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SPEAKER:

Welcome to the disability and philanthropy form webinar series. My name is Emily Harris, executive director of the disability and philanthropy forum. I use she/her pronouns and I'm proud to be part of the disability community. I come to you from the unceded land of the Council of three fryers, the nation now known as Chicago. As part of our commitment to accessibility, our panelists will each provide an audio description of ourselves.

I am a white woman with dark, curly hair wearing glasses and a dark blue shirt. Behind me is a white and tan screen. My access needs are met today because we have CART captions. A few items for today's webinar. There are two ways to access live 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. Or, to access the captions in a separate window, see the link to the external caption viewer in the chat.

Today, only our moderators and panelists will be on camera. You will be muted throughout the event. The webinar is being recorded, and you will receive a link to the recording in the next few weeks. Although we will be using the chart to share links with you, it will not be available for you to communicate out. Instead, please use the Q&A button at the bottom of your screen to share your questions anytime during the session. And we will have some time to share them with the panels at the end.

If the Q&A is not accessible to you, feel free to send your questions to communications@disabilityphilanthropy.org. -- The email address on the screen. Check the form early and often.

We will be life treating today, and hope you will join us on social media using the hashtag [disability philanthropy](#). You can also follow along by connecting with us on Twitter [@disphilanthropy](#).

Disability is a natural part of the human experience. According to the CDC, one in four US adults, 61 million people, has a disability that impacts major life activities. Disabilities can be apparent, such as a mobility disability, but many disabilities are not apparent including non---chronic illness and mental health disabilities.

Disabilities can be lifelong or acquired, and we often say that we are the only minority group that anyone can join at any time. The Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare that systemic oppression of people with disabilities. It is increasing the size of the disability community. Today, we will dive in to explore the timely topic of ableism, the systemic oppression of disabled people.

To moderate our panel, I am delighted to introduce Sam Gill, president of the national philanthropic organization that supports the performing arts, medical research, the environment on child well-being. He is one of 17 CEOs who serves on the President's Council on disability,

inclusion and philanthropy. He is joined by three disability sort leaders and advocates. You will find the link to all of their buyers in the chat. And I will turn it over to Sam now. Thank you.

SAM GILL:

Excellent. Thank you so much, Emily. Thanks everyone for joining us today. As Emily mentioned, my name is Sam. I am a South Asian American male. I am wearing glasses and a blue shirt and a blazer, and I am in a fairly typical office. My pronouns are he/him. I am on the lands of the Lenape people today, and all of my access needs have been met.

I am absolutely thrilled about the opportunity to help facilitate today's discussion with three really amazing experts and advocates and leaders. Just as a personal reflection, one of the reasons I am excited is I have one sibling, I have an older brother with down syndrome. My mother was a disability advocate, and even growing up in a household in the 80s and 90s where we were really passionately committed to ideas of inclusion and saw ourselves probably at the vanguard of what a lot of the thinking was around what civil rights would mean for people with disabilities, and should mean, I am struck in retrospect by how many of the ways that we approach supporting my brother and his thriving really reflected what you would call an ableist paradox. Of course, unintentionally.

So I think today is really not about educating people that do not want to support equity and inclusion for people with disabilities. It is about widening our toolkits for those of us that want to, and want to have a richer sense of the way in which we do our work does or doesn't support people with disabilities.

I am incredibly pleased to welcome our three panelists. Lydia X Z Brown, Rebecca Cokley who is a program officer for US disability rights at the Ford foundation, and Ryan Easterly, executive director of the WITH Foundation. And also a fellow member of the president counters – my counselor's commission on disability. Biographies are in the chat, so we will not get into those here. But I do want to just go around and ask each of our panelists to introduce themselves, their pronouns, a description of themselves. Rebecca, maybe you could kick us off.

REBECCA COKLEY:

Thank you so much, Sam. My name is Rebecca Cokley, pronouns are she saw her. -- She/her. I'm from Lenape lands. I have turned the red hair, a glorious abundance of freckles, wearing a white shirt and a black blazer. I have a migraine today so my access needs are being met by my handy dandy ice pack. And I would say that I wanted to play -- pay particular attention to cornice illness folks that have joined us today. Wherever they are and that disclosure journey. Our committee – my community is better for your presence.

SAM GILL:

Thank you, Rebecca. Lydia, how about you?

