

THE ADA & YOUR DISABILITY IDENTITY
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>> JENNIFER THOMAS: This webinar is being recorded. Hello. My name is Jennifer Thomas. I'm your moderator for this evening's webinar. Thank you for joining us for the ADA and Your Disability Identity. I want to begin here by giving you a quick overview of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, also known as NCWD/Youth. It is housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership and the Center for Workforce Development.

The collaborative is funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor. The collaborative is a national technical assistance center and we assist state and local workforce development systems to integrate youth with disabilities and to their service strategies. Our partners are the Institute for Educational Leadership or IEL, the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, Boston University, and the Pacer Center.

I want to take this time to introduce the speakers for today or the presenters. We have Sara Moussavian. Sara is known in the disability community for her advocacy work and her volunteerism both in the disability and proud team program. In the past Sara has worked with the Silicon Valley independent living center as a youth leader and has volunteered her time with the Webster house in Palo Alto and the Boys and Girls Club and the Paul K. Lawnmouer Institute at San Francisco state. She has been

recognized for her work by the California legislature. Sara graduated in art with a major in Persian studies from San Francisco State University. More recently Sara has been working as a part time afterschool program aide for Hope Services in Mountain View, California. When she is not working she is a council member on the California state youth council.

We also have Alexander Miller. Alex is an amazing teen living with the results of prenatal exposure to alcohol. He knows firsthand the results of living with fetal alcohol disorder. His motto is God gives the toughest battles to the toughest soldiers. Through the Minnesota organization, he speaks to other teens, professionals to foster understanding and others living with FASB. Alex is a national delegate to the YouthACT program which teaches young adults living with disabilities how to better advocate for themselves and their needs. Alex is currently a senior at Eden Prairie high school and will graduate in the spring of 2016.

And we also have Marissa Sanders. Marissa has worked in disability rights for more than 15 years. She has served as executive director of the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing and as a director of training for the MidAtlantic ADA center. She has also worked at three different centers for independent living and served on the National Council on Independent Living. While at the ADA center she trained over 500 people on various aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ms. Sanders currently serves as an independent consultant and is a video interpreter for source and communication where she interprets phone calls in American Sign Language for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. And she lives in Charleston, West Virginia with her husband. Thank you, Marissa, for being on with us today as well.

Before we move on to the main portion of the webinar I'd just like to share with you all some information regarding ways that the Institute For Educational Leadership is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Right now we have a call for stories. Please submit your story today. IEL is collecting stories from youth of the ADA generation as well as their allies asking them to share what the ADA means to them. Submissions are due by July 1st. And we have here a contact for submissions and questions. We also have the link here where you can reach out for more information on how to submit a story. So we want to share that with you all today and encourage you to submit your story regarding the ADA as soon as possible.

We are also having another webinar similar to this one on June 19th. That webinar will cover the ADA more specifically around employment and again for more information about this webinar you can reach out to our contact, Dana Fink. As Eric mentioned earlier this powerpoint presentation is available for you to download. So you can always review it later to get the contact information regarding these two opportunities.

For this time I am going to pass it over to Marissa Sanders and she is

going to review for us the Americans with Disabilities Act.

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Hi everyone. I want to thank the National Collaborative for inviting me. I am excited to speak with you all today. I am going to talk about the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA as Jennifer said. The 25th anniversary is coming up soon. Before we get in to what the law says I wanted to talk about the history of what led up to the passage of the ADA. There were several key pieces of legislation that helps us set the stage long before the ADA ever came around. And the first of those is the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you do the math that means it was 26 years from when racial minorities and ethnic minorities received guaranteed Civil Rights. So that's a pretty long time. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the first real piece of Civil Rights legislation for people with disabilities but it only applied to organizations that received federal funding. So it had a very narrow scope. The Education for Handicapped Act which we call Individuals with Disabilities Act or IDEA was the law that guaranteed that students with disabilities could go to school. The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 prohibited discrimination in housing and the Air Carrier Act of 1989 requires airlines to be accessible for people with disabilities. We had all these legislation and we had several negative Supreme Court cases that mobilized the disability community towards advocating for the ADA and realized that they needed to address this situation.

