**Intersectionality in Centers for Independent Living: Cultural Inclusion presented by Dustin Gibson, Keri Gray, and Ola Ojewumi
March 31, 2016.**

And without any further adieu, I'm going to slide five and turn it over to Keri. Keri? >> Keri: Thank you, I appreciate that. So, today we're going to be discussing a lot about intersectionality which has been a more recent topic that popped up in a lot of different circles. We'll discuss ways in which centers or organizations can do outreach and be inclusive of people through intersectional lens. Before we get into more information about intersectionality though, I think it's important to make a distinction on diversity versus intersectionality. So, broadly speaking, diversity, as it shows on the slide, includes social characteristics such as race, ethnicity, culture, home language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social class, age and disability. Diversity is very broad. Most any characteristic that makes you unique. So, most organizations and college institutions at this point recognize that diversity is very valuable. It has been shown to enhance social and intellectual development, openness to challenge individual beliefs, problem solving, critical thinking and writing. And although, at this point, diversity is seen as valuable, it can be a little bit misleading. And I say that because ultimately, in one way or another, all people are diverse. Organizations have some form of diversity and this is great, but it can also create an illusion for the realities or experiences of people from marginized populations. In order to not just celebrate that difference, but acknowledge that difference exists, it is important to figure out how might my organization or the ways in which people are treating marginalizing people. That's why we want to look at it from an intersectional lens. So let's get into what intersectionality is. Technically speaking, intersectionality is the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations. So, what that means is individuals who experience marginalization based upon multiple factors gives them a unique perspective or experience in life. For instance, myself, I'm a black woman with a disability. Those are three different marginalized populations, characteristics that I experience every single day. And that makes my experiences in terms of employment, interactions with people, a unique point of perspective. So...this research was established through Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. She did a writing on feminist theory and anti-racist politics. The concept of intersectionality has been around for a very long time, but at the actual term and research behind it was just developed in 1989 and it stemmed from the, the situations where feminist movements and anti-racist movements would compete with each other. So right now I'm going to give you two examples of what that means and how that's looked. The first one, we've seen discrimination through social movements. We're going to look at the Suffrage Movement. This was originally both a feminist and a black issue. So...during that time you had very notable people come together so you might see Frederick Douglas, Elizabeth Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, those are some of prompt intent people you'd see that came together and said that both women and black people should have the right to vote. And originally, they didn't. So...on this slide, you'll see the first triangle shows that in terms of voting and political power, white males were at the top of the pyramid. And women and blacks were towards the bottom. So...they came together and they said, this is unacceptable, we need to make do with everything we can to ensure that both of our people, both of our populations have the right to vote. So...what they, but, as time went on, unfortunately they get to the point where they begin to question how are they prioritizing the issues that they care about? And how are they prioritizing what exactly they need to stand for. So the quote on the slide says post reconstruction, a devastating question was opposed, is it more important -- I'm going to say blacks at this point -- is it more important that black people should vote than that women should vote? And ultimately they decided it's more important that black people should get the right to vote. So in 1870, the 15th amendment was passed that gave black suffrage, while the women's right to vote remained unconstitutional until the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920. That was 50 years later. 50 years later because of the fact that these movements decided that they had to compete against each other, women didn't get the right to vote. So, as you can see, the political power did not become equality or equity, instead, it just reshaped itself so that black males had power over women. I'm going to give one more example on ways in which people have been asked to compete against each other. We'll see a legal example. The next slide shows that, slide eight, that DeGraffenreid vs. General Motors, black women decided to sue General Motors because they made the claim that General Motors would hire, they would hire, essentially black men and they would hire white women, but they wouldn't hire black women. They basically said that black women were the last hired and the first fired in any situation when it came to General Motors. This wasn't uncommon in a lot of different corporations and businesses. So...they, General Motors essentially turned it around and said we do display diversity within our business, because, again, we hire, look at the amount of white women we hire, look at the amount of black men we hire. The fact that you also want us to hire black women, like...how much diversity do you really want from us? Sadly, the courts agreed with General Motors. And they specifically said that black women should not be allowed to combine remedies to create a new super remedy. This lawsuit must be examined to see if it states a case of action for race discrimination, sex discrimination, or alternatively, but not a combination of both. So, basically it shows the examples and ways in which black women's experiences are unique. There's been many times when people have said you need to either choose whether you want to face discrimination on racist issues or face discrimination on sexist issues, but it should not be the combination of both of those things. But those are the experiences of people, they experience a unique situation where because they're a person of color or because they have a certain gender or sexuality, that their unique perspective, their intersectional identity has determined whether or not they get an opportunity. And in some cases there, are many examples of this. But in some cases, it has even determined whether or not they get to live. So, the next slide, slide nine, how does this relate to disability? In actuality, this is a trick question because it all relates to disability. Disability is seen in all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and languages. In fact, African-Americans experience disability at the highest rate. Almost nearly one in four people with a disability experience, black people experience disability, 19.7% of whites, 13.1% of