The ADA at 30: Past, Present and Future

ADA 30 – NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US – A CELEBRATION WITH JUDITH HEUMANN

Transcript

Catherine Johnson: It's a pleasure to welcome everyone back or welcome those who are just joining us for this session. This is our, believe it or not, last session of our two day celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ADA. It has been a real honor to have the ability to bring together, not only Judith Heumann and Wesley Hamilton, but all of the moderators and panelists that have helped us celebrate this two days. It's been one of the most exciting, impactful things I've had the chance to do in my career as a disability rights advocate. We've had over 1,000 people join us for this two day celebration from all over the world. We've had 22 different states join us. And we've had a lot of international friends join us. So that's been really exciting to have such a large population and breadth of people joining us for these two days. We want to make sure that folks that have been impacted by Hurricane Zeta know that our thoughts are with you. We wish you a speedy recovery. I also want to assure you that you are not going to miss out on this two day celebration. Because these are all being recorded. And they will be on our website Accessible KU, in the near future. So my name is Catherine Johnson. I am the ADA RCA for Resource and Equity Director. And I wanted to let you know that I use she, her, and hers pronouns. That I am about 5' 7" and white. I have a lot of freckles. I have reddish brown hair. And I am wearing a green blue jacket with a white blouse underneath. If you have questions while we're having this conversation today please send them either through our events website or directly to us at accessibility@ku.edu. We have captioning for this last session as well. If you are not finding the captions on your browser just hit Refresh and those will come. We also have ASL interpretation being provided. Big thanks go out to Kim Bates and Alana Calhoun for providing the ASL interpretation for these two days. So an event like this, of course, doesn't come together with just a thought. Right? It's a whole community that has brought these two days of celebration to you. We have a really active planning committee that has been working for a year to bring this event together. As well as 62 very dedicated co-sponsors that have helped us with this event. I want to particularly thank a couple co-sponsors that were helpful with this particular session. That's the Kansas Disability and Health Programs, the Office of the Provost here at KU, our Beach Center Endowment, the Commons, also called Spooner Hall. Of course Media Production Studios, who has been just instrumental in the seamless transitions that we have done in this virtual conference, both with the recorded questions that we've done and the welcome message. And, of course, Zoom, who has been providing technical assistance to us in making sure that our event creates a standard for accessibility of virtual programs going forward. So thank you Zoom. This session today that concludes these two days of celebration is with Wesley Hamilton and Judith Heumann. This is going to be on the impact of the ADA over the past 30 years, kind of some current issues that are impacting the disability community, and some thoughts on next phases of advocacy for disability rights. So the ADA, at its core, is a civil rights law. A very powerful law, it was meant to eradicate discrimination based on disability in all aspects of our society. So this is a different law than the Rehab Act that applies to not only federal entities but to public accommodations, restaurants, gymnasiums, theater, all that fun stuff, right, that we want to do. Those entities also must comply with the law. So this is a very powerful law and changed society for the better. And we're going to hear from both of them from their perspective how it's impacting their lives. So it's my pleasure now to introduce Wesley Hamilton. He's been, just, a tremendous joy to work with over the past few months since we've planned this conference. You might know him from Netflix Queer Eye, season 4, episode 2. He also is a Kansas City local, which I'm proud to say. He's also Executive Director of Disabled, But Not Really. I think you're going to really enjoy this conversation between Wesley and Judith. So, Wesley, I'll turn it over to you.

Wesley Hamilton: Awesome. Thank you. Thank you, Catherine. I appreciate the introduction. Hello, everyone. I am excited about this conversation that me and Judy's about to have. You guys, literally, should be on the edge of your seats. Just because we have a lot of insight and perspective. And with ADA 30 being something that is in the now, we really want to be able to share our perspectives so that we can start to create a more inclusive culture. So without further ado, I'm going to start it off. A lot of people might not know. Nine years ago-- one second, Judy. So nine years ago I was shot multiple times, which led to me having a spinal cord injury. And I have been paralyzed from the waist down since then. So I wanted to kind of shed light on when I did have my disability so people can understand the perspective that I start to share. Judy, let's start with you. I want you to kind of let everyone know—

Judith Heumann: Why don't you finish your story?

Wesley: [LAUGHTER] No, seriously. Oh, you want more of it? [LAUGHTER] It's a good story. [LAUGHTER] Oh, OK. All right.

Judith: I had the privilege of being to interview Wesley about two years ago now, a year and a half ago, on the Heumann Perspective. And yeah, tell your story now and then,

Wesley: yeah. [LAUGHTER] All right. All right. Cool. Thank you, Judy. Well at the time of me being injured I was overweight. So I do want to throw that out. I was 200, about 250, pounds. I'm 5' 5", probably 5' 4". I give myself an extra inch all the time. [LAUGHTER] But because of that height weight ratio it caused a lot of health complications while I was in the wheelchair. And that led to me eventually having a pressure ulcer on my tailbone, which caused two years of bed rest. Within those two years a bed rest, I had six surgeries. 21 hours a day-- [GROAN] I always tell people I was defeated at that time. The only thing that was different with me, I had a daughter. So I have sole custody of my daughter. I'm living as a person with a disability and a single father. And I knew that. And at the time, I really didn't understand it, nor did I understand my situation. My perspective on people with disabilities was completely different. I lived my life without having a disability, nor being around those with disabilities. So it was new to me and it was something that I really wasn't willing to accept. And that led to me being put on bed rest and really going through those years of defeat. Having the strength that my daughter gave me the ability to see what I could do to actually take control of my life. A lot of people with disabilities go through the same thing I went through, pressure ulcers and bed rest. And the process is very debilitating. For me, the doctor told me that I could add more protein in my diet. It was foreign to me. I tell everybody that. But I had a will to do it. So I went to school to learn. For those three hours a day I could get out, I went to school to be a dietitian. I learned nutrition on a different scale and it helped me take control of my life. For the next couple years, I wanted to change other people's lives as well. But I didn't know how. I had my last surgery three years after my injury. And I was 100 pounds lighter. So once I lost this weight, I realized that the disability was always mental. It was never physical and even though I had limitations I had become limitless. I gave myself power to do something I couldn't even do when I was walking. And that gave me courage. It allowed me to start my organization while I was still in a hospital bed, Disabled, But Not Really. Because I knew people would see my disability. But I knew now I had something that I couldn't even do walking. And you couldn't tell me that I was disabled. And I wanted to have that strength and courage. For the next couple years, I started competing in bodybuilding and CrossFit, became an adaptive athlete. Now I'm an entrepreneur, model, speaker, and really just trying to shift the narrative on what people see, not only as a person with a disability, but a black man and a black man living with a disability. So the work that I do that you might know or might follow is just that, how can I empower our society to show you that despite our limitations they don't define who we are? There you go, Judy. You like that? [LAUGHTER]

Judith: I think you're-- right? The organization that-- the business that you started. Just 30 seconds on the business and who you work with and—

Wesley: [LAUGHTER]

Judith: It's valuable in relationship to ADA, really.

