

HLAA-LA
JULY 25, 2015

>> LISA: EVERYONE HAVE THEIR T-COIL ON?
IS THIS WORKING? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
CAPTIONER: I AM OKAY.

>> LISA: WE HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF A SMALL GROUP TODAY, BUT I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING HERE. WE HAD A LITTLE BREAK – ACTUALLY, SOME OF US HAD A BREAK. I DO WANT TO THANK DANNY FOR HOLDING DOWN THE FORT LAST MONTH, WHILE – [APPLAUSE].

AND ANY OF YOU WHO CAME HERE LAST MONTH AND HELPED TO SET UP AND CLEAN UP THE MEETING, THANK YOU AS WELL.

SEVERAL OF US WERE AT THE HLAA CONVENTION, WHAT WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT TODAY. AND THEN WE ARE GOING TO END THE MEETING WITH A RAP SESSION AND TRY TO TALK ABOUT SOME OF THE WAYS WE CAN TRY TO KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE, LIVING WITH HEARING LOSS.

A COUPLE THINGS BEFORE WE GET STARTED; I WANTED TO MAKE A COUPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

THE AUGUST MEETING NEXT MONTH WE HAVE A REALLY GREAT GUEST SPEAKER LINED UP. SHE'S THE NEWEST COCHLEAR IMPLANT AUDIOLOGIST AT HOUSE CLINIC. I SAW HER SPEAK, SHE'S A GREAT SPEAKER, REALLY INFORMATIVE. SHE WILL TALK ABOUT ANYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS.

WHEN WE WENT TO SEE HER SHE HAD THE AUDIENCE SORT OF GUIDE HER DISCUSSION. COME WITH QUESTIONS. WHETHER YOU ARE NEW TO COCHLEAR IMPLANTS, OR YOU HAVE HAD FOR YEARS AND YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SHE'S GREAT. AND SHE WILL SPEAK FOR THE FULL TWO HOURS IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.

SEPTEMBER WE HAVE OUR ANNUAL STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS. I JUST WANTED TO GET EVERYONE THINKING ABOUT THIS. THE CURRENT STEERING COMMITTEE IS GOING TO MEET TODAY, AND WE WILL TALK ABOUT SOME STUFF. ONE OF THE THINGS WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT IS POSSIBLY TAKING THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS – RIGHT NOW WE HAVE NINE MEMBERS, THINKING OF GOING DOWN TO SEVEN. SO WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT SOME OF THESE THINGS, ALSO WHAT WE ENVISION THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO FOCUS ON NEXT YEAR. AND THAT WILL HELP – WE WILL SHARE THESE THINGS ON THE YAHOO GROUP AND AT NEXT MONTH'S MEETING SO YOU WILL HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF WHAT THE EXPECTATIONS ARE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE.

THE THREE THINGS I CAN TELL YOU, THERE ARE THREE BASIC REQUIREMENTS. FIRST IS YOU HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF NATIONAL. THAT'S \$35 A YEAR, AND I THINK THAT'S WELL WORTH THAT \$35. THERE ARE SEVERAL BENEFITS.

ALICIA'S COMING. SHE HAS A NEWSLETTER. HAS A LINK TO THE NATIONAL WEBSITE AND WHERE YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT JOINING AND MORE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP.

THE SECOND REQUIREMENT IS THAT YOU HAVE TO HAVE EMAIL ACCESS BECAUSE IN BETWEEN MEETINGS OUR PRIMARY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IS BY EMAIL. AND ALSO WE HAVE A STEERING COMMITTEE YAHOO GROUP. SO YOU NEED TO HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO A COMPUTER AND ABLE TO COMMUNICATE BY EMAIL.

ESPECIALLY IF WE GO DOWN TO SEVEN MEMBERS THAT ALL OF THE MEMBERS ARE ABLE TO COME TO A MAJORITY OF THE CHAPTER MEETINGS AND THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETS EVERY OTHER MONTH. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE REGULAR MEETING.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE INVOLVED WITH THE CHAPTER, SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THIS CHAPTER AND HELP KEEPING IT GOING.

LOOK OUT ON THE YAHOO GROUP FOR MORE INFORMATION.

IT'S REALLY A SMALL GROUP TODAY, AND ACTUALLY ALICIA WILL BE PART OF OUR PANEL AS FAR AS SHARING ABOUT THE CONVENTION.

ANYONE NOT KNOW WHAT THE HAAA CONVENTION IS? ARE YOU ALL FAMILIAR WITH WHAT THAT IS?

SEVERAL OF US WENT AS CHAPTER DELEGATES AND SEVERAL MEMBERS WENT AS WELL. IT WAS IN SAINT LOUIS THE LAST MONTH OF JUNE. WE HAD A GREAT TIME. BUT SOME OF US CAME BACK WITH NASTY COLDS.

THERE WAS A LOT OF FREE FOOD THIS YEAR, WHICH IS A BIG PLUS. SOMETHING I ALWAYS LOOK OUT FOR.

I GUESS WE CAN GET STARTED AND HOPEFULLY ALICIA WILL SHOW UP.

I WILL CALL KEN, GEORGIA, AND KAT, AND PAT ALSO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE TODAY, AND SHE JUST EMAILED. SHE HAS A COLD. I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS DELAYED FROM THE CONVENTION, BUT SHE WAS ONE OF THE ONES THAT DIDN'T GET SICK AT THE CONVENTION, NOW SHE'S HOME SICK.

WE WILL START WITH THE FOUR OF US AND SHARE ABOUT OUR CONVENTION EXPERIENCES AND IF ANYONE ELSE THAT WENT WANTS TO SHARE ANYTHING.