Latinos, 30% of adults and 36% of women experience disabilities. So...as we know, the disability community is extremely diverse. There's all different types of intersections that exist within our communities. So, we have to acknowledge the different, the very unique perspectives and experiences that people with disabilities face. And if we aren't aware of them, then it only increases the amount of discrimination and exclusion that our community has. So...the last point I want to hear on this particular slide says disability has often been used at justification discriminating against the LGBTQIA community and people of color. What I mean by that is that one particular article pointed out that low income black mothers have been blamed for perpetuating social problems by transmitting defective genes, crack damage, and deviant lifestyles to their children. The use of language and rhetoric that has been pointed out to people of color has been an attack against disability as well. It has led to people wanting to sterilize black bodies and to show that birth defects can happen because of the color of skin. There's just been a lot of, there's been a lot of hostility between the different movements. And this is problematic because if we don't recognize how disability can be seen in people of color, within people in the LGBTQIA community, then we can never come together and acknowledge how we're all on the same page. So...the next slide, slide ten, intersectional issues, it kind of lists a few different policy areas in which our communities really should come together on. So the first one talks about disproportionate school punishments. A lot of people may have heard of this term at this point, the school to prison pipeline or cradle to prison pipeline and this particular situation affects people of color and people with disabilities the most. It has the highest percentage of disproportionate rates between those two communities. And so, if you are a person of color with the disability, then we know that you are the most vulnerable to school to prison pipe lines. So we have to determine ways in which we can have these discussions within our CILs so that our children are more prepared. Same thing when it comes to police brutality. People of color and people with disabilities. People in the LGBTQIA community are extremely affected. There's little to no support in Higher Education. A lot of instances of denial of services and denial of job opportunities. These are occasions in which our centers can connect with other organizations and connect to the people they serve to determine what are your unique experiences by having the intersection of disability and something else. And how can we address these intersectional issues so we can better serve our people in whichever direction they seem to go. So the last part I will say on this is what can CILs do? You can educate your staff and let them know that people with disability look, sound, talk all different types of ways. You have to be prepared for these conversations. Educate your staff. When you have a staff meeting every week, maybe at least once a month, have these conversations. Talk about intersectionality. Two, formulate community partners for intersectional awareness and outreach. Recognize that it is impossible for you, Executive Director or a staff member to know all of the different ways in which people can be diverse. Impossible, we cannot expect your center to know all about what it means to be black or Latino or anything else. So, that's why it's really important for our centers to develop relationships with other organizations, Civil Rights organizations within your local communities. Know that these organizations can come to you about disabilities and you can go to them about other topics in which you may not be aware of. >> Three, establish spaces for people of color with disability to have peer support. People need to have a space where they feel that they can discuss their unique experiences. If we go a center and it is basically all whites, why should we expect black people, who experience disabilities the most to feel this is a place they can go to? It should be, but we have to establish that space for them. And then, finally, discuss educational and employment opportunities that are inclusive of the LBGTQIA community with disabilities. This is just one example of intersectionality. So, obviously, I mean, other communities as well are intersectional, but you, again, you have to be having these conversations, you have to be, have to be discussing ways in which people can get educational opportunities, get employment opportunities within that intersections of their identity. With that, I'm going to stop for a moment and let us transition. >> Perfect, I'll jump ahead to slide 12 and we'll take your questions. If you're on the phone, you can press star pound and if you're on the web, you can type your question on the chat box, the text box underneath the list of attendees. Just type it out and hit enter. We'll take them in the order they're received and again, I'm also on the streaming text page, so, if you're logged in there, you can type it in that chat and I'll read it as well. I'll give you all about 30 seconds to type out questions. All right, maybe Keri's great explanation on the background of intersectionality needs no further clarification. Good job, Keri. I'll wait about ten more seconds to make sure we're not missing anybody. And that's fine, we do the Q&A breaks throughout the call. We will have two more Q&A breaks during the presentation and again at the end. So, you'll have plenty of time to ask and discuss if you'd like to. I see at least one person typing, I'll wait a few more seconds just in case. One more time, star pound if you're on the phone or you can type your question in the chat box. Okay...just so folks know, this is a, we've got a great audience today, but it's not huge. We have plenty of time for Q&A. So, don't be shy. Okay, got a little activity now. The focus at Access North are wondering, Keri, if you can provide some examples, but...I'll ask you all for -- oh, there we go. Little more clarification. Okay...Keri, can you provide any examples of how we can formulate partnerships and further educate -- I assume there's more coming -- our staff and consumers. >> Keri: Sure, definitely. So, one, I would recommend, and I can send this out later, but looking at that article I referred to at the beginning of the presentation. From Kimberle Crenshaw, she really lays out the heart of the issue and great examples. When it comes to forming partnerships, I'd suggest looking at what other social justice organizations exist in your community and literally just giving them a call or sending them an e-mail and saying "can we grab coffee?" For instance, here in D.C., we have a partnership with the congressional black caucus, the congressional Hispanic caucus, we also meet with several other organizations that aren't always exclusively disability. And...we just get together and say, this is what our organization is about. I know, at times, you interact with people with disabilities. Let us be a resource for you if you have questions and we do the same thing for the demographic they serve and say, can you tell us more about issues in your