A national call was put out asking people to keep diaries of discrimination to document their everyday experiences as it became clear to the Supreme Court and Congress did not understand that people with disabilities were facing discrimination and barriers every day. At the same time Justin and Yoshiko Dart traveled the entire nation and held town hall meetings and learned what they needed in this type of legislation. The ADA had several sponsors, really a lot of sponsors but several of them had personal experience with a disability in one form or another.

Senator Harkin, who is just retiring, his brother is deaf. So he spoke from personal experience about that. Senator Kennedy had a son who had a leg amputation and Representative Coelho who helped to draft the ADA has epilepsy. That helped to drive the advocacy towards the ADA. One of the awesome and sort of unique things about the ADA is that it really is processibility and a driving principle when they are advocating for all people with disabilities and to that end the disability community reject -- and there were several. There are amendments to try to include people with AIDS, because it was a fairly new thing and people were scared of it. There were amendments to exclude people with mental health disabilities and learning disabilities. Every single one of those in the community as a whole said absolutely not. This is to cover everyone with a disability. We are not going to leave anyone out. The underlying goal was to give all people with disabilities the basic Civil Rights that were granted to women already at that

time.

I have a poll and I wanted to mention one of the handouts out there has some links to some videos. And one of those is a set of videos that has the hearing where they were discussing the ADA in Congress.

And this poll is what were the goals that were laid out in the preamble to the ADA. There are four. So of those listed here in the poll you can pick which one or which four. And then on this slide July 26, 1990 was the date that the ADA was signed and you will see this picture that has President Bush signing their -- the first President Bush signing the ADA. And he famously said as he signed let the "Shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down." I am watching our poll results. We have full participation seems to be a winner. Independent living. While you guys are right on those first three. We have -- the Congress signs that the nation's proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of community and full participation and independent living and economic self-sufficiency. And that's the basic goals behind the ADA was to give people with disabilities those four things. And there were four purposes laid out, but for the sake of time I picked the two that I find most powerful and they are in this -- the findings of the ADA.

The first is to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against people with disabilities. The elimination of discrimination I don't think we are there yet, but I loved that that was one of the purposes. And the fourth is to invoke the sweep of Congressional authority to address the major areas of discrimination faced day by day by people with disabilities.

So what does the ADA say and who is included in this coverage? This definition of disability under the ADA is a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities or a person who has a record of such an impairment or a person who is regarded as having such an impairment. And I have another poll about what -- what are major life activities. And this one is select the ones that are not a major life activity. And I'm going to talk a little bit a record of an impairment means that, for example, I have a history of epilepsy and I have not had a seizure in 16 years, but I would still have coverage under the ADA if an employer knew I had a history of epilepsy and didn't want to hire me because of that. And a person who is regarded as having such an impairment that could be someone who either doesn't actually have an impairment but somebody thinks they do. Maybe someone thinks you have AIDS and they decide not to hire you because of that, but you don't really but you say it is discrimination because someone believing that you have a disability.

Okay. Let's see, looking at our poll we have reading, driving, buttoning buttons, texting. That is not a major life activity. Driving is not either and I'm glad to see so many of you know that. Because most people think it would be. As someone who could not drive until I was 21 I am inclined to

agree that it is a major life activity and buttoning buttons is too specific, but it could be part of self-care. So what are major life activities? They are the basic activities that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty. They include caring for yourself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, bending, learning, working, lifting, reading, interacting with others and communicating. But as you saw they do not include something like driving and texting. They also under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act, which I will talk about later, we have added major bodily functions. Functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, which addresses people with cancer, diabetes, digestive, bowel, bladder, circulatory, neurological and reproductive function.

