LILY BOND: Welcome, everyone, and thanks for joining this webinar entitled The Long Road from Reactive to Proactive-- Developing an Accessibility Strategy. I'm Lily Bond from 3Play Media, and I will be moderating today. I'm really excited to be joined by Korey Singleton, the Assistive Technology Initiative manager at George Mason University, who has a really great presentation prepared for you today. We have an hour and 15 minutes slated for this presentation. Korey's presentation should take about 50 minutes, and then we'll leave 25 to 30 minutes for questions at the end.

For questions, you should feel free to ask them throughout the presentation, and we'll compile them to answer at the end. The best way to ask your questions is to type them directly into the box in the bottom right of your control panel. A recording of this webinar with captions will be available tomorrow, and you'll get an email with a link to that when it's ready. You can also find a link to live captions in the chat window if you would like to play those as the presentation is going on.

This webinar is being produced with OLC, the Online Learning Consortium, and we wanted to alert you to some of their upcoming workshops. April 8 to 10, they have a workshop on designing with accessibility in mind, and November 13 to 20, they're holding another workshop on the ADA and web accessibility. You can register for those workshops on their website at onlinelearningconsortium.org.

And before I hand it off to Korey, we have a poll for you to answer, which I'm going to launch right now. So the question is, do you currently have a reactive or a proactive accessibility policy? And you can answer reactive, proactive, some of both, or not sure. I'll give you a second to answer that, and then we'll see the results.

Great. So you should see on the screen the results, which are pretty overwhelmingly that some people have both reactive and proactive, and about a quarter have a reactive policy. Korey, I don't know if you want to speak to that, but I am going to hand it off to you, and we're excited to hear your presentation.

KOREY SINGLETON: Thanks, Lily. I appreciate it. The poll results are pretty interesting. I think we are in a similar role or similar space, I'd say, as far as seeing some of both. There are some areas where we do very well in terms of being proactive, and there are some areas where we can grow. So

let's go ahead and proceed to the presentation.

Thanks, Lily. I appreciate it. All right. So the title of today's presentation is The Long Road from Reactive to Proactive. And basically, it'll be highlights of what we've done here at George Mason University to move towards a proactive accessibility strategy. And what we'll cover, I'll talk a little bit about my office and where we're situated, so you kind of understand our role here at university.

I'll talk about issues and challenges generally and broadly impacting institutions of higher education. I'll talk about the IT accessibility working group initiative, which we had here-- it was probably about a couple years ago now-- and what we did to kind of get us on the right path in terms of being proactive. And then I'll talk about what those strategies and recommendations look like in practice, the different things we did to implement proactive strategies.

So let's talk a little bit about my office and the university as a whole first. George Mason University is situated in Fairfax, Virginia. We're about 30 minutes west of Washington, DC. Our enrollment is roughly about 34,000 students. We have a little over 1,400 full-time faculty. As far as teaching faculty or instructional faculty, we're probably in the 1,700 range. That includes full-time and part-time.

We have four campus locations. The main campus is in Fairfax. We have satellite locations in Arlington, Manassas, and Sterling, Virginia, and we have an international location campus in Songdo, Korea. If you want to learn more about our university, I've included a link in the presentation. And at the very end of the presentation, I'll make sure that you also have access to our PowerPoint.

I'm not going to read this word for word, but I'll tell you, generally, what our mission here is at the Assistive Technology Initiative. We're basically in charge of technology accessibility here on campus, so we work with different units. That's academic units. That's non-academic units like ITS and maybe library personnel, other units on campus to deliver a strategic plan for accessibility, for information technology accessibility on our campus.

The services that we provide, first, we provide accessible text, and that's basically textbook conversion into electronic format. It could also be Braille, large print, those kinds of formats. We also oversee the captioning process. It is centralized in our office, where faculty members can make requests to have their videos captioned or audio described for students with vision impairments.

We oversee web accessibility testing, and that's of Mason websites and applications. We also look at auxiliary applications and websites if they're being used in the classroom. We also provide informal assistive technology assessments and support and training for individuals who are assistive technology users on our campuses.

Just to talk about how we are situated here on campus, we are under the Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics office. We report directly to the ADA coordinator, who is also the associate director of the Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics office. I'm the manager. We have an accessible media coordinator, Courtney Shewak, who oversees our accessible text and media process. We have an IT accessibility coordinator, Kara Zirkle, who oversees our web accessibility testing process.

She's also our liaison in many ways between our office and the information technology services unit. Accessible media specialist, Nancy Borck, supports Courtney with the accessible text process. Stephanie Robbins is our program support specialist, and she supports Kara mainly with the web accessibility process, but also with technology assessments for students with disabilities. And we have two student workers, Robert and Sitara, who support all of our projects.

So that's enough about us. Let's kind of get into issues and challenges. So what we know is that there are increasing numbers of students with disabilities entering institutions of higher education. We know that online and e-learning technologies are being used more and more in online and face-to-face classes.

We also know that there's a growth in distance education offerings by many institutions of higher education, and part of that is to address gaps in funding. There's a lot of states that are starting to cut back on the funding to higher education institutions, so you're going out to try and seek more students to enroll, and you can do that pretty easily through distance education.

And we also know this. There are a growing number of legal challenges and judgments against institutions of higher education by individuals with sensory impairments. That would be individuals who are blind, low vision, deaf, or hard of hearing. And they are winning those challenges. This is a list of the settled and open cases. This is not a comprehensive list. This is just kind of a snapshot of a lot of different things out there. There are many major cases out there. I'm not going to go through all of these, but I will point out some of the similarities.

Most of these cases involve one, two, three, or really just a handful of individuals with visual impairments who have the Harvard and MIT case, which was just announced recently, which involves a handful of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. But you'll notice that all of these institutions had to make significant changes in order to provide instructional resources and support to meet the needs of these populations.

And so oftentimes, we'll get the question, well, you know, how many students are we talking about? Well, it doesn't matter. It only takes one student to file a lawsuit. And I think in many cases, our university as well, you're subject to risk by not doing the things you need to do to ensure equivalent access. And so one thing we did was we took all those cases, and we said, let's compile all of the common issues and areas of concern, so we can see what's being pointed out as far as our problems from what these cases mention.

They're all looking at learning management systems and supplemental application. Supplemental applications would be like Google Apps for Education. It would be My Labs. It would be the McGraw Hill Connect kinds of applications. Some of them are looking at alternative textbook resources or materials not being provided in a timely manner. Others are looking at document accessibility or the inaccessibility of course materials like Word documents, PowerPoints, PDFs, not labeling images, not properly marking up tables or adding headers.

Some are looking at the captioning or the lack of captioning for videos. You have inaccessible library resources that have been pointed out. The fact that library databases may not be accessible, or the search page when you go to the library website is not accessible. And then also, how do you get access to the print resources that are in the library?