community? Could you let us -- could we call you if we have additional questions? And then I would suggest, taking a little staff time to have these conversations. We have a weekly staff meeting here at NCIL. So, maybe once a month during the staff meeting, just kind of talk about your demographic of people. That'd be my suggestion. >> Great, good tips, thanks, Keri. All right...the folks at the Image Center, Keri, could you just repeat that stat you had on the number of LGBTQIA people that have disabilities? >> Keri: Yeah...let me pull that up real quick. So, according to the U.S. Bureau, among lesbian, gay and bi-sexual adults, 30% of men and 36% of women have a disability. Unfortunately, at this time, I don't have statistics on transgender individuals. >> Okay, thanks for clarifying. All right...and the folks at the Image Center, not a question, just a comment and a good one. Reminder that CILs should have a safe space for people with psychiatric disability. Good tip. All right...Keri, the folks at the Independent Center are wondering if you have examples or tips on how to define spaces for people of color and examples of how to do that effectively without creating separate groups. >> Keri: Right, so the first thing that I'd have to say on that and I definitely, if I have additional comments on this question, that'd be great, but...I would argue that sometimes having a separate space isn't a bad thing. You don't want it to be completely like segregated, but sometimes, as a black woman with a disability, I just want to be with black people with disabilities. And...that is an important experience when a lot of times you can be surrounded by a lot of people that don't always get your cultural distinction. Sometimes if you're able to identify a couple key constituents who kind of have this feeling and just get them together, for, again, something as simple as coffee, it'd be like, you all wake up and have a conversation. That'd be great. But then, also, knowing, eventually you do have to move from that. You do have to move and say, all right, this is what we want our center to look like. We want our center to look like all of these different demographics represented. >> This is Ola. I wanted to chime in about Keri's comments about the need for separate spaces. A part of constantly wanting to be included, certain things in life you're not going to be included. I often, as a realtor, people often compare that one time where I had to use a crutch to my lifetime disability. I want to join the disabled list because I had three months of my life where I was disabled. But in actuality, there are separate things. Would we say they isolate able-bodied people and segregate? No, but disabled people need a place to congregate and have their views heard, similar to African-Americans and minorities and LGBT. We have a big event all over the country, it's not differentiating straight people. It's a place where you can be amongst your own. You can have African-Americans present in your Independent Living Center as well. Or Asian Pacific islander events and include people, there are parts of our culture as African-Americans that we have issues with being vocal about our disabilities. There are things that are often indicative to people of different cultures and people of different abilities as well. So, separate is not terrible. Separate is not bad and separate is not association, either. >> Great, thanks. All right...Keri, I'll turn it back to you to start responding to this. Jennifer's wondering how you'd suggest beginning conversation around intersectionality and conversation around the diverse experiences of people with disabilities, specifically in centers that may not be racially or demographically diverse. >> Thanks for that question. So, what I'd have to say when you mentioned CILs that may not be racially or demographically diverse. One, I think it's okay to be recognized that these conversations are going to be uncomfortable. And people are going to be nervous on how to respond, what to say. And that's okay. I think the way to starlight these conversations is to give them the information on it. Give them information that comes from this webinar, show things you find out along the way on intersectionality when it comes to different articles out there and say "did you know that people with color with disabilities experience this?" Did you know that people of color and people with disabilities are pushed into the school to prison pipeline at very disproportionate rates? And just kind of let people know what some of these realities are and then, encourage them to just express what they think about it. Encourage them to figure out ways in which they can have an opinion and be included in that conversation and let it go from there. >> Okay, great, thanks. All right...and from Access North. As you stated, Keri, disability is seen in all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and languages, do you know of any statistics on how many people may or may not disclose their disability if they're already experiencing other cultural, some of the other cultural barriers that you discussed? >> Keri: That's a really good question. Definitely, I don't have any statistics on me at this time, but...if you want to follow-up with me, I'd be more than happy to get some information to you. That's a big topic. In the disability community, disclosure is hard to determine and so, that's another way in which people can experience discrimination and be left out of opportunities because they're already not disclosing why they may be a certain way. And then, on top of that, they may be a person at LGBTQIA community or they may be an immigrant and so, certain levels of discrimination are very visibly seen and certain of them aren't. So, we can definitely discuss that further, later. >> Okay. Great. All right, well, that is, I think, the end of our questions for this first break. Keri, the folks from Access North say thank you. Great questions, really good discussion for the first break and...we're going to go ahead and continue the presentation now. So, next I'm going to flip to slide 13. What is racism? And turn it over to Dustin to continue. Dustin? >> Dustin: Thank you, Tim, first I want to say that was a good job, Keri. A lot of the things that Keri spoke about, I will touch on a little bit. The question that Keri and Ola both answered about the spaces being separate, I also agree with them that it's important to have those spaces for people to feel comfortable and then slowly integrate those or go into other spaces after. Separate not segregate is important sometimes. What I'll be talking about today is just one of the intersections that Keri explained and this is race within the disability community. A lot of the times we get racism confused with prejudice, but in order to have racism, you must have that component of power. On the screen, there's a formula that says prejudice plus power equals racism. There's also a quote that says "if a white man wants to lynch me, that's his problem. If he got the power to lien me, that's my problem. Racism isn't a question of attitude, it's a question of power." A can't express how important that is when talking about racism and who has the power. Prejudice is the reconceived notion that it's based on