LYDIA X Z BROWN:

Hello, this is Lydia. Sign name L Brown. Pronounce they/them. I am a young East Asian person with short black and teal hair wearing glasses and a zip up. Behind me is a blurred room so that you do not all see my ADD mess. -- Mess. I am joining you from the ancestral land of the Piscataway-Conoy and Nacotchtan peoples.

SAM GILL:

Thank you, Lydia. I like youngish. I am youngish from now on. That is how I feel. Ryan, how about you?

RYAN EASTERLY:

My name is Ryan, my parents are he/him. I may Black identifying man wearing a purple dress shirt with a black blazer and sitting in front of a white wall with a diploma on it. I come to you today from the land of the (unknown name) people in California. Due to my own disabilities, I may not always be in the center of the frame because my body posture may change. But other than that, my access needs are being met.

SAM GILL:

Thank you all. We will get into it. I will be guiding the conversation, but we really encourage people to provide their own questions and we will weave them into the conversation as we go.

I think it would be great to start just by helping, for all of us, to understand how each of you thinks about the concept of ableism and what it means and what it comprises as a phenomenon and its impacts.

Rebecca, I would like to go to you first. And to ask you, is our American society and ableist society? If so, what do we mean by that? In what ways is this an ableist society?

REBECCA COKLEY:

Thank you so much, Sam. I think ableism is grounded into the very structure of all parts of American culture and society. I wake up in a bed that is built for average height people. I paid twice as much for a wardrobe because I cannot get clothing for myself because I'm a little person. I paid twice as much for the vehicle that I drive and the necessary modifications that I need.

There is a series of systems and rules that were not developed for people with disabilities, and I think you can even look back to the founding of the country, and even earlier than that to see ways that ableism is grounded in white supremacy. Which I know some of our other colleagues will definitely delve into, but I think you cannot look at, you cannot provide a thorough critique of American culture and American society, let alone philanthropy without looking at the way that ableism is throughout.

SAM GILL:

Lydia, I would like to go to your next. I would like to ask you to reflect on two things. If there is anything you would like to add to how Rebecca has set the terrain of ableism, that would be

great. And I would love to hear from you. You have worked in a number of different contexts in which you and others were helping people to see ableism where maybe they hadn't before in a campus environment, now in a technology environment. We would love to hear about the process. How you see ableism, but also, how in your work, you have worked to make it visible for people who are not necessarily looking for your identifying.

LYDIA X Z BROWN:

This is Lydia. Rebecca hinted a little bit about what I'm about to explain that white supremacy and ableism are deeply connected. But let's back up a little bit. At its most basic, ableism is a system of values and beliefs. A system of values and beliefs that teaches us who is valuable, worthy and desirable, and who is expendable and disposable.

Ableism teaches us, in other words, who gets to count as human, or a person. And who does not. It teaches us who is "Normal", but more than that, it teaches us who is ideal. What kind of person is ideal. As a system of values and beliefs, ableism is deeply wrapped up with every other system of violence, domination and oppression.

Ableism is deeply wrapped up with white supremacy and settler colonialism, and it is also deeply wrapped up with patriarchy, with antique Queer and trans oppression. With classism, and any system of domination and oppression. We can see that in the history and the founding of this country, its settlement, the justifications that white settlers used to justify forced removal and genocide of native and Indigenous peoples.

We can see it in the ways in which white slaveholders literally used ableism to justify and perpetuate enslavement of enslaved Black Africans and their descendents. We can see it in the history of our immigration laws, in restricting immigration to those deemed fit, productive, intelligent and healthy.

We can see it in manifestations in centuries of anti-Asian racism and derision of Asian peoples cultures, whether south, Southeast or East Asian, as both exotic and uniquely dangerous and disgusting. We can see the legacies of ableism, racism and other forms of oppression, and how ideas about our bodies and minds are always grounded in and connected to ableist values. The ways in which values -- violence is enacted on fat people and trans people and immigrants and incarcerated people and homeless people are all deeply interconnected.

It is impossible to understand ableism as a system of values and beliefs without also understanding it as a system that is both necessary for and dependent upon every other form of ableism that exists. SAM GILL:

Thank you. I want you to come to respond to Lydia. To me, thinking about the intersections between systems of discrimination and oppression is both a moral exhortation to recognize exactly what Lydia calls us to pay attention to, but it is also an analytical invitation, to understand the way in which different systems of oppression, expenses of oppression, logics of oppression can come together. So be great if you could help us in a contemporary context, understand sort of what it means concretely, for a sense of an ableism to come together.

