SOFIA LEIVA: Thanks, everyone, for joining us today and celebrating GAAD with a special webinar entitled "The Second A in GAAD: Raising Awareness About the Need for Digital Accessibility." I'm Sofia Leiva from 3Play Media, and I'll be moderating today. And today, I'm joined by Lainey Feingold, a disability rights lawyer, author, and international public speaker and trainer, and Lucy Greco, who leads the University of California Electronic Accessibility Committee and serves as the web accessibility evangelist at UC Berkeley. And with that, I'll hand it off to Lainey and Lucy, who have a wonderful and special presentation prepared for you all.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Thanks, Sofia, and it's great to be here. If you do want to live tweet, I'd say also add the hashtag, #GAAD, capital G, capital A, capital A, capital D, since we're here to talk about Global Accessibility Awareness Day. So in addition to the title of this session on the title side, we also have our names and Twitter accounts. So, Lucy, why don't you say your Twitter and if there's anything else you want to add about who you are and why we're here.

LUCY GRECO: Sure, so I'm Lucy Greco. I am, as Sofia said, an accessibility evangelist. And my Twitter handle is @AccessAces, A-C-C-E-S-S-A-C-E-S, which is always a mouthful for everyone, so sorry about that. But accessaces.com is my website, and I'm here today because Global Accessibility Awareness Day is a really important day to me, as a person with a disability first, but also as a person who works in the field as a day to celebrate and a day to meet with my colleagues and find new clever ways to enhance awareness. And Lainey and I thought this would be a great way to do that. Off to you, Lainey.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Yeah, thank you. So yeah, I've been in the digital accessibility space trying to raise awareness, I guess you could say, since 1995. And we'll talk a little bit more about my work as we go through. But for now, I'll just say that I've been at it since 1995.

I am a disability rights lawyer who practices structure and negotiation, which is a collaborative way of resolving accessibility issues. And I use the Twitter handle, LFLegal, @LFLegal, which is also my website, lflegal.com, which is a good way to kind of kick this off, because the reason I even have such a great brand of LF Legal is because a blind friend of mine, Josh Miele-- some of you may have heard me tell

this story.

I was putting my website up in 2008. I was going to call it laineyfeingold.com or Feingold Law, or something like that, and Josh said, Lainey, no one will know how to spell Lainey. No one will know how to spell Feingold. And your email address won't fit on a line of Braille.

So because I listened to my blind friend, Josh, to a person with a disability, I got a great brand out of it. It was way before Twitter. Actually, it wasn't that way before. I started Twitter in '09, but I'm LFLegal on Twitter. I'm lflegal.com on the web. I didn't know I needed a brand. I work for myself, but there you have it.

So our title, as Sofia said, is "The Second A in GAAD: Raising Awareness About the Need for Accessibility." And we also have an alternative title, which is "Lucy and Lainey's Accessibility Awareness Principles." So our first principle is tell stories. So, Lucy, you want to start by telling a story?

LUCY GRECO: Sure. So stories are really key, and they help people understand and learn a little bit about what the real life experience is. And prompt me a little here, Lainey. Am I supposed to go into the oldest story first?

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Well, actually, yeah. So I think Lucy billed this as an intimate conversation. So we're going to be just like regular friends who have to remind each other where we are in this conversation. Well, we want to talk about stories. We want to talk about the power of stories to really do two principal things. One is to create connection, build relationship, and another is to support the autonomy of people with disabilities.

So we each want to start with a story about accessibility and technology as creating connection. And while we're talking, I really invite you to think of, oh, what story you have in your life that you can use to share with someone to talk about awareness of accessibility? So Lucy has a great connection story, which I learned of recently, and she wants to start with that.

LUCY GRECO: OK, thank you, Lainey. I wasn't sure which of the two I should start with. OK, so connection and relations-- I actually have a very important connection and relation story when it comes to technology. My closest friends, Lainey of which I consider one, all know the story of how I met my husband. For me, technology is the tool that

I used to get out there and into the world and connect with other people.

Well, that's because I met my husband online. My husband and I were 2 of 10,000 people who had email addresses in the '80s. We were on the internet before there even was an internet, and we met online in a chat room. And it was a very valuable connection. It kind of brought us to where we are today. It was the beginning of our whole technology journey.

I was part of a research project in Canada that said, let's take people with disabilities, who tend to not actually have the ability to connect with one another and connect with others, because most of the time they're very restricted as to what their globe of influence is. And let's put them into this experimental thing-- in those days, it was called BITNET-- and give them an opportunity to meet each other and chat and talk about issues and become friends and become more, in those days, you know, across the country.

But it ended up becoming global. I was chatting with people, actually, in Germany and in England and the US. It was a very global community. And that's where I met my husband of 30 years now. And it was a really important connection.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: And I think that, if you have a story like that, and you share it-- everyone is on this call because you're already an accessibility champion. You already know about GAAD. You want to talk about raising awareness. You may be thinking of raising awareness in your place of employment. That might be private sector, public, higher ed.

You might be a consumer wanting to raise awareness with all the types of websites and mobile apps that you use. So whatever way in which you're trying to raise awareness, the story of how accessibility can forge connections for people with disabilities, I think, goes far, because people want to hear about connections.

