

Diversability Unplugged: Disability and Tech 10/20/21 Transcript

17:59:28 Some Moon is not. Okay. Okay, let me see if I can fix my audio.

18:00:00 Now Catherine.

17:59:58 I can't see gets when I saw her Chad.

18:00:04 If she was able to see us But no, thank.

18:00:27 Um Can you guys hear me now.

18:00:30 Yes, that's a lot better. Okay, awesome, thank you so much I appreciate that.

18:00:53 Thank you think you asked me something married.

18:00:58 Oh, yeah, um, how would you like me to pronounce your name like how should I pronounce your name.

18:01:05 Or you can call me Mina. Mina. Awesome. Thank you so much,

18:01:12 you for asking. Thanks.

18:02:42 Thank you for joining us diverse ability unplugged, disability in tech. My name is Marie definitely

18:02:35 carrying a black

18:02:42 doing right now, from the Blue Ridge Mountains in Roanoke, Virginia.

18:02:47 If I get your versatility, is a community of people with disabilities, and people support us, who are all on the same mission of elevating Disability Pride together.

18:03:01 We are celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month, with a powerhouse panel discussion of with for disabled leaders who were blazing trails in the, in the tech world.

18:03:14 As the Bureau of Labor projects over half a million new jobs will be added to the tech industry by 2029, the industry really has the power to make a difference when it comes to employ disabled people.

18:03:29 Tonight, I'm joined by Avi from ad hoc Mina from Microsoft briefing Google and Derek, a member of the diverse ability leadership collective with varied experience in the tech industry, and they're here tonight to share a little about their journeys as

18:03:45 disabled pioneers in the tech world. If you have any questions during the conversation drop them in the chat and we're going to get to them at the end of the discussion.

18:03:54 We're going to start with introductions. And so, please introduce us, introduce yourself. Tell us a little about yourself and don't forget to describe yourself for us, and we'll start with you all fee, um this is Maria, I'm done speaking.

18:04:11 Hi everyone on on lit and I'm so excited today.

18:04:19 I see her phone on, and I'm a fan. I'm a ton of American woman. I have long hair, and when one I, and in the raw file.

18:04:46 And I hope I hope I am Mozilla can turn and turn and burn. So, I'm

18:04:57 gonna type of one.

18:05:00 I sudden, I know, I know.

18:05:02 And now what as on Google.

18:05:07 Nice to meet you.

18:05:12 Thank you so much, re, even a little bit about all of your experience and everything that you've done on next. So

18:05:29 my name is Toby.

18:05:32 I go with him pronouns.

18:05:35 I am for the large man with a full beard.

18:05:41 I behind me is my work background, which is green with white text.

18:05:50 I have I'm on a spectrum.

18:05:54 But with minimal supports. In most instances, also have an audio processing disorder, as well as ADHD. And so, if it takes me a couple seconds to respond it's probably my brain just processing as a little bit of lag.

18:06:11 But I'm a software engineer with a hawk I specialized in cloud cloud infrastructure.

18:06:18 But I'm generally a jack of all trades I've done quite a different I've been in a few industries from health tech to insurance to private aviation, doing the entire stack.

18:06:30 So I have a bit of a bit of experience with everything.

18:06:38 Thank you so much of the.

18:06:47 Hi everyone, it's so nice to meet you all.

18:06:50 My name is Mina. I'm a software engineer at Microsoft, are

18:06:59 A brown skinned

18:07:03 woman.

18:07:05 But dark black hair.

18:07:09 And my pronounce are she and her.

18:07:30 A. I'm a person with speech impairment or specifically a startup. And I'm so glad to be here. Yeah, thank you.

18:07:30 So glad to have you. Thank you so much for being here. And last but not least, Derek,

18:07:38 everybody, my name is Derek.

18:07:40 I am a white male with medium ish brown hair and a goatee beard kind of thing. I'm wearing a blue.

18:07:53 The red shirt underneath, and a brick wall behind me as my background. I use em pronouns.

18:08:03 And let's see, I work in the industry as a user experience designer, which is essentially a kind of a design strategist, where you could the metaphor that I like to use this, or like, architects, kind of draw the blueprints for a house or a building,

18:08:42 then pass that off to contractors who then the house gets designed and all that kind of stuff like into the interior. So I work more as like an architect who draws blueprints for technology applications websites, apps.

18:08:42 All kinds of anything that is a product or service digitally, really.

18:08:48 I've worked in the industry for, I just passed a 20 year anniversary. My first job in tech.

18:08:56 I started in tech pre disability.

18:08:59 I had a stroke. And when I was 19.

18:09:04 And that rendered me half blind to both eyes, which is the image.

18:09:09 And the left side of my body was completely paralyzed, and now it's partially paralyzed against some function back.

18:09:17 So my left hand is non functional from left arm from the elbow down my left leg is this week, and my left vision is gone as well so

18:09:30 I've worked primarily as a contractor, over the years, so I worked at a lot of different places that would be a lot list, but everywhere from Amazon to Disney to horizon to Sony on all kinds of small, medium, large global clients for 20 years so that's

18:09:50 me.

18:09:54 Awesome. You just lead perfectly into our first question which is, what is your role in the tech industry, and it really sounds like you're really has had such a vast experience that I can't wait to hear everything that you've learned.

18:10:11 So we'll leave right into that question what is your experience in the tech industry and why is your work, so meaningful to you.

18:10:24 We'll start with you a veto. So, I've forgotten, some some really small startups in some very large companies I've worked at a 20% startup, all the way up to \$100,000 hundred thousand \$100,000 hundred thousand employee company.

18:10:40 And right now I work at ad hoc. And the reason I don't ad hoc is because they help federal government agencies better serve people that we work with agencies to improve their digital services by designing and building applications that meet people's needs.

18:10:54 And I specifically joined because I, I really believe in helping people and I see that the work that I do is very clear that I'm currently working with an organization called the pan Foundation, and they provide grant money in transportation money for

18:11:10 people who have disabilities and illnesses to provide for their care. And so the the work that we do has a very real impact on people's lives and.

18:11:20 Yeah.

18:11:23 That's awesome it's safe to say the tech industry really allows you to make an impact where, otherwise you wouldn't be able to correct yeah it's it's one of those things that like being in the tech industry allows me to have a multiplicative impact right

18:11:38 so instead of being able to help one person directly on how you know thousands of people with with the code that I writer, the infrastructure that I put in place.

18:11:46 Wow, that is just so powerful.

18:12:00 Um, Adria. I would love to hear, with you. Why is your work so meaningful to you and what do you do in the tech industry.

18:12:01 So, some of our older women in the tech industry has so much power over people's lives.

18:12:13 And the way I look power and purpose technology. It's what people can do.

18:12:27 So, no people who can benefit the move on technology or disabled people.

18:12:34 Yet, I know that. Nothing in this thing is not focusing on us.

18:12:41 So I say my role in this thing, and.

18:12:49 And the thing that people don't ignore. Don't forget about.

18:12:57 So, my

18:13:02 is a no I hadn't known. That is not my full time job at Google. I am a marketing angle. Not another my condition inside zoom or.

18:13:22 And I can take home I'm talking about.

18:13:27 Disability Employment Awareness Month.

18:13:30 And I think part of that Employment Awareness is not just about hiring.

18:13:48 Nothing not nothing for that company, one point in time.

18:13:46 But that is what people have power and handle blue one day.

18:14:01 That is a fitness template on how I run my law and the

18:14:06 method that can help.

18:14:08 That's amazing because it really goes back down to that phrase, nothing without us. It used to be nothing about us without us but I've heard some people saying, not just about is nothing without us period.

18:14:24 Yes, yes, I, well I know

18:14:28 nothing about this one out on nothing at all.

18:14:35 Exactly.

18:14:36 And it's like just having these roles to where you have that representation, it's so much more than just a job.

18:14:47 And so, I really appreciate your perspective and thank you so much for sharing, Nina, I would love to hear next from you about why your work so meaningful.

18:14:57 Sure. So,

18:15:05 I'm a software engineer, and I just started to three months back. So, if it's more recent. So I think the, one of the things I don't want to share.

18:15:23 Is that so my software engineering role.

18:15:25 It's not focused strictly on accessibility, but at the same time, through my work in just software engineering.

