

# DISABILITY ETIQUETTE AWARENESS

## BUILDING A FOUNDATION

**~1B**

people with disabilities in the world

**~54M**

people with disabilities in the U.S

**~5.5M**

veterans with disabilities in the U.S.

- Disabilities come in many different forms and can be visible or invisible
- In general, treat and speak to others as you would like to be treated and spoken to:

- ✓ Use people first language
- ✓ Ask before you try to help
- ✓ Idiomatic expressions are ok to use
- ✓ Avoid phrases like “inspirational” or “courageous”



### MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

- People with mobility impairments are not their equipment
  - People may use wheelchairs, but they are not wheelchair bound
- Be mindful of people's differing mobility and reach limits
  - Some people who use wheelchairs may be able to transfer from their chairs or walk about



### DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

- American Sign Language (ASL) is different from English and makes lip reading difficult if ASL is one's first language
  - Less than 30% of people who are deaf are able to lip read
- Face-to-face communication is best
- It is ok to get the attention of people who are deaf by using your body or motion



### BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

- People are legally blind when their vision is 20/200 corrected
- Always identify yourself and ask and offer to help as a guide if needed
  - Offer your arm as guidance, but do not take people's arms or hands without asking
- Respect people's equipment and canine companions



### MENTAL HEALTH

- Talking about mental health is crucial to breaking down stigmas
- Small, everyday actions like spending time with people can help
- Avoid clichés like “cheer up” or “I'm sure it'll pass”



### LEARNING DISABILITIES

- Learning disabilities are lifelong disorders that interfere with a person's ability to receive, express or process information
- Be flexible and accommodating with how information is presented



### AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

- Autism is a wide-spectrum disorder, meaning no two people with autism will have the exact same symptoms
  - Autism is not a learning disability
- Remove potential sources of stress when talking to people with autism
- Keep behaving consistently throughout interactions



*\*This graphic is not intended to be fully comprehensive. Always use your best judgement and be mindful of your words and actions.*