

Seattle-King County Cultural Accessibility
Consortium, Wednesday, June 12, 2019

NOTE TO READER: This text is being provided in a rough draft format. Realtime captioning is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a verbatim record of the proceedings.

Lisa K. Hutchinson
Certified Realtime Captioner

>>ELIZABETH: I just want to make a quick announcement. At check-in we forgot to ask if it's okay if you would like to be photographed or videotaped. If you are not okay with being photographed or in a video, please raise your hand. And we will have someone hand you a Post-it so that you will not be in any pictures.

I apologize for that oversight.

Please raise your hand if you are not comfortable with being photographed.

>> I can also just pass them down.

>>ELIZABETH: No worries. I totally forgive you

(laughter).

>>Hi, everyone.

Welcome.

My name is Jeff Herrmann, the Managing Director here at Seattle Rep. I want to take a briefly moment to welcome you to our space and thank you all for being here.

We're really happy to be hosting this workshop, the second in a series.

We had the first one a month or two ago maybe. But --

>> March.

>> Really happy to have you back.

I want to thank Elizabeth for her incredible leadership. She is a force of nature so thank you for driving to make all of this happen.

Restrooms are right out the door (pointing) that way.

(Pointing) you can also go out this way and find another set.

This room is equipped with a hearing loop.

If you turn your T-coil setting to on you should be able to access it.

And what else can I say?

We have been on this journey here at The Rep along with many of you and other organizations in town to prove access to

our offerings to everybody in our community. We're really excited to learn more how to do that better.

Let me turn it over to my good friend Kathy Hsieh with the City of Seattle.

(Applause.)

>> Thank you, Jeff.

I also want to thank Elizabeth and her Seattle-King County Cultural Accessibility Consortium for heading up and leading these workshops and also let you know that the Office of Arts & Culture, one of the funders for projects like this, the reason why we do this is because we are trying to really inspire our entire community, our arts and cultural community, really look at how do we create inclusive welcoming spaces that are equitable so that anyone who lives, visits, or works here in the City of Seattle or King County or the state, can have access to what we have to offer and that's why these workshops are so important.

We also in alignment with these workshops we also are working in partnership with a number of groups doing an online calendar to be able to help promote accessible events so if you have not got an email from us and are interested in more information you can talk to me about that and we want to get you connected so you can start posting your events and testing that

out.

But more importantly, with all of these events, one of the things I really want to make clear is that we have a wonderful panel of panelists up here and each of them has their own unique perspective.

They are all experts in what they have to share in their own stories and the work that they have been doing and the reason why we're funding a series of workshops is because each person has a unique experience, whether you are a person of color, someone with a disability, ever different gender or sexual orientation or religion or immigrant status or age, the reality is that each individual person's experience is unique and so what you're going to hear up here today is fabulous but don't feel that you hear from someone, say, who is deaf that their experience represents all Deaf people or that if you hear from someone who has mobility issues, that that represents everyone. Right? That's something we just want to make clear with every situation. These are incredible experts and what they have to share will hopefully open our awareness and some of our blind spots and that each of the workshops will have different panelists and each of those experiences are all valid and so if there are questions, if there are things that come up, we're all here and available to help answer and work together as a community to create the most accessible, inclusive, equitable community that we can in

the arts and cultural sector. Thanks. (Applause.)

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you, Kathy. You said it really well. Thank you. Welcome, everybody. I want to make sure that you are in the right place. (Laughter.) We are doing accessibility: Laying the foundation in your organization. So, if you are not in the right place, please feel free to stay. It's going to be very interesting. (Laughter.) I want to thank our sponsors, city of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture office. The Seattle Rep for hosting us, and for funding us. Really appreciate your support. This is the second workshop in a series of three workshops that we will be having this year.

I also want to thank all of the presenters you see here, Tim, they re saw, Wei, Jenny, and Andrea. Thank you for being here and sharing your expertise with us and thank you to our wonderful volunteers and partners who have helped put everything together. I also want to acknowledge our steering committee for the Seattle-King County Accessibility Consortium. That's a mouthful. (Laughter.) Please raise your hand if you are part of the steering committee. I want to make sure that everybody knows who you are.

Raise your hands.

Raise your hand.

There you go.

Great.

(Cell phone ringing.) And we have some great partners and resources without whom this would not have been possible, because as Kathy said, we're not all experts in everything. We're expert in our own field, our own thing. So, guidelines.

Goals of today's workshop. I went too quickly.

So, today we're going to dive into reasons of why we should care about accessibility. We're going to give an overview of terminology, the ADA and statistics.

I promise you it will be interesting. (Laughter.)
Bear with me.

Paint a picture of what accessibility could look like in cultural organizations.

And hear from these wonderful folks here about what they are doing in their organization. This is a full packed presentation, so please feel free to do what you need to do, if there is restroom there are cookies out that need to be eaten if you need a sugar fix in the middle of the afternoon.

Guidelines: I want to remind everyone, first of all, who came to the first workshop, please raise your hand. Okay. Great. So, we have some new folks. So last time we talked about guidelines to keep this a safe space because we respect all efforts to work on accessibility issues in your organization. The fact that you are here is a big deal. You are taking time

out of your day to come and learn about these issues because you care. Or maybe somebody told you you had to be here (laughter) but I think you care. And really want to be here. So, we also recognize that each organization is at varying levels of accomplishment with accessibility. We are here to help you and not to judge. We are not experts in everything. We are diligent in studying and researching our resources. Questions can be texted at any time and the number (pointing) is up on this board here 713-7683. And please text at any time during the presentation. The questions will be answered at the end of the presentation, hopefully we will have a lot of time to do that, which is why we're going to be talking fast. So, we'll do our best to answer all of them.

Or most of them.

So here is an exercise for you. But before we start, I want to find out, show of hands, who here is from they theaters?

Okay, great.

Who here is from museums?

Okay. Who is from a cultural space, some other kind of cultural space?

Okay.

Who here is from the government? (Laughter.) Oh.
All right.

And who here is a parent or is affiliated with someone

with a disability?

Okay, great.

Wonderful.

We have a really diverse audience here. I'm really excited that you're all here. So I would like for you to think about why you are here, why did you come today, why should we care about accessibility. Why should the arts community care about accessibility for people with disabilities. Why should you as a person care. So find someone you don't know very well, behind you, in front of you, diagonally and talk each of you for 30 seconds. I'm going to be ruthless (laughter) you have a minute total to have a conversation. Thank you.

>>ELIZABETH: So, I would love to hear some sharing of what you found out from the person you talked to. As you may notice, I have a computer in front of me, and my computer has my presentation on it.

I also have a smaller one here. What do you call it a tablet I guess of some kind an iPad or a tablet. This is captioning what the captioner -- thank you, by the way, I forgot to thank you. The captioner is captioning what everybody is saying, even what I'm saying, so I can see if I missed something, I can see what I'm saying (Laughter.) So, it's very useful for me in case somebody's speaking from far away, I can't really see

or hear them. So, please raise your hand and I'm going to have Tory repeat so that everybody can hear.

So, what did you learn? What is the take-away?

Come on, there has got to be a take away.

Yes?

>> I spoke to somebody who had a -- an issue with a lot of things going on and somebody came to see a show and there was an issue with getting them seated properly and being comfortable to see a show and so they are here to talk about -- to think about that and how to make the space and the programming more accessible.

>> So they are here to try to make their space and their programming more accessible which was inspired by a patron incident that occurred.

>>ELIZABETH: Anybody else? Yeah?

>> So, my friend Marni and I, she is from a writing support group.

>> Writing workshop.

