



The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the October 2022 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC wrote about the topic of disability awareness. This allowed members to share their personal insights, experiences and memories. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

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Celebrate Disability This October!

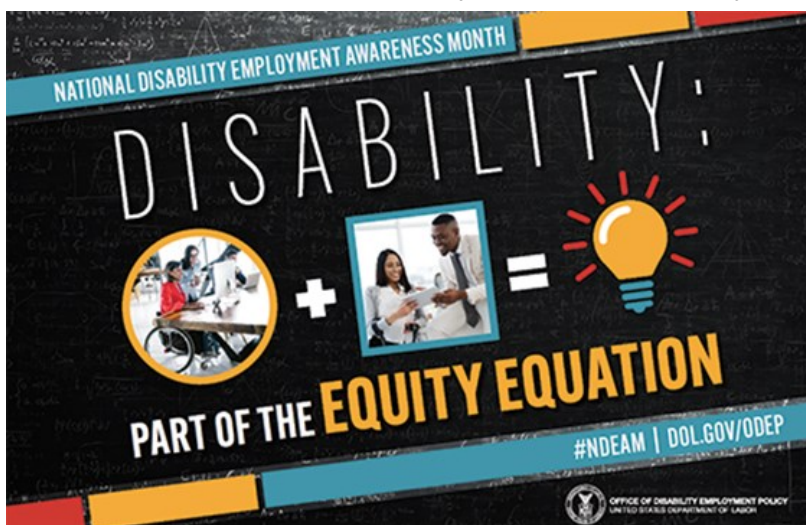
October is a big month for people with disabilities. Not only do we honor Disability History and Awareness weeks, but we also recognize the National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

In Florida, the first two weeks of October are Disability History and Awareness Weeks. During these weeks Florida schools teach students about disability history and the disability rights movement so they will gain a better understanding about disabilities and be more aware about people with disabilities.

It is important to me that people learn more about disabilities because, as a person with disabilities, I want to be understood, respected, and accepted by others. I want them to know that everyone has differences, and I am just as good as anyone else.

For the whole country, October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Taryn Williams of the U.S. Department of Labor says, "A strong workforce is the sum of many parts, and disability has always been a key part of the equation. People with disabilities make up a wonderfully multifaceted group. By recognizing the full complexion of our community, we can ensure our efforts to achieve disability inclusion are, in fact, truly inclusive."

These words and NDEAM mean a lot to me because everyone should be aware and include others, especially at work. My workplace includes me even though I have a disability. I am grateful for that, and when I contribute to the workforce, I make a statement about my abilities not my impairments.



This year, the NDEAM theme is "Disability: Part of the Equity Equation." I like this theme because it points out that we are all equal! Take a look at this year's poster and join the movement!

By John Howard Baldino



What does disability history and awareness mean to me?

What it means to me is without the people who have and had a disability, to fight for what is right and what they believe in, then we would not have the freedom and the disability rights that we do today. It also means I would be told I could not go to a normal school, I would have to go to a special school that the government said I would have to attend and be forced to be separated from other kids without a disability or have any kind of disability issues. I may not know what kind of world I would be missing out on.

The big thing for me is that disability is not just a condition, it is a word that describes a condition. Just because we have a condition does not mean we should be put in a certain class without even asking us if that is what we want. We do not want to be in a special class, we are just like every other person without a disability. By doing this it opens up a door to being bullied because we are different and shows them that we are different. The best example of this is the movie Crip Camp that is the inspiration behind this topic for me. Feel free to watch the movie and see why it means a lot to me. You will also see why we have disability history and awareness to this day and how we got the government to change the laws to be in favor of people who have a disabilities.

By Morgan Griffin





Living up to our Legacy

Every year in October, the first two weeks are designated to be Disability History and Awareness weeks. During this time, I think to myself, “how can I carry on the legacy of disability education in our country?” Thinking back, I have done a lot. I have helped teachers put together presentations to inform students about the history and struggles we have faced through the years.

As I was about to leave high school, I helped my economics teacher. She was teaching another class at the time and one of her topics was minority rights. I pointed out to her that people with disabilities are in fact the largest minority and offered to help her create a power point presentation for her class. We had been working on it for a couple weeks, with me giving her suggestions, like how the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) was created and passed. Eventually much to my joy, she decided there was far too much information, so she decided to set aside one day in her class for exploring the topic. Although I was unable to participate, the ESE director attended the class and was impressed that I took it upon myself to help the teacher with this very important project. The teacher told me she would do this every year.