I know that, from my work in digital accessibility in the legal space, we use the potential of accessibility to forge connections almost in every single case I've worked on since 1995. And just I'll share one story, since we're storytelling, which is how Major League Baseball became an accessibility champion. And I have written a book about structured negotiation. This is a story that is from the book.

So blind baseball fans-- you know, this was after I had done a lot of work with financial accessibility, health care accessibility, and when blind baseball fans first came to me, I was like, baseball? It's like, how serious is that? Does that really need to be accessible? And I'm here to tell you that, after 25 years, I think it's probably the most popular case among the blind community that I've worked on. And I learned a lot. And, of course, now I know that everything has to be accessible.

And, you know, for the recording, please know that we're doing this in the middle of a pandemic. And now accessibility and connection is more important than ever.

So the way we got Major League Baseball to become a champion and to commit to doing their website, all 30 teams websites, their mobile app, to be accessible and usable to blind people is because we were able to introduce the Major League Baseball folks with blind baseball fans, primarily Red Sox fans-- maybe some of you are in the audience-- from the Bay State Council of the Blind, led by Brian Charlson.

And we had a phone call. We didn't even meet in person. We had a phone call, which is kind of a good lesson for the pandemic. We didn't have to be in the same room. And it was like magic when the Major League Baseball folks understood. Oh, wow, there are baseball fans, just like we're baseball fans, who need accessibility to do all the great things online that we want our fan base to use.

So I've had just so many wonderful stories of connection, but that is-- that's one I'm going to share under the Tell Stories. We also want to share a little bit of story about autonomy. So, Lucy, I know you have a good story about the power of accessibility to support autonomy.

LUCY GRECO: So I went to school in the '80s, and the '80s were pretty much pre-- like I've already said, pre-internet. And I had to spend a lot of time in libraries when I was researching papers, because that's where you went to research a paper. You went down to the library, and you went through the hard copy indices-- indexes of articles-- and those books that were 30, 40, 50 volumes, trying to find references to articles, and then going to pull them out and print them out.

And I had an assignment that required five papers. I had to reference five papers in it and absolutely had to get that list of papers down and copy them and so forth. So I went and spent over 12 hours with a reference librarian looking up articles, and

getting printouts of those articles, and then bringing them to my faculty member as part of the assignment.

And after that 12 and 1/2 hours, the instructor threw them all out. They just threw out the work completely and said, you know what? You can't read these articles. These are drier than anything. They're terrible. I'm going to give you a different assignment. And, you know, it was heartbreaking.

She gave me another assignment run, and you know, it was not an equal. It was not a good accommodation in any way, shape, or form. It was a very devastating experience for me as a young college student getting started. And then a year or two later, I was introduced to that online network I was-- that I met my husband on. And all of a sudden, there was the tool in there that gave me access to articles.

So I could go to this tool called Gopher. Some of you here have probably heard of Gopher before. And it would literally go for an article. You would type in a search term and it would bring up a list of 15 or more articles. And then you could choose those, read them, and get them all online and all digitally.

And so in another class then, I had an assignment that I needed to do some research and get some articles, and I could find them. It was wonderful. It was liberating. Within 10 minutes I had my bibliography. I had the articles all read. I had the paper read on time.

You know, typically, I had to ask, in high school, for a month to two-month extensions on papers just because of the process of getting them down on paper and going through it with a Braille transcriptionist. When I had a computer, I didn't have to ask for those extensions anymore. I mean, technically, I could have not even told the instructor I was blind, if I wanted to, although it was pretty obvious being there in the classroom with a dog.

But just having access to a computer and Gopher was phenomenal. It was absolutely liberating, and it gave me my own autonomy back. I didn't have to deal with the articles that a librarian found. I could come up with my own articles, and they were more appropriate and more useful.

LAINEY   Yeah, so autonomy, again, comes up in most of the civil rights work I do around

FEINGOLD: accessibility. And I think one of my earliest experiences of that was with the talking ATMs. That is how I got into this field in the '90s.

There were no talking ATMs that blind people could independently use. And we had a really powerful group of blind customers of banks, and we worked with Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and Citibank without a lawsuit so we could create the connection and the relationship between the bankers and the blind customers.

So we had, just to name two of the many people who contributed to this effort-- Kathy Martinez, who later went on to work for the Obama administration-- she was an international advocate and was traveling around the world. Kim Charlson-- also an international advocate, first woman director-- I'm not sure she had this job yet, but of the Perkins Talking Library. And our connection to the bankers were like, here are these people that can't get $20 of their own money out of a machine without asking for help, yet here they are traveling around the world, doing all this independently.

If we had been in a traditional legal environment, where we had to write a brief to the court and explain that, that's one thing. But the bankers could meet. They could hear the stories directly from Kathy Martinez and Kim Charlson and the whole host of other people that were involved in that effort. And that's what made the difference-- seeing people, in this case, who couldn't get their own $20 out of a bank really made the difference. So that is just a little bit of an example of the kind of stories that can really make a difference as you're advocating.

That's our first accessibility awareness principle. And we have a little reminder of the key aspects of it. One is involve disabled people. Involve disabled people. Two is create connection, and three is support autonomy. So let's just say real quickly about involving disabled people.