>> Writing workshop group and I work in supported employment. I work with people with disabilities to help them find employment. I'm -- one of the things we talked about was the necessity in having access to the arts because in a population where we're already pushed to the margins, there is a lot of I guess what I would say -- there is already a feeling of not

feeling like they belong, and what I see in my clients is they don't -- their mental health is impacted and so by providing accessibility to the arts to join a -- to join what we deem as the "normal" society, it allows them more inclusive environment and an uptick in their own mental health and that's something I would like to encourage my own clients is to reach out to those organizations and settings, but it's difficult. (Laughter.) It's very difficult.

>> So, essentially ensuring that the arts are accessible to everyone because it promotes really positive mental health and other things. Something that you said reminded me of something that Lincoln Center of the arts recently said. They said there's a difference between welcoming somebody and giving somebody a sense of belonging and I feel like that's kind of what you just said.

A. Thank you.

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you. That was wonderful. Thank you for sharing. So, I'm moving along.

Why should cultural organizations be accessible? So, remember you can text questions any time, so if a question comes up, feel free to text.

Reason 1: It's the right thing to do. So from a health perspective I have a public health background, I'm always thinking about prevention. I'm always thinking about how we

can live our lives fully and be a part of a vibrant arts community. Being inclusive and welcoming sets the tone for a positive experience in the arts. People who engage in the arts are healthier, less depressed, and feel more a part of society. And that's common sense. And there is some research that indicates that if you are involved in some creative outlet, it makes you happier. So that's reason 1.

Reason 2: It's part of an organization's vision. Usually the diversity, equity, and inclusion, and accessibility is usually a part of the organization's vision or strategic plan. So, for example, "Dance for All" or the People's Theatre is inclusive of all populations. Accommodating people with disabilities or aging folks is a natural fit.

Reason 3: It's great for business! (Laughter.) Think about it. People who receive good customer service or experience their friends and family receiving good service will feel respected, welcomed, and included. And guess what? They will return over and over again to support you with their dollars. It makes sense, right?

Reason 4: The population in the U.S. is aging. Except for me. I'm going to stay young forever. (Laughter.) Each one of us is going to eventually need accessible accommodations as our bodies age or become injured. And by the way the joke that I make is that the last time I gave you this workshop, I had one

cochlear implant. Now I have two. So, I tell all my friends who are my age, or older, that their hearing is getting worse, but mine is getting better. (Laughter.) So, perhaps someone close to us will need accessible accommodations. We don't want to inevitably be shut out from doing things we love.

So that's reason 4.

And that ties into reason 3, it makes good business sense. You will want to include a population that's aging and is going to have more issues with their bodies.

So, let's consider our -- before I go on to reason 5 I want to talk about a potential consumer base. 1 in 5 people have a disability. Elderly people are more likely to develop disabilities as they age, as I said. 10,000 people every day are turning 65 and that's not me, by the way. (Laughter.) And that computes to almost 4 million people turning 65 every year. I round it up, okay. I round it up.

So that's a lot of people. Right? And so think of the implications of this. When we look around the room, there were 100 people who RSVPed. I'm not sure there are 100 people here. But that means that 20 people in this room have a disability. So, that's 20 potential consumers who could be participated in your space, your program, and events. So, remember that disabilities are not always visible. Some are and some are not. So, as I said earlier, America is aging. And we have some

interesting statistics. This is from I think 2016. We have about two million people in King County and of those two million, about 10% have a disability. That's almost 200,000 people. So we're talking a good chunk of the people who are in the county who have a disability. But then if you think about the city -- by the way I'm going to email you all of the slides so don't be feverishly writing because I'm going to email these to you. So sit back and enjoy the show. (Laughter.) This side is just in Seattle. That's about 630,000. Of those, 9% have a disability. That's very similar to King County. So, I just want to give you an idea of all the different -- of the breakdown of disabilities.

So, what do these terms mean? So, this is the ADA definition of disability. We're going to talk about ADA in just a minute. Someone who has a record of, or is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities: Eating, breathing, walking, talking, seeing, hearing even. I'm surprised I didn't put that down. So, yes. That's the definition.

Then accessible. It means it's easy to reach. It's easy to enter. It's easy to speak with or use.

So, it really goes hand in hand with inclusion: Ensuring that participants with disabilities are welcomed and feel treated like any other patron. So, when we think about how people with disabilities are included in the accessibility

strategy, that's why we're here. We're trying to figure this out.

All right, so, what I'll do now is turn this over to Wei Ying Wong who is an expert on universal design because universal design is a really important way, I think, of thinking about how to make spaces accessible.

>>WEI: Just a quick clarification. I'm an expert in being interested in universal design (laughter).

Has anybody -- does anybody here have an idea of universal design? Show of hands. Yes I think this is a fairly common thing.

One of the really things we really differentiate -- one of the things we try to differentiate is as you know with accessibility it's just having the opportunity to be able to participate, right? So, and you can kind of think about well you want to make sure folks with different disabilities can participate and have access, but is just and a key thing here is being accessible, and still a special kind of -- this is something that's specially designed. But whereas when you can move into something like universal design which means how you design something with the widest differences or with the widest differences of abilities in mind as well as different kinds of interests, different intent, and how do you access that, so that everybody has -- because it's about all of us go through periods

in which we might have if I run five miles I get achy the next day and I won't be able to walk up the stairs very well. Right and it's all these things about how do we actually design so that nobody's called out, none of these -- everybody can fully participate without being kind of singled out in some way as being different or having special needs. Right? That's always the critical piece of it. And in designing that, all of us actually have a better experience. So if a door for example is easier to pull and is lighter, so all of us require less strength to be able to do it, and that's one of the ways in which we think about universal design, right, is actually easier access, so that way everybody doesn't have to struggle with it. If you have less strength, it's not just about disability. It's about everybody having better experience. And one of the things that you see here is a ramp that's on the side is one of the things that we think about access, but if you design a ramp as the call way in which everybody can use it, the core way, you're not being called out as somehow being different from the experience. So that's one of the things that we think about. And for those of you who are familiar with it, obviously there are 7 different principles associated with. It's about equitable use. Everybody accesses it in the same way, so nobody's called out as being different for needed to -- needing to use something. It should be flexible. So if you are taller, you are shorter, one of the

things I think about is being shorter, or vertically challenged (laughter), vertically challenged female, when I first think about -- actually my new office, I started having problems with my shoulders, for example. I started having real bad aching and sharp pains down my shoulder. One of the things when we looked at it ergonomically designed we realized my chair and its arms were really designed for 6 foot tall 200 pound male and now I have to contort my body around. Right? And so that's not me. And how do I actually be able to have designs that actually allow me to flex it so that I'm not trying to conform to that which is defined somehow arbitrarily as "normal." How many of us fall within the "normal" construct and as I'm sure a lot of you are aware, the "normal" typically means male, typically means able-bodied male. And even for females, that's a huge thing that we all have to tend to conformity to. Right? So how can it be simple and intuitive? This is also something that we think about, is it's not just about disability. It's also about if somebody speaks a different language, right, speaks a different language and we are only interpreting in English, and how do you actually have to be able to read it or it's different levels.

If you maybe able to speak English but your vocabulary does not necessarily include certain words can you be able to figure out something without complex instructions. So that's one of the things we need to think about, is how we provide

something, where I look at it -- like when I look at a chair, I know: Oh, I get to sit there. It's not some contorted design in which I'm like: I have no idea what that is supposed to do. So how do we actually design around ways that people can react and respond sieve to it.

It's also perceptible information. So, is it differentiatable? Are there ways in which you are accessing it or can read it simply? Are there ways that you can -- you can access the information without, again, going through multiple ways ever trying to find it. So one of the things that always intrigues me is in a previous institution in which I worked we were very proud we had designed this whole thing around universal design and one of the things we put around all our interpreters was we had braille. So we were really pleased with ourselves we had braille on all our signage. So we brought in the visually impaired community and said help us assess this. And they said well as a visually impaired community we don't go around touching things, (laughter) without instructions.

This is not a thing we do.

