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RespectAbility

From Dependence to Independence:
Changing Hearts and Mind

Presentation by Ben Spangenberg,
National Leadership Program Director

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What We Do

- Nonprofit organization that fights stigmas and advances opportunities for people with disabilities.

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My Story



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Why RespectAbility?

- The Oxford English Dictionary on respect:
 - "A feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements."
- You can't have RESPECT without ABILITY

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- 7 out of every 10,000 babies born in America have Spina Bifida.
- 166,000 are living with Spina Bifida nationwide, a majority of which are adults

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POLICY

We don't lobby, we educate.

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RespectAbility's Connection to Spina Bifida Community

THE PROBLEM:

Workforce:	Education:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 5 working aged people with disabilities are employed • 1 in 10 people with disabilities are looking for a job and can't find one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% of PwDs graduate high school • 7% graduate college

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Question

When is the appropriate time to start preparing a young person with Spina Bifida for successful transition into the workforce?

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Answer

The moment a child with Spina Bifida enters school.

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IEPs

IEPs need to be geared toward both academic success and high expectations for class and the future.

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WIOA

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is federally mandated, state-run legislation designed to strengthen our nation's workforce and help get American youth and those with significant barriers, into high-quality jobs and careers while helping employers hire and retain skilled workers.

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Results

In 2016, around 87,000 people with disabilities entered the workforce across the country. In 2017, over 343,000 people with disabilities entered the workforce.



The figure is a bar chart with two bars. The first bar is blue and represents 87,000 people in 2016. The second bar is orange and represents 343,000 people in 2017. The bars are set against a background of a map of the United States.

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Project Search

- In Alaska, former Gov. Bill Walker expanded Project SEARCH to help young people with intellectual and other disabilities find jobs.
- Wisconsin has also rapidly expanded Project SEARCH as a result of our advocacy and collaboration with local partners.



Project SEARCH

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FIGHTING STIGMA

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Question

What are the 3 reasons why employers hire people with disabilities?

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Question

What stigma do you or your loved one face that have become barriers to success?

respect **ability** Shows That Have a Positive Influence

The image displays three movie posters stacked vertically. The top poster is for 'Speechless', showing a group of people walking on a crosswalk. The middle poster is for 'The Good Doctor', featuring a young man in a white lab coat. The bottom poster is for 'The Mindy Project', showing three young people in a hallway.

respect **ability** The National Leadership Program

- The National Leadership Program has three cohorts of Fellows – fall, spring and summer – for a total of at least 36 Fellows.

Two photographs showing groups of young adults. The left photo shows a group of about ten people sitting and standing together. The right photo shows a group of five people walking in a hallway, with two individuals in wheelchairs.

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respect **ability** Goals of the Fellowship

- 1) It will provide intensive job-training in strategic communications for at least 24 college students and graduates each year, as well as online training for thousands of others
- 2) Participants will directly work on inclusive employment and stigma reduction
- 3) It will develop a successful and replicable model to enable college graduates with disabilities to successfully enter the career ladder
- 4) It will develop confident leaders and self-advocates trained to solve issues in the future

A large group photograph of approximately twenty young adults, some in professional attire and some in wheelchairs, standing together in a hallway.

respect **ability** Resources / Contact Information

Ben Spangenberg, National Leadership Program Director
 Phone: (202) 517-6272
BenS@RespectAbility.org