18:15:42 I've been trying to make the code we write more accessible. So, for example, a

18:15:53 I've been just trying to talk to my teammates to me, to make sure that they

18:16:11 consider writing accessible code for us. From the start, rather than

18:16:16 creating at the

18:16:22 at the end

18:16:27 to fixed accessibility problems on your code. So,

18:16:38 I think.

18:16:43 I just want to share

18:16:47 that.

18:16:48 We've been even though.

18:16:50 Oh yeah, and your main job on the tech field.

18:16:57 That's like not directly connected to accessibility. He only can take the small steps to make sure

18:17:16 that the product or the service, you're already working

18:17:21 on it is

18:17:25 accessible. So, I guess. These are the small ways I've been trying to can impact the tech field here.

18:17:39 Thank you.

18:17:41 Thank you so much and I just have to say before we move on that it's not just small ways that that makes an impact because the fact that there are people in the tech field that understand accessibility should never be the caster thought it needs to be

18:17:58 fully integrated and everything we do. That's the way we're going to dismantle the evil of society so it's not just a small step that's like a massive leap, and it's critical to, I think, everything that we do.

18:18:14 So thank you for all that you do.

18:18:17 And the next, Derek, we talked a little bit about what you do in the tech industry but you never mentioned about what it really means to you and why your work is so meaningful so I want to touch on that a little bit before we move off.

18:18:30 Sure.

18:18:32 Well, it's so many reasons but, I mean, I started my career so long ago, like right out of high school, I didn't go to college. I don't have a degree.

18:18:45 Because back then. I graduated in class of 2000, the internet was still kind of new and, like, not everybody had it, and it was still dial up and it was still not a household thing for a whole world and people didn't know if it was really going to stick

18:19:03 around and take some said it was bad and the.com bubble burst and.

18:19:09 And I ended up teaching myself HTML, you know in junior high when I got my first computer was just fascinated by programming and by the time I graduated high school anybody and everybody knew HTML.

18:19:22 Back then could get a job. So, I decided to just try and start working and I did that, and then my first big job which was working for horizon.

18:19:41 I worked on their first version of horizon, calm, and while I was doing that.

18:19:48 I had my stroke, and I didn't know if I'd ever work again, you know, like, I lost half my vision, I lost half of my body function wise, I'm not an amputee.

18:20:02 I lost function of the left side of my body completely, I had to move back into my parents house, I had to go on disability at my job. I didn't know if I'd ever get to go back, I didn't know if I'd be able to learn how to type, with one hand or if I get

18:20:16 my other hand back or you know if I'd be able to do programming and design work with half of my vision and do it successfully. And so then I spent several years, you know, learning to adapt and going through physical and occupational therapy and and found

18:20:35 a way, you know, to adapt and and do the work and get back to where I felt like I contribute to not fall behind and not need too many accommodations and.

18:20:56 And once I got back in and felt like I could do it and prove that I could, like, I never wanted to let it go, that like, I, I can have a job, you know, like I'm not like my life isn't over quote unquote, you know, because this happened and I am going

18:21:05 be able to find my independence again and, and the technology industry blew up, obviously, and I've been able to kind of ride that wave with it, and grow with it I mean I was a kid and now I'm 40 years old, almost like.

18:21:22 So, having having this industry and having the work and having the so many problems that technology solves for people like us.

18:21:35 And it helps us be able to do things and use products and services, and like an Uber because I couldn't drive for the longest time that you know like Uber and Lyft and those kinds of services that like, those are Technology Services, I mean they're ride

18:21:47 sharing but those kinds of things have enabled me to have work, and also live so I'm super passionate about the industry and what it can do, and that people with disabilities can get involved and have jobs in the industry and not, you know, not be relegated

18:22:08 to feeling like they can be a part. So, That's my long winded answer.

18:22:16 It was a great answer. And it's truly amazing to just think about how much technology has truly given us. I can't imagine living in a day and age without it.

18:22:26 I'm just a reminder we will have question and answers at the end so if you have any questions just put them in the chat, and we will get to them towards the end of the event.

18:22:38 Our next question is, when did you disclose your disability, if you have disclosed it.

18:22:48 And why did you wait till then. Did you disclose it for example, during the hiring process was it after you got the offer, and why on the veto will go with you first.

18:23:04 Um, you're muted.

18:23:09 I usually just close after, after my first week of employment just to make sure that I have the job.

18:23:16 And that's usually because my experience has been when when I disclose during the hiring process. People tend to have very very narrow views of what autism is right and so it's very hard to break down those those stereotypes or those biases before they

18:23:35 even have a chance to know who I am and what I'm capable of and so I found that for me works better to disclose after I've quote unquote proven myself.

18:23:44 Right.

18:23:48 And so, yeah, kind of like Jacob saying the right guy hired me for my ability right not not for my disability and so that's usually why I disclose after after I'm hired.

18:24:00 Awesome, on that next step, I would love to hear from Audrey on this.

18:24:10 So, I'm totally understand that and the best that I will say that I had a moment of a quote

18:24:24 on the bonus integral part of my identity.

18:24:29 So I had it on my resume.

18:24:32 Now I had online, and I had closed down the, and had been the president of the sample

18:24:42 sampling.

18:24:44 And that I'm one fellow for line connect what two o'clock on point with able to make know.

18:25:04 And that

18:25:12 I'm going to interview.

18:25:11 I'm cost about, 9, million, and someone who came home and who had to fight for a play, and other than I am.

18:25:24 And I'm fortunate that my input new learn, and also though Cluedo.

18:25:38 We're on the Bandon and. No. I'm pleased in how my filet

18:25:44 mignon.

18:25:46 I'm gonna ask it.

18:25:51 So, Amazon my.

18:25:56 I completely vibe with that so much. I'm the same way. Honestly I have all of my advocacy work on my resume, because I feel like I shouldn't be ashamed of it just because it has to do with disability is that shame and that stuff fear that continues to

18:26:14 allow the able of society to thrive, but every person's personal belief about that it's so personal because it's our livelihoods to like the discrimination in the workforce is extremely real.

18:26:29 So it's like, it's a rock and a hard place because we want to fight that April is and but we need our jobs to survive. So it's like it.

18:26:41 So, it's so hard.

18:26:43 I mean I would love to hear your perspective on this.

18:26:48 Sure. So for me, And I do

18:26:56 disclose my stutter. The interviewing stage.

18:27:03 Because I do need accommodations.

18:27:32 On my stutter. So, for example, I can share my experience, interviewing that Microsoft. So, when I got the interview from Microsoft. I did tell them to.

18:27:53 So they do have a speech impediment. So, yes, yes, we're making the kind of accommodations need us to have an option

18:27:51 to both chat, and speak at the same time, so.

18:27:56 So, if I do feel tired.

18:27:59 I could talk all the time, like I could still use the chat option. So they. So,

18:28:12 This was back.

18:28:15 Like, and like, 2019 other interviews.

18:28:26 They were still

18:28:33 in person.

18:28:45 Start the

18:28:48 interviewer on me.

18:28:50 I'll be shared the same Google Doc, so I could just stay and the dog.

18:29:13 So, this way.

18:29:17 I didn't like have to speak of the time, and get tired. So, yeah, it was great.

18:29:25 And I got the job so.

18:29:28 But I do understand. I think like not all companies they are like Microsoft, so I'm Microsoft, they already have

18:29:49 a very good,

18:29:52 including

18:29:55 hiring strategy.

18:30:00 So, they are like, I think, able to provide such accommodations. And they do

18:30:15 understand.

18:30:17 But at the same time I feel that for you think a lot of the smaller companies are they don't know about the competition process.

18:30:35 like, um, they may discriminate. So I think it's a challenge for sure. Yeah, definitely.

18:30:49 It really is a challenge but it's awesome be here a major employer like Microsoft is that being so accommodating and inclusive.

18:31:00 I really think inclusive leadership is the key to the hiring process making the interviews accessible like that. So it's awesome that you have that experience and I love that you talked about accommodations, because that leads us into our next question

18:31:16 of what has your employer done for accommodations and how did you start those conversations. Derek, we'll start this question Off with you.

18:31:29 Um yeah so accommodations.

18:31:34 I personally myself, I guess.

18:31:40 Everything happened to me so so young, I was 19. Like I said, I really, I guess I didn't start going back to work, until I was 20.

