



# ***Women's Disability Leadership, Inclusion & Advocacy Series***

***Welcomes You to Our  
Empowerment Training for  
Female Students with Disabilities***

Saturday, April 6, 2019

[www.RespectAbility.org](http://www.RespectAbility.org)

**Debbie Fink** is the Director of Community Outreach and Impact for RespectAbility, and responsible for its *Women's Disability Leadership, Inclusion & Advocacy* Series.

An author, educator and performer, her books and curricula have been distributed worldwide, as she 'edu-tained' on global tours with the USO.



## Today's Motivational Quote

*“Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life. Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement.”*

(Golda Meir)

## **Today's Goals:**

### **TO DELIVER TOOLS OF EMPOWERMENT TO:**

- ✓ TAKE CHARGE SELF-ADVOCATING ON-&-BEYOND CAMPUS  
(ACADEMICS, EXTRA-CURRICULARS, AND BEYOND CAMPUS)
- ✓ TAKE CHARGE SELF-ADVOCATING SOCIALLY
- ✓ TAKE ACTION ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS ON CAMPUS
- ✓ MEET OTHER STUDENTS ON A SIMILAR JOURNEY AND CULTIVATE  
NEW RELATIONSHIPS

*Please note that any views expressed by today's speakers are solely in a personal capacity and are not intended to represent the views of their companies, organizations or RespectAbility; or to be taken as legal or medical counsel.*

**We wish to express our profound thanks to our generous hosts  
here at the Guttman Community College**

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**To these NYC organizations for their collaboration (alphabetically):**

- DemocracyNYC
  - Girls for Gender Equity
  - Guttman Office of AccessABILITY Services
  - Guttman Office of Partnerships and Community Engagement
  - L.O.V.E. Mentoring
  - Hunter College
  - Several other colleges for sharing this opportunity with its students.
- 

*And thank you to the New York Women's Foundation and the  
Coca-Cola Foundation for their direct support for this effort.*

# Welcome by Barbara Bookman

**Barbara Bookman** is CUNY's University Director of Disability Programs. Prior to her role at CUNY, she was the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at Queensborough Community College. She earned her Master of Arts, Counseling & Vocational Rehabilitation, from Teachers College, Columbia University.



**Gabby Einstein-Sim** is a board member of RespectAbility. She is a recent graduate of a Master's degree in Community Health Education at Columbia's



Teachers College. Ms. Einstein-Sim is a member of the Jewish National Fund's Disability Task Force, focusing specifically on the Special in Uniform program, which enables people with disabilities to serve in the Israeli army.



# PANEL: Self-Advocacy On-&-Beyond Campus

**Moderator:** Gabby Einstein-Sim, RespectAbility Board Member

## Panelists:

- **Crystal Vasquez, Academics / Curricular Self-Advocacy:**  
*How to Self-Advocate with your Disability Services Office*
- **Rebecca Gross, Campus-wide Advocacy:** *How to Broaden Inclusive Advocacy on Campus through Grassroots Organizing*
- **Brilynn Rakes, Extra-Curricular Advocacy:**  
*How to Self-Advocate in Extra-Curricular Settings*

**Crystal M. Vazquez, a CUNY Alum,** is the Associate Director of AccessABILITY Services and Women's Resources Services Specialist at Guttman Community College. Crystal holds an M.A. in public administration and has extensive leadership experience in higher education.



Crystal Vasquez, looking  
at the camera.

# Campus-Wide Advocacy: Grassroots Organizing 1

**Rebecca Gross**, a self-advocate with learning disabilities, graduated from Sarah Lawrence College with a BA in Theater, Disability Studies, and Education. She co-led the Sarah Lawrence Disability Alliance (SLCDA). Rebecca is doing a Master's Degree in Disability Studies at the CUNY School of Professional Studies, and works part-time as RespectAbility's NYC Inclusionist.



Rebecca Gross, smiling  
at the camera

## Who Benefits from Campus Disability Advocacy?

### 1. Students with Disabilities

Providing a welcoming community space for students with disabilities to connect and share experiences.

### 2. **Non-disabled students** (*a.k.a.* allies and “future allies”)

Educating non-disabled peers about disability issues through events and collaboration with other student groups.

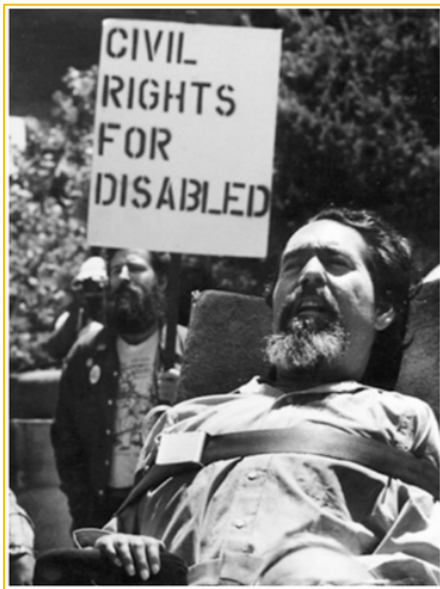
### 3. **School Staff and Faculty**

Advocating for physical, psychological, and academic accessibility on campus through interactions with staff and faculty.