judging someone else. Those judgements come from a lot of places that sometimes we're not aware of. When we have that power, it's easy to be racist in that situation. It's important for us as agents of transformation to understand that the foundations of race and racism still play a pivotal role in the work we do today and it affects a lot of our constituents. Race is not a DNA, it's not a scientific concept, it's mover a social construct. This is invented to categorize people, this began with a categorization of Caucasians and Negroes which I'll refer to as blacks and whites today. One key thing in our government that I wanted to point out was the Naturalization Act of 1790. That stated to be a citizen of the U.S., you had to be of good moral character and a free white person. That establishes race within the constitution as we know it. That wasn't overturned until the late 1800s and even standpoint, we had the 3/5 compromise which allowed for the southern states and slave owners to have more stake in the government, which we have now. So, a lot of the laws we're operating off of are inherently racist from the beginning. On the next slide, I'll talk about a few different factions of racism. On the screen, there's a break down or umbrella of racism under supremacy and the different factions of that racism. These are three very general ones, but it's a complex issue, so there are a lot more factions. The three I wanted to focus on interpersonal racism, internalized and institutional. Toni Morrison has a quote that says, "in this country American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate." We'll go to the next slide to talk about interpersonal racism. This is what we experience on a day-to-day basis. This isn't just a black issue, it's a white issue as well, or people of color. The prejudice that is involved with racism is a big thing that we'll experience as well as microaggressions. Microaggressions are verbal situations or behavioral, environmental indignities that allude to the fact that people of color are less than. Some of these microaggressions we use on a day-to-day basis or hear sometimes. An example of that could be, well, you're not like the rest of them or you're pretty for a black woman or can I touch your hair, it's really soft and all of these things imply that you are inferior as a race, but you are the exception, you're not the rule, but you're the exception. All of that goes into the internalized racism piece that we'll go over on the next slide. The internalized racism is really parallel to the disability community. A lot of the things that we experience are low self-esteem or lack of confidence and how racism plays a factor in that is really deep. We have the self-hatred from all of the things we internalized and what the systems tell us our worth is. And this is, again, parallel with the disability community. We have a crab in a bucket mentality, which it's referred to a lot of the times. I think it's also important to note, a bucket is not a crab's natural habitat. The imagery we see historically in America of blacks have been depictions of less than humane figures and when thinking about that at an early age and internalizing that, how we think about ourselves is important. Another important could be a Stockholm syndrome. When we talked about spaces and having a separate space. A lot of the times when we bring up race and discussions and we talk about how it's personally affecting us as people of color, it makes another group uncomfortable. And then we tend to sympathize with them, but with that sympathy, we can't actually have progress in our situations. That leads me to the next slide which is institutional component of racism. The U.S. government was founded with a racist lens. It's important to have that anti-racist lens and understand how it may affect the constituents we have of color, on the same things we fight for in the disability community, which are access to education, employment, Health Care, housing, political capital, transportation, any of the systems that we're left out of, when you're a person of color with a disability, it's now compounded. On the screen, there's a graphic that shows two people having a conversation. One man states, well, I think that all lives matter. The next one states, we should care equally at all times about everything. There's two houses, one is burning, one is not burning. They're putting water on the one that is not burning and says "all houses matter." This is something we've heard a lot over the past years. Is the social movement of black lives matter. And then that's combatted sometimes with all, all lives matter, white lives matter. But...in saying black lives matter, it doesn't imply that other lives don't matter, it just implies that historically black lives have been at a higher risk of brutality, so we should focus on those lives for the time being to fix that issue first. One of the arguments I hear quite a bit is when someone has a walk or a marathon for breast cancer, no one says that all cancer matters. I think it's important when people are establishing how they've been treated in expressing that, that we take that into consideration at all times. And throughout these institutions, racism is definitely a part of it. All right...the next slide, we'll talk about segregation and separation, going forward. And how that relates to the rural and urban settings. And the rural setting is usually less populated, so with that, there'll be a lack of diversity. So you experience a lot more of those microaggressions and all of that plays into how you internalize the feelings about yourself and that's not only people of color, that's white people as well. The culture and historical deficiencies, when there's a lack of diversity, if you don't know your past, it's really hard to go forward. So, we see a lot more of a white standard in rural areas and anything that doesn't fit into that culture, it's ostracized. So that leads to a lack of confidence, which leads to a lack of motivation and that's particularly important for CILs. The things we teach here is how to advocate, you really have to have motivation and will in order to accomplish a lot of the goals that we set out. With that social acceptance piece, and the normalization of everything that is white. The white standards in culture differs from that of people of color, which is not a bad thing, it adds to the greatness of America, but when the normal preset is white, everything else is inferior at that point. The urban impact looks a little bit different on the next slide. There's a map of Pittsburgh, the city which I reside in now. It outlines where particular demographics or racists live throughout the city. Pittsburgh is predominantly white in the black area which is separated by railroad tracks. We have a lack of resources to education and Health Care. The schools are not funded as well as the fluent areas, which happen to be the white areas in Pittsburgh. So, with that, we have this notion of segregation, similar to what we had in the 60s or the 40s with the Jim Crow laws. These are still very prevalent today. Our constituents, especially our youth that go to the public institutions here, don't have the same resources that they do in other areas. And the disability