We are just not randomly reaching for things and just because you have braille there doesn't mean I actually know where your braille is going to be so I still can not access your information because this may be catering to my community, but it is not a -- in the larger context it is, you know, in a big

exhibit you have a little signage that's this size (gesturing). If you are visually impaired you are just not going to be out there touching any random things especially in a zoo (laughter). So that's -- so anyway you have to have greater tolerance for error and again we have talked a lot about physical effort. And one of the big things is obviously size and approach. So, you must be able to get to some of these easily. You can not have to squeeze through multiple -- how do you great obstacles? We also think about we have things that we may have an access ramp but then we over the course of time because nobody uses it we start putting things on top of it so now suddenly if they need to use it they have to squeeze around it so those are not things we necessarily think about. So we can talk more about it and this is something we continue to be very engaged with and interested in. So --

>>ELIZABETH: So, I want to make it clear that this is the tip of the iceberg for all these topics we're talking about and I hope to have workshops in the future that are going to do a deeper dive into some of these topics. For example, we may have one just on universal design, which I'm sure Wei would love to speak for hours on.

>>WEI: As I have. (Laughter.)

VOICE: Imagine a town full of physically impaired

people. All wheelchair users.

There aren't any able-bodied people.

So naturally when they built the town, the community decided it was pointless to have ceilings 10 foot high and --

VOICE: 7 foot high.

So the ceilings were built to 7 --

>>ELIZABETH: Talk to one another.

>>ELIZABETH: Okay, we're ready.

Imagine a town -- (Read captioning on the PowerPoint screen.)

VOICE: Here's what's awesome about being a writer.

In this town --

>>ELIZABETH: Obviously I don't -- okay, okay.

All right.

So, I'm going to go back to my original slide.

Reason 5! (Laughter.) It's the law. So, going back to the reasons, we are talking about why cultural organizations should be accessible. I talked about four reasons.

And the fifth reason is: It's the law. And now it's not just about compliance. It's also about doing the right thing, it's about attracting more people to your business, but, yeah, there is another reason and I'm going to have Andrea talk about this.

>>ANDREA: Thank you. Elizabeth.

So, hi. I am Andrea Kovich I'm an accessibility consultant at studio Pacifica. Sorry.

And I'm going to first talk to you about what is the ADA. Which seem kind of obvious, but I guarantee that people don't really understand this. The ADA is a civil rights law. Fundamentally it comes back to people's rights.

So, it is based on the belief that all individuals, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to full benefits of equal treatment in American society. So the next time you are curse the ADA about costing too much, think about rights. Think about the things that you take for granted every day, like getting a job, public transportation, enjoying shows, going places. The ADA is really important to me, so --

Okay, the historical predecessor of the ADA was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Which was actually the first federal law to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities. It requires that federally funded programs be

accessible to people with disabilities. I would like to note the federal funding does include receiving a grant from a federal agency like the National Endowment for the Arts. That's a big one. The ADA clarifies and extends the scope of the Rehabilitation Act.

So the basic organizational structure roughly corresponds with the areas that the ADA prohibits discrimination. Title I is employment. Which I would love to talk more about, but unfortunately I don't really have that much time. Title II, state and local government. Title III public accommodations. Title IV telecommunications. And Title V is kind of miscellaneous category. No one completely gets it but, yeah (Laughter.) So, the ADA created a framework for continual compliance by public entities. So, while there are some obvious things, like the ongoing responsibility for new construction to comply and for employers to not discriminate, there is also a requirement that older buildings continue to remove barriers that are readily achievable or provide alternate ways to access the goods and services. There is no grandfather provision. Just because your building is old does not mean that you do not have to comply with the ADA.

So, for the purposes of this presentation, we will be focusing on Title III. If you are here from the government, please don't tune out. I promise this will be helpful to you.

So, Title III says a public accommodation must ensure equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In arts and culture, Title III accommodations include museums, zoos, theaters, and other cultural spaces. So most of you are Title III.

In Title III, private entities have three mandatory areas of obligation. 1: Operate in a nondiscriminatory manner: Ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunities to participate in and benefit from all the services, activities, and other goods offered to other customers.

2: Ensure that communication with people who have disabilities is as effective as with others, means providing auxiliary aids and services to communicate effectively and when doing that, you must consider the person's normal methods of receiving communication. So, that means maybe ASL will not work so well for someone who doesn't know sign language.

And the big one in Title III: Provide accessibility in existing facilities, renovations, alterations, and new construction.

Getting a bit deeper into what providing accessibility really means, it means removing barriers in existing facilities when removal is readily achievable.

Readily achievable is a term that is defined within the ADA. It means that the barrier removal can be accomplished with little difficulty or expense in relation to the resources of the entity.

So, if you have a large budget, it's probably not going to fly that you don't have the resources to do it.

So, the second is providing alternatives when it is really not that readily achievable.

The third, all new construction must comply.

There have been several revisions and updates of the past 28 years, almost 29, so the ADA is having a birthday (laughter). It's coming up here. We can celebrate. (Laughter.) Our company always does, so -

So, the new regulations under the 2010 ADA: We are going to specifically look at tickets and accessible seating. Online ticketing. Tickets for accessible seats must be available for purchase during the same times, in the same ways, and during the same stages as the purchase of other tickets.

Accessible seating must be identified to the same level of specificity as other seats are on maps, seating charts, and brochures, and this does also apply to maps online, so seating charts online are usually a big problem.

Okay. Tickets for accessible seating must be available at all price levels. If possible, accessible seating

should also be in all seating options, like boxes, balconies.

The purchaser of accessible seats can purchase up to three companion seats and accessible seats can only be released when all others have sold out.

I do want to mention that the ADA does apply to Web sites. There are resources out there for figuring out Web site compatibility -- or accessibility. And speaking of Web sites, there are many great resources out there on the Web, including adata.org.

And ADA.gov where you can find everything I pretty much went over.

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you.

So, you have harder about the ADA and that was a small snippet of what this incredible piece of legislation has done for people with disabilities, 30 years ago. It still has some more work to do, of course. So now the presentations from the cultural organizations and we are going to start over here with Jenny.

>>JENNY: Hi. Good afternoon.

Can everyone hear me okay?

Okay. This microphone works? I think I need to Lean in a little bit.

My name is Jenny Woods. I'm with the Seattle Art

Museum. Today I am here talking to you as one of the co-chairs of our access team and then my other title at SAM is I'm the assistant Manager of Volunteer Programs.

So, at SAM we have an access team that was formed in 2016 and this was formed following a leadership model that we have at SAM. So, these are cross-departmental teams where we're folks from different departments are getting together and looking at trying to help solve issues at SAM. So we have a green team that looks at environmental practices. We have an equity team looking at racial equity. And following that model, we went to senior leadership and we said. The hey can we start an access team looking at accessibility at SAM? They thought that was a great idea, so the team was formed and the model that we have is that any interested staff member can join the access team, so this involves folks from all levels of the organization. And I admit initially we did specific asks to key folks we wanted to have on the team and they said yes, which was great, but in general, yes, anyone at SAM, any staff member at any level of SAM can join the access team so currently we have about 18 team members representing 11 different departments which is the vast majority of our departments have representation on the access team. Early on, right after forming the team, we had the brilliant idea of getting an intern to come in and help us and that intern developed an accessibility assessment where we

really went through all aspects of SAM and looked at accessibility and documented what we were doing, what we were not doing, all of those things. It was a really helpful process to sort of launch the team.

And then from that assessment, with that intern, we started crafting both some short term and longer term goals and some of the short term things we were able to knock off right away and some of the long-term things we have not started on yet and I don't have a timeline on some of those but that's why they are a longer term goal.