YOU GUYS WANT TO COME UP – ARE YOU TOO BUSY EATING?

THE OTHER THING, WE WILL PROBABLY TAKE A BREAK AROUND 11, AND WE HAVE A LITTLE SPECIAL TREAT. AND THEN WE WILL COME BACK AND HAVE THE RAP SESSION.

FIRST HALF WE WILL SHARE ABOUT THE CONVENTION.

YOU WANT TO START, GEORGIA?

>> GEORGIA: SURE.

>> LISA: I DON'T KNOW IF I INTRODUCED MYSELF. I'M SO SORRY. I'M LISA AND I AM THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THIS CHAPTER AND I

APOLOGIZE FOR NOT SAYING THAT SOONER. I KNOW MOST OF YOU. I KNOW THERE ARE A COUPLE NEW FACES. AND THIS IS GEORGIA FLEISCHER, AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, THE ADVOCACY CHAIR. ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR FOUR YEARS. AND WE LOVE HER.

>> GEORGIA: I WROTE UP MY SPEECH BECAUSE, IT'S JUST BETTER FOR ME.

I AM GEORGIA AND I AM THE ADVOCACY CHAIRMAN OF THIS CHAPTER. AND GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE. CAN YOU HEAR ME OKAY?

I AM SO GLAD TO BE HERE TO TELL YOU ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE AT THE CONVENTION IN SAINT LOUIS. IT WAS GREAT FUN.

JUST SEEMED LIKE A WHIRLWIND TO ME. THERE WERE SO MANY THINGS TO DO AND SEE, NOT TO MENTION ALL THE LOVELY PEOPLE I MET AND VISITED WITH.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THIS PROGRAM THAT I AM HOLDING UP, THIS IS THE PROGRAM THAT WE GET WHEN WE GO TO THE CONVENTION EVERY YEAR,. AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S CHOCK-FULL OF INFORMATION, WORKSHOPS, JUST THE WHOLE PROGRAM FOR THE FIVE DAYS THAT WE ARE THERE IS JUST – IT'S A WONDERFUL THING TO REFER TO.

A LOT OF THE WORKSHOPS OVERLAP, SO IT'S REALLY HARD TO PICK AND CHOOSE WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE, AND YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY GO TO EVERYTHING. IT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE.

BUT THE EXHIBIT HALL WAS AMAZING. ONE LONG HALL WITH TWO AISLES TO MAKE IT EASY TO NOT MISS ANYTHING.

THE OLD SAINT LOUIS STATION WHERE WE STAYED WAS CONVERTED INTO A HOTEL. A GREAT BIT OF HISTORY. ANOTHER WONDERFUL THING TO SEE AND VISIT WAS THE GATEWAY ARCH. MY FRIEND NANCY GRAY AND I WALKED AND TOOK PICTURES.

IT WAS HOT AND HUMID AND RAINING AND LIGHTNING, HOWEVER, TURNED OUT TO BE NICE AND POSSIBLE.

THE GATEWAY ARCH IS THE SINGLE LARGEST STAINLESS STEEL STRUCTURE IN THE WORLD. FROM THE DISTANCE IT SORT OF LOOKS LIKE PART OF MCDONALD'S, BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S JUST ONE ARCH.

WE DID NOT GO UP ON THE ELEVATOR, BUT SOME OF OUR COMRADES DID. WE ALSO SAW THE BASILICA OF SAINT LOUIS NAMED AFTER THE KING OF FRANCE. IT WAS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE FAMOUS ARCH.

THE OPENING SESSION THURSDAY EVENING WAS HONORED BY THE HONORABLE SENATOR TOM HARKINS OF IOWA. HE WAS GETTING THE ADVOCACY HALL OF FAME AWARD. MAIN ARCHITECT OF THE A.D.A. I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. WHAT A TREAT IT WAS TO HEAR HIM SPEAK.

A FEW OF THE WORKSHOPS I WENT TO WERE ABOUT INNOVATIONS FOR THE FUTURE WITH COCHLEAR IMPLANTS. I HAVE TWO.

I ALSO ATTENDED A WORKSHOP ABOUT DOGS FOR THE DEAF. AND I LOVE DOGS. I ALSO ATTENDED A FACEBOOK WORKSHOP ON HOW WE CAN

HIGHLIGHT OUR CHAPTERS FURTHER ON FACEBOOK. JUST A COUPLE I ATTENDED.

FRIDAY NIGHT WAS THE BASEBALL GAME AT BUSCH STADIUM. THE WEATHER COOPERATED. TURNED OUT TO BE A LOVELY EVENING. EVEN WITH THE BREEZE, AND CARDINALS BEAT THE CHICAGO CUBS BY ONE POINT IN OVERTIME.

SATURDAY EVENING WAS THE BANQUET, THE ROCKY STONE HUMANITARIAN AWARD WAS GIVEN TO HIS TWO LOVELY DAUGHTERS. WE HAD A GREAT TIME AND WONDERFUL ENTERTAINMENT FROM THE ONE AND ONLY KATHY BUCKLEY. KEPT US IN STITCHES THE WHOLE TIME ABOUT HEARING LOSS. HOW CAN HEARING LOSS BE FUNNY? KATHY MAKES IT SO.

SUNDAY WAS THE AWARDS BANQUET. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I RECEIVED MY WONDERFUL MARCIA DUGAN ADVOCACY AWARD. [APPLAUSE]

THANK YOU. I WOULD HAVE TO SAY THAT THIS WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE CONVENTION THIS YEAR, FOR ME. AND SO I AM GOING TO SHOW OFF MY AWARD. [APPLAUSE]

I HAVE A COUPLE OTHER THINGS HERE. I HAVE A BASEBALL CAP TO GIVE AWAY. WHO WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IT? HANDS UP?