community, the Special Ed programs are the first ones to be cut or defunded, so when we compound that in a black community that's already losing resources, the Special Education program is sometimes non-existent. Which is a huge educational barrier for a lot of people with disabilities, primarily the ones of color. We definitely have a lot more violence in these areas that are predominantly black. There are food deserts as well, there's not healthy options for eating, a loft fast food restaurants, all of these are reasons that we should reach out to these groups more. It puts them at a higher risk when we're talking about disabilities. On the next slide we'll talk about how to combat racism in IL. Keri made valid points about having those peer support groups. The first thing should be to acknowledge and understand what racism is. After that acknowledgement in understanding, we're able to have those peer support in those discussions and that's really, has to be the starting point, after that, is the intention, so, what do we do with the knowledge that we've obtained? We have to be intentional about actually including people in our programs and our curriculums that can't be what the world has done for disabilities, usually to hire somebody at a certain percentage. We have to have an accurate reflection of the people that we serve and sometimes that means more than the percentage, only because these people have been marginalized more so, than the average. So, the curriculums are really important. We have to have a, a decent understanding of what disability history is as it pertains to people of color. And then, after the intention is the support. We have to be able to support and advocate on behalf of people of color when it's situations that are singular to people of color. And it doesn't necessarily sweep across the disability community. One of the large issues right now is mass incarceration. People with disabilities are incarcerated at a higher rate than people without. But even within that, black people with disabilities or people of color with disabilities are incarcerated at a higher rate than anyone. So, it's important for us, as a disability community to get behind some of these social movements and that support could be anything from a hashtag to a retweet to a letter to a protest to an anything we can to tell the public this is something we're not standing for any longer. On the next slide, I'll talk about the efforts in the rural and urban areas. Myself, I'm from Wyoming. I moved to Denver and now Pittsburgh so I've seen what CILs in the disability community looks like in that rural area. And a city setting as well. The main difference between the rural and the urban is you have the segregation in the urban settings. So...with that comes community groups and organizations that are set up to help that community already. So, our outreach to that could be very simple, as far as an e-mail or a letter or a visit to those organizations to tell them about us and what we do as CILs. And the rural area, you usually will have families and places where people of color congregate. So...after finding those places out, we can take the same approach to outreach to them. And on the last slide here, in undoing racism, it is important to actively pursue diversity. And diversity is a term that we throw around now and I'm thinking that it's losing its luster a little bit, but a lot of the times, what happens, people are tokenized. We say we need to meet the status quo of having a couple of people of color on our staff or on our board, but we have to actively pursue those people, people that we know are going to advocate on behalf of people of color and then the public inclusion, it was intentional that I put public there. The public has to know what we're doing as CILs. They have to know we're reaching out to people, very much appreciated every time you're incorporated in that public setting. Diversify the conversations. With the acknowledgement and understanding of racism, we'll introduce this cognitive dissonance to a lot of white people where they realize for the first time in their lives that they have been upholding this institution of white supremacy and in their work, have not been doing it through anti-racist lens. So, at that point, there'll be that level of uncomfortability. That feeling that's uncomfortable, means we're progressing and with that, we can actually make change. And we must affirmatively increase a diverse staff. And I say affirmatively because we have to actually go out and not have just the staff -- and intentional programming. As we talked about before, we'll have separate groups for peer support, we have to have sometimes, separate programs that intentionally focuses on a marginalized community within our disability community. And that about wraps it up for my portion of that. >> Great, thanks. I'll click to slide 24, which is our next Q&A break. So...you all know the drill by now, I'll just remind you. Star pound if you have a question on the phone. Or you can type your question in either of the chats, either on the webinar or on the captioning chat. Okay, we have plenty of time for Q&A today, so I hope we can take advantage. Not only are we waiting for questions, but it looks like we've had a pause in the captioning. Our captioner has lost the platform and is rebooting now. I'm seeing my own words in front of me, that's a good feeling. We've got our first question. The folks at MDRC said it's been mentioned that CILs, et cetera, intentionally reaching out to groups or organizations of color and letting them know what we offer, how do we do that without making that question about us, a primarily white organization? >> You have to have somewhat of an understanding on the barriers that the people of color in your area already face. By doing that, you have to have conversations with them and instead of telling them about what you do, maybe first is to ask what some of their barriers are and possibly, then, you can talk about the resources that you have and then work with them together, rather than going back to develop something on your own. Incorporate them in the development of some of these programs as well. >> All right, good tips. Got a few more people typing. Okay...next question, from the folks at Access North. It's come up in our community that the "system" is set up with youth disabilities are so much more likely to end up incarcerated, related to stigma, lack of supports, and lack of accommodations or awareness of how these individuals are impacted by their disability. You also mentioned black people with disabilities have even higher rates of incarceration. And this is continuing, just a second. Any thoughts on how we can advocate on a systems level with this? So...incarceration rates among young people with disabilities and black people with disabilities and how that relates. >> Yeah, when we talk about the system and I think we should point out that people of color are impacted disproportionately by all systems. But with the criminal justice system, we're definitely at a higher risk of being incarcerated. There's such a high rate of black people with disabilities or people that are incarcerated, if we simply reform -- not simply, but if we reform criminal justice as we know it, that