18:31:50 Um, but I always tried to like be the quiet one and not like rock the boat too much and. And for the record, I, I might answer to the disclosure disclosure of disability is that it varies for me as a career long contractor I've had like my LinkedIn list

18:32:17 of jobs as long because sometimes it's a month long projects and events of the year, sometimes it's six months. So I work and work and work and work or that move places and I do interviews, all the time, and it various on when I disclose into who and

18:32:35 how and why. But.

18:32:39 So, in the case of places I've worked where I had disclosed they did know, there had been a few things I think I wrote down a couple things like one in particular was like, flexible hours and working with my employer to get my like arrival time to work

18:32:58 because I wasn't driving. And I was only relying on public transit, and sometimes I wouldn't miss a bus or the bus would break down, or the bus would not be running that day for whatever reason, I live in Los Angeles.

18:33:14 Traffic here is crazy and public transit is surprisingly good it's just not always reliable and so I talked to my manager, up front. Hey, just let you know I'm visually impaired.

18:33:26 I can't drive. I don't have a car. I take the bus, and the train, or an Uber or Lyft, sometimes, and even, this is before Uber and Lyft existed, and I couldn't tell them that so my ability to guarantee I could be there at nine or 10 or whatever time was

18:33:46 kind of hit or miss. And so, for the most, most part, managers were understanding and, like, Oh yeah, don't worry about it like, you know, it's good. But if you're going to show up a little later maybe you can stay a little later and there's ways to like

18:33:59 kind of kind of work with your employer about the accommodations you need the conversations I've had always been very civil and they weren't like what are you talking about, like, why do you need this, you don't need the service no anger or anything like

18:34:15 that.

18:34:17 One time I had to, like, my blind on the left side.

18:34:24 And I was sitting, I was put in an office where the whole, it was an open office floor plan with everybody was on my left side but I'm blind on my left side.

18:34:34 And then there was a wall on my right side. And so I when there's a wall on my right side and everything's on my left side that I can't see the wind to it, I felt like I was sitting in a little box, and like I didn't know what was going on and people

18:34:46 would come over to me and my website and wonder why it was ignoring them and how to tap me on the shoulder and I'm like scared.

18:34:55 So I had to have a conversation with my bosses like maybe we can find me another desk where I'm facing the other direction so that I don't feel like I'm not sitting in the office is everybody or like I'm sitting against the wall and he totally understood

18:35:10 and a couple other people in the office like rearranged so that I could arrange and it was not a big deal.

18:35:19 But one of the even trivial one I went to work at Amazon, I, there had like water coolers on every floor, and they were you had to like, push it a certain way with like, have your glass under the little spout where the water comes out, and then push the

18:35:37 button, but the little ledge for the glass to go under wasn't big enough for a cup, sit there and I only have one hand to use, so I couldn't hold the cup and push the button at the same time for the water cooler, and everybody drinks water all day and

18:35:54 I'm like, I don't want to have to ask somebody to get me water. So maybe we can find if there's another type of water cooler around that we could use that maybe would be and it was like so trivial, and I felt so stupid.

18:36:07 But the HR lady who managed the situation like was just so like, thank you for bringing this up and we're so glad but like we don't know these things we don't see these things.

18:36:20 Like, it's so nice to know that, you know, we can do something that can help you just something as simple as getting water so those are all kinds of. It's so many different ways, things that can happen but generally for me it's all been very positive,

18:36:35 and I haven't had any negative experiences with combinations.

18:36:40 That's awesome. I'm so glad to hear that you haven't had any negative experiences because that's that makes it a little easier on us when we're able to ask, and before I move on to the next person I just have to say, split may seem like trivial like it

18:36:55 may seem trivial just to get water but it's like, that's a human need, we need to be hydrated you know and if we're unable to get to the water cooler for unable to access that water it's like were deprived of a basic human except human necessity, just

18:37:16 because of the unintentional exclusion so I think it's awesome that you brought that up to their attention and, you know, they're probably going to remember that beyond the time that you're in the workplace these when we explain the accommodations and

18:37:31 the reason we need them. It doesn't just impact us but hopefully our employers will remember it moving forward.

18:37:40 So, moving on, I would love to hear about any accommodations and how you asked for them, a veto.

18:37:48 Yeah, so I have some part of my autism I have a cold temperatures of audio processing disorder.

18:37:59 And the best way that I can describe it is like most people, when they when they focus on listening to something that's like a, like a car radio right where you go from one section to another.

18:38:09 But for me it's like I hear everything, all the same. At the same time on the same level. And so it's really hard sometimes to pay attention to things that are going on.

18:38:19 And so, usually my one of my commendations is like, Hey, can I have noise cancelling chemical

18:38:25 industry for a while so I think a slew of them now.

18:38:28 But that was one of the biggest things that was really hard to get. When I first started because most of my partners have like an open floor plan which, you know, especially in 2015 people were like, Well, why are you wearing headphones that, that's disrespectful

18:38:42 That's disrespectful you're not paying attention. What are you just watching YouTube videos like why are you doing any work, right, and the places that I was able to get the headphones like my ability to focus skyrocketed because I wasn't distracted by,

18:38:57 you know the watercooler, that's 15 feet away from some is dripping water any or, you know, somebody that's playing a YouTube video, and the other room.

18:39:04 So that's, that's one of that's probably one of the bigger ones that I initially asked for.

18:39:11 I do have some notes.

18:39:12 And then one of the other ones that I didn't actually.

18:39:16 I guess I just gotten used to this by going into the office but being remote.

18:39:22 being able to focus is difficult, and at the same time like I'm really good at focusing just at random times today and so I can hyper focus and I can get hours of work done an hour because I'm just in the zone for it, but it might take me eight hours

18:39:49 to get to that point right or two days to get there. And so one of the nice things about being remote is like there are flexible hours. There's not really like a Hey, you got to come and clock in at nine to five.

18:40:01 And so that's also been very, very helpful and one of the reasons that I'm at the company that I'm at now.

18:40:10 I think remote work is probably the silver lining from the pandemic just the fact that now it's so accessible, that honestly companies don't really have an excuse if they don't have a remote strategy anymore.

18:40:27 I'm sorry. next I would love to hear about how you went to for asking for accommodations and if you experienced any stigma when you asked for yours.

18:40:38 So, the cost about dropping a simple gun wanna a moment, cleaning out a new.

18:41:06 It's a new one. Another new thing.

18:40:58 And that's something that I need help work time of my mouth to move.

18:41:04 I'm help moving from my wheelchair and intimate little tip.

18:41:12 And when I started that Google mom was not a holiday for personal care attendant.

18:41:22 And so, what do I do, I don't think one at one time and then

18:41:28 I'm happy to do hi who, like the stone net as living water and you know.

18:41:39 And so,

18:41:44 at some point.

18:42:00 I hope I went to my Google Doc.

18:41:55 And when advocated four o'clock my time.

18:42:00 Hon.

18:42:01 And a couple while that's coming, Google, then implement that.

18:42:08 And click that one.

18:42:11 And I find that that being able to build them is Jacqueline, and I'm unlevel nothing everything, but not in how.

18:42:26 That's how I know, but that is part of one when I, when I, when I play.

18:42:32 Another thing that I add

18:42:36 guys I'm so glad.

18:42:41 I'm so glad when I saw him on holiday and I know what me looking at night.

18:42:51 But the kinds of pitch More, more, more, more

18:43:12 important than anything in life and it's not to move behind them, and hide them.

18:43:13 Um, I feel like that was one thing on employment

18:43:19 employer.

18:43:23 But anyone out there trying to add on more than might have been kind of new.

18:43:47 No, I know. I had nothing to lose. But that might have been this one, and I'm.

18:43:58 And I was that one. I know that I, I had a Clinton, a plan, behind the same diagnosis as me. And so you have to cost this plan to move back home and building has a one and homebuilding not.

18:44:13 So, I'm not.

18:44:20 But I am excited saddened and lift with Tim Cook.

18:44:34 Yeah, it really is sad that it's 2021, and there are people who can't even use the bathroom at work still that just breaks my heart. It's like an inclusive workplace is it inclusive until it's accessible to the disabled.

18:44:53 And if people can't use the bathroom if they can't be able to drink water get their human needs met, it's not accessible.