RYAN EASTERLY:

I want to underline what Lydia said, in general, and then mentioned that we know that identities are complex. And identities are experienced in parallel to one another. For example, one in four Black Americans experiences a disability. And we know that communities of colour are disproportionately impacted by disability.

We also know that BIPOC people often struggle with accessing resources to obtain a disability diagnosis. And diagnosis can be a key step in the acceptance of a disability identity. We also know that BIPOC disabled people experience additional issues when it comes to accessing high-quality healthcare services.

And we definitely know that there is room for growth when it comes to the leadership of BIPOC people with disabilities. Disability organizations and beyond, as well as the representation of people of colour with disabilities when discussing and would represent a the experience of disability in general.

SAM GILL:

Thanks a lot Ryan. Aching of the complexity of this tapestry. How would you help the people on this call, Rebecca, think about the way in which ableism is a barrier to equity and inclusion. I assume people are on this webinar because they have some understanding of what was just explained. They want to know more, and that they want to translate that knowledge into some improvement in what they do or what their organizations do.

And as someone who is having to take this rich and complex history and contemporary set of experiences is translated into a grantmaking program, what is the framework that you use about thinking about that either. Understanding of barriers to equity and inclusion for people and disabilities or pathways to opportunity that could help us to overcome ableism as a limitation or imposition to the dignity of everyone in our society.

REBECCA COKLEY:

Thank you so much. I think about it, very similar to how you just described it, but also with the lens and how can we use the mechanisms of philanthropy that we engage with, to not just create a better future, but address historic inequities. And I don't think that you can actually have the conversation around, frankly, the history of flow-through being in this country if he don't start talking about the fact that both of our major foundations-- most of our legacy foundations had found in the lid eugenics movement. It actively sought the eradication of disabled people. You know, and thinking about that lens shaped the relationship that V went on to have with the disability community, from moving from trying to eradicate people to frankly acting like disabled peoples did not exist for decades. To acting as though, I mean, for example, foundation had only ever made one does ability, grant, and in their notes to a disability organization, said go and bake the federal government for money or ask March of Dimes.

And that the door really was closed, to use the actual technical term for the equipping used on a course, there were actual this full blinders on philanthropy. In a lot of ways to you thinking about how to be inclusive of people with disabilities.

To a place, now, where anything came-- any thinking about this work, it can't be just like we are going to do this. Something that our CEO talks about his revising honesty and embracing risk. As of them actually taking time within your institution to unpack what is your organization's disability history? What has the engagement been like with the community? Has there been any? Going through the archives and see what is there? What isn't there? What multitude institution play in perpetuating inequities? And how does that inform the work that you want to do going forward? And who you pray on to really do that work?

SAM GILL:

Ryan, do you feel as a weight of history or relatively younger institution? How do you think about the issue of history in the context of how to conceptualize equity for people with disabilities?

RYAN EASTERLY:

I share a lot of Rebecca's feelings and thoughts in this work, and I'm also mindful that Becca and I are among the people, there are many folks with disability and philanthropy that aren't comfortable embracing their disability, identifying that they are not safe at work. We are the few among leadership positions in philanthropy and the way that that carries in the work that we do, and even in the ways that with foundation has been including the people at disability in all aspects of our operations, but there are ways in which through our self advocacy advisory committee, that those advisory committee members challenge us and told us grow in our learning and our journey to better embrace the perspectives of the communities, to kind of daily lived experience of disability and keep us continuing to learn, continuing to evolve, and better address the experiences of all people with disabilities, including BIPOC, people with disabilities. So I just echo everything that she shared so far.

SAM GILL:

Lydia, I just want to give you recognition of the differences in organizations that might be on this call, and different kinds of issues that people might work on, not really knowing, for sure... I'm curious about the experience that you might bring, distinctly, as someone who is thinking about technology, and reinforcing ableism from exasperating ableism for helping to overcome it. I'm always struck. There's a saying in Silicon Valley, the best way to predict the future is to invent it. And you feel that from a lot of the corporate forces behind a lot of contemporary services. They are diverted by history. They are acting like they're just merely building a better future. Has been part of your practice to find ways to talk to these organizations about the history that I think you very eloquently details, but how to see themselves in relation to it? And can they hear that?