If you, yourself, are not disabled, if you are in a company that doesn't have disabled people who can be part of your effort, first of all, do what you can to change that. But, Lucy, you want to say anything about how you can bring disabled people in for certain activities to help create awareness?

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, so there are countless non-profits in the community that can help you locate people with disabilities, help you find people who can talk to you, can participate

and use your studies, be parts of your teams. I do think it's key that you have them be part of your company, because if all you're talking to blind people about is how they use your product, they don't become real people.

And getting people involved with your company and in your program with disabilities makes them real, makes them a person who's a friend, you know? The reason things like the talking ATMs were so easy to come about in the end-- and they probably weren't easy, Lainey, but [INAUDIBLE].

LAINEY FEINGOLD: I was just going to say, in the end, in the end, they were easy.

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, in the end, yeah. Looking back on it, it's because the people who were doing it were real people, like Kathy Martinez. I mean she is a vibrant, energetic, friendly woman. Nobody is going to say no to her, because, you know, it's-- how do you say no to a woman that's so generous herself? And, you know, same with Kim Carlson. It's just these are real people.

You know, I tell my story about the papers in college because it was real, and it was-- there was actual hard work that went into getting research done before computers made it easier. I mean, I still didn't think it was easy at the time, even doing the computer research, because a teenager doesn't want to actually do any work. But, you know, a computer made my life better.

And if I'm the only face that you have telling you that a computer made my life better, it'll only have a small impact. You've got to have people that you are with every day that you have a good relationship with and form relationships with them so that the one thing that sticks in your mind after this is that people with disabilities are people, and they're all there-- they're everywhere.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Yeah, I did a panel with Microsoft, and we were talking about, what are the ingredients in the accessibility cookie? And Microsoft, who, as most of you in the audience probably know, is a champion in this space, they put hiring disabled people as an element of an accessibility program. And the example that the Microsoft person used during the session was, if you have a deaf person in the next cubicle over, unlikely you're going to put out video content without captions, like we have here.

So OK, so that's our principle number one. Our principle number two is related, which is show, don't tell. Show, don't tell. And, of course, again, that's involving disabled people at every stage. But I think we have two quick examples, Lucy, about why or how showing really can make a difference in raising awareness rather than just telling.

LUCY GRECO: So when I first started at the university, I was not involved in Web accessibility professionally. It was a volunteer effort by a bunch of people on campus. And we initially started as wanting to create a policy. And people are sitting around that table and talking about how we create a policy on accessibility. And one of the people said, you know, pointing at this thing, and we're saying we need to do this thing, and I really don't actually know why. I don't get it. I don't get what's inaccessible and what's accessible.

And so she said, I am going to bring my new website here next week, and I want, Lucy, you to show us with a screen reader how it works. And she was so strongly impacted when we did that, and everybody else in the room was so strongly impacted. They're like, I gotta get so-and-so to come see this. I gotta get so-and-so to come see this.

We had a group of four people meeting to talk about policy. And what we ended up doing is doing clinics from that point on and that day forward to show people what accessibility was. It kind of got waylaid on the policy thing a little bit and sent it off to another working group. But we showed people what accessibility was, and people got it. Then they started wanting it and needing it.

It was like, oh, my god, I have a new website. I better check it. And they understood that it's not something that's being pointed at, that somebody is telling me in a policy. It's I need to make sure that Lucy can use this website as well as every other person who uses a screen reader on campus and everybody who's using speech recognition or a keyboard. It's literally showing these people, brought them into our community, and helped them also-- you know, and she told two friends, and she told two friends.

LAINEY Which we're not saying you don't need the policy, of course. But the policy is more

FEINGOLD: likely to flow and be strong and be meaningful if it starts with the basis of understanding that can only happen by showing, not telling.

My show, not tell story-- again, many, many times ago. And one of the reasons I love structure and negotiation is because we can be sitting in a room with clients with disabilities and company decision makers, and it's not just all lawyers, blah, blah, blah. And we were in a meeting, and the company is pretty sophisticated. And they understood website, but they had never seen a Braille display. So for those of you listening to this who haven't seen Braille display either, I invite you to check it out online.

But basically, it's a little small computer that attaches to the computer and is constantly refreshing what's on the screen in Braille under the fingertips. And, I mean, people's jobs were dropping, because they just-- you know, sighted people can't really imagine it. And so if you just tell them in words or write a letter, it's not the same thing as actually seeing someone. So using that Braille display-- I've done a lot of work on talking prescription labels. And lot of times, if labels are not talking, blind people have to put different numbers of rubber bands around their bottles.

And when we sat down with pharmacists in various companies all around the country and showed them such a bottle with rubber bands, it's like, oh, my god. It's one thing to talk about the civil rights to health information, which is critical. It's another thing to see that some people have to rely on rubber bands attached to a bottle because accessibility hasn't been considered.

So showing dot telling-- showing, not-- sorry, showing, not telling-- show, don't tell. And our takeaways for this is a picture is worth a thousand words. Everybody knows that, but we're going to change that. We're going to X out the picture and change it to a disabled person's experience is worth a thousand words. So that's our awareness tip number three.

For our awareness-- I mean two. For awareness number three, it's remember you are not alone. And this has been a real important awareness aspect for both Lucy and myself. So I'll let Lucy start with the community of practice that you've developed at UC.