# Campus-Wide Advocacy: Grassroots Organizing 3

## Never Underestimate the Power of Student Activism!

### The Rolling Quads, University of California Berkeley, 1960s



B&W photo of a man in wheelchair at outdoor protest, holding up a sign saying "Civil Rights for Disabled"

Source: <https://www.bamsi.org/administration/celebrating-the-life-of-disability-advocate-ed-roberts/>

### Deaf President Now, Gallaudet University, 1988



Color Photo hundreds of students at protest, each holding up an arm, some holding up a sign that says "Give Gallaudet a chance to have a Deaf President!"

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2018/04/03/gallaudet-deaf-president-now-30-anniversary/464611002/>



# Self-Advocacy: Extra-Curricular Advocacy

**Brilynn Rakes**, a self-advocate, completed a dual-degree program in New York City at Fordham Univ. with a BA in Communications and Media Studies, and a BFA in Dance. Brilynn competed in the NYC Finals of the Youth American Grand Prix and was featured on ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Brilynn is currently getting a degree in Business Administration.



# Self-Advocacy: Extra-Curricular Advocacy2

[https://drive.google.com/a/fordham.edu/file/d/1mQbfhCLARUud00pOFbElJWMjbZnNCJo/view?usp=drive\\_web](https://drive.google.com/a/fordham.edu/file/d/1mQbfhCLARUud00pOFbElJWMjbZnNCJo/view?usp=drive_web)

# Self-Advocacy On-&-Beyond Campus

## Q & A



Picture: Enlarged Q & A in 3-D; Q in red, & in blue, A in green



**Thank you, Webinar attendees,  
for your participation –  
stay in touch with us!**

***Respectfully,***  
**Debbie Fink**

Director, Community Outreach & Impact

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# I AM ME Exercise Examples

## I AM...

- ❖ I AM Responsible.
- ❖ I AM an Atheist (or a religion).
- ❖ I AM nervous.
- ❖ I AM funny.
- ❖ I AM Latina (or other ethnicity).
- ❖ I AM outspoken.
- ❖ I AM happy.
- ❖ I AM competitive (or other sport or talent).
- ❖ I AM loveable!

## I HAVE...

- ❖ I HAVE a pet (name kind of pet).
- ❖ I HAVE a disability.
- ❖ I HAVE a supportive family.
- ❖ I HAVE a home.
- ❖ I HAVE brown eyes (or other feature).
- ❖ I HAVE one best friend.
- ❖ I HAVE positivity.
- ❖ I HAVE a big heart.

## I BRING...

- ❖ I BRING enthusiasm.
- ❖ I BRING experience.
- ❖ I BRING leadership.
- ❖ I BRING love.
- ❖ I BRING compassion.
- ❖ I BRING humor.
- ❖ I BRING creativity.
- ❖ I BRING computer skills (or other skills).
- ❖ I BRING strength.

# I AM ME Exercise Examples (cont.)

## I NEED...

- ❖ I NEED moral support.
- ❖ I NEED a sense of humor.
- ❖ I NEED a friend (or family member).
- ❖ I NEED to live a healthy lifestyle.
- ❖ I NEED to be patient.
- ❖ I NEED leadership skills.
- ❖ I NEED courage.
- ❖ I NEED writing skills. (or any other kind of skill).
- ❖ I NEED independence.
- ❖ I NEED love.

## I SEEK...

- ❖ I SEEK companionship.
- ❖ I SEEK employment.
- ❖ I SEEK independence.
- ❖ I SEEK positivity.
- ❖ I SEEK mentorship.
- ❖ I SEEK teamwork.
- ❖ I SEEK routine.
- ❖ I SEEK community.
- ❖ I SEEK happiness.
- ❖ I SEEK inclusion.

# My Elevator Pitch Template

Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Choose from the list of "I Am") (Choose from the list of "I Am")

I am looking to / for an opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Circle One) (Choose from the list of "I Seek")

I have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Choose from the list of "I Have") (Choose from the list of "I Have")

I bring \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Choose from the list of "I Bring") (Choose from the list of "I Bring")

I welcome the chance to talk to you more about \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Choose from the list of "I Seek")

I really think we could work together to \_\_\_\_\_!  
(make the world a better, more inclusive place for all!)