LYDIA X. Z. BROWN:

This is Lydia. One problem that we address frequently in conversations that we have with partners, and also with folks who are coming from industry, or from research, is the rush to techno solution is up as an answer to social problems.

And what that means is that a belief that if we can just create the correct technology, we can fix a problem and make it go away. Unfortunately, technological driven innovation still exists in the context of the world in which we live. Such innovations are often deeply informed by eugenicist ideas, let's invent technology that will disappear. People with Rebecca and my disability. Let's create technological innovations that try to fix disabled people. Plot that will interpret sign mileage, wheelchairs that will climb stairs, robots that will teach social skills to autistic children, all of these ideas about far-fetched technologies, that are aimed, punctually, and fixing disabled people and making us conform to able to people's expectations, and norms, but that are not at all, about actual accents. And that don't address the very real issues that disabled people, especially those in the margins, are dealing with on a daily basis, that many of us aren't thinking about whether a wheelchair can climb stairs, or whether a robot can teach me to be better at a job interview, we're worried about being addicted, about being killed by our partners, or the police.

We are worried about the kicked out of a hospital, denied healthcare, left for dead in a global pandemic that is happening right now, it is not over. We are worried about life or deaths. And inventing a fancy technology that appeals to enabled peas. To become able saviours by disappearing disability, does nothing to address ableism and everything to reinforce it.

Know when they are thinking about what we can do, instead, how can technology, then, be leveraged to be actually about access to actually be about justice, then the question really needs to be, what are we making? Who is making it? For what purpose are we making it? Are the people who are designing and deploying new technologies from marginalized communities? Do they understand what is at stake for those who have the most to lose?

Are they thinking about what future we are imagining? Allison

In her introduction to the book feminist, queer crip, discusses the particular form of ableism that most of us have internalized, that basically says that a better future, an ideal future, is one in which disability no longer exists, or in other words, a future in which disabled people, right, Rebecca, and I don't exist. And people like us don't exist.

, A future that for many disabled People's communities has already become more and more of a reality. Through prenatal testing, gene editing and also selection procedures to prevent certain disabled people from coming into existence. But (unknown name) offers a challenge to an alternative to that vision by inviting us to consider, instead, what would a better future look like if we believed and assume that disabled people will be present. That disabled people are part of the future, that disabled people deserve to be part of the future, and, that our future, and our vision of the future, is incomplete without disabled people.

Disabled activist Annie (unknown name)

Put it up a lot more simply, the future will be accessible

SAM GILL:

a key section of this discussion has been actual and apparent and that there has been a lot of different metaphors for proceeding, either cognitively, or something externally, something that we are, in some cases, choosing not to look at. Either intentionally, or as part of a system that allows us not to look at.

So now helping our audience to make about what would it mean, when you begin to actually confront them and be part of overcoming ableism, what RV looking for? And Lydia, if one of these things of these conversations ought to be actually giving voice to those who are sometimes have less power in the situations, I think you working at an organization that is on the green tea side, I think she go first here. What is examples of ableism Lacey in the way that philanthropy operates that come to mind for you?

LYDIA X. Z. BROWN:

This is Lydia. One of the most obvious ways that ableism Joseph in philanthropy who is actually making decisions about where grant money goes. Rebecca and Ryan are the exception, not the norm. Vast majority of the staff and foundations, at corporate giving organizations, or in any other printmaking body, are not disabled people, and when disabled people are present, the vast majority of the few who are, are still coming from a place of privilege. From access to wealth, from whiteness, from heterosexuality, and from the global North. In countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. Globally, that still remains true, that philanthropy is a still a force that often reinforces imperialism and modern day settler colonialism. Who gets money and how? Secondly, another major way that ableism shows up, are in the application and reporting requirements in order to receive grants.

Your organization has to demonstrate a five year track record of success, your organization has to demonstrate the party been able to manage a large multi-year Chris, your organization has to demonstrate that you've been able to do internal and external audits, that you been able to balance your books, that you have access to mainstream making services, that you been able to keep people on payroll for certain amount of time, that you can show metrics, and numbers, quarterback quarter that show improvements and measurable outcomes, and I'm literally word vomiting because these are all the words that we are encountering, and the average disabled person of colour, poor, disabled person, disabled person in the queer and trans communities, we are literally just trying to take care of each other in our communities and we don't have any fucking time for writing these 200 pages long, detailed print reports to prove that we are really being honest because you know who does not have to prove that? Generally, shall he, while the people in externally well resourced organizations have to worry about where the money is coming from, they don't have to worry about who they are asking for money from.