LUCY GRECO: Exactly. So, you know, once we started showing people websites, people became

members of a community. People turned to each other. We have a listserv that's just people who are interested in this whole topic. And it was somebody would quickly send an email out saying, hey, can somebody check this website? Or I need to do a list on my website. Is this the proper way to do a list? Or I need to label graphics. What do you think of this as the graphic, the label for this graphic? Or should I even label this graphic?

It was really important. Getting people into the community and sharing with each other gave people somewhere to turn to. If you just have a web developer sitting over in a corner, and at the campus, that web developer might have been sitting in the corner with 12 other jobs on their shoulders as well, they're not going to have someone to turn to, unless they have something like our community of practice.

You've got to actually have someone to ask the questions to. It's not something that's intuitive and something that can be done independently. It's something that needs you to ask advice and share with people and get revisions and run it past a person with a disability, to go back to our old theme. It's really critical to have, you know-- and we feel like communities. Many of the people in that community have retired from the university, but that's the only mailing list they still watch, because that was something that was important to them. And it made accessibility important for them.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Yeah, and I think recognizing that we're part of a community, whether it's in the workplace, like Lucy's talking about, or the global community that we're celebrating today on Global Accessibility Awareness Day, I think for the large organizations, they don't know-- many-- let me start that over again.

The larger organizations, and even small organizations, like knowing that they're not the only one doing it. They're not the first one to do it. Nobody really likes to go first. In that talking prescription label initiative, we had that issue about, well, is anybody else doing it? And a lot of people are doing it.

And I think part of awareness of accessibility is awareness of what is going on in this community. I mean, we're here celebrating GAAD. Everyone on this call knew enough about GAAD or 3Play or Lucy or me to know that this is something of interest. There's many, many people out there who might have heard about

accessibility, maybe from a demand letter about compliance, and don't have any idea this community exists.

So I think part of our jobs at raising awareness is letting people know, hey, Microsoft is out there. Salesforce is out there. Wells Fargo, Bank of America, the biggest-- apologies to anyone I left out-- because there are so many large organizations leading the way, and universities, and whatever sector you're in. I mean, I was at the Disability:IN Conference last summer, and Sara Basson from Google got up on a stage with Microsoft. There was Google. There was Microsoft. I think Adobe was up there.

And Sara Basson said, accessibility is kind of like business without borders. And I do some work with Disability:IN, and I see just the powerful sharing that goes on to-- both to share information, but also to create that community that none of us are alone. We just have a big job to let people who aren't in on it yet get in on it. So, yeah. Lucy, did you have anything more on that?

LUCY GRECO: I think what I want to say is accessibility is one of the most caring and sharing communities out there. And by having that community, you can gain a lot that you wouldn't otherwise have if you didn't have community. You know, many of the web-- many of the listservs about accessibility I'm on or the meetups I go to or the committees I sit on have people from all different companies.

And somebody from Microsoft might ask how to fix X, and somebody from Google might be the one to answer it. And there's no share-- there's no fear of the sharing. Because it's accessibility, it's OK to let Microsoft do the same thing Google's doing, let the same thing Apple's doing.

The other company is never the competition when it comes to accessibility, and it's really a beautiful thing. You can go to a meetup and the two experts in the room are friends from other companies. You don't see that often in the tech world. The Oracle people don't interact with the Salesforce people because they're competitive. Not in accessibility. Oracle and Salesforce hold hands and give presentations together.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned the meetups, because one silver lining of the coronavirus situation is we can all go to meetups from other cities. I've been lucky enough to experience firsthand the Chicago meetup, the Toronto. But now I would

really encourage people to check out the offerings, because everyone's doing everything online, mostly through Zoom. And you can see what's happening in other communities.

And I think it's a way to raise awareness to give ourselves, who are already in the community, the support we need, and also to bring other people in. So our awareness principle of remembering you're not alone ends with build community, and remember that most people don't like to go first. So share, stay aware of what's happening globally, locally, nationally.

OK, our next principle-- this is kind of my favorite one. Well, they're all my favorite, but-- is don't use fear. Don't use fear. Lucy, you want to say something about that?

LUCY GRECO: Fear is never a way to teach, learn, or engage with people. And, you know, you think of the old horror movies, where it's, don't go into that house. It's terrible. And nobody ever goes into the house, and it's something that's terrifying and the unknown. And it's terrible. Fear doesn't get people to actually become accessible.

I can't tell you how many times I've heard developers that I've not worked with say, this accessibility is so hard. And I have to do this damn accessibility. And I have to comply with it. And they don't want to do it. They can't get their head around the, I have to, because if I don't, somebody's going to sue us. And if we do it, somebody's going to sue us anyways.

I mean, you know, I've literally heard, I don't care how hard you try, you're going to get sued. No, no. If you try, you're less likely to get sued. And it's a fear thing. It's like, oh, my god, if I even begin to have a website, I'm going to get sued. That's a terrible motivator. It puts people into a state of mind where they're not going to be creative, and they're not going to be inventive, and they're not going to engage. Don't use fear. It's really self-destructive by telling people, you have to do this or you're going to get sued.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: I'm sure there's brain science-- I think there actually is brain science around this. Fear closes you in. And everyone who's bought into accessibility knows that accessibility can be an innovator, can be a creative juice. I was surprised, as I was writing my book, how often fear was something that had to be overcome.