The team has of course benefitted from a cohort of different arts organs, networks, advisors, partners, and peer learning. We are not doing this alone. We should not be doing this alone. We are doing this in consultation with, alongside with, advice from, a wide variety of different folks from our community, national organizations, local organizations, individuals. That's a big part of any planning that we're doing, is not just thinking like: Oh, we're SAM, we know a lot about art museums. Let's make up some stuff about accessibility too. (Laughter.) So we definitely are doing this in consultation.

I wanted to address a couple of successes that we have had as a team real fast. I can't not mention our popular Art Beyond Sight tours, offered each month, October through June. These are for visitors who are blind or have limited vision and

they are operating at capacity every single month. This program has really taken off and been a really wonderful way for us to connect with that community here in Seattle at the art museum. We have also developed and implemented a system for creating large-print versions of our exhibition text. That seems like probably a really simple thing. It took us a little bit to figure it out but we did actually come up with a way to make that work for us. And then our access team members consult on exhibition design and in general advocate for access improvements across the board which has been a really great thing to do.

Additionally, I'm just personally excited about this. We just purchased this winter an all-terrain wheelchair for the Olympic Sculpture Park location. So this is exciting to be able to roll this out for folks who need to navigate the park with the wheelchair.

We also have different widths and heights.

Our permanent audio tours included verbal descriptions in the audio stops. That's an exciting thing as well.

One other success I mentioned hasn't quite happened yet but it's coming soon. The Asian art museum will reopen this winter and the accessibility challenges for the most part have been fully addressed at the Asian art museum. So, things like multiple accessible restrooms, family restrooms. Our auditorium has assistive listening capabilities and improved

wheelchair seating.

The Marge to the entrance is no longer rocky, meandering, difficult to navigate as it was before and the staff areas are accessible as well. So those are all exciting things coming up.

A few current efforts, things that we are working on, working on improved communication. So, updating our ADA route maps, working to improve the accessibility section of our Web site. These are things that we're actively in the midst of. As well as developing an internal training for our staff. This is something we're really excited B. I think it will be an extensive training and something that we can really customize and roll out to different members of staff so the security staff doesn't need the same training that the receptionist needs but we can customize a little bit, still having some basics for everybody. And in the meantime we have been, would go to provide resources for our staff so that they have something while we are working on getting that training together. Some challenges: Museum time moves slowly. Maybe theater time does too. I'm not sure. But what I mean by this is the planning process at least at Seattle Art Museum for exhibitions is a two to three year planning process. So if we implement a new change in the way we include, you know, a requirement for captioning in videos, going forward, that haven't going to be seen by the public for a couple of years

because that's just the way our timeline works. We are not able to really be as nimble as I think we would like to be sometimes, given this long-drawn-out planning process. So that can be a challenge. Another challenge is all the members of our team are doing the access work in addition to their regular work, accessibility is not part of any of our job descriptions to be perfectly blunt. So this is all something we're doing in addition to our regular jobs which usually take much of our time. Sometimes staff and I always think this is unintentional but unintentionally move us backwards instead of forwards with seventh. It's never like I say intentional, but things can happen, you know, simple thing from a plant that keeps getting moved in front of the automatic door opener or a last minute change to the layout of an exhibition that then creates some accessibility challenges. Those things happen and we have to roll with those sometimes. And then surprise, surprise, funding for large accessibility projects is a challenge. If anybody solved that, (laughter) make sure to share but that is a challenge for sure.

So, what's coming next for us: We have a Web site redesign on the horizon. The access team is looking forward to working with our technology team so that that does include better accessibility.

We are hoping to start offering regular ASL tours.

Those are hopefully going to be rolled out this fall. Stay tuned.

And ADA route map of the Olympic Sculpture Park, I have one of the versions of it here. This is way more complicated than we thought it was, so that's a big project. I mentioned the more training for staff. We're starting to talk about some longer range planning for some new projects for visitors with cognitive or sensory disabilities. They are sort of in the discussion phase at this point. And then building more community advisory groups and partners always is on our agenda.

Some ideas for getting started. These are a few things we thought of as a team. But first employ foremost, developing relationships, partnerships, advisories. Don't go it alone.

My next advice is pick the low hanging fruit. Is there something that's free, that's easy, that doesn't require permission up a all the way up the ladder and makes an impact? If that's something you can do, do that first.

I am a volunteer manager, as I mentioned, from my regular job, so utilize volunteers. Utilize interns to help with this process. They can be a great resource.

Amplify complaints you get up to senior leadership. Let them know that something's not going right.

And then use examples of things that have happened to make your case for more accessibility efforts and budgeting.

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you, Jenny. In addition, maybe using the patrons to help with this process, getting feedback from them can be another way to get good feedback on what's next.

>>WEI: Hi, everyone. It's me again. (Laughter.)
Wei Ying Wong from the Woodland Park Zoo.

I'm from the learning and innovation team.

I'm here to talk about snippets of what the zoo has been working on for the past few years and so a little bit of history. The zoo in many ways has always historically been interested in and there is kind of diversity and inclusion issues in pockets.

We have some sort of responsibility, there is felt both in terms as a responsibility based on income or responsibility based on different abilities or compliance, right, with ADA upgrades or with -- so there's always been these pockets of activities that have happened, right, but most of these activities are from the perspective of they are individual and they are also based on specific opportunities or specific individuals' areas of interest or passion.

So, we've always had a requirement of law. This has historically been something that the zoo has kind of engaged with but I would say in the past few years with the arrival of our

new CEO, so our CEO has been here three years now, so he has brought on a different executive team and he has reconstituted the board in very different way. And one of the areas of focus for the Alejandro our CEO is he is really interested and committed to thinking about the institution for everyone. That it must reflect our communities and all the different ways, not just in our patrons but also in our visitors -- in our volunteers, and our staff, in our board, so he has really reconstituted and he has led a lot of these initiatives and it's been integrated into our strategic plan which -- strategic operational plan which is new. We finished both of those last year, and it is now a part and parcel of an institutional effort. It is not pockets of it. It's system-wide and we're working across there. We have built in expectations, accountability, and kind of specific targets and goals associated with it.

And part of that also last year as you all know, Special Olympics USA games came and we were one of the first cultural organizations, one of the largest cultural organizations to sign on to it and we were commented. That was really interesting. We leveraged that as an opportunity to have conversations and training throughout the institution, so everybody from, you know, front line staff all the way to senior executives and our CEO all had trainings associated with WIN.

So continuing on that, so this has become part and

parcel of the expectation of how do we continue to do training, because, you know, we all get so many different aspects of it. How do we actually bring everybody on board to think this through and each department and each team has slightly different need. How do we actually think about preparing them, because one of the things that folks are is that they have the best of intent, but either that they feel that oh, it's not relevant to us but because we welcome everyone. What do you mean? Everybody should be here, right? But the audience unintentional barriers that have been created. There are these unintentional barriers.

We have to help folks shift the mindset associated with it and make them feel empowered.

That they don't feel they are set up to fail. We have been doing a lot of background work helping to Taylor each of the pieces so i relevant so they can is he.

Our horticultural team, it is large, and they said well we are not the ones -- we are dealing with plants. Why do we actually have to deal with will? This is not our issue. We said: No, actually, you know what? Turns out that because of they are dealing with the plants out there all the time, they are oftentimes our front line staff, because people see them a lot and ask them a lot of questions.

If that's the case, what kind of training do you need in order for you to be prepared to support an individual that

requires -- that asks questions associated where to access certain things or what if a child with autism has a meltdown in front of you, how do you deal with that or how do you bring on somebody who is able to do that. So we have had to Taylor some of these components associated with that. We have also been working a lot in thinking about programming and activities, so, from perspective of not just -- so I'm sure you have harder from different folks, how do we create accessible opportunities, but we've been developing specifics where we have a Zoo For All programs. This is an institutional-wide activity where the zoo, we focus on certain issues. So these are high profile events that focus on particular communities, but in addition to that, that allows us to build deeper relationships and begin to develop, so our camps are changing how we might do our caverns, for example, that we might provide -- this is part of the universal design stuff. We're shifting away from here you can have a camp that's for one week we provide if you are deaf, hearing, you have access to this camp, into much more integrated programming, so that we do universal design and those are things that we're trying to shift into ow we think about that.