So anyone with an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity in one of those areas would be covered under the ADA. The ADA is structured in to five titles. They are employment, public services, which we usually call state and local government that's who that applies to. Public accommodations which actually applies to private businesses. Telecommunications and miscellaneous. We will talk a little about each of those. So this slide is a little pie graph that shows kind of four different parts of Title I. The Title I is employment. The enforcement agency for employment is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. But not the Federal Government employees because they are covered the under the Rehabilitation Act. It covers job posting and application process, hiring and promotions, benefits of employment and workplace accommodation. It covers everything having to do with employment. A qualified individual with a disability under Title I is who satisfies the requisite skill and other job related requirements of the position and who with or without a reasonable accommodation can perform the essential functions of the job. So that's a whole lot of big words, but it means that just because you have a disability doesn't mean that someone has to hire you. And you have to meet all of the skill experience and education requirements for the job as long as those jobs that those requirements are legitimate and necessary for the job. And they are just not making things up to exclude people with disabilities.

And it means that you can perform the essential functions which are the reason that the job exists. You can do those with or without a reasonable accommodation. You may know an accommodation to do the essential function but you have to be able to do them. A reasonable accommodation is a modification to the job application process, to the work environment or the way the work is customarily done or that enables the employee to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment. A job application modification might be providing an interpreter during an interview or providing the application online. The work environment modifications could be scheduling, could be equipment that you need or computer software that you need to do your job and benefits and privileges of employment would include things like

opportunities for training, access to the lunchroom where everyone gathers at the same time to share ideas and socialize. Those are kind of the benefits and privileges.

Title II, state and local governments this is the pie graph again. Enforcement agency is -- there are actually several enforcement agencies. The main one is the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation and Education all have a hand in Title II. It covers all state and local governments and public transportation. And it covers program access and reasonable changes or modifications to policies and services. I will explain what that means. A qualified individual with a disability under Title II is a person with a disability who meets the essential eligibility requirements with or without reasonable modifications, auxiliary aids and services and removal of barriers. A state or local government could have an eligibility criteria for their programs. Age, we only take six-year-olds in this county run summer camp. Residents have to live in the state in order to participate in this program. And they don't have to waive those because you have a disability as long as they are necessary for the program. And then state and local governments have to provide program access. It means that every program they offer has to be accessible, but each program in itself does not have to be entirely acceptable. It means if a county has ten libraries and they are spread out fairly evenly and there are several that are accessible or on a bus line or easy to get to, not every library has to be physically accessible. There might be a very small or a historic one. As long as people can get to another one that is accessible and it has similar hours and programs available at that location. Then not every single library has to be accessible.

Moving on to Title III, places of public accommodation. It covers private transportation and private businesses that serve the public. So just about any business you can think of that is not a church, a government agency or a tribal organization is covered under Title III. Grocery stores, movie theaters, restaurants. What it requires is keep an easy barrier removal and reasonable changes or modifications to policies and services and any new construction or significant remodeling must follow the ADA accessibility guidelines.

So the ADA -- the architectural access provisions require that any barrier removal that a Title III organization does must be readily achievable which I said earlier which means cheap and easy. Easily accomplishable and able to be carried without much difficulty or expense. So making the building physically accessible would require tearing down the building and starting from scratch and this is a small business. And if they don't have the funds to do that then they wouldn't have to do that. However if it was something like McDonald's and they wanted to move in they would have to rebuild it. They have the money. This fair -- the public accommodation must make goods and services available through alternative means and methods. A

restaurant that may be a small business doesn't have the money to put in a ramp, they could put in a doorbell and have someone come and bring food to the door. It is not equal. But it is worth a lot. Or they may have to deliver food to a person with a disability at their home even if they don't deliver it to anyone else. If the doorbell options say the street is too busy and not a sidewalk right there, and the doorbell option doesn't work, then they can -- they may have to deliver it to your home or some other options. They cannot say we won't serve. Or we don't have to serve you.

Title IV and I'm going pretty quickly. This is sort of an overview but there is a lot more to all of this. Title IV is telecommunications. The enforcement agency is the FCC. It covers state or phone companies and people who develop public service announcements. And what it requires is that states must provide a telephone relay service for people who with speech or hearing disabilities to be able to use the phone. And any public service announcement that is funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government must be closed captioned. Now this part of the ADA does not address closed captioning on TV or movies. That's all under the Telecommunications Act. But this part deals with the phone system and with public service announcements.