>> STEPHANIE: I DO.

>> NEXT YEAR'S GARAGE SALE.

>> GEORGIA: ANOTHER THING I HAVE HERE IS A LITTLE FOOTBALL YOU BLOW UP TO TAKE TO THE BEACH. ANYBODY WANT THIS? DANNY!

>> DANNY: WE WILL PUT IT IN THE POOL. THANK YOU, GEORGIA.

>> GEORGIA: WHO WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A PAIR OF NAVY BLUE SHOE LACES. GARAGE SALE?

THAT'S IT. THANK YOU.

>> DANNY: THANK YOU, GEORGIA.

>> LISA: ALSO GRACE IS DONATING THIS WALK4HEARING BACKPACK. SHE RAISED LIKE \$5,000. YOU GET ONE IF YOU RAISE \$500 ON THE WALK. ANYONE WANT THIS?

I WANTED TO ADD WHAT GEORGIA WAS TOUCHING UPON WAS THAT THE CONVENTION IS NOT JUST WORKSHOPS, BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF SOCIAL EVENTS. THERE WAS A BASEBALL GAME, A BANQUET. THEY HAD A GET-ACQUAINTED PARTY THE FIRST NIGHT. SO, REALLY, THE WHOLE WEEKEND IS JAM-PACKED WITH THINGS TO DO. YOU ARE AMONG THESE OTHER PEOPLE FROM OTHER HLAAs ACROSS THE COUNTRY, PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, EVERYONE HAS HEARING LOSS OR ASSOCIATED WITH HEARING LOSS IN SOME WAY. IT'S A UNIQUE INSURANCE. MOST OF US ARE THERE BECAUSE WE ARE DOING SOMETHING ABOUT OUR HEARING LOSS. MOST OF US ARE IN HLAAs BECAUSE WE ARE TRYING TO COPE WITH OUR HEARING LOSS IN A POSITIVE WAY. IT'S GREAT TO BE IN THAT ENVIRONMENT. EVERYTHING IS CAPTIONED. MOST OF THE FACILITIES ARE LOOPED, VERY ACCESSIBLE.

IT'S REALLY A GREAT EXPERIENCE FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN THERE.

AND AS SHE SAID, THERE WAS ALSO THIS EXHIBIT HALL WITH VENDORS, THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY, PRODUCTS, ALL SERVING PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS.

IT'S GREAT. GREAT TIME, INFORMATIVE AND VERY INVIGORATING.

>> DANNY: WHERE WAS THE FOOD?

>> LISA: ANY – LAST YEAR I REMEMBER THERE WASN'T THAT MUCH FREE FOOD. I WAS DISAPPOINTED. I WAS SEARCHING. THIS YEAR THERE WAS A LOT OF FREE FOOD, EXCEPT I DON'T THINK THERE WAS A LOT OF FREE COFFEE, WHICH -- [LAUGHTER]. I MEAN, I WAS LOOKING, I LIKE THEY HAD FREE COFFEE IN THE HOTEL ROOM SO I WAS COVERED.

>> MITZI: SOME PEOPLE WERE DESPERATE FOR COFFEE.

>> KEN: ICE CREAM SOCIAL.

>> LISA: THEY DID PRETTY WELL ON THE FOOD FRONT.

THIS IS KATHERINE BURNS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF OUR CHAPTER AND ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR MOST OF THE PAST 10 YEARS.

>> KAT: HI, EVERYONE. I WANT TO START BY SAYING WHEN I KNEW THE CONVENTION WAS GOING TO BE IN MISSOURI THIS YEAR, I THOUGHT "MISSOURI?" I HAD NEVER BEEN THERE. SOUNDED LIKE KIND OF MAYBE A HICK STATE, RURAL. I KNEW NOTHING. SAINT LOUIS WAS THE MOST EXCITING CITY. IT WAS BEAUTIFUL, LOTS OF PUBLIC ART, BEAUTIFUL PARK AREAS, A FUN, HAPPENING, HIP TOWN. I WOULD LIKE TO SAY ALL MY PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS WERE WRONG. I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME THERE. THE PEOPLE WERE ALL VERY, VERY NICE.

I'VE BEEN TO MANY CONVENTIONS, BUT I WENT THIS YEAR – I ROOMED WITH WENDI WASHINGTON. MANY OF YOU KNOW HER. SHE WON A SCHOLARSHIP. APPLIED FOR -- I FORGET WHICH SCHOLARSHIP. THEY HAVE SEVERAL YOU CAN APPLY FOR. AND SHE APPLIED TO THIS ONE THAT PAID FOR HER REGISTRATION PLUS HER HOTEL. SO THAT WAS GREAT.

I MEAN, LIKE A SET AMOUNT FOR HER HOTEL. SO SHE JUST HAD TO BASICALLY PAY FOR HER FLIGHT. SO IT WAS A GOOD DEAL. ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO GO NEXT YEAR AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, PLEASE APPLY FOR ONE OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS.

ANYWAY, I'VE BEEN TO SO MANY CONVENTIONS, AND IT WAS HER FIRST, SO I WAS REALLY SEEING IT THROUGH HER EYES. IT WAS A FRESH EXPERIENCE FOR HER, A NEW EXPERIENCE. JUST MADE IT REALLY FUN FOR ME. I HAVE TO SAY IT'S ONE OF THE MOST FUN CONVENTIONS I'VE BEEN TO. IT WAS JUST A BLAST FOR ALL THE REASONS LISA AND GEORGIA MENTIONED.