. And so, they had the privilege to be able to not care whereas we have to be 100 times more scrupulous and still be concerned that we will be accused of inappropriate, questionable, or problematic financial practices. It will be accused of not showing stability. Why we have stability? Because we are not getting multi-year and rail operations grant funding. Why are we unstable? Because our people are more likely to be in precarious employment, working multiple

jobs, caregivers of other disabled people on top of being disabled ourselves, because we are less likely to be able to prove, according to recent capitalist ableist norms, that we deserve a handout. And that is how we are framed. We are both ashamed and guilty for asking for handouts, and yet we are also expected to bet, and that is why the vast majority of philanthropic resources continue to go to the same well resourced established organizations, that are largely not accountable to directly impacted communities, and to the people who have the most to lose. Whereas organizations that are doing work on the front lines, directly from community, are infinitely less likely to be able to access even a fraction of the same funding pools.

And even in the same space, if you are a smaller, community-based organization, you get really excited. If a once in a decade opportunity comes up for you to compete for a single \$100,000 grant. The larger organizations that are generally not led by disabled people or are led by disabled white people, their operating costs are in the millions of dollar ranges. They let grand slip like pudding just constantly. When you ask how this ableism is showing up, it shows up in the expectation that all disabled people understand these complex fiscal responsibilities and requirements, that we understand these cognitively inaccessible forms. That we are capable of writing according to these secret methodologies for grant writing that people pay thousands of dollars to take classes on, and that we can just do that with all of our nonexistent spare time on top of having three jobs and multiple kids and volunteering because our organizations do not have money to pay us.

This is ableism. The assumption that everyone is on the sequel, level playing field, one that could not be farther from the truth. Philanthropy so often claims to be addressing in equity and inequality while reinforcing, perpetuating and exacerbating it.

SAM GILL:

That is powerful. It seemed like you were reacting positively, Ryan, behind the Zoom. You work at a place where I think people are certain receptive to the ideas that Lydia just articulated. So I would be interested in how open you think they are to the impact that she is articulating, and how responsive are they? How responsive are you and they actually? Or what do you try to do to be responsive to the kind of ideas Lydia is articulating.

REBECCA COKLEY:

Any time I speak after Lydia, it is all emerges and fireworks and claps and snaps and doing the robot. I learned from Lydia on a daily basis and even during their most recent comments, -- Slack was blowing up. Thinking they were amazing, we need to be in touch friends. I went to the national (indiscernible) with automakers that were making driverless cars. We had everybody in to talk to us about autonomous vehicles. The Google people started out the presentation talking about their disabled engineering group and they ended talking about their driverless vehicles. So I asked the question that I assumed was a natural question, "Obviously you had your disabled engineers working on your autonomous vehicles, thinking about the access issues, right?"

They looked at me. I am from the bay area, I went to Santa Cruz, the hippie school. So the Silicon Valley people typically look at me like I had two heads, but this time they really did. One of the key things that instructed to me is just the internal -- maternal lesson about the need to have us at the table. When we started building out our disability rights strategy, we put together a series of roundtables with over 50 folks in the community to attend three different roundtables. It included people with all different types of disabilities, legacy organizations, lucid volunteer coalitions that were doing really brought us work but did not have their C3 status yet. People that got set up at the disability community and left her more working outside it. And then we had about 150 individual one-on-one conversations in the first year to help inform what we were thinking about.

One of the big takeaways, which echoes what Lydia said, is that as a community, we are told to be... You know, we ask for scraps, and we are told to be thankful for crumbs. It is beyond disheartening. It is an attitude that is really internalized in a lot of our spaces. So when I landed in my position and started reaching out to people about providing grants to their organizations, I remember reaching out to an organization in the rural US because we know over one third of people with disabilities live in the South. It is an organization that has been doing phenomenal work around young people with disabilities for years. I said, "Have you ever had the freedom to stop and think about the work you are doing? Just think about it?"

They were like you mean not running to plug out a fire over here, putting fingers and the holes in the boats, and sparkling everything, but think? Rebecca, we have never had time to think about why we do things or how we do things.