And one of the pieces that we're particularly excited with, the personnel changes too, is last year we had a -- we received a federal grant to really change our volunteer program, so we have a volunteer inclusion program that allows us to think

about you know so it's one of the ways that as someone mentioned is about how do you create meaning, how do you create opportunities to socialize, how do you create meanings and how do you develop skills to be able to integrate, so our volunteer opportunities, one of those great ways that we think but also allows us to revisit how like we think about every year we have a volunteer appreciation program that because of funding purposes it always is limited to one of our on-site facilities and we say: Wow that actually is not particularly accessible if you are in a wheelchair, for example because we're trying to pack everybody in, that's not particularly accessible.

That forced us to rethink how we design our volunteer program and because our volunteer program touches all aspects of the institution, that's also kind of ignites conversation across the different departments.

So, what is really working well? Is that folks after the initial kind of hesitation around it are feeling very energized and we're also getting folks that come to us and say: I have a family member, I have a friend, you know, and this means a lot to us, that the institution does this kind of stuff. So there is a lot of excitement and the more that they are trying it out and realizing: Wow, it's actually not that hard, is kind of reinvigorating them and part of the beauty of this is so immediate, right? You can see the change so immediately. And

oftentimes when we are working on conservation issues these are climate change or 100 years down the road, you know, that you are not seeing those changes down that far. But whereas when you have these changes and you are seeing a child that comes and suddenly they are having the time of their lives and they are caregiver says this is the first time I'm seeing them smile, you know, it has all these incredible opportunities and it's very affirming for our staff.

And the community response has been incredible too, so people have come and really engaged with us and talk about how important it is that we do this kind of work.

So, some of the challenges that we have, that we want to address a little is we have about 300 full time regular staff. In peak season that grows to about 600 to 800 people and those are short term folks that come in for brief periods of time. That means that training is hard (laughter). It's ongoing. It's rapid. And how do you expect somebody who is coming in for two months to be trained up to speed, right, to be able to deliver this fully.

This is one of the things that we are trying to focus on and really think about.

Because of that too it is also really thinking about how do we actually do that in a consistency in practice associated with that.

Our first -- funding is also a challenge, you have harder from Jenny about some of that and there are also competing priorities associated with these pieces.

As to what's next and what's in the future, we really want to envision a world in which it's not punctuated experiences. It's not pockets of the zoo that you have experience in. You can choose to be able to show up at any time, at any part of the zoo, and have in credible experience regardless of who you are. And we want that -- we want people to be able to volunteer. We want people to be able to be part of our staff ask we continue to work on those. We expect that in all this fullest way both from coming to visit with us but also working with us, that this is -- we should be reflective of our community, that this is a community we serve, then that should be the community that is -- that makes it up. Right? And the other piece is we really, to echo Jenny again, is so much about partnership with other organizations. We need to build -- it's not individual pockets. We should create a larger landscape, a cultural landscape where people can fully participate. And that's the goal. We're having conversations with the symphony and other folks. That's kind of where we are. Thank you.

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you that was comprehensive and an interesting question just came through, I thought we should change this up a little bit and ask the question right now. Do

the -- to the access team at Seattle Art Museum: How do you all stay accountable to your accessibility assessment cross-departmentally? How do you get the recommendations to not just sit.

>> We stay account able as a team. We are meeting monthly and looking at short term things we're working on, but also checking in with those longer range things, although as I say that I think to myself: I should put that on the next month ace agenda. It comes and goes, maybe, is the right answer there. So, but I think the team is made up of people across departments, folks have different areas that they are an expert on or different areas they are interested in and everybody sort of bringing that to the table and I have to say like the access team is just the most wonderful group of people that I get the privilege to work with at SAM and things that in the past have, you know, issues that have come up that to me personally have seemed insurmountable, we throe it on the table. Everybody talked about it and somebody always is has a great suggestion or the energy to move something forward. So I do think that's a big part of it. So, yeah, I think we're just accountable to each other as a team. I hope that answers the question, whoever asked it and if not, follow up and I'll try to talk more.

>>ELIZABETH: Perfect. Thank you. All right, let's move on to Theresa Thuman.

>>THERESA: Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>>THERESA: Great. My name is Theresa Thuman I'm the producing artistic director of Sound Theatre company. And I got a promotion (laughter).

There we go. Okay. That looks familiar.

We are a small nonprofit theater company. We have a mission that is -- has moved over the years to become more and more of a social justice mission that is based on inclusion and it's very much an artist-centered mission. I'm going to read that to you briefly.

Sound Theatre company empowers artists to give voice to the dignity and diversity of the human experience, moving the audiences toward a more justice and compassionate world.

And one of the key things in that is artists.

(Justice and compassionate world.

We are working in this area on two paths, so we are working on the accessibility for our audiences and our patrons and people to come and engage in the work and come to any performance, but we're also looking at building a core of artists who identify as disabled and been looking at our programming and

how our programming reflects. I believe that it's actually a small -- it's a small step. We have cultural work that we do, the culture helps inform the bias, which then informs justice. So, in many ways I feel like even though we may feel working in the cultural sector that we are really in here for the long game. There isn't necessarily always those immediate moments like Wei was mentioning. We actually are part of something very important and very deep-seated in the culture of our community and where we are.

So, we're kind of on these two tracks. We have been doing a lot of work with racial justice, racial diversity and that continues on. And I guess it was about 2016, maybe a little bit before then, that really the concept of disability, disability justice, representation, authentic representation on stage, really started to surface and become -- come in my path (laughter) a lot of ways, to the point of even myself recognizing my own physical disabilities. I had sort of as a theater artist just accepted that they were just another area to eliminate me from being able to do a certain -- to do certain things, and when I realized, actually, I should be able to do all of those same things, just with a body that does it differently than perhaps other theater artists do, was a very obviously very personal and very meaningful time for me, and so a couple things. So I started thinking a lot about that. Started reading a lot about what was

going on in the rest of the country. There is actually quite a bit of what I will call disability theater that is happening in other parts of the country. And sort of finding out that, wow, it's very exciting what's happening. In -- so that was 2016 when that work sort of started. We did a season last year, 2018 we called the Human Family, Toward Radical Inclusion. We started to include actors with disabilities into the programming and programmed with that goal, towards that goal. That also included a first-ever general audition for actors with disabilities. A lot for us to think about what that is. See we're learning a lot as we go. We don't have a lot of answers but we have a lot of acquired experiences over the last few years. And then the season that was three main stage productions, and a reading series. I'm going to go -- I will barrel through this so I can get as much of this out to you as possible.

The first was a production of you Can't Take It With You which was a radically inclusive production. It had an actor used a wheelchair. It had people who used cane assist, mobility device, someone with a facial differentiation and a number of other differences involved in that production. As well as racial and gender differences as part of that community. And the idea was it was a chosen family. It was a beautiful family comedy that we all know and love and it was a chosen family, very meaningful.

That of course would impact things like set design because it had to accommodate wheelchair, use of a wheelchair.

The next production we did was we joined with Deaf Spotlight and did a production of "Midsummer Night's Dream" which was an ASL "Midsummer Night's Dream."

(Inaudible) was involved with that and Tatanya.

The text was entirely signed in ASL and in spoken English, so you had Shakespeare's text and you had the signing simultaneously. So that it could be for audiences, for deaf audiences and for hearing audiences alike. What we did not have was CART. CART for people who did not know ASL. So lesson learned. Thank you, Elizabeth. And so that was very exciting, very much centered deaf artists. We had a cast of about 19 actors. 10 of them were deaf actors and the other hearing artists had varying degrees of access to ASL. We had two directors, myself and deaf director Howie Seago. We had also mixed hearing and deaf production design folks working on that. So of course it was awesome.

