

Center for Independent Living, Inc. presents

# **Independent Living Summit**

#CIL50: Reflection, Reunion, Renewal

October 19-21, 2022

Berkeley, CA

**Powered by Elevance Health**



**Special thanks to CIL's service and program funders:**



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Independent Living Summit

#CIL50: Reflection, Reunion, Renewal

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# A WELCOME FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR COMMUNITY,

A generation or more ago a group of disabled students in Berkeley, CA found themselves connected by a need for greater accessibility and inclusion. Based on the University of California at Berkeley campus, they and their allied activists joined forces to take action and break barriers which made the university's academic and social life more accessible.

Seeking the same independence and community integration as any non-disabled person, without excuses or apologies, the synergy and intentional action of this band of advocates became the inspiration for the Independent Living Movement.

Turning advocacy into collaboration, in March of 1972 they founded and incorporated The Center for Independent Living, Inc., more famously known as "CIL". This new type of organization would seek to serve and support the access and independence of persons with disabilities, and be run by and for disabled people. Today CIL provides services for advocacy, transportation, education, independent living skills, peer counseling and much more from our locations at the Ed Roberts Campus in Berkeley and in the Fruitvale neighborhood of Oakland.

Now, a generation later, the CIL model has inspired Centers for Independent Living in over 400 communities across the nation and even more in 20 countries across the globe.

In our 50th year it is more important than ever to remember our roots, to reflect on our beginnings and learn from them, and to reunite and celebrate our accomplishments, so that we can renew our commitment to Independent Living. Let us never forget that the road to independence is paved with self determination and advocacy, advocacy, advocacy!

Lead on,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Jackson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ted" being more prominent than the last name "Jackson".

Ted Jackson  
Executive Director

# **#CIL50: REFLECTION, REUNION, RENEWAL INDEPENDENT LIVING SUMMIT**

Center for Independent Living, Inc. (CIL)  
Ed Roberts Campus  
3075 Adeline Street, Berkeley, CA 94703  
Ashby Bart Station

Wednesday, October 19, 2022 to Friday, October 21, 2022  
Doors Open at 9:30 a.m.  
Daily 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Center for Independent Living, Inc. (CIL), headquartered at the Ed Roberts Campus in Berkeley, CA, will celebrate our 50th anniversary with a series of events in October 2022: #CIL50: Reflection, Reunion, Renewal. These landmark events include an Independent Living Summit. The goal of the summit is to reconnect with the issues and actions that have defined our movement and collectively engage, organize and plan for the next 50 years of advocacy for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in our communities.

This 3-day conference style summit will engage disability community members in tracks committed to IL core services, community organizing advocacy, access to employment and more, while also serving to connect community members to Independent Living opportunities.

# Day 1 Schedule Morning

## Wednesday October 19th - Independent Living

- 9:30 a.m. Refreshments and Registration

- 10:00 a.m. Opening Plenary (Large Group)

### **The State of Independent Living**

***Ted Jackson, Center for Independent Living, Inc. (CIL)***

***Zayda Ortiz, Center for Independent Living, Inc. (CIL)***

*Location: Atrium*

### **The State of Independent Living**

**Kim Rutledge, Department of Rehabilitation**

*Location: Atrium*

A snapshot of the history of IL services provided throughout California and locally in the East Bay through CIL, with a discussion on the future of service needs in our communities.

- 11:00 a.m. Morning Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

### **Access Tech: Assistive Technology in Our Communities**

***Morgan Kanninen, CIL Assistive Technology Specialist***

***CIL Community Consumers***

*Location: Atrium*

An overview of Assistive Technology with a panel of AT-users sharing their specific AT journeys, their favorite devices, and their dreams for the future landscape of Assistive Technology.

### **Travel and Transit Safety Training**

***Ciara Lovelace, CIL Independent Living Skills Specialist***

*Location: Osher*

Alongside disabled peers and transit-users, learn and discuss ways to safely navigate various modes of public transportation independently and accessibly.

- 12:00 p.m. Lunch: Pre-ordered box lunch or on your own

# Day 1 Schedule Afternoon

- 1:00 p.m. Afternoon Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

## **How to Hire and Manage Personal Care Attendants**

***Russell Rawlings, California Education Director, Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network***

*Location: Atrium*

An interactive conversation for both attendants, domestic employers, and advocates on hiring and managing attendants, and building clear and respectful relationships between attendants and employers.

## **Wheelchair Repair 101**

***John Benson, CIL Residential Access Coordinator***

*Location: Koret*

Roll-in session for wheelchair-users to ask questions and receive free wheelchair repairs and build connections with other wheelchair-users.

## **Housing 2.0**

***Janet Brown, CIL Housing Advocate***

***Max Dolane, CIL Housing Advocate***

*Location: Osher*

Learn about how to navigate the systems for getting into affordable and accessible housing, and the advocacy to create systems change for disabled community members seeking equitable housing opportunities.

- 2:30 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. End of Day Plenary (Large Group)

## **Independent Living In The Community**

***Robin Earth, CIL IL Core Services Program Manager***

***Brandon Young, Athletic Director at Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program***

***Vanessa Castro, Artist, Author, Illustrator***

***Michelle Rousey, Disability Advocate, Artist, and Activist***

*Location: Atrium*

A panel of diverse community perspectives on how independent living services have supported their goals of living in integrated communities.



Center for Independent Living, Inc.

# Day 2 Schedule Morning

## Thursday October 20th - Community Engagement

- 9:30 a.m. Refreshments and Registration
- 10:00 a.m. Starting Plenary (Large Group)

### **Welcome to Summit Day Two: Community Engagement**

***Emma Martin, Center for Independent Living, Inc.***

*Location: Atrium*

### **Disability Policy Today and Tomorrow**

***Claudia Center, Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)***

***Sylvia Yee, Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)***

*Location: Atrium*

An interactive panel discussion on the reemerging and emerging policy priorities for disabled Americans. Discussion will span the distance from the early and still on-going fight for access rights to progressive battle for the protection and accessibility of reproductive rights and justice.

- 11:00 a.m. Morning Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

### **Reimagining a Community-Centered Care System in California**

***Malcolm Harris and Care Fellowship Cohort, Caring Across Generations***

***Member Leaders from Hand in Hand: the Domestic Employers Network***

*Location: Atrium*

Join California caregivers and recipients and the social justice organizations they are connected to as we re-imagine a system of care that expands home and community-based services through a BIPOC, disability, feminist and working communities lens that's linked to addressing generational care issues through policy and organizing.

### **Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Training**

***Ron Halog, Independent Living Resource of Solano and Contra Costa***

*Location: Osher*

A fun and interactive training on the 4 steps to emergency preparedness, and action steps you will need to take before a disaster happens.



# Day 2 Schedule Afternoon

- 12:00 p.m. Lunch: Pre-ordered box lunch or on your own
- 1:00 p.m. Afternoon Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

## **Disability Community Organizing and Campaign Planning**

***Jessica Lehman, Executive Director, Senior and Disability Action and Senior and Disability Action Organizers***

***Ligia Montano, Health Care Organizing Director, Senior and Disability Action***

*Location: Atrium*

Learn the ins and outs of community organizing and building campaigns that center accessibility, racial justice, class solidarity, gender equity, queer and trans liberation, and more!

## **Disability Housing Advocacy and Accessible Design**

***Eddie Ytuarte, Co-Chair, Oakland Tenants Union and Host of Pushing Limits, KPFA***

***Dolores Tejada, Lead Organizer, East Bay Housing Organizations***

***Fatimah Aure, Director of Field Building and Capacity, The Kelsey***

***Reverend Sophia DeWitt, Program Director, East Bay Housing Organizations***

*Location: Osher*

A conversation on emerging issues facing the disability communities' access to housing, ways we can organize to create change, and work being done within the fields of accessible and inclusive housing design.

- 2:30 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. End of Day Plenary (Large Group)

## **Election 2022: Make a plan to vote!**

***Itzel Romero, CIL Systems Change Advocate***

***Fred Nisen, Managing Attorney Voting Rights Practice Group, Disability Rights California***

***Gabe Taylor, Senior Voting Rights Advocate, Disability Rights California***

***Bay Area Systems Change Advocates from the DOnetwork***

*Location: Atrium*

Build accessible voting plans and learn ways to engage and mobilize the disability community to vote in the 2022 Midterm Elections. Learn about the advocacy needed to make voting more inclusive for disabled Californians and how you can be a change agent by building disability electoral power.

**CIL**

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

# Day 3 Schedule Morning

## Friday October 21st - Access to Employment

- 9:30 a.m. Refreshments and Registration

- 10:00 a.m. Starting Plenary (Large Group)

### **Welcome to Summit Day Three: Employment**

***Ted Jackson, Center for Independent Living, Inc.***

***Robin Earth, Center for Independent Living, Inc.***

*Location: Atrium*

### **The Next Frontier for Disability Inclusion and Equity: Employment**

***Hon. Tony Coelho, former Congressman and House ADA Author***

***Joe Xavier, Director, California Department of Rehabilitation***

*Location: Atrium*

Morning keynotes on the development of the movement for creating more accessible and inclusive spaces in the workplace for disabled persons to increase their employment into competitive jobs with equitable pay. Congressman Coelho (retired), primary author and co-sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act, will touch on the promise of the ADA and what more we need to do around employment to live up to this promise.

- 11:00 a.m. Morning Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

### **Standout Strategies for Candidates with Disabilities**

***Joyce Bender, Founder, Bender Consulting Services, Vice Chair, AAPD Board of Directors***

*Location: Atrium*

Understanding that employing people with disabilities is great for business and provides freedom to Americans with disabilities. Exploring the opportunities open to disabled workers to advance their careers and build a sustainable future in the workforce.

# Day 3 Schedule Morning/Afternoon

## **The Disability Pipeline to a Career in Law**

***Katherine Perez, Executive Director, The Coelho Center for Disability Law Policy and Innovation at Loyola Law School***

*Location: Osher*

Exploring the pathways available to people with disabilities to enter into and sustain a career in the legal profession. Discussion on barriers and breaking barriers in law education to increase accessibility and inclusion for disabled persons seeking a legal career.

## **Becoming a Code Star**

***Laurence Carew, CIL Technology Educator***

*Location: Koret*

Learn about CIL's CodeStars program and other tech-based programs to give participants digital creation skills and enter the workforce with valuable assets to compete for good pay and longevity in the tech and entertainment job market.

- 12:00 p.m. Lunch: Pre-ordered box lunch or on your own
- 1:00 p.m. Afternoon Breakout Sessions (Small Groups)

## **A Win/Win Scenario - Hiring from our Community**

***Merrill Friedman, RVP, Inclusive Policy & Advocacy at Elevance Health***

*Location: Osher*

Learn from a long-time Independent Living and Healthcare professional about the techniques and skills you can employ to become competitive in the corporate job market.

## **Lights, Camera, Action!**

***Tari Hartman Squire, CEO, EIN SOF Communications & Diversity Media Consultant***

*Location: Atrium*

The LCA Career Exploration Summits are specifically designed with interconnected and interactive career entry and trajectory "employment mapping" activities to empower current and aspiring media professionals with disabilities so that civilians and veterans can explore and develop careers in the media – television, movies, documentaries, advertising, news, theater and interactive, including video games.

# Day 3 Schedule Afternoon

- 2:30 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. Closing Plenary (Large Group)

## **Disability Employment Today and Tomorrow**

***Joyce Bender, Founder, Bender Consulting Services, Vice Chair, AAPD Board of Directors***

*Location: Atrium*

Joining us will be experts who have made this their life's work and will enjoy a robust discussion on the challenges ahead for the community, along with the opportunities for us to move the needle forward.

## **Closing Keynote**

***Ted Jackson, CIL Executive Director***

*Location: Atrium*

Recapping the takeaways from the summit and how to build a plan to put learning into action and increase access, inclusion and opportunity for the individual and the community as a whole.

# PANELISTS

Ana Acton

Andrea Jennings

Benjamin McMullan

Brandon Young

Caleb van Docto

Ciara Lovelace

Collin Thoma

Eddie Ytuarte

Emma Martin

Fatimah Aure

Fiona Hinze

Fred Nisen

Gabe Taylor

Itzel Romero

Jade Theriault

James Ian

Janet Brown

Jessica Lehman

John Benson

Joyce Bender

Katherine Pérez

Kim Rutledge

Laurence Carew

Lawrence Carter-Long

Ligia Montano

Max Dolane

Merrill Friedman

Michelle Rousey

Morgan Kanninen

Reverend Sophia DeWitt

Robin Earth

Ron Halog

Shay Roberson

Shelby Wayment

Silvia Yee

Tari Hartman Squire

Ted Jackson

Tony Coelho

Vanessa Castro

Zayda Ortiz



# Ana Acton

*California Department of Rehabilitation*

*Session: The State of Independent Living*

Ana Acton is the Deputy Director for the Independent Living and Community Access Division at the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). Under this division, the DOR works with Independent Living Centers, Traumatic brain Injury Program sites, and Assistive Technology (AT) service providers throughout California to provide a wide variety of disability services and supports. DOR's Disability Access Section provides technical assistance and training to state and local government, consumers, employers, and businesses to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. As well, the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities makes policy recommendations to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities and puts on an annual event for youth with disabilities. Ana uses a wheelchair due to having a physical disability and has over 18 years' experience in providing direct services and leadership for independent living community-based services in California.



# Andrea Jennings

Accessibility and Disability Strategist, C  
Talent @Whalar; Co-Founder of RAMPD -  
Recording Artists and Musicians with  
Disabilities

Session: Lights, Camera, Action

*Image Description: A Black woman with long black hair smiles while wearing a denim jacket.*

Andrea Jennings, M.Mus. is a sought-after keynote speaker, moderator, and panelist for numerous diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) panels advocating for social justice through the lens of Disability culture, film, music, and art. She is the Chair of the Accessibility and Disability Commission for The City of Pasadena, Disability and Accessibility Strategist for C Talent at Whalar, Founder of Shifting Creative Paradigms, and Co-Founder at RAMPD. Andrea's work has been featured at Park Avenue Armory, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rutgers University's Jack Tchen exhibitions and recognized by Forbes, Billboard Magazine, The Hollywood Reporter, and The New York Times.

# Benjamin McMullan

*Center for Independent of Individuals with Disabilities*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

Ben McMullan is the Systems Change Manager at Center For Independence of Individuals with Disabilities. He currently serves as the Vice Chair of the San Mateo Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee. In that role he advises the San Mateo County Registration and Election Division on county-wide accessible voting matters affecting individuals with disabilities and senior. He is a member of the San Mateo Voting Education and Outreach Committee, which is a committee dedicated to engaging in voter education throughout San Mateo County. Ben is also a member of Disability Vote California, which is a coalition dedicate to educating the Disability Committee on the voting process and the power of the disability vote.





# Brandon Young

*Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program*

*Session: Independent Life in the Community Panel*

Brandon has been a blind athlete his entire life. At the age of 11 he was introduced to the sport of goalball, which became his passion. He competed in the 2000 Paralympic games in Sydney Australia and, after returning to his hometown of Philadelphia, he helped found a youth-led nonprofit serving youth who had dropped out of school. He moved to California in 2005 and began working at the Hatlen Center for the Blind where he introduced the students there to goalball. After learning about BORP, Brandon began volunteering with its goalball program, helping to establish the goalball class at UC Berkeley. Brandon joined the BORP staff in 2021. He is committed to building a pipeline of BORP athletes who can take whatever sport they play to the highest level of competition.



# Caleb van Docto

*Board of Directors, The Center for  
Independent Living*

*Session: Disability Employment Today and  
Tomorrow*

Caleb van Docto has worked at the intersection of education and workforce policy for the past 15 years. As a researcher and capacity-builder, he focuses particularly on integrative workforce programs, accessible K-16 education, and disability inclusion; how people move to and through human service systems. In his recent past Caleb worked as an educator—both domestically and internationally—where he's tinkered extensively with accessibility and universal design principles for both physical and learning environments. He also currently serves on CIL's Board of Directors.



# **Ciara Lovelace**

*Independent Living Skills Specialist, Center  
for Independent Living*

*Session: Travel and Transit Safety Training*



# Collin Thoma

*Disability Services and Legal Center*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

Collin graduated from Sonoma State University in 2020 with a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science and a minor in American Multi-Cultural Studies. In June of 2021 Collin joined Disability Services and Legal Center (DLSC) as their Systems Change Advocate. The goal of the Systems Change Advocate is to make life more accessible for people with disabilities. His major areas of Advocacy include Elections, Transportation, Housing, Emergency and Evacuation Planning. Collin who has a learning disability understands the challenges that come with disabilities, combined with his passion for Social Justice he has worked hard to advocate on behalf of the disabled community. Since joining DSLC Collin has worked hard on advocacy and has joined several committees to represent the disability community to ensure our voice is heard. One such committee is the Sonoma County Voter Choice Act Committee (VACC) where he makes sure the entire voting process is accessible. Collin will continue to work hard on his advocacy work and will use the experience and knowledge he gains to help in his plans to go into state government.



# Eddie Ytuarte

*Oakland Tenants Union and host of  
Pushing Limits on KPFA*

*Session: Disability Housing Advocacy and  
Accessible Design*

Eddie Ytuarte is a Housing Rights activist and a co-producer for a disability-oriented program (Pushing Limits) heard on radio station KPFA in Berkeley. He has been in community work since 1970 when he had the fortune of meeting and learning from Chicano Marxists activists while attending graduate school at California State University Los Angeles. Much of his activist time currently is spent working with the Oakland Tenants Union of which he is co-chair. Since the seventies he has worked at organizations including KBBF radio station in Santa Rosa, El Tecolote newspaper (San Francisco), Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality (Alameda County), Latinos for Emergency Bilingual Health Services (SF), Ohana Cultural Center (Oakland), United Farm Workers, and former president of Center for Independent Living board of directors. He has also served as a member of the Disability Rights California board, the Oakland Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities, Clinica de la Raza board and other bodies. He says, "people with disabilities have to take it among ourselves to organize for our own behalf around housing, education, employment and other struggles. We know ourselves what is best for us; we must be careful not to allow well intentioned abled-bodied bureaucrats determine our realities."



# Emma Martin

*Community Engagement Program  
Manager, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Welcome to Summit Day Two:  
Community Engagement*

Emma Martin (she/hers) is an advocate and storyteller currently serving as CIL's Community Engagement Program Manager, where she supports CIL's Advocacy Program, Youth Program, and Emergency Preparedness and Resiliency program. Emma's background is at the intersections of disability and anti-violence organizing through queer, feminist, and transnational lenses. Emma also grew up in rural Montana, which greatly impacts her sense of identity, as well as her experience organizing across geographies.



# Fatimah Aure

*The Kelsey*

*Session: Disability Housing Advocacy and Accessible Design*

Fatimah Aure is The Kelsey's Director of Field Building & Capacity. With a communications degree from Northwestern University and a Public Policy Masters from UC Berkeley, managing meaningful nonprofit programming is her sweet spot. She leads the efforts to grow the field of leaders, advocates and champions of disability-forward housing solutions. She dreams of a day when affordable, accessible and inclusive housing is a given for any new developments. She is fueled by The Kelsey's commitment to a co-led movement by people with and without disabilities. She uses a cane for balance and coordination stemming from a neurological movement condition. Born and raised in San Francisco, now an Oakland resident with her husband Seth and dog Duke Ellington. When she is not working, she loves to travel, bake and adhere to a strict skincare routine.



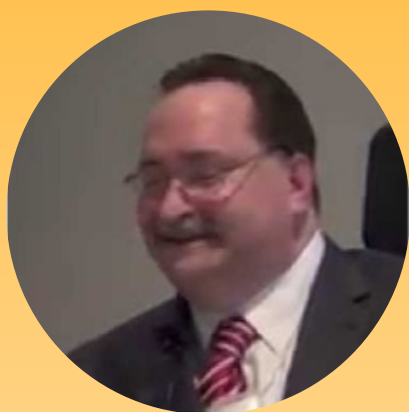
# Fiona Hinze

*Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco*

*Session: Independent Life in the Community Panel*

Fiona Hinze, transit accessibility advocate and resident of the Outer Richmond, joined the SFMTA Board of Directors in 2021. Nominated by Mayor Breed in late October, Hinze brings a lifetime of experience advocating for transit access for people with disabilities such as herself. Hinze lives with cerebral palsy and uses an electric wheelchair for mobility. Ms. Hinze is the director of systems change for the Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco, a disability rights advocacy and support organization, a position she has held since 2014. There she tracks state and local advocacy issues and works to ensure consumers are aware of advocacy opportunities in the community. She's also co-chair of the Dignity Fund Coalition as well as the Coalition of Agencies Serving the Elderly. She has served on several boards and task forces including the Paratransit Coordinating Council, the Senior Disability Working Group of the Vision Zero Coalition, the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force and the Disability Organizing Network. She just completed two terms on the California State Independent Living Council, to which she was appointed in 2014 by former governor Jerry Brown. Hinze graduated from Stanford University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction in Psychology; Health and Development. She also worked as a legislative intern for Assemblywoman Fiona Ma.





# Fred Nisen

*Disability Rights California*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

Fred Nisen is the Managing Attorney for Disability Rights California's (DRC) Voting Rights Practice Group. DRC is California's federally mandated protection and advocacy system. Mr. Nisen has been working for DRC for over 20 years. He began advocating for the voting rights of people with disabilities for almost 15 years and has been in a leadership role with DRC's voting advocacy for approximately eight years. Under his leadership, DRC operates a busy Voting Hotline for voters with disabilities, trains voters with disabilities and election worker trainers, and improves voting accessibility by working with county elections officials and the Secretary of State's office.



# Gabe Taylor

*Disability Rights California*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

Gabe Taylor is Disability Rights California's Senior Voting Rights Advocate based in the Los Angeles area for their Voting Rights Unit. He has been with DRC since 2015. In his position, Gabe works with counties in Southern California, by providing them feedback on ways to improve voting accessibility and promote best practices when assisting voters with disabilities. He serves on the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committees in six counties and is currently the co-chair for the Los Angeles and Orange County VAACs. Through his work, he hopes to engage people with disabilities to get involved in the elections process and improve access so that people with disabilities have a voice with their vote.



# Itzel Romero

*Systems Change Advocate, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a plan to vote!*

Itzel grew up in San Diego, CA and much of their desire for community comes from growing up in a latine neighborhood. Throughout her career, they have gained a deep passion for grass-roots organizing and community revitalization. Itzel recently joined the CIL as the Systems Change Advocate, but has been an activist for justice since high school. Itzel is currently finishing their bachelors degree at San Francisco State University, where she is majoring in Sociology with a minor in Latino/a Studies. In their free time, Itzel loves to bake focaccia and hang out with their cats, Beans and Richard.



# Jade Theriault

*Member of Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network*

*Session: Reimagining a Community-Centered Care System in California*

Jade Theriault is a member of Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network and homecare recipient. Jade is a Forbes-recognized comedian who combines provocative thought with moving furniture. Jade, a borg, was manufactured in the Bay Area and has performed at many popular showcases including “The Ruckus and Rumpus Revival,” “Critical Hit,” and many more.



# James Ian

Musician and Actor

Session: Lights, Camera, Action

*Image Description: James, a Black man, is wearing a pink tank, black joggers, and he is holding a black cane in his right hand. He is smiling and wearing a blue necklace as he smiles. He has long dark hair pulled into a bun, and he has tattoos on his chest and left arm.*

James Ian is a singer, songwriter, instrumentalist, actor, and writer. He has Spinal Muscular Atrophy ("SMA") Type 3, and is a passionate advocate for authentic representation of disabled artists in music, TV, film, and other media. James' music is featured on the iHeartRadio website, and he is singer and primary songwriter of "SPACES," which is a first-of-its-kind song that highlights those living with SMA. "SPACES" won several PR industry awards and music awards, and James recently performed "SPACES" at the Closing Ceremony of Special Olympics. His filmography includes several movies, commercials, TV series, and documentaries, including The Allnighter, Pugsley, Kimboo & Kids, and Inner Warrior.

*Photo Credit: Elliston Lutz*



# Janet Brown

*Housing Advocate, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Housing 2.0*

Janet Brown has been with the Center for Independent living for over 15 yrs. Very much so dedicated to her work and enjoy working with anyone in need. She loves her puppy "Ke Oir" who is a pomeranian 2yrs old.



# Jessica Lehman

*Senior and Disability Action*

*Session: Disability Community Organizing and Campaign Planning*

Jessica Lehman serves as Executive Director of San Francisco Senior and Disability Action, an organization committed to mobilizing seniors and people with disabilities to fight for justice on health care, housing, transportation and other issues. She led coalition efforts to win Free Muni for seniors and people with disabilities and to create Support at Home, a new San Francisco home care program for upper-poor seniors and people with disabilities. Jessica identifies as a queer, Jewish, white disabled woman and works to honor intersectionality in her work and amplify the voices of the most marginalized people in our society. As a person with a disability who employs home attendants, Jessica supports domestic worker rights as a founding member of Hand in Hand: the Domestic Employers Network. She leads monthly Organizer's Forum calls, as part of the National Disability Leadership Alliance, to expand organizing in the disability community and to explore collaboration with other communities.



# John Benson

*Residential Access Coordinator, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Wheelchair Repair 101*

John moved to Berkeley as a UC student in 1988 while working as an attendant and van mechanic for “Last Call” which became “Easy Does It Emergency Services” in the early '90s. He worked with the Berkeley disability community to pass the Measure E campaign in '95 funding this service. Until 2020 he worked with EDI and creating its Emergency Repair service which Repaired Wheelchairs and other Durable Medical Equipment (DME) in the field in emergencies.

Through this work he hosted workshops, outreach and assisted various programs eventually moving over to work at CIL full-time in 2021.





# Joyce Bender

*Bender Consulting Services*

*Session: Standout Strategies for Candidates with Disabilities*

Joyce Bender is the Founder and CEO of Bender Consulting Services, Inc. and the Bender Leadership Academy, located in Pittsburgh, PA. Her focus for both organizations is employment for people with disabilities. As a woman living with epilepsy and hard of hearing, she dedicated her life to a crusade for youth and adults to gain the dream of competitive employment. She works tirelessly to break down the barriers and stigma that exist for people with disabilities.

She serves as the Vice-Chair of the American Association of People with Disabilities, as a Trustee for The Bazelon Center on Mental Health Law, World Institute on Disability (WID), the National Advisory Group for National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), Homeless Children Education Fund, Variety the Children's Charity, Civic Light Opera, Disability Rights of PA, and is Chair of the Epilepsy Association of Western and Central PA. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Geneva College, and hosts the radio show, Disability Matters with Joyce Bender on [www.voiceamerica.com](http://www.voiceamerica.com).

Joyce has received numerous awards and recognitions that include the following:  
2018 Highmark selected Joyce as the first disability-owned business in supplier diversity

2016 Disability:IN, Supplier of the Year Award

2015 Volunteers of America Lifetime Achievement Award

2013 AAPD Justice for All Corporate Award

2013 Geneva Distinguished Service Award

2011 Epilepsy Foundation Hero of Epilepsy Award

2008 YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh Tribute to Women Award in the Entrepreneur Category

2003 Bush Administration's New Freedom Initiative Award

1999 President's Award, received from President Clinton at the White House



# Katherine Pérez

*Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy,  
and Innovation*

*Session: The Disability Pipeline to a Career in Law*

Katherine Pérez is the inaugural Director of the Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy, and Innovation. She graduated from the UCLA School of Law (2013) and is a current doctoral candidate in Disability Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago where she is writing a dissertation on the Burger Supreme Court (1969-1986) cases on the criminal legal system and mental disability. Katherine writes about and presents on Disability and Immigration law and policy. Her article, "A Critical Race and Disability Legal Studies Approach to Immigration Law and Policy" advocates for an intersectional approach to understanding immigration that considers disability as well as a multidisciplinary approach that combines grassroots activism with legal work. Katherine teaches a Disability Rights Law course at Loyola Law School as a Visiting Professor of Law. Katherine's sense of disability justice formed at a young age as she grew up with psychiatric disabilities and is a sister to an autistic woman with intellectual disability. Katherine has dedicated her life toward advocating for people with disabilities on local, national, and international levels. She worked for Congresswoman Linda Sanchez as a Legislative Fellow from 2006-2007 as a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellow. From 2008-2010, Katherine lived in La Libertad, Peru working with a local disability rights organization as a Peace Corps volunteer. From 2015-2019, she helped launch and led The National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities (CNLD), an intersectional organization that advocates on important issues and provides a positive space for the disabled Latinx community. As a queer, disabled woman of color, and granddaughter of Mexican immigrants, Katherine's lived experience informs her approach to intersectional justice.



# Kim Rutledge

*California Department of Rehabilitation*

*Session: The State of Independent Living*

Legislation and Communications at the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) by Governor Gavin Newsom in April 2022. Prior to joining the executive team at DOR, Rutledge held multiple positions at the California Department of Social Services, including Adult Protective Services Program Liaison and Chief of Adult Programs Policy and Quality Assurance. Before entering state government, she was Assistant Legislative Director at the United Domestic Workers of America, AFSCME Local 3930. She was the Sweeney Graduate Intern on Disability Policy at the National Academy of Social Insurance in Washington, D.C., and a Graduate Policy Intern at the Disability Community Resource Center in Los Angeles. Rutledge is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance and the American Association of University Women. She earned a Master of Social Welfare degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri.



# Laurence Carew

*CIL Technology Educator, Center for  
Independent Living*

*Session: Becoming a Code Star*

Greetings, I'm Laurence, and I love to code! My work experience has included full-stack application development for small businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as—17 years of classroom experience as an educator to students on the spectrum. Recently I have taken on the role of Sr curriculum developer for an after-school computer science Enrichment program in which I write tutorials and lesson plans in various subjects such as cyber security, web design, and Game development. Outside of teaching, I produce digital music and advocate for Hip Hop cultural awareness, giving seminars on hip-hop production tools and techniques. I am enthusiastic about teaching and avidly a user of the "analogy." I love teaching and try to make each lesson an experience that creates anticipation for the next session.



# Lawrence Carter-Long

*Director of Discourse for DisArt*

*Session: Lights, Camera, Action*

*Image Description: A Caucasian man turns his head to the right. He wears dark blue glasses, a dark suit jacket, and a plaid collared shirt. He has dark hair.*

Lawrence Carter-Long, a respected authority on the history and evolution of disability in media, has created, curated, critiqued, or consulted on projects for the National Endowment for the Arts, Turner Classic Movies, Sundance, SAG-AFTRA, AFI, NPR, ITVS, the BBC, along with other notable names and initials Non-Disclosure Agreements don't allow us to mention. His work has been featured in Film Quarterly, by PBS, and in mainstream publications like The Atlantic and USA Today. A popular public speaker and social commentator, Lawrence has lectured on disability representation at the Library of Congress, the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, and the United Nations.



# Ligia Montano

*Senior and Disability Action*

*Session: Disability Community Organizing and Campaign Planning*

Ligia Montano has been the director of HAT for five years. She has built the program to be very strong, HAT is a diverse group of participants and most meetings are held in both English and Spanish. Ligia comes from a working-class family in Nicaragua, where she first learned about community, oppression, and advocacy. She has been active in many community organizations in San Francisco, including La Raza Centro Legal, Compañeros del Barrio, Arriba Juntos, and Mission Hiring Hall. Before coming to Senior and Disability Action, she worked as a parent organizer at Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth. As a single mother who was isolated and struggled to make ends meet, she understands the need of supporting systems and communities that include everyone as a member of the society. She wants to make changes in the way our city marginalizes seniors and persons with disabilities.



# Max Dolane

*Housing Advocate, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Housing 2.0*

Max has been in the non-profit world for 18 yrs. He enjoys his work.





# Merrill Friedman

*Elevance*

*Session: A Win/Win Scenario: Hiring from Our Community*

Merrill leads inclusive policy and advocacy for Elevance Health. She works collaboratively with advocates, community leaders, and stakeholders to ensure the interests and preferences of our membership and diverse communities inform Elevance Health's health benefits approaches and healthcare programs. Ms. Friedman advances the integration of the independent living philosophy and the National Advisory Board (NAB) on Improving Healthcare Services for Older Adults and People with Disabilities six foundational principles throughout policy, programs, individual interactions, and business practices. In addition, she leads strategic partnerships with national and local organizations to advance access, health equity, and inclusive public policy.