Later, when I was in college, I took an American History class and was able to do something similar. I had a professor who fit an enormous amount of information into her classes, but when I pointed out to her that there was nothing about disabilities in her presentation, she offered to devote one slide on her PowerPoint, which was as much as she could fit into her time slot. Somehow though, she realized how much needed to be said and I managed to get her up to two slides. I know it doesn't sound like much, but it was great compared to zero which was the original plan for her class. The lesson here is that any one of us can live up to the legacy of teaching with just a little perseverance.

By Serena Wetmore

**Our
Community
is Better
together**



Glad Times are Changing

Recently, I read the script of the play, *The Elephant Man*. Immediately it brought up thoughts of my preparation for the Disability and History Awareness Panel for the 24th Annual Family Café. In my preparation, I stumbled across the Ugly Laws. And I could definitely see, the concept of these laws were definitely in affect during the setting of the play.

The *Elephant Man* is based on the true story of Joseph Merrick. He was born in 1862 with the condition of Proteus syndrome which caused him to have severe deformities. Back then, Ugly Laws were in effect. And he spent his life first in a workhouse, then in a freak show/circus, and then institutionalized. The Ugly Laws, as they were called, were discriminatory laws against people who did not look “normal”. If a person didn’t meet the society standard, they were not allowed out in public. This forced some people to seek work in the circus, become institutionalized or remain at home and out of the public eye. Thankfully the Ugly Laws ended in 1974 in the United States. Unfortunately, society at large is very ableist and continues to allow prejudice based on looks or diagnosis.

I see it when I tell someone that I have disabilities. You can see the change in their eyes. And sometimes they’ll talk down to me, infantilize the conversation. I see it with my friends who have visible disabilities. When they go to order something, the server will ask someone else what they want instead of asking them. Society needs to be educated about disability history. They need to come to an understanding so that they will be accepting.

The first two weeks in October in Florida are Disability and History Awareness Weeks. This is a great time to educate the public. Schools are requested to teach Disability and History Awareness. It would be better if they were mandated to teach it. Hopefully one day, we will see a greater acceptance and understanding. In the meantime, I will continue to advocate and spread awareness, which will hopefully lead to full acceptance!

By JJ Humphrey



Disability History & Awareness

As you should know by now if you've followed this publication and the FYC for any amount of time, the first two weeks of October are designated as Disability History & Awareness Weeks in the state of Florida. During these two weeks, there are several special ceremonies, events and other initiatives that take place. Nationally in October, you have Disability Employment Awareness Month.

All kinds of other related ceremonies take place during this month that promotes this important subject. Personally, as a person with multiple disabilities, it means everything. I think it is just as important and people should be knowledgeable of it just like other histories such as world, American, native, black, etc.. that you hear about and most likely learned to some degree in school. Just like those you commonly hear about, disability history and awareness is just important and it would mean everything to me if one day it was finally a required curriculum in school and not just optional like it currently is. It promotes and encourages inclusion and spreads the word that people with disabilities are no different than able-bodied people and that is a little on what disability history and awareness means to me.

By Derek Carraway





Disability history and awareness

When I hear the words disability history and awareness, I think back to a time where people didn't know how to tell if a person had a disability or not, because doctors didn't have the technology to test for a disability. I think of how some people might have more of a disability that shows than others with a hidden disability, like mine is hidden.

Then In the past, I don't think people had iPhones or computers until 1994, so they couldn't spread much awareness except to people they knew and trusted. They didn't have a job coach to help them find a job. They also didn't have places and rides that accommodated people with a disability, so they never got out as much. They didn't have a place called vocational rehab, that would help them get through high school and college.

Now in 2022 we have more ways to spread awareness. We have job coaches to help us find jobs. We also have many places and rides that accommodate for people with a disability. We have vocational rehab now that helps us get through high school and college.

This is all made possible through disability history and awareness, and that is what I think of.

Here are 3 ways that I think we could help with spreading disability history and awareness.

1. We could provide people with information on what a disability is.
2. We could make the president of the United States aware of the history and ask him for help to spread the word for us.
3. We can also have doctors tell parents of a child with a disability where to go to get involved in a plan for the child's future.

By Chelle Sandiford





How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round.

We hope to hear from you soon!



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