JUST QUICKLY, I WANT TO DISCUSS THE TWO WORKSHOPS THAT I FOUND THE MOST INTERESTING. I WENT TO SEVERAL, AS MANY AS I COULD JAM INTO THIS CRAZY, BUSY SCHEDULE. TWO THAT STUCK OUT IN MY MIND,

BECAUSE OF WHAT I'M GOING THROUGH WITH MY HEARING LOSS RIGHT NOW.

I APOLOGIZE, I PRINTED OUT THE SHEET ON THIS ONE, AND I LEFT IT AT HOME. BUT I HAVE IT, THE PRESENTATION ON – A PDF. AND IF ANYBODY WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT, I WILL EMAIL IT TO YOU.

THAT PARTICULAR ONE WAS ABOUT THIS NEW MIDDLE EAR IMPLANT THEY HAVE CALLED THE MAXUM. AND IT WAS INTERESTING TO ME BECAUSE WHEN YOUR HEARING AIDS AREN'T DOING ENOUGH FOR YOU, BUT YOU ARE NOT QUITE READY FOR A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, IT WAS LIKE THE BRIDGE BETWEEN HEARING AIDS AND COCHLEAR IMPLANT.

IT'S A DEVICE THAT YOU USE ELECTRO-MECHANICAL ENERGY. MITZI HAS THIS.

BEFORE I GET INTO IT – BECAUSE I WAS VERY EXCITED ABOUT IT -- BEFORE I GO TOO FAR FURTHER I WANT YOU TO KNOW IT'S A \$12,000 INVESTMENT PER EAR. SO OBVIOUSLY IT'S NOT FOR EVERYBODY. IF YOU HAVE INSURANCE THAT COVERS HEARING AIDS, THAT MIGHT COVER PART OF IT.

HOWEVER, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH HEARING AIDS COST AND HOW OFTEN YOU HAVE TO GET THEM, IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING YOU COULD LOOK INTO.

I WAS JUST VERY INTERESTED IN IT BECAUSE OF THE WAY IT WORKS WITH YOUR INNER EAR. THEY PUT THIS TINY LITTLE MAGNET ON THE OSSICLES OF THE YEAR, THE INNER EAR, THE STAPES, THE HAMMER AND ANVIL, WHATEVER THOSE TINY BONES ARE, THEY ACTUALLY PUT A MAGNET ON THERE. AND THEN THEY INSERT THIS DEVICE DEEP INTO YOUR EAR CANAL, RIGHT NEXT TO THE EARDRUM AND IT CAUSES MOVEMENT IN THE FLUID IN THE COCHLEA.

IT'S LIKE A PURER FORM OF ENERGY. IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN.

>> MITZI: IT DIDN'T GET DISTORTED LIKE SOUND WAVES. BECAUSE IT'S ELECTROMAGNET IT MOVES MECHANICALLY.

>> KAT: THAT'S ONE THING THAT ONE OF THE ENGINEERS INVOLVED WITH IT WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT THE ACOUSTIC ENERGY THAT SHAKES THINGS UP SO MUCH IT CAN GET DISTORTED. WHEREAS THIS MECHANICAL – ELECTROMECHANICAL ENERGY IS JUST AN EASIER SOURCE OF MOVEMENT. IT'S NOT GOING TO CAUSE A DISTORTION AND ALSO WON'T CAUSE FEEDBACK.

SO THEY ACTUALLY HAVE TO GO IN, IT'S AN OUTPATIENT SURGERY, AND THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE GOTTEN IT OVERWHELMINGLY LIKE IT SO MUCH. THEY CAN HEAR SO MUCH MORE.

AND FOR ME, I AM AT THAT POINT NOW WHERE I HAVE A VERY MODERATE – THEY CALL IT MODERATE, A MODERATE-SEVERE HIGH FREQUENCY HEARING LOSS, AND IT'S – I AM MISSING SO MUCH OF THE SPEECH TONES. MY AUDIOGRAM KIND OF GOES LIKE THIS. IT'S NORMAL UP TO ABOUT 500 Hz, SO I GET ALL THESE LOW-FREQUENCY SOUNDS AND NOT

HIGH FREQUENCY SOUNDS. IF YOU HAVE A LOW-FREQUENCY LOSS IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK FOR YOU – MITZI.

>> GEORGIA: FOR THAT PARTICULAR – IS IT CALLED AN IMPLANT?

>> KAT: THEY CALL IT AN IMPLANT BECAUSE OF THE MAGNET ON THE OSSICLES. BUT THEY HAVE TESTS. YOU GO DOWN AND GET EVALUATED JUST LIKE YOU WOULD FOR A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. THEY HAVE A DOCTOR AT THE HOUSE CLINIC WHO DOES THIS, AND THEY ALSO HAVE ONE IN NEWPORT BEACH.

THE THING IS –

>> STEPHANIE: IS THE IMPLANT THEY PUT IN THAT'S ALL THERE IS? NOTHING ON THE OUTSIDE?

>> KAT: YES.

>> STEPHANIE: OKAY.

>> KAT: IT'S ACTUALLY – I DON'T WANT TO SPEND TOO MUCH TIME TALKING ABOUT THIS.

>> DANNY: YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD IT UP.

>> KAT: IT'S ACTUALLY – YOUR EAR IS OPEN. YOUR EAR CANAL IS OPEN SO YOU ARE GETTING THE SOUND COMING IN THAT YOU NORMALLY WOULD HEAR, LIKE I HEAR THE LOW FREQUENCY SOUNDS. AND IT'S THIS LITTLE TUBE-SHAPED THING THAT GOES DEEP INTO YOUR EAR CANAL. HAS A LONG-LIFE BATTERY, LIKE A YEAR OR TWO. WHEN IT DOES GO DOWN THEY DO REPLACE IT.

