



Communication**FIRST**

Because communication is a human right.

Bob's Retirement



Bob Williams sits at the head of the Roosevelt Room conference table in the White House with his AAC device mounted on his power chair. He is laughing along with President Obama, Attorney General Holder, and other disability leaders.

With mixed feelings, we share the news that CommunicationFIRST's co-founder [Bob Williams](#) is retiring.

Bob's [lifetime of advocacy](#) for people with the most significant disabilities, especially children and adults who need but continue to be denied access to effective communication, has changed lives. In his four-decade career in federal and state government service, on Capitol Hill, and in nonprofits, and in his private life as a

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<https://CommunicationFIRST.org/>



community activist, husband, father, grandfather, son, student, friend, and mentor, he has been tireless and unfailingly principled.

CommunicationFIRST would not exist without his leadership. He has been central to everything we have accomplished over the past six years; here is a tiny sampling:

WRITINGS:

- [Making Communication a Reality for All](#)
- [Bob Williams on the Power of Free Speech](#)
- [Speaking Up for Access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication](#)
- [AAC Users on the Future of AAC Research](#)

FILMS:

- [See Us. Hear Us. Film Chronicling Bob's Life](#)
- [The Judith Campaign: Bob Williams' Story](#)
- [Bob's Appearance in *The Ride Ahead*](#)

WEBINARS:

- [The Power and Art of AAC: Disrupting Racism, Ableism, and Oppression](#)
- [See Us. Hear Us. and Forest Haven Webinar](#)

PRESENTATIONS/REMARKS:

- ["We Take Care of Our Own:" Protecting Medicaid](#)
- [Literacy and AAC: Reading, Writing, and AAC Are Fundamental](#)
- [AAC & Technology: What's Communication Equity Got to Do With It?](#)
- [Remarks on Data Equity to the US Census Bureau](#)
- [Eulogy for Judy Heumann](#)

Please help us thank and celebrate Bob's legacy by sharing a memory or your thoughts about his impact by emailing info@communicationfirst.org with the subject line: **Bob's Retirement**. You can make a submission through video, audio, or writing, and feel free to include photos of yourself or photos of you and Bob, if you have any that will bring a smile to his face. If texting or DMing is more accessible, please let us know. We will be compiling all the submissions and presenting them to Bob at a later date. Thank you in advance for your participation and support.



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**OUR LIFE HISTORIES CAN NEVER BE
REWRITTEN OR MADE MORE JUST,
BUT WE AND OTHERS MUST LEARN
FROM THEM IN ORDER TO CREATE
GREATER JUSTICE MOVING FORWARD.**

BOB WILLIAMS



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Graphic containing CommunicationFIRST's logo, our tagline: "Because communication is a human right," and the following quote from Bob Williams. "Our life histories can never be rewritten or made more just, but we and others must learn from them in order to create greater justice moving forward."

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