Wesley: OK. All right. [LAUGHTER] I love it, so Disabled, But Not Really. Our mission behind Disabled, But Not Really is to instill a physical limitless mindset that brings courage, confidence, and competence. And we work with people with all different disabilities. And I focus on programs that are geared into fitness and nutrition. Those avenues helped me change my life and pushing past those mental limits has really opened up doors. So we partner with, not only CrossFit entities, we also work with our parks and rec departments here in Kansas City doing multiple different avenues on raising awareness for those with disabilities. Gyms--I'm very hands on with my organization. I believe that we have to be the change that we wish to see. So a lot of my work is personally invested. And I train a lot of my athletes, solely, now due to COVID. COVID changed a lot of things. So let's put it like that. But we still do our impact. We work with the homeless. We work with the homeless community. We work with the inner-city community as well. When I think about disabilities I don't-- my perception of a disability isn't physical. For me, it's always going to be mental. You don't exactly mean that because-- right? I mean, you do have a physical disability. So, the built environment is very important, right? OK. Yeah, you're right. And so, the mental limitation, or mental debilitation from, I would say, systems that are in place becomes debilitating in the mind. I do have a limitation which does not allow me to do things or lack mobility, for sure. But I know that having this perspective on life has gave me a larger perspective on life and has gave me more out of life. I mean you're a change agent, right? So, you use a wheelchair. It's a part of who you are. And you don't allow your physical disability to limit your vision, or the vision for others, about what it is we can do. Right?

Wesley: So, Ms. Judy-- for a second now. Because I love how we're going in depth with my story. And thank you for that. But you're a change agent. And you've been a change agent for a very, very long time.

Judith: That's ‘cause I'm much older than you.

Wesley: [LAUGHTER] I mean, that could play a part. But your name rings bells in many halls. And I just kind of want you to share not only like your story introducing you into ADA, introducing you into disability and the world of disability. But also, what put you in a position to actually be the person that you are or start speaking on the rights that you speak on?

Judith: I think I've been given-- things have happened that just have happened. And I'll explain that a little bit. But basically, I joke with Wesley-- how old are you, Wesley?

Wesley: I'm 32. Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

Judith: He's 32. And I'm more than twice his age. That's why I'm joking. I'm going to be 73. And it's relevant to the discussion. And as much as I-- when I was born, I didn't have a disability. I had polio in 1949 and that was the time when there were a number of things happening. Disabled veterans were coming home from the war, surviving disabilities or injuries that they had gotten that previously before the war they would have died because penicillin was invented. And penicillin allowed people to live. And the reason I mention this is because it was groups like the Paralyzed Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans, that were really beginning to speak up and out about the built environment, meaning buildings, and housing, and steps, and lack of accessibility on buses and trains. People who were non-disabled who came back from the war where they'd been told, serve your country government will take care of you. Well government might have been giving people money and helping them with various things. But it was still not enabling them to move about their communities they had before. And they were still experiencing significant discrimination and being denied jobs. Many parts of the areas that they were fighting for we're still fighting for today. And I think that's a very important message to remember. That in the 1940s, the president's committee, well, at that point it was called the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. So, you can see the evolution of--that no longer exists but its name had changed to be the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. But nonetheless, employment is a big issue. There was a movie made of The Best Days of Our Lives. And I should have talked about this on a previous panel. But to those of you who haven't seen it, The Best Days of Our Lives. One of the main actors is a guy named Harold Russell, who lost his arms in the war. And it was very unusual at that time to have a disabled person really playing a disabled character. And he was also the chair of the president's committee. But I give that a little bit as a backdrop. Because I think it's very important to show how long we've been dealing with these issues. And because there was no 504, because there were no laws that made it illegal to discriminate against disabled kids and adults, like in the area of education, I was denied the right-- my mother took me to school-- I was denied the right to go to school. I used a wheelchair. I have used a wheelchair since I had polio. And just for the audience, I'm right now. I have brown hair. I'm wearing red glasses. I have a red blouse with a green and red scarf. And I'm in the foyer of my apartment. And behind me we have pictures on the wall and an arch going between our foyer and the dining room and all kinds of pictures. I will explain what Wesley looks like because he forgot to do that. He is a black man in a wheelchair wearing a shirt that says Black Disabled Representation Matters. It's black and red and white. It's got pictures of someone with a cane, sign language, a wheelchair, and someone with a brain being highlighted. But the most important part of this is his kitchen, which I'd die for. Because he's got a wheelchair accessible sink. And he's got-- I can't see his stove.

Wesley: [LAUGHTER]

Judith: I think he's got a dishwasher and a nice plant. OK. So I grew up in a time where there was the beginning of change going on. Parents of kids with cerebral palsy-- I'm from Brooklyn in New York-- were fighting to get kids in school. But the kids wound up being in segregated classes or segregated schools, which on some level was better. Because before if they weren't in institutions they were at home. But nonetheless, my parents really began to recognize that they needed to play a role in getting me into school. I experienced discrimination, which we can talk about during the rest of the interview. But I think, suffice it to say, over the years what I was learning from my parents-- what I was beginning to learn from myself as a result of going to camps with disabled kids and segregated classes with disabled kids-- was that I was not being treated equally within society. And the older I was getting the more I was recognizing that there really was not a vision for disabled children to grow up, go to college, get meaningful jobs, really, to get married. My mother was very clear with me. Not in a negative way she said to me, you have a disability, you may well not get married. Because someone may not want to marry you because of your disability. And you need to go to college. You need to be able to support yourself. That was like a real, kind of, progressive statement in the 50s and 60s. Because that's not what young women were expected. They were expected maybe to go to college but get married, have kids, and stay home. So through my mom and my dad fighting for things for me, and then as I was gaining my own voice-- if you haven't seen the film Crip Camp I encourage you to watch it. It's a documentary about disabled kids at a camp called Camp Jened. I've also written a book that came out this year called Being Heumann. My last name is h e u m a n n. And it's a story about my life. It's really a story about my life. And I think it reflects the stories of many, many other people. I learned to become an activist not because I ever planned to be an activist. I think that's similar to what Wesley is saying. Wesley didn't plan to have a disability. He didn't plan to get into fitness. He didn't plan to work with other disabled people. He didn't plan to be a public speaker. He didn't plan to do any of those things. They evolved, which is exactly what happened with me. I think the more I was with other disabled people and looking at what was going on in society, overall-- and by that I mean the Civil Rights Movement-- really, really impacted me and my friends and why. It impacted me, not only because it was demonstrating and showing us the injustices that were going on against Black people and other minorities. But it really also showed us how discrimination was being addressed by a movement of Black people supported by others to break down barriers of discrimination and enable people to be able to achieve greater equality in our society. Now no we have not gotten there either. But those are very important lessons. And so, really, I learned over the years that taking the barriers that I have experienced, the discrimination that I have experienced, speaking with other people, and learning that millions of us have had the same experiences, that not staying in a silo where I'm only talking about myself and what I want to be able to do, but working with other people who have a similar vision, and also recognizing that this goes beyond disability-- it's really dealing with injustice and what we need to do as a larger community to reframe the countries that we live in-- has enabled me to do things that, I think, as a group of people we didn't realize that we were going to be able to achieve. We've achieved a lot with many, many different laws. And I feel like I've had many opportunities that I never thought I would have as a child. But at the end of the day, what are some of the main things that we're still looking at? COVID and a much higher rate of death of disabled people of all ages living in segregated environments, which we've been fighting against for decades. Looking at people of color who are at higher risk of health inequities. And higher rates of people dying from COVID. But it's not just COVID that's the issue that we look at at the moment. We really see the disparity. We see what ADA, in fact, has done in many wonderful ways. And the ADA, I think, really has been very helpful even with ADA-- I'm sorry, with COVID. But I also think we see very clearly, not only the inequities that we still face, but I think we really have to recognize that the impact of COVID on the economy is going to have an adverse effect on disabled individuals if we really are not prepared to continue to fight for what we need.