We learned a lot. One thing we literally when you talk about centering communities, we literally sat the deaf audiences in the center so they could see the ASL as best. So quite literally had center seats. Another thing that we did last year, we are carrying to this year is with we're removing the front row seats from theaters so that people who use wheelchairs can

sit in anywhere they would like that is for assemble.

Wow, great.

Great.

All right.

And then the third main stage production we did is a play called "Rules of Charity."

That was by a playwright, a disabled playwright, passed away in '06, John Belluso.

And he was a playwright writing a lot of plays from that perspective.

One of the first playwright he is who wrote about his lived experience and put that on stage. I say that's very important because the concept of narratives is what I want to sort of impress upon you. We are giving a lot of thought to how narratives of disability is represented and how important it is this phrase "not about us without us," the idea that the experience of the disabled person has been presented to us pretty consistently through the lens of the able-bodied storyteller, artist, you know, person of power, in positional power. So we wanted to be very clear about that so what we also did is we did a play reading series of all plays that were written by deaf and disabled playwrights.

And Andrea was our curator for that. She did mention this earlier but she is an accomplished dramaturge and we're very

fortunate to have her work with us in our company as well.

So here's a little bit about one.

Then okay so that was last year.

So we were learning a lot.

A lot of new actors, new artists, making people think maybe this is a thing. That artists with disabilities can actually be on stage and performing, instead of people pretending to, there is some terminology that's used. You hear disability drag, you hear crip phase, you hear crippling up.

Two minutes.

This year we are focusing on erasure. We have a season we're calling Unerasable. That includes everything not just disability, but that's part of it.

We have increased our -- we have increased our programming for accessible audiences. We are doing ASL for our first show up is "Citizen: An American Lyric" and we will have ASL-interpreted performances for that, we have CART-interpreted performances for that, and we're planning a relaxed sensory-friendly production for that.

It's important to know the relaxed sensory-friendly production are for adult content, which is a whole nother conversation.

And we brought in a wonderful accessibility coordinator

who is not able to be here today who is -- we're paying him a very tiny little bit of money and he is very passionate about all of this, Roland Carette-Meyers, and he is helping us to do all the work, so much of what has been discussed from these other organizations. We now have five people who identify as disabled on our staff. We have a few people who identify as disabled on our board. So the goal is really for this to be in every aspect of the organization. So we have a lot of vision for that. In terms of future, I'm just going to say that I think this is -- the potential for creativity in this area of theater work is unlimited. I mean, it's amazing the kinds of things that when you start to bring people together who have different lived experiences, how creatively they can reinvent the world and I just encourage us all to embrace that and be a part of that.

And the other thing that's very important to know is we're actually all volunteer. So we are doing this on a very small budget. It's hard. (Laughter.) We don't want to do it necessarily all volunteer. But the concept of funding is a very, very important issue and who has access to that funding and how to get access to that funding and how to justify it. I would just say that that's a big thing.

I was going to show the one picture there was the one of the woman in a -- there.

This is a photo we took actually here at the Seattle

Rep, thank you very much. A photo session for an upcoming play called "Peeling" that we are doing.

It is a piece with three disabled actresses in it. It was written with the intent that the play would be fully accessible to everybody for every performance, so that means the playwright wrote into it audio description, she wrote in captioning, and so that it is -- it's fully accessible.

This is one of our actors and we just -- I just happen to love this photo.

I think it captures sort of a bit of an Ali Stroker moment.

If you don't know, she won the Tony Award, the actor who uses a wheelchair.

So with that --

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you. Really excited about this panel.

There is such a -- -- there is such a diversity of experiences. We have one large theater.

We have a small theater.

We have a museum.

We have a cultural space.

And they are all doing amazing things and they are similar and they are different.

And so it's just very exciting to see.

And I lost my train of thought here, but I think that the next one we have is Tim. But please remember to text questions. We have one more left and -- I knew -- I'm really excited because when Theresa Thuman was talking about "Peeling," the next gathering of the consortium is going to be in August and we're going to see a performance of "Peeling" and you are going to get -- it will be like a field trip. You will get to see a fully accessible performance in action, so, you will see a slide on that and that will be in August.

We are going to have a meet and greet and a networking person before the play and then you'll get to see the play and we will have some really good networking happening at that time.

Tim.

>>TIM: Hi, everybody my name is Tim Gonzalez-Wiler I'm the director of guest services and sales at 5th Avenue Theatre and first thing I want to say is I'm very embarrassed by my slide show. My PowerPoint is all text and Elizabeth even called me on it and said: Don't you have any pictures? I'm just an operations pragmatic kind of guy (laughter), so a lot of white screen and black text coming up. But I wanted to talk about what we're doing at the 5th Avenue Theatre.

The history of accessibility at the Fifth there are certain services we have been doing since the beginning.

Wheelchair seating has been in place since opening in 1980.

Alternate -- (Read the PowerPoint.)

Worked with Morgan Sound to get all that equipment up to date because it had been there for 32 years or what's 1980 minus 2012. You know what I mean. A long time.

ASL performances started in the early '90s for us.

Audio described performances began in the late 1990s.

Open captioning is our most -- well one of our more recent.

Opening captioning started in 2006. We started with that with a grant from TCG working with C2 Caption Coalition.

They have been great partners with that.

For the first time last season we provided tactile interpreting for our deaf-blind guest who requested that service from that of the that was definitely an adventure in learning how to do that. I reached out to as many people as I could think of and couldn't find an organization that had done that yet so it was a real learning curve on that one. I will talk about that in just a little bit.

Our accessibility team. This is a little bit of an exaggeration here (laughter) because the truth is, I'm the accessibility team and I ask a lot of people to help pitch in in a lot of different ways.

I love this idea of an access team and I'm trying to

make it happen at the Fifth Avenue Theatre as well because like we've harder from a few other people, accessibility isn't even my primary job. My primary job is director of guest services so the ticketing department, the front of how is, of course when you are talking about front of house we're talking about guests and taking care of those guests. Accessibility is a large part of that. 275,000 people or 275,000 individual people -- not individually. Come to our theater over a course of a year.

Think of that 10% model, 27,500 of them have some sort of disability so it's a very big deal and it's a lot for one person to chew on but I do get the help of a lot of people. The front ever house manager of course in implementing the actual practices and policies and procedures that we're trying to work on, the assistant guest services manager in the box office I have a passionate person in there who became interested in American Sign Language very deeply. When we did the Hunchback of Notre Dame. We had a deaf actor on stage, so we really ramped up our ASL efforts for that performance.

She has taken on the role of portfolio manager for all of our ADA subscriptions so anybody that has any of the ASL subscription or open caption or audio described, we have one person now who takes care of all of those subscribers. It's not a lot of people. It's only a dozen subscribers that come to us regularly. We're hoping to grow that. We're working on a much

more dedicated outreach to first those 12 subscribers and then growing that group as much as we can. The volunteer coordinator and office manager is very, very helpful because a lot of what we do relies on volunteers as well. Our foundation and government relations manager of course that's funding. We are lucky to have somebody just dedicated to that position but as I was researching this and I have only been with the Fifth for a year and a half so I had to ask a lot of people. When I asked her how did we fund all these various things? Her list was very short. And it was -- it's an example of how hard itself to find funding. A lot of it came from individuals. We're just lucky to have a donor base with some people with deep pockets and big hearts. But we did get some grants along the way, TCG being one, offers of arts and culture has helped us a great deal.

They are definitely the funding sources out there but they are hard to fine.

Our director of education and engagement Orlando Morales is such an advocate for American Sign Language, disability, inclusion, he is amazing. He used to really kind of take a lot of this responsibility on before I arrived. Our technical director has been a huge champion for us. We're putting ASL interpreters up on the stage. He is -- of all the discussions and times that people say: That doesn't work for this show he says: Yeah let's find a way that it does. He has

been amazing.