impacts a lot of black people with disability. The first step is to get rid of racist policies we have in that system and that could in turn, help black people with disabilities. On a systems level...I know there are some federal acts that are looking to be passed now, like the sentencing reform act. That will alleviate the mandatory minimums and that is a big way to start chipping away at the amount of people that are incarcerated. On the local system levels, here in Pittsburgh, at the Pittsburgh public schools, we have 90 police officers in our schools as opposed to 53 social workers and counselors, if we were to advocate against that and get more social workers and counselors, we'd stop criminalizing a lot of the youth. A lot of the youth that are being criminalized are people of color with psychiatric disabilities in Special Ed classes and have behavioral and trauma issues. To educate on restorative justice rather than a punitive level would definitely decrease in getting rid of the school to prison pipeline which is prevalent on Special Ed to prison as well. >> Keri: This is Keri. I'd love to add to that. The NCIL U, caucus is vocal about these subjects. If you have young people in your area that are trying to figure out how they can engage, we'd be great to get in contact with. But additionally, your question kind of points to how do you engage the subject on a local level and how do you engage on a national level? I hope there are a staffer or transition coordinator or someone who is actually in some of the schools in your local area. When we're talking about the school to prison pipeline, a lot of times we're talking about zero tolerance policies where the teachers immediately kick a student out of the classroom for a certain level of disruption. Because they have, just characteristics going on that are unique perspectives and so, it's important for our centers to engage our school officials, our teachers, and inform them of ways in which people with disabilities may appear to be disruptive, but that's not really what's going on. And the same thing when it comes to other cultural identities, on a national level, it's really important for our centers to engage in the policies that determine things such as zero tolerance policies enacted in our school systems. And again, that is about figuring out what these policies are, having an opinion on them and stating why this may further discrimination or why this is a good thing. If you want more information on these policies, feel free to reach out to us and we can point you in that direction. >> Nice, okay, thanks. All right...I see another question from the Image Center. The question is, I find that people are very defensive when it comes to being the beneficiaries of white privilege and as a white person, I feel uncomfortable admitting that I have prejudices. I feel like I'll lose friends. How can I help myself and address other people who are white privilege? >> I'm not sure if that's a question I can answer. I could add my perspective on how you might feel about that. Maybe Keri and Ola can help me out, but as a person of color, in not addressing white privilege as a white person, it helps to up the systems that disproportionately affect myself and groups of people with color. There's really no sympathy that we have. This is what we must do as people as well, be unapologetic about the treatment we have and not feel sympathy in that situation. I'm not sure if I can answer that. That may be something that white people can talk about amongst other white people and how you address that and get over that uncomfortable feeling. >> This is Ola. There are certain activities you can do with your coworkers or your friends. I'll mention one of them. You all line up, everyone, five, ten people line up at the same starting point and you walk forward if you say, ask a question like, have you ever felt discriminated based on your skin color? Have you ever been unsure about how you're going to pay for college? Have you ever been unsure about how you're going to pay for your rent? That's a visual way. Many people step forward, many stay in the same place, you'll see who is in the front and those who stay in the back. Those tend to be people of privilege. Whether you're white or black. Just because we're people of color, doesn't mean that you don't have privileges of our own. Just because we're disabled people, doesn't mean we don't have privileges of our own. There are all sorts of disabled people. To be quite honest, I see how differently a white person with a disability is choosing opposed to a black person. It's statistically proven the treatment is better. You have access to economic resources. That's how you begin the discussion through games like the privilege line. I'm part of an intergroup dialogue quest with a co-teacher who was white. I was -- very obviously, I'm black and we'd ask the class a series of questions. My name is Ola, obviously a foreign name. When the question came down to, where are you from? What do you do for a living? All of them came up to stereotypes about immigrants. No one guessed I was from the United States and born here. My white co-teacher, none of those stereotypes applied to him. Even games like that, and just having discussions amongst your staff, without calling people out and saying "you're prejudice, you don't understand." Those eliminate the hostility and allow the discussions to come naturally. >> Great ideas. All right, that's the last question I see for this Q&A break. And again, just a little after 4:00, so we need to go ahead anyway. So...I'm going to move right along. To slide 25. Ola you can keep the mic, so to speak, because you're up next. >> Hi, everyone, okay, I'm a writer and activist. I've written about disabilities for CNN and the Huffington Post. My portion will focus on identity, culture, country of origin, immigrant status and disability. So, the first topic at hand is international disability crisis. With the disability rights community, we hear a great deal about the fight for our rights community in our state. There are a number of privileges we do have that the international community doesn't. Access to education, employment, and a lot of opportunities that do not exist for people with disabilities living in other countries. 15% of the world's population is disabled. Totaling over 1 billion people. 