So one of the first things we did in our initial year of funding was a lot of training grants just to give folks in the community, after five years of being... Even more than five years of being constantly under attack, watching the programs that people and their families depend on for survival, to actually think about work. We really communicated that with our folks across the foundation saying the disability community has been in triage mode for forever. This is the communities entry point to philanthropy. So it will look different to a lot of other communities. It will mean a different level of technical assistance and support.

It will mean talking to grantees about how to make the application process easier. I remember 255 page applications to the Social Security Administration that got audited and I still have nightmares about it. But how do we look at our structures? How do we look at what data we collect and how to make it as easy as possible? And for our grantees that are not their own C3 yet and may have a fiscal sponsor, fiscal agent, how do you pick a good one? And how do you make those relationships work productively?

There is a lot of knowledge around engaging with philanthropy that has been kept away from disabled people and disabled led organizations. So one of the things we have found critical to do for the success of our grantees is to spend the extra time with them, is to help them think through how do we translate the black box that is philanthropy in such a way that helps our

organization scale up the way that they want to with the information that they need to thrive, in a way that is also accessible for them and meets them where they are.

SAM GILL:

Ryan, you are leading an organization that is, as a matter of mission, focused on working with communities of people with disabilities. Do you find that in spite of that, some of the dynamics that Lydia is pointed to -- pointing to our nonetheless (indiscernible) to how you do your work. What are the things you do to try to overcome that?

RYAN EASTERLY:

The short answer is yes. Without a doubt, they still exist. I think it is important to acknowledge that all within many foundations that are veterans in this work, we are all still in the journey. There are things we are still learning every day. In the case of WITH Foundation, there are ways we are evolving our reporting mechanisms to allow reports to be submitted via video and audio links because some folks, talking takes a wild. So looking for multiple ways for us to hear that information from organizations when it comes to reporting.

Looking for ways to have those intentional conversations around, you know, how can the money support you in providing accommodations, how can it support you in providing for access needs, how can it help you in succession planning. Because we also know for organizations that are disabled led or led by people with disabilities, that many of the leadership as it stands now come from places of privilege, so they often can accept lower wages, because they have other means, or other sources of revenue. So how can we support them in making sure in their succession planning, they are providing an executable wage so that individuals from backgrounds with fewer resources can end up within leadership, can end up (indiscernible)

So having those intentional conversations with the grantees while continuing to have conversations with grantees and with the community, to say, "How can we do better?"

SAM GILL:

I am looking at the questions that are coming in. A lot of it is to praise you all, well-deserved. Although, hey, that is my job. So this is clearly a valued conversation, which is fantastic to see. But there is a number of questions that are said, either by those who might be seeking funding or on behalf of those who might seek funding. And they are along the lines of how do I challenge a paradigm? To the extent that I see the funder having a different understanding of disability than I do, or feeling -- failing to see some of the issues that you are pointing to about the way in which organizations can support and advocate for people with disabilities, the ways they are treated. How do I challenge the apparent paradigm that a funder might be in? Staying with you, Ryan for the moment. What advice would you give someone with a critique of the way their supporting organizations.

What would be the right way to deliver that critique to you? Because what is coming up in the chat is I sort of fear that I cannot say what I really think, that ultimately that will jeopardize

whatever crumbs I may have to live with but nonetheless will take. So what would be some advice you would give someone in that situation?

RYAN EASTERLY:

On behalf of WITH Foundation, if you have a critique, deal with me directly. I want honest, frank opinions at all times. Email me directly. If it is with an organization that you don't know where they are as far as their understanding of disability and inclusion, disability and justice, I do hope you would start by sending them links to the disability and philanthropy form to say here is a resource that may be valuable to you. And that, in a way is... You are not addressing exact issues with saying here's a resource, and hopefully they will take advantage of it and be part of the conversations that are occurring in the former bargaining -- regarding these issues and take advantage of the resources.

That is often the first step I suggest that organizations looking to support their funders in advance in disability and inclusion journeys, just start by saying here is a resource, or introduce them to me and I can also say let's have a peer to peer conversation. I will take Rebecca's note for being volunteers, I'm sure she also volunteers to have those conversations as well. So that is another way that you can help your funders in their journey of disability inclusion and disability justice.

SAM GILL:

Rebecca, same question to you. What advice would you give to a grantee who wants to challenge the way they think they are being treated? Or generally speaking, who wants to challenge the way they think the foundation is addressing these issues and open up some of these pathways?