So one thing about not using fear is you have to recognize that the people that you're trying to raise awareness with may have fear. And you have to kind of put aside your feeling like, are you kidding me, and have open, listening communication like, what-- get to the bottom of what you are afraid of. And just two quick examples that really-- had I not and the blind people I work with had not had awareness that this is something we actually have to deal with, it might have derailed a lot of negotiations.

So for example, we worked with accessible pedestrian signals. And we couldn't get the city of San Francisco-- they had one, I think, at the time we started. And the traffic people were actually afraid that if a blind person heard there was audible information, they might mishear it, step onto the street, and get hit by a car. Well, we thought that was ridiculous in the privacy of our own thinking, because without audible signals, you're getting no information. But it was a real fear of the traffic people.

So again, bringing in the other principles-- by working, sharing stories with disabled pedestrians, having practice runs, we were able to get past that. Same with the prescription labels-- the very well-meaning pharmacists felt, well, if we give audible information, what if it's misheard, and someone takes the prescription medication wrong? Well, right now, a label without a talking version is like giving no label. So the fear didn't make sense to us, but we have to treat it like it makes sense.

So that's dealing with the other person's fear. We know that fear is a blocker. We can't use it ourselves. And it is a problem in the legal space right now that there's a lot of negative energy. We just kind of have to put that aside and focus on the value of accessibility as per people's stories and people's experiences. So our takeaways for don't use fear are fear is a poor motivator. I always like to say I do trainings around fear, and I say, you don't want to be a shark. You want to be a dolphin, because dolphins communicate, and that's how you get things done. That's how you raise awareness.

We don't like to use fear in our families, in our neighborhood. We wouldn't say, oh, that person's so nice. They really make me afraid. No, because it's not-- why is fear in any space here? So it's a poor motivator, and beware of the big C, compliance.

Compliance is important. Compliance will flow from good practices around accessibility. But, you know, I was asked a question once in a webinar like this. Someone raised their hand and said, well, our captions are 65% compliant. Or sorry, our captions are 65% accurate. Do you think that complies with the ADA?

And it was a well-meaning person, but once you get that complete narrow vision of compliance, you can ask a question like that. And again, we have to take people where we find them and explain, well, would you-- if you could-- if you're sighted, would you want to read a book that had 35% of the words missing off the page? If you can hear, would you want to watch a film with 35% of the dialogue gone? Of course you wouldn't. But if you have too much fear, and that's the driver, that's what you end up with.

So our next--

LUCY GRECO: One thing to fill in, Lainey, is that--

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Yes.

LUCY GRECO: The other part of this is, if you're not working from fear, and you're working from all the principles we've spoken on so far, you're working with a person with a disability, you're communicating with them, you know the stories, developers are clever individuals, and people working on websites or programming or creating tools of all kinds-- they have a creative instinct, and they can be very creative and very innovative and create beautiful products that are accessible.

If you're using fear, that fear will step in the way of that innovation. They'll create better products if the place they're working from is collaborative, friendly, and informative. If you're working from fear, all you're going to do is check the box and move on, check the box and move on. And we all know that box-checking doesn't make compliance.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Box checking does not make compliance. We'll add that to our list of awareness principles for the next version of this. OK, celebrate accessibility achievements. Celebration-- that is a fundamental awareness, and a way to raise awareness is by celebration and having fun. Lucy, kick us off on celebrations.

LUCY GRECO: So celebrations-- first of all, I am so glad that nine years ago Joe Devon and Jennison Asuncion put Global Accessibility Awareness Day together, because it is an opportunity for us to celebrate accessibility and do things that can be fun that increase awareness. It's really, really important to celebrate this and have events and functions and do things that are really cool.

You know, I personally believe empathy exercises, if they're done properly, can be really effective, but they're fun. They can get a person understanding what a person with a disability's experience is. Hopefully, the person with the disability is there while you're doing it. And they can make it fun. Have a person understand that, with accessibility, things work. Without accessibility, somebody has to go through another barrier and push a little harder to make it do the next thing they need to do.

But, you know, have fun with it. Go celebrate. For me, it's the best thing in the world to go to a meetup and see all my friends and realize that, hey, this is a community I'm part of. Go back to you're not alone, understand that. I mean, really, you'll see how our principles build on each other. I'm so looking forward to the meetup tonight. I haven't talked to most of the people in the accessibility meetup in months, and I miss them. They're my friends.

And that's where I learned about my accessibility, is from my fellow people. And it's fun. It's enjoyable.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: And when I think about celebrating accessibility achievements, part of that is creating-- making it possible to have achievements. And everyone who's in this field, whether you've been in it for a long time or you're just new, accessibility is a journey. It's not going to happen overnight. So it's really important that we define small enough steps, so there can be achievement of them.

And over and over again in my experience, we want an-- we work with a company to make sure that the entire website's successful. Well, we have certain functions on that website. And when that's done, we applaud the company, and the company should applaud itself. And one of the problems with, again, with injecting fear, sometimes you get a report. It's like, oh, my god, there's like five million things. I can never do them all, and it's a grudge.

