



# Ed Roberts: Father of Disability Rights

*Diana Pastora Carson*

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Children know about Civil Rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Cesar Chavez. But many have yet to learn about the transformational work of Ed Roberts, hailed as the "Father of Disability Rights." Ed Roberts: Father of Disability Rights is a biography about Edward Verne Roberts, who, at age 14, became a quadriplegic as a result of Polio. The life he lived post-Polio was one of transformation, both for himself, and for society's image of people with disabilities. Ed became empowered through his determination, his education, and his advocacy for supports and services that enabled him to become an independent citizen. Ed knew he was not disabled by Polio as much as he was disabled by societal responses to his disability. He fought for his own rights and the rights of all people with disabilities. His legacy continues to inspire equality and respect, both in the United States and abroad.

### About the Author

Diana Pastora Carson, M.Ed., is an educator, author, disability rights advocate, and a consultant and speaker specializing in inclusion, and diversity as it relates to disability. Ms. Carson's passion for disability and diversity appreciation stems from her brother's experience of growing up being misjudged, excluded, and DISabled. Ms. Carson has taught Disability Studies courses through the San Diego State University Foundation and is also an elementary school teacher. She has served on the Board of Directors of Disability Rights California, and is the author of Foundations for Ability Awareness, and Ability Awareness in Action: Teaching Ability Awareness to Children and Youth. Through her writings, trainings, and speaking engagements, Ms. Carson guides both children and adults in exploring the subject of disability, societal attitudes around disability, and the impact of those attitudes. Empowering awareness, inclusion, and total diversity appreciation is her goal.

### About the Illustrator

Patrick Wm. Connally is an artist, civil rights advocate, co-host and producer of a radio program focused on disability issues, consultant on access and disability rights, and most recently, a family caregiver and in home support provider. Patrick worked closely with Ed Roberts for years and knew him as a human being with a commitment and passion for creating independence for people with disabilities. Patrick has served extensively on government and non-profit boards and committees such as Disability Rights California, Federal Government's Projects of National Significance, World Institute on Disability, Research and Training Center on Personal Assistance Services. He is the founder and president of Disability Rights Enforcement Education Services. Patrick's artwork has been used to promote world-class museum events and to raise funds for animal rescue projects. It is an expression of his experience of disability as well as other dimensions of his past, passions, and identity.

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