45 countries have antidiscrimination laws. So, I'm going to introduce you to Lakhan Kale. This was a story I read on CNN.com. He's a young man with various disabilities. His grandmother is his caretaker. She began tying him to a pole to prevent him from running into the streets. The World Bank said India has one of the most developing policies in the world. Though policy is in existence, its actual implementation is lacking. His disabilities include being deaf and mute. There is an international call to action for disability rights that don't exist in the United States. Unfortunately sometimes, as an American, I, myself forgot about that. The crisis shows that a lot of immigrants with disabilities and parents of children living with disabilities are immigrating to the U.S. and fleeing their home lands as a result of a lack of [indiscernible] -- many immigrants with injury and death move to the United States. Immigrating to the U.S. is very challenging and difficult. Limited access to medical treatment in their countries. Millions of undocumented immigrants in the U.S., it's unknown how many are disabled. Often disability is a result of the harsh living conditions, as a result of living in the developing world. As a result of poverty, as a result of limited access and only available jobs, the main available jobs include agriculture and as a result, a lot of people become disabled as a result of living in poverty. There are a variety of barriers that immigrants face upon their arrival in the United States. These all, these pictures kind of show you all of the barriers and there are more. But we're going to focus on these six. When disabled immigrants arrive in the United States, the challenges they face don't end. The tragedy, the intersectional relationship between one's ethnic origin and disability creates a double edge sword of discrimination. Obviously ableism is a chief source of problems, but when this is mixed with ethnicity it creates a breeding ground for discrimination, language barriers and poverty. On the discrimination front, it's very implicit bias against immigrants and people of color in the Health Care, education employment systems. If you think it's hard to get a job as a person with a disability, just imagine on ethnicity or race. Many immigrants tend to be people of color as well. Language barriers, many immigrants struggle with speaking and learning. Added to that, many have intellectual disability that may prevent that. Ask yourselves, in your disabilities, do you use translators or even [indiscernible] in the non-English-speaking world. The world doesn't revolve around the United States. Poverty, a combination of all these barriers leads to poverty and destitution. To give you a defined version of what intersectionality means with respect to ethnic origin. Is that all of one's identities, including disabilities may limit your access to services, resources, Health Care, education and housing. That's the heart of what intersectionality is, which occurs when oppression is based on multiple identities, race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, sexual identity, or class. There's no such thing as a person who is blind with a disability. They are present within all of us. (?) To expand on the definition of intersectionality, a few of the unique problems that immigrants with disabilities face includes gender-based violence, and xenophobia. I've had members of my own family that have been deported as a result of being undocumented. Xenophobia is an irrational dislike of people in other countries. Many immigrants tend to be people of color. This is exemplified in racism endured by disabled immigrants. A little bit about my immigrant story. You can see in this picture, that's me with my brothers. That's a picture of us when I was younger before I became disabled. That's our traditional African attire. We look different. My parents spoke different. As you can tell by my name, I'm of foreign descent. My parents were both born in West Africa and in that region there are views about disability that are often oppressive and tie into gender bias. Even when immigrants move to America, these cultural beliefs come with them. So, when dealing with disabled immigrants, it's best to accept their culture even if you do not agree with their customs or beliefs. My parents were growing up, there was no school for the blind in Nigeria. There was no disability services. Those things did not exist. The disabled population resided in the gutter. If your child was disabled, as a result, they would be abandoned often. I've seen countless barriers along the way. There was a stereotype that people not from here aren't smart. Despite the fact they're educated. Even in public school I had challenges. I had a teacher accuse me of taking advantage of my disability. My high school was used to provide me with an elevator key. Our building has four floors. I took my complaints to the School Board and lobbied for changes and education policies. It has to do with the is your skin color, your ethnic identity and the way you sound when you speak to people or read off your name and people assume you aren't from here. Asking me to translate what my mother says even though she's speaking English. My next slide is creating a plan of action so we can all make institutional changes for the benefit of disabled people. As a young person, I learned early on, I can make changes if I apply myself and if I allow that to transient through my [indiscernible]. We can all make change. We can create a centralized outreach plan that targets the communities, informing them this is a safe space, regardless of their legal status. There is a fear that if I say I'm undocumented or my family members are undocumented, someone will want to deport me. (?) Even though recruiting volunteers and staff from your organizations that are multilingual. Beginning to learn cultures outside of your own. Comprehension immigration reforms, disabled immigrants as well. If you hear a racist comment, don't be afraid to call someone out. It's not a problem to identify. That's how we change things by having discussions. By not allowing certain comments to fly and hiring diverse and racial and ethnic backgrounds. One of the common threads in American democracy is pulling yourself up by your bootstraps. That's not the reality for a lot of people of color. A lot of times people are hired through word of mouth, they're hired because their father knows somebody. Those interpersonal community connections. Stop just hiring your friend's daughter, there are locally historic black colleges you can pull from. People with immigrant backgrounds as well. And that concludes my portion. >> Great, thanks, Ola. I'm going to go ahead to slide 35 for our final Q&A break. Obviously I welcome questions for Ola's session, but if you have questions from earlier in the presentation, you're welcome to ask those now too. And again...a reminder, star pound if you want to ask a question on the phone or you can type your question in the web chat or caption chat. While we're waiting for your questions, there was a great question while Ola presenting. It's about the on demand link. Of course, the full copy, archived copy of the presentation will be archived on ILRUs website. Given the nature of the topic, you and others can access that on demand link for free. Again...within 48 hours, usually much sooner. I have posted that on the website. ILRU.org/training-on-demand. There, you'll see a list of topics. This isn't up there yet, when the archive is finished, it'll be loaded. That'll include full audio -- let me say it this way. It includes the presentation just like you're seeing it now. It's timed, it has the captions and everything. You can also open up the audio transcripts separately. I thought I'd do a plug for that while I was waiting for your questions. Okay...I see a few people typing. Again, looks like we've got 12 minutes until the end of the webinar, so plenty of time. So...please let us know how we can help you as you think about implementing some of these suggestions in conversations at your CIL. Okay, next question is from Jennifer. She says, Ola, you mentioned taking a stand against