Instead of saying, OK, here's what's on my roadmap for this sprint or this next two-week period, I did that. Congratulations.

So a lot-- there's a lot out there on creating accessibility champion programs, which I really recommend and think it's really important, because you get buy-in, and people can see the small steps. Back to the ATMs-- I sort of first thought about this. Bank of America has long been an accessibility champion. They signed the first website accessibility agreement in 2000 with their blind customers, including earlier ones we talked about.

We wanted every ATM to be talking. Now it is. When we got the first five, we had a press conference, because we wanted something to celebrate, because celebration is motivational. Unlike fear, which is demotivational, celebration is motivational. So whatever you can do to celebrate achievements and create small enough steps in attainable achievements to celebrate is good, which is why, for our takeaways on this particular principle, we say, have fun and create small, achievable steps.

Lucy, did you have anything else on celebrating and fun, hackathons, all sorts of things?

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, I mean, it's really important. I mean, when you think about a hackathon, that's actually a true example. That's where a group of people get together and start at the beginning of a project and work that project out to a prototype. Throughout that entire process, they have times where they can share with their colleagues to celebrate, to understand-- you know, to get feedback. And the feedback tends to be positive, and then they get an award, and that award might be just the accolations of their peers. Sometimes it might be cash. Sometimes it might be that prototype becomes a product hosted by someone else.

But most hackathons I've been to, people work for a couple of hours. Then they come back and share, come back and share. And that sharing is not a way to comply with anything. It's a way to celebrate the little steps they've made and the ideas that they've gone through.

Nobody's going to want to check a box as part of their work. How many of us have to do that already enough? But for the accolations of the community, people like hearing that what you did was good. Developers, when I work on their websites in

front of them, love seeing me say, that worked great. That was awesome. And, yeah, maybe I don't do it often enough, but they work for that.

They want to bring something to me that I'll say, well done. Let's move on now to the next step, but this was fantastic. You know, that works exactly the way I would have expected, and it's nice, and it's accessible. You know, people love those experiences. They hate the, you did not do X. You did not do Y. Go back to the start and start over again. No, that's not a motivator. But celebration, even if that celebration is, congratulations, that's a celebration.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: You know, this is a good place to mention, if you're not aware of it, I invite you to check out Knowbility-- that's with a K-- which is a great accessibility nonprofit out of Austin. Every year, they run something called the AIR, Accessible Internet Rally competition. And I think they've been doing it a long time. If anyone knows, put it in the chat. I'll mention it later.

But they bring together developers with nonprofits or education institutes who need accessibility, and they match them up, and they have teams, and they work together for some period of time. And then they have a big celebration, and I think there's a-- I think it's been going on for a long time, because there's a video on that Knowbility website.

So that's just one example. And I've heard companies-- especially on GAAD-- I think we should all take a look at the Global Accessibility Awareness Day website. People are doing things like treasure hunts and just things that pull together all these principles that we just talked about-- the storytelling, the show, don't tell, the don't use fear, the celebrate, the involve disabled people. So celebrating achievements is good.

Our next awareness principle is yours. What are your awareness principles for accessibility? These bubbled to the top of ours. If we had another two hours, we could tell you other things we do to raise awareness, but I think these are the kinds of umbrella issues that hopefully have created takeaways for you to bring back into your own space, where you're trying to create awareness.

So we can use the time remaining to hear about your accessibility awareness principles and answer any questions. So, Sofia, do we have any questions?

SOFIA LEIVA: Yes, we do. So the first question that we have is, "How do we locate a community of practice, where we can get advice and run web pages through a person with a disability?"

LUCY GRECO: So that's, I'd say, two separate things. A community of practice-- although the community of practice should include people with disabilities, it doesn't necessarily include people with disabilities. It should, but that may be a goal of that community of practice, is to find people. You can find people with disabilities by reaching out to your local nonprofits and different organizations.

So for example, here in the Bay Area, we have the San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind. They do a lot of usability. They have an actual community of practice that will evaluate products for people and give you advice on how those products can work called Lighthouse Labs. There's also the World Institute on Disability that will help you connect with people with various disabilities. There is the many, many hundred, maybe thousands, of independent living centers across the country.

All of these organizations can help you connect with people disabilities. There are several meetups under the hashtag of #a11y. Just go to meetup.com and look up hashtag #a11y. We have an A11Y Bay inclusive design one. And we actually have two-- we're lucky to have two here in the Bay Area. We also have accessibility dinners.

So start by searching for A11Y, accessibility. Go to independent living centers. Find out who the nonprofits are who serve people in your community and work with them. Reach out to them.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: I'd also add to that-- I like all those suggestions-- on my website, which is lflegal.com, if you go to forward slash, resources, I have a list of the kinds of organizations Lucy's talking about that can connect you up with people with disabilities. Also, there's a couple on there that are remote, which is going to be something we need in the next period of time.

And one of those is a program from Knowbility again. I saw there was a question in the chat. The event that Knowbility hosts, it's called AIR. In case somebody saw me and thought I was texting on my phone, I wasn't. I was looking up the AIR. You can go

to knowbility.org-- that's with a K-- k-n-o-w-b-i-l-i-t-y, dot-org, and just look under their programs. It's AIR, A-I-R, Accessible Internet Rally. It might be Accessibility Internet Rally. So, yeah.