And outside partners, of course.

None of us do this in a silo, as Jenny said.

Wheelchair accessible seating.

The Fifth Avenue Theatre has the exact same seats and configuration as its opening in 1980. We are deficient in this area and we're working on that. We currently offer six movable wheelchair accessible seats, each with three adjacent companion seats next to them.

They are available by sale online and in person.

However, our Web site and mobile experience especially is less than ideal, and we're dealing with struggles there that we're addressing with the new Web site design that we have got going on right now, including becoming a mobile responsive site. Whereas, right now we have a mobile app that's works with our ticketing system, it's really not ideal. But we're working on that.

Notes are taken at the time of sale to communicate to the front ever house especially if they are over the phone if somebody is speaking to someone, just to talk about whether the seat should be removed, whether there is extra equipment that will be next to the oxygen tanks et cetera.

My gosh I only have five minutes.

We have all the standard procedures in place of how we

greet everybody, how we radio ahead to the section to really try to help them at every step of the way.

And then we do have a major seating renovation scheduled for thor some of 2020 and will increase our wheelchair seating to 17 seats with more vertical and horizontal dispersion.

It's long overdue.

Alternate format programs, available for free at every performance.

Options include braille, large print, and we have a digital program now. Our new program provides objectivity(???) .

They have a digital online version so people can access it on the smartphone, things like that.

We always offer performance script in a binder with a book light and all these physical items can be borrowed from coat check with a valid ID returned at the end of the show.

Mobility assistance: Our theater has back and forth orchestra ask balcony seating.

There is not an elevator built into the building but we have an adjoining Skinner Building that has a set of elevators.

We have had to get creative and station ushers at strategic places to catch you in the underground hallway from the parking garage to the theater, outside to the theater, to

escort you up to the adjoining building's elevator to the hallway to the balcony seating.

Less than ideal.

Not what we want to be doing, but we do everything we can to get people in the right places so we will be there for you when you arrive, whether you have asked for any help ahead of time or not. Because it should not be about that. It should be we're already present, already trying. Not to do universal design, in we aren't designing the building, but trying to put the people in place so we're as inclusive as possible everywhere.

We have gendered men's and women's accessible restrooms on the ground floor.

We have gender-neutral single-stall accessible restrooms for balcony guests, unfortunately with usher assistance, because it's in the adjoining building, but we can do that through the third floor.

ASL and open captioned performances.

We made a distinction to combine ASL and open captioning services at the same performance, which I struggled with and talked to a lot of people about, because of course limiting the number of shows, again, that somebody can get a service is not the direction we ever want to go and I am working towards getting more of these in the season on more performances. But what we did was we talked to a lot of people. We talked to our volunteer

interpreter coordinators and talked to people in the Deaf community, a few different people we had good relationships with. We kept this discussion going. I had a lot of feedback off of surveys from Hunchback of Notre Dame that kept talking about there are so many -- there is so much range in that spectrum of course of deaf or hard of hearing. There are people that, just to simplify, people that sign and people that don't sign, but they are all members of the same deaf and hard of hearing community and they know each other and want to be together in a space together and see people that they know and not be isolated to one performance but your other friend who signs can't go to that performance because it's not the right service so we wanted to bring those together to be able to simultaneously offer both ASL interpreted and written English text of what's happening during the show. And something to say too, we will always take requests for added performance dates. I can't always fulfill every single one of them but we definitely work hard to take those requests as needed, add extra dates in and by doing that my little secret trick is I'm getting it into the budget by showing we have spent this money once so let's just program it for next year. Baby steps. Sneak sneak. Don't tell my boss. She is not here.

Dedicated seating section. We do orchestra left.

First 10 rows are held for people needing services.

We have a promo code to allow for online sales because we want to hold the seats, but you type in the promo code ASL and it opens up the seats in that section. We always do sell them at our cheapest zone 6 ticket price because we're trying to relieve financial barriers. ASL interpreting at the Fifth. We have two interpreters and one sign coach for each production.

We're committed to placing the interpreters on stage. We are doing that for "West Side Story."

They put cones where the interpreters would be. So they were thinking about it every single moment, that "There will be two people standing here. Get over it. It's happening." (Laughter.) We are excited about this. So, it was really great that we do that. Additionally something we started with Hunchback, somewhat unsuccessfully, but we're doing better now, we have a payroll specialist whose mom is an interpreter through Video Relay Services company and she said, "I can get people to come and help you on a volunteer basis, if you would like." I'm trying to go fast.

The background is the interpreters would often have to assist our guests that, of course, that only communicated in American Sign Language. But their job is there to be a performance interpreter. That's their specialty. That's what they are there for. I want to respect that. It's not fair that they have to break away from the concentration of "I'm preparing

to do an entire show," to say: "Oh, that seat is not your seat" or "You wanted to move over a little bit? Let me get an usher and I'll translate for you." It was just terrible, so we were able to get volunteer interpreter ushers who would not only be outside the venue at the box office and work off a preshow, but also down in the seating section, and that has worked well.

Staff has all dry erase boards and laminated maps and menus.

Open captioning, I said we were using C2 Caption.

We have an LED reader board set up to the left and we have a live operator cuing the text in realtime.

They get the text set up, watch it once, and then do it in realtime.

Same orchestra. Assisted listening system.

Again, it's the Sennheiser devices and they work with telecoil settings on hearing aids with an induction neck loop.

Audio description, that's where there is a live narration of the visual elements of a production. So you will wear that same Sennheiser.

One channel will be the feed from the stage, one channel is the narrator giving you contextual visual clues.

Tony Brown has a gorgeous English -- British dialect and he sounds so good when you listen to it.

Tactile interpreting. For the first time we did that

at the request of a deaf-blind guest. We arranged that. That was a specific PTASL sign coach with two certified tactile interpreters who would sit on either side of the deaf-blind guest. And if you are not familiar with that, that means -- think Helen Keller. It's the touch style of interpreting, on your back, arms, everywhere.

It is fascinating to watch.

I sat behind them the first time they did it and it was the most beautiful, physical, expressive thing I have ever seen in my life.

I stopped watching the play altogether and I was watching the three individuals literally on top of each other, it was just gorgeous, watching them laugh together, watching them sigh together, things like that.

Anyway.

Thank you.

(Laughter.)

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you.

(Applause.)

So, thank you for sitting through all this. I have a whole section on types of accommodations that I will skip because I really would like to have time to answer some questions and I do have a second to go through.

Please bear with us.

There will be workshops that will be more interactive than this one, I promise, but this is sort of the foundation for all of you that going forward we should have some more interactive workshops.

So, let's get started in accessibility.

How do we get started?

So, what are some steps your organization can take to foster access and inclusion? First, you have harder from a lot of these folks that you allocate and you leverage resources. You budget for access and you -- maybe you have staff.

Maybe you create accessibility position in your organization if you can. Maybe it's very, very part time to begin with. Maybe you start with an intern. Maybe you start with a volunteer. Establish and implement policy, have an access plan. So an access plan could develop -- include developing an access team or doing an audit of your organization. I'll say more about that in a minute.

Training: Really important to have training. Get your staff all on the same page about this.

Talk to them about microaggression, about DEI, racial equity, cultural competence, disability etiquette, and there were questions that came through about disability etiquette which I won't have time to go into but we should have a whole work slop focused on that because it's important to know how to

communicate with people.

And different types of disability needs.

So, develop a marketing plan and create and foster relationships with potential partners.

Now, you may have the most accessible organization, but guess what? It's not going to be very useful if nobody knows about it. So it's really important to do outreach and to develop relationships with other theaters, other nonprofits, other people with disabilities who can help you get the word out about your services.

So, some things you can do is you can ask questions. Can everyone truly experience and engage with us?