I KNOW IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE BECAUSE OF THE PRICE AND EFFORT. BUT IF YOU ARE IN BETWEEN A HEARING AID AND A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, HEARING AID NOT WORKING, COCHLEAR IMPLANT MAYBE TOO MUCH. YOU MIGHT CONSIDER IT.

WHAT YOU DO WHEN YOU GO DOWN TO THE HOUSE INSTITUTE OR NEWPORT BEACH, THEY EVALUATE YOU; GIVE YOU TESTS, SEE IF YOU MEET THE CRITERIA. AND BEFORE THEY DO ANYTHING ELSE, TALK PRICE OR ANYTHING, THEY SET YOU UP WITH SOMEONE WITH YOUR SAME PROFILE, SAME TYPE OF HEARING LOSS, IN YOUR AGE RANGE, SOMEBODY WHO HAS BEEN THROUGH IT, AND YOU TALK TO THEM AND SEE WHAT THEY'VE EXPERIENCED. THAT TO ME IS A HUGE BONUS, BEING ABLE TO TALK TO SOMEBODY WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE GOING THROUGH, WHO HAS BENEFITED FROM THIS AND CAN TELL YOU IN THEIR OWN WORDS WHAT THE PLUS AND MINUSES ARE.

>> LIL: IF YOU WANT TO FIND OUT ABOUT IT NOW YOU ASK ABOUT A MIDDLE-EAR IMPLANT? HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY THIS?

>> KAT: IT'S CALLED A MAXUM. YOU WANT TO LOOK AT THAT BROCHURE THAT'S GOING AROUND. AND ALSO I HAVE THE WHOLE PRESENTATION, IT'S A 12-PAGE PDF. BE GLAD TO EMAIL IT TO YOU. IT'S KIND OF TECHNICAL. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ALL OF THE TECHNOLOGY. THEY WOULD EXPLAIN IT TO YOU.

>> LIL: JUST WANT TO KNOW HOW TO IDENTIFY IT.

MAXUM.

>> KAT: THE NAME KIND OF MAKES ME LAUGH, LIKE A CONDOM. WHATEVER THEY WANT TO NAME IT IS FINE.

I WAS VERY EXCITED. THE BEST THING WAS TALKING TO THE ENGINEER AFTER THE PRESENTATION BECAUSE HE WAS SO EXCITED ABOUT THIS PRODUCT. HE WAS AN ENGINEER AND HE – YOU CAN TELL THE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THIS PRODUCT AND HOW IT'S HELPING PEOPLE, FIRED HIM UP.

I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEND YOU THE PRESENTATION. MAKE SURE I HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS. THE BROCHURE GIVES YOU MORE INFORMATION.

THE SECOND WORKSHOP I WENT TO THAT KIND OF SPOKE TO MY OWN HEARING LOSS, WHAT I AM GOING THROUGH, WAS THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT USE WITH HEARING AIDS. PARTICULARLY, WHAT THEY CALL A HYBRID COCHLEAR IMPLANT. AND THIS IS A CI THAT DOESN'T GO INTO YOUR WHOLE COCHLEA. YOU KNOW HOW THE COCHLEA IS A SPIRAL AND THE ELECTRODES GO INTO THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT TO TAKE CARE OF THE LITTLE – TAKE THE PLACE OF THE LITTLE CELLS THAT MOVE BACK AND FORTH.

FOR PEOPLE WITH HIGH FREQUENCY HEARING LOSS BUT NORMAL OTHER FREQUENCY HEARING LOSS, THE HIGH FREQUENCY CELLS THAT MAKE THE MOTION ARE IN THE BEGINNING OF THE COCHLEA, THE FIRST LITTLE ROUNDING PART OF THE COCHLEA. SO THE HYBRID COCHLEAR IMPLANT JUST GOES IN THAT FAR. IT DOESN'T GO ALL THE WAY IN SO IT'S NOT DAMAGING YOUR MORE HEALTHY CELLS THAT ARE IN THE REST OF THE COCHLEA. SO THE IDEA BEHIND THAT IS, YOU USE THE ELECTRODES TO REPLACE THE HI-FREQUENCY DAMAGED HAIR CELLS BUT KEEPING YOUR UNDAMAGED LOW-FREQUENCY HAIR CELLS – WHAT THEY CALL THEM – YOU ARE KEEPING THOSE INTACT BECAUSE THE ELECTRODES ARE ONLY INSERTED PARTIALLY.

QUESTION?

>> DANNY: PARTIALLY COCHLEA SURGERY COVERED BY INSURANCE?

>> KAT: SEEMS LIKE MOST OF THESE COCHLEAR IMPLANT SURGERIES ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE. SO YES THIS WOULD BE COVERED. I AM SURE YOU STILL HAVE A CO-PAY AND OTHER PAYMENTS, BUT IN THIS CASE THIS MIGHT BE CHEAPER THAN THE MAXUM.

I WAS EVALUATED FOR THIS MANY YEARS AGO WHEN THEY WERE DOING CLINICAL TRIALS. I PASSED THE CRITERIA. MY HEARING HAS GOTTEN WORSE SINCE THEN. DIDN'T DO IT AT THE TIME, BUT IT'S STILL AROUND AND BETTER NOW. PEOPLE HAVE GONE THROUGH IT AND NOW THEY ARE PAYING FOR IT. SO I AM SURE THERE HAVE BEEN IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THE LAST SIX YEARS SINCE I WAS EVALUATED.

IF YOU HAVE PROFOUND HIGH-FREQUENCY LOSS BUT NORMAL HEARING IN LOW FREQUENCIES.

THOSE ARE JUST TWO OF THE WORKSHOPS. VERY INTERESTING, JAMPACKED WITH INFORMATION. SOME OF IT TECHNICAL, BUT SPARKS YOUR INTEREST TO FIND OUT MORE AND DO RESEARCH ON YOUR OWN. I WAS ABLE TO COME HOME AND DO SOME RESEARCH.

>> GEORGIA: THAT'S COCHLEAR AMERICAS? RIGHT? I THINK IT IS. CORRECT ME IF I AM WRONG, BUT I THINK IT'S LIKE A COCHLEAR IMPLANT SURGERY, AND THEN LATER ON, IF IT SHOULD BE THAT YOU LOSE YOUR LOW FREQUENCIES THEN THEY SOMEHOW GO BACK IN AND REDO IT. BUT I THINK BECAUSE THE IMPLANT IS ALREADY IN THERE KIND OF. BUT I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW THAT WORKS.

>> KAT: I THINK SOMEBODY DID ASK THAT QUESTION. I THINK THAT WAS THE ANSWER. THEY CAN GO IN AND IT'S EASIER AT THAT POINT TO REINVERT THE ELECTRODES SO THEY GO IN ALL THE WAY. I KNOW INSERTING THE ELECTRODES DAMAGES CELLS. YOU WANT TO KEEP AS MANY IN TACT AS YOU CAN, AND WITH THIS WHAT THEY CALL THE HYBRID YOU DO THAT.

YOU WEAR THE HEARING AID ON YOUR BETTER SIDE AND GET THE CI ON YOUR WORSE SIDE. YOU GET DIFFERENT KIND OF SOUND ENERGY. THE ACOUSTIC SOUND THEN THE ELECTRONIC SOUND. YOUR BRAIN KIND OF MAKES IT MAKE SENSE AFTER A WHILE, APPARENTLY. I KNOW SOME OF YOU HERE HAVE CI'S AND HEARING AIDS. IT TAKES A WHILE BUT YOUR BRAIN MAKES IT WORK AFTER A WHILE. SAME WITH THE HYBRID.

ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

>> LISA: THE SPEAKER NEXT MONTH CAN ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS HYBRID COCHLEAR IMPLANT. SHE WAS REALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE. I THINK SHE TALKED A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THAT.

>> KAT: I OBVIOUSLY DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS BUT SO INTERESTING TO ME. [APPLAUSE]

DANNY: THANK YOU, KAT.

>> LISA: KEN IS ALSO ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE. HE'S OUR TREASURER.

>> KEN: HI, EVERYONE.

I WENT TO THE CONVENTION THIS YEAR. I'VE BEEN TO QUITE A FEW CONVENTIONS, AND I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED IT. THE PROGRAM, SAINT LOUIS, WAS – WE GOT TO DO SOME GREAT THINGS IN SAINT LOUIS. WE HAD SOME OF THE BEST BARBECUE. NOT THE WORLD'S BEST BARBECUE. I STILL HAVE MY FAVORITE RIGHT HERE IN LOS ANGELES. BUT SAINT LOUIS IS KNOWN FOR BARBECUE.

GREAT BASEBALL GAME. WE WENT TO DINNER AS A GROUP. ONE THING ABOUT CONVENTIONS IS SOME OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT IT IS SPENDING TIME WITH FELLOW CHAPTER MEMBERS THAT GO. IT'S REALLY A GREAT BONDING EXPERIENCE THAT YOU REALLY GET TO KNOW PEOPLE WHEN YOU SPEND THREE DAYS WITH THEM.

IT'S WONDERFUL. I MOVED HERE FROM CHICAGO WHERE PART OF THE HLAA CHAPTER. SOME FRIENDS FROM CHICAGO TOOK THE AMTRAK, CAME DOWN. WE GOT TO HANG OUT WITH THEM. THAT WAS FUN.

BUT I AM HERE TO TALK ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT PANEL. THERE WAS A – IT WAS A BIG – LIKE A SYMPOSIUM.

ONE OF THE MAIN PROGRAMMING EVENTS, IT WAS FOR THREE HOURS SATURDAY MORNING? FRIDAY MORNING. AND I THOUGHT IT WAS VERY, VERY INTERESTING AND TIMELY BECAUSE OF WHEN THEY INTRODUCE THE PANEL SPEAKERS BASICALLY TALKED ABOUT WHY THEY ARE HAVING THIS PANEL AND WHY IT IS TIMELY. IT'S BECAUSE OF THE HUGE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE. THE BABY BOOMERS COMING THROUGH. AND IT IS NOT – NOT ONLY TALKED ABOUT HEARING LOSS, BUT ALSO TALKED ABOUT DISABILITY. AS WE ALL AGE, UNFORTUNATELY, OUR BODIES CHANGE AND CHANGE DOESN'T MEAN FOR THE WORSE, BUT JUST CHANGE. AND IT'S SOMETHING WE ARE NOT USED TO. BUT IF WE GO WITH THAT CHANGE IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ALL THAT BAD.

BUT IN THE WORKPLACE, THEY TALKED ABOUT IF THE EMPLOYER IS NOT WILLING TO CHANGE OR THERE MAY BE A LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY, AND THERE ARE TOO MANY COSTS TO IT. AND THERE ARE ALSO ECONOMIC COSTS. SO THEY SAY THERE IS ALL SORTS OF RESEARCH ON THIS STUFF, ET CETERA.

THE FIRST SPEAKER WAS FROM ERNST AND YOUNG, LAURIE GOLDMAN, THE H.R. PERSON, AND SHE WENT THROUGH AND TALKED ABOUT ALL THE GREAT PROGRAMS AND DIVERSITY, ET CETERA, ALL LARGE COMPANIES HAVE SOMEONE LIKE THIS TO REPRESENT H.R. DEPARTMENTS AND TALK ABOUT EVERYTHING GREAT THEY ARE DOING ABOUT DISABILITY.