Wesley: So to kind of go right off of that, Judy, so that we can make sure that we are on time. I want to throw in a question that we have from a guy named Phillip. It kind of goes and plays a part into the Civil Rights back end of what you were just sharing. So let's check that out.

Phillip McGruder: Hello, Ms. Heumann. It's an honor to ask this question of you today. My name is Phillip McGruder. I live in Kansas City, Kansas. I am a Self-advocate Trainer for the Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas. I also work for the defending Super Bowl champion, Kansas City Chiefs. I graduated from the University of Kansas in December 2017. For a lot of y'all that don't know me, I'm a Black man with autism who has a Chief's uniform around or talks about the Chiefs a lot. You might see me in blue KU colors sometimes. My question to you is, how do you see the impact of people of color on the disability rights movement, past and future? And what is your take on current civil rights issues affecting people with disabilities? Thank you.

Judith: Thank you. Our movement is working on expanding itself so that it really becomes reflective of who we are. And who we are is a diverse community made up of Black and Brown and indigenous and straight and gay and all other types of people. And I think it's important to discuss the fact that our movement is really very young. The independent living movement, really, just was being born in the 1970s. And there is much work that needs to be done. And I'm very excited about work that's been going on within the people of color community to-- sorry I've got an itch on my back-- to really elevate the voices of disabled people with different types of disabilities and different racial backgrounds to become meaningful part of our movement. I think in many ways right now we're going through a period of time where people who feel that they have not been included are really rising up and coming forward and demanding representation. And I also believe that laws like the IDEA and section 504 and the ADA are playing a very important part in this regard. Because we're seeing disabled individuals with various forms of disability, from various racial and ethnic and sexually oriented communities, being able to go to schools, more included in school, finishing high school, getting into universities, getting jobs, and moving forward. It's still not where it needs to be. We still have higher rates of drop out of college students, Black college students, Latino college students. The disparities are across the board. But I think we've also been seeing that our movement is becoming broader, richer. And by that, I think, we also need to recognize that communities of people with mental health disabilities, with intellectual disabilities, with brain injuries, and all forms of invisible disabilities, are really also now recognizing the importance of them beginning to identify as having disabilities. And for me, I very much rely on friends with disabilities to speak to, get support from, to bounce ideas off. And I think the diversity of our movement really enables us to reach more people. To be able to help more people to become empowered. And to be able to help more people look at the different aspects of their lives. You know, I am a disabled Jewish woman. My Judaism is an important part of me. But for many, many decades it wasn't that I wasn't practicing and participating but we hadn't had discussion about how I, and other friends of mine who are Jewish with disability, really felt within the community. When things were not accessible. When discussions were going on that were intentionally or unintentionally talking about disability in a negative way. It was an important part-- my parents were Jewish, came from Germany, we lost a lot of relatives in the Holocaust. Really being able to discuss that was very important. Likewise, for people who have other back-- who are from the BIPOC community there are lots of issues that people need to speak about also within the disability community, but within their own community. How are disabled people being accepted in various communities? And I think, across the board, it's fair to say that one of the reasons why it's so important to be seeing the emergence of beautifully articulate people. Who are just creating images and reasons and being models for other people. Who can then also go into other communities and really have discussions about how the walls and barriers that exist in different parts of our life need to be broken down. To have discussions that other people can't really have, I think, is very powerful.

Wesley: Love it, Judy. Thank you for that answer. Phillip, from my insight I think Judy hit it all. She threw out some laws and everything for us. [LAUGHTER] It was good. But I always see ourselves as where we're coming into a new time. 2020, we've seen a lot happen. We've seen a lot of people using their voices. And we've seen a lot of people from outside communities amplifying those voices. And so for me it's always, be hopeful. I mean, like Judy said, I just kind of evolved into the work that I do. I see that there's a disconnect. I see the lack of representation. So I choose to be that representation. And use my voice to speak positively on change. And I think that we all have our part in this. And you're doing the same thing by asking questions and getting the information. And that's how it goes with conversation. And like Judy said, we piggyback a lot off of people from our community. It's just a lot of things that we've been through and we've overcame. And sometimes the strength that we find in ourselves helps other people in different communities and that gravitates. I would say all of us fighting for rights, of whatever background, we all gravitate off each other. Because we're using our voices. And we're speaking for what we believe is right. And we're coming off of places of empathy. We don't discriminate off someone else. If it's something that we-- we can support it. And I think that's just it. We're just rising. We're evolving. The work that Judy's been doing for so many years, now you have social media coming out. And you have this opportunity to now use these stories and have them on feeds. And it changes perspectives. And so that is my thing, is that we're shifting perspectives. And we're going in the right direction. But there's a lot of work to be done. But you sharing your story, me sharing mine, Judy sharing hers, that's how it starts to change.

Judith: And I also think that you go beyond hoping. To me, hoping-- I mean, of course, I used the word hope. But the reality is neither you, nor me, nor most of the people listening to this Zoom call today, are hoping. We're acting. And I think we can say, or I can say, that I'm hoping our actions change some people's minds. But inactivity doesn't allow minds to be changed. So that, I think, is also important. And I need to say that we in the disabled community do discriminate. We discriminate in many, many different ways. The reality is we have not mixed with people of intellectual disabilities, people who have mental health disabilities, people you have brain injuries. And now I'm talking across our community, including racial diversity. When we are needing more voices of people who come from underrepresented, really underrepresented groups, in the disability community. We need to be looking at what we are not doing and what we need to do to support those voices to become a more prominent part of the work that we're doing. And that is going to happen over time. As we meet each other, as we learn from each other, as we become friends together, as we work collaboratively to broaden our movement and make the changes we need to make. I mean, one very large part that we consider our movement are older people. But many older people, even though they have what we would call disability, don't want to define themselves as having a disability. [INAUDIBLE] And for me that's very important.

Wesley: I was just going to say, I like what you just said. And I really want to put that out of how there is a lot of separation within the disabled community. I knew that coming and just being a part of spinal cord injury groups. Well most of my friends that I have today have different disabilities. And that was me going into CrossFit and learning adaptive CrossFit. And they opened it up to so many people of different disabilities that I became empowered from those that wasn't just like myself. And it gave me insight and a new perspective. And so I really just wanted to share that. Because that's some of the work that I see myself doing is making sure that I bring more groups together instead of just having us separated. Because, when you're speaking of rights, we all have our own rights we have to speak on. But we're also trying to speak of those as a whole. And the only way we can come and be on the same page is we come together. And so that's a lot of work that needs to still be done as well. And it is happening and I think that's what's very important. Obviously, it hasn't been completed. But I think there's been some really powerful changes that have been happening because the voices of underrepresented people have been demanding it. Yes. So let's jump right in to independent living. I think that, since you highlighted my home, I want to talk about that, just discussing the freedom that I got once my house was remolded.