18:45:02 But, um, Mina. Moving on, I would love to hear about if you've ever experienced any stigma in your career. And how have you handled it if you did.

18:45:15 Sure. Oh, so I think a lot of times, like my college career, so I just graduated two months back. So, I don't think

18:45:34 I'm too far

18:45:54 into my career yet, but it came in my college

18:45:54 career.

18:45:46 a lot, a lot of people.

18:45:53 They was taught that had taught taught that,

18:46:01 hence my speech.

18:46:05 It's not fluent, it.

18:46:11 It's like was somehow related

18:46:20 to me not knowing things that well. But

18:46:25 it's not true, I think, of people, they should pay more attention.

18:46:48 Unlike what I'm planning to say, rather than how I'm saying it. So I think it's the small things when been not a small thing.

18:46:54 It's just that

18:46:58 when some people they try to make assumption about

18:47:09 just kills and be just March

18:47:15 Madness.

18:47:17 just because the way you speak, I think.

18:47:24 Touch like a one of the stigma like I've faced for sure.

18:47:39 that's like a one of the stigma like I've faced for sure. I thought I clicked on you.

18:47:40 That has to be really frustrating and I'm so sorry you have to experience that and I just want to echo what you said, of people listening to what you're going to say instead of how you're saying it because it's like what we say it matters and it doesn't

18:48:00 matter how is being said. So I think it. It's like when it comes to feeling that in the workplace, it's awesome that you just keep existing there and making sure that you're heard.

18:48:15 And so our next question is, how can corporations that run the tech world, engage in better ally ship towards the disabled of video, we'll start with you.

18:48:30 For this is a really big question that we could do like a whole series on just by itself, but like my two cents on it for a quick thing as like my, there's a there's a general feeling in corporations like, well, if you're if you're if you're anything

18:48:45 but the norm if you're anything but capable, right. You're a burden. And so we don't want to put in the time we want to put in the effort because that's going to take away from our bottom line or whatever, whatever the reason may be right and what what

18:48:58 I think a lot of corporations and the people who run the missile is somebody in the chatroom up, most people that I've met that have that are disabled in some way, are some of the most resilient people because we have to do right like we we've.

18:49:13 We have to be resilient to just survive, and to thrive and so, not, not implementing those accommodations which most of them are fairly easy rather like a water cooler place where some headphones are pretty trivial things in the grand scheme of things

18:49:26 that would not only allow your this employee to better function greater better for the role but then allow them to also, you know, carry over that conversation of other people and allow them to have those discussions about like awareness, with with their

18:49:42 co workers and so I think it's a disservice to not even ask. Right. But I think, not being willing to even have a discussion or to even do the minimum is

18:50:00 having the discussion on asking the question so that's a minimum that you can do is cooperation right but and providing the combinations.

18:50:09 And I'll make it sounds really simple but if that's that's the basis of it, I think.

18:50:17 Yeah, honestly the basic thing they could do is make it an environment where disabled people can drive and that's providing accommodations having these conversations.

18:50:29 Derek I would love to hear what you think about how corporations that run the tech industry can be better allies.

18:50:37 Um, yeah, I think, first I think it's very helpful or more helpful for more companies to make it feel like it's okay to disclose that you have a disability, not everybody's disabilities are visible.

18:50:55 And mine are sometimes visible sometimes not sometimes I am a partial part time wheelchair user.

18:51:02 Sometimes white cane user.

18:51:05 And I know that in the past when I've been looking for jobs, or interviewing for jobs, filling out applications for jobs. Some, some companies actually put on there if you need accommodations, you know, please let us know we're happy to have you know

18:51:21 the, the, the language, the tone that companies use towards people with disabilities is more inviting and less threatening, you know, I think that's a huge thing which maybe that's part of like marketing your company.

18:51:39 Like that.

18:51:41 They can just take us position of oil like we want to include people like you and, which can trickle, or go up, not trickle down but go up to break out in the world and these companies can represent more disabled people in their, in their company, advertising,

18:52:02 and all that kind of stuff. I think when you see that companies like Microsoft, like with Nina have all kinds of adaptive technology applications that they've developed, and that they actually put advertising out around those it makes me feel like wow

18:52:28 that looks like a place that I could actually work and that if I reached out to them they wouldn't be like, why are you contacting us, you don't like they would see that as, as like we have a place for you, like the how cool is that, you know like, so

18:52:35 I think just having that general sense of like welcome this and oneness with disabilities, be great, and then also like Aubrey It sounded like created.

18:52:46 I think what Amazon called affinity groups within the company

18:52:53 created actually mentioned in a gathering the troops and, and I think companies having more

18:53:03 unity within their within the company for people with disabilities like I've worked at so many places where people that I worked with didn't know I had disabilities, I didn't know people that I worked with had disabilities.

18:53:15 If there was like an actual initiative where it's like, Hey, you know like, we can get you guys together and you guys can also do like teach out to the rest of the people who aren't necessarily wouldn't identify as having a disability, but would love

18:53:32 to hear your stories and understand your experiences and engage with you.

18:53:39 There's a lot of people, it turns out are very timid about asking or feel uncomfortable when, that kind of thing I think companies internally can enable people that they've already hired that they may not even know have this ability to speak out and then

18:53:52 kind of organize, you know, I'm just, there needs to be more hiring of people like us, you know to is a great way to get to that, having a having a group, and banding together with coworkers, you know, if you found out that there was an executive in your,

18:54:12 in your company that if I found out had a vision in here and then I'd be so excited to go like talk to them, but like, you know like, and swap stories and share laughs and, you know, like, and fight the good fight for accommodation and all that so so

18:54:29 many different things that can be done, but that's, that's what I think.

18:54:37 He said so many great things.

18:54:41 We're actually going to touch on the last part of your statement after we get to Audrey about how companies can be better outlines, real quick I wanted to say can you imagine one if like tech giants would like boost the algorithm for like disabled creators

18:54:56 and like if they would actually like have paid ads have disabled creators and just hire disabled creators like there's so much power, and that would really add to the representation.

18:55:09 So Avi I would love to hear what you think that companies can do to really be better allies.

18:55:16 Yeah, and I love that I know about Apple foreign.

18:55:24 And I'm on here.

18:55:31 I'll tell you.

18:55:36 I had a nice

18:55:40 new high and then in method and I learned a lot of listening, where to go and happen to show up and hand them the axon and hand an online store and move in on a film Atlanta and print not asking what know how can how can they got an ally.

18:56:12 How can that an ally. No, no.

18:56:17 I wouldn't have not talked about, but I'll put on within the chat within

18:56:26 the time.

18:56:27 time. I would like to move on from having the same conversation on why no one will have to have upon with

18:56:41 moving the conversation point one instead of getting caught up on the same time I had my 10 years.

18:56:50 So,

18:56:53 my ignorance on having an ally.

18:57:00 Cause when I'm doing my homework. And then one thing and one topic, and then within that.

18:57:12 I'm opposed to one thing and having to solve all my problems on film, while we're not all then

18:57:28 that's great advice. I'm thank you so much for sharing.

18:57:31 Before we get to our q amp a we have one last question. What impact does disability representation and employment in the tech world have on the wider world.

18:57:48 We'll start with you, Mina.

18:57:51 Sure. Oh, I'm gonna try to think about this. So, pink the

18:58:00 pink one of the main things.

18:58:07 I start

18:58:12 the technology.

18:58:16 It's just so widespread. Now I think

18:58:22 everything is so powered by the deck. Now she that do not have

18:58:34 disability, good presentation, and that just be so sad.

18:58:45 I think.

18:58:54 when you do see

18:59:06 somebody like you have

18:59:02 the same kind of disability,

18:59:11 like you to sing the same kind of

18:59:18 accessible technology. It just feels so good. And so, I'm partnering.

18:59:38 I like to know, I'm very much like a one off a ton of that we did some time back.

18:59:45 They tried to make like the

18:59:50 accessible version, often very popular video games for kids.

18:59:58 On the first thing like.

19:00:04 But the game.

19:00:07 It was like

19:00:10 thought made

19:00:16 accessible from the start. But, but they made an accessible version, later on. So, just seeing those

19:00:32 disabled kids trying to play that accessible gain a pink.

19:00:42 And like

19:00:42 And like we just felt really happy. So, so a thing.