REBECCA COKLEY:

Ryan and I talked about this over the years, but doing your homework on the front end as well and what are the things that the foundation is funding? Think through. Where's the disability? Are they finding police violence? Well, as we know at least 50% of Black and Brown individuals are funded by people at his abilities. Working on poverty? A maturity of low income leaders are people disabilities. For the consequence. The climate change? What is the lands by which disability would be at natural fit? You know, and really like having a sense of what the data is, having a sense of who is doing the work? It is your organization that is great if it's on the people, that's equally wonderful. As Ryan said, I think, and I think pressure is really powerful in the philanthropic space.

And I say this, as someone who works for and is often lauded as the cool kid that hosts the cool lunch table that people want to be at, the number of times that I've gotten full calls from smaller foundations, from family foundations, who were like we saw Darren out there talking about X. How are all you doing at Ford? And having the time to have that conversation and in cases where other grantees come to me and say hey we talk to the foundation and they seem interested, but they seemed like frankly, overwhelmed by thinking about how to do it. Stop

would you people like to have a call with them? I'm always willing to have a call. Always willing to think about how can we expand the entourage of people that are doing this work.

And I know it can feel overwhelming. But at the same time, it's only going to work. If we are willing to take that call and to put in that labour. And honestly, our grantees, are so... Is a privilege and philanthropy to do that later because our grantees are doing so much and are trying to help so many people with the funding that they have, and trying to save the world on a daily basis. The last thing that I would ever want to do is push back on my grantees and tell them that they need to do it. That's the privilege that we have making the spaces that we are in. Simply thinking about what are the tools and resources, as Ryan mentioned, the forum, and other materials and information that folks need to get in touch with.

SAM GILL:

That brings us to a question that I want to ask you, Lydia, that is coming up in the chat. So I think Rebecca, you mentioned something that I think in the lot of the sort of progressive institutional foundations, we are not combating malice. This is what it means to be a systemic problem, that what we are combating is the going back to the conversation about inability to see, and to change one's perception of what's going on.

Is so, what someone asked in the chat, Lydia, is a dynamic that I feel is a little familiar to a lot of people in this conversation, with the panelists and the audience and someone says, "look, I'm disabled and I'm not further along in my disability justice journey than my colleagues who are open to learning don't necessarily see as a priority. Or maybe do not know how to make a priority." As of the person asks, "what would be your Suggestions for how to make this a priorit."

LYDIA X. Z. BROWN:

This is Lydia. I think often about what my friend and colleague Eli (unknown name) says. In describing access culture. As a defining characteristic of disability justice. Access culture means that we build access into everything that we do. Not as an afterthought, not as something to do to appear to be progressive or inclusive, but because we believe that access is the work of justice. That access is a core component of, and a necessary precondition for justice. So when I think, how does that translate into a funding organization? I'm thinking, what are your HR policies? Could you hire and how do you hire those people? What are your grantmaking and application policies? What is the nature of your application process? How can you advocate for changes in each of these ways? And who you compensate, how much you compensate them, and how? What benefits you offer to employees. How you compensate community members, providing advice on advisory boards, committees.

What types of funding do you offer? What are your reporting requirements? How do you support grantees in meeting those requirements? Understand that? Can you simplify them? Can you make them functional and workable? At each stage of your process, you can think about what you can advocate for two Centre access in design.

SAM GILL:

I just want to stay with you a minute Lydia, and I'm speaking more for this person, I read the great question, but I feel like have been this person or I know this person and you are in the situation, you're seeing everything you just said, but your fear is that if I don't ask, evil won't act. I've got people who want to learn, but how do I like-- lights that sparked so that they are taking on the action, and they are asking that question, as opposed to me bring it up in every staff meeting or me catching them in the hall or meeting-- me pointing out where they are coming to me for simple say I'm working on a new hot report we really want to make sure that access is included in it. What have you found useful when you have encountered people who are interested, but not as far along as you and your understanding to help them, to take responsibility for their own journey? To make access and a central component of justice.