Judith: Is this the Queer Eye remodeling?

Wesley: It is.[LAUGHTER]

Judith: For those of you who haven't watched Queer Eye, it's a great program. You need to look it up. And what season were you in?

Wesley: Season 4, episode 2.

Judith: So go-- it's Netflix? Yeah. Yeah, Queer Eye, q u e e r e y e. It's a great show.

Wesley: Yes. So speaking of that, like you said, when you have communities that lack representation-- for me, independent living wasn't something that came to my mind when I first found out that I-- Had you ever heard of it? I had never heard of it. I'd actually been living on my own already. And in the hospital we transitioned to me living back with my mom. And I see that happening more and more in our communities. Because you don't know, actually, what's out there. And a lot of those resources, depending on where you are, aren't provided. So I could share my experience. But I want to, more or less-- when did you learn about independent living? And what did that do for you? And then, what was your take once you'd seen the barriers that I faced as you watched the Queer Eye episode? Before I share it. But from a outside point of view, the barriers that I faced for five years taken on to what they did from there. And why is that very-- why does our community and people that are looking or watching us today need to watch that and understand the freedom in it?

Judith: So there are a couple of ways for me to answer that question. One is my desire to be able to live my life like my brothers and my friends and relatives, which in the US typically is at a certain age you move out of your family's home and you live on your own or with roommates or whatever. That was something that was difficult for me to really envision when I was younger. Because I used personal assistance services. I always have. And I've never been able to physically do everything for myself. And I, over the years, was able to piecemeal things together, never getting any assistance to pay for personal assistance. So my parents did my personal assistance. When I went to college I paid for people to help me with my personal assistance. And when I was going to go to graduate school I had sued the Board of Education. I had won. I had gotten a teaching position. I'd been involved with setting up an organization called Disabled in Action in New York City. We were a cross disability group. I began to teach. I taught for three years in Brooklyn, in a school in Brooklyn. I needed to go to graduate school. I was going to go to Columbia. And I got a call from a gentleman named Ed Roberts, who was one of the leaders of the Disability Rights Movement, who, unfortunately, passed away in '95. But he called me to say that they were setting up an organization called the Center for Independent Living. Which was a non-residential organization that was run by disabled people and that was providing various services, supports, like helping people find housing, getting modifications, moderate modifications made. And I could go to graduate school. That's when I first got involved with the first organization that used the term independent living. And over the years I was involved directly with CIL, both on the board and then on staff and then again on the board, in helping to grow that organization. So that it became one that was not only cross disability and intergenerational, but really was having an influence on expanding the voices of disabled people, really, disabled people with various forms of disabilities, getting funding from the city and the county, state, and federal government and private sources. And really doing work that allowed our community to see that a, disabled people could run our own organization. b, the work that we were doing was really enabling people with very significant disabilities to live outside of institutions in the community. As we were also fighting to get better benefits for disabled people and helping disabled people get jobs. So that movement, which continues today, which now there are about 700 centers for independent living in the US, including satellites. But there are 125 in Japan. There are many in South Korea, in Indonesia, in Vietnam, around Europe, and in the Middle East. So this model of self-determination of engaging disabled people in a rights based model has really been something that's been catching on around the world, along with the development of other aspects of the movement. And so I would say this really has spawned not only activity in the US but the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is a UN treaty that was adopted in 2006. And now 175 countries, unfortunately not yet the United States, have adopted it. And that is really meaning that we're seeing the globalization of a Disability Rights movement. Obviously, most people are still not yet directly benefiting. But I think the work that we're doing is having an impact. You know, when you look at the ADA and the physical environment and changes that have been made. Issues around employment, and Title I, and ADA around employment, and others, they are beginning to have an effect. We need much further to go.

Wesley: Yes. So-- all right. You answered—

Judith: Have you seen any of these questions?

Wesley: Yeah, I do. And so-- OK. Well let me add my insight and then-- so when I think about independent living and ADA, there were just a lot of things that I didn't have knowledge of. I didn't know about modifications in homes. So I think I faced a lot of barriers just because of that. Even just having a home with steps and having to find someone to build you a-
- Ramp. [LAUGHTER] It's one of those things that if you don't have the resources or knowledge it could be a large barrier. And if you don't have someone that actually knows how to do it then that becomes a barrier in itself as well.

Judith: Or the money.

Wesley: Yes. [LAUGHTER] Or the money. So thinking about the financial part of ADA and accessibility and modifications, Judy. Of course, Queer Eye changed and modified my home, which I love. But this was something, probably, right away I wouldn't have been able to do.

Judith: You know, I-- Yeah, I don't have that. Just so you know. I live in a rented apartment. And my kitchen is not accessible like his. There's no requirement in the law, in any law, that there is money to modify a kitchen or bathroom. There are many other countries where, in fact, you can get money from the government to modify one's home. Basically, we're not it. [LAUGHTER] So is that, you know-- [LAUGHTER] So do we see that as being financially, not only just with the homes, is that a barrier that you see in the future being uplifted with the rights and with the things that you're doing? Well here it's a we. It's not me. It's a we. I think we-- and I mean more than you and me. One of the reasons why people go to live in nursing homes or in senior housing is because they need various supports. They need to live in a place without steps. They need to live in a bathroom that's accessible. They may need a bar. They may need a roll in shower. Now roll in showers are required in new construction under the Fair Housing Act. But the bottom line is, it doesn't require that everything be accessible. And the biggest issue that I wanted to talk about regarding accessibility is the fact that we have not as a community spoken up enough at the local level as well as the state and federal level about why it is important to be able, in my view, to build housing accessible in the beginning. Why are we using money to build homes that are not accessible. That will not enable people to have disabled friends and others visit their home. Just like you didn't know anything about accessibility before you became disabled. Right? I'm sure you never thought about a ramp. You never thought about steps. You never thought about a wider bathroom. Those are things that you didn't really see. And maybe you saw a ramp here and there but you didn't link it together. Now you're in a wheelchair and then you saw all these things that you weren't able to do that you could do before. And you didn't know about how to get these things done.

Wesley: Not at all. [LAUGHTER] Not at all.

Judith: And I think we really, quite frankly, need to be focusing on our communities and a, allowing our communities to understand. Most people have no idea what the ADA is. They may have heard of it. They don't know what it is. They don't know how it benefits them. Nor do they know about many other laws like the ones I've been mentioning, 504 and [INAUDIBLE] whatever. These laws are important. Quite frankly, it's like the Civil Rights Act. Yeah. I'm quite sure that most people have heard of the Civil Rights Act. But many people don't know what it actually means. And so I think we need, on a regular basis, to be helping inform people about what these laws do, how they benefit us, and changes that may need to be being made. But getting people to be able to articulate the fact that it should not be a privilege that Queer Eye, however they found you, decided to do your story. And one of the things Queer Eye does, not just for you but for anybody, is they come in and they do make overs. They're a reality show. And they help do make overs. Now you were in a wheelchair. Your make over not only included your food, and your clothing, and various things. But it included making your living environment accessible. They do work in people's homes. So they do get rid of furniture. They do all those different types of things. But I'm sure they never look at a ramp as something that a family without a disability should have. So that the Wesley Hamilton's and the Judy Heumann's in the neighborhood can come and visit. Yes. And I think that's-- when we think about where a lot of our socializing goes on. We visit people in their homes. But you and I don't visit most people in their homes. Because they're not accessible. I'm in an apartment building. That gives me more latitude. I can visit more people. But when I go outside I can visit hardly anybody in the neighborhood. Unless they've consciously built a ramp, I can't get into most of their homes. So these are things that we need to be articulating on a more regular basis and recognizing that these are things that we should have a right to. And getting people who were like you, before you became disabled, to learn about this not only for the event where you may acquire a disability at some point. But also to say, OK, I have friends or I want to be able to make friends who I want to be able to come visit me. It's like sign language interpreters and things being accessible for people with various disabilities. And the ability to get personal assistant. People who can help one who needs various things. That's not built into the framework of our country.