19:00:48 Everything starting from gaming to work were on to transportation I think everything is just powered by tech. So, I just just so crucial that we make all these experiences powered by tech accessible to

19:01:16 everybody.

19:01:18 Yeah.

19:01:23 Thank you so much for sharing Mina. I'm real quick I would love to get our viewers perspective on what disabled representation in the tech world would mean for the wider world and then we're going to get to our question and answer segment.

19:01:43 In fact, the principles of representation clematis conduct meetings and it's very dramatic for especially for younger people, and I've, I've had conversations with them and artistic people in

19:01:56 within the artistic community there's a very low planet rate.

19:02:01 So, just having conversations with general artistic people that are in middle school and high school, just being a representation of Okay, I have a full time job and live independently, like, really.

19:02:15 There is, there is a future for you there is a life for you, other than you know being shunned or pushed aside and so it's very, very dramatic and impactful for the one I think on the wider world, the.

19:02:31 And we can accept people who have disabilities or we have accommodations or need accommodations and make me an aberration when we include that into the design of the original design but not after the fact.

19:02:43 Right. And I'm like, Oh, we need to add this one because we have an employee who needs this thing. But when we are inclusive from the start.

19:02:49 It not only benefits you know us who specifically need those those accommodations but it makes life easier for everybody right like being kind of the people, makes life easier.

19:03:00 And it doesn't really been kind of takes a lot of forms, but I think one of the things that I've noticed with disability representation is like showing kindness actually is very impactful for everybody else.

19:03:16 Well said, and it's honestly easy to show kindness.

19:03:22 You don't have to really go out of your way to be kind to somebody.

19:03:26 So now we're going to start with our question and answer segment. And our first question is, what is one thing that you would like hiring managers to do to be a better ally for disabled candidates, and that we will start with you, Derek What is one thing.

19:03:46 Um, I think I guess I kind of maybe I'm repeating my answer from earlier but I think just a general openness and oneness and tone around, there's anything we can do or that you might need, and maybe even sharing, in some way, because I know it might not

19:04:10 come up in conversation. Generally for people that like, Oh, and by the way, we have a persons with disabilities Affinity Group here in our company, you know.

19:04:18 But if that were part of like some of the materials, you've got leading up to an interview, or that you could find, accessible on a company's website about their like value principles and things of that nature like think just that general kind of like

19:04:36 Like, I think just that general kind of like acknowledgement and a warm kind open way to like feel like I can. This is a place where I feel like they'll see me hear me and talk to me and let me get involved, you know, think that's, that's a great start,

19:04:53 You know, I think that's, that's a great start, I mean there are other like technical things that could be done to I mean, obviously like

19:05:01 providing the kinds of accommodations or being flexible and being able to talk about those flexibilities, which, like you're saying, working from home now is change the game completely.

19:05:16 Fortunately as a contractor for most of my career I've done a lot of work from home. Over the last 20 years probably like 70% of my work has been from home.

19:05:29 That even just being more open and, like, about what that means for people in that that like that opens jobs up to so many millions more people that might never be able to make it into an office, you know i mean i couldn't drive for the longest time and

19:05:47 it was so difficult for me to get the offices.

19:05:51 There were jobs I had to turn down that I was really interested in, because it's just a place I wanted had always thought about working but it's too far to get to on public transit, you know I there's, it would take me two and a half hours in the morning

19:06:06 to get there when it would be like 30 minutes by car.

19:06:10 So being able to find that HR and in this application process and interview process just more like when they talk about that as a general perk, or benefit to the general masses that they can maybe squeak in

19:06:31 some verbiage and and and conversation about what that might mean for people who may need something more specific, you know, and, like, isn't this great, we offer flexible work hours.

19:06:43 Like, maybe we could say, you know like if you have a need for a flexible schedule for any specific reason other than just generally you want that and we're happy to talk about it.

19:06:55 We're not going to like throw your resume out because you're asking for this like some kind of assurances that that we're cool with people like you, you know,

19:07:09 It would be awesome if we didn't have to worry about our resume going in the trash.

As soon as they found out our dirty little secret that we were disabled.

19:07:18 One day, I agree, I would love to know what's one thing that you would love from hiring managers for them to do to be a better ally

19:07:32 think the number one had.

19:07:40 I picking the time from Bill cloth, one.

19:07:48 Yeah. So, um, and how did they build the hill.

19:07:57 Can I have

19:07:57 some momentum what. One thing that I.

19:08:06 It's nothing new.

19:08:06 Nothing Nothing anything I can do, connecting and really make me feel like I'm welcome, and that I can learn something up.

19:08:16 And part of that in.

19:08:21 Nothing.

19:08:23 So, miss my thighs, some people. Like, I 10.

19:08:29 I really need it.

19:08:31 And I had been on phone call, where.

19:08:40 Now I know caption. And I, I'm in the past I don't know when it.

19:08:45 And sometimes that, and then kind of tapped in on one call him a new day and then I know tapped in on the next call. But then, I'm holding my moon.

19:09:00 So, there's one way or another.

19:09:07 And with an opening, like someone put one on a new one. I'm not going to continue this one.

19:09:21 There's some great points. Thank you. Our next question is, what advice do you have for aspiring tech workers with disabilities looking to find a great employer, especially if they're new to the tech world of, you know, I would love to have you answer

19:09:40 this one first.

19:09:47 There's two parts the first part is not so much advice for more second affirmation, you belong here, right, there is a place for you here and in this space, you've logged in.

19:09:58 I volunteer with an organization called hack diversity here in Boston.

19:10:02 And they, they work their work is about bringing people with the underrepresented minorities into tech, and one of the, one of the, one of the things that I've learned from them as it's about relationships with with those companies are the most important

19:10:17 especially as a new person.

19:10:20 Boston is one of those, similar to the Bay area where it's all about who you know, to be able to get your foot in the door.

19:10:27 And so, it's.

19:10:30 I suck at networking right but networking is a really useful way to do it. And especially, I've been to networking events, since the pandemic started and it's been significantly easier because being remote allows me to have control over the space whereas

19:10:46 if it was in person I probably wouldn't go because I have no control right.

19:10:52 So I think I'm done my advice is, I know.

19:11:01 First and foremost, know that you belong here. And secondly, trying to know that other people there's. There are many organizations, there are many organizations and places that you can jump in and just have conversations, graduates very low stakes, not

19:11:14 like hey you work at all. Can I have a job ago or, you know, I'm just conscious low stakes and let people get to know you, because that that helps a lot more than you would think it does.

19:11:26 I think the best advice that's going to come out of tonight is your quote you belong here.

19:11:33 If anyone takes away one thing from tonight, please take away that you deserve to be where ever you want to be an effects the tech world that you deserve to be there.

19:11:46 Mina, I would love to know what advice would you give to someone with a disability who wants to enter the tech world and might be new to it.

19:11:58 Sure, I pain.

19:12:17 Oh, I do

19:12:05 want to

19:12:17 echo what

19:12:11 to said to, I think, of our first fall, understand

19:12:20 that you belong here for sure.

19:12:29 I think the one of the most today chest.

19:12:35 I find advantage. Okay, see us being or disabled software engineer, is that

19:12:49 I just have so so much money.

19:12:57 The more skills, and more patient and more busy Leanne.

19:13:04 I don't give up that fast. So, like, thing.

19:13:15 By disabled key us just

19:13:22 like me such

19:13:30 as, and you just person on back to the five spot.

19:13:39 Let me just person on back to the spot. I think are on the tech

19:13:47 ecosystem online, it was so, so

19:13:57 full.

19:13:57 Like,

19:14:01 I'm a part of sewn Facebook groups were

19:14:11 to share some new job opportunities in the tech field.

19:14:20 And make sure to post some of the other truth links on the chat now.

19:14:28 I just feel there is a lot of like support to

19:14:38 pursue the tech 30 years on social media. So, I think, Just like finding these kind of groups.

19:15:00 Okay. It can be very useful.

19:15:18 And the other thing, which helped me, is to go to conferences and just started two

19:15:15 companies on the spot, or one of the biggest it, I don't think, some guest but it's called the

19:15:34 copy

19:15:38 time students for computing.

19:15:46 I met some many employers there, and I spoke to them about their job

19:15:56 training requirements. So I think

19:16:09 just trying to find the support group is very important.

19:16:18 Awesome, thank you so much and we have time for one final question. So, I'm the last

question is that, I would love to know how folks in the field advocate for new research and product design for better accessibility features and encourage tech companies

19:16:35 to collaborate, instead of compete.

19:16:38 So we will start with you agree.

19:16:44 I love that so much.

19:16:49 And I wish I had an aqua blue.

19:16:55 Um, I think.

19:16:58 So I think I knew in the, in the chat

19:17:04 about how the corner that technology to one.

19:17:12 So, when I moving and

19:17:21 quantum computing.

19:17:25 And I think the moon and sun on.

19:17:32 But I think we need to move and

19:17:40 on and on.

19:17:42 Okay.

19:17:43 There's more than one.

19:17:49 And

19:17:49 that in mind that I'm among tech companies, and people in general, don't bow and online on lab, and not yet.

19:18:09 So, I'm not as aware, new segment and standalone.

19:18:22 It's not who desire to

19:18:22 connect on hardware and software, but the way that and something was going nowhere.

19:18:36 Today, so awesome to collaborate more and to have sustainable.

19:18:48 I'm looking at doing the I can.

19:18:51 I always go back to Poland Poland.

19:18:57 So, a month.

19:19:02 The problem is that the people who can build a movement, don't know I'm not no problem.

19:19:08 I have learned how to move potato, have a pen and motivate people to ask me something about it.

19:19:24 I, you said it wasn't an easy answer but I think that was such a great answer. Thank you so much I agree, just for sharing all of your insight. And I want to thank our entire panel for joining us, our entire audience for joining us.

19:19:39 I want to toss it to each one of our panelists so they can tell you where you can keep up with them you can follow them on social media, learn about any of their new projects so I'm Derek, I'm going to start with you tell everyone where they can find,

19:19:52 find you real quick.

19:19:54 you real quick.

19:19:56 Yeah. Um, I guess, for like tech related stuff, it's mostly LinkedIn for me.

19:20:02 Um, so, Derek that asked you'll find a profile on there with the same name, that's made for photography stuff that I do as well I have a background in photography to as a half blind guy who knew.

19:20:16 But yeah, you'll see, you'll see my name come up there.

19:20:21 I am working on a new project that I'm not ready to put out into the world yet and so I'm no longer at Deloitte like the marketing materials for this talk, said, and my profile says that I'm just, I'm kind of figuring out what's going on that.

19:20:58 I need to figure out what I'm going to do about that, but hopefully there'll be something cool that I'm working on and I can get people here that we talked to today and people that are watching, listening, involved in the future. So we're excited to see what you got going

19:21:00 what you got going on. And you can also catch up with Derek in the DLC. You can also catch up with Nina in the DLC and Mina let everyone know what else, where else they can find you.

19:21:14 Sure, so I just posted my LinkedIn, or does Ali

19:21:26 linkedin.com, slash, slash, and he a one one my Instagram is instagram.com, slash, or

19:21:48 disabilities in tech. So, yeah,

19:21:57 please feel free to follow me. And thank you so much for inviting me this panel today. Thank you.

19:22:08 Thank you for being here. A video let everyone know where they can find you.

19:22:14 At the moment it's just on LinkedIn.

19:22:16 I am, I'm have a podcast for each other. I've been working on that, hopefully comes up, maybe the beginning of next year.

19:22:30 Talking about disabilities and workplace and it's.

19:22:48 How do we navigate those and so I'll update that on LinkedIn. If and when it does come out. But yeah, most of the month I put it in the chat for people.

19:22:41 Awesome. Thank you so much, and I agree I would love to know wherever I can find you and what you're working on next.

19:22:48 That I could not sleep.

19:23:11 I am in building an ark. I'm an owner at heart. And I know.

19:23:23 Oh, we're going to be get getting connected after this, because I would disabled artists to our activism is my favorite thing ever. So I will definitely be following you after this.

19:23:37 And I just want to while we have a few minutes left I want to save Do we have any final thoughts from our panelists anything that you would like to say on that you guys have the floor.

19:23:48 Just let it out.

19:24:00 Okay, well, I yeah I think this like we were saying, You belong here. And how do we get companies more involved and things like that as well as is we have to speak up, we have to band together we have to make a case for ourselves.

19:24:20 I've had to do that so many times over my career where I'm literally the person that we're designing the product or service for I'm literally that person that can't use it.

19:24:35 And they're asking me to design it in a way that would make it unusable for myself. So, I'm like, I can't like I'll design it that way but we need to have an accessible option to, you know, I worked at Sony on PlayStation, PlayStation four.

19:24:53 When that came out years ago, and I got the job.

19:24:57 They didn't know I was disabled, they didn't know that I didn't have much use of my left hand.

19:25:04 And I wanted to be part of the job was using a PlayStation controller, which is designed for two hands.

19:25:14 Video games are designed for people with two hands and, and all of their vision, and I said, I, I don't know, I can't use this controller. And so, I didn't like scream and yell at them about it I said I want to find a way that I can do the things that

19:25:33 my coworkers are doing to and then design for the stuff that the users that we're designing for can use it.

19:25:40 And I had to like do a bunch of my own research and and contacting people that had their projects out there where people have made one handed video game controllers.

19:25:51 And I ended up reaching out to a guy, his name's Ben heckendorn who modifies video game consoles and controllers he's like a retired electrical engineer hardware tie and in his spare time he just modifies parts that makes any he was making one hand controllers

19:26:10 for the game consoles for what he did for a guy that had, I think pirate one of his arms amputated. In a tackle overseas in the military when he came back, he couldn't play video games anymore.

19:26:36 for you and so I saw that video so I reached out to the guy that what that story is incredible. I don't have to kind of same story but I work at Sony on PlayStation.

19:26:42 I need a one handed controller.

19:26:43 So I can do my job, and he made one for me, and then I showed it to my employer, you know I showed it to Sony, my bosses and they were like this is incredible, like, and then I was given so much more like, like we had no idea that this was thing that

19:27:02 you needed that that that that would be helpful that there are people out there that need that kind of support that use the system differently.

19:27:10 So, if that's something that you're interested in helping us with or want to be involved, then we're granting us, the time and resources to do it, you know, and I had to speak up I had to like kind of create the case, like RB was saying I had to tell

19:27:26 that story.

19:27:28 And then once I did everybody was just like, all in, like, the love it, you know like, let us know how we can help. what other things would you like us to help solve, you know, and then.


19:27:39 So that's, that's kind of I think my biggest takeaway in my career in tech has been like, be a squeaky wheel, but not in a knot in a way that's like, like shaming employee employers for like, you're not doing enough, you know like, like I'm not torch

19:27:56 wielding when I, when I bring things up, it's like, hey, I want to have a conversation about this thing, like, I want to do better work. I want to do better work for people like me who are we're designing for, how can I help.

19:28:08 here's the things that I've done to help myself.

19:28:11 Maybe we can implement some new processes and, and solve some of these problems and I think it'll like OBS and said it will make things better for everybody.
19:28:20 So, that's my big spiel.
19:28:24 Definitely, and that was an amazing spiel to end on because it's like the power of advocacy can't be unmatched. So if you see something that needs to be changed.
19:28:37 That should be changed that could be changed, why not try to change it up our time together is nearing the end, but we can continue this conversation together in the diverse ability leadership collective, where you can connect with our DLC members, Mina
19:28:55 and Derek are members as well as a variety of different leaders in the disability community. I'm joining the DLC is a small investment for a big future giving you access to networking opportunities like our community mixers you get access to our diverse

Chat

18:00:14 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Warm greetings from Fiji everyone, thank you for organizing this wonderful session today. Happy to join you all.
18:00:23 From Katherine To All Panelists : I think it's because I'm in the audience. That's fine since I'm just moderating the chat.
18:00:53 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Welcome everyone! Let us know where you're joining in from!
18:00:58 From Katherine : Hi Deepti! Welcome. We're so glad you're here.
18:01:17 From Katherine : Hi Eugenia! Thanks for being here. We're so excited for today's chat.
18:01:36 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) To All Panelists : I think we'll still need to spotlight the speakers & interpreters @whitney
18:01:43 From Eugenia Baldoni : You're welcome.
18:01:52 From Antonia Ford : Joining from Paso Robles, California! Hi everyone!
18:01:56 From Suzanne Gardner : Good evening from Greenville, South Carolina!
18:02:02 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) To All Panelists : Hey Marie, you're good to stop sharing and get started!
18:02:05 From Kelsey Reimers : Hi from Seattle, Wa!
18:02:13 From Erin (she/her) : Erin from Oregon
18:02:17 From Jessica L. : Good evening from San Diego, California!
18:02:23 From Cindy Merrill : I'm in Portland, Oregon
18:02:25 From Sarah (she/her) : Good morning from Melbourne, Australia :)
18:02:26 From Angie R : Hi from Toronto
18:02:28 From jayde : Hello from Melbourne Australia
18:02:29 From Helen Walsh  To All Panelists : Good afternoon from Berkeley California
18:02:41 From Karen Catlin (she/her) : Joining from San Mateo CA. Looking forward to this event!
18:02:54 From Katherine To All Panelists : Marie, your sound is atrocious. It's cutting in and out a ton!

18:03:06 From Diversability : Hi From New Jersey!

18:03:15 From Hannah (she/her) To All Panelists : Hi, joining from San Francisco, CA!

18:03:29 From Olga Razumovskaya To All Panelists : Hello from Northern California!

18:03:39 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Thanks a lot Desr Katherine

18:03:50 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Dear

18:04:12 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : Hello from San Francisco!

18:04:45 From Tino Vodanovic To All Panelists : Good evening from Croatia I'm looking forward to the session and thank you for organizing it

18:04:58 From Diane Owens To All Panelists : Hello everyone from South Carolina. I'm the statewide coordinator for Project SEARCH. I'm so happy to be here.

18:05:13 From Hannah (she/her) : Hi, joining from San Francisco, CA!

18:05:14 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : Good to meet you, Aubrie!

18:05:55 From Christina Shivtahal To All Panelists : Hi everyone! Joining from Toronto, Ontario

18:06:42 From Jacob Levy : My name is Jacob and I teach jobseekers and small businesses with disabilities how to identify opportunities OUTSIDE of their network by utilizing the LinkedIn algorithm, as well as content creation based on one's subject matter expertise and targeting/adding value to decision makers behind any job in the world.

I also have a learning disability due to a brain hemorrhage at birth.

Feel free to connect:

<http://linkedin.com/in/searchable4u>

18:06:47 From Katherine : Loving the across-the-globe attendance today! I'm Katherine, the Content Manager for Diversability and I'll be moderating the chat today. If you have any questions you'd like to have asked at the end, please drop them in the chat. We're keeping a running document to ensure we get to as many questions as possible today. I'm joining from Hawaii!


18:08:12 From Fred Wang (He/Him/They) : Hi, I am from Seattle WA

18:08:33 From Claudia To All Panelists : Greetings from Montreal, Canada!

18:09:04 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Congrats on 20 years in tech, Derek!

18:09:08 From Shelley Nearing (she/ her) : Hello I am Shelley from Calgary Ab Canada

18:15:45 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Fun fact: Meena runs this great Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/disabilitiesintech/>

18:16:27 From Helen Walsh  To All Panelists : I like Nothing without us At All 🙌 especially when it comes to technology as we have a ways to go before there is both inclusive design and accessibility. We do a lot online and all developers, web designers etc need to include us.

18:16:49 From Kelsey Reimers (she/her) : good to know! :)

18:23:42 From Jacob Levy : After the offer.

Why?

You should be hired based on your ability

Not your disability.

18:23:48 From Sarah Tompkins : Hi from Bellevue, WA, so grateful for this event today; thank you all so much!

18:23:51 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : I'm curious what needs to happen on the hiring side for that to change

18:24:12 From Jacob Levy : What I learned from having a disability:

A disability is NOT an inability to do something...

I see it as an opportunity to go an alternate path to arrive at a solution

And it's on this path where novel and innovative ideas EXIST.

18:25:57 From Rachel Schwartz To All Panelists : Hi there! I'm Rachel, calling from NYC! I work in public education. I'm legally blind and now that I'm getting older (early 30s), have recently experienced major ergonomic issues from being at a computer all day and doing so much extra leaning towards screens. I've reached a lot of dead ends with accessibility features with dictation/ narrative software, and have spoken to several folks in tech and with support orgs who explained that a) the dictation software isn't really that sophisticated and b) the software that does exist doesn't integrate across platforms. I would love to know how folks in the field advocate for new research and product design for better accessibility features, and advise on how to encourage tech companies to collaborate instead of compete :)

18:26:03 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Thanks for sharing that perspective Aubrie

18:27:06 From Katherine : Jacob, absolutely!

18:27:26 From Rachel Schwartz To All Panelists : My second question is, for those of us who are thinking of entering the tech sector (with no prior experience or network), any advice on how to break in??

18:28:54 From Dan Epstein : I second Katherine's affirmation!

18:30:55 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : Question: I'm a recruiter at a technology company in San Francisco and co-chair of our new ERG for employees with disabilities. I actively want to search for qualified employees with disabilities and I'm wondering if keyword searches on LinkedIn (i.e. "disabled," "mobility device," etc.) could work for prospective candidates who self-disclose. Any other ideas from the group?

18:32:26 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) To Dan McGrath and All Panelists : Hi Dan, you may want to look into these 2 platforms to start <https://inclusively.com/>
<https://www.wearecapable.org/>

18:34:50 From Nidhi Jaisoor To All Panelists : This is a long question but I needed to add context:

I worked in IT in Texas (business analysis, so I wasn't coding). It's been 8 years since I stopped working because I couldn't take the pain from my chronic neck pain anymore. (Due to EDS and car accidents). I couldn't go on disability because I was an immigrant at the time + I didn't make good decisions.

I'm now settled in the Bay Area. I want to get back to work but I want to work part-time.

I realize 8 years is a long time. I only have about 3 years of work ex before that, and a graduate degree.

1. Do I have a shot in the tech industry?
2. Do I need to look for part time roles from the get-go, or can I ask for a full time role be converted to part time to accommodate my needs?

Thanks so much!

18:35:14 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Thank you for sharing Jacob, I find persons with disabilities to be one of the most resilient people, and we all have a lot to learn from your lived experiences. There is such a huge opportunity (as there's different paths to a common solution) as well as towards Peacebuilding

18:35:19 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : That's a good start, Tiffany.

18:35:35 From Jasmin To All Panelists : How did you build confidence with your disability as you transition from HS, college, to the work force.

18:36:58 From Lisa Catino : How often is it or is it common that your employer will sit down and talk with you about your accommodations? Or is it normal that an employer will only grant accommodations based on a doctor's or medical opinion?

18:36:58 From Eugenia Baldoni : Which one of part time jobs have you worked?

18:37:33 From Cindy Merrill To All Panelists : Question for Derek: What was the HR accommodation for the water cooler access?

18:38:42 From Nidhi Jaisoor : That's awesome (and expected!) that they accommodated you. I once asked for a high back chair for my neck pain. This was from an accident and it had been a year of pain (I'm now on year 12 of chronic pain). I was told that I had to pay for the chair because the accident was the cause and the workplace wasn't responsible. This was an oil and gas company in Texas 🤖. I wish I'd filed a complaint.

18:39:32 From Jacob Levy : Totally agree, Deepti!

18:40:11 From Christina Shivtahal : Great question Lisa

18:40:13 From SamKelly ☺ she, her y ella : Same here, Ovidio!

18:40:18 From Jessica L. : Ad Hoc sounds like a great employer for that remote work access!

18:40:30 From Lisa Catino : Is it normal for your employer to ask you not to talk about your disability with anyone outside of HR? Is it inappropriate to talk with your immediate supervisor about any accessibility issues you are facing?

18:41:38 From Shelley Nearing (she/ her) : The odd thing for me and being Autistic I need to work at the office even though i have some of the same issues as Ovidio I cannot tune anything out, but I need the separation of home and work

18:42:05 From Ovidio Reyna : @Lisa my experience has been that they (HR/Managers) wont disclose to any one else in the company but that you are free to disclose as you like

18:42:22 From Jessica L. : Amazing!! Didn't know we could have care attendants at work!

