

Disability History Museum Set To Open

by Michelle Diamant | February 16, 2026

A one-of-a-kind museum chronicling disability history is reopening after a five-year hiatus in a new, bigger space that's hundreds of miles away from its previous home.

The Museum of Disability History will open its doors Tuesday in Albertson, N.Y., just outside of New York City, with exhibits showcasing the history of the disability rights movement from its inception through today.

Until 2020, the Museum of Disability History was housed at People Inc. in Buffalo, N.Y., but it shuttered after the COVID-19 pandemic left the institution unable to welcome visitors. The Viscardi Center, a nonprofit disability service provider, ultimately took over the collection and is now reopening the museum in a brand-new 4,500-square-foot gallery space in its Kornreich Institute for Disability Studies.

"The Museum of Disability History at The Viscardi Center is uniquely positioned to empower people, from all communities, to learn about the disability experience throughout the arc of American history," said Chris Rosa, president and CEO of The Viscardi Center. "The museum's exhibits serve as portals that allow visitors to situate themselves in social, cultural and political contexts, helping them to understand what it means to be a person with a disability at key moments in history."

With more than 8,000 artifacts, documents, books and photographic images, Kim Brussell, a senior vice president at The Viscardi Center, said the organization is not aware of any other museum like it. About 130 items are currently on exhibit including a Hall Braille Typewriter, which transformed Braille writing for those who are blind, a unique three-wheel vehicle known as the Invacar that the British government promoted as a mobility aid for decades and a video of the Capitol Crawl, a 1990 protest where dozens of people with disabilities left their wheelchairs to crawl up the steps of the U.S. Capitol in an effort to urge lawmakers to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Most of the museum's collection carried over from the Buffalo location, but there are some new additions and items are displayed differently, according to Brussell.

One big addition is an exhibit about Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr., the founder of the Viscardi Center, that is housed in his former office. A self-advocate who created a business staffed primarily by people with disabilities, Viscardi advised eight U.S. presidents and influenced legislation including the ADA.

Officials at The Viscardi Center say they hope the new iteration of the museum will help spur momentum for the creation of a larger museum focused on disability history on the National Mall in Washington.

Read more stories like this one. Sign up for Disability Scoop's free email newsletter to get the latest developmental disability news sent straight to your inbox.

© 2026 Disability Scoop, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

View this article online at <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2026/02/16/disability-history-museum-set-to-open/31858/>