# DISABITY MATTERS\_NCIL\_T.Braddy 2024

## Disability Matters

* We never see anyone with a disability come through our doors.
* We use the right language for them.
* Besides, it only words

## Why do we need DEIA?

* We need Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility as a matter of necessity because different groups, women, people of color, LGBTQ+, and especially People with Disabilities have been unfairly discriminated against and denied opportunities and human rights for far too long.
* We all suffer when people of all backgrounds aren't able to contribute their voices, insights, and talents to our organizations and communities.
* You have been taught and conditioned to believe that one group of people is better than another.
* What you have learned can be unlearned.
* Whose voices are you missing?
* What are you doing?
* You can either attract or repel people with disabilities!

## Understanding DEIA?

* Diversity speaks to what your organization looks like. Look around the boardroom – is everyone the same?
	+ Is everyone from the same race and background, all non-disabled?
	+ Who is missing?
* Equity speaks to fairness.
	+ Let's say your organization recognized that diversity is needed, so hire someone with a disability.
	+ But you pay that particular staff with a disability subminimum wage.
	+ That is not equity of wages.
* Inclusion speaks to a sense of belonging.
	+ It speaks to feeling safe and comfortable, to bring their best selves.
	+ People with disabilities contribute at their highest level because when they do, they thrive, and so does the entire organization or community they are a part of.
* Lastly, Accessibility speaks to access.
	+ Go back to the organization that hired a person with a disability; now, it is somewhat diverse, but they don’t try to remove physical barriers.

## COVID 19 – A Good Example

* People with disabilities (PwD) were an afterthought.
* PwD were not included in the planning.
* PwD voices were not heard.
* PwD did not have access to all the vaccines and treatments.
* PwD definitely were not treated fairly- they were put into Congregate settings where COVID-19 spread, and too many died.
* Medical professionals were instructed to treat abled-bodied patients before they treated PwD because patients without disabilities have more to offer society.

This project was supported by funds made available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Center for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support, through cooperative agreement OT18-1802, Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services Through National Partnerships to Improve and Protect the Nation’s Health award #6 NU38OT000303-04-02. Copyright © 2024 National Council on Independent Living. All rights reserved.