Live captioning by Ai-Media

EMILY HARRIS:
Welcome to the second session of Disability & Philanthropy Forum Journey to Inclusion Series wrote to by the disability Council. My name is Emily Harris. I use she/her pronouns. I the director of the disability and philanthropy inclusion.

I come to you from the Ojibway nations it now known as the city of Chicago. I am proud to be part of the disability committee. As part of our commitment to access ability, our speakers and I will provide a short audio description.

I'm a white woman with dark curly hair wearing rectangular glasses, a black and white flowered shirt with a black jacket over a it. Behind me is a screen made of wood and white paper.

A few housekeeping items for today's learning session next slide please – the recording of today's session will focus on the speaker and moderator. The breakout rooms will not be recorded.

You will receive a link to the recorded session proximately 10 days. We have live captioning today. There are two ways to access these captions: use the CC button at the bottom of your screen and choose subtitles or full transcript, which will pop up as a box on your screen within zoom.

If you prefer to access the captions in a separate window, a link to stream text is now in the chat.

During the first portion of our program today, which will be approximately 35 minutes, we will be spotlighting our speakers and he will be muted.

Next, there will be a Q&A session. You can place questions in the chat, and our moderator and the speaker will address as many questions as we can for approximately 20 minutes.

Again, if you have questions any time during the program, please put them into the chat and our moderator will continue to look at that.

After the Q&A session as a big group, you will be placed into a bit -- a breakout room for approximately 20 minutes to be colleagues in philanthropy and discuss disability and inclusive language with each other and expert facilitators.

Finally, we will come back for a few minutes after the breakout rooms to wrap up by 1:30 Eastern time.

We will share links of the chat to information and you could use it as well to post questions any time. You could also send questions to assistant@disability flown to be.org. Please know that if you run out of time to answer questions, they will inform the resources we create on the disability and philanthropy forum website. Check back early and often.

The forum was created to help the public. We also want to create a candid experience and support each other as we learn. A free forum membership is open to anyone working and philanthropy. So please invite your colleagues to join.

If you happen to sneak in today and are already not a member, please join our community by signing up for membership at disabilityphilanthropy.org.

This series is building a community of practice so we hope you will stay in the breakout rooms and start to build relationships across foundations. We look forward to learning together and hearing from you on what works and what does not to advance a learning journey.

Also, since we want this to be a safe space for open and candid conversation, we will not be live tweeting this webinar and we ask that you refrain from posting on social media.

We would like to say that we are building the plane will we are flying it. So welcome aboard! Please let us know how we can continually improve.

Before I introduce our moderator, I want to highlight a few principles: first, disability is a natural part of the human experience and there are more than 60 million of us in the US alone.

Disabilities can be apparent or not apparent, lifelong or acquired, and disability is intersectional. We represent all aspects of diversity.

Second, like other forms of oppression, the barriers to full participation in our society are socially constructed, and they can be dismantled if we are intentional.

Finally, we recognize the founding disability rights, and justice principle: nothing about us, without us. Today, you will hear from my colleagues, Emily Ladau and Gail Fuller, both of whom are disabled communications professionals.

I am particularly excited about our session today because we just launch the disability inclusion pledge, a series of commitments for philanthropy.

Today, 35 foundations and philanthropy serving organizations have signed on. If yours has not, please see the link in the chat and encourage your CEO to join us.

Today's learning session is meant to directly address one of the pledge priorities, the foundations use disability inclusive language in all forms of communication. Specifically, we ask that you take the lead from disabled people, and when in doubt, alternate person first and identity first language.

We are so glad that you are here today to learn what that means. Without further ado, I am thrilled to introduce our moderator for today, my colleague, Gail Fuller, communications strategist or the president's council.

Gail comes to us with extensive experience leading communication strategy in foundations including the San Francisco foundation and Rockefeller Brothers Fund. She will introduce our speaker.

I promise that you are in for a big treat, thank you.

GAIL FULLER:
Thank you, Emily. Ratings! I come from the land of the Seminoles, now known as central Florida. As Emily said, her name is Gail Fuller. I am a black woman with a non-apparent disability and I go by the pronoun she/her.

I am currently standing behind a yellow panel divider, and I am wearing a blue shirt with dark blue polkadots, and my hair is in a short bob with bangs.

Although it has been at least a year, I decided to put on lipstick for the occasion. I am beyond thrilled today. Emily Ladau is not simply a colleague, she is one of the most talented people that I have had the pleasure of connecting with.

Emily serves as our Digital and Community Manager. For the disability and philanthropy forum. She is a well-known writer and editor, and during her spare time she also cohosts the accessible stall, which is a disability podcast that I encourage you to listen to.

Perhaps what I am most excited about is her book that is coming out in September, 'Demystifying Disability'. I will say that again:

DUSTIN JONES:
. I am sure -- 'Demystifying Disability' I am sure it is going to be a book that you want to read. So before we get into our conversation, Emily Ladau is going to introduce herself. She is going to do an exercise around disability and language. Then we will start the talk.

I am going to turn it now to you, Emily Ladau.

EMILY LADAU:
Hi everyone! Gail, thank you so much for the lovely introduction. Please know that the feeling is incredibly mutual. I absolutely love working with you. I am really thrilled to be in conversation with you today.

As you mentioned, I will give a brief introduction, and then we will move into an exercise. So, I am Emily Ladau and Ayushe/or pronouns. I come to you from Long Island, specifically from the land of the Massapequa, and I'm a white woman with brown hair that is pulled to a bun on the side.

