent representing the disabled members of the Brooklyn College community on matters pertaining to architectural, bureaucratic and curricular barriers that exist as inhibitive and hazardous factors affecting the performance of the disabled on the Brooklyn College campus.
- To educate and create learning experiences for the disabled and non-disabled members of the Brooklyn College community where they will be able to judge each other as individuals, with their own selective personalities, motivations, and make-up in order to break down the unfair and disapproved social and psychological stigmas that exist about the disabled.
- It is our belief that the disabled are a minority group that has been, and is being, blatantly exploited and discriminated against. Therefore, it is a purpose of S.O. F.E.D. U.P. to become actively involved in educating its members to become more informed of the overall conditions of our society which affect them and will continue to affect them after they leave Brooklyn College.



The number which appears on the above buildings corresponds to that facilities listed on pages 10-11.



number indicated before each of the entailed descriptions of the campus