And then you have additional classroom resources that have been pointed out like iClickers and classroom podiums. Those are some other things that have been pointed out. When you look at general campus access-- and we broke it up into two areas-- the bulk of the issues are really centered around classroom instructional resources.

But you also have general campus issues, where you have the inaccessibility of university websites and resources. Now that could be, in many cases, that may mean the inaccessibility of the registration system, or I mentioned that here the access to auxiliary offices. Some offices may have their own online requests forms that students need to fill out, or that's the

primary means for them to access services on campus, and those resources may be inaccessible. They may post documents, like a lot of them will post PDF documents or forms, could be HR, could be other offices that post a lot of PDF documents or forms that are not readable to screen reading technology.

We also have ATMs that have been pointed out as inaccessible. And so what should you kind of take away from this? Not only do you recognize that these issues exist, and that these are kind of areas of risk for universities, but when you break down these two areas, one thing you'll notice is that there are specific stakeholders on campus who are in charge of providing broad access to these resources on your campus. Those are the stakeholders you need to go after.

And so in terms of the Learning Management System, there are specific offices on campus that are in charge of deploying that and with negotiating the contract for purchasing the learner's management system. Those are people who should be sitting on your accessibility committees. There are offices that do a lot of programming around videos, whether it's a YouTube channel, or they may produce their own, or many institutions just like us, we have GMU TV. Many institutions have their own TV channel.

Those are people who should have a seat on your accessibility committees. Library staff, obviously, should have a seat on your accessibility committees. These are things to think about when you look at what these, generally, what these areas of concern are from these settlement cases.

So really the nice thing about all the settlement cases is that they give you a roadmap. When you look at what the DOJ settlements are and what the OCR settlements are, they tell you exactly what you should be doing. This is what you should be doing as far as providing broad access to programs and services or EIT programs and services at your university. So one of the first things you should be doing is establishing or updating your electronic and information technology accessibility policy.

There should be a grievance in the remediation process if someone encounters electronic or information technology that's not accessible. There should be procedures for procurement. Before you think about bringing new technologies on campus, that technology should be reviewed to see who's going to be using that technology, is there a user interface, and do we need to think or have a communication, or have some communications with the vendor

regarding accessibility and how you remediate challenges and timelines and things like that?

There should be broad EIT accessibility training on your campus. Stakeholders should be involved, academics unit should be involved, deans, directors, those people who make broad and wide-reaching decisions on your campus should be involved. You should establish an accessibility web portal. We have an accessibility.gmu.edu page. And essentially what it is is it's a portal page.

It's a referral site, so you go there. You get quick information, and it points you to either the assistive technology information website, or it'll point you to the Office of Disability Services website, or it'll point you to the ADA coordinator. It's a place to go to get sent out to areas that you're looking for specific information on.

You should be hiring EIT accessibility staff or designating staff who have a significant role in ensuring that the university is doing what they need to do around electronic and information technology accessibility. There should be a process for monitoring EIT issues, so ongoing. Are you continuing to look at accessibility in the years ahead when you implement new technologies?

There should be an audit at the very beginning. Do an audit, and kind of say, this is where we are. This is where we're weak, and this is where we need to make significant changes, or put in place significant resources, and these are areas where we're strong, and we probably just need to address these policy changes or culture shifts.

And then from those resolutions, you also saw institution-specific resolutions. If you'll notice, and I didn't point out in this particular presentation, or rather, I won't point it out, but there's monetary compensation that's coming from some of these lawsuits. Louisiana Tech, there was monetary compensation. With Florida State, there was monetary compensation.

If you look at some of the ongoing cases now, not necessarily Harvard and MIT, but if you look at some of the other ones that are out there, there's monetary compensation that's being requested on behalf of those students who've been denied access. So that's another thing for universities and institutions to really consider as they move forward.

There have been changes requested of department-specific applications and websites. So, for example, with STEM content, if you use proprietary applications-- I think in the Florida State case, it was an e-grade application which was inaccessible to two blind students, those are

things you need to think about before you broadly implement those kinds of tools into your curriculum. And then there were also some nondiscrimination policies that needed to be addressed, so they're very institution-specific resolutions that are in there as well. But again, this is kind of your road map.

If you look at collectively what these resolution agreements say, this is what you need to be doing. The other thing I'll say is when it came to establishing our electronic and information technology accessibility policy, we just lifted the definitions directly from the settlements, because we didn't want to think about, well, what stuff is covered? What stuff is not covered?

We just looked at the resolutions, and said, this is the technology that they're actually covering. So for electronic and information technology, you can look at it. They point out electronic books and reading systems. They point out content delivery in digital form. So websites, search engines, databases, learning management systems, classroom technology-- this language is pulled specifically from the Penn State resolution.

You also have a definition for what accessibility means. Are individuals able to independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same time frame as individuals without disabilities? That's always an area of contention when we would have some conversations around, what exactly does accessibility mean, what technology needs to be covered, and so on and so forth.

So when you go to have those conversations, you can say, this is what the Department of Justice and the office of civil rights are looking for. So if we're not doing these things, if we're not covering these technologies, we are at risk. And so let's look specifically at my institution, so we can kind of talk about how we moved forward. For pretty much every national case that I had listed, there was a Mason equivalent. We were using My Labs in some classes.

For example, we had one class where there was a blind student, and the faculty member did not choose to use Blackboard or Blackboard Collaborate, which we have. They chose to just use My Labs. And that was because the faculty member, either I think they might have been assigned the course late, and so they instituted My Labs. It was completely inaccessible to the student. They spent several weeks trying to find resolution, and we couldn't. So the student eventually had to drop the course. So yes, we were exposed.

Captioning-- I'll give you a perfect example. We had a student who signed up for an online course, and it was three, four weeks before we figured out that he needed captioning. He

couldn't take any other lab courses, because he was working full time. This was the one that fit for his schedule, and we didn't have any captioning.

At the time, we didn't have any captioning solution. We didn't know who was paying for the captioning, so eventually, you had an argument between my office and disability services and the academic units about who had to pay for it. And by the time you finish that argument, you're still several weeks down the line, and the student's been denied access. And so as a result, we paid extra. We literally paid twice what we would've paid if we had planned because we didn't address those needs in the beginning.

He also had issues around inaccessible websites and web-based documents. The e-courses were not being looked at for accessibility. Very hard to retrofit those kinds of things after the fact. A lot of communication breakdowns. Purchasing procurement-- we were purchasing all kinds of technology, which wasn't being reviewed for accessibility, and then you'll go and make this broad sweeping implementation only to find out that it's denying access. And if a student decides they want go up the chain to fight that battle, they will. And they'll win. And there's evidence of it, obviously.

Something else that was also happening was our university's information technology infrastructure was changing. We were perfectly positioned to try and piggyback off of that. There was a shift towards Blackboard Learn, which was a very accessible learning management system, a shift from kind of using-- and I'll talk about this a little later. We had some other enterprise systems that were being looked at. Essentially, we were using our streaming media server as a storage repository.

Nobody really liked it. It wasn't working out really well, and so it wasn't being used as intended. And so there was kind of a groundswell of we need a video management platform that everybody can broadly access and host stuff on and not have it hosted on YouTube and Vimeo and any kind of other platform out there. So there was a move towards standardization of some of the enterprise infrastructure systems, and so we were able to kind of piggyback off of some of that stuff.

So let's talk about our working group. All of those things that I just mentioned were really the precursor to us establishing this working group. And the reason we called it working group is there was a colleague of mine that I had met with prior to establishing it, and she suggested that you call it a working group and not a committee. And when I asked her why, she said,

because they need to know they're coming in to work, not to sit there and just kind of offer some suggestions and not do anything after they leave that room.

So we decided to call it a working group. And we pulled in stakeholders from the library, from our university life is our student affairs, essentially, the information technology services area, our Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence, the distance education office, our university council was involved, we had representatives from academic departments, and we also had representatives from our office of compliance, diversity, and ethics.

And it was established in and met throughout spring 2013. And we mainly centered it around issues and challenges impacting students with sensory impairments. And the reason we did that is because that's where the legal challenges were happening, and we knew we were exposed, and that's where we needed to focus our attentions.

Also, we find that in most cases-- at least that's been in my experience here at Mason-- in most cases, those are the students who require the most resources, and those are the students who are impacted the most by broad implementations of inaccessible technology. Students with learning impairments, hidden disabilities, tend to find workarounds. That's been our experience here at Mason. We may not find out about issues, or the issues aren't necessarily around technology. And so for that reason, our group was centered on how do we address the needs of students with sensory impairments?

At the time, we had 81 total students with sensory impairments. That's students with vision and hearing loss, and/or hearing loss. And we had just had eight incoming blind students, which really made things really challenging for us. So I have a link on this slide, which actually will take you to the findings and the documents that came out of that working group. So when I share the PowerPoint, you're welcome to review that information if you're in a position where you're just getting started and you want to look at what you might need to consider going forward.

And so these are the issues that were identified by the working group. And I'm really going to point to, I mean, of course, there's procurement and legal and learning technology costs, compliance, and enforcement, all these things that we really talked about. I'm going to highlight the two in red, one being accessibility versus accommodation, and the other being non-inclusive practices and awareness.

What I mean by accessibility versus accommodation is we wanted to look at how we could be

proactive. That's really what started the discussion about being proactive. There are things that you do as far as including the disability statement and maybe having the faculty member announce at the beginning of class and really highlight that statement that there are additional resources to support students who may have disabilities or any kinds of other challenges.

But we wanted to say, this needs to be built into the course in the beginning as much as possible, and for face to face courses or courses where somebody literally shows up, we have adjunct faculty members that show up on Friday for a course that they need to start teaching on Monday. That's a difficult thing to plan for.

And they also, in many cases, have full-time jobs. So when you throw that on top of what they need to do as far as planning, it's easy for someone to fall into the gaps, especially someone who has significant needs to fall into the gaps. It also puts that faculty member in a really difficult space with trying to do the things they need to do, so we wanted to think about strategies that could not only support that person who's planning six months ahead for their course, but that person who shows up on Friday for that class they've got to start teaching on Monday.

We also wanted to think about just-in-time versus developed resources, so resources, again, that could be built into faculty development workshops, and in just-in-time resources, meaning you show up, you have something you need to do really quick to remediate something, and we give you a quick way to do it. As far as timing and staffing, we needed to look at what was involved in these solutions we were going to come up with, and does that mean that our office or some other office is going to need to be staffed, is going to need more personnel, or they're going to need more training, or those kinds of things?

We also wanted look at inconsistency. And what I mean by that is at the time, we had some instructional designers who were champions of accessibility and some instructional designers who, if they were getting a lot of pushback, may not have been doing a lot around accessibility or may not have been getting questions around accessibility, and so therefore, it was something that didn't need to be discussed. So how can we make sure that we're providing consistent information to all faculty who show up, whether developing the course, or they're showing up right before course is about to start in a few days, we give them the same consistent information, access to the same resources, and make sure that they're aware of what they need to do, what their responsibilities are, what the student's responsibilities are, what our office can do to support them, and so on.

As far as non-inclusive practices and awareness, that really gets to decisions around that. It really kind of ties into everything when you talk about procurement and e-learning technology. We wanted to start looking at what kinds of things should instructional design staff, our unit, faculty members be thinking about when they build course modules in Blackboard or when they do certain things within Blackboard Collaborate. We wanted to start looking at what practices we needed to educate those individuals about so that they could start to build them into course design, or we can at least provide, say, a checklist or a guide or something like that to say, these are the things you need to do and think about when you're developing your course so that you are as accessible as possible to as many people as possible.

And so one of the things that came out of our recommendations is we looked at high impact high priority recommendations. What things need to happen now? And what things will take some time to get to? But these are the kind of glaring things. And they were centered around three areas-- improving student access in the classroom, improving web accessibility and procurement, and structural improvements.

Now I have a list of all this stuff here, so a provost letter, basic design considerations for your courses, accessibility reviews for DE courses, improved communications and collaboration, training with academic units, departments, and instructional designers, accessibility testing of e-learning and IT resources. I'll get into the web accessibility stuff and I'll also get into structural improvements. Now going forward, the recommendations, I'll talk about them now in practice. This is what we actually did and what they look like once they hit the ground for the most part. I restructured that high priority list. I'll talk about all those things, but I've kind of restructured it into other categories so that it makes a little more sense as I go through.

So the first would be improved communication and collaboration. What do we do around that? Most of what we've done around accessibility, not within the past few years, but when I first got here in 2008, and some of the folks on my staff who started working here years prior-- 2005, 2007-- it was all grassroots. So it was who you knew, what "friends," quote unquote, you can make in the library, or "friends," quote unquote, you can make in the instructional design team, more in the information technology unit, as it was called at that time, and disability services. And so those friends would give you access, but it only went to a certain point, because if that individual who was running their unit decided that that wasn't a priority for their unit, then that's kind of where things stopped. If that individual who you were friends with decided to leave the university or move into a different role, that access stopped. And so for that reason, we said,

there needs to be a top-down approach to this. It needs to come from the provost, out of the office of the provost so that it carries some weight for what people are going to need to do in the classroom.

And so I had a meeting with the VP of the compliance, diversity, and ethics office set up a meeting with the provost, and the provost agreed to basically send out that letter, which highlighted these are the units you need to talk to, and this is what we're going to ask that you do. And it was nice, because it went out at the beginning of the year when faculty members are receiving all kinds of communications at that time, but they will look at things that come out of the provost's office. So that kind of gave us a leg up in terms of saying, when we went to academic units, when we went to work with other partnering units to say, this is the top-down approach that's being supported. So let's kind of start our discussion from there.

Another thing that happened was our VP organized a meeting with the deans and directors, and from there, one of the issues that was identified from the committee was there are situations at times where a student was not provided with the accommodations that they needed, or the accommodations weren't as effective for one reason or another, but that the faculty member hadn't done what they needed to do, or information hadn't been communicated properly. And for that reason, if you go to the academic unit and say, I need to do this, or they go to the faculty member and say, I need you to convert your Word documents into this, or add descriptions to your images and blah, blah, blah, and the faculty members say no, then you kind of had no recourse. Where did you go?

If you would go to the chair, and the chair said no, then OK, where do I go next? And if you go through the assistant dean or the dean or whatever, part of that is you risk-- people were kind of apprehensive about doing it, because one, you really start to place a microscope on that student, and the student doesn't want any kind of retaliation from the faculty member for that kind of pushback. The deans and the chairs-- I mean, there are different priorities. So I may be coming to them about accessibility, but they may have a nine to five job, which says that I'm an adjunct. I'm only getting $1,500 for this entire semester. It's difficult for me to do all this stuff, so no, I'm not going to do it.

And so we needed a way to kind of remediate that problem, and so what we did was we went to the deans and directors, and said we need a person who-- an individual for each school or college who is in a leadership role, who essentially is a the buck stops with this kind of person. And so in many cases, it was either the dean themselves or an associate dean, who was

identified as having some authority so that if we went into a situation where we weren't able to work out things with the faculty member or with the department chair, we could go and work with someone specifically in that college or school to say, this is what's going on, can you help us remediate it, without having to go all the way up to the office of the provost to fix those issues?

The other thing we did was we focus on what we call choke points or what I call choke points. And we emphasized our strategic partnerships. What I mean by that is there are areas where students with disabilities have to go to access specific resources. There are areas where faculty members have to go to access specific resources. And that includes the library. That includes our Office of Distance Education. That includes the instructional design team. That includes disability services, all these different areas. We know that there are going to be a large number of students going to access these resources to register to receive accommodations.

We know faculty members are going to go to work with the instructional design team to help them with transitioning their face-to-face course to an online course. And so what we started to focus on was, let's not try to get our own face time in front of faculty. Because we're the accessibility office, we're considered kind of an auxiliary office. So instead of trying to steal that time, why don't we work with the other units to build accessibility into the time they have in front those folks?

So we provided accessibility training to quote unquote, "friendly academic units" in cooperation with the instructional designers. We had a number of units who were in a position where they were starting to build online programs or build online courses. And they were interested in accessibility because the Office of Distance Education said, you will make your courses accessible. That's a part of us supporting the development of your online course.

And so the nice thing about that is we really had an in quickly with the Office of Distance Education in terms of working with the instructional design team to build in accessibility training when they worked with faculty and staff. I'll also talk about how that's manifested into accessibility reviews, but I'll talk about that a little later.

Another thing we did was we worked in collaboration with the library. We have assistive technology labs in each of the libraries. The libraries, of course, have e-reserves that faculty members will post documents to.

And in my office, we had to convert a number of those resources for students who are blind because the PDFs weren't accessible for one reason or another. We work with the library on captioning of their specific resources or resources that they own, that we kind of find that they own, for example, if someone just found something randomly on the web. And we also wanted to work with the library on procurement.

And so one of things that the library did was they actually established an accessibility coordinator role. It's a separate role. Well, it's a role that's combined with an instructional design role from one of their staff members. And we also worked with them on the streaming media policy. And I'll go through all of these things a little bit later. But I just wanted to highlight. And these are the choke points that we focused on.

All right, so let me now talk about our updates to policy, purchasing, and procurement. Policy 1307 goes into what we call-- it really talks about our architectural standards review board. And so what that is, that board reviews all incoming electronic and information technology purchases. And we were able to get Kara onto that committee as the person reviewing accessibility.

And so just like an individual who's reviewing security or reviewing systematic management, whatever they're reviewing, networking, how it interfaces with all enterprise systems, we have an individual on there who's reviewing accessibility and giving guidance to that committee on, this purchase impacts X, Y, Z, and being able to communicate with vendors about, this is what we need from you, a vPad or whatever, to identify where the accessibility issues are. We could do testing on those applications. So Policy 1307 really specifically addresses the role of that committee and how they would review all technology purchases.

Policy 1308 is our electronic and information technology accessibility policy. We updated it in April, 2014, as I mentioned before. We literally took the definitions from that Penn State settlement, because it really helped us to define exactly what accessibility meant. It helped us to define exactly what technology we're considering under that policy, because prior to that, we had a very weak policy which didn't spell out those things.

And so sometimes, when you would go and you would sit down with units and say, this is what we need you to do, they would go, well, it's not in a policy, and what law does this reference, or federal law doesn't apply to us, 508 doesn't apply-- so you have all these different discussions about-- you get into the weeds instead of really getting to what you need to do as

far as fixing the issues. And in that policy, we spell out some roles and responsibilities, essentially who's in charge of addressing what. And we link towards the findings and recommendations from our IT accessibility working group.

And so the architecture review board is what I mentioned before. Kara and Stephanie worked to come up with what they call a risk analysis and recommendations document for the purchaser. And the purchaser is the individual, here at Mason, who's initiating that purchase. And what happens on that committee is we're not in a position-- early on, there was confusion, and we were put in a position to say yes or no.

So if somebody decided they wanted to purchase a new database for their office and we found some accessibility issues with the user interface and they decided that they then wanted to-- well, the vendor said, well, we need you to kick out the accessibility language from purchasing contract and all of that, then what would happen is that everything would get held up. And they would look at us and our particular office, and then, essentially, you'd kind of get into screaming matches and people developing really ill feelings about the whole process because we were put in the position to say yes or no.

And so we made a change to that to say, we're not in this role to say yes or no. We are in this role to tell you what the risks are by you doing it. We give those risks and those recommendations to the person here at Mason who's making that purchase. And now, they take the responsibility for how they go forward.

So it would be nice if we had the authority to say no, but the truth is it's really not on this office to do that. We tell you what risks are involved in you going forward in that direction. And if, for some reason down the line, there's an issue and we have to address it, we're going to the person who authorized that purchase.

And so we worked with the purchasing office and with our information technology services and with our legal counsel to come up with accessibility language that exists in every contract. That doesn't mean that we review every purchase. We don't look at every pool of printers that come through or every pool of scanners that come through or everything that goes through our electronic Virginia purchasing system. But that language is everywhere.

And so the nice thing about that is, for those things that we don't review, that still exists in the contract. And it protects the university by allowing us to then go back to the vendor and say,

hey, we've identified an issue. Can we get this fixed? As opposed to the university then-- which is what we used to do in the past-- having to pony up more money to then pay for a fix for a new solution.

And so this language is the language that I referenced before about people wanting to have taken out. But our legal counsel backed us. And when we talked to the CIO and the ADA coordinator and explained why this all needs to happen, everybody now is in lockstep with, these are the recommendations, you make the best business decision for your office on how you want to move forward.

And so let's talk about baseline design considerations and what we did for our training resources. There are a lot of things spelled out in WCAG 2.0, in section 508. And oftentimes, what would happen is people would get lost, thinking they needed to know the law or to understand the standards in the law or the standards within WCAG 2.0 in order to make a fully accessible document, website, whatever.

And so we kind of felt like we were getting bogged down with getting into legalese and getting lost in that conversation instead of focusing on what matters the most. There are a few things that we can do that will go a long way for students with vision impairments. For example, if you have a Word document or a PowerPoint document and you have images in that document, or a PDF document and you have images in that document, provide alternative text descriptions for any meaningful graphics. That'd be images, charts, graphs, Smart Objects, whatever, in that document. If you do that, that goes a long way.

Provide descriptions for videos where visual content is important to the understanding. We don't have to provide audio description for every video. But there are videos where the visual imagery really does matter. And for that reason, it's necessary for us to review some of those to make the determination whether or not we need to outsource it and have it audio described.

Using styles in Office documents-- there's a term that's called like text dump, where-- let's say you take a long, 50-page PDF file, and you scan it to make the text readable. Instead of it just being a long, 50-page document of text-- because screen readers will only just read the text, left to right, top to bottom, and keep on going-- how about adding some markup in that? So for example, in Office documents, you can use styles.

So you can put the headers. You can put in heading structures. You can put in title structure. You can put in footnotes, all kinds of other stuff, to make it easier for screen-reading software

to identify the structure that you placed in the document. What that allows an individual who's a screen-reader user to do is to quickly step through different elements within the document to get access to what they need.

And then we talked about what we could do as far as marking up tables properly. You don't need to use complex tables in a simple syllabus. You could use a simple table that's just one row for column headers and one column or row headers. Doing those kinds of simple things really did make it easier for screen-reader users to get access to what they need to.

And also, before you plan your course out, choose applications that support keyboard navigation. Those are things we can help out with. Blackboard's accessible. Blackboard Collaborate is accessible. So as much as possible, we would love people to use those tools. That doesn't mean that there aren't specific features within them that cause accessibility issues. But as much as possible, choose the most accessible resources.

For students with hearing impairments, provide captions for all videos. Provide transcripts for all audio files that you post online. Just do it. That benefits not only students who have a hearing impairments, that benefits individuals who, for one reason or another, can't access the video or the audio because they have a bad connection or a weak connection. That benefits folks who are English as a second language. There are a lot of things that you can do that benefit a lot of different individuals. And so these simple things-- it doesn't mean you have to do everything. But there are about three or four things that you can do in each category that really go a long way.

The other thing that my office did was we created a guide to creating accessible electronic materials. It's about 58, 59 pages. But we have a statement, a disclaimer, in the very beginning which says, this is not for you to go through 58 or 59 pages. These are a series of one and two-page cheat sheets that tell you quickly how to do what you need to do.

So for example, this one is a goals document. It's taken from a project that was done by NCDAE. And what this goals document says is, this is how you actually go through PDF conversion in a Microsoft Word document. These are the things you need to do. It's a one pager. If you're using a Word document and converting it to a PDF, just pull this quick document out, and then, go through these steps. You've done everything you need to do to make it as accessible as possible.

Same thing for just creating accessibility within a Word document. Same thing for creating

accessibility in a PowerPoint document. They've already created the cheat sheet for you. And it was just a matter of us pulling it in. For those areas where we didn't have any kind of reference from goals, we had things that were very Mason-specific. We created our own kind of cheat sheets for tools that are commonly used here.

So for example, YouTube and Vimeo were commonly used for hosting videos. And now that Vimeo allows you to add captions and subtitles, let's do a quick cheat sheet to make sure that people know how to add captions to their Vimeo videos. And these were things that we did when we created this guide.

We also updated our website. We usability group tested it with students and with faculty and staff to be able to identify whether or not it was easy to find resources. We made two really important updates. To further support that guide that we posted, that PDF document, we also created a video training library. And that video training library mirrors, in many ways, the one and two-page cheat sheets that we put in there.

That way, if it's easier for you to look at a one or two-minute or three-minute video online, by all means, go to it. And what we didn't want to do was have links which sent you out to all different kinds of vendor websites. We wanted to host as much content as we could on our website, to keep you looking at our resources so that you know that we are the office that you can come to to help support you with those kinds of things.

We also streamlined our service request process. There was a lot of confusion about how you request services for us. So we created a requesting services form online. You can request captioning and audio description. You can request that we review your documents for accessibility. You can request technology assessments, assistive technology assessments, review your websites and applications, or just report a problem, or just contact us with a question.

And we have those little Quick Links box on every page that you go through. So as you go through, if you want to request services, you can just move over to the Quick Links and make a quick request to receive services. So these are ways that we try to get people to learn about us, to know about what resources are out there, quick ways that they can do things on their own, quick ways that they can come to our office to get assistance from us to help them with certain things.

So let's talk about the structural improvements and updated service workflows that we have. Now our captioning process-- and I talked about this at length in a previous 3Play Media webinar back in December-- started out in summer, 2011, just as kind of a pilot study and had grown to a point where we were using YouTube primarily to deliver captioned videos. And that worked out well.

But we had a lot of issues because, in terms of scalability, we were starting to run up against people who had their own YouTube channels and whether or not we would give them the SRT files to be able to host that stuff on their own channel. We were running up, again, a lot of copyright issues. We started off with one channel, or one account, and it got flagged. So we had to move to a second account, and that was getting flagged as well.

And so then we just had a legal account and then we had an illegal account, which is where we posted some illegal stuff that we knew we had a lot of copyright challenges around. And then we opened up a third account. And it's like, this isn't going to work. We got to figure out some better strategy for this.

And I mentioned earlier, where we were talked about piggybacking on the university's transition towards newer solutions. And there were a number of other units that really wanted the Kaltura video management platform here for their own reasons. We wanted it for our own reasons. It was a way for us to get everybody moving in lockstep to use Kaltura. We didn't have to learn all of these different video management platforms. It would help to address a lot of copyright concerns. It would help to address last minute requests for videos. It would streamline a lot of things for us.

And the biggest thing is it allowed for scalability. We could go from all of the hand-off we were doing between downloading videos from YouTube and uploading them to the vendor site and then pulling down the captions and then uploading them back to our channel. We could eliminate a lot of that hand-off by having a platform which pushed all that content directly to the vendor, and then, the vendor would actually put it back for us within Kaltura. So that meant one person can do a lot more work and allows us to grow that process.

And so this is our updated accessible media process. I'm not going to go through it. The only thing I'll say is we have a process for doing stuff in-house and we have a process for outsourcing. Anything over 15 minutes or there's an immediate need in the classroom, we pretty much will outsource. And then if it's under 15 minutes, for the most part, between

Courtney and the students, they can do it in-house because we kind of know the timelines that we're working off of, and we're doing a lot with compliance and slowly growing the accommodation part of things.

And so this is how the numbers have grown. The year of that pilot study, we did about 147 videos. It grew to 337. It jumped exponentially last year to 1,034. And just in this fiscal year alone so far-- and we still have until-- we count May to May, although the fiscal year really goes July to June-- we're already at just under 1,200 videos.

And so who's using that service? Over 150 faculty and staff members have taken advantage. We can recognize the top three schools and colleges making the requests. And the reasons for request-- these are basically the choices-- compliance for DE courses are over 70% of the requests.

Compliance for face-to-face we see is not really happening. Web compliance is very low. And disability accommodations are about a fourth of what we do. The nice thing about knowing these numbers is that we can go and do targeted marketing. We can be much more effective in how we go and grow the service going forward.

We also have worked to grow our web and applications testing process. There was a university web audit last year. And what we were able to do is Kara and Stephanie worked to prioritize what are priority one and priority two websites, our most accessed. For example, priority one would be our academic units, our admissions, financial aid, student health, housing, visitors, HR. Priority two would be individual collage and school websites and so on and so forth.

And we were to scan those pages for accessibility, provide fixes to web developers, and reports to web developers to identify issues. And that was included in the university web audit. We're in the process now of moving towards a new web content management system. And this information was used to help move that process along.

The other nice thing is we've also gotten a seat on that committee, which allows us to have a role in determining what new web content management system is being brought here on campus and also a role in evaluating the new template designs that are going to be used. So broadly, we can make a huge impact on accessibility, just by having a seat on that committee and making sure that the templates that they throw out there for people who are just going to be content authors to pull out and that their content is accessible.

And this is how the web applications processes has grown as well. And what these numbers reflect, collectively-- ASC reviews are those reviews from the Architectural Standards Committee. We have applications that we get requests for outside of that process.

So for example, a faculty member is using something in their course, and they want us to review it. We also have website reviews that are done automated on a quarterly basis. And we have website reviews manually, where Stephanie will usually go through with some screen-reading software, screen and voice recognition software, to check the accessibility of websites.

And so the 297 in fiscal year '14 really reflects the web audit process. And you can see, so far this year, we have 170 more requests. We really have grown that process to be positioned to handle a lot of requests if indeed they grow going forward.

And so our other current and future projects, as I come up on the end, as far as library accessibility, we worked with the new accessibility coordinator/instructional designer in terms of reviewing what the library is doing and how we can have a role in helping them with accessibility. And that's improved the hand-off when addressing captioning for our library resources. Mainly, all captioning requests will come through our office, and the library helps us with doing that. In many cases, if we identify that there's a video that's within our collection, they will digitize it for us so that we can actually go ahead and get it captioned.

We have improved coordination with the Copyright Office about ensuring that we're in compliance with copyright as well. And also, in communicating-- because we've had some discussions around this-- is that when do you make decisions about accessibility versus copyright or accommodation versus copyright? And we decided that we're going to err on the side of providing someone with a disability access as opposed to trying to fight a copyright battle. And I'm happy to have that fight. So that was another large area of discussion in working with the library.

We have an informal process for reviewing library technology purchases, because they're not under the purview of the Architectural Standards Committee. But they were gracious enough to say, hey, we know we need to be a part of this. So when we are looking at new databases or we're looking at new technology, we're going to make sure we have a discussion with you about those things.

Courtney and Nancy went and tested our top 20 most-utilized library databases for

accessibility, which all have screen readers. We have a number of students who are blind or low vision who had some challenges when it came to doing research in classes, because they didn't know how to access resources on those library databases. But having tested those top 20, we could identify where access issue areas were.

We worked with the library on the streaming media policy. And that was also part of how we worked out the hand-off for captioning library resources. And going forward-- because we use a citation management platform here, although it's free and open source, it's not accessible to screen-reader users. We're looking at a citation management solution for blind students and wanting to pilot test that so that we have an alternative solution that those students can use. And the library is working with us, saying, if you purchase the technology, we'll provide the training to those students on how to use and access those resources. So that's been helpful, too.

Another thing we've done is we recognize that we're asking a lot of faculty in terms of document accessibility. And there are a lot of challenges around timing or time frame. Again, if you have somebody who shows up Friday for a class on Monday and they're not sure what they need to do in terms of accessibility, could my office actually support actually doing their document remediation for them? So we did a document accessibility pilot just last semester to see what we could do.

And worst case, we'd be able to say, this is what's involved in actually remediating documents, in terms of frame. Somewhere in the middle would be that at least we provide a process for faculty members who have a blind student in their course and need help with this. The best case would be that we can grow to support all of distance education and do it on a large scale basis to ensure that instructional materials are as accessible as possible.

We fell somewhere in the middle. That's exactly where we are, because it was a lot. We had five faculty, staff members participate. We reviewed 87 documents. And they were broad range, PDFs, Words, PowerPoints, Excel.

You can see that the last faculty member, faculty member number three, submitted 58 documents for the pilot. And it was a large, large, large, heavy load for us. We reviewed about 1,100 pages, and while it wasn't difficult, it became a lot of work, even just for the five faculty and staff members. So if you grow that tenfold, there's no way my office would've been able to do that on a large scale.

What we did do, though, is we were able to use that pilot to streamline our own internal documents accessibility process, meaning how will we capture documents? What technology will we use to remediate documents? We'll still work out some bugs in terms of how to get faculty to add alt text, whether it's before after, how to address final outputs-- if somebody gives you a Word document, do they want it in PDF or Word or et cetera?-- how to address documents versus, say, PDF images and things like that.

There was a great deal of variation in terms of the content, so you can't really plan for that kind of stuff. But we are better positioned to focus on accommodation at this time. So we're now offering this service to faculty members that have a blind student enrolled in their courses.

And just this semester, we had one blind student, four courses. We remediated 56 documents, which resulted in over about 1,900 pages. That's not including the textbooks that we remediated for them as well.

And so finally, the last thing I'll mention is that, for pilot testing, we're pilot testing a process with the Distance Education Office in which my office will actually review new DE courses for accessibility. And so we're starting with 10 to 15 courses that are not under the umbrella of the Office of Distance Education, but are kind of "rogue," quote, unquote, "courses" out there at the University for people who want to have their courses reviewed.

The way the process has worked in the past is we were asked to be reviewers. But we were like every other reviewers, so faculty members, library staffs, instruction designers. And we're reviewing every element of the course. While I've taught some classes and Kara's taught some classes, that's not really our strong suit. Our strong suit and our expertise is in accessibility.

So I can look quickly at an entire course and tell you where the issues are with documents. I can look quickly and tell you where the issues are with the platform, quickly where the issues are with the videos. And so I suggested that you leverage the expertise of this office to look at the accessibility of those courses, instead of just giving us one or two courses and letting other people look at platform and documents and things like that, because that's just not their strong suit.

So they thought that was a good idea. And so we're going to pilot test this in May to see how it goes. The process will still say the same. But my office will be used solely to look at the accessibility. And I think that could be something that we can grow going forward to give a lot

of guidance. And it really inputs us in the process. And so we're grateful to the DE Office, because they've been great about supporting accessibility here.

And final slide-- our next points is to build on those pilots, build on the Distance Education Office's pilot that's going to take place in May and to build on the document accessibility pilot that we just did, look at ways that we can have a larger impact here at the university. Continue to improve campus buy-in-- we're looking at our data and the stuff we kept.

We have a lot of data around captioning and how we can do targeted marketing. We need to be more effective with that as it relates to web accessibility and web applications testing and things like that. We are still analyzing costs. Captioning can be very expensive. Most of our captioning now is outsourced. We still do a good deal in-house, but most of it is outsourced to handle the amount of content that comes in. And so we're trying to streamline to drive down per minute captioning and transcription costs.

And finally, we're in the midst now of an information technology accessibility working group version 2.0. And we're looking at strategies that go more broadly in terms of all student access instead of just students with sensory impairment. So we've done a lot to address the needs of students with sensory impairments.

Now we want to look more broadly at what does the research say around measuring specifically the impact of universal design practices in higher education? And what kinds of things can we pull from that research to maybe come up with guidelines or checklists or some set of strategies that's prescriptive, in a way, to tell faculty members, do this and you will have, essentially, the biggest bang for your buck, in terms of providing an inclusive classroom. I think there's some really good things we can do about that, and we already identified a lot of different articles that we're going through and reviewing content of out.

And lastly, identify additional checkpoints-- where are the individuals in the Mason community most often going to access specific resources? And if there's electronic and information technology that's being used in those places, we need to do what we can to work with those stakeholders to ensure accessibility.

So I've gone over about 10 more minutes than I thought, so I'm sorry about that. But that's the end of the presentation. And I'll take questions.

LILY BOND: Thank you so much, Korey. That was a really, really fantastic overview of your process.

KOREY SINGLETON: Thanks, Lily.

LILY BOND: And as Korey said, we are about ready to start questions. Again, please feel free to ask questions in the Control Panel. Someone is asking about your risk analysis and recommendations report that they believe you mentioned. And they're wondering if you have a template or key considerations for that, especially when the results aren't good, or if George Mason has an escalation or exception process for the final decision to go or not go with a piece of technology, based on other business needs.

KOREY SINGLETON: Yeah, essentially what happens-- we do have a template that we kind of work off of, definitely some key considerations. Mainly, what happens, however, is that, like I mentioned earlier, if we get to a point where there is something-- particularly, if we think it's not a good idea to go forward, if it's a big enterprise-wide platform-- and what I mean by that is we've been on the panel where we've had a complete change in student email. And it was, do you go with Google, or do you go with Microsoft Office? And we fought the battle of going with Microsoft Office because it was more accessible. And it was the same for faculty and staff, when they went to make a change to the email system.

So yeah, those battles we will fight. If we're talking about a database that's kind of buried in an office, where you have 5 to 10 staff members who may only access it, neither of which has a disability, sometimes you've got to pick your battles, and we do. We will still provide a risk analysis and recommendations and say, hey, we suggest X, Y, Z. But it really is the decision of the person who's initiating this purchase in terms of what's best for their business need.

My office cannot determine what's best for their business need. But we do want to say that we've told you what's wrong, if there is anything wrong, and you make the decision on what's best for you going forward. I hope that answers the question.

LILY BOND: Yeah, that was a great response, Korey. Before we go on, there are a lot of questions coming in about a recording of the presentation and the slides being made available. We will send out a link to the recording that will also include the PowerPoint presentation after the webinar is over. You'll receive that in the next couple of days.

So there's another question here, Korey, more about the George Mason captioning process. And I want to mention, again, to people who are asking about captioning, Korey gave a really

great presentation in December on their captioning process. And that can be found on the Webinars page of our website. But Korey, maybe you could talk a little bit about how much of your recorded video you're transcribing or if new online courses are required to have transcripts and captions prior to their launch.

KOREY SINGLETON: OK. Yeah, basically how it's happening now is we partner with the Distance Education office, and they have specific times during the year-- I literally just got the email like two or three days ago-- on when they are reviewing new courses for a number of things, accessibility being one of them. And before those courses can go live, they're asked to do certain things, one of them being accessibility.

So when the pilot goes out, if the videos aren't captioned or things aren't done, they identify those issues and then point them to our office. And we'll work with them to get their stuff captioned. That is a part of the process. And that is something that is identified that they need to do.

As far as our captioning process as a whole, we've set it up so that faculty and staff members can make the request. For compliance, most of it comes through the Office of Distance Education, as you see, or the course is being developed there. We also receive a lot of requests from faculty members who are working with instructional designers who suggested the faculty members contact us to have their videos captioned.

We also receive a number of requests. A quarter of the requests that we receive-- and that number is growing-- come through the Office of Disability Services. We partner with the deaf and hard of hearing services coordinator to identify-- there are a couple different things that we do. It's a bit larger than captioning.

So the Office of Disability Services has a coordinator for sensory impairments who works specifically with blind, low vision students. And they have a deaf and hard of hearing services coordinator who works specifically with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. But at the beginning or prior to the beginning of each semester, they both send out emails to say, you have a blind or low vision student or you have a deaf or hard of hearing student in your course. And so if it's a deaf or hard of hearing student, it's suggested that they go get captioning, if this is something they have to do, and yadda, yadda, yadda.

And so our accommodations numbers have grown, as that's been pushed more and more out of the Office of Disability Services. And it's the same around document accessibility. First, we

were looking at blind and low vision, but we learned quickly that the low vision students really don't come to us. For the most part, if they can magnify it, they'll magnify it on their own, work through whatever issue. They really only come to us if there's a really significant issue.

Our blind students are the ones who are receiving the most challenges. So it may be three students. It may be five students. But you're looking at roughly anywhere from 12 to 20 faculty members who may need help with documents. And so for that, we support them with document accessibility. And as far as captioning, that's where we identify all of our accommodation numbers from. Students will point out things sometimes. But the students, again, don't always want to rock the boat, because they don't want to get on the bad side of a faculty member who's in the process of determining their grades going forward.

LILY BOND: Thank you, Korey. That was a very comprehensive answer.

KOREY SINGLETON: Yeah? No, it was roundabout. I'm sorry.

LILY BOND: No, it was great. So there's a question here about the copyright issues you were facing. If you could just kind of specify a little bit why you faced copyright issues with YouTube but not with Kaltura.

KOREY SINGLETON: It's a lot easier. The issues still exist around Kaltura. But the library is able to adjust the guidelines, to implement their own guidelines. The other thing is Kaltura is a closed system. It's not open to anybody other than the faculty member and the students who are going to be using it in that particular course. So you can really close things down. It's not open to the public.

And YouTube, the copyright issues-- one is that we were oftentimes getting requests for library content that wasn't captioned. And the vendor may not caption it. It could be an old resource, whatever, or it was never captioned. And so do you take that library resource and then post it on YouTube, which is what we did, in some cases, very early on.

And even though our channel was unlisted so that it wasn't seen to anybody other than the person who had access to that link, YouTube would flag it. And so if YouTube flagged it, then that blocked a lot of our content. And sometimes it was legitimate. We had a film and video studies course or something like that where they used a lot of video clips. It was a faculty member who was lecturing in the video, but he used a lot of the clips from different movies.

And all those videos, even though they were developed by GMU-TV, great videos, they were flagged on YouTube as copyrighted. And so we couldn't host that stuff on that channel. And for a while, we couldn't stream his content because we didn't have Kaltura at that time. You only had YouTube, and you had Vimeo. And that was prior to Vimeo even offering the ability to add captions or subtitles. And so copyright is less of a challenge now because we have a closed system and you can control who sees the content.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Korey. Another question here-- are you offering any incentives to faculty to make their sites accessible?

KOREY SINGLETON: I'm assuming like their websites or whatever? No.

LILY BOND: Yeah, and content, I'm sure.

KOREY SINGLETON: The incentive, at this time, as much as possible, is for us to be able to do things. So one of things we learned early on is that nobody, for lack of a better phrase, has it out for individuals with disabilities. They're not trying to deny access purposefully. But you can't put in place processes that make it difficult for faculty members to do things.

If I'm here to teach history, I am here to teach history. If I'm here to do research and teaching is kind of a side thing, then that's what I'm here to do. I don't want to learn how to remediate a Word document. I don't want to learn how to caption a video. And I'm saying that generally. That's kind of the attitude that we would get.

Now I understand that attitude because it's asking them to do something above and beyond what they're used to. So how do we put in place processes that make it easy for you to do things? We wrote a proposal. The university backed it, gave us some money, and said, OK, we'll centralize captioning out of your office. And then we put in place a web-based process that said, all you have to do is fill out a form, give us a link to your videos. We'll take care of it for you. And people bought in because it was easy for them to do.

We're trying to figure out a way to do that, on a broad scale, with documents, because I think if you do that, people will buy in. And we're finding that the faculty members, certainly the faculty members who have a blind student in their course and are really overwhelmed when that first day of class starts, especially if their documents aren't accessible, they'll buy into that. They'll show up. And if we can develop a process that makes it easy not only for my staff to handle it,

LILY BOND: Great, thank you. Another question kind of along the same lines is, how do you prioritize courses for accessibility?

KOREY SINGLETON: Priority is for students who have-- if there's an individual with a documented hearing impairment in the course and they need those videos captioned, we'll do those first. After that, it pretty much falls to compliance for DE courses, because there is a specific timeline that they follow. And then there's compliance for face-to-face courses, but as you saw, it was less than 1% of everything we've done. Those folks just don't show up for compliance purposes. So we need to figure out better strategies to reach those people.

And then after that there was compliance for websites and those kinds of things. So one of the other strategies that we have going forward is to put language on university websites that basically says, if you need this content captioned or to be made accessible, yadda, yadda, yadda, to contact our office. We're not going to get to everything. It's very difficult for us to see everything. Content changes all the time.

But if we can put in place guidelines-- and Courtney and I were just working on this a few days ago-- that say, we need you to use that video for at least a year. We'll give you a copy of the text file, but it has to be used in a GMU website or in a classroom, because we do have some faculty members who are teaching courses here, but also want to take that content and use it for courses that they may be teaching other places.

And so we need to identify that the ownership is with Mason. We paid for the hard work of captioning it, so we want to keep that content at Mason. But yeah, priority is for accommodation, then DE compliance, then face to face, and then websites.

LILY BOND: Great. Thank you, Korey. I think, at this point, we're going to take one more question. And then there are a lot of other unanswered questions that we can reach out over email about.

KOREY SINGLETON: OK.

LILY BOND: But the final question here is, how did you get your provost and other key higher up players to agree to endorse your process?

KOREY The biggest thing for us was our office used to be called the Office of Equity and Diversity

SINGLETON: Services. When the director-- he's now the previous director, but he came in, I'd say, roughly about four or five years ago. And because he had a background in dealing with compliance for the NCAA, they ended up giving compliance duties to our office, so compliance, diversity, and ethics.

At that point in time, that was another thing we piggybacked off of, because oftentimes, you would go in into classrooms and say, I need you to caption your videos or I need you to make your document accessible. And they're like, well, how many students are we talking about? And so we were able to change the culture and change the discussion away from accommodation and you know, I have somebody in the classroom with me now, to think down the road about accessibility and just about being more inclusive. We changed the conversation to compliance.

And so our VP at the time was very supportive of that. He wasn't comfortable, necessarily, speaking about accessibility, but he would come to me and say, give me talking points. I'll go and have a conversation with the folks on the exec counsel, because he sat on the exec counsel. And if he wasn't comfortable having that conversation, then he would pull me into the meeting with the provost or pull me into the meeting with the deans and directors and so on and so forth.

That was extremely helpful. And that went a long way. So if you have a higher up who's supportive of what you do and they have a role on those committees that make broad-reaching decisions, those are the people who really advance the discussion. And they advanced the discussion for us.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Korey. So I think we're going to wrap up now. But Korey, I can tell from the questions and comments coming in that people are really, really appreciative of this information.

KOREY SINGLETON: I'm glad.

LILY BOND: So thank you for having a great presentation.

KOREY SINGLETON: Thank you, guys, for having me again. I appreciate it. It was a great experience.

LILY BOND: Great to have you. And thank you to everyone who joined us. And we'll be in touch shortly with

a link to the recording and slide deck. Have a great day.

KOREY SINGLETON: Thanks, Lily. Thanks, Tole. Take care.

LILY BOND: You, too.