Wesley: No. So just thinking about that, let's go into employment real quick. Because you think about-- we're talking about homes and independent living. But not all buildings and organizations and corporations are accessible either. And so when you think about employment. And even though the direction-- right? So we want to talk about where we are with employment with people with disabilities, the good that has happened. But also, for me, as been an entrepreneur I've found many barriers when it came to a lot of spaces not having accessibility because we aren't included in that space. And when I do find myself getting in there I'm that one person in a wheelchair in a room of 300. And so how do we change that? Or where do we see this now and where is it going? So let me break this question up. So one, the issue of employment of disabled individuals. And I think we had a question over here. What suggestions do you have for individuals with disabilities seeking employment now during these challenging times?

Judith: I suggest that we keep seeking employment just like non-disabled individuals. I suggest that we really need to be able to be on top of the changing world of work. And that's something which is happening now. And we don't, necessarily, know where it's going to go. But we're really needing to look at what are some of the skill sets that one needs to be able to work in many jobs. Do we have those skill sets? What do we need to do to acquire those skills sets? There's an agency called the Department of Rehabilitation, which Wesley and I know about. There are many areas where it needs to be strengthened. But one of the big problems, I believe, is there's not enough money in that agency to really help people who are looking for jobs get the training and the support that they need. Centers for Independent Living need to be much more engaged in working at the local level, with employers at the local level, to ensure that disabled people understand, what is a good resume and how do you put it up on a website? All these things are changing and people need to be trained on how to do it. We need to understand what Title I of the ADA is, which is employment discrimination. You need to know what state laws may exist or local laws that might be stronger than the ADA. You need to understand what your rights are. You need to know how to do an interview. You need-- if you feel like it, it is good to be able to do, like, a role playing for an interview that you may have. I think these are very important aspects. And the other thing is I think we're also-- for younger people and now I'm meaning teens, 20s. The importance of disabled people, really any age, getting internships and mentorships. Wesley raises a very important point around entrepreneurship. And he got into entrepreneurship for whatever the reason he did. And one of the things that he does is go to meetings with other entrepreneurs. Because he's wanting to learn from them about what they've done. But he doesn't want to be the only one in the room who is using a wheelchair, which is more than him being the only person in the room using a wheelchair. It also means that others like him and other disabled people are not being encouraged or are not being successful or are not aware of these different meetings. So having subgroups, which we're seeing in many different associations, where there are subgroups of disabled individuals being formally established to talk about what needs to be done, in this case, within entrepreneurial organizations to really ensure that disabled people with visible and invisible disabilities who want to be entrepreneurs learn about it. I have a friend named Diego Mariscal. And he's been doing work in entrepreneurship. And for me, I think, not everybody gets up in the morning and is going to be a good entrepreneur. What does it look like? What should we be thinking about when you want to set up your own business? I think those are very critical issues. But I think the basic point that I'm making here, and that Wesley is making, is disabled people want to work. There's different kinds of jobs that we want to have. We need different knowledge and experience to obtain them. We get excluded in many ways from being involved in activities that give people opportunities, like having jobs when you're younger, like having mentorships that intern. And these are things that we need to be looking at. Where are the places in our community that are focusing on, for example, inner city kids getting summer jobs? Are we making sure that these programs are reaching out to disabled individuals and that accommodations are being made for these young people? What are the programs that exist in our community? And how are they proactively including disabled people? And how are they working with the Wesley's and the Centers for Independent Living and other disabled run program to really make sure that they are doing it right?

Wesley: Yes. Yes, love it. Oh, I love that. And too, for the question like what suggestions do you have for individuals seeking employment? I started working, or went back to work, right after I got my disability. And I was not prepared to go back to work. I hadn't adapted or accepted the things that was going on with me. So I allowed every other issue that I was facing-- kind of, led to me actually being unemployed. My advice would be to have confidence in that job that you're seeking as well. Because you do-- you are aware of the things that are going on in society, the views that are going on in society. Don't let those things stop you from seeking employment. But also have the courage and the confidence within yourself in the abilities that you have going into that job space. So I just wanted to throw that out. Because confidence played a large factor in me seeking—

Judith: Did you have role models? As you were-- it sounds to me like what you were experiencing is very similar to what other people have experienced. I'm going to use the word stumbling along. Because you know, you really were a different person. Yeah. Wesley was Wesley but Wesley was different. In many ways, which only you can describe. But did you have other disabled mentors who were working and had acquired an injury that meant that they were now a paraplegic or a quadriplegic, whatever it might be, who you could talk to and ask questions of on a regular basis? Did you have any of that?

Wesley: I did not. Honestly, most of the people that I started to be introduced to when it came to those that were employed were when I got into that CrossFit space. But at the beginning when I tried to go back I didn't have any representation that I could really seek. Or those that were providing those references to me just didn't have that one.

Judith: And I think it's not, necessarily, required for everybody. But I think it should be something which is available. Because I had my disability when I was young. So I didn't make a transition like most people do from not having a disability to having a disability. But nonetheless, I'm always dealing with, is there an accessible bathroom? If you watch the film called Camp you'll see that I talk about bathrooms. Most people never wanted to talk about bathrooms. I decided very early on-- I remember, I was at some meeting. And I decided I'm going to talk about going to the bathroom.

Wesley: [LAUGHTER]

Judith: And nobody talks about it. But everybody does it. And nobody thinks about, what does it mean if you can't go to the bathroom? And there is this, kind of, silent presumption that we don't discuss it because the majority of people can get up and go to the bathroom. They don't need any help. It doesn't matter how wide the bathroom door is. Or how heavy the door is to get in and out. Or whether you can get onto the toilet, pull your pants up and down, whatever it may be. And just that discussion really makes people uncomfortable. And so very early on I decided I don't intentionally want to make people uncomfortable. But I do intentionally want them to understand that they are not looking at our lives the same way they look at theirs. That there is not an expectation that we are going to go to the bathroom five or six times a day. And no one thinks anything about asking, oh, what do you do when you're going on an airplane and you can't get into the bathroom?

Wesley: Thank you. Thank you. [LAUGHTER]

Judith: And I'm spending all this time trying to figure out, where can I get diapers that are going to be good enough that allow me to fly to Asia without totally dehydrating myself? Which you wind up doing. Yes. That level of discussion we can have as disabled people. Right? Or you don't have a sign language interpreter. Or things are not available if you are blind. Or issues of, what do you do with your guide dog? Or if you have an intellectual disability or whatever it may be. These types of discussions are critically important. And we need not to just have them running around in our heads. We need to be able to express them. Because I want other people to help be problem solvers. Yes. You know?

Wesley: No, I like that you added the airplane thing. Because I never started traveling until I got in a wheelchair. And I didn't know the barriers of flights. And it started off where I would just do quick flights or do a road trip. I still prefer road trips. And I really didn't—

Judith: [LAUGHTER] You drive? I do. I don't.

Wesley: Oh. [LAUGHTER] I love to drive when I got that freedom back. But no, I didn't understand it until I went to London. And I started looking at the flight time. And I was wondering, how do I do this? And I mean, I wasn't going to go because I didn't know how. But I just took matters in my own hands and made sure that I took care of myself so that I can enjoy life. But I do want those that are watching to understand those are barriers that you see every day. And that those are barriers that you could speak up about. It's a simple question, hey, what if I had somebody here in a wheelchair? How would they do this? And that is how we start to speak up for other groups. It's just small things like that. Because if anything, flights, travel, travel is very, very complicated rather it's in cars or planes. And I haven't been on a train. So I can't tell you about a—

Judith: I love trains. I also want to say that right now we're talking about issues around travel for people who have physical disability. But travel is an issue for people with all forms of disability. And being able to learn about what some of the barriers are for people with different forms of disabilities is really important, travel just being one example. But it has to do with employment or whatever. And our ability as disabled people to understand the different issues that may come up for people, I think, is very important. So that we can advocate for each other on each other's behalf and be supportive of each other.

Wesley: Awesome. So, Judy, so we have a few minutes left. And I know we have a few questions on the side. But we had one from someone named Gabe. And I want to share that it, kind of, speaks on today. And I think we can probably close out with our perspective on his question.

Judith: Oh there's-- Oh, sorry.

Gabe Mullen: Hi, Judy. My name is Gabe Mullen. I'm a 22-year-old white male with brown hair. And I'm from here in Lawrence, Kansas. Discrimination in the allocation of life saving health care against those with underlying health conditions has been a common practice in our country for quite some time, despite the fact that the ADA and the Rehab Act specifically forbid it. This pandemic seems to have made this problem more visible. But do you believe it will change the way our society views giving lifesaving care to people with disabilities? If so, how? And if not, how close are we to that shift in perspective? Thank you.

Judith: I think that also, in some way, links to the question of how do we address a national culture where it seems perfectly acceptable or at least not objectionable for public officials to mock people with disabilities, both specifically and perceived. Including assaults on the perceivable disability of those running for office. The reason why I think these questions while on the one hand may seem very different, I'll try to answer them together. It goes without saying that people-- and I don't want to say every-- excuse me, everybody. But the reality is that many people don't understand disabled people and the segregation and isolation that we've had within our communities. And the lack of representation in media has allowed the misperceptions of who we are and the ridiculing of who we are. And as a community our strength, the more strength we obtain, will allow us in a more proactive way to be really responding to ridicule, to devaluing people. So that when we're in a health care crisis like we are that if you look at someone who comes in with a disability plus COVID versus a person who has COVID and wasn't known to have a disability that priority, in too many cases, will go to the person who has COVID but does not have a disability. I think we're working on that. I think ADA has been helpful in other laws. That we've seen policies coming out at the federal level to the states and hospitals. But really, we are needing to make a fundamental change in the way we view who we are. And when there are millions of us who don't identify with our disabilities as a part of who we are, as a valued part of who we are. Where we don't take on the shame and the lack of public policy and enforcement of laws seriously. I think we've got to be the loudest spokespeople. I want to mention the case of this 27-year-old black man who was bipolar who was killed the other day in Philadelphia. This is a man who was known to have a psychosocial disability. His mother called asking for emergency services. The police came. They did not know appropriate procedures. There was not a mental health person with them to help de-escalate what did not appear, at least visually, to be one where anyone's life was in danger. And they killed him. And this man had a disability. He was black. And these types of assaults against disabled individuals happen regularly. And really we know, for example, that rape and sexual violence occur more against disabled people than non-disabled people. And these are not being addressed appropriately. We know all these things. Or maybe many of us don't know it. But nonetheless, I think as a community-- and that's really for me the issue. The formation of stronger communities that not only rise up against these atrocities but, really, as disabled people speak up against why these conditions where appropriate services are not being provided are allowed to escalate and murder people. And people get murdered on the street. But they're being murdered in nursing homes. They're being murdered in many places. And we don't call it that. But that is what it is. People are not being charged with murder. But people are being murdered.

Wesley: Thank you, Judy, for that. Man, that was really, really good. But it is very true just with the care. There's a lot of things that, with this 30-year act, that has been accomplished. And there is a lot of things that we still have to do. But-- We can feel proud of what we've done. Very. And we need to know that we have so much more to do. And like Judy said, representation matters. I want everyone to at least take time and start to do your research, if you haven't already, more on some of the laws that Judy threw out today. As well as even talking about the underlying issues of health care or even in nursing homes. We all can do our part in using our voices and speaking up. But it starts with us. So, Judy, when we think about the last thing. Oh my god, I love talking to you. I love hearing your voice. You've taught me so much on this call. As much as you've done, everybody else, and I just appreciate it. And I always appreciate you and the work that you do. So I wanted to throw that out there.

Judith: People appreciate you and others like us because we're helping create space for people to say the same things we're saying. Yes. You know, I think that's really it. It's not that what you're saying or what I'm saying that we're the only ones saying it. The issue is the ability-- and really, I want to thank everybody at KU who had the vision of putting these two days together. Because I think the breadth of the work that's been done is a model for what has to happen. And the deeper we can go, not only into these discussions, but taking this into action. And looking at what universities need to be doing, really, to ensure that faculty and staff and students are learning more about disability in a way that enables them to take the knowledge they're acquiring, whether they have a disability or not, and applying it in their day to day work lives and personal lives.

Wesley: Yes, yes, and accessibility. I've been to many campuses, I'm not saying KU, guys. But accessibility, that's a barrier that we just need to keep talking about. So making sure—

Judith: More than that, we need to file complaints when they are in violation. [LAUGHTER] You know, we've been talking and talking. So take action. That's it. It's about taking action. Universities need to understand, they've been obligated under Section 504 since 1973. 1990 with the ADA is not the first time these obligations came forward. So we need to support faculty and staff and students. So that they don't feel out there on their own. And that they don't feel at risk of filing complaints and raising issues when universities are not doing what they're legally obligated to do.

Wesley: Well thank you, Judy, for everything. And this is our time. We're actually going to close out with a message for you. But again, I do want to say thank you. I enjoyed all of this. And I know that we'll be talking again soon. And thank you, KU, for having me. And I hope that this was something that really shifts perspectives and helps you guys in the work that you're doing.

Judith: And a fun level, Wesley am I are going to do something on cooking together over Zoom.

Wesley: Yes, I love it. [LAUGHTER]

Catherine: Well make sure that we know when that's happening. So we can all join you.

Wesley and Judith: [LAUGHTER] OK.

Catherine: Thank you for this amazing conversation. It was both impactful and fun and also, I think, helped move our conversation forward on the rights of individuals with disabilities and disability inclusion. Judy, when you were on campus virtually yesterday you had a chance to meet with members from the faculty-staff council for disability inclusion. They were very honored that you took the time to spend with them. So much so that they wanted to do something to keep you with us here at KU forever. So our council has created a Judith Heumann Disability Rights Advocacy Award that we'd like to give you the inaugural award. At this point, I'd like to call up representatives from the executive council to join me, please. Kit Cole, Abby

King, and Katelynn Schultz. I'd like to virtually recognize all of the other members of our amazing Council on Disability Inclusion. Judy, I present to you-- I'm trying to hold it so you can see it. It's a little Jayhawk. And it says-- oops, let me-- it says Inaugural Judith Heumann Disability Rights Advocacy Award, October 29, 2020. Congratulations, Judy. Thank you so much.

Judith: So unexpected, thank you all. You've done a great job. But most importantly, I know you will continue to do a great job. That's what it's all about. And you really-- hats off to you all. Thank you.

Catherine: We will get this in the mail to you, Judy. It's very heavy. Thank you. So I want to do a few thank yous and closing remarks. And Judy, I'm going to give you an opportunity to share any final thoughts you have with us. And we'll conclude our time today with a recorded message from representatives of our 62 amazing co-sponsors. So I first have to thank everyone who joined us here today. We're 1,000 plus that have joined us over the two days. And I said at the start of this that that includes individuals from 22 states across the US and multiple countries. So we have a wealth of information, a wealth of resources, and supports who have joined us. I have to thank all of the panelists and moderators who joined us. This is one of the things that COVID actually made better was this opportunity to bring us all together in this virtual format. So we have all learned so much. Not only from Judy, and Wes, and Keri, and Dior, and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Too many people to name. But every panel conversation was so impactful, so amazing, and gave us all a lot of information on going forward. Where the issues are for the disability rights community and a plan for how to address those issues. In addition to our panelists and moderators, I have to thank the incredible Judy Heumann. And her incredible team of Stevie May and Becca Howell. It has been an honor and a pleasure for my team to spend the amount of time we've gotten to spend with Judy and her team over the months planning this even. We've learned and grown from those relationships, Judy. And I sincerely hope we have the opportunity to continue learning and growing with you. The planning committee, the 62 co-sponsors, just cannot think this group of people enough. They have all worked really hard over this past year to have this event be as successful as it has been. I'd also like to thank everyone who helped with the prerecorded questions and messages that we shared over this two- day celebration. I am blessed to have the best team in the world. You've seen most of them over the last couple of days. But I want to give a real recognition. And I want them to come up and join me again. It's Abby King, who's our accommodation specialist. Katelynn Schultz, our disability inclusion fellow, our inaugural fellow, she's doing amazing work for us. And Kit Cole, who is our IT accessibility coordinator. Also, tremendous work for us. We have a tendency to find great people and make them part of our team. That's how, actually, this team's come together. So I'd like to also acknowledge, virtually, our two adopted team members, Haines Eason and Sierra Hunter. Haines Eason has been instrumental in being our communication and webmaster for this event. And Sierra Hunter, not only is a talented graphic artist, but she applied her talents for this event by creating the welcome and the closing format that you'll see soon on the prerecorded message. She also did some amazingly cool graphics through the whole course of Judy's career that you might have seen with social media. My final thanks go to my beyond supportive boss, Mike Rounds, who is the Vice President of Operations here at the University of Kansas. He always gives us the freedom and power and support to do what we think is right and needed to advance disability inclusion, both here at KU and beyond. Our amazing provost, Barbara Bichelmeyer and our chancellor Doug Girod. We thank you for your support in our work as well. So we've had an amazing two day celebration with a lot of people from across the world. I think our motto, nothing about us without us, has been really felt in these past two days. Not only were we 1,000 plus strong over the past two days we are 61 million strong in the US and 1 billion strong worldwide. Those numbers will grow. And it seems like Judy's going to tell me I'm not giving that enough numbers. So I think after the 2020 census comes out we're going to see those numbers go up. We now have a new network of support with everyone that you have had an experience of getting to know virtually on screen, on your laptops at home. But also all of us and all of you. This is a community that is ever-growing. And I know right now with COVID we all feel socially isolated and alone at times. I want you to remember that we are all together and together we are powerful. We have a virtual powerful community. Over the past two days we had the opportunity to celebrate not only the Independent Living Movement, the Disability Rights Movement, key advocates in that movement, and also the Americans with Disabilities Act, we were able to touch on and begin conversations on current Disability Rights issues. And we charted a course for future advocacy to make sure that we are moving forward the rights of individuals with disabilities and disability inclusion. I would ask all of you to take what we've learned over these last couple of days and apply it in your world. We all have power. We all can be an agent of change, as Judy has said, as Wesley as said, and as Keri, and Dior, and Reyma have said. I want you to remember Judy's philosophy. Her persistence, her inability to accept no as an answer. No should never be an answer. No is a starting point of a conversation. Right? I want you to remember we are powerful in unity and we can make change. That is what these two days have been about. And I urge you to make the change that you can make in the world that you live in and control. Judy, before we go to our final message from our co-sponsors I'd like to turn back to you to give us your final thought sas we close out this two day celebration.

Judith: Again, I really want to thank you all. And Catherine, I really want to thank you for your vision over the last couple of years and for the modeling that you've done. For me, what's been really-- this has been a process that's been going on for way more than a year. And I think what I've learned from you from the beginning is how you-- my words-- it's like an onion where you're peeling back different sections of the onion. And you see every leaf, or whatever we call the section of the onion, as being equally important. And how we need to be able to pull it apart and pull it together. Maybe the onion's the wrong example because it makes you cry. But it can make you cry with joy. And so I think the magnitude of the changes that we're trying to make do not happen by only individuals. They happen by a collective vision, which continues to expand. And for me, the work going on over the last couple of days is really, as I've been saying, an example of what we need to be doing not just on our college campuses but in our communities, in our city councils, in our county governments, our state, our federal, in our local businesses, in our houses of worship, on and on. So that the discussion of who we are as disabled individuals, the strengths that we have, but also the barriers that we're experiencing, that can be changed that impact us individually and collectively must occur and we need to be addressing the issues of diversity. Diversity by disability, racial diversity, et cetera, and the additional forms of discrimination that people are facing when we look at the totality of individuals.

Catherine: Thank you, Judy. It's been an impactful couple of days. I think we've all learned and grown a great deal in a pretty short amount of time. So I think it's only appropriate at this point that we close out the celebration with some words from some representatives of our 62 amazing co-sponsors. Thank you, again. And thank you everyone who joined us over these last couple of days. We could not have done this without you. Thank you so much.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Katelynn Schultz: On the screen now is a panel introduction image. This image is a dark blue screen with light blue and bright red designs on top. In the top left corner is the KU logo, which is dark blue surrounded by a light blue blob like design. Handwritten cursive is written in large print in the middle of the image. The text reads, Thank You and Concluding Remarks from Representatives of the ADA 30th Celebration Co-sponsors. Pictured on the screen is Mike Rounds. Mike Rounds is a white man with black hair that has been parted at the side and each of those sides have been slicked back with gel.