Title V is called miscellaneous provisions and there is no enforcement agency for Title V. Most of what's in Title V is not enforceable. Because the Congressional branch of government is not covered by the Rehabilitation Act. But employees of the executive branch are covered -- are not covered by the ADA because they are under rehab. What it says is that it lays out who the enforcement agencies are and it says that the Access Board will develop the ADA accessibility guidelines. It prohibits discrimination on the basis -- it prohibits retaliation if you file a complaint. It says -- your employer or a business can't do something negative to you because you filed a complaint. So Title V is pretty -- it is just -- it is a miscellaneous, extra things and that's why it doesn't have the enforcement agency. There are a few general requirements that are required, especially Title II and III that really apply across the board. Goods and services must be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of an individual. So the state, for example, can't say well, we are going to have a swimming class just for kids with disabilities. They could offer that but he can't require you to go in to that. They have to make it accessible for someone to join the classes, everyone, if that's what they want. Also Title II and III entities may not impose eligibility criteria unless they are necessary for the provision of service. So, for example, they can't require that you have a driver's license in order to get a library card. They can require identification of some sort but if they required a driver's license, that would effect the screening out of people with disabilities who can't drive. If the state has a program where they are lending out golf carts or renting cars then they have every right to require a driver's license because it is a safety issue. Also Title II and III

must reasonably modify their policies, practices or procedures to avoid discrimination, allowing a service animal in to an establishment where pets and animals are typically not allowed.

I forgot our last poll. I gave you the intro. The ADA Amendments Act was signed in to law on September 25, 2008 and the reason for the Amendments Act was because we had several again just like before the ADA we had several Supreme Court cases that significantly restricted and limited the coverage of the ADA. In fact, to the point that one of the authors, Representative Coelho was not covered because his seizures were episodic and he wasn't constantly having a seizure. If you are not having a seizure right this second we don't have to cover you. Advocates mobilized again and passed the ADA Amendments Act to correct some of the Supreme Court cases. The enforcement agencies and there is a handout with all of this information. You can see it all in one place. Again Title I, employment is the EEOC and all of their contact information is here. Titles II and III, you have the Department of Justice, I think I only put the Department of Justice on here. Because they are the main enforcement agency but the handout has Department of Transportation and the Department of Education on there.

Title IV again is the Federal Communications Commission and all of their information is here. And then here is the other enforcement agencies that mostly deal with Title II and III, U.S. Department of Education. Their Office of Civil Rights enforces the ADA and things like public education, K-12, private colleges, et cetera. And the Federal Transit Administration would oversee transportation issues.

The Department of Justice also has an ADA information line where you can call for technical assistance and information. Their number and their website is on here. And that's also on the handout. And then there is a national network of regional ADA centers which were -- they are funded by the Federal Government, but they were set up to provide neutral confidential technical assistance and information regarding the ADA. You can call them if you have any kind of question or you think that -- are they -- am I being discriminated against according to the ADA. Is this a legal issue or not. They will help you sort that out. And there is one national phone number to call them, and it will take you to whichever regional offices that you are in their region and that is a (inaudible). So then the question becomes we have almost 25 years since the ADA was passed. What's the next thing that we are going to be working on? And with that I will turn it back to Jennifer and see if we have any questions.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Marissa. We greatly appreciate your overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act. You can see Marissa's contact info and this information is downloadable in the slides that we have in the pod to the top left for you.

So at this moment we'll take any questions that the audience may have.

If you can type your questions in the Q and A box for us please. I will read the questions off and give Marissa the opportunity to respond.

Kirk has a question. It says can you repeat the ADA number or the ADA advice number please?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Sure. Which one? There is a couple. The Department of Justice has one. The voice phone number is 800-514-0301. The TTY number is 800-514-0383 and the ADA National Network, the number is 800-949-4 ADA or 4232.

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Thank you. Thank you, Kirk, for your question. Are there any other ones at this time?