I am wearing glasses with a pair of dangle earrings. I have some pink lipstick on and a purple polkadot shirt. Behind me is just a plain white wall with my brown chair and a blue pillow.

So I am very excited to be here with all of you today, and I want to let you know that this is a safe space, and I generally mean that. This is the place were you can ask questions, this is the place where you can say things you are not necessarily sure of, and this is the place where you can make mistakes. It is OK.

Disability and bling which can be crudely complicated, complex and nuanced. I do not want it to be something that feels scary. I wanted to feel something that -- I wanted to feel like something that is an ongoing journey.

So you're going to do something that is familiar to me. I have done this exercise before, however, I have done it in person using Post-it notes. I've done it on virtual platforms that are unfortunately not accessible.

So I did some research, and by understanding is that the platform we are going to use is accessible to screen readers in terms of participation, and then I will be happy to read results to you as they come through.

We are going to go through a simple exercise. I will share my screen now. What I need you all to do – keep in mind, the responses will be anonymous – share what language you heard pertaining to disability.

So we are all going to go to menti.com and type in the code. I just have to move this week and see it: 59559445

Once you have entered that put in words or phrases that you have encountered that describe or refer to disability. Once you do that, it will populate a word cloud on this page the time-sharing with all of you. Then together, you're going to go through some of the terminology that we have heard to refer to disability. So take some time to do that. I have left space for up to 10 words that you can enter. Feel free to only enter one if you only have one on your brain, that is OK. Then hit submit.

The words will start to change slides, depending on how many people submit or how many people submit the same word. One caveat, if you do use a slur, that is OK for this context, only because I am trying to capture the breath and depth about the ways in which we talk about disability – both positive and negative.

So I will say that I welcome slurs only because it is important for us to acknowledge that they exist. So I am going to give you a couple of minutes to think through this.

Thank you, everybody. It is exciting to see everybody participating. I am going to go ahead and read everything on the screen after two more hits. OK? Alright, it looks like participation is still going a little bit. I am just going to give it another minute.

Alright, so we had 25 people participate. You are welcome to continue participating. What I'm going to do briefly is read what we have here on the screen.

If I do miss something because I know it is not the easiest format to read things in, we can also get a copy of this word cloud to you afterwards. But let us take a look at this word cloud. I think that this exercise absolutely proved what it is that I was aiming for, which is that there are so many ways to think about and talk about disability.

There are broader terms that describe the disability community and there are terms that are slurs, terms people have reclaimed, and terms people prefer and some people absolutely a bore. There are terms -- people absolutely hate. There are terms that people take.

So this really runs the gambit. So the first and foremost words that come to front is disabled, handicapped and special needs. Right? These are terms you probably heard a lot. Different labels, people with disabilities. Those are the most common terms and that I am sure we have all heard, when referring to disability.

Then of course you have specific terminology for types of disabilities: you have blind, deaf, a physical disability, right? You have intellectual and develop mental disabilities, chronic health conditions, visual impairments, and those are just some examples of types of disabilities.

I see cognitive disabilities as well. Then we have disabilities like invisible disabilities or hidden disabilities. We have visible disabilities. We are going to talk about all of these things.

Then we also have examples including euphemisms like handy capable or special. Those are words that come up a lot. We also have what is known as function labels and high functioning, which I'm sure many of us have heard before.

EMILY HARRIS:
Sorry to interrupt, subject to the captioning is not working.

SPEAKER:
Thank you for being patient everyone. Captioners, please feel free to speak with me. Alright, so they are working with stream text link. I would have captioning in Zoom. Thank you so much for your patience and thank you for standing by.

SPEAKER:
OK, team I'm just a hop onto the new link. Please know if you need me to reset anything on my side. Thank you so much everyone for standing by. Fabulous. OK, I'm going to place a new, updated link into the chat for everyone to access stream text should you need or would like
taxes that today. Here it comes!

To my amazing captioning team, can you also confirm that we are all set with a resume integration? -- With a resume integration? -- With zoom integration.

OK, we are all ready to proceed. Thank you very much.

EMILY LADAU:
Alright, thank you everyone. I do apologize because I am not exactly sure where it is that we left off regarding captioning. In the interest of time, I will wrap up this exercise. I really appreciate all of you for participating. I appreciate that you all took the time to share honestly with us some of the different terminology, whether or not it is appropriate or correct to use.

It is really important that there are some new ways of thinking about and talking about disability. On that note, I'm going to wrap this up. But I do have this word cloud saved. If anybody would like it for excess ability purposes, I am happy to provide that after the event.

I will stop sharing and will move in to the conversation portion.

GAIL FULLER:
OK, I would talk about the disability inclusive language. Why is it critical? Why is it important in this disability inclusive pledge?

EMILY LADAU:
I am glad we are starting with this because we need to first understand that language shapes how we think about disability and how we think about disability shapes our language.

So we are not being conscious of the language we are using.

There are indeed people behind those numbers who have a very wide and diverse array of identities and the way they relate to those experiences. We don't think about disability and we don't think about how to meaningfully include disability and not consciously aware of the language we are using, we are automatically excluding people. The other thing to remember, is that disability cuts across every identity. Disabled people like to joke that it is the only community that you can join at any time. And we don't say that as a threat, we say that because it is our reality and affect. Anybody can become disabled.

For us as disabled people, what we are asking you to do is recognized by doing something accusing inclusive language you are making the world better for everybody, including you if you on day become disabled. It is really important to note, that the pledge that we have put together, is slower and -- a floor and not a ceiling. If you're using inclusive language you don't get to pat yourself on the back and say I have been a good allied today. I think it is what people do a lot. We need to recognize that inclusive language is beginning and not an end.