LYDIA X. Z. BROWN:

I tell them that. This is Lydia speaking. I tell people exactly what you just said. I can't be the one always speaking up. You need to speak up. You need to work to educate yourself and support our colleagues in educating themselves. You need to take this on. Because if I'm always the only person thinking about disability and talking about disability, that you don't actually care. If you want to care, if you want to do something about ableism, then you need to begin being proactive. This means that you need to say, oh, I'm not an expert, and it does mean that you will listen to me instead of a disabled person, but it means that you needed to raise the issue. You need to ask the questions, because we are sick and tired of always doing our own job, and that also being the disability DEI person. We are sick and tired of doing our own job, but also being the access consultant. We are sick and tired of also doing our own job and also having to educate, literally, everybody all the time in disability and rehash every visit our trauma day in and day out. We need to you, if you are not disabled, to practice saying something, even if it is, I know what the best practice is, but I think something is off here, and we need to go talk about our disabled community partners.

SAM GILL:

So, I think we just have a humanist lap so maybe we can just do one very quick lightning round, maybe starting right there. I think this is a great way to end which is how do we help our would be, punitive allies, take responsibility for confronting and overcoming ableism? So, if you can suggest to the people who are listening to this webinar, one thing, that they are a colleague-- they or a colleague could do today to get that ball rolling for taking response Billy for overcoming ableism, what would that would things be? Is not the only thing which is one take away, practical thing, maybe Ryan, we can go to you and then Rebecca and then close with Lydia.

RYAN EASTERLY:

Is a multipronged answer. But if you are sitting in a boardroom, of a foundation, if you are on a board of trustees of the foundation, I want you to look around the room, do you have individuals that identify as having a disability at the table on your board? If you are on staff, on leadership, on the foundation, when you look at that staff, do you have folks with disabilities on staff? How are you engaging the community that you seek to benefit, how are you engaging the most

impacted? How are you working with the community, not just for the community? If you are in procurement when you look at your vendors, how are you engaging disabled lead vendors and looking to them for their services and support. Look for ways that you can work with the most impacted communities, and not just for that, because as Andre says, remember, there's no such thing as a single issue structure, because we don't live single issue life.

SAM GILL:

I think multipronged is an abuse of one thing, but it was so compelling that we will allow it. That's fantastic. Thank you. Rebecca, how about you?

REBECCA COKLEY:

This is Rebecca. First I want to add on to what Ryan said, the Ford foundation now actively asks all of our grantees, our people disabilities present on your board of directors or executive leadership team? And this being the first year that we are doing. It is really excited to see the data coming in. I'm actively doing data cartwheels on that.

I would also say that there is power in being the first person to say the word ableism in a row. I remember the first time I was ever in a room and summary brought up ableism before I did, and they were not part of the disability community.

Actively, actually having to check myself because I was likely to miss it-- wait a minute, and I was like what I going to say because they said it first? It was this brilliant colleague member of the community. Now, from the Black policy lab (indiscernible) and I remember being like thank you for doing that. I've never been in a room in my 30 years of doing this work, where I wasn't the first person that had to say that.

And the last thing that I would say, because I know this is a three-pronged answer we are wrapping up, but take the disability inclusion pledge, you can find information on it on that disability, philanthropy, website, and dip your toes in the water and know that you are not doing it by yourself, we have lifeguards, we have floaty devices, we have pull rules. You are not just jumping off the diving board and we are hoping to hold your hand and walk you through this.

SAM GILL:

And I know Lydia had to step away, but she still gets credit because she really sparked this line of discussion. While thank you all.

Everyone should leave this last segment of the conversation feeling and via-- empowered. Looking around, just using the word ableism, that counts. That counts as taking action and getting your organization going. So, I learned a time in this conversation and I hope you do. And with that, back to Emily.

EMILY HARRIS:

Thank you so much Sam, Rebecca, Lydia and Ryan. In criminal conversation and thank you to the audience for all of your questions and comments. We will be sending a short survey, following the close of this question, please help us learn from your experience by taking a few minutes to fill it out. A link is also available in the chat.

And I hope that you will join us for the next sessions in June, on disability arts and culture, in September on economic justice.

To receive future webinar announcements and continued your learning the disability and philanthropy form is here for you. If you were in Flint to be, you can sign up as a member, if you work in a nonprofit, you can sign up to receive our newsletters too. Back early and often to exclude videos, curating the resources, to address the journey in inclusion and if you are working in philanthropy, we encourage your organization to sign the disability inclusion pledge. You'll become part of a community with more than 65 other foundations and philanthropy serving organizations that are on this journey by taking concrete steps in the direction of confronting ableism.

, Thank you so much sand and panelists for joining us today, we've all learned an incredible amount and let's go out and fight the good fight. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you so much and this does conclude today's webinar have a fabulous day.

Live captioning by Ai-Media.