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Disability, Diversity and Intersectionality
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Introduction to Intersectionality

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KERI: All right. Well, thank y'all for listening today and participating. So again, my name is Keri Gray, and I'm super excited to talk with everyone here about diversity, about intersectionality, about laying that framework, then also talking about practical and tangible things that we can do with this knowledge. I very much want to invite this to be a conversation today, you know.

So, we will have some intentional time for, like, question and conversation towards the end of the presentation, but I also invite that any time in the midst of something being said, something happening, if you have a thought, if you have a comment, please bring that into the space. I know I have some knowledge on some things, but I never want to say that I'm the end all‑be all when it comes to these conversations. So, I really want to invite people to bring that here. So, I'm going to start with a little bit of a story. I mentioned just briefly earlier that I have a background in youth programming, and I remember I was running this mini conference a couple years ago. I get a call from one of my team members and they said, one of our students was detained at the airport and he's on his way to the conference and he’s shook. What do we do? It was difficult because this was the moment when all of our students were arriving to our conference, so I was occupied trying to make sure everything was happening, and I needed my team to be able to set him aside, have a conversation. Obviously, we couldn't do anything about his experience these last few hours but still, it needed to be addressed.

What was very real about that situation was that it was clear it happened because of the intersections of race and disability. That student was a male of color, and if anybody saw the propaganda that started to occur specifically after 9/11, he could in some ways look like that. On top of that, his disability was something that very much impacted his interactions, so he was a bit fidgety, and he could in some ways embody a person when you're scoping out who's in the room and who you need to, like, the airport says they pull aside for just a random inspection, as they call it. It was clear that there were reasons why a person like him was pulled aside.

The issue that we were having is that on this particular team for our youth conference I was the only person of color on staff, so my team was coming to me like: Yo! I'm paraphrasing. They didn't say that.

[ Laughter ]

But they were coming to me and they were just like ‑‑ what do we do? And I was like: Listen, right? It’s the first thing. Treat him like a person. When he walks into the room, he's been in a very traumatic situation where he was pulled into a separate space, a box, and threatened and questioned of where he's going, what's he doing, what's his purpose and should we trust you. Even with ID, should we trust you? Even with emails, showing where he was going and why he was going, why are you here? So I bring that into this space because there are a number of moments and times where we're interacting with our people, our constituents, the folks that we're building programs around and a situation would occur that we were not completely prepared for and we realized that in some ways it might have to deal with our level of preparation and things that we need to be aware of, but sometimes it has nothing to do with us. It's things that happen in our country, our world, our society that get brought into our space and how can we attempt to be aware of the different intersections of diversity and ensure that we have at least some level of foundation of how to respond and react. So, today we're going to talk about that.

I'm going to acknowledge that there are a lot of people in this space, a lot of faces of folks that I recognize and I love, like, genuinely, like, these are my people, right, and respect, and I think that we're here today to be greater, to do more, to challenge ourselves to ensure that I know I'm a good person. I hope everyone in this room considers themselves to be a good person, at least for the most part, but how can we be better because our people need that from us.

So there may be moments in times throughout this presentation, throughout our conversations where there's discomfort--where you may not feel aware of everything, but how can we lean into that discomfort, breathe into it and not allow it to let us fall apart. And, that's something I'll help with, I'll support, but I need everybody in this room to be supportive of that process. I can have a bit of a direct personality. I love to just go there, and just say it, and just be like, listen, I know this is weird, but we need to address the elephant. And then there are folks who are passive. Who walk around it a little bit, and still are there with you, but the personality is different. So how can we learn and communicate and chat with each other so we're still reaching this goal of diversity, inclusion and intersectionality. So, let's frame the conversation today. One, I want to acknowledge we want to talk about the conversation inclusion as a value and not a profit.

There's a lot of research; there are a lot of documents and articles that talk about why diversity is important. It helps your bottom line. It helps you be able to bring in more resources, whatever you are looking for. There's a lot of research around that, that shows here's why you should do it because it's profitable to your organization and your business. That's real. That's not this presentation, to be honest. This presentation is about centering ourselves and our organizations and our community and saying: Regardless of how much money we end up making off diversity and intersectionality and things of that nature, we need to do this for our people.

We have folks who are coming to us and we have folks who are not yet coming to us that we need to figure out how to be in community with, right? So just laying that as a framework.

Second, we're going to address some inequalities that are happening within our spaces, within the disability community and thirdly, we'll talk about distinctions between diversity and intersectionality. And knowing again, all of that is important but understanding the framework of what we're discussing today.

So, let's start with that, diversity and intersectionality. One, I just want to get a sense for: How many people are familiar with intersectionality? A little bit of a sense. Okay, that’s helpful. A little bit less than half.

So, one, I'm going to start with diversity. So, diversity is a beautiful concept, right? It talks about all of the things that make us different, that make us unique. We could be talking about race, gender. We could be talking about all types of things. Everything that you can possibly mention talks about diversity. So, the reason I want to bring diversity into the space before we get into intersectionality is because we have to acknowledge that every single person in this room is diverse. Every single person. There are things about you that are unique. There are things about you that you share with other people, but in some ways that no one else has.

There are places that you've grown up. Everyone has diversity. And so, I want to make that distinction first, because we've seen some problems with diversity initiatives. Because when we have a diversity initiative, we could say: Oh, well, our Board is super‑diverse, right? And when we look at who makes up a Board ‑‑ I'm just using an example ‑‑ you'll see, oh, well, we have a person who is a white, Christian, male, able‑bodied individual who is also like ‑‑ I'm not trying to be too critical ‑‑ you're listing all these different things that make up qualities and characteristics that are diverse, right? It exemplifies this distinction that regardless of the amount of privilege that you have, you still have diversity within you.

So, diversity is a concept where everyone exists and everyone can be welcome, but is that really the meat of what we want to get into today? So, I want to talk about intersectionality. And I'm sorry, I'm going to come back to that.

So, intersectionality is a framework that describes how people with multiple marginalized identities experience discrimination and violence. So, the distinction between diversity is that we're talking about different qualities that exist within individuals. And those different qualities and characteristics could be anything, right? Intersectionality, we're talking about multiple marginalized identities that exist, and that unique experience that you have. Right?

And so that meaning--what is a marginalized identity in our country? That could be race; that could be sexual orientation; that could be gender identity; that could be something that exists--that experience of systemic oppression in our country-- and you have more than one that exists within your identity and makes a unique experience, right? So that's one. Identity politics generates violence in movements, social justice spaces, and D&I initiatives. So, identity politics essentially talks about this concept where you, as a person who has multiple marginalized identities, and you're asked to split your time between different movements.

So, I'll use myself as an example. I identify as a Black disabled woman and when I think about our spaces of social justice, of social movements, typically, you can go to racial justice spaces. Specifically, I can go to Black spaces, so I can go to places like Urban League, NAACP, other places of that nature, and I can move with the Black Lives Matter movement and figure out: How can I ensure that people of color are experiencing less inequalities, right?

But, if I want to talk about disability, I don't go to the Black Lives Matter spaces. Maybe a little bit, but not a lot. I come over to this space. I come over to the Disability Rights space, and I figure out: How can we address the inequalities that exist within our system? And that creates its own level of discrimination and violence, because essentially, it's saying, one‑half of myself is able to get higher in society, while another half of myself may still be suffering, right?

So, let me break that down just a little bit more. So, the suffrage movement. So this happened in the early 1900s where many folks may have heard the situation where originally when we were fighting for the right to vote, it was Black folks and it was women that came together to ensure that we could all have the right to vote, because neither one of these groups had it at that time, right? But in the midst of that advocacy happening and everyone trying to figure out, none of us have this right, let's combine our forces and make this happen, a question got posed. Literally, it said: Is it more important that Blacks get the right to vote or that women get the right to vote? I wonder how many times you've heard those questions occur in spaces. We need to prioritize our efforts.

And I think logically, we understand why those questions get posed, because in some ways we only have so much capacity, right? And we need to figure out how exactly can we get a win. But the consequences of asking questions like this is if you -- I'm going to describe the chart. There was a period where White males were the only ones who had the right to vote and women and Blacks were beneath that. Then post‑construction, because they asked this question, and because they answered this question, they decided to prioritize the Black vote. And so now you have a triangle basically a level of hierarchy that change from White males to Black males to then women. And that's only like surface level, right? Because that even breaks down even more.

So, when we think about how are we discussing this conversation around intersectionality, a big part of this is: How are we not dividing our community and trying to get folks to be forced to choose which part of themselves is more important? Right? How can I show up and say: Everything about the diversity of our space as people with disabilities in particular is important? And how can we not ask questions that will lead to our folks to suffer?

I'm going to give you another example. So, this is a court case that happened with DeGraffenreid and General Motors. It was a situation where General Motors had a factory open, and there were a few Black women that were trying to work there, needed a job, like many of us do. And, it was a situation where they made a statement. General Motors does not hire Black women. They just don't. And General Motors was like: Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, we have diversity in our space. Look at these Black men we done hired. Look at these White women we done hired. That's good enough, right? There's diversity there.

But there was this case of saying that specifically y'all have an issue with Black women. And so, they presented that to the court, and unfortunately, the court said: No, we don't see the issue. There is diversity here. And as Black women, you can't make a special case about yourself. You can't say that the combination of race and sex creates this whole super‑remedy as they called it that creates discrimination.

And so Black women were left in a position to say: All right, we're going to support these other groups but we're just going to suffer, right? Thankfully since then, that court case has been overturned, but it creates this, like, situation that we recognize that happens over and over again where once again we're forcing people to choose which side of themselves is more important, and it can exclude people in the process. Does that make sense so far? Any questions?

Okay, so why do we keep hearing this word intersectionality, right?

[ Laughter ]

Keep hearing it over and over again, like, you know?

So, let's break down some numbers for why that is the case. So, one, let's talk about race. So, this is a breakdown that shows that in actuality, the majority of people with disabilities are also people of color. Right? So, this chart shows that in the American Indian community, about 30% have a disability. In the Black community, 25%. In the White community, 20%. In the Latino community, 17%. And the Asian community, 10%.

In raw numbers, you'll see that about 10.8 million folks, who are also people of color, have disabilities. And among folks that are lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults, about 30% of men and 36% of women have a disability. Unfortunately, I don't have a number for trans folks right the now, but I recently saw some information that was released about trans identity, so I think it’s helpful for all of us to look that up. All of that to say if we're talking about the numbers, if we're talking about the reflection of our community, how is that reflected in our organizations? How is that reflected in the people that we work with? And in particular, how is that reflected in the leadership structure?

So, these are questions that I think we should be asking ourselves when we want to acknowledge intersectionality within our communities. So, I want to talk about, we talked about inequalities right. I'm going to give you an example when it comes to Black women because this is me. But I also just want to acknowledge in this understanding of inequalities when it comes to a multitude of our community. So, when we look at what happens with Black women, we see about 22% of Black women experience rape and sexual violence in their lifetime. Black women are killed at a higher rate than any other group. And I would also say that Black women earn about $36,000 a year, which is 21% lower than White women, and what's also interesting about that is that Black women are, a majority of the time, the bread‑winners of the family, more than any other group. But there's these disparities going on here, right.

And so when I think about the example I talked about earlier with one of my students coming to me and talking about detainment of happening in the airport and I think about these inequalities that we're experiencing in communities of color, I wonder how prepared we are to address them if they come up, right? To just have the conversation. I'm not even trying to say that, we've got to figure out how to make sure a murder doesn't happen. We have to figure out how rape doesn't happen. Those are very large questions.

But what I am saying is we have people that we work with in our communities that are experiencing these types of things and they bring that into our space whether we were prepared for them or not. So, how can we figure out how to address that, have that conversation, and not just ignore the realities of our community?

So essentially all of that to say disabled people of color experience injustice, discrimination and violence at alarming rates. Alarming rates. And so, I think now we're in a time, we're in a situation, we're in an experience where we have to make a decision. Like, be decisive. Who is our mission for?

Who is all inclusive in that? And how can we do a little bit more, if not a lot a bit more, to ensure we're addressing the inequalities that exist within our communities? Right?

So, my definition of intersectionality from a disability inclusion framework. So, it is my suggestion to all of us in this room and even beyond this room, that we must expand beyond working with disabled folks that are the easiest to assimilate into our already existing culture. This means we should not predominantly recruit or work with or have on our staffs and boards, disabled folks that are of the most privileged race, gender, sexual orientation, all of the other identities. The majority of people with disabilities are also people who are low to no income, indigenous, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ, and more. So those are some thoughts to revel, reflect in, think about, and then do some work behind. Yes. We have a thought. Or a question. Whichever.

AUDIENCE: So, I'm sitting here, first of all, okay my name is Rose. I use they/them pronouns, and I'm hearing all of these things about intersectionality and full disclosure. I've studied intersectionality under Mercedes Avila for a full year, so I got this. But, working at a CIL, a question I'm constantly thinking about is even within the disability community, how many CILs have someone with an intellectual or developmental disability in a paid position in their office? So even within our own community, we still have marginalization, and I feel like if we can't even address that within our own community, how are we going to be ready for this?

KERI: That's real. Thoughts on that from anyone?

AUDIENCE: Hi, everyone. My name is Asha. I use she/her and they/them pronouns. I think they can all be addressed at once. We don't have to section out what we do. And ‑‑ but I definitely think that is something that's really important in that we need to be aware of the disability hierarchy.

KERI: Yes, that’s so. Any other thoughts from folks? Yeah? So, I appreciate that, bringing that into the space, right? Because you make a very valid and real point of what you mention, the hierarchy that happens in our space. I think what is overwhelming at times is the idea that there's so much to address, and where do we start is kind of the concept I'm getting at. How do we make this all happen and possible?

And I think that what needs to happen just from my perspective is that we build teams of folks that are prepared to answer these tough questions, right? It can never be just one individual person who says: We need to focus on this. We need to focus on this. But how can we create an atmosphere and environment and culture that says we need to start by recruiting. We need to start by building and including programs that are inclusive of as many people as possible. I know there's going to be presentations later in our training what we'll discuss, how we can look up the demographics and the reflections of who exists within our community. How can we take a hard look at who exists? And then how can we figure out what is our strategy to ensure that we're being as inclusive as possible.

I'm going to push back just a little bit on the question, because I agree with what you were saying, I think that you can have an intellectual disability, you can be a person of color, you can be queer, and all of that can exist at the same time so how are we creating strategies that allow for us to move forward with all of these different groups? I think that would be the question I would pose.

Great.

All righty, so all right, I know it's been hanging. I know you've been talking about violence and harm and discrimination and all those different things, but one of the things that I really want to bring into this space is that's not even the root of why I do this work. I do this for joy. I do this for culture. When we talk about diversity initiatives, when we talk about intersectionality, I want to talk about the root of our people.

So, on this screen I have just four folks. There are so many people that I have so much love and respect for. So, on my far right we have Momma Cox. She's on Instagram. Shout out to her. She's a woman with a prosthetic limb who is living in fashion, and just trying to rep who she is all day every day. The next person to that is a woman named Hyatt Ryder who focuses on the intersection of race and mental health. Then we have Itslolo, shout out to her on Instagram. She's a woman with a disability who recently got into a film and has been doing all kinds of things in the fashion world, and finally, we have the amazing living legend, Claudia Gordon, who is a Black‑Deaf lawyer, who does all types of amazing things in her past and in her current situation. So, I want to think about this not from just a framework of how to address the disparities, how do we address the harm, and everything that happens, but how do we celebrate culture? I'm going to give you an example.

So, I'm a church person, and I don't know how many of y'all have been to, I'm just going to be real, there's Black churches, in the United States. And there's majority White churches and there's all these, we’re kind of divided, we got some work to do.

[ Laughter ]

And if you've ever been to one or the other, there's a vibe, you know what I'm saying? There's a way of song, of praise. Neither one is better than the other, but there's distinctions in how we celebrate and embed ourselves in culture. So, when I want to think about the ways in which we come together and we build initiatives, we talk about ADA celebrations. We talk about bringing young people together.

What is our vibe? What joy can we bring in the space? What modern activities can we bring in especially knowing that young people care about intersectionality, are passionate about it, are studying it. Don't want to see nobody they know or care about left behind. How can we bring not only the violence we experience in our communities and address that, but how can we bring the joy? Do you have a thought? You can go back if you want us to go back.

AUDIENCE: I'd like to go back.

AUDIENCE: I wanted to go back to the intersectionality definition and bringing in the majority of people who may be low income, indigenous or people of color. Some folks may not have world experience so I want to add we should cross‑educate. Because most of the time people are trying to survive, and the requirements of participating on a Board it might need more support, so educating about how to participate in that space, but also providing resources for people to be there, as well.

KERI: So if I have you correctly, I think you're acknowledging, like, the disparities that occur in specific communities where you don't have access to maybe the education, maybe the resources, or maybe the network that grants you the opportunity to elevate, right?

And so ‑‑ Sorry. No, go ahead.

AUDIENCE: That could look like costs. Some boards require you to fund raise. That could be childcare. It could be travel to and from meetings. So just various things like that could be a barrier for someone to participate in the Board space.

KERI: 100%. 100%. I think that's a really good segue into best practices of, like, if we want to address the inequalities that exist, if we want to figure out how to bring more joy and culture into our spaces we may not have access to, what are some of the practices that we can do? So, one, I'm going to ‑‑ these are just some of the examples, right.

So, I'm going to talk about designing programs. So, recruitment, community outreach, reconstructing our platforms. So this is an example of some work that I did with an organization now known as Disability:IN. So, one of the things that we did, every time, every single time, we designed a program, we pulled our numbers, right? And I'm not trying to say these numbers I'm about to go over them are the epitome of what folks should be doing. I every year want it to be better and be stronger, but we always started with pulling our numbers and taking a look at what's happening.

So we would do intentional recruitment, and we would put on all of our announcements and say: Please apply if you are a person of color, if you're queer, if you're a woman, if you're ‑‑ all of these different things. We were like we want you, right?

But then we also had to take a look at our selection process and we had to figure out, okay, if we're bringing people into our spaces, if we're trying to make more folks a part of our leadership structure, what are we doing to ensure that people have access to these opportunities?

So, we looked at our numbers. These are an example. We pulled the sociodemographics of how many women are we working with. How many people of color are we working with? Because it was a youth program, we had to look at some statistics around what they were studying, all of that. I was working with a lot of companies.

And unfortunately, I can also what we don't have on here is our LGBTQ demographic. It was low. We had about 11%, which for some people that actually may be high, but for us I considered that low. So every year, we want to look at: Are you pulling your numbers from what your staff demographic is made of, of what the folks you're looking at, the folks that you're working with, and how many people exist from different intersections that are part of these groups? Right?

Organizational branding is a big part of this. So, knowing that you may exist in a community that has a ton of White folks. You may exist in a community that has a ton of specific…, whatever your demographic is. But if you want to outreach and expand beyond that, that means some shifting needs to happen that's intentional. It is not my belief that if we want to do better in our demographics that it will just naturally occur, because we want it to.

[ Laughter ]

It's a process of ensuring there's intentionality behind what are we saying, what are we doing and who are we partnering with, to ensure that we're building environments and having messaging that does encourage a welcoming environment, an inclusive environment.

And the final piece I'll definitely add to that is what Candace was discussing. And that's a message of saying that, I don't know about how many of you grew up in a school District that was underserved, you know what I'm saying? And we've got some issues in our educational system. That's a whole conversation. And what ends up happening is that when you ideally graduate from that school, you enter into the world and you find out that you're not prepared, that expectations are placed on you of how to conduct yourself, of how to write, of how to whatever the case may be, and because of the system that you grew up in, there's a disparity, right?

And so what can we do as CILs, as organizations ‑‑ I'm not trying to say that we're turning into teachers all of a sudden, although that's not a bad thing ‑‑ but how can we provide some services that allow for people to understand the types of skill sets that would be helpful for their career moving forward, for the opportunities that they want moving forward? That's something that we did a lot in youth programming.

I remember I had students that would come up to me, and the first thing they would say when they meet somebody, they were so excited about networking, they'd be like: I'm looking for a job. Like, in marketing. What you got?

[ Laughter ]

And that's a little bit of an overwhelming conversation to have from the rip. So, to be able to have conversations with my students and talk about how you dive and ease your way into opportunities was important, right? And it's very similar when we're talking about what's happening with the opportunities that we have within our organizations, the boards, the CILs, the programs that we host, right? And being able to share: Here's what we're looking for, and here's exactly how you can kind of get a step in the game. I need to introduce you to some folks that you should know. So that you're aware of your network and that you're building a network. All of that is about intentionality and all of that is about designating who exactly can help with these types of initiatives. Right?

Any other thoughts or comments before I move on?

AUDIENCE: Mine is actually a question. So, you talk about being intentional with not doing what we always do. I live in rural Idaho, and we are very predominantly White, and so we go to voc‑rehab first to fill our positions and then we go to the Department of Labor. So how do we get more intentional? Because we still have to follow proper hiring practices. So, I'm not sure how to get more intentional than that with hiring and making things more diversified. So, if you could give examples of what you mean when you say that, that might be helpful.

KERI: Yeah, 100%. So I'm going to go back to this slide so just to give some context on this. So, one of my previous jobs, Disability:IN, we partner with a lot of Fortune 500 companies. So, the expectation of working for a place like that was high expectations. I'm just going to say it like that. So, that's why we had to look at our consumer, our partners and say: You know, what are they looking for? A lot of them are looking for STEM. So, I hear what you're saying about there's a certain protocol that we could lose in the midst of trying expand our outreach. So, what did we end up doing? We went to the voc‑rehabs, we went to the NCILs, the AAPDs, all the different disability organizations and really tried to get as many applicants as possible.

A couple of other things that we did too is we started going to student organizations, who didn't have disability focuses, and saying: Here's what we're trying to do. I recognize that a lot of your organizations probably don't identify with disability, but we know that they exist.

[ Laughter ]

Whether you claim it or not, we know that it exists. Spread this opportunity and awareness, because at the end of the day, people are going to want a job, and a lot of people want a well‑paid job, and if that's your end goal, it might encourage someone to ask a couple questions and say: Actually, I've got this, and can we work together? So, we started going to student organizations. We also started going to groups outside of--like an equivalent to VR--that was for communities of color.

So, we started expanding our partnerships and saying: We want to let you know here's what's going on. Do you have a local NAACP chapter in your community? If not, who do you have in your community that regardless if they really identify with disability, we we're just trying to spread awareness. We want people to know about us. And, allow that to raise some questions and for us to show up more in other spaces.

I saw a couple of hands.

AUDIENCE: What we did was, I mean, we put our job announcements, we would give them to the clerks at our churches.

KERI: Yep.

AUDIENCE: We also provided information to the NAACP, their meetings and that sort of thing. They have a Martin Luther King Center in our community. We would always make sure that our announcements were posted with them, so any of those organizations in your community, if they exist, and in very rural communities, there may be a very limited number of these places. Because we serve really rural counties in Iowa and Illinois, and there are very few people that look like me, but there generally are one or two or three or four.

So, what we've done is reached out to those communities to identify people that may be suitable or may want to seek employment at our agency.

AUDIENCE: If I might, I wanted to add that it's very important to know your communities, and to get the data to drill down to ZIP Code level, to be in the community, to identify influencers. It may be a local corner store. If not, a church that's local. Sometimes people in very White areas have to travel far to get to a place where they find communion, but it may be that there are local businesspeople. It may be that there are other places where people gather and who are the influencers within the community, with whom you can start a dialogue.

KERI: I think I saw one.

TIM: We have one more.

AUDIENCE: Hello. My name's Lorrell, and I'm with a CIL in Northwest Indiana, and one of the things that we realized is that there has to also be reconciling of areas that have been traditionally ignored, right? And whether or not it's malicious, sometimes it is. In our area it is. But even with our CIL, there are areas that we simply did not have the person power to be in, right, due to an overarching issue.

But I think that starting with, even if someone is new, starting with the reconciliation of traditional avoidance of that area, which absolutely has everything to do with race, social class, demographic, geography, all of that, I think some of those projects have to be implemented, too. There has to be an honest conversation about why certain areas traditionally have not been served.

It's rarely ever accidental, right? There's always "a" reason. Let's say the reason is not malicious. There is a reason, but to be open about that reason and to really identify, well, and to really involve the community in that conversation.

And I think doing that is a great way to build unity and be on the road to trust going forward.

KERI: One more and then I'll transition us over because we're going to do a little activity.

AUDIENCE: Thank you for your presentation. One of my concerns is that people with invisible disabilities seem to have the responsibility themselves. They have one demographic that is obvious to some people, but they are responsible themselves for identifying their invisible disability. How do we make sure they're included in the organizations? In terms of the people that know them well, they may know about their invisible disability, and people that don't know them, may just kind of box them in, and say they know what's going on.

I'm particularly interested in talking about people that are deaf. We assume they know what's going on because they're there. They can see what's going on. But we don't know they can't hear, and we don't respond to their need. How do we do that?

KERI: Right. So ‑‑ well, that is a question. So, I have a thought. Anyone have thoughts before I ‑‑ one right here.

AUDIENCE: We have a very large deaf community in our area, and one of the things we found was that many of the people that were supposedly Sign Language interpreters, they were not qualified to do it. And in fact, the Deaf felt that some of them had been instrumental in people actually dying, because they did not understand what was being said during conferences with the doctors. So, they came to the Center, wasn't sure what we could do for them, but they asked us to at least identify Sign Language interpreters that were qualified to work with them.

And so out of that, we developed a Sign Language interpreter business, so we provide qualified interpreters to court systems, the medical facilities, and that sort of thing. And, in addition to that, by us working with people who were Deaf in the community, we have consumers that are working with us to increase our knowledge of people who are Deaf in the community. In fact, about 10 years ago, I hired a person that was Deaf and of their community on staff, and that has been one of the ways that we've been able to provide services that are respective of their culture and values.

KERI: Thank you. Okay, so there's a lot more to be said on all of this. And I definitely want to know ‑‑ I'll be around these next couple of days and a lot of us will be around to have more in‑depth conversation, but I do want to transition us at this time to do a little practice run, right?

End of Presentation