OK, what else we got? And don't forget to put in your own awareness ideas in here.

SOFIA LEIVA: Awesome. Thank you. The next question we have is, "I work at a university. The last time a department attempted to hire disabled students to get feedback on digital systems, the response was negative, and students felt that they were being exploited at minimum wage for their disability. Do you have any suggestions for engaging with the disabled community in a positive, productive way?"

LUCY GRECO: Number one, don't pay them minimum wage.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: I was going to say, pay more money.

LUCY GRECO: Pay them more money. But, I mean, respect them as people first. Don't just hire them to-- you know, one of my favorite phrases, which people tend to tell me not to use-- I'm going to use it anyways. Don't hire them to be a screen reader monkey and test things for you. Respect that they have other skills and hire them to do a full job for you. You know, there's work study jobs that people with disabilities can do, but most people with disabilities get exempted from the work study program because, oh, they have a disability. They can't do work study.

I call foul on that. There are a lot of things that people with disabilities can do. If you've got a program working on a website, bring those students in for usability studies and pay them the going rates for usability. If you're going to have somebody in there for an hour, and it's just for a usability study, you can't just give them a Peet's coffee.

And I've seen universities do that. Oh, let's have the students test this, and we're giving them the Peet-- that's not respecting the level of ability they have and the work they're giving you, the time they're giving you, and the importance of their skillset.

When I do a usability study as an end user, I'm getting paid $125 an hour. That's

supposed to also cover my transportation. Make it something that's worthwhile for them to do. You can't just say, all the disabled students, take a look at this website, and we'll give you a Peet's coffee. That doesn't work.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Also, I think this is a place, like every place, when you're talking about awareness, where communication really matters. And listening matters. So if you have a project that you think is a good project for disabled students, do a focus group. Say, what do you think about this project? And they probably would have gotten the kind of-- if they had something like that, you may have gotten feedback before you put the job out there that, well, I'd like to do it, but it's really important to me that this is the pay rate.

You may not be able to meet it, but having that kind of open communication and allowing the students to see you as someone who cares actually about involving them in the process instead of just, like Lucy said, click off a box. We hired a disabled person to look. Even though that wasn't your intention, those kinds of mistakes can happen with the very best of intentions. So I want to acknowledge that. But one way to avoid them in the future is to try to have more open communication at the start.

LUCY GRECO: Don't just--

LAINEY FEINGOLD: What else we got?

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, just don't bring them in to do the screen reader. Ask them for their advice.

SOFIA LEIVA: Thank you so much. The next question we have is, "Some organizations don't want to make the effort to make information accessible, as they don't see it as an obligation. How do you approach them and make it clear that it is the right thing to do without the fear of being non-compliant?"

LUCY GRECO: I think the most effective way is bring people with disabilities in. An organization that doesn't want to do the work, because they don't see it as a need, are losing massive revenue, are losing massive community involvement, users, what have you. Doesn't matter what their motivation is, but leaving out, in a worldwide case, 20 million-plus, 21 million-plus people because you're not accessible, that's a big

number.

You know, in the US, they say 11% of the population has a disability. So you're a company that doesn't want to sell to 11% of the population? That must mean you have far too much money and just don't care.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Well, that's a good point. And we should probably add to our list, if we-- as we talk about this in the future, how do you make the business case, because the business case is a way to raise awareness? It can be made, this multifaceted-- one is probably the most important one that Lucy just said about creating-- expanding the market.

There's also many organizations. There's a big report from Accenture about the value of disabled employees and statistics and studies about contributions and the retention rate of people with disabilities. So there is definitely a business case. That gets back to our principle of you're not alone. So if you're in a certain industry, find out who in that industry is the leaders, and make connections, and introduce people to each other.

Maybe your manager wants to talk to a manager at a company where they're actually doing this and can say how great it is. Yeah.

LUCY GRECO: Or maybe that company is your competition, and you say, that's the edge they have on us, you know? They're doing this, and they're going to take away that market share from us. That's not fear, but friendly competition and fun in that case. Don't do it in the fear sense. Do it in the fun sense.

I mean, the other thing that's really important, too, is you can't force them. You cannot force people to do the work if they're not going to do it. You've got to make them believe it's their own idea. And the way I do that is by just putting that face on disability and helping them understand that this is not accessible. It doesn't work. Even if it doesn't work for one person, that's something that impacts the person.

Everybody has pride in their work, and the pride in their work means that they want it to be accessible. They don't know access-- they don't know that, but when they realize that, they will do it.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Well, also, there's some great work being done by Adobe and Google, Microsoft around universal design, where they talk about inclu-- sorry, inclusive design, where

they talk about the design for one, build for all, and how designing for what may seem like an outlier-- or who else is going to want to use our site that doesn't have use of either hand? Designing in that way is useful for all. So there's a lot of good information out there. We can send it out tomorrow around inclusive design.

There's a good question here about, what are the top couple of technical issues you want people to be more aware of? That's sort of the what of awareness that we didn't really address in here. But for Global Accessibility Awareness Day, which is not over yet, at least here-- I know Australia already had theirs-- you know, I try to invite people-- if you can hear, turn off your video. Turn off your sound. Throw away your mouse for 10-- not throw away, but put aside your mouse for 10 minutes, because keyboard access is so, so crucial.

Microsoft has a very good tool for Chrome that's free. It's a Chrome extension called Accessibility Insights, and they have some very good-- put this on the list for next time-- awareness. They have great awareness things right in that tool. You can turn on tab stops, and you can use your Tab button, and you will see where the user is going if they're just using the Tab key. Ideally, they're going from the top of the page to the bottom, but if it's not set up right, it's going all over. So that's just a couple things.

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, I-- [INAUDIBLE].

LAINEY
FEINGOLD: Sorry, Lucy.

LUCY GRECO: No, I'm just agreeing. That's exactly the way I would have put it.

LAINEY
FEINGOLD: Yeah, I think we have time maybe for one more question, Sofia. What do we got? Or one or two fast ones.

SOFIA LEIVA: Yeah, of course. So we had one come in. "Is voting accessible? How is the government doing in this area?"

LAINEY
FEINGOLD: Well, just last week, there had to be a consent decree in Michigan to make sure the National Federation of the Blind did an important lawsuit on the-- there's going to be a big issue about accessibility of absentee voting. So that just happened, and the

parties agreed, and the judge approved that absentee voting has to be accessible. There's a lot of legal work going on around absentee voting.

There's been work around accessible voting machines. Registration has to be accessible. You know, we talk about accessibility being a civil right. That's not the topic of this talk today, but voting is one of the places where that really shows up, because if you don't have accessibility, you don't have the right to vote.

LUCY GRECO: Exactly. And, I mean, we could do 10 webinars on that subject and not cover it all.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: But now we have one more minute. You want to give us one more question? And we can answer-- if it's OK with 3Play, we could stay on and answer some of these in chat if people want. I don't know. Sofia, do you have something else right now?

SOFIA LEIVA: Of course. Yeah, we have time here. I think we have two more questions that came in.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: OK.

SOFIA LEIVA: So I have one here. "I think Lainey's point about the fearfulness of non-disabled persons and providing appropriate services is really salient. In my own field of copyright and content accessibility, there can be a lot of insecurity about what rights one might have over a particular piece of content and what accessibility tools you can retrofit on works protected by copyright without authorization of the copyright holder. What do you think can be done to ease the anxieties of those who find themselves in legal gray areas and encourage them to add accessibility tools?"

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Well, that's a big question. I'm not an expert-- there have been cases, and if you want to contact me off list, I'll put my email right here, which is-- well, you can reach me through my website, lflegal.com through the Contact page, lflegal.com.

There has been work, legal work around accessibility and copyright. But I like using phrases like the "book famine," which is what the phrase was around getting international copyright manacles lifted in order for blind people to get books. And sometimes a law can make it feel scary. But if you talk about-- again, the story of we have this content. If we don't make it accessible, there's some percentage of the world that's not getting it. And our whole point is to get--

You know, accessibility is really a bridge between the content and the technology and the people who you're expecting to use it-- your employees, your readers, your students, your voters, whoever. And--

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, there's a really good white paper created by the University of Colorado and the University of Berkeley, doing-- or talking about authoring tools accessibility and what the impact of authoring tools is. And if you want to communicate to authors about the importance of accessibility and getting accessibility into their work, that's also a really good resource. I can look that up if somebody wants to reach out to me, and I'll share the article.

SOFIA LEIVA: Great, thank you. And the last we had here was just a comment. "I'm at a university and work with vendors daily on making their products accessible so that we can use their products on campus. We use being able to list accessibility as one of their features as a great selling point for other universities."

LUCY GRECO: Yeah, I agree. I try to do that, too. And the way we achieve that is by helping them to become more accessible. You know, we don't tell them to go off and do it in a vacuum. We support them through that process.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: You know, I want to just make a quick-- there's a good comment in here. I don't know, Sofia, if you said this, but I'd like to focus on it being about usability, not just accessibility. The user experience is meaningful to companies. Accessibility improves the experience for everyone.

I completely agree with that. And I think some of this work being done, like I said, by Adobe and Microsoft, they have Google, they have suites up on their website about usability and inclusive design is making things better for everyone. I tend to use the word-- just I probably should start saying this at the beginning-- that accessibility is embracing usability. What's happening now is accessibility has kind of become that checklist thing, like compliance, checklist, accessibility. And usability is something broader.

But I completely agree. As an awareness tool, the W3C slogan of accessibility, essential for some, useful for all, is-- I got to put that on our list for next time, too-- accessibility for some, useful for all is really good. And they have a great series of

videos on the w3.org/wai website. And if you put into Google, accessible-- essential for some, useful for all, you'll find those videos, and they're very good awareness building tools as well, really good.

SOFIA LEIVA: Great. Well, that's all the time we have for today. But thank you so much, Lainey and Lucy. This is really wonderful. We enjoyed all your tips. And I hope everyone has a wonderful rest of their GAAD Day.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: Thank you. Thank you, everyone. Thank you for your time.

LUCY GRECO: Enjoy your day, and celebrate, and have fun.

LAINEY FEINGOLD: OK. Bye.