Previously, Ms. Friedman was interim director at a nonprofit foster care agency serving children and adolescents who experienced severe neglect and abuse. She also served as president and chief executive officer of a private organization that owned and operated residential treatment facilities, group homes and home and community-based services in several states for adolescents with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Ms. Friedman has served on numerous national boards and commissions. She was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities and by Governor Jennifer Granholm to the MI Statewide Independent Living Council where she served as Board Chair. Currently, Ms. Friedman serves on the board of directors for the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI), the Institute for Exceptional Care (IEC), and the American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF), and is an Advisory Board member for Uplift and ADvancing States' MLTSS Institute





# Michelle Rousey

*Disability Advocate, Artist, and Activist*

*Session: Independent Life in the Community Panel*

Michelle is a disabled woman with over 30 years of doing advocacy work. She has worked with children, seniors and people with disabilities. She currently is working with the DACLAC (Disability and Aging Community Living Advisory Committee) at the state level and two transportation committees locally. She's an activist, advocate and artist who has spoken up about social justice issues related to disability.



# Morgan Kanninen

*Assistive Technology Coordinator, Center  
for Independent Living*

*Session: Access Tech: Assistive Technology in Our  
Communities*

Morgan joined the CIL team in November 2021, and brings experience both in mechanical repair (as an electric bike mechanic) and support for people with disabilities. Their support experiences include 2 years as an in-home care attendant, bottom-lining accessibility coordination for disability-focused rallies and political conferences, and 4 years of coordinating and running errands in a disability justice-focused mutual aid network. También habla español. Morgan is passionate about supporting the self-determination of people with disabilities, building up networks of interdependence, and organizing against systems of ableism. They have experienced multiple periods of being significantly disabled.



# Reverend Sophia DeWitt

*East Bay Housing Organizations*

*Session: Disability Housing Advocacy and  
Accessible Design*

Sophia serves as EBHO's Program Director and has been with EBHO for 5 years. She leads EBHO's work in Berkeley and Alameda. Rev. DeWitt's extensive experience in the area of housing justice and with low-income communities of color includes: tenant-landlord rights and responsibilities education, housing element advocacy and community organizing with low-income communities for affordable housing. Sophia is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, and is a native of Fresno. She holds a Master of Divinity from Emory University and a B.A. from Mills College. Previous to joining EBHO, Rev. DeWitt served at Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM, Inc.) for 11 1/2 years directing and designing multiple programs to serve and empower refugees of all generations, from early childhood to elder programs, with a special focus on housing justice and health access.



# Robin Earth

*IL Core Services Program Manager, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Independent Living In The Community, Welcome to Summit Day Three: Employment*

Robin Earth has worked at CIL for 15 years. She started out as a receptionist/ Information and Referral Specialist and is now the Independent Living Services program manager. Her involvement in the independent living and disability rights movement grew out of her feminist and anti-militarism organizing activism and her growing yearning to connect with more disabled people.

She moved to the SF Bay Area in 1987 because of its strong LGBTQ community, cultural diversity, and radical politics. After moving here, she discovered disabled people everywhere, learned about CIL, and gradually felt even more at home.



# Ron Halog

*Independent Living Resources Center of  
Solano and Contra Costa Counties*

*Session: Emergency and Disaster Preparedness*

Mr. Ron Halog has served in the disability non-profit sector for over 36 years. Throughout Mr. Halog's successful career in the disability field, he has worked with organizations such as CCS (Abilities First), PARCA, Kaleidoscope Activity Center, Easter Seals Bay Area, Mt. Diablo Vocation Services, Ala Costa Centers (10 years as the Executive Director) and Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL) (4 years as the Executive Director). Mr. Halog is currently the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for Independent Living Resources of Solano & Contra Costa Counties (ILRSCC). He is also the Vice Chair for Alameda County Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (ALCO VOAD). In 2019, Mr. Halog was awarded the Bettie Hamilton Outstanding Advocacy Award from the Alameda County Developmental Disabilities Council for the work and support he has given to promote independence and accessibility to people with disabilities. Mr. Halog has held multiple officer positions (Member-at-Large 2017 and Treasurer 2018) on the Board of Directors for the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) and Alameda County's Developmental Disabilities Council as President from 2019 – 2021 and Vice President from 2016 - 2018. In addition, Mr. Halog is a member of FAST (Functional Assessment Service Team) for Alameda County. In 2020, Assemblymember Kansen Chu awarded Mr. Halog the Community Hero award for his work with the people with disabilities and Access Function Needs. Mr. Halog is currently one on the lead trainers for the Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (BAUASI) East Bay Region (Prepare U 7 week emergency preparedness training series).



# Shay Roberson

*Community Resources for Independent Living*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

I am the Systems Change Organizer, helping folks learn how to advocate for themselves and others around them. I've lived in the Bay Area my entire life, I started out as a CRIL consumer; working with Michael in 2006 while attending Las Positas College. After graduating from San Jose State in 2012, it was a real struggle trying to find a job and a purpose. In January 2020, I was hired by Michael himself to become part of the CRIL team. I've truly found a home here. I love that I have found a way to contribute to society...in helping the disabled community find and or further their independence. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with this organization.



# Shelby Wayment

*Disability Rights California*

*Session: Election 2022: Make a Plan to Vote*

Shelby is a third-year law student at UC Berkeley and has been a law clerk for Disability Rights California's Voting Rights Practice Group since June 2022. Shelby graduated from the University of Utah in 2019 in Writing & Rhetoric Studies, with a minor in Campaign Management. She served as an education Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi after graduation. Throughout law school, she has been involved with Ecology Law Quarterly, Election Law at Berkeley Law. Shelby is a first-year writing tutor and oral advocacy judge.