18:42:56 From Jessica L. : Google is my dream employer

18:42:59 From SamKelly ☺ she, her y ella : Going to the bathroom on the airlines will be revolutionary (sigh)

18:44:27 From Lisa Catino : @ovidio Thank you. Do you have any idea of what "over disclosing" is? Perhaps there are times that disclosing makes it uncomfortable for another person? idk

18:46:21 From Ingridou To All Panelists : Hi everyone, I am Ingrid from France working with unesco with persons with disabilities (www.story4development.com). It is great to hear your insightful experiences and how any work can keep providing a more inclusive environment as a basis from the very start as in the hiring process. I believe new technologies could also still be more exploited and would like to know your views on it if I may ask.

18:46:27 From Ovidio Reyna : @Lisa, my experience with disclosing has been that I disclose with coworkers that I'll be working closely with or on a regular basis. If it's a one off kind of cross team work or some soft of function then I don't disclose as having those conversations is a long and tiring process for myself

18:47:30 From Sarah (she/her) : Makes me think of the curb cut effect. If employers make things accessible for people with disability, it's likely to benefit everyone.

18:47:32 From Matthew To All Panelists : Have any of you indicated in your cover letter or resume that you have a disability? Is that something you would recommend that job applicants do?

18:48:48 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Diversability Unplugged 2.0 on corporate disability allyship haha

18:50:21 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Absolutely Meenakshi, its so crucial to understand the depth of the point, and not stay on the surface of how it's being delivered. This creates many opportunities that we can miss out lose out on, if we don't allow meaningful engagement.

18:51:16 From Lisa Catino : @meena. I do not have a speech impairment but I do have expressive language disorder and I also have trouble communicating my thoughts orally. It would be revolutionary for people to withhold judgements. My brain works but maybe it doesn't work for every need. Wish it did though.

18:51:50 From Helen Walsh 🧑🏻 To All Panelists : Love the curb cut as an example as it is both inclusive design and accessibility.

18:53:25 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : There is so much value in disability ERGs/affinity groups

18:53:41 From Shelley Nearing (she/ her) : I am in a disability ERG at my job

18:53:47 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Thank you and best wishes to our brilliant speakers, moderator, technical support team, sign language interpreters, donors/partners and participants. This session has been a great learning experience.

18:53:55 From SamKelly ☺ she, her y ella : I like learning the different names of these groups ☺


18:53:56 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : I sometimes see Diversability as a disability ERG outside of a company 😊

18:54:16 From Meenakshi Das : I agree Tiffany!

18:54:18 From Eugenia Baldoni : What does ERG stand for?

18:54:24 From SamKelly ☺ she, her y ella : Employee Resource Group

18:54:32 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : ERG = employee resource group

18:54:35 From Helen Walsh  To All Panelists : Why does microsoft program their automation without considering persons with disabilities?

18:54:43 From SamKelly ☺ she, her y ella : I've also heard Energy Renewal Group! ☺

18:54:56 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : AKA an "Affinity Group"

18:55:03 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Will this sessions presentation be shared with all of us?

18:55:05 From Nidhi Jaisoor : It took COVID to make workplaces a little more inclusive (for those who's access needs are served with remote work) :(

18:55:15 From Jessica L. : It's like a club/interactive organization in a workspace! Sounds awesome.

18:55:27 From Ingridou To All Panelists : Which kind of accommodations did you bring in your workplace, and that can/could be done by (your} companies?

18:55:29 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : @Deepti, yes this is being recorded and a link to the recording will be shared with registered attendees

18:56:24 From Aubrie Lee :
<https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2021/10/12/20-questions-for-disability-inclusive-employers/>

18:57:19 From Ingridou To All Panelists : Thank you for sharing the link

18:57:22 From Jessica L. : Yes!

18:57:32 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Thank you so much Tiffany


18:59:02 From Karen Catlin (she/her) : @aubrie thank you for sharing that doc. It's a fantastic list we can use to hold ourselves accountable.

19:00:35 From Cindy Merrill To All Panelists : Thank you so much to all the panelists! I have to leave now, but I'll catch the rest on the recording

19:01:05 From Claudia : This has been extremely helpful and insightful. Thank you ALL for this informative workshop!!!!

19:01:07 From Caroline J. Mailloux (she, her, disabled) : Shout out to all speakers! I've been a long-term fan of Meenakshi (and Ad Hoc, one of the founders is a colleague in RII!). It's a privilege to lean about the work and perspectives of Marie, Derek, Ovidio, and Aubrie. Thank you.

19:01:40 From Meenakshi Das : Thank you Caroline so much!!!


19:03:09 From Helen Walsh  To All Panelists : It sure does !

19:04:49 From Lisa Catino : Yes! Being kinder makes life easier! I just saw a report that said that releasing aggression (by acting out) actually prolongs the feeling of aggression... Perhaps being kinder prolonger the feeling of kindness? Tell me why that's bad. HAHAA

19:05:39 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Great one Lisa 🌸

19:08:54 From Caroline J. Mailloux (she, her, disabled) : Cheers to kindness. I appreciate when DEI champions explain equity and inclusion work as "being a good human." of course there's more to it than that, but it's relatable as a starting point.

19:09:18 From Jessica L. : To be inclusive, employers can ask unassuming questions about anything we might need and how they can help.

19:11:20 From Helen Walsh  To All Panelists : Kindness builds relations.. technology relies on a network of people and there for kindness is a better way to build a network on. Easy to be rude much more difficult to be kind but by being kind the foundation is more available for

transition or change. Technology relies on updates, transitions and changes... there for Kindness is a best practice.

19:12:32 From Deepti Karan Weiss : Thank you everyone 🙏🙏🙏

19:15:41 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : You can join Diversability's communities on Facebook <http://bit.ly/diversabilitycommunity> and our Leadership Collective <http://diversability.mn.co> 😊

19:17:45 From Meenakshi Das : Some FB groups for tech I'm part of:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/102806176471556>,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/417975261719117>,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2084597534906520>,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1384252878496456>

19:18:34 From Helen Walsh 🧑🏻 To All Panelists : Propriety is what can create non operable issues. It would be great if the tech giants could come to an understanding that would allow technology to be inclusive and accessible. More innovation would come of it....

19:20:01 From Helen Walsh 🧑🏻 To All Panelists : 🙌🏻🎉 Thank you

19:20:07 From Eugenia Baldoni : Is there further reading available for this subject?

19:20:07 From Ingridou To All Panelists : Thank you so much to all speakers

19:20:22 From Aubrie Lee : https://twitter.com/aubrie_lee?lang=en

19:20:39 From Lisa Catino : @Aubrie I love painting a picture of the problem and painting a picture of potential solutions! VISIONARY

19:21:08 From Ovidio Reyna : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ovidioreyna/>

19:21:09 From Meenakshi Das : LinkIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/meena11/>, Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/disabilitiesintech/>

19:21:25 From Nora Hanlon To All Panelists : Thank you, all!

19:22:54 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Thank you to all of our panelists for this great conversation!

19:22:56 From Aubrie Lee : <https://linktr.ee/aubrielee>

19:24:11 From Myrna Daramy To All Panelists : Thanks so much everyone! This was such a wonderful panel!

19:24:15 From Caroline J. Mailloux (she, her, disabled) : So much gratitude to the Diversability team for organizing and facilitation! These events fuel me.

19:25:17 From Eugenia Baldoni : I think I have question, what percent of jobs for everyone including disabilities had unemployment?

19:26:37 From Dan McGrath To All Panelists : I've heard 70% unemployment for people with disabilities

19:28:40 From Helen Walsh 🧑🏻 To All Panelists : squeak and come around with the solution!

19:29:22 From Yael Sharon, Ad Hoc To All Panelists : Same as Caroline, above! Thank you, Diversability team, Ovidio, Aubrie, Meenakshi, and Derek for the inspiration, insights, and community.

19:29:28 From Caroline J. Mailloux (she, her, disabled) : I'm a new member! It's been awesome so far.

19:29:33 From Sarah Tompkins : how much is it to join the Diversability community for disabled patient advocates?

19:29:35 From Meenakshi Das : Thank you everyone!!
19:29:40 From Nidhi Jaisoor : Thanks so much! 🧡🙏
19:29:41 From Tiffany Yu (she/her) : Join the DLC: <http://diversability.mn.co>
19:29:44 From Laurence Carter : Thank you so much ... from here in Australia