**Maryanne Sackarnoski** works with Guttman Community College's AccessABILITY Services as the Assistive Technology Specialist. She is a graduate student of CUNY School of Professional Studies. With a Bachelor's Degree from John Jay College, Ms. Sackarnoski worked in its Office of Accessibility Services before her current position. Ms. Sackarnoski played a techno-supporting role with the series' events hosted by Guttman Community College.



# SELF-ADVOCACY 201: Campus-Wide Advocacy

**Rebecca Gross**, a self-advocate with learning disabilities, graduated from Sarah Lawrence College with a BA in Theater, Disability Studies, and Education. She co-led the Sarah Lawrence Disability Alliance (SLCDA). Rebecca is doing a Master's Degree in Disability Studies at the CUNY School of Professional Studies, and works part-time as RespectAbility's NYC Inclusionist.



# SELF-ADVOCACY 301: Extra-Curricular Advocacy

**Brilynn Rakes**, a self-advocate, completed a dual-degree program in New York City at Fordham Univ. with a BA in Communications and Media Studies, and a BFA in Dance. Brilynn competed in the NYC Finals of the Youth American Grand Prix and was featured on ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Brilynn is currently getting a degree in Business Administration.



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Teachers College. Ms. Einstein-Sim is a member of the Jewish National Fund's Disability Task Force, focusing specifically on the Special in Uniform program, which enables people with disabilities to serve in the Israeli army.



**Valora Blackson**, Director of Partnerships & Community Engagement for Guttman Community College, has strategic oversight for Partner Relations to develop industry partnerships for experiential, workforce, and career preparation opportunities for the student population. Ms. Blackson is currently pursuing a PhD and has held past Board positions the American Association of University Women.



# SMALL GROUP SESSIONS: Advocacy 101, 201, 301, 401 & 501

**SELF-ADVOCACY 101:** *How to Self-Advocate with your Disability Services Office* with Maryanne Sackarnoski, AccessABILITY Services and Candace Cable, 12-time Paralympian and Respectability Senior Fellow

**CAMPUS-WIDE ADVOCACY 201:** *How to Broaden Inclusive Advocacy on Campus through Grassroots Organizing:* Rebecca Gross, Sarah Lawrence College Alum, RespectAbility's NYC Inclusionist and Candace Cable, 12-time Paralympian and RespectAbility Senior Fellow

**SELF-ADVOCACY 301:** *How to Self-Advocate in Extra-Curricular Settings* with Brilynn Rakes, Fordham University Alum, ABC *Dancing with the Stars*, MBA student, former RespectAbility Fellow

**SELF-ADVOCACY 401:** *How to Self-Advocate in Personal Relationships* with Gabby Einstein-Sim: RespectAbility Board Member, Master's Degree in Community Health Education at Teachers College, Columbia University

**COMMUNITY-WIDE ADVOCACY 501:** *How to Broaden Inclusive Advocacy Beyond Campus* with Valora Blackson, Director of the Office of Partnerships and Community Engagement, Guttman Community College

Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction

**4/8/2019 10:00 AM**

Council Chambers - City Hall Jointly with the Committee on Aging

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=685312&GUID=61016C9A-D016-42E9-B063-504D6BD52048&Options=info&Search=>

Committee on Higher Education (yes, that's your college!)

**4/30/2019 1:00 PM**

Committee Room - City Hall Jointly with the Committee on Women and the Committee on Education

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=685412&GUID=9B72DA49-DE1F-4814-9566-D4717ECF51AC&Options=info&Search=>

# Closing (Meaningful) Fun!

- Survey
- Self-Expression Graffiti Wall-Webbing
  - Eminem *“Lose Yourself”* with  
ASL interpreter
  - Group Photo  
and  
Farewell . . .

***Stay in touch!***

# Eminem “*Lose Yourself*” with ASL interpreter

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P\\_4D26hApY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P_4D26hApY)

*Followed by motivational music on CD*

**Once again, our profound thanks to our generous hosts  
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**And to these organizations for their collaboration (alphabetically):**

- Guttman Office of AccessABILITY Services • Guttman Office of Partnerships and Community Engagement (OPCE) • DemocracyNYC • Girls for Gender Equity • Hunter College • L.O.V.E. (Latinas on the Verge of Excellence) Mentoring •
- 

*And thank you to the New York Women's Foundation and the Coca-Cola Foundation for its direct support for this effort.*

***Please aim to . . .***

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**Thanks to everyone at  
Guttman Community College and all  
speakers and participants for teaming  
together today!**

## You are our future leaders!

*Please stay in touch,*

**Debbie Fink**

Director, Community Outreach & Impact

*And Women's Disability Leadership, Inclusion & Advocacy Series*

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