>> ERIC CLINE: This is Eric. Just a reminder that for this phone number or any phone number any links as well, like if you realize later that you thought you had it or you want it after the fact you can -- we'll send out a recording of this and you will be able to download the powerpoint and the other documents at any time. So if you don't download them now which I still encourage you to do, you will be able to pop back in and get the recording and that will be sent out to everyone who registered.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Eric, for that reminder. We will take another question at this time if there are any. So Angela, I saw your comment in the chat box. Your question is not showing up in the Q and A box. So can you please go ahead and retype it in the chat box for us? Thank you.

>> ERIC CLINE: I'm seeing Angela's question. It is we've heard a lot about the strength of the ADA, but what things do we wish it would address better.

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Wow. That's a really good question. I think that for me one of those things would be -- I think that everyone would like to see every business has to be typically accessible. Instead of allowing, you know, businesses -- I mean there was a balance struck with the resources that a small business might have. But I think ideally no one would have to go in a back door or have food delivered to their house instead of being able to go to the restaurant with their friends. That's one thing that I think would have been helpful.

I think -- well, an interesting thing to note is that the Civil Rights Act does not have a definition of race anywhere in it. It says that you may not discriminate on the basis of race but it does not define what that is. The ADA has a very specific definition that very clearly means some people are in and some people are out. And it is defined as an impairment that limits. It is a very negative definition. So personally I would have liked to have seen it. You can't discriminate on the basis of disability or physical ability or something like that. It might be harder to enforce though. Those are my thoughts on that.

>> ERIC CLINE: Okay. And then we have another question here. Oh, wait. It was a statement from Arthurlene. It says everything was very

well described and clear. Thank you. No questions.

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Thanks.

>> ERIC CLINE: So those are all the questions that have popped up in the Q and A pod as of yet, Jennifer.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Eric. This is Jennifer. Are there any other questions? We can take one more. Okay. If not we will go ahead and move forward to the next portion of the webinar which includes a panel discussion on the panel -- on the panel is our speaker, Marissa Sanders, as well as --

>> MARISSA SANDERS: That's okay. I can do either.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: As well as Sara Moussavian and Alexander Miller. All right. So we have a few questions here for you all. And the first one is for all of you. We'll start with you Sara and then Alex and then you, Marissa. The question -- the first question that we have for you is can you tell us the name of your disability as some of the things that people who have it have to deal with?

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: Sure. (Inaudible) which is mostly significant which is a typical disability. However the larger impact the disability has on a person's life is different from each person. Personally for me it is difficult to walk more than about five walks. In addition to both myself and for some of the other folks who I know who have Apert syndrome we have shoulder limitations, limited fine motor skills and when we have conversations with people who don't know us or who haven't had conversations with us, they often have a difficult time understanding this due to the speech portion of the disability.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. Alex, what about you, can you tell us a little bit about your disability, the name of it and some of the things that people have to deal with?

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: Sure. I have FASD which is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It is very random. One person may have -- what it is the mother drinking alcohol while she is pregnant. And like I said it is very random. One mother could have a full bottle every night and her child may be fine. And another woman may just drink maybe a drop for a whole nine months and her son could be -- son or daughter could be severely affected. Zero alcohol for the full nine months is key. What people with FASD struggle with is learning. We have a very hard time remembering things and when we do it is very sporadic. Like if I was trying to learn spelling words when I was younger, I would get them down cold and then ten minutes later I would totally forget. And then a week later I would somehow remember it. Also one thing I mainly struggle with is decision making. People with FASD do not understand the cause and effect. So if I run out in the street -- in the street in front of a car I may get hit. That's what I struggle with and others struggle with other stuff that I don't struggle with and some things that I struggle with others don't.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Alex. And what about you, Marissa?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: I had to unmute myself. The name of my disability, one is epilepsy and the other is depression. With epilepsy I had seizures and I had three or four a month. That meant that I couldn't drive until I was 21. I didn't get a driver's license. So I had to either depend on family and friends to drive me or take the bus and throughout high school I was in a rural area that did not -- of Minnesota that did not have public transportation. That was challenging. And also the -- I took a lot of medication to try to control the seizures and that medication really affected my mental processing. So I failed a semester of college. I got two Fs and a D for my final grades because in part because I couldn't process the information. I would read and read and read and not any idea what I just read. I couldn't remember words. The other disability is depression which some days I am fine. Other days not so much. It is just some days I -- everything seems negative and it makes it very difficult to function and to go to work and do the things that need to be done.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Okay. So Marissa and also Alex, based on the descriptions that the two of you gave it sounds like your disabilities are types of disabilities that are not apparent. And some may say it is hidden or invisible. The ADA does provide protection of unapparent disability. Why do the two of you think it is important?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Well, I think it goes back to the underlying driving principle of the ADA which was that it is processibility. And we know that you can have a disability that can't be seen, you know, by people although as I am having a seizure you are going to know I have a disability. But they still substantially limit a major life activity. For me learning and reading and communicating, communicating and interacting with others can be affected by my depression. I think it is important to recognize that not everything is something that can be seen but can still result in discrimination which is the goal of the ADA, is to resolve the discrimination issue.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: All right. And Alex, what about you?

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: For me actually FASD, the more severe cases, there is actually a little facial thing that you can see that are -- that you can see that they have a disability. But for me you can't which I'm very thankful for. I'm glad that the ADA protects me because I know like just being a normal kid I'm socially normal, physically normal, but when it comes to school and stuff, and also like independency and decision making that's where I struggle. And that's where the ADA can, you know, step in and, you know, make sure I get the things that I need to be the most successful person that I can be.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Alex. So this is Jennifer. I thank you also, Marissa. It sounds to me based on the things that the two of you have said and some of the things that we heard earlier in your presentation

Marissa that acceptance by society is a big part, you know, of this. And Alex, you mentioned how you basically wanted to be, you know, just a regular kid, like everyone else. And so can you talk a little bit about that, about how if you feel the ADA helps you to be more accepted by others in society who may not have a disability, how that works for you. Or how it doesn't work and how you would like for it to.

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: I will start. I think the ADA helps a lot because it helps me, you know, get through school and I don't have to go to like a certain like school where, you know, people who need a lot of help, you know, all come together. But the ADA helps me like get like Taras who help me -- my help that I need for assignments or like a test or like if I need to go take a test somewhere else in a small room or get an extension on homework assignments which is very helpful. Also getting like my own living. I can get an apartment and not be discriminated against because I have a disability, which would be very, very nice.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Marissa, would you like to chime in here?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Sure. I think Alex mentioned employment which is a big one, ability to go out and get a job and have the things that other people have, like an apartment and, you know, be able to go out to a restaurant or something with friends but also I think, you know, before the ADA and really before especially before the Rehab Act and IDEA people with disabilities were traditionally separate from the rest of the society. So societal acceptance wasn't even an issue because nobody realized people with disabilities were around unless they had someone in the family. In that way the ADA has helped people with disabilities to get out and integrate with everyone else. And so that creates more possibilities for societal acceptance.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: I definitely agree with what you just said because I think often it is hard for people who don't have disabilities to understand that for folks who have disabilities it is not just about getting to where they have to go. But it is also about being part of the community and welcomed and, you know, as you say integrated and you talked about employment as well and that -- that is also a big key or a big part of being part of your community. Speaking of which I just want to remind you all at this time if you want to learn more about the ADA and employment you should join us for our next webinar which is June 19th, 2015 at 4 o'clock Eastern time. And we'll definitely send out more information about that. So thank you all for adding that in.

While we are talking about employment, we understand that all private employers with 15 or more employees and all state and federal agencies are required under the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide reasonable accommodation. Have any of you received accommodations in your work environment? And Sara, I will go ahead and go to you. I know that you are working. Have you received any accommodations under the Americans with

Disabilities Act?

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: Yes. So I have received accommodations for the current position. An accommodation I am receiving is asking my coworkers or some of the clients who are able to assist me in carrying objects which are heavy in that which I am not able to carry due to my shoulder limitation.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. Alex, actually before I go to Alex, Marissa, what about you, have there been any accommodations that you have received in the workplace?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Yes, I never did a formal accommodation request but I did ask my supervisors for things that I would consider accommodations. I didn't go through a formal process. One of those was I usually tell my supervisors I need deadlines for things between my depression and I also have ADHD. If I don't have a deadline and a firm date when I need something it won't get done. And I would tell them you need to make it a couple of days before -- you will get it at the deadline and not too many days before. Don't think you will get it with time to review it. So those were kind of my accommodations to help me make sure that I was getting things done on time. And I also had a modified schedule in a couple of my jobs. Mornings were a challenge for me. So I would set my schedule and go in later.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: We are approaching the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Why is this important? We will take Alex, Sara and Marissa and if you want to pass a question just say pass.

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: I think that this is a very important thing because, you know, people who have disabilities that are perfectly like functioning people need to be able to be successful in life just like anyone else would be. I know for me I would hate to be like discriminated against. Like I would hate to have people say oh, you can't, you know, become something in life when, you know, I could be, you know, the next millionaire for all we know. But this is very important, not just people with physical disabilities but also people who struggle with school. People who struggle with decision making like I do and also people who need that assistance, kind of like the training wheels on a bike, who they can correct you if you lean too far over to one side. And they are also there to help you like learn to be who you want to be. And also to like some day ride on your own. So that's why I am very thankful and excited about this.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Great, Alex. What about you, Sara?

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: For my perspective I think a lot has happened within the past 25 years which has impacted the lives of millions of people with disabilities in a positive way. Given that I believe it is important to celebrate and recognize living with disabilities as well as seeing people who are not in the disability community aware of the changes or any new policies which -- which impacts them in the ADA.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. A lot has happened over the course of time, since the ADA was passed. So I agree it is definitely very important and as Alex said it reiterates the fact that folks with disabilities need different levels of support and these things just help to level the playing field so that people with disabilities have equal access just as everyone else. Marissa, what about you, why is this 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act important?

>> ERIC CLINE: Marissa, you may be on mute if you are talking right now because we do not hear you.

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Sorry. Thank you. And I was on mute. I think first of all, because 25 years means that we have a whole generation of people who have grown up entirely under the protection of the ADA. I was 13 when it was passed. It was there when I was in high school. I didn't know I had a disability. So I never would have been aware of it. But because we have had now 25 years a lot more people are aware of and we are starting to see the ADA over a life and those people who were born in 1990 or a little earlier are now in the workforce. And the other reason is because 25 years is a long time. It is a quarter of a century. And this is an opportunity for us as a community to really reflect on the last 25 years on what has happened and also to celebrate our accomplishments which is a really important part of advocacy that we don't always take the time to do, but it is important to celebrate the fact that we have a lot and been around for 25 years and been very successful and also to take the time what are our next steps.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Marissa. So Marissa and Sara, you both have talked a little bit about history and what has happened since the ADA. As I understand it both of you, Marissa and Sara, have been involved in getting some legislation moved around disability, history week in your areas. Let me start with Marissa first and Sara, can you tell us a little bit about your involvement in getting disability history week happening in your areas?

>> MARISSA SANDERS: Sure. I am in West Virginia and before I moved here I developed and facilitated similar to a leadership forum but it was a different curriculum. A youth conference where youth with disabilities and the Speaker of the House came and did a mock legislative session. And he told the youth if they have wrote a bill he would sponsor it in house. What they wanted was disability history in the school and they said why didn't we learn this in school. The youth wrote the bill and our legislative session in West Virginia is two months long. And they got the entire bill passed in two months which almost never happens. And it was the first in the country to -- we were the first state to require disability history to be taught in schools. And it was a good movement. And now we are seeing a lot of other states pushing for that as well. So I think that that is a huge success because it is important for everyone to understand disability history.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Marissa, for sharing your experience there. Sara, can you talk a little bit about your experience with getting disability history work legislation passed in your state?