Does a person with a disability feel like they are treated the same as a person without a disability? Are they welcomed and included in the space?

Does a person with a disability feel considered with their needs in mind, or like an afterthought, as they interact within the space?

For example if somebody comes in and asks for an accommodation and you don't have it, then it's sort of like an afterthought.

But if you are intentionally and consciously thinking about what people might need even before they get in your space, that's the way to go.

Audit the places your guests interact with you.

The venue: Think about the things in the venue that could be difficult or challenging for people to navigate. Do they have ramps some is there accessible parking, et cetera.

This is all on the slide. I'm going to let you read this.

Survey your audience: What does your existing audience need the most? Let's start providing accommodations for them. Like Jenny was saying start with the low hanging fruit. Start with that and then you'll feel really good about what you have accomplished and then maybe you can do a little bit more.

And then what features would grow and diversify the audience down the road?

So, other considerations: Involve the patrons in the planning and design process, rather than after the fact. Make sure your Web sites have accurate and easy to locate information about accessibility accommodations.

Think about inclusive design rather than accommodating when the patrons enter the door.

Do an accessibility self-evaluation in your organization. Start out by having a conversation with your staff. What do you think about accessibility in the

organization? What does that mean for you? What have you noticed?

So I'm going to skip the types of accommodations because you have harder. But there was something really cool I wanted to show you.

For accommodations with visual access, you harder about audio description.

But you didn't hear about service animals. So, service animals: They provide any kind of assistant to a person with a disability. You might see a dog, that's the most common service animal but you also might see something like this in your organization not, but actually, these are service animals. These are potbelly pigs and they are really good with kids and they don't shed that much and they are pretty clean, actually, so keep your eye out for those.

So I want those with -- something I want to share with you, take a minute to think about -- I'll show you a video -- think about I hope this comes up here. Oh, my gosh. So, can you come over here and help?

I want you to look at this video were I want you to think for a microphone.

Just relax because this is kind of a show.

Look at this video. Think about who is -- is there a

person with a disability in this video? I'm going to play with you for a minute. Think about which person might have a disability.

Do you want to see the whole thing? It's only 7 minutes.

But anyway, so raise your hand if you think it was the conductor who had a disability.

Raise your hand if you think it was one of the people playing a string instrument.

Raise your hand if you think it was the pianist.

And you are all correct.

So this person is profoundly deaf and she uses two cochlear implants to hear. And she has been playing piano since she was five. So the point I want to illustrate is this, is that, A, people with disabilities can be artists, and when they are involved in the arts, they are thriving, they are healthy, and they are happy, and they are a productive member of society.

And as a parent of a child with a disability this is where all parents -- this is what all parents want for their children with disabilities. They wanted their children to be able to enjoy the arts and participate in the arts as much as

possible.

I hope you enjoyed that.

We have a few minutes left for questions.

So, the question I have got which I thought was very interesting was: Are there -- when you talk about working with peers, this is for everybody, when you talk about working with peers, are there peer groups that meet about accessibility issues? Are there any (inaudible) groups H message groups or ways to post questions or share information with each other? Anybody want to respond to that?

>>TIM: This consortium is probably the -- this consortium is definitely the first peer group I have been able to reach out to but I do, you know I reach out to Miranda over at ACT recently. We had to share some resources and information with each other. That's for me.

>>ELIZABETH: Anybody else?

>>JENNY: Same. This is sort of the first that I have seen since I have been looking at this work where we're all coming together. And before this it was very much personal connections here or there. Oh, I know this one organization that I reach out to but I'm excited about this group because it does bring us all together in one room and I think there is opportunity for

conversations to happen outside of just the workshops, so maybe there could be a forum where someone could pose a question and other people could chime in with their experience or answers or suggestions.

>>WEI: One of the group is -- the other thing is there are national groups that do this too, so we do reach out to across the nation to do some of these folks.

In many ways we don't have to reinvent the wheel. There are a lot of folks working on this. How do we collaborate differently about that.

>>TIM: Yea for the Internet. (Laughter.)

>>WEI: Where were we before Google? (Laughter.)

>>ELIZABETH: There was another question that was very interesting. Given that communication is a huge part of accessibility, how do you all communicate your accessibility offerings to patrons in a way that helps promote belonging, rather than feeling like being Others.

As opposed to being Other.

>>TIM: That's a great question and one that we are working on quite a bit, actually. One of my wish list I didn't get to that slide was a special what we call our know before you go email to people with accessible tickets that can address more

of their issues but again that makes it an Other. That's not an inclusive design there.

Adding in to our regular know before you go the section on accessibility we make that prominent so that you can get a little bit of information right there and click through to the Web site for a lot more, but I think we can go much further in marketing. I think we can go much further in just general awareness on the Web site and signage at the venue itself and then we have got a long way to go.

>>JENNY: I don't feel like we have solved this one. Work in progress we're working on cross training our customer service center staff to be able to handle most accessibility questions that come in. Certainly there's always the option for them to escalate that if there's something they don't know how to answer so then folks are using the exact same general access point as everyone else, but it's like I say, it's a work in progress.

>>THERESA: Like for our production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, we had -- we would have some deaf ushers as well, and then we would have people who knew ASL, some hearing people who knew ASL as well. We had a number of different techniques that were mentioned before in some of the things of being able to write. We also had a -- what was really terrific a video that was made for any deaf audience members to look at ahead of time

and actually know the signs for the characters, have an introduction to the character in costume, and so there was, you know, it was a wonderful preparatory thing that was said up so people could show up and open up their phones and look at that up to the point of curtain, which I think was very, very helpful.

And I think in any kind of communication thing, honestly, finding out how people want to be communicated to and how and -- is really, really important.

>>ELIZABETH: Thank you.

We have time for one more question and then I'll close with a couple of announcements.

What happens when the accessible seats are sold out before the other seats?

Do we say sorry the seats are gone and try to accommodate folks as well?

What happens?

>>TIM: I guess it depends what the guest needs. If it's a wheelchair accessible seat and they are all sold out, I don't have any more seats to remove, so we can't accommodate that but again that's why we're putting a lot more in. It actually also doesn't happen very often to us, but that's a great question.

What do you do when you have sold out -- one you have enough.
You should make sure you have enough.

Yeah, when you sell out.

>>ELIZABETH: Is there a place that wheelchair users
can go to even if there are no seats shh could they go in the
corridor?

>>TIM: Not in our venue. You would be in a fire Lane
if you were anywhere like that. But it -- maybe they are
questioning the accessible seat because they can't walk very far
or maybe we can find an alternate seat if we understand what need
that's solving for them. Maybe we have another seat that we
could offer but specifically removable seat if we have run out
of them we would have to offer another date, try to explore other
date choices.

>>ELIZABETH: So I want to end with some resources for
you that you can all look at. The Web site of the Chicago
Cultural Accessibility Consortium has some wonderful resources.

And I really would love feedback from you about this
workshop.

If it met your expectations.

There's a link you can go onto right now. I would
definitely email that to you.

And one thing I wanted to announce. Upcoming events.

August 22 from 7:30 to about 10:00, there is going on

an accessible performance of "Peeling," by the Sound Theatre Group. More information to come about that. And meet and greet.

In September and October we will be doing lessons learned from the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability conference which is August 4 through 6 I believe in Denver. So, more information to come about that.

As you know we are trying to keep these very accessible and low cost, but in the future, we are probably going to start asking for donations so that we can then have a way to sustain these workshops. It sounds like it's really valuable since a lot of you are showing up. So keep that in mind when you come to the next workshop.

I wanted to leave enough time for you to mingle with each other and ask the presenters if you have any questions. Thank you again for taking the time to come.

(Applause.)

NOTE TO READER: This text is being provided in a rough draft format. Realtime captioning is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a verbatim record of the proceedings.

Lisa K. Hutchinson

Certified Realtime Captioner