Mike Rounds: Hi, my name is Mike Rounds. I'm the Vice Provost for Operations at KU. And I have the pleasure of working with Catherine Johnson and the rest of her team in the ADA Resource Center for Equity and Accessibility. The real credit for organizing this event goes to them. As we close our celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, I would first like to thank everyone for participating. We had an amazing turnout making KU the center of disability rights discussions in progress over the past several days. While, on behalf of KU, I appreciate everyone who participated in the work that we've done during the forums and discussions, I would like to extend a very special thanks to Judy Heumann. Judy's untiring advocacy for disability rights is inspiring. And we are very grateful to her for joining us at KU in our work to make the university more accessible and inclusive. As with any great event, the hard work starts now as we consolidate what we have learned and committed to and begin to implement substantive changes to our campus and beyond. I look forward to continuing to work with Judy as she provides mentorship and, without doubt, holds us accountable as we realize substantive change. My final thanks go to Chancellor Girod and Provost Bichelmeyer for supporting our efforts to make KU the right choice for all of our students, faculty, and staff, including those who identify as having a disability. Rock chalk.

Katelynn Schultz: Pictured on the screen is Tammara Durham. Tammara is a black woman with very short light brown hair. She is wearing silver hoop earrings with a silver necklace and a brown and white crisscrossed patterned blazer. She is also wearing eyeliner and a soft pink lipstick. She is seated in front of a wood bookcase.

Tammara Durham: Good afternoon. My name is Tammara Durham. And I am Vice Provost for Student Affairs here at the University of Kansas. What an amazing two days we have had. Thank you to each of you for joining us as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Americans with

Disabilities Act. We have had a great set of speakers over these last couple of days sharing their research, their experiences, their journeys, and we are all better for it. A special thank you to Judy Heumann, whose life-long advocacy has paved the way for so many today. As an African-American woman, I can tell you that this advocacy work is so important for so many of us. And my charge to you, as we close out these great two days of learning, I want to ask that the work not stop here and not stop today. Please, carry forward the message, the information, that you have learned over these last few days to make the experiences of our friends, colleagues, and peers a better one. Thank you.

Adina Duke: My name is Adina Duke. And I'm honored to be with you on behalf of the Spencer Museum of Art, where I work as an associate director for public engagement. I have blue eyes, freckles, and long light brown, sort of, wavy hair. And I'm wearing eye glasses and a blue shirt today. The deep impact of Judy Heumann's work on the Spencer museum and the cultural arts at large cuts across all dimensions of our work. From operations, to employment, to facilities, interpretation, exhibition design, digital engagement, and our commitment to continually advancing and recalibrating our work toward disability inclusion. I'd like to share one example through the lens of our 2020 Common Work of Art. A program that highlights a singular work, typically, in conjunction with the KU Common Book program. This year's Common Work of Art is Translated Vase by Yeesookyung, which is now on screen, in detail on the right and in full in the center. Translated Vase is roughly about human scale. At around 5 feet tall by 2 and 1/2 feet around. It's made of dozens of ceramic fragments from broken blue and white pottery, sort of fitted together and rising up from the ground in an asymmetrical stack of rounded bubbly surfaces about the size of small balloons. Criss-crossing across the seams where the pieces meet are thin, bright gold lines. Gathered from the waste piles of Korean ceramicists, the fragments reference historic Korean pottery but were cast aside due to so-called imperfections. The artist mixed and matched the broken pieces, betraying assumptions of frailty or weakness, to create a new dynamic and biomorphic form. Its strength and power is in its transformation, the sum of its parts, it's lived experience, and its distinctive features. Rather than hiding or masking its perceived defects, the artist acknowledges and honors those changes or differences with shimmering gold. These ideas are not my own. They capture a fraction of the sum of the artist's intentions, stirred with the imaginations and experiences of students and colleagues who've engaged with the work and facilitated conversation over the years. A practice that borrows from Judy's life as a counselor in her 20s at Camp Jened and infuses our approach to gallery teaching today. As some of Judy's friends reflect in the film Camp, Judy was known for making sure that everybody gets a chance to speak. No one is sidelined. That's what we try to practice, too. Thanks to Judy and her colleagues, Camp Jened represented a transformative expansion of the life space of so many campers. It was a place where possibility and community thrived. That's what we aspire to at the Spencer Museum, to model the threshold of the museum after the threshold of Camp Jened and what Judy cultivated there. To invite people into a supportive space and temporary community galvanized, in our case, around provocative works of art where independent thinking is valued and every voice adds to our collective understanding of our world. Thank you, Judy. We are humbled and elevated in your presence and through your life's work. Thank you to the KU ADA Resource Center for Equity and Accessibility for making Judy's voice heard here at KU and far beyond.

Katelynn Schultz: Pictured on the screen is Jennifer Ng. Jennifer is an Asian-American woman with black, shoulder length hair with straight across bangs. She is wearing black eyeliner and a light gray and dark gray striped long sleeve shirt.

Jennifer Ng: Hi, Judy. This is Jennifer Ng from the Office of Diversity and Equity. I wanted to take a moment and express my appreciation for your visit here at KU these last couple days. Before you came, I actually watched your 2017 Ted Talk. And I loved the way that you explained how one person in a strategically positioned wheelchair can stop a bus. And that 50 people working together can halt rush hour traffic on Madison Avenue. Through the stories that you've shared and this chance to think back on your lifetime of activism and the 30 years since the passage of ADA it's also clear, however, that this work is more than just a moment. It takes a movement. And you've also reminded us that while we can each as individuals make a difference that none of us has to do this work alone. Thank you for that important reminder and for your visit.

Katelynn Schultz: Pictured on the screen is Jeff Chasen. Jeff is a white man with short black hair wearing round metal glasses, a blue blazer, and a t-shirt that can be seen underneath the blazer.

Jeff Chasen: Thank you, Judith Heumann. Thank you for helping bring to life KU's celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ADA. And thank you for, literally, helping bring to life the ADA, section 504, and so much more. Thank you for your sense of commitment, your sense of compassion, your sense of justice, and your sense of humor. Thank you for the information you've generously shared with our campus community, and literally a worldwide community, just during the past couple of days for this conference. But beyond information, thank you for the inspiration that you've shared to help all of us, especially at a difficult time, to find the energy and to recommit to making a difference in the world, just a fraction of the difference that you've made. But we know that you've helped not only inspire but empower us to do the work that needs to be done. Thank you for all of those things and even for exemplifying that each of us needs to continue to work, to learn, to grow, even you. All of us can and need to do that work on behalf of those that need our support to create, to find, inclusion. And in fact, inclusion is a paramount value for any institution of higher education. We need to create inclusive campus communities. But beyond that, we need to foster opportunities for inclusion beyond our campus borders. We need to help people find their lives and chase their dreams and make their own difference in the world. And all of that is thanks to the fundamental work that you've done to help, literally, help us find that way. The work that any and all of us do has been enriched and empowered by your life's work. And so thank you. Thank you for that. Thank you for helping us pursue our highest ideals and challenges in a way that wouldn't be possible without you. You know, I mentioned your legislative accomplishments. And they're very important. And it is critically important to try to prevent or, if necessary, punish wrongdoing. But it's so much more valuable to promote right doing. And that is indeed what you exemplify. Doing the right thing. Doing something that makes a difference in individual lives. And, in truth, makes things better for the entire society, the entire community, country, or global community. So thank you for being superhuman. And above all thank you for being Judith Heumann.

[MUSIC PLAYING]