I HAVE A LITTLE NOTE HERE. I'M A LITTLE FACETIOUS – SAYS OH, SHE MUST BE A LAWYER.

ANYWAYS, THE NEXT SPEAKER I THOUGHT WAS VERY, VERY INTERESTING BECAUSE HE WORKED FOR A MEDIUM-SIZED COMPANY, I THINK, AND IT WAS A VERY SIMILAR EXPERIENCE I HAD IN THE WORKPLACE, BUT HE WAS ACTUALLY HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCE AND HE LOST HIS HEARING. AND HE SAID "I THOUGHT I WAS EXTREMELY PROGRESSIVE H.R. PERSON," BUT HE SAID "I HAD NO CLUE ABOUT HEARING LOSS. AND WHEN IT HAPPENED TO ME," HE WAS JUST – HE HAD TO GO THROUGH THE WHOLE EDUCATION PROCESS AND LEARN ABOUT IT. AND HE LEARNED ABOUT IT, AND HIS EMPLOYER WAS FAIRLY SUPPORTIVE. BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT. AND HE SAID FINALLY HE JUST – HE GAVE UP. HE GAVE UP AND HE WENT TO FIND ANOTHER JOB.

AND SO HE NOW IS WORKING FOR A COMPANY – COMMUNICATION SERVICES FOR THE DEAF. THAT'S WHAT THE COMPANY IS CALLED. IT'S A NON-PROFIT. AND THAT'S REALLY WHAT HAPPENED TO ME IS I WORKED IN A JOB WHERE I WAS VERY, VERY FOCUSED ON COMMUNICATION, TALKING ON THE PHONE. IT IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR A REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER,

AND YOU REALLY HAD TO HEAR AND UNDERSTAND EVERYBODY ON THE PHONE BECAUSE YOU ARE WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS THAT ARE ALWAYS TRYING TO RIP YOU OFF. AND YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT'S LIKE REAL DOLLARS THAT COME OUT OF MY BOSS'S POCKET I HAD TO TELL HIM ABOUT.

I HAD TO FIND ANOTHER JOB. IT WAS NOT FUN, BUT SOMETIMES THAT'S REALITY. BUT ONE THING THAT HE FOCUSED ON IS HOW UNEDUCATED THEY WERE AS AN EMPLOYER FOR PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. AND SO NOW HE BELIEVES HE'S A HAPPIER PERSON, MUCH HAPPIER PERSON, AND A BETTER PERSON WORKING FOR THIS NEW COMPANY AND THAT HE HAS HEARING LOSS HE'S REALLY OPEN ABOUT. AND (INAUDIBLE) SAY I AM A BETTER PERSON.

THE NEXT SPEAKER – ACTUALLY FROM MICROSOFT. I WAS REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THAT. I AM – I LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND HOW IT'S CHANGING OUR WORLD SO MUCH. BUT SHE WASN'T VERY TECHNICAL. IT WAS KIND OF FUNNY. BUT SHE WAS VERY FUNNY. AND – BUT SHE TALKED – I THOUGHT IT WAS VERY INTERESTING, BECAUSE SHE SHARED A LOT OF HUMAN PART OF HEARING LOSS WITHIN THE WORKPLACE. AND PERSONAL STORY, I THINK WE ALL CAN RELATE IN SOME WAY ABOUT BEING IN A MEETING AND MISSING THINGS AND EMBARRASSED AND DIDN'T WANT TO ASK, BUT IT WAS CRITICAL THAT SHE DID, AND IT CAUGHT UP TO HER.

FINALLY SHE CHANGED. WHICH CAN BE DIFFICULT. I THINK, I KNOW I STRUGGLED WITH THAT IN THE WORKPLACE, AND EVEN IN PERSONAL LIFE. IT IS CHANGING AND ADVOCATING AND EDUCATING PEOPLE AND CHANGING OUR OWN BEHAVIOR OR MY BEHAVIOR TO NOT APPROACH SOMEBODY IN A NOISY PLACE LIKE I DID TEN YEARS AGO WHEN I HAD ALL MY HEARING, BUT TO CHANGE MY OWN BEHAVIOR AND SAY, OKAY, I NEED TO EDUCATE THIS PERSON THAT I HAVE HEARING LOSS SO THEY CAN IN TURN CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR. IT'S KIND OF A TEAM WORKING LIKE THAT.

BUT SO HER MESSAGE WAS "YOU HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION AND YOU HAVE TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF. YOU HAVE TO SPEAK UP." AND AGAIN I THINK WE ALL STRUGGLE WITH THAT.

AND FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU NEED AND TELL SOMEBODY ABOUT IT. WHICH CAN BE TOUGH. ONE OF THE BIGGEST THINGS ABOUT DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE IS THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT WILLING TO SPEAK UP AND LET PEOPLE KNOW.

NOW GET INTO THAT A LITTLE BIT LATER.

THIS GUY, HE'S FROM NORTHRUP GRUMMAN. BECAUSE HE WAS BLIND -- DIDN'T HAVE HEARING LOSS. TALKING ABOUT JUST HAVING A DISABILITY TALKING ABOUT HAVING A DISABILITY WITHIN A LARGE WORKPLACE.

AND THE LAST PERSON THAT SPOKE IS LISA HAMELIN, PART OF HLA, THE POLICY PERSON. AND WHAT SHE BASICALLY SAID AND – IS WE NEED LAWS, AND WE NEED AN ENVIRONMENT IN THE WORKPLACE WHAT ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LAW NOT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LAW. AND NOT ALL OF

US ARE PROTECTED BY OUR CURRENT LAWS. AND BUT WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO WORK WITH THE EMPLOYER.

SO BASICALLY TO EXPLAIN, IT'S KIND OF LIKE – TALKED ABOUT POLICY, PUBLIC POLICY AND LAWS, LIKE A.D.A., EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LAW BASICALLY SAYS THAT WE ALL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY WITHIN THE WORKPLACE TO – WE HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY AS EVERYBODY ELSE.

AND THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LAW BASICALLY SAYS THAT YOU EMPLOYERS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ON YOUR STAFF. AND THAT'S SOMETHING THAT'S ACTUALLY BEEN ON THE BOOKS, I THINK, SINCE 1978, BUT NEVER ENFORCED. IT'S BEEN A LAW. BUT COUPLE YEARS AGO, THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION CAME OUT AND SAID OKAY, EVERYBODY THAT CONTRACTS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, YOU NEED TO HELP OUT AND YOU NEED TO HELP US EMPLOY PEOPLE THAT HAVE DISABILITIES. AND THERE IS A QUOTA, I THINK LIKE 4 OR 5%.

PEOPLE DON'T SPEAK UP AND LET PEOPLE KNOW THEY HAVE A DISABILITY. PART OF IT IS BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID.

I DISAGREE WITH ACTUALLY WHAT LISA HAMELIN SAID ABOUT THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AND HERE'S WHY.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE HAD PROBLEMS AT WORK, FRUSTRATIONS AT WORK, TRYING TO GET THEIR WORK DONE WITH THEIR HEARING LOSS? ALL RIGHT. SO HOW MANY PEOPLE THAT HAVE A BOSS THAT HAS NO CLUE ABOUT HEARING LOSS? NOW, HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE A SENSE THAT SOMETIMES YOUR BOSS IS JUST CRAZY BUSY AND YOU DON'T WANT TO REALLY BOTHER THEM?

WELL, THAT TO ME, THAT'S A PROBLEM. BECAUSE A LOT OF COMPANIES NOW, THEY – BOSS – PEOPLE THAT HIRE, THERE IS REALLY NO INCENTIVE TO HIRE SOMEBODY WITH A KNOWN DISABILITY BECAUSE THAT HIRING MANAGER, THAT MANAGER HAS NO CLUE HOW THEY DEAL WITH THEM, TO MANAGE THEM, HOW TO CHANGE. AND SO YOU GO THROUGH THE INTERVIEW PROCESS, IT'S HARD ENOUGH – I MEAN, THEY TALK ABOUT, THEY – IN THE FIRST 30 SECONDS THEY KNOW IF THEY WANT YOU OR NOT. HE HAS AN UGLY TIE ON, WHATEVER THE REASON. IF YOU ARE LOOKING AT A HIRING MANAGER THAT SAYS I AM – I HAVE NO CLUE. IT'S SOMETHING THAT I DO NOT WANT TO DEAL WITH. SO BOOM.

IN PUBLIC COMPANIES, IN THE COMPANIES THAT WE HAVE NOW, THERE'S VERY LITTLE INCENTIVE. IF THEY HAVE A HUGE HEART AND ARE EDUCATED ABOUT DISABILITIES AND THINK I WANT TO GIVE THIS GUY A SHOT, GREAT. BUT IF YOU ARE LIKE MOST COMPANIES AND THEY ARE TRYING TO MAKE A BUCK, IT'S THE BOTTOM LINE THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT, AND ME, THE MANAGER, IF I AM NOT PERFORMING THE WAY I SHOULD, THAT MEANS I AM NOT GONNA GET THAT BONUS OR WHATEVER, I AM NOT GONNA GET THE PROMOTION, I AM GOING TO FOCUS ON, GET A CANDIDATE THAT DOESN'T HAVE A DISABILITY.

HERE'S THE DIFFERENCE, THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BASICALLY SAYS YOU GUYS NEED TO HAVE FOUR OR FIVE PERCENT, WHATEVER IT IS. THAT WILL FORCE THE COMPANIES TO GO OUT AND EDUCATE THEIR MANAGERS. IT'S GOING TO CREATE A NEW WORKFORCE THAT IS GOING TO PREPARE OUR EMPLOYERS IN THIS COUNTRY FOR THE BABY BOOMERS, FOR THE PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. AND THESE ARE FOLKS THAT – SOCIAL SECURITY, THERE IS THIS – PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE WORKING LONGER. GOING TO BE STAYING HEALTHIER, AND WE ARE GOING TO NEED THOSE EMPLOYERS TO CHANGE. BUT IF THERE IS NOBODY OUT THERE EDUCATING THEM AND THEY HAVE NO INCENTIVE TO CHANGE, THEY WON'T. SO THAT'S WHY I FEEL AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS A GOOD IDEA.

AND I THINK THAT WRAPS IT UP, AND I APOLOGIZE FOR BABBLING ON SO MUCH. [APPLAUSE].

>> LISA: SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SHARE? EVERYONE ELSE –

>> ALICIA: DON'T WE NEED TO TAKE A BREAK?

>> LISA: YOU CAN GO AND THEN WE CAN TAKE A BREAK.

>> ALICIA: AS EVERYONE SAID, THERE WERE GREAT WORKSHOPS, AND ACTUALLY PAT AND GEORGIA AND I WENT TO ONE ON A BRAND-NEW TECHNOLOGY CALLED A "ROGER PEN." THEY ACTUALLY GAVE EACH OF US A SAMPLE. SO LATER ON, THIS – THIS YEAR OR NEXT YEAR WE WILL HAVE A TECHNOLOGY DAY AND BRUSH UP ON THE DEMONSTRATION, AND WE WILL ACