>>Lauren Appelbaum

Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for joining our webinar today on the Hollywood Disability Toolkit, The RespectAbility Guide to Inclusion in the Entertainment Industry. My name is Lauren Appelbaum. And I'm the communications director of RespectAbility a nonprofit organization fighting stigmas and advancing opportunities for people with disabilities.

And, um, I have the honor of being one of the authors for this toolkit. We have a great webinar coming up with a lot of great speakers who represent a variety of different jobs within the entertainment industry. So I think, you're going to really enjoy that today. And we received a question already, if this PowerPoint will be available to download. And yes, following this webinar, you will be able to download the PowerPoint and reference it later. There's a lot of text on there. So you don't have to worry about taking notes right now.

So why is this important? Well, first of all, it's important to take a look at who has a disability. Most people are unaware that one in five are or 20% of Americans have a disability. Even more importantly, because everyone is connected to everyone and cares not only things about themselves but with their families and friends, it's 51% of Americans report having a family member or a close friend with a disability.

And research that we just did a few months ago, actually showed that 64% of Americans consider themselves to be part of the disability community. And that meant that they either had a disability themselves, have a family member with a disability, a close friend with a disability, or work in a field with disability. So way more than the majority of Americans are connected to disability in some form or fashion.

So we take a look at, we diversity means something to everyone. And often times we're talking about diversity in the lens of race or gender or sexual orientation. And it is very common to forget the lens of disability. And so that is what we're trying to encourage today. So I'm going it talk briefly about the intersectionality between disability and other minorities. Six million students have a diagnosed disability in America's public schools today.

More than 1,000 African-American black students and more than-- more than 1 million and more than 1.5 million Latino students with disabilities in our schools today. So often times, when we see representation of disability on TV, we see a street, white male in a wheelchair.

And we advocate for the idea for not only disability inclusion in TV and film but also for there to be proper representation of all the diversity of people with disabilities. And it's also important to note that between three and 5 million Americans with disabilities identify as being part of the LGBTQ community.

So what does real inclusion look like? The graphic that is being shown right now, shows an example of an exclusion with people with disabilities outside the circle. Segregation with two separate groups, one for people without disabilities and a special thing for people with disabilities. Integration are where people are disabilities are part of the circle but still separate and inclusion where people with and without disabilities are fully included in the same, exact circle.

We have learned that leadership really needs to start at the top. A lot of people are afraid sometimes to talk about having their own disability especially if it's invisible disability. But when someone at the top is able to say, I have X disability, it allows people who are coming up this pipeline to then be able to be able to part of it as well. So I don't think Jose Plaza has the opportunity to join yet. Is that correct?

>>Virginia

Not yet.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Okay. So I want to just say a few words about Jose Plaza of the he is the manager of California endowment, we would not have been able to have this toolkit without the financial support of the California endowment.

And Jose cares very passionately about disability inclusion. And I'm going to read a quote from him where he said, there is a difference within philanthropies in terms of their mission, some are focused on education. Some are focused on labor, some are focused on racial disparity. Disability is always left out. Disability needs to be front and center. So having people working in philanthropy like Jose who get it is extremely important in order for us to be able to be doing this work in Hollywood. And if Jose has the opportunity to dial in shortly, he will deliver a few remarks himself.

>>Jose Plaza

Hi, Lauren, I'm on.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Oh, wonderful. I'm turning it over to Jose, right now.

>>Jose Plaza

Thank you so much, and apologies, I'm recovering from technical difficulties coming on. I want to thank everyone in RespectAbility for the opportunity to speak today but more importantly I want to thank everyone who cares about the issue of disability and the need for awareness on disability.

As Lauren mentioned in my quote, it is important for not only organizations but also for funders to have disability at the forefront of their work. One of the things that I mentioned in some recent presentations I did with RespectAbility out in California was the need for that disability to be not only done in the work but also it has to be entrenched in the funding schemes that we do and the programming that we do because disability matters, and that is at the core of what RespectAbility stands for.

It's important that when we talk about issues of presentation, we talk about not only those marginalized by race, gender, gender expression, but really by disability because what tends to happen in circles of funding and circles of programming specifically with nonprofits, is that we are issue based.

But that intersectionality of work always tends to leave disability out. And it's important for folks that are on the line that continue to do this work, that are really at the forefront of this messaging, that if you don't have someone that is able to check your work, cross check the mission and the program that you have, I think that's something RespectAbility has done great especially us at the endowment. They're able to tell us how equitable our programming and funding is. And it's something that we want to stress to other funders, to other program heads. It's important to be intersectional on all lenses of work.

And ultimately as we hear from Lauren and other presenters, a lot of issues young people are faced early on when it comes to bullying, discrimination at schools which is did he heart of the work we do at the California endowment, we need to ensure disability is at the center. More than likely, young people that are over disciplines in schools expelled of high rates, more often than not, disability tends to be an issue.

When looking at issues of race and expression, disability is always over seen. And other issues are at the forefront. Really our work and being truly equitable, we need to look at those issues.

I'm glad that the California endowment has been able to partner with RespectAbility to support this work. It's something we hope to continue doing, looking at various intersections of how disability impacts the way of life, how it impacts health, mental health, as it is at the forefront of the work we do. And I look forward to hearing from folks on the call and answering any questions for you. Thank you, Lauren.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you very much, Jose. And before you go, we received a question about, if you had a personal connection to disability or why are you so drawn to disability. Because I know you're not necessarily able to stay the entire time. I wanted to give you that question right now.

>>Jose Plaza

So I personally am not disabled. But I do have family members that are living with a disability. And they're thriving with a disability. In terms of the work I do at the endowment, as I mentioned, it is important that as a help foundation we look at all issues that impact our community's health.

And as I said in the PSA and in the release, disability is not always looked at as a primary issue that impacts communities. When in reality when we really dig into our work, it is at the center of a lot of the reasons why our community is impacted. When I say community, I mean communities of color, communities that are documented, LGBT and so at -- for us, as a foundation, founder, philanthropy, when we are doing racial equity work, when we're doing immigration work or general health work, that we check all the boxes because usually one of those boxes that is left out is disability. And we are losing large walks of individuals that are living and thriving with a disability.

It's important that we look at the resilience and see how we can offer help. And that is where I think, and I know that RespectAbility is a great partner for us to work with. Because not only are you all putting disability at the forefront when it comes to media, to messaging, but you're also providing fellowship for students with disability. So you're doing a full wrap around service, not only of messaging outwardly but you're also working internally to make sure students with disability have an opportunity to succeed. And that is the core of the mission of the endowment. This is why I'm invested in your work and continue supporting it.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you so much, Jose. I'm going to move on now with going into what is in this toolkit and how it can be useful to everyone.

So the reason for the toolkit. We know that entertainment professionals across all platforms are working to become more inclusive minorities. This is our community's opportunity to ensure inclusion and equality for all people including America's largest minority, the one in five Americans with disability. There's a monetary reason for this, too.

Opening the inclusion umbrella is the right thing to do as well as the economically smart thing given that the disability market is valued at more than 1 trillion-dollars. People with disabilities and their loved ones are your audience. As they mentioned, there were 56 million Americans and 1.2 billion people around the world living with a disability.

RespectAbility, we're here to support your success. This guide for disability inclusion is for entertainment professionals who wish to ensure they are as inclusive of people with disabilities as policy.

This is a living document that will be constantly updated. So we welcome updates. What we see and hear really impacts our thoughts and feeling which can have a life and death consequences. An increase in positive, diverse, and accurate portrayals of people with disabilities in television and film would significantly help to end stigmas.

So a few steps. According to GLAAD, the only place to track people representation of characters with people with disabilities in television, fewer than 2% of television characters have a disability in the 20172018 season. Only 2.7% of all speaking or named characters in film was shown to have a disability in 2016. That's up from 2.4% in 2015. It's important to note that none of the leading characters in the top 900 films were from it an underrepresented, racial or ethnic group or LGBTQ community. And one last stack for you, actors without disabilities play more than 95% of all characters with disabilities on television.

Many characters are shown in a negative and inaccurate light. So there's a bunch of different tools in the guide. I'm going to jump right in. First one is we talk about how RespectAbility our network of partners can be your partner.

A few things that we can help with is helping you connecting you to different people. For example, Gail Williamson will be speaking later in this webinar. And when we receive requests for trying to find someone whether you are a big studio or an independent filmmaker asking for help to find an individual with a specific disability, she's one of our go to people. And we connect you to her and she's often able to help you find exactly what you're looking for.

We try to help working with Kate Folb with Hollywood house society to provide expert sources to ensure that, when you are writing a script or producing a show, that you are-- you're doing so in an accurate way.

I want to go through a few examples of best practices. People always ask, who's doing it right? Where can we look? So if you look in reality TV, Born this Way stars seven young adults and one toddler who have Down Syndrome. The Show Control Systems them living their actual life as they go through finding jobs, living on their own, receiving education, and even getting married. They've won three Emmy Awards including for being the best unstructured reality TV show. In scripted TV, Speechless is a sitcom centered on a family that includes someone with cerebral palsy. JJ which is important to know. Also in scripted television, NCIS New Orleans features a character in a wheelchair. An African-American actor who uses a wheelchair in real life.

Let's take a look in children's television. There were two examples I'd like to point out. You have Julia in Sesame Street and a new animated show called Pablo. Both are dealing with autism. Pablo's interesting in a sense that the writers and everyone involved with it, the majority of people involved with the show have autism themselves.

In film, you have The Silent Child just won an Oscar a few months ago which features Maisie Sly. A young girl who is deaf. So you have a character who is deaf played by an actual actress who is deaf.

And then in animation, you have finding dory, a Pixar box office success which stars many characters with disabilities. Dori herself has short-term memory loss. She is helped by a whole host of other characters who have a variety of physical and other disabilities.

Another section in the toolkit, talks about using the appropriate lexicon. And one tool that we think is very important is the national center on disability and journalism. They provide the industry's only disability language style guy. Had we started to prepare this toolkit, we originally thought that we were going to have a style guide as part of it.

But as we did our research, we found out that the NCDJ had already done one and it was fantastic. While it is geared towards journalists talking about including AP style recommendations, the top parts of everything it talks about is extremely applicable for anyone in the entertainment industry.

Etiquette - sometimes people say, I don't know how to talk to someone with a disability. And it shows because sometimes people would talk to an adult with a disability and treat them like a child. So we have a whole section on etiquette and how to interact with people with disabilities.

I'm not going to go through all of these. Everyone, we will be sending you a link to the actual toolkit, and you can read it all yourself. But you can kind of see a sampling of this now.

We also talk about key terms. You know, and in the disability FAQ, we go through some of them. For example, what is considered a disability? What is the Americans with disabilities act? We talk about the inclusion rider, something that's important in Hollywood right now and how that can help people with disabilities in Hollywood.

Then there's also other things about how to ensure that your website and events are fully accessible? What do you need to know regarding hiring employees with disabilities? Something we receive a lot of feedback about that people are enjoying is what tax and other incentives do employers have hiring people with disabilities? That section is going to be expanded because we had some volunteers who are very interested in researching that more not only in California but across other states because as we know, we can, you know, many shows and films are shot across the country and internationally.

Then we have a whole resources section from audio description services, closed captioning services, sign language interpreters to organizations that you can go to if you want to hire a performer with a disability or people with disabilities behind the scenes employment resources. This is a massive document that, um, we hope includes everything that you could need as you're going through this process.

Now, I would like to introduce Kate Folb. She is the director of the Hollywood health and society. She worked in the entertainment field for more than 20 years and is extremely well versed in all of these issues. I'm going to hand it over to Kate to talk a little bit more.

>>Kate Folb

Thanks, Lauren. Hi, everyone. Yeah, I'm Kate Folb. I'm director of Hollywood Health and Society which is a program of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Norman Lear Center. So I challenge anyone to have a longer title, organization title.

So there it is, USC Annenberg center, Hollywood Health and Society. What do we do? We study and shape the impact of entertainment and media on society.

What does that mean exactly? Well, first of all, here are some of our partners, we're funded by the CDM, Bill and Melinda gates. We're partnered with RespectAbility on this project and the writer's guild of America which is the union that supports television and screenwriters. So they see us as part of their support system rather than a group trying to sort of weaseling its way in.

So what do we do? Well, Hollywood Health and Society provides entertainment content creators with information and access to experts on a wide range of topics from health and medicine to safety and security and more.

What the heck does that mean? Well, for example, from 2012 to 2017 we consulted on more than 1,000 aired TV lines across dozens of networks and streaming channels and cable shows. These are just a few examples of the networks and streaming channels that we worked with.

So how do we do this? We offer free services to the entertainment industry. So with our funding partners, allow us to be able to offer our services for free to the entertainment industry. They can call us or email us when they're working on a storyline that may involve for example, someone with a disability. Maybe they want to talk to an expert in that issue. Maybe they want to talk to a person with that disability. Maybe they just need information and resources from us to help ensure that their portrayal of that character is as accurate as possible.

So I say we have operators standing by to take writers calls and emails. We can get them the information on a quick notice. We understand that the entertainment industry's timeline is fast and furious. And so we're available to get them their answers and/or connect them with experts as quickly as possible.

But in addition to our hotline, we also do outreach to raise awareness among the entertainment industry about certain topics. So we will hold panel discussions. We also take writers on location trips where we pile them into a bus and take them to sort of immerse them into an experience.

We have, of course, our website and tip sheets which are written in plain language and friendly to the entertainment industry but explain the various health and safety topics that we work on. We have a quarterly news letter called real to real that goes out to 800 entertainment industry professionals, and it's chock-full ever stories about real people, facing the challenges and living their lives regarding all the health and safety topics we work on.

We also hold the annual Sentinel Awards where we honor shows that depict health topic. Lauren mentioned Born This Way, that show has won our Sentinel Award two years in a row now. Just as an example.

We also work with the networks and television shows on public service announcements, and more and more we've been working on the shows with transmedia. People don't just watch a show and that's it. They're usually tweeting about it or they're on the show's Facebook page or texting with their friends about what's going on with the show.

So we help provide tweets and other kinds of information and resources for viewers to access if they're inspired to do so by a portrayal that they see on tell vision. And we also do research and evaluation. So we look at the impact that these shows and depictions have on audiences knowledge, attitudes and even behaviors around their own health and safety.

So we do a lot. And I just quickly want to share a little about impact. So you understand why it is we do what we do. We look at the impact the storylines have on audiences and we know that audiences are motivated often much more so by what they see in a narrative storyline versus commercial or a public service announcement or even a news story. There's something about being transported to a storyline when watching a favorite show or character. You identify with that character, and you're at some point you almost lose all sense of surroundings, and you're in that story with those characters. When information and accurate portrayals are depicted, it sinked in on a deeper level.

Here is an example of a study we did recently. The show Royal Pains which is on the USA Network, called us because they wanted to do a story line about a transgender teen. And mind you the actress in the photo that you see with the green streaks in her hair is a transgender actress. That's an example having a person play the part for which they represent in real life.

So they called us because they wanted to get-- make sure that they were accurate as possible in depicting this topic and using the proper language. So we consulted with them several times in the development of the storyline.

Well we thought this would be an interesting episode to do a study onto see if this storyline had any effect on people's attitudes around transgender people and policies. This was a few years ago. This was a time when there was a lot of discussion in the news about what bathroom to use and people were all in an uproar and voting about bathrooms and so forth. This was before Katelyn Jenner had come out with her story. So we also felt that, because USA Network is a very general network, that is not a niche market, it's not like if you're watching the show transparent on Amazon, you're bought into that topic. They have lots of different genres and shows and storylines. And we thought it would be great to see if this episode had any effect on audiences.

So what we did is we conducted a study, a pretest survey before the show aired. Engaging people's knowledge and attitudes around transgender people and policies. And then we let the show air. And then we surveyed viewers after the show aired to see if their attitudes had shifted at all.

I'll show you quickly, so we found that viewing the Royal Pains transgender storyline caused people to have more positive attitudes towards transgender people and more support for transfriendly policies. It also had a cumulative effect. People that saw more than one storyline about a transgender person, that featured a transgender person tended to have more and more positive attitudes towards transgender people and policies.

We also saw that there was a reduced link between political ideology and attitudes towards trans people by whatever. So the more shows they saw, if they had kind of a negative political ideology, that was reduced almost by half.

So we know that these kinds of depictions, whether it's transgender or people with disabilities, we know that the more these things are depicted accurately and sensitively, we know that it can affect people's knowledge and attitudes and possibly even their behaviors around the subject matter in their own personal lives.

So, um, I'll stop-- well, one last slide. Just to do a little bragging, Lauren brought up Speechless which we were very delighted to work with when the show was first being developed. The network reached out to us to ensure that they were using proper language, et cetera.

And they also were very concerned about how to market the show. And, um, and to be sure that the language they were using was as accurate as policy. We were very happy to work with them from the beginning. We're pleased because we work regularly with the show Switched at Birth, if you know features several characters that are deaf.

We've also just in the last two years, we've consulted on, we've conducted 49 consultations with shows on disability inquiries, topics including blindness, autism, dyslexia, mental health, many issues as well. And since February 1, we've already conducted five consultations with shows with disability. Some shows are claws, they have a character with autism. The good doctor, Switched at Birth and even shows like blackish are depicting people with variety of disabilities. We're happy and proud to be working with RespectAbility.

And I'll stay on the call until the end so if people have questions, I'll be happy to answer them at the end of the webinar. Thank you.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you very much, Kate. We really enjoy working with you. And we love learning from your expertise. I know questions are coming in, and we're going to address the questions at the end now because now I would like to go to another great speaker, Donna Walton. Donna is the founder of-- well, she's many things but one of the things that I love about what she does is she's the founder with the diva's disability project. She's going to talk about that. Donna is also a member of our board of advisors and we have done events together and the Los Angeles area, specifically on intersection, race and disability. So I'm going to hand it over to Donna to talk more about her work.

>>Donna Walton

Thank you, Lauren. I am so happy to be here to be part of this webinar for this important work, inclusion of disability in the entertainment industry. My name is Donna Walton and I am the founder and director of divas with disability project, grew out of several things. It grew out of the extension of the work I do around vocational or rehabilitation of African-American women in the district of Columbia and make sure they are empowered and gainful employment.

It also grew out of the need that when I lost my leg 41 years ago, there were no images of myself reflected in mass media, particularly when I would turn on the television, I would never see myself reflected in stories or film. That was another motivation for diva.

I some writing or reading about a disabled writer an activist palm hunt. And he wrote the mass media which he defines as including, press, internet, advertising, television, print and radio. It's a strong source of information whether correct or inaccurate. And it still provides imagery that continues to enforce disability stereotypes. So by portraying disabled individuals in a negative and unpowering way, black women and girls with disabilities are depicted as nonsexual, pathetic or a burden or our worse enemy, object of curiosity and unable to participate in any aspects of life. that was a motivator. I knew that narrative had to change in terms of what disability looks like for black women or for the inclusion of black women and the imagery of black women. So the different as with disabilities project became a digital campaign. The whole goal of it is to create and amplify the images of African-American women with physical disabilities.

You know, images have power, and we knew that based on the research and based on the fact what we see in ourselves. If we could see ourselves, that that would have a major transformation how people viewed women of color and black women. You know, because our images influence our perception of others and ourselves.

So by using the power of images, the divas with disability project helped shape the perception of what disability looked like. What we use the term diva to show that diva and disability can exist if one single person. The two terms-- it shows that women could be beautiful. They can be empowered. They can be leaders and be across the spectrum in terms of their personalities.

So by creating a divas with disability project, as I said, it's a digital movement. It starts online, of course. On Facebook, it's presence is on Facebook, Twitter, et cetera. It also has a website. But the way the divas are connected and the way our work has really sort of motivated or-- it's carried out is through, we have monthly conference calls, where by divas around the country speak on different topics.

We also service a resource to the entertainment industry. I think we like to consider our materials as a pipeline for our talented people of color. The women, range-- with experiences so that their disabilities range and their experiences range. Employers can call about the divas with disabilities project for talent and other areas of speaking for just, if they're looking to cast in a particular area.

Another initiative that we have with the divas with disabilities project is our divas state of mind initiative. We have ambassadors go around and have meet up groups and mentoring in schools and rehabilitation facilities to somewhat get the -- to pretty much connect with other young girls and women of color who are not out and about, who are not employed who don't see themselves reflected. That's what part of the divas project is to embrace and empower and to transform what mass media sees as women of color with disabilities.

And so, if you have any more questions about divas with disabilities project-- I should share with you, too. We have core values that we established ourselves by. And that's diversity and inclusion, empowerment, image transformation, integrity, and social justice. And so these are the core values that somewhat guide the divas with disabilities project. And I'll be glad to answer any questions for you at the end. Thank you.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you very much, Donna. And we are going to go to our last but certainly not least speaker, Gail Williamson. Gail is a talent agent with KMR talent. She has over the years represented countless numbers of people with disabilities in both film and television, in theater. She works both in Los Angeles and New York. And, uh, elsewhere around the country. So I'm going to hand it over to Gail now to talk a little bit more about her work and why it's so important that we making sure that we are giving opportunities for these actors with disabilities.

>>Gail Williamson

Thank you, Lauren. A pleasure to be with you today. KMR is one of the only agencies that we're aware of that has opened their doors to performers with disabilities. Our diversity department. It has that name because basically we started outback many years ago, trying to get disability included in the diversity program at the very studios which has been accomplished now.

I have been doing this for 30 years. I started with the California governor's committee with employment of people with disabilities. Not as long as Kate's title but close. And I've seen in using performers with disabilities in the media, I think the first 25 years, I saw the growth that I've seen here in the last five years.

I think because we have so many partners like you have on the phone today coming together to make a difference and it's a different time. And I think that Social Media allows more interaction and allows us to know people with more diversity overall. The KMR office, we work in-- with performers with disabilities specifically and cover many areas of the entertainment.

We cover TV and film, theater, commercials, advertisements and occasionally modeling when we get calls. We're not specific live a modeling agency. Just thrilled to share with you, speaking of theater, the drama league nominations came out today. And we have two women who are nominated for outstanding performances, Children of a Lesser God which opens and Katie Sullivan who played Anna in Annie in Cost of Living. So we're excited about that. And this is, you know, this is Broadway and off Broadway. We also have Jimmy-- and Emmy who have Down Syndrome starring in aim-- off Broadway. It's been a good year for this department and a good year for the talent we work with.

My motivation comes from the fact that I've seen such a difference with what the media was. As a young mother with a boy with Down Syndrome, I could walk into the restaurant and science it. After life goes on, I noticed waiters would now turn to him what he would like to order. In the past they turned to us of what we liked to order.

Education is why I do what I do. Although we are all part of a large agency which is great. We talk about some of the shows like Good Doctor and Switched at Birth which had Cobbie on the good doctor. Switched at Birth we helped with the Down Syndrome storyline and provided lots of characters. We have a lot of time with various people with disabilities. We're fairly well known in the industry. We get calls more about cultural issues with disabilities quite often and we can assist with helping people with accessible dressing rooms and those sorts of things when needed.

Most of all, I think the importance of this is the way it changes society. And what we're able to fit into. I'm thrilled every time we get someone with disability in front of the camera. And I'm saddened every time we don't. There's several times we go to bed as advocates we go see a particular role going to an abled actor.-- the authenticity of coming from an actor with disability to play a role. We've been also asked, who else with a disability could you put in your program? Where else can we do advocacy work?

We work hard to try to get people to get smaller roles for people with disabilities. Often, we ask, why can't an attorney be in a wheelchair? Well, if in a wheelchair, -- he's an attorney and went to law school. And he's in a wheelchair because he needs to get around. That would make him a valid attorney. I don't get that response to people. We try to push the smaller roles. If we get used to with disabilities, that are in a show, a waiter, a bank teller, someone on the street, someone in the school, someone in the club. If we can have people included in those pays, it will impact the viewers accepting of people with disabilities in the various roles and hopefully lead to more nontraditional roles in the guest star and larger roles.

I think most of all, it's just people -- people with disabilities need to be trained, need to be actors and we have many who are. Which is wonderful and we're able to propose them nontraditionally. That's the ultimate goal. The goal is to give them the same opportunity to audition as an able body has. And also, to lead the way in making things happen, making a difference. We want to get rid of my department someday which sounds silly. We're working towards the goal of having full inclusion in all agencies. If many people start out here, hopefully they'll find other agencies to transfer to so we'll be able to get rid of this department completely. Will it happen in my lifetime? I don't think so. But I would like to see it happen. Thanks, Lauren.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you very much, Gail. We very much enjoy the fact that your department exists for now. And we sure hope at some point, people with disabilities will just be accepted in every department and be the norm.

So I'd like to, just for a few moments tell you about a few other resource guides that exist out there. If you wanted to learn more-- our guide is focused for people in the entertainment industry whether you're based in Los Angeles, New York, or anywhere else in the country. It's very much U.S. centric. But can be, you still can learn a lot if you're outside of the U.S.

But if you're looking for more specific disability, you want to get into the nitty-gritty, one of the ones we recommend is the Chicago Community Trust. And there's a link here in this PowerPoint which will be sent out to all of you tomorrow.

Another, if you're looking for model of someone really doing inclusion well outside the entertainment industry, it's the Ford Foundation. Lorraine has a quote saying, specific outcomes and goals of the Ford Foundation is working to achieve simply cannot be accomplished without addressing the needs, concerns, and priorities of people with disability. Just like Jose Plaza and the California endowment, the Ford Foundation is working for full inclusion of people with disabilities, and they did a whole audit of themselves as an organization from the inside within, and there were a bunch of links here as well. If you want to learn more, we want to share what with you.

And lastly, on a smaller scale, the Jewish federation of greater Washington has a toolkit that was originally made for synagogues. But a lot of churches and other institutions started using and a lot of nonprofits. It includes a self-assessment where you can go through and answer all of the questions, and completely private. No one's going to see your answers. It will give you suggestions in certain areas of your work.

So people always ask, well, I'm really inclusive. What is it that I need to do? On here we have questions to think about. For example, has someone who uses a wheelchair personally checked the physical accessibility of your offices and programs for people who use wheelchairs? Has a person who is blind and who uses adaptive computer technology checked your website and facilities for accessibility there do the videos you use have captions? Do you have a way to communicate with people who are deaf or use other adaptive supports? Do you employ individuals who have disability? If so, what are their jobs? Do they receive the same compensation and benefits of other employees? So just some questions to kind of think about as you're trying to ensure that your company that your organization is fully inclusive as possible.

The next steps. So if you haven't read the toolkit, I recommend taking a look. We hope it's a fairly easy read as you-- in addition to being a very educational read. We encourage you to share it with your colleagues and others. Speak with me about your new ideas, as I mentioned, the toolkit is a living document and we welcome additions. I also want to let you know that we have a new staff person at RespectAbility named Debbie. She's our new director of community outreach and impact. She will-- if you're in Los Angeles, she will be in Los Angeles next week. And, um, if you're not in Los Angeles, but you want to be volunteering or working on this project with us, you can be in touch with her. She would love to hear from you.

So, I want to get one last note. Having inclusion in Hollywood is not simply about ensuring an actor with disabilities can have jobs. It also leads to this whole idea of representation. When we'll see, people with disabilities succeeding in TV and film and theater, they're much more likely to emulate that in real life.

This past year there was a four time improvement with people with disabilities compared to the year prior. That meant there were 343,000 people with new jobs with disability this last year. Part of it, I personally believe is this increased representation of people with disabilities succeeding in what we see in TV and film. So I think all this work really leads to a greater goal of increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities not only in Hollywood but across the country. You'll see the last slide it includes contact information for the speakers. If you'd like to follow-up, but first, what I'm going to do is look at some questions. Virginia, will you let people know how they can ask a question vie why the phone, please.

>>Virginia

Ladies and gentlemen, if you have dialed in on the phone and would like to ask a question over the phone, you can press 7-pound on your phone now. 7 followed by the pound sign on your telephone keypad. Just listen for your name to be announced and ask your question when prompted. All participants can submit questions by typing their question in the chat box and-- excuse me in the Q&A box and using their mouse to click the ask button to send it.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

I'm going to ask questions that have come in via the Q&A box. And if you have a question via phone, cue up. So they ask about resources relevant to those in the media industry outside of the L.A. area looking to cast folks in Northern California as a low budget organization and not able to bring people from Los Angeles. While the resources in the toolkit themselves are applicable to everyone no matter where you live. And some of the different resources are L.A. centric or New York centric or national. Gail would you like to talk to the idea-- I know you represent people all around the country.