racism. Minorities within the CIL may want to engage in the conversation around racism, but may not want to face the burden of defending their race, the minority experience or having to face conversations around white guilt. What steps should they take to combat these encounters? >> It's often difficult as a person of color to not want to be the [indiscernible] of your race. I think in those environments, I guess, if you're white, the question is, don't allow it to come off as that person has all the answers, or their views come off as representative of the entire race. People of color on our end can understand these conversations are uncomfortable, but important to have. One of my colleagues told me, if you're from the stereotype that you're coming off as an angry person because you speak out about racial injustice at work and education, get over it. Everyone's going to have a perception of you or prejudice of you your entire life. Allow yourself to let go and don't feel like you have to be forced to educate. Understand you can create environments to make a change. In your Independent Living Centers, you can make it clear that a person won't be published because of their thoughts or beliefs. I think that's what a lot of people with color are afraid of. Will my career be over if I say the wrong thing? People talk about injustice all the time. I think there should be an environment in which you allow that conversation to happen. I think it can be helped with, even in my office, we have signs, don't be afraid to speak, don't be afraid to push the envelope. Don't be afraid to say what's on your mind and just affirm here, affirm to your staff members that they will not be penalized because of their views. >> Great, thanks, Ola. One thing, if I may, that I'd like to highlight, as disability advocates, we have a lot of these skills already and we know how to have these conversations in regards to you know, nothing about us without us and disability representation. And if you apply that to an intersection -- or through an intersectional lens, I think you can find that we have these conversations with others all the time. With allies and enemies alike, about the importance of authentic representation and that when you think about that, in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation or a host of other identities, that you can speak in solidarity, but you're not necessarily speaking for others or you might not have the same life experience. So, just keep in mind that, I think a lot of you all, I mean, we do all have our own identities and perspectives and some of these conversations might be more natural in our CILs that we might expect. Okay...Laura says thank you for that clear message of the reality of intersectionality. I feel it's absolutely necessary for CILs to have any practicality for this modern era. I've been defending the idea of being a trustworthy faith-based, welcoming and identifying with people of color in the building. She adds, I work directly with the immigrant community. They always identify first who they are culturally, ethnically than what kind of disability they live with. >> That can be, as an African person of West African descent, a lot of African-Americans we know are black. Our tribal identity or national origin. There might be a different view of what racism is from a perspective of an immigrant or ethnic identity. It is, that's the beauty of a personality that affects people differently. You know.... >> Great. Still have plenty of time, I'll give about 30 seconds to see if there are additional questions or comments. I have a short wrap-up, but it will just take a moment. I want to be sure we're able to respond to any questions you have first. While we're waiting, I'll give a little commercial. We have a webinar coming up on April 14th, through the IL-NET project for CILs and SILCs for people with cognitive disabilities, broadly defined. Autistic people, people with intellectual disabilities and that'll be with Julia. If you haven't seen that announcement yet, let me know, I'll send it to you. An IL-NET webinar so you can sign up on NCIL's website. I don't see additional questions. I'll begin to do the wrap-up and if any questions roll in, we'll certainly address them before we break. We have the time for that. So...I'm going to click here to slide 36. And...we have the link to the evaluation for the webinar. And...this is a live link, so if you still want to way the rest of the webinar, don't click it yet, but that's a live link, you can click right on it, it just takes a moment to complete. I know some of you are participating in small groups, that's great, we love that, but I hope that each of you will fill this out as individuals so you can share your thoughts. This same link was in the confirmation e-mail that was sent to you. And...we'll also send a thank you out tomorrow with this link again. But please do so with that, when you open it up, you'll see I was telling the truth. It is pretty short. But it's really important to us, so please do tell us what you thought of the presentation. Just as I hoped, here's another comment. So...Laura says, so, why not start by acknowledging who they are before what they need as a simple approach to overcoming white supremacy? Thank you again for sharing this information that all CILs can benefit from. So, partly a question, partly a comment. Anybody want to respond to that? >> This is Keri. I just definitely want to agree with that. I think it's very important to acknowledge who people are and one last thing I wanted to say is hopefully from this webinar that our centers can know not to ask people to choose between the intersections of the identity and the intersections that the advocates need and see where we can go from there. >> Great. Well, I think that's a perfect way to close the call. So again, if you all have any -- speaking to the audience, if you have any additional questions or thoughts, as you mull this over or discuss it with others, please do discuss this with others, please reach out to us, I'll offer myself as a single point of contact for simplicity sake, my e-mail again is Tim@NCIL.org. So if you have questions about today's presentation, or any of our upcoming presentations, please let me know. If it's related to the content, I'll be happy to pass it along to Dustin, Keri or Ola, but of course, they offered their contact information on, on -- I think it was slide three. So, reach out to them, you can e-mail them or maybe it's an excuse to hop on Twitter and tweet at them if you haven't done that before. So...and thanks to all of you for taking time from your day to join us. I really do appreciate it. >> Audio recording for this meeting has ended. >> I know it's not easy to find 90 minutes to set aside. I do appreciate your time here. Dustin, Keri and Ola, can't say enough, this is such an important conversation for our community and you all have hit it out of the park. It's been great. Thank you so much for putting this together for us. It'll be archived so everyone can share it with their colleagues. With that, we'll close today's call. Everyone have a wonderful afternoon. Bye-bye. [Call concluded at 4:28 p.m. ET]. "This text is being provided in a rough draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings."