

July 2022 Newsletter

Affinity Month

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion celebrates the rich tapestry of human experiences at Emory University. This month, we have curated resources that highlight, educate, and encourage a sense of community.

Reflecting on the 32nd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act



Fostering a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion benefits all of us. To truly embrace this value and promote full inclusion, it is critical that we include accessibility for people with disabilities in our diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities. Disability is a natural part of human diversity and has long been overlooked or underrepresented in diversity efforts and priorities, with greater emphasis being placed on other dimensions of diversity like race, ethnicity, age, and religion. Getting beyond dominant narratives of pity, tragedy, and/or redemption has been and continues to be critical to the inclusion of people with disabilities. As we recognize, appreciate, and value the infinite range of unique attributes, experiences, and abilities amongst people with disabilities, we enhance our own self-awareness and knowledge of the world around us. Furthermore, the inclusion of disability in the diversity conversation invites us to accept and celebrate the intersectionality of infinite dimensions of diversity inherent in all of us. Considering one in four adults in the United States lives with a disability, it is essential that we begin a shift in the paradigm toward embedding efforts aimed at disability inclusion into broader DEI practices, policies, and programs.

Despite people with disabilities being the largest minority group in the U.S., disability has seemingly been an afterthought amongst civil rights movements occurring in prior decades. The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** was signed into law on June 26, 1990, decades following other significant legislation expanding the rights of women and African Americans. Just now reaching its 32nd anniversary, the ADA is a considered a *young* law and although it included many components to support the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment, public and private spaces and communications, the work is ongoing.

Inclusion of people with disabilities into everyday activities involves practices and policies designed to identify and remove barriers that hinder individuals' ability to have full participation in society, the same as people without disabilities. Making this change should not be a chore. It is an *opportunity* for all of us. It is critical that, as we evaluate the extent to which the Emory community is inclusive to people with disabilities, we are involving input from people with disabilities in the conversations, the planning of new structural design, acquiring new technologies, the implementation of new practices, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of inclusion efforts. Increasing our accountability to this mission has no downside and is an essential step toward a transformative future for all people.

Joelle Butler
Associate Director, Faculty & Staff
Department of Accessibility Services

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

Improve Disability Inclusion at Emory through the **Suggestion Box**. By clicking this link, anyone can make *anonymous* comments or suggestions for ways that Emory can improve disability inclusion and enhance accessibility for students, employees, and visitors. The Department of Accessibility Services will review the suggestions and engage with our campus partners to develop an action plan to address identified access or inclusion opportunities.

Celebrate. Learn. Share. ADA32

Americans with Disabilities Act

Upcoming Programs



Celebrate the ADA Anniversary with Emory's Department of Accessibility Services July 14, 2022
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Join DAS in celebrating the 32nd anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act by participating in this introductory webinar. We will explore:

- What and Why: ADA overview, history and connecting to the spirit of the ADA
- Who: Orientation on who is protected under the ADA, including an overview of disability categories and incidence of occurrence
- When and Where: Applicability of the ADA to the Emory's campus and its constituents
- How: How the Department of Accessibility Services serves Emory

We will leave time for open Q&A at the conclusion of the webinar

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ADA Anniversary Update

Great Lakes ADA Center
July 19, 2022
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Mark the 32nd Anniversary of the ADA by joining this session as we hear from representatives of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) provide an update on their litigation, technical assistance, and enforcement efforts. Participants will have an opportunity to pose questions to the presenters regarding issues in their own workplace or community.

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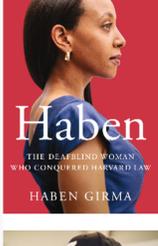


Lessons Learned about Disability Inclusion from the COVID-19 Pandemic
Department of Accessibility Services
July 26, 2022
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Join DAS for this new webinar where we will reflect on the many important lessons learned over recent years as we have navigated the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of this session will not be on describing what went wrong, but how this unprecedented time catapulted us into critical discussions about disability inclusion that have had and will continue to have a profound impact on students, faculty and staff with disabilities.

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Recorded Events Highlighting Disability Inclusion



A Conversation with Haben Girma

The first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, Haben Girma is a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. President Obama named her a White House Champion of Change. She received the Helen Keller Achievement Award, a spot on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list, and TIME 100 Talks. President Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Chancellor Angela Merkel have all honored Haben. Haben believes disability is an opportunity for innovation, and she teaches organizations the importance of choosing inclusion. The New York Times, Oprah Magazine, and TODAY Show featured her memoir, *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*. [Read more from Emory's March 29, 2022 new article](#)

Emory University and Emory Healthcare Employee Login Required

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Hands-on Communication & Community Building: A conversation with American Sign Language Music Interpreter Matt Maxey

An hour-long conversation with renowned American Sign Language music interpreter Matt Maxey. Mr. Maxey is the founder of **DEAFinitely Dope**, an organization that seeks to foster understanding between hearing and Deaf communities, provide accessibility at concerts and music festivals, and create employment opportunities in arts and education for Deaf people and people who are hard of hearing. He discussed his work in the arts at the intersection of racial justice and disability rights advocacy, his approach to interpretation, and the potential of signed music—and hip-hop in particular—to create cultures of inclusion.

(October 28, 2021 - sponsored by the Friends of Music at Emory, the Emory Hightower Speaker Fund, the Department of Music, the Department of African American Studies, the Institute for Liberal Arts, and the Disability Studies Initiative)

Emory University and Emory Healthcare Employee Login Required

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Microsoft Ability Summit 2022

Ability Summit is an annual free community event that brings together people with disabilities, allies, and industry professionals to *Imagine, Build, and Include* the future of disability inclusion and accessibility. Below are links to some of the recordings from the 2022 summit.

- [Opening Keynote | Lunch Keynote | Closing Keynote](#)
- [Mental Health and Accessibility: Supporting the largest growth area of the disability community](#)
- [Industry Trends in Accessibility: How the last two years have impacted the field of accessibility](#)
- [Accessibility that Thrives: Building a sustainable culture of accessibility](#)

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Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Executive Leadership Council Spotlight

The purpose of the Executive Leadership Council is to provide support and guidance toward achieving strategic goals for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As a guiding principle, we want diversity and inclusion to achieve its goals of promoting diversity and institutionalizing equity and inclusion as core values by reviewing progress of initiatives through curricular audits.



Disability and community are of highest priority to Emory University and the Laney Graduate School. Diversity and community are fundamental to our commitment to graduate education that provides students with deep expertise in their chosen fields, creativity to cross disciplinary boundaries, and courage to take on the most important and complex problems of our time.

We strive to create and strengthen an inclusive, respectful, and intellectually challenging environment that embraces individual difference. We are committed to proactively cultivating and sustaining an academic community that engages diverse intellectual capacity and that values open dialogue, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and cultural competence — the driving forces that enrich and enhance innovative research and scholarship.

2020-2021 Year End Report

DEI Highlights

- [Programming](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Outreach and Recruitment](#)

[Learn More](#)

Noteworthy News



Robust community engagement will inform design of twin memorials

"I had no idea."
"I knew some of this history."
"What do we do next?"

These are some of the responses of more than 225 community members during 18 listening sessions — 16 in-person and two virtual — conducted during spring semester by **Baskerville**, the firm guiding Emory's community-engagement and design process in association with the **Twin Memorials Working Group**.

President Gregory L. Fennesch the working group — co-chaired by Oxford College Dean Douglas A. Hicks and Gregory C. Ellison II 99C, associate professor of pastoral care and counseling at Candler School of Theology — with designing and constructing twin memorials to honor the enslaved individuals and their descendants who lived and worked on Emory's original campus, which is now Oxford College, as well as others whose labor has not been fully acknowledged by the university. Having two memorials is a means of articulating and interconnecting the shared histories of the Atlanta and Oxford campuses.

Participants included descendants, students, faculty, administrators, staff, alumni and community partners who met on the Atlanta and Oxford campuses as well as at Atlanta and Covington churches. They came not only to learn more about the university's history but also to address a central question — what messages should the memorials convey?

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In Oklahoma, Emory builds relationships with the Muscogee Nation

With a commitment to deepening a new and developing relationship, 15 Emory community members traveled to Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on a journey of learning at the invitation of the Muscogee Nation. Prior to Emory's founding, the Muscogee people lived, worked, produced knowledge on, and nurtured the land where Emory's Oxford and Atlanta campuses are now located.

While spending time with Muscogee elected leaders, educators and students, ceremonial leaders and community members, the group expressed Emory's efforts to begin to understand, as President Gregory L. Fennesch said, "a more complete story about where we have been and who we are so we can build a more equitable, diverse, inclusive and vibrant university."

The Emory students, faculty and staff who traveled to Oklahoma during part of spring break are members of the **Indigenous Language Path Working Group**, which Fennesch appointed in November 2021 to fulfill a recommendation from the previous year's **Task Force on Untold Stories and Disenfranchised Populations** to develop "physical reminders and rituals on campus that highlight Muscogee language and knowledge" as the original language and knowledge of this land.

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Students soon to be able to select their own pronouns in OPUS

For more than 10 years, Emory students have had the option to designate their preferred name through the OPUS's official student information system, the Online Pathway to University Students (OPUS). Now, thanks to modifications within OPUS and a **policy change** effective this June, during PRIDE month, students will soon be able for the first time to designate their pronouns. Students will be able to make the change in OPUS prior to the start of the fall semester.

"This change was really driven by Emory students and their desire to help us be a better community," says Christa Acampora, deputy provost for academic affairs. "A large group of people at Emory — including staff, administrators, faculty, and students — worked to shape the policy change and enable the systems to support its implementation. I'm truly grateful for all of those efforts."

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Fun at Emory's LGBTQ+ Pride Celebration

The Emory Pride Employee Network (EPEN) concluded Pride Month by hosting an LGBTQ+ Pride Celebration at Asbury Circle on June 30. Featuring a carnival theme and including games, a food truck and lots of balloons, the event brought together people from all around campus. Various Emory organizations set up tables to advertise and task — and share some top-notch Pride-themed swag.

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Supplier diversity program advances Emory's mission

Randy Brown holds fast to research that **Forbes published in 2017** indicating that inclusive teams make better business decisions up to 87% of the time. The "teams" Brown has in mind are the partnerships that Emory has created with diverse suppliers.

Through a variety of strategies, he has acted on this principle of inclusivity's value to business, helping departments assess their annual spending and pivot to create opportunities for worthy companies. Apart from health care, units with the largest budgets include Campus Services, the Emory University School of Medicine, the Office of Information Technology, and Rollins School of Public Health.

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ODEI Learning Corner

DISABILITY INCLUSION WEBINARS AND FEATURED ARTICLES

- [The Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology \(PEAT\) Future of Work Podcasts](#)
- [Creating a Truly Inclusive Workplace: A Conversation Between Colleagues with Disabilities](#)
- [Neurodiversity and Intersectionality: A Disclosure Challenge](#)
- [As COVID-Era Restrictions End, Disabled Americans Want to Avoid a 'Return to Normal' \(Time, April 15, 2022\)](#)
- [Creating an Inclusive Workplace: Lessons From the Pandemic \(Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs, February 8, 2022\)](#)
- [Neurodiversity in the Workplace Articles & Resources \(EARN, 2020-2022\)](#)
- [Disability and Campus Mental Health: Understanding the Experiences of College Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic \(Mental Health America, October 2020\)](#)
- [Resource Guide for Students with Psychiatric Disabilities \(Best Colleges, May 13, 2021\)](#)
- [What Are Psychiatric Service Dogs? \(WebMD, October 25, 2021\)](#)
- [CIDI Webinar: Creating a Culture of Disability Inclusion and Equity/Disability Rights Fund | Inclusion 101: The How-To of Inclusive and Accessible Communications](#)

Resources at Emory

- [Department of Accessibility Services](#)
- [Faculty Staff Assistance Program](#)
- [Center for Faculty Development and Excellence](#)
- [Accessibility in Emory Libraries](#)
- [Academic Technology Services](#)

General Accessibility Resources & Training

- [Accessibility for Higher Education and Inclusion](#)
- [Accessing Higher Ground](#)
- [Designing an Accessible Online Course](#)
- [Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [The Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology \(PEAT\)](#)
- [SHRM: Developing Accessible Workspaces](#)

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
201 Dowman Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322
odei@emory.edu
odei.emory.edu