>>Gail Williamson

I do. I don't represent a full range of people in all areas. But it's always worth checking with us because we may have someone in the area or a school or program in the area that could help.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

And so if you have a specific request, you know, if you're casting somewhere, feel free to be in contact with me and I'll put you in touch with Gail. We also-- you know, different disability organizations all around the country that we can put you in touch with where they might have someone who will work well with you as well. So Doug asks, he's producing an independent film with multiple forms of disability features. I'm looking forward to learning more about them. He asked about the idea of sending sources. So we do not have a list in this funding resource guide, our funding sources but you're not the first person to ask that. That's something we are exploring in terms of adding to this online version of the guide. I want to tell you about, an organization that's based in Los Angeles but membership is open to people around the entire country, and that's film independence. They're specifically for independent filmmakers. And I know that there is a process to receive grants. I don't know much more about it. But if you reach out to me, I'll be glad to put you in touch with the folks at film independent. We have a specific question for Gail from Daniel. He asks, how podcasting and online play more-- how can podcasting and online media play more of a role for those of us with disabilities?

>>Gail Williamson

That's a great question and referred to a little bit with social media. I think we have people with disabilities able to reach a larger community of people through the internet. I have a client, a few clients who have regular podcast. I have clients who have their own little story lines they run on Social Media, smaller things. It's a great way to get noticed and to get awareness. I think it's a wonderful thing to be doing. Am I answering this question? Yes, there's a role. That's wonderful. I think it's a great thing to get involved with. Anybody can do a podcast.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Did Donna or Kate want to talk to that at all?

>>Kate Folb

Hi, this is Kate. Yeah, well, I would just agree with Gail. It's definitely shall the internet is such a wonderful way to get started and even great disability. People with small shows that have started on Youtube are now making big network and studio TV shows. So it's not impossible at all. And in terms of podcasting, same thing. It's super easy to get started doing that. And it seems to be something that, more and more people, engage in and look for great podcast. I actually have a filmmaker friend who sends me a weekly update on the cool podcast he's listening to. It's an easy way to get started and definitely not something that would not get noticed. So I encourage it.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Any questions via phone?

>>Virginia

No questions at this time.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Okay. I know we have gone over our time. I want to let you know that, um, a woman named Danni has informed me that they have a launched an award for films about inclusion. This looks really great. And Dan any we're going to be in touch. As we hear more about the award you're doing, it's something we'll promote. And all of you will be receiving more information about that as we learn. And Doug, maybe you can apply for that and receive some funding that way. I love these webinars for things like this where we're able to connect everyone. It's a wonderful way of connection. Just checking, we do have a question-- for Kate Folb or Gail. On occasion, this is coming from-- on occasions where people call to ask assistance with crafting a story or plot line to incorporate people with disabilities, it's clear to be a continuing theme of a TV series, do you recommend-- it strikes metropolitan as a great opportunity to add new disability professionals in the Hollywood employment pipeline.

>>Gail Williamson

This is Gail.

>>Kate Folb

Go ahead, Gail.

>>Gail Williamson

I talked to casting directors. If I get a chance to talk to a producer, definitely I would talk about that. But I'm talking to casting usually. I don't get the opportunity that Kate would get.

>>Kate Folb

Yes, and we often, if-- we often have shows that come to us for the firsts couple of episodes and the planning stages if it's a long story arc. And me realize they probably should have somebody on staff that's consulting about the topic. In which case we can connect them with consultants, and we let the consultants make arrangements with them. We've done that on a number of occasion for various topics including for Speechless. So yes, that is something, I mean, usually if it's an episodic show and it's just one episode that they're going to feature the-- it's a short story arc, they don't feel they can afford or hire a consultant for that, they use us. But if it's something ongoing, usually the shows are interested in hiring. And we definitely can point them to individuals.

>>Lauren Appelbaum

Thank you. I'm going to ask if Kate, Donna or Gail has anything else they would like to add before we conclude this webinar. Okay. Well, I want to thank everyone for participating today. And for sticking with us as we went over our time. As I mentioned, we will be sending out both the PowerPoint as well as the Youtube of this webinar that you can listen to again or watch as well as the transcript. RespectAbility is very excited about the work that we are doing in Hollywood. We are always looking for new partners who want to work with us, learning about what it is that you're doing and if there's a way we can support the efforts you're doing as well. So please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address is laurena@respectability.org. You'll see it up on the sheet, everyone else's contact information as well if you would like to learn more about the work that they are currently doing. And I hope everyone has a wonderful afternoon.