

DIVERSITEA

Disability as Diversity

A DUKE DPT DIVERSITY CLUB AND
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER



About the cover photo: Verizon Media, Getty Images, and the National Disability Leadership Alliance have partnered to create [The Disability Collection](#), a growing collection of stock images that break stereotypes and authentically portray people with disabilities in everyday life.

Definitions

DISABILITY

"any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions)"

- [CDC](#)

ABLEISM

"a set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against people with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities and often rests on the assumption that disabled people need to be 'fixed' in one form or the other"

- [Center for Disability Rights](#)

According to the [CDC](#)

**61 MILLION ADULTS
(26% OF THE POPULATION)** in the US live with a disability

Disability is especially common among:

- **OLDER ADULTS (2 IN 5)**
- **WOMEN (1 IN 4)**
- **NON-HISPANIC AMERICAN INDIANS/ALASKA NATIVES (2 IN 5)**

Adults living with disabilities are more likely to:

- **BE OBESE**
- **SMOKE**
- **HAVE HEART DISEASE**
- **HAVE DIABETES**

The above disparities can be partially attributed to healthcare access barriers, which include:

- **1 IN 3 DO NOT HAVE A USUAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**
- **1 IN 3 HAVE AN UNMET HEALTHCARE NEED BECAUSE OF COST**
- **1 IN 4 DID NOT HAVE A ROUTINE CHECK-UP IN THE PAST YEAR**

DISABILITY RECONSIDERED: THE PARADOX OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

An [article](#) published by *Physical Therapy Journal* sheds light on the paradox that exists within the physical therapy profession regarding disability - where physical therapists are charged to remedy disability while also celebrating disability as diversity. The authors pose an alternative conceptualization of disability that strays away from the typical focus on a client's impairment as the problem and more towards addressing the environmental barriers (whether physical, social, political, or economic) that hinder full societal participation. This framework places the onus on us as professionals to become allies and advocates for people with disabilities in ways that extend beyond our treatment sessions. As the article poignantly states:

"A well-fit wheelchair will not enable a client to enter an inaccessible building."



THE JOURNEY OF PTs WITH DISABILITIES: CHALLENGES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Published in APTA Magazine, this [article](#) delves into the adversity that PT students with disabilities face in PT school. It was found in a study that these students' sense of self-efficacy is affected by discrimination from people in authority. In another study, it was discovered that fewer students with physical disabilities were enrolled in PT or PTA programs (5%) than were enrolled in other graduate (11%) and undergraduate (7.6%) programs. Additionally, many faculty respondents thought those who completed the program wouldn't have the same job opportunities as would students without disabilities, despite the fact that they performed at the same academic level. A stigma exists around disabilities that is projected not only on our patients but also on others in our profession. A great quote from one of the studies sums up the hypocrisy in this:

"How can we tell patients they can lead normal lives when we don't allow their peers to become our colleagues?"



OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH



2020 marks the 75th observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The US Department of Labor's theme for NDEAM 2020 is "Increasing Access and Opportunity." In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential for workplaces to be inclusive and accommodating to people with disabilities in order to allow them to reach their full potential and contribute to an economic rebound. As Office of Disability Employment Policy Deputy Assistant Secretary Jennifer Sheehy states:

"People with disabilities are experienced problem solvers with a proven ability to adapt. Now more than ever, flexibility is important for both workers and employers. National Disability Employment Awareness Month celebrates the ingenuity people with disabilities bring to America's workplaces."

*According to the
US Department
of Labor:*

In 2019, the unemployment rate was:

8.0% for persons with disability

vs

3.6% for persons without disability

In August 2020, the unemployment rate was:

14.3% for persons with disability

vs

8.3% for persons without disability

ART: A COMMON LANGUAGE

"When you ask someone who has been disenfranchised their entire life to tell their story, it's amazing how the door opens."



Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, California is the world's first and largest nonprofit center dedicated to giving artists with disabilities the space to let their talents shine. Since 1974, the center has served hundreds of artists with developmental, mental, and physical disabilities who lacked formal education in the arts. The studio helps to provide the tools, the space, and the inspiration needed to grow into professional, exhibited artists. Today, artists represented by Creative Growth have been invited to the Venice Biennale, have had their works acquired by MoMA, and remain in high demand among collectors around the world.

BECAUSE YOU
WATCHED

NETFLIX



The short and sweet (only 40 minutes long!) documentary *The Speed Cubers* follows the beautiful story of Max Park's diagnosis of autism and his journey of coming into his own by discovering his passion for competitive speedcubing – becoming a champion in global competitions and breaking multiple world records, all of which started once he picked up a Rubik's Cube as a child.

In 1951, Camp Jened was founded to allow teenagers with disabilities to enjoy a summer filled with a strong sense of community void of stereotypes and labels. No one could have imagined that those summers in the woods together would be the beginnings of the Disability Rights Revolution – fighting for the enforcement of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

*Netflix has also published the documentary on YouTube as a [full feature](#) as well as an [accessible version with audio description](#).

"You can pass a law. but until you change society's attitudes. that law won't mean much."



"Give us a chance and we'll show you what we can do. And if not, we'll make our own chances."

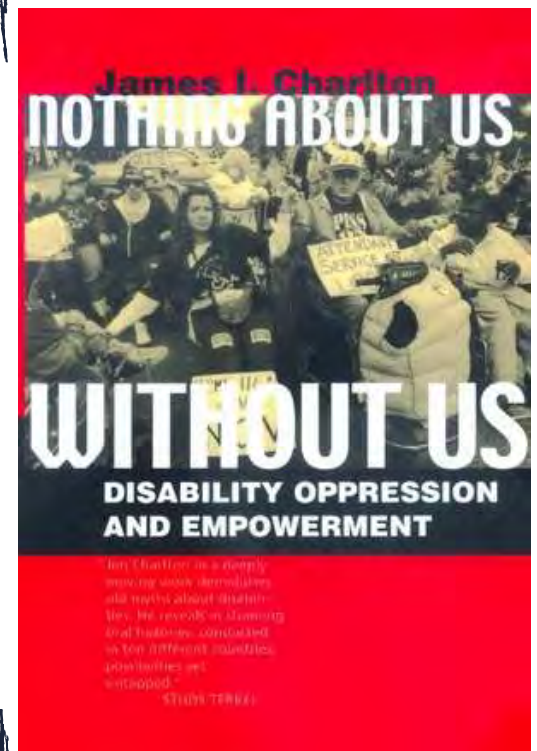


Rising Phoenix is an emotional, inspiring, and breathtaking display of the power and beauty of the human body and spirit manifested in the Paralympic Games and told through the narratives of athletes from across the world – including swimmer Ellie Cole (Australia), long jumper Jean-Baptiste Alaize (France), archer Matt Stutzman (USA), sprinter Jonnie Peacock (England), fencer Bebe Vio (Italy), powerlifter Cui Zhe (China), wheelchair rugby player Ryley Batt (Australia), sprinter Ntando Mahlangu (South Africa), and wheelchair racer and skier Tatyana McFadden (USA).

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US: DISABILITY OPPRESSION AND EMPOWERMENT

BY JAMES I. CHARLTON

Nothing About Us Without Us is the first book in the literature on disability to provide a theoretical overview of disability oppression that shows its similarities to, and differences from, racism, sexism, and colonialism. James I. Charlton's analysis is illuminated by interviews he conducted over a 10-year period with disability rights activists throughout the world. Charlton has produced a ringing indictment of disability oppression, which, he says, is rooted in degradation, dependency, and powerlessness and is experienced in some form by 500 million people throughout the world who have physical, sensory, cognitive, or developmental disabilities. His interviews contain striking stories of self-reliance and empowerment evoking the new consciousness of disability rights activists. *Nothing About Us Without Us* expresses the conviction of people with disabilities that *they* know what is best for them and that *they* should be front and center as visible leaders leading the way.



SINS INVALID



Sins Invalid is a disability justice based performance project that incubates and celebrates artists with disabilities, centralizing artists of color and LGBTQ/gender-variant artists as communities who have been historically marginalized. Led by disabled people of color, *Sins Invalid*'s performance work explores the themes of sexuality, embodiment, and the disabled body, developing provocative work where paradigms of "normal" and "sexy" are challenged, offering instead a vision of beauty and sexuality inclusive of all bodies and communities.



NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM (NCYLF)



The North Carolina Youth Leadership Forum (NCYLF) is planned and run by and for young people with disabilities. It is an overnight, multi-day program that fosters emerging youth and young adult leaders by teaching them how to advocate in their communities and for themselves. Delegates come from all across North Carolina to learn about the Disability Rights Movement and how certain civil rights laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, came to fruition. The NCYLF builds young leaders while enabling them to experience independence and find their voice as advocates.

Through practical experiences, roleplaying, discussions, activities, and testimonies, the NCYLF is here to empower today's young adults with the knowledge they need to live full lives and teach other young people with disabilities about what the Independent Living Movement is all about.

321 Coffee is a nonprofit coffee shop in Raleigh, NC staffed by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Their mission is to provide meaningful employment for adults with IDD and to model inclusion for other businesses to follow. Currently, 321 Coffee operates as a permanent vendor at the NC State Farmers Market and employs twenty-one adults, all of whom are paid above minimum wage. Now, they are pursuing opening a storefront to grow their impact.



Hours of Operation:

Monday: closed
Tuesday: closed
Wednesday: 10AM-2PM
Thursday: 10AM-2PM
Friday: 10AM-2PM
Saturday: 9AM-3PM
Sunday: 9:30AM-3PM



HOW TO GET INVOLVED AT DUKE

DUKE DISABILITY ALLIANCE



Duke Disability Alliance (DDA) is a student organization whose mission is to advocate for disability and accessibility issues and to celebrate disability as an identity and culture. They hope to make Duke more inclusive and accessible by fostering conversations about disability issues, expanding accessibility on campus and in the community, encouraging positive perceptions and full appreciations of people with disabilities, and promoting legal rights. They strive to engage the entire Duke community to make Duke a better place for those with and without disabilities. Some of DDA's current initiatives involve creating a Duke Disability Cultural Center on campus and establishing a Disability Studies curriculum at Duke. **To learn more about or join DDA, visit their [website](#) or**

RUNWAY OF DREAMS @ DUKE

Runway of Dreams @ Duke is a college chapter of the national nonprofit Runway of Dreams and was founded in the fall of 2019. They believe that everyone deserves to feel confident in what they wear and have autonomy in dressing themselves in the morning. Runway of Dreams @ Duke's mission is to provide an interdisciplinary space to empower people with disabilities in the fashion industry and to advance the future of adaptive design and innovation through a variety of design workshops, fundraising events, and runway shows. The founder of the national nonprofit, Mindy Scheier, had a TED Talk about the importance of adaptive clothing and how it helped her son. **To keep up with what they're doing, follow them on [Instagram](#) or check out their [website](#).** They are also looking for people with disabilities to collaborate with as clients for their adaptive design teams. **If you know of someone who may be interested in getting adaptive apparel designed for them free of charge, please [email](#).** They are also always looking for guest speakers. **If you have any experience working with people with disabilities, especially related to dressing challenges, please [email](#) to set**

DUKE STUDENTS FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The mission of **Duke Students for Universal Design (DSUD)** is for undergraduate project teams to report and resolve issues of accessibility on campus, educate Duke faculty and students on the tenets of Universal Design, and advocate for people with disabilities in the Duke community. They will work in conjunction with graduate students, Duke faculty and staff, and community members who may consult their teams. They hope to make Duke campus more inclusive and accessible for people with and without disabilities. One of their initial plans is to create a platform for people on campus to report issues of inaccessibility - likely through a website or app. They will then devise project teams of qualified student volunteers to address those reported issues. DSUD has also teamed up with Duke Disability Alliance (DDA) to assist in any of their task forces and project partners centered around Universal Design. This includes tactile campus mapping, UNC B3 coffee stand development, and evaluating a DDA center in the Bryan Center. Outside of the projects, that last major goal of DSUD is to help incorporate Universal Design into Duke design-based curriculums. Ideally, this will look like DSUD representatives preparing short lectures and presentations on Universal Design applications and importance to give in engineering, policy, architecture, and other various design-based classes. **To learn more, take a look at these [informational slides](#). To get**

CHAMPIONS OF DIVERSITY: Above and Beyond a Diagnosis



Kalin Bennett:

first Division I basketball player with autism

Kalin Bennett is a center for the Kent State University basketball team. On November 6, 2019, he became the first college basketball player with autism to score a basket in a Division I game in his debut against Hiram College. Kalin had previously made history when he became the first person with autism to sign a letter of intent with a Division I school. He vastly overcame the expectations of doctors who had told his mother when he was an infant that he would never walk and talk. Rather, Kalin is paving the way for others who are underestimated to prove their doubters wrong.



Shelby Gruss:

captain of Team USA wheelchair basketball team

Shelby Gruss experienced a T8 spinal cord injury in 2010 as a senior in high school. After integrating wheelchair basketball as part of her rehabilitation, she earned her Master's in Agricultural Production while playing on the Illini wheelchair basketball team at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Shelby captained Team USA at the 2018 Wheelchair Basketball World Championship in Hamburg, Germany where they took 6th place. Now, Shelby is finishing her PhD in Agronomy at Purdue University. One of her most recent initiatives is entitled Wheel Rise and focuses on raising awareness and support for Paralympic sports through funding and resources for athletes.

Madeline Stewart:

first professional model with Down syndrome

Madeline Stewart became the first professional model with Down syndrome in 2015. She has since modeled in New York Fashion Week, Paris Fashion Week, and London Fashion Week, among many other shows worldwide. In 2015, the Global Down Syndrome Foundation awarded her the Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award for her work in the disability industry. Madeline is a powerhouse in many other ways, as she also owns a dance school called InsideOutside Dance Ensemble and launched a fashion label called 21 Reasons Why.



Nick Vujicic:

motivational speaker born with tetra-amelia syndrome

Nick Vujicic is an Australian-American born without arms or legs who has become a world-renowned speaker, *New York Times* best-selling author, coach, entrepreneur, husband, and father of four children. He is an anti-bullying advocate who travels the globe speaking to millions of students in partnership with education departments of several governments. Nick has created an innovative Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum called "Attitude Is Altitude," wherein he teaches students to make positive changes in their lives and their communities. He is also the founder and CEO of the non-profit ministry Life Without Limbs.



Lasting Impacts

ANECDOTES ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE INSPIRED YOU

"While working at a skilled nursing home, I had the privilege of working with a patient with Friedreich ataxia. It left a lasting impact on me because of her resilience to participate in physical exercise and be active with recreational activities like kayaking and swimming. She did not allow her disability to limit her physical capabilities. While working with her, she always had a positive attitude and continued with a hard work ethic when participating in pool exercise activities."

- **Tyler Ray**

"I have had the pleasure of spending time with several individuals with Down syndrome over the years and every single person I have met with this disability has made a lasting impact on my life. While very different in many ways, as a whole, I have found that individuals with Down syndrome are the most kind, respectful, cheerful, and embracing group of people I have been lucky enough to know. They have taught me how to sing and dance like no one is watching, be friendly and say hello to everyone I meet in a day, and how to love the little things in life."

- **Anonymous**

"I listened to Nicole Byer's podcast episode *Why Won't You Date Me: Dating with Disability* featuring Santina Muha who is a writer, actress, comedian, and improviser. Santina, originally from New Jersey and now working in Los Angeles, discusses her career and her dating life (including the use of dating apps) with Nicole. She specifically talks about her experiences using a wheelchair as a form of mobility and choosing pictures on dating apps, conversations on the first date, accessibility to restaurants, etc. Santina is hilarious and real (be aware there is quite a bit of swearing), and she brings attention to rarely talked about ableist-aspects of our society."

- **Anonymous**

"A few years ago, the sailing school I was leading as the head instructor partnered with a program called Warrior Sailing, which is an outreach program for veterans who are physically or mentally disabled. Many of them had fallen into homelessness or low points in their lives after being discharged from the military and this program aims to help them get back on their feet, becoming a positive point in their life. Sailing with these individuals brought so much perspective as I tried to picture myself in their shoes. Many of them had only been sailing for one or two years, yet they were now a seasoned 12-man team training for the Chicago to Mackinac race in a 45-foot boat. For me, the most inspiring time with this program was when I was asked to skipper a smaller, 22-foot boat while my main crew was a veteran who was blind. Sailing with a man who was blind was truly the most eye opening experience I have ever had. He was so keen on being able to feel the shift of the boat or wind, knew exactly when to sheet-in or out, and always made sure he was in the right spot by communicating with me; it was amazing... This experience was truly inspiring and to this day, he is one of the best sailors I have ever met."

- **Emma Connell**

"I used to volunteer with an organization that provides recreational opportunities to children and young adults with disabilities. The best part of each day was our 'Proud Circle' - everyone sat in a circle and each athlete mentioned one thing that they were proud of doing. Their answers were often as simple as 'making a basket,' 'dribbling,' or 'running.' That experience made me realize that something that may seem inconsequential to one could be a great accomplishment for another, and that is a testament to the diverse experiences each person has and how important it is to recognize and celebrate them."

- **Anonymous**

"Eileen is 22 going on 23 this year. We have been friends that whole time since our moms are best friends. She works at Chick-fil-A, attends college, keeps an eye on her little siblings, and every Saturday for the past 6 years, she calls me to ask about my family and tell me about her life. I forget half the time that we are supposed to talk, but she never forgets. She has Down syndrome and she likes to remind me how special that makes her... but I don't need the reminder. She is the most consistent and faithful friend I have ever had the privilege of knowing."

- **Anonymous**