# Silvia Yee

*Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund*

*Session: Disability Policy Today and Tomorrow*

Silvia Yee is a senior staff attorney at Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) where her work has included projects to increase physical and programmatic accessibility and disability awareness in the delivery of health care services, as well as impact litigation to increase access for people with disabilities in myriad aspects of public and private life. Ms. Yee maintains interests in health care reform and the impact on people with disabilities, international disability rights and the implementation of national disability rights laws, and the strengthening of cross-disability and cross-civil rights communities.





# Tari Hartman Squire

CEO EIN SOF Communications, Lights! Camera! Access! and Partner of ADA Lead On Productions with Danny Woodburn

Session: Lights, Camera, Action

*Image Description: Caucasian woman with long dark hair, glasses and pink blouse and dark suit smiles.*

Tari Hartman Squire's EIN SOF Communication is a leading disability-inclusive diversity media, business and strategic marketing firm. Since founding Media Access Office (disability community/media liaison), she consulted with AP Stylebook on disability-savvy language, plus hundreds of TV, film, marketing, and advertising campaigns, including The Disability Collection (Getty Images/Verizon). She established disability strategic marketing campaign tied to passage of the ADA. Lights! Camera! Access! Career Initiative and ADA Lead On Productions (co-founded with Danny Woodburn) build on Media Access success to increase disability employment in front of/behind-the camera/keyboard; improve portrayals; insure accessible media; and create a disability talent pipeline database.



# Ted Jackson

*Executive Director, Center for Independent Living*

*Sessions: Welcome to the Independent Living Summit, Welcome to Summit Day Three: Employment, Closing Keynote*

Ted Jackson is a disability advocate, LGBTQ activist, accessibility consultant, and former political operative with three decades of experience working in grassroots social justice, electoral and nonprofit communities.

He served as the Senior Advisor-Disability at the Democratic National Committee. His consulting work has provided accessibility services and disability-focused diversity, equity, and inclusion training for non-profit organizations. Previously, Ted was the Statewide Community Organizing Director for California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, organizing systems change advocacy with the Disability Organizing Network (DOnet).

His disability advocacy achievements include successful campaigns to increase access in voting rights, healthcare, and transportation, including the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). His work has led him to work with Equality California, the American Association for People with Disabilities, The Women's March, Inc., and the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies. He is also an adjunct professor at American University, teaching a historical and political disability curriculum.

Ted volunteers on the LGBTQ Victory Fund Campaign Board and has personal passions for Shakespearean plays and baking sourdough bread.



# Tony Coelho

*Session: The Next Frontier for Disability Inclusion and Equity: Employment*

The Honorable Tony Coelho is a retired U.S. Congressman from California, a former House of Representatives Majority Whip, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman and the principal author of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Diagnosed with epilepsy when he was 22 years old, Mr. Coelho has spent his entire adult life helping advance the lives of people with disabilities. While he calls this his “ministry”, those in the disability community call him their “voice” and “champion.” Mr. Coelho founded The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation at Loyola Marymount University.



# Vanessa Castro

Artist, Author, Illustrator

Session: Independent Life in the Community Panel

My name is Vanessa Castro. I am a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, with a bachelor's degree in English and minor in Education. I grew up in the Bay Area, and currently live in Alameda. In 1999, I was accepted into the Disabled Students' Residence Program at UC Berkeley and lived in the dorms, that was my first experience of living independently. I had to figure out how to get attendants to help me be independently. Apparently, I got a hang off it since I got the opportunity to co-taught the Disabled Students' Residence Program for two semesters. Now I am a professional artist, and have my own art business, 'Ness Ness Va's Art'. In addition, I have written, illustrated and published three children's books, *Gloria*, *The Gecko Attendant*, *Rollerblading On Autism*, and *Finding The Spirit*. I'm currently working on my fourth book. All my books and a lot of my artwork have disability themes to raise awareness and educate kids and others about disabilities. I have Cerebral Palsy with a speech impediment, so I use a wheelchair and a communication device to communicate more effectively with others. I was always taught not to let my limitations prevent me from what I want to accomplish. I painted Wonder Woman in a wheelchair and other superheroes with crutches or hearing aids to show that people with disabilities have their own unique super powers. All of my three books, *Gloria*, *The Gecko Attendant*, *Rollerblading On Autism*, and *Finding The Spirit* are in the Alameda Free Library, and available for purchase on Amazon and my website, [nessnessva.com](http://nessnessva.com). My *Rollerblading On Autism* book is also in the Autism Speaks Resource Library. Besides my books and paintings, I also make and sell greeting cards, posters, and calendars. I often sell my work at art festivals and fairs around the Bay Area. My paintings have been displayed in the Expressions Gallery, Passage Gallery, and ArtVale Gallery. As part of my mission to educate others about disabilities, I also do speaking engagements and go to different colleges and elementary schools, to spread the word and read my books. I also did a series of speeches at Ability Now to help and motivate others with disabilities.



# Zayda Ortiz

*Program Director, Center for Independent Living*

*Session: Welcome to the Independent Living Summit*

Zayda Ortiz is the Programs Director of the CIL. She grew up in LA in a first-generation immigrant home and became disabled at 16 with fibromyalgia. She received a bachelors degree from San Francisco State University and has worked in various government and non-profit organizations such as TreePeople (LA), National Park Service (SF), Institute for Civic & Community Engagement (SF), and actively serves in her church. Zayda has helped CIL's administration and program development for over 2 years and enjoys supporting CIL's disabled consumers and making spreadsheets to keep everything organized.

# **CIL**

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