GAIL FULLER:
Talking about inclusive language we also have points where there is conflicting language and we don't know what to use. This is probably the question I thought most people think I would start with. You hear a person with a disability, and you also hear people use a disabled person. I can go back and forth and even with my writing.

EMILY LADAU:
We do have a back-and-forth. I do have a language to use. The truth is that even I find myself feeling conflicted at times. Very briefly, I will share that first-person language in academic setting, government sitting, and it has become the accepted norm.

That is essentially saying a person with a disability. It means you're putting the person before the disability in the sentence, and acknowledging the person first. There is actually really great resource that we have just posted on the disability and full in the pre-forum – a shameless plug – it is an interview with a fantastic advocate named Julie Petty, who shares why is she prefers first and -- person first language.

Person first language has a rich history especially with people with intellectual and develop mental disabilities. That is a deem where the passive use of it originated. This is known as the self advocacy movement. It was a very conscious, linguistic effort to separate people from their disabilities in order to ensure that their person has been recognized.

So these are one of the most common terms we hear. But we also hear disabled person, which is a form of identity first language, which essentially means that you are associating yourself with disability as an identity.

You do not need to organize her personhood in the sentence before acknowledging your disability because disability as part of your personhood. So I personally choose to identify as a disabled woman.

But I want to acknowledge that this comes from a very specific place of privilege in my identity, and the sense that I am also a white woman, I have a physical disability, and I do not have a disability that affects my communication.

So there are very specific reasons to go into why I personally choose to identify as disabled and to use identity first language. But neither is wrong, and neither is right.

So in the Disability & Philanthropy Forum we ask the person what they want to be referred to as. We also want to make sure that within our language that we are varying back-and-forth between person with a disability and disabled person.

There is also more specific roles when it comes to talking about diagnosis or type of disability. For instance, you would not say 'Down syndrome person' or 'cerebral palsy person open pause -- cerebral palsy person. But you will say deaf person.

I know that I'm glossing over this only the interest of time. But I really encourage you to reach out to me directly if you would like to get more into the nitty-gritty of language because I am very passionate about talking about person first, identity first, which to choose and when to choose it.

Going on about that. But we should move on.

GAIL FULLER: When I first met you, I would say I am a black woman with an invisible disability. But over these last several months, and I have heard there different reasons why someone might say not apparent versus invisible, and particularly as a black woman I wanted to remove that invisible disability from when I talked about it. I am curious, between those terms, not apparent and invisible, is there any right or wrong and do you have a personal preference? I am curious to learn more about that one.

EMILY LADAU:
I have noticed that evolution just as we have gotten to know each other in terminology. I am glad you brought it up and I think the honest answer is that there is not a right answer. As is the case with many of the nuances with this ability language. Certainly there are right answers in some cases like do not use slurs. When it comes to self identity it can be a little more nuanced and complex. I have actually, taken to using apparent and not apparent disability. I find that it doesn't do the work of invisible icing the disability. Even if you can't see the disability doesn't mean you can -- you are not disabled. My preference tends to be non-apparent and apparent or hidden or visible. That being said, it is also complicated to choose one or the other one sometimes a disability that is non-apparent can become apparent. Or a disability that is apparent in some cases may become non-apparent. I have had that experience as we have been on zoom. You might not know that I have a disability if you don't know that I am a wheelchair user because I am not sitting in my wheelchair right now. Suddenly, this very apparent visible disability that I have, is non-apparent. And I think that is probably the term that I'm most comfortable with. It is the one you seem to be gravitating towards as well. It comes down to a matter of personal preference.

GAIL FULLER:
It was definitely one I struggled with but associating black woman and visible did not work for me. So not apparent.

I have another question for you, and as you know, I love to read books, magazines, newspapers, you name it. I love to read. What I have been finding and discovering since my time of working with the President's council is that I will read a story and the story will mention a person's disability but yet there is nothing about the story, about disability and so for those of us who are also writers, when do you actually refer to a person's disability?

EMILY LADAU:
You actually raised the point just now when you said I as a black woman do not want to associate the term invisible with myself and so, I think that a lot of how we can think about disability as we are writing about it is: are we considering it in terms of the relevance of other identity and how it shapes their experiences and the story we are writing and talking about. If we are talking about someone who is multi marginalized and has these intersecting experiences of oppression, doesn't make sense for us to acknowledge that they are a black person? That they have a specific type of disability for example? I think absolutely because that shapes the outcome of the story. But sometimes what I have seen is as story that isn't necessarily about a person's disability but then it will say something like suffers from cerebral palsy or something like that. Suddenly, you have turned this story into a moment of pity toward someone when it wasn't the overarching point of the story. So I think that it is not only about relevance it is also about framing. For me, if it feels relevant, I will absolutely mention it but I will also mention it in such a way that it adds to the story rather than takes away from that person's particular experience. Because we have just framed their identity in an negative light.

It is also a matter of what people are comfortable with as well. I know that there have been times when I have been writing and someone may not want to disclose their disability and that is totally OK. I think it goes back to personal preference and to elephants to the overarching story and being mindful of framing the whole way.

GAIL FULLER:
Thank you. I actually want to point out while you were speaking, there was a comment. I want to highlight this one: this person says they prefer to use "person with not as visible disabilities" even though it is wordy. I think it goes back to respecting how people choose to describe themselves.

Emily, most of our audience today are foundation people and as a person who has spent (unknown term) in current foundations I know sometimes with the best intentions of equity, of diversity, of inclusion, the disability community is left out at times. When they are spoken about, they are spoken about in medical terms. I am curious of how, or what advice you would give to foundations to ensure that when they are actually talking about disability, that they are using affirming language.

EMILY LADAU:
It is a great question and I am smiling because you are absolutely right that a lot of foundations first of all don't talk about disability at all. That is the first hurdle. All of a sudden you will see language somewhere on their website like people with special needs or people of all abilities or people of diverse abilities or doing whatever they possibly can to avoid actually saying the word disability. That is because society sends this overarching message that to use the term disability is somehow at negative, derogatory, shameful thing. There is a movement, a huge subset within the broader community that is all about saying the word disability. Actually saying what you mean rather than dancing around it and saying things like special needs, differently abled, handy capable, I think a lot of people who use of terms are really, really well-intentioned and I want to acknowledge that. They come from a place where they have been conditioned to understand disability as something we don't say. But disability is in fact the legal term here. It is not the Americans with special needs act. Having special needs is not what will give you access to the support and the services that you need. I have a disability, I disability is part of who I am and it is not a bad thing. I am going to embrace the term disability as part of who I am. That being said, I think there are a lot of cultural nuances here. This is again where it can get tricky. There are a lot of cultures where disability is considered to be a source of shame, absolutely. Using the term disability or coming into you are own as one who has a disability, is a lot more challenging than simply coming out and saying I am disabled and proud of it. I want to be mindful that as much as I encourage foundation to use the term disability, don't forget that if you are working within specific cultural groups, consider how it is that disability coexist with those cultural identities. Then there may come a time where a language adjustment makes sense due to cultural sensitivity and being respectful of the culture. On the whole, whenever possible, try to avoid avoiding the word disability. Try to use the word disability. I will adhere quickly, there are some other things that members of the disability community really encourage people to look out for: that includes terms like wheelchair-bound or suffers from, and again it is all about the framing. Also avoiding terms and this was one that we saw on our word cloud earlier, high functioning and low functioning. We ask that you avoid language that arbitrarily sets Dandridge for people of what is normal and what is not. When we say hi functioning and low functioning, it assumes that there is an normal standard of function. That is very arbitrary because we would say that I am hi functioning in communicating but I am low functioning in walking. That is so silly to think about it like that. Everybody does things differently. Again, I know that we are scratching the surface of such big topics here but I really am happy to die further in with anyone who is interested.

GAIL FULLER:
Talking about big topics: I will jump into a big one. We talk about sexism, racism and people understand those terms. A couple of months ago you used the term with me that I had to learn about. When you said America is an ablest society. You don't often hear the word ablest or able-ism. I would like for you to walk us through first of all, what is able-ism? And how can we be more mindful to avoid ablest terms in everyday language. I never thought anything about saying step back or line spot until we started having discussions around able-ism. I would love for you to share more with the audience on that.

EMILY LADAU:
I don't know if I've had enough caffeine for this, Gail. (Laughs) I appreciate you bringing that up and I think that the easiest way to define able-ism for our purpose is attitudes and actions that discriminate against disability. It really goes so much deeper than that. On our website we do have more information about able-ism. So I really do encourage everyone to take a deeper dive because there are some people who have done the incredible work including an activist named (name) Lewis who has put together a much more in-depth definition of able-ism that talks about how it intersects with other types of oppression. We understand it as ways that we discriminate against disability. Not necessarily just against disabled people it is more a mindset that we have about disability. You can be ablest to someone who is not disabled. Simply because of the assumptions that you hold about disability. You might say something or make judgement or assumption about someone else regardless of whether you know that they identify as disabled is not and that can be considered able-ism. We also need to understand that able-ism in no way exists in vacuum. It very much connects with all other types and forms of discrimination and oppression. Sexism, racism, Xena phobia, homophobia, you name it it unfortunately both shapes able-ism and forms able-ism and connects to able-ism and sometimes it causes these other forms of oppression. Everything exists in a very big tangled web of oppression. For our purposes in terms of language, there are some pretty simple set -- steps we can begin to take. It is really training ourselves to be mindful of the language that we use.

Just for the sake of this conversation, I will note slurs such as Lame or moron or crazy or idiot. These are things we might say on a daily basis without even realizing it. These are terms that are considered slurs against people in the disability community. We fall back on these as a metaphor like using something as a crutch or fell on deaf ears. It has infiltrated our language so we don't even realize we are being ablest. Taking a moment to consciously work -- look at the words we are using and how they might have a specific impact even if that impact was not our intent it is incredibly important. There are some nuances here that sometimes people reclaim certain words that you might consider a slur. Examples being crazy or cripple. I wouldn't encourage you to use them if you don't in fact identify with having certain types of disabilities where they have been reclaimed unless you are given express permission to use them. Sometimes I joke around with people and say cripple when I am having a conversation. Or I might identify myself as crippled. But that is a personal choice and reclamation. What we can do to be more conscious, in a broader sense, is think about how the language we use has an impact on disabled people even if it is not our intent to offend.

GAIL FULLER:
Emily, I will go back and forth now between some cautions that I have and questions from the audience. This one follows right up with a question I asked and it is: how does context factor into words that may be perceived as ablest? We often debate the words like stand and stand with and stand up or voice like raising your voice, you have touched on this but there specific question is can terms that mean more a physical act and a metaphorical one be appropriate?

EMILY LADAU:
That depends have deep down the rabbit hole you want to go. I have had this conversation over and over again where I try to avoid using any terminology that might indicate physical ability or cognitive ability or sensory ability. I was thinking the other day, something about envisioning the future. I found myself pausing and wondering whether to say envisioning the future was ablest because it doesn't include people who have visual disabilities. I know there are plenty of people with visual disabilities who have told me time and time again if you say see you later, it is not offensive because it is a figure of speech. It really does again come back to personal preference. If you can, choose another word I really encourage you to. Especially for things for standing or voice, those are some of the more obvious ones where you can find other ways of expressing that. To stand for someone is to be in solidarity with them. To use your voice, is to powerfully communicate. Sometimes it looks like coming up with other terms. It is also sometimes a matter of which group are you working with and I mean group in terms of are you working with people with multiple disabilities and what preferences are they expressing to you about that? There are some people that really would prefer you not use like stand up to you or speak up because it may discriminate against someone who has at communication disability or at this ability where they are unable to stand. In those cases, be mindful of that. Consider how you can use at thesaurus to your advantage.

GAIL FULLER:
That is a great point. And this is about learning. You will make mistakes, we all make mistakes when it comes to language but to learn from them.

I want to move towards some of the how to and practices. What kind of language related practices could foundations implement in order to better recruit and support disabled stop?

EMILY LADAU:
That is a really good question. I think it first and foremost comes down to understanding of the foundation. How you think and talk and communicate about disability. I know in a lot of foundations they have internal style guides that inform everything that they put out into the world. If you can be mindful as you are updating a style guide, including information on disability but not only that, including information on disability language that has been informed by actual people with disabilities and not just your assumptions about their preferences. I think that is a really good start. Once you have that really solid internal guidance, that is how you can start to create more inclusive job announcements and social media posts. More inclusive internal communication with the staff members and consultants for your foundation. Often, what I will do, and this is my little trick, if foundation releases a job announcement or report or some kind of communication, I will hit on at mac it is command F or on Windows it is control F, you can type in disability and if I'm really looking for it I will type special needs or diverse abilities and I will look at any mention for the term disability and it is a low bar to clear but that's the first thing I do. From there, I will look at how a foundation is communicating about disability and what they are putting out into the world. That really comes from an internal setting of policies and style guides to make sure that you are using inclusive language.

GAIL FULLER:
On the flipside, when it comes to grantees focused on disability inclusive work. What kind of language related policies, practices do you think foundations need to implement so that they are more explicit and more welcoming to these grantees?

EMILY LADAU:
I think not only do you need internal style guides, you also need to explicitly mention disability on your communications and on your website, in your request for proposals and do so in meaningful way and not just throwing it onto a laundry list of identities. Acknowledging that disabled people and disability communities have a place in the work that you are doing. The best way to approach it if you are just starting out with this work, is to consult with disabled people and disability led organizations. I know the inclination is to go to organizations that claim that they work on disability. I would like to make the distinction that that is very different from organizations that are actually led by and hire disabled people. Have them at every level of the organization. Not only that, we have to be mindful of the fact that despite we are philanthropy we are still very good at asking for unpaid labour and consultation when it comes to things like how to be more inclusive. So, pay people for their consulting and that is one of the key ways you will get the information you need to be more explicitly welcoming. But don't just pay one disabled person. I know this is challenging, especially for smaller foundations. They say we don't know where to find disabled people. We have an archived webinar that was the first in the series that talks about working with disabled people. You can go back and watch that if you're not sure where to find disabled people or how. Make sure that you are really getting insights from a cross-section of the community.

GAIL FULLER:
What about the foundations and the other grantees that they work with. How can they encourage all grantees to use disability inclusive language? Should there be a requirement, some people complained that foundations have to many requirements. What are your thoughts?

EMILY LADAU:
Line is that foundations will start right now by modelling best practices. I believe that we learn from what we witness. If we are seeing foundations model these best practices, it is a great place for grantees to start. In my dream world, foundations were not only model these best practices but also strongly encourage their grantees to ensure that they are also using disability inclusive language and being affirmative of disability in their communication. In my real dreamworld, it would be a requirement. If at grantee is going to receive funding that disability inclusive language and disability inclusion in general is something that is actually meaningfully a part of the work that they do. As a really solid first step, I hope to see foundations modelling what they would like their grantees to do. I think that will be the best way to roll the ball forward.

GAIL FULLER:
I so agree with you. I will take a question now from one of the participants. How does someone kindly correct someone that doesn't use the correct terminology referring to a person with a disability or uses a slur or and one of the situations like the people in the room have non-apparent disabilities but basically, what you say one someone doesn't use the correct terminology?

EMILY LADAU:
I think the really important thing to keep in mind is that we are calling them in and not calling them out. There is a big distinction there. When you are calling people out, you're putting them on the spot and making them uncomfortable. To be quite honest, sometimes it is necessary. I am not at all the type of person that things that we need to protect every single person who has said something offensive or harmful. Sometimes if someone says something that they really aren't sure about, they had no idea or example that saying lame was actually something that could be offensive to you. Or to someone with a disability. You might say, in the moment, "hey I don't know if you know this, but lame is actually considered a slur towards disabled people please find a better used -- were to use next time". You can't interrupt in the middle and say you just use a slur! Send that people and email afterwards or pull them aside after the meeting or hop on act quick chat with them and tell them you want to give them a heads up but so you know for next time, what you said was a slur. Obviously if someone is saying something directly offensive and I am not saying using the word crazy is directly offensive but if someone uses the other our word for example, or if they say something about disability that is just really, really harmful and shocking, then I am more likely to say in the moment "hold up and we need to talk about why that is not OK". If the opportunity is not presented to you in the moment then following up with them and saying "you said something really harmful and we need to talk about it" and that is really scary especially if you are lower, junior colleague. It is scary if you're talking to someone who is your superior. It can be uncomfortable to have those conversations and especially if you are a disabled person yourself, it feels like extra work. It feels like the onus is on you to do the educating when you would like to exist in the world. I acknowledge that there are a lot of nuances to these conversations but whenever possible, really calling someone in and taking the time to share with them and letting them know that even if their intent wasn't malicious the impact is still there. That is how we change this and have conversations that shift away from able-ism.

GAIL FULLER:
I so agree. I would add because you talked about the hierarchy, I would encourage people, I've had to do it in speaking with someone who was my boss and explaining about my disability. It is a difficult conversation but it is a conversation that needs to happen. Emily, I am going to ask you because I know that every time I need something, you tell me where to find something. For people who want to learn more about disability language tools and the resources, are there some places and we already know the forum is on the top of that list. Where else can they go to find things?

EMILY LADAU:
I will drop a link in the chat for the forum because I think that our page on disability and language is pretty handy if I do say so myself. Also, another good starting point and I say starting point but not endpoint, the National Centre for disability journalism has a style guide that I recommend. That style guide is not the be-all and end-all for disability language but it is a good place to go in terms of getting basic ideas of what to say and what not to say when writing about disability. Honestly, the best resource is people with disabilities. 10 times out of 10 it will be your best resource as long as you are paying them. Yo another --

GAIL FULLER:
Another question how can we make sure if these are accessible and with disability inclusive…

EMILY LADAU:
This is interesting because the field of work and love to use jargon. They love big words and they love to make it sound like we are super fancy. But the reality is that most of the language used, especially in the field of philanthropy is so incredibly inaccessible to a lot of disabled people and a lot of disabled people feel it it is alienating.

So we should use plain language when it is possible. I will admit this, and I come from a background of academia. So I was taught that the bigger the words, the better the grade. Unfortunately, that logic has carried over with me and a lot of the work that I do.

So even when I was writing revoke, I had to go back and say, "Oh my gosh. Is this even understand bull to people? Do I even understand what I just wrote?"

So using plain language is a great way to ensure that your publications are accessible, and a really good place to start is just plain language.gov. They have a lot of great resources.

GAIL FULLER:
Can ask another question because I already know how you're going to answer it.

(Laughter)

You've talked about it before. But foundation staff persons, unsure of language they should be using – what do they do? Do they just call you up, Emily? What should they be doing?

EMILY LADAU:
Yes, just me specifically

(Laughter)

I am glad you brought this up as a final question because I actually think a caveat that I quite honestly should have big -- should have given at the beginning of the conversation is that I am just one person. I am not the expert. I am the expert in my own experiences and preferences, and I certainly have a strong well of knowledge around disability and language because I'm so active and immersed in these conversations on a daily basis.

But I am not where this conversation should be ending. I am where this conversation should be starting, if it is indeed a starting point for you today.

So I think that the words of wisdom I will leave everyone with is the mantra about "Nothing about us, without us." Which Emily Harris mentioned in her introduction. Nothing about test without us means including disabled people in any and all conversations, not just about disability, but about everything and anything that impacts disabled people – and I will give you a hand – that is literally every issue. (Laughs)

Every issue is disability issue. So nothing about us, without us. Now that doesn't make just mean one white woman who has a opinion on disability language. It means nothing about the disability community without having conversation with several members of the disability community. And paying them. (Laughs)

GAIL FULLER:
Thank you, Emily. I love talking with you. I love the fact that you always acknowledge your privilege, when answering question. It is so important for all of us. We all have different amounts of privilege and I appreciate that.

Anything else you want to say before we turned back to Emily Harris? I have enjoyed talking with you, as usual. I know we talk every week, but it is fun to actually be able to talk on a particular subject.

EMILY LADAU:
I just want to access my gratitude to you, first and foremost, always pushing me to have such thoughtful conversation, and everyone here for participating.

Wherever you are in this conversation, I am glad that you joined us to discuss it. So, thank you!

GAIL FULLER:
Back to Emily Harris!

EMILY HARRIS:
Hello! Oh my gosh, this is so fun. I get to talk to all the time, but I just have so much fun seeing how much fun you are having together. You get to see what it is like working with this awesome team.

We know that breakout rooms are not accessible for everyone, and I just want to acknowledge that. We do hope you will stay. It is a great opportunity to meet some of your colleagues, continue this conversation, and our hosts can even invite Emily and Gail into our rooms, if you would like to hear more from them.

We will have about 20 minutes or so for you to meet your colleagues and share your experiences and what you have learned. Do you have any problems getting to the breakout rooms? Well, there will be somebody here in the main room to help you.

Group norms are going to be put into the chat now, and will also be posted in your breakout room. Note that the facilitators do have expertise in using disability inclusive language. Again, as Emily mentioned, we all have a little bit of a different take depending on our disability and perspectives.

So you will hear from others as well in these rooms. So, Kathleen, please send this off and we will come back after a safe and candid conversation. Again, we do refrain from you -- we do ask that you refrain from posting on social media. Then we will return to close out for five minutes.

SPEAKER:
Thank you so much. We will just take one minute to put everybody into the breakout rooms. Thank you!

(Breakout Room)

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
Hello everyone! My name is Carmen. I've a black woman with lasses and short black hair. I go by her and she. I am wearing gold earrings, a goal top with a black sweater. We will give you some time to introduce yourselves and then we will dive into the questions. Catherine, Emily or anyone else?

EMILY HARRIS:
Hello, ACS is actually our captioner. Nobody else requested and I enjoy captioning because I am a hard of hearing person. So, I would be happy to participate here.? Alright, Emily would like to register self?

EMILY HARRIS:
Hello, my name is Emily Harris. And I am a white woman with dark curly hair, I wear rectangular glasses, black and white shirt with a black jacket, with a blonde -- with a woodpaneled background with a white screen.

About 24 years ago, I had a sinus infection and lost hearing in one ear. I became aware of being part of the disability community about six years ago, when I started working on the 25th anniversary of the Americans with disabilities act.

So this is a personal and professional passion for me. I learned so much every day from everybody I am working with and listening to. So, I am thrilled to be here.

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
Thank you, Catherine. One thing I failed to mention was that I am an African American woman and a wheelchair user. I had an accident 30+ years ago, and I do not want to leave that out. Catherine, if you could introduce yourself, that would be great.

EMILY HARRIS:
I hope she can unmute.

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
Catherine? Let's see. I will ask for assistance. Alright, while we wait for assistance, Emily and I will have this conversation and Catherine can listen in.

So based on what we have heard so far, do you have any thoughts or questions about language and disability? I will ask the question and we can dialogue about it.

EMILY HARRIS:
You know, I think one of the things that strikes me, and Emily addressed this, is how afraid people are of the word disability and it carries a negative connotation that are because of another goal use of the term, which is how it is used for Social Security income I think. Also, insurance, right? It means that you cannot work when it is used that way.

You know, obviously – hi, Emily! Sorry, hi Gail.

GAIL FULLER:
Hi!

EMILY HARRIS:
We asked for help because Catherine is our only participant and she is not a muted. We are not sure if that means she cannot unmute herself.

GAIL FULLER:
That you ask -- to click asked unmute?

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
Well I clicked on the pins. It only shows hide pin and hide participants.

EMILY LADAU:
I clicked on asked to unmute just now. She might not be able to. Card back OK.

EMILY LADAU:
Do you want to come back to the main room with us?

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
OK.

EMILY LADAU:
OK, we can all just jump out.

EMILY HARRIS:
Yes, we can leave the room.

EMILY LADAU:
OK, captioner, you can leave to.

(Laughter)

OK, thank you.

GAIL FULLER:
We are back! Is she still in the breakout room though? The lady who did not want to unmute herself?

EMILY LADAU:
We can) III. -- We can close down that breakout room 3.

EMILY HARRIS:
What did you think about what I said, Carmen? You are on unmute.

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
I think what you said was very relevant because what use -- what I have seen between a lot of companies that dance… You know, industry definitions that include disability and have impacts inside the organization and its culture, and how it seems to be a continuum between… I think everything you shared was spot on.

EMILY HARRIS:
What I was trained to say, Emily, was that the challenge with insurance. Disability insurance means you cannot work. SSI as well.

EMILY LADAU:
Or you can work, but he could only make X amount of dollars and have that amount of dollars to your name.

EMILY HARRIS:
Right. So we are talking about the ADA positive people connotation (Laughs) So I think that is one of the big reasons that people do this dance that Carmen was just talking about, and trying to come up with all of these euphemisms.

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
I definitely agree with you on that. I am trying to think in terms of the African-American world with black people, do we have that same thing?

To some extent, yes. To some extent no. I think what you said is totally spot on.

GAIL FULLER:
Do we know hundred people we have another breakout rooms?

SPEAKER:
Yes, and breakout 1 we have three other participants in the facilitator. That and breakout 2 have two participants at a facilitator.

GAIL FULLER:
Should we go back in and earlier? What do you guys think?

EMILY LADAU:
Yes, maybe at 1:18

SPEAKER:
OK, yes I can do that. Also that the message.

EMILY LADAU:
Yes, I do not want to leave them dangling.

EMILY HARRIS:
I wonder if there is a way to ask them without popping in?

SPEAKER:
Yes, we can have – if anybody wanted to… Go into and let them know to give them a sense that we want to let -- we want to close it down (Laughs) We can do that. Emily Harris, I would make you a cohost again. OK.

EMILY HARRIS:
What you think, Emily? Should we just ended or should we give them that opportunity?

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
As I started seeing numbers trickle down, I thought it was going to be challenging to keep people engaged. That whole amount of time.

EMILY HARRIS:
Yes.

EMILY LADAU:
This was an exciting conversation though. I love talking with all of you.

EMILY HARRIS:
You guys are so great! The chemistry was amazing and I can listen all day.

(Laughter)

EMILY LADAU:
We had fun. I believe that Gail was the best hiring decision in the whole world.

(Laughter)

EMILY HARRIS:
The other language thing I trip over all the time is what to say about mental health.

EMILY LADAU:
Oh, yes.

EMILY HARRIS:
Like mental health disabilities.

EMILY LADAU:
I feel that we should have a separate webinar on that. I feel like the language of mental health… Although, there is this new mental health storytelling guide that just came out.

GAIL FULLER:
Is that a resource we can put on the forum?

EMILY LADAU:
Yes, I am still trying to vent it.

GAIL FULLER:
OK.

EMILY LADAU:

Honestly yeah. I will email to you.

GAIL FULLER:
Carmen, while we have here, are there any of the topics that were missing? You do not have answer now. But we are in the process… We will probably talk more at our communications advisors meeting in July about the content. Emily Ladau has done a great job on going to the content, and now we are trying to find out what are those gaps that we have. Mental health is definitely one of the gaps.

CARMEN DANIELS JONES:
OK, I will give it some thought!

EMILY HARRIS:
The other thing we have been thinking about is chronic illness. There are people who are concerned about that. And they need to know and have this conversation.

GAIL FULLER:
Was (Name) part of that?

EMILY LADAU:
Yes I believe (Name) is.

EMILY HARRIS:
I do want to think about what makes a difference. When I could say I want an accommodation and you over to me under the Americans with disabilities act. (Laughs) Then all of a sudden, "I love being part of the disabilities committee!"

(Laughter)

SPEAKER:
Alright, friends I'm going to go ahead and bring everybody back now if that works. Here we go. They will be with us in about 30 seconds.

EMILY HARRIS:
Emily, do you want to just invite people to share in the conversation or Gail?

EMILY LADAU:
Yes, would you like me to? Yes, I am happy to do that. We could also give people little time back in their day if they want (Laughs)

SPEAKER:
Welcome back everyone!

EMILY LADAU:
Hi everyone! You so much for sticking with us and for being part of our breakout rooms. We did want to give you just a moment if you would like to share any particular insights that came out of your breakout rooms.

If not, that is OK and we can wrap up. But since we have a few extra moments, we just wanted to hold that space for you if you would like to share.

EMILY HARRIS:
Kathleen, can everyone unmute themselves now?

SPEAKER:
Absolutely! In the bottom left-hand corner, feel free to click on the unmute bottom. -- Button.

EMILY HARRIS:
We are delighted to stay and have until 1:30 Eastern budgeted on our day. So, if you would like to chat, and unmute feel free but if you would like nine minutes back in your day, we understand that as well.

SPEAKER:
I will share take away from our group's discussion. The importance of ritual and practice. Creating space to be more intentional in our focus, making clear commitment and creating space to honour that commitment through earning, creating space two safe spaces, or people do not get it right the first time. That ritual and practice is key to the work ahead.

EMILY HARRIS:
Can you say what you mean by ritual in that context?

SPEAKER:
As it is becoming normative in philanthropy to identify your preferred pronouns part of professional practice. So also ensuring that we are creating space and mindfully including all of ourselves in the work is super important.

EMILY HARRIS:
Great.

KRISTY TRAUTMANN:
One of the things we talked about in our breakout session was one of the first comments that you made Emily, in framing the session about how anguish really reflects what we think about disability and people with disabilities and that language also shapes… To think of it as a culture change lever is really helpful and we were just starting on the question of how do we actually do that in our foundations? We would have loved to have more time to have that kind of conversation.

EMILY LADAU:
I think there are so many ways in which this was a starting point so I hope we can continue to make time for these conversations. You are absolutely right.

SPEAKER:
One of the things we talked about was that when you are talking about racial equity you are also talking about changing the culture of the organization because when people make mistakes or when they slip up they need to feel that they are able to do that, that is actually what safe space means. There are so many pathways to this and I think Emily was bringing that up at the beginning and it is language and shaping but it is also what does it mean to say: you did that wrong. We have created a culture to honour that and say that. That we can change the practice, so to speak as we were talking about earlier.

EMILY HARRIS:
I was meeting and discussion in a board meeting last night and I put my foot in it related to talking about diverse people instead of diverse groups. And somebody very nicely called me out because you can do this in zoom in the chat, personally and said I want to let you know why this is marginalizing way to use her language. I would like to make this a learning moment for everybody. So I said I will just quote you in the chat. I took the quote and said I want to thank this person for calling me in and recognizing this issue. It is interesting in the moment to… How do you deal with these things with grace?

CATHERINE TOWNSEND:
I also think we don't talk about disability much at all. We have to normalize the discussion in general at the same time as we are talking about what language to use.

EMILY HARRIS:
There's also the sense that it is private and people are afraid to talk about it.

EMILY LADAU:
The definite challenge of saying the wrong thing is what we need to grow and learn and sometimes saying the wrong thing can cause irreparable harm. So how do we find the balance and how do we find it within ourselves to have these difficult conversations that may not always feel so good?

GAIL FULLER:
I would also add when we talk about the different identities, as a black woman with at disability, it is not always easy to have that conversation. Quickly people see you differently when you have it. I think it is so important for people who feel comfortable talking about disability, to talk about it. The whole saying of modelling best practices. There will be times when you will have to deal with basically ignorance. People who do not understand or who will judge you for something. I just think that it is so important to have these honest conversations.

EMILY HARRIS:
With that I want to thank you all again for sticking it out with us and starting to have the honest conversations. Even when we dwindled down to a small group like this, I think it is an opportunity to get to know each other and I think as this conversation occurs across philanthropy that is one we will see change. Thank you and thank you Emily and Gail and facilitators we so appreciate your willingness to do this. There will be as survey and it is in the chat. It should automatically come to you following… This is learning journey and we are learning so we appreciate all of your comments. We hope you will join us again in July when we have another session like this on July 8 if you are not celebrating. This to discuss self identification and demographic tracking. In October, for a conversation on disability in the workplace that we are excited about having two disabled HR leaders from foundations having that conversation. Don't forget to check out our public facing webinars as well and the next one is on gender sexuality and disability is on June 10 and will be dynamic conversation I promise. The link for those is in the chat as well. Finally, please remind your colleagues that they also can become members and to receive notices for events like today. Have a great day and thank you so much for joining us.

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