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: Sure. So like Marissa disability history week in California started as an idea with the class of 2009 at the youth leadership forum for students with disabilities. Similar to Marissa's program we found it interesting that we have not heard about disability history until attending the forum. So we were interested in passing it and seeing something -- a policy relating to legislation, relating towards -- leading to disabilities history task in California. A few months after the (inaudible) proud program started a campaign which focuses on passing disability history to the legislation and (cutting out) testifying in front of the human services committee as well as working on the (inaudible) piece of legislation and to working with local members also. Care for the piece of legislation.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. I heard both you and Marissa mention YLF. It sounds like YLF youth, which are youth leadership forums play a major role in impacting young people with disabilities. Sara, can you tell us if you think the YLF while attending that has impacted your identity as a person with a disability at all?

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: Definitely. I think that YLF -- I think attending YLF was the part of my life when my disability identity started as I had realized that after attending YLF I identified as a person with a disability for the first time. Prior to attending YLF I identified as a person who has a disability instead of a person with a disability. Further through YLF I was able to meet other people and then share experiences. Share my experiences with them in a faith environment.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. So I know that you are an athlete student. Do you feel more connected to the disability, you know, community as a young person who has FASD knowing more about the ADA, just learning about how people with disabilities are impacted? And if so can you tell us how that affects your identity?

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: Yeah. I did play football. I also played every other sport that you could name. You know -- what was the question again?

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: No problem. So how -- how do you -- do you feel connected -- basically do you feel connected to the disability community as a young person with FASD?

>> ALEXANDER MILLER: Got it. I feel very connected not only because I lead a youth group for the YouthACT thing who helps others with FASD kind of, you know, get through what we are going through and also to more independence and also to get through high school and all of that. Also going to these events with MOFAS, which is the Minnesota Organization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and meeting other people who struggle with the same thing, also being, you know -- how do I explain it? Like being more

thoughtful of others who also have disabilities.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you. All right. So we greatly appreciate our panelists taking the time to be on and participate in this discussion today. We want to open up our Q and A, question and answer period to the audience. If you have any questions at this time, please type them in to the chat box and we will take your questions.

>> ERIC CLINE: And this is Eric again. I want to let you know that I have been chatting with Sara a little bit offline and she was concerned about some of the audio quality on some of her answers. So she sent me her notes and I have uploaded her notes in to the files panel. So if you wanted to get a little more detail, if you happened to have missed anything she said if you want to read it it is downloadable and it is the fourth document now. Go ahead and ask your questions on the Q and A.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Eric. If we have any questions we will take those now. Okay. Well, if there aren't any questions, are there any comments? All right. Well, I guess then that means that Marissa, Sara and Alex covered everything then. So that's awesome. I just want to cover a few other things really quickly. I wanted to draw your attention to the resource slides that are in the presentation. These are just some additional resources that we think you all might find helpful. There are a few slides worth of resources. Also for more information on the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. We have included the website as well as the phone number. And we have also included the website for the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. I also want to remind you all really quickly that the Institute for Educational Leadership is celebrating the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please check out that slide that has more information in a link with more information about how you could submit your question and also please check for information about the upcoming webinar on June 19th. I see here that we do have a question. So I will go ahead and read that now.

Actually Eric, if you are able to see that question --

>> ERIC CLINE: Yeah. It is from Arthurlene and it says for Sara. Please clarify the difference in your perspective related to your statement about how you saw yourself as a person with a disability versus -- as a person with a disability versus a person who has a disability.

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: I'm sorry. That's a person with a disability, so before while I knew that my disability existed, however I was kind of ashamed of it in the sense that I would try and hide it from others. The physical part it was obviously not hidible. The learning -- the learning aspects of my disability is not -- was -- the learning aspects of my disability I could have hidden that from my peers. In comparison after I attended YLF I became completely open to both not only my professors but also my peers about why I use the note taking services or why I needed extended time on tests. I'm not sure if that addresses the question.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Sara. This is Jennifer. I believe that it does.

>> Yes. Thank you.

>> JENNIFER THOMAS: Thank you, Eric and thank you for that question, Arthurlene. If we don't have any questions at this time I am going to remind you about stories and about the next webinar, we will be sending out information about both of those activities. We thank you all very much for joining us this evening. And we look forward to hosting another webinar soon. Thank you.

>> SARA MOUSSAVIAN: Thank you.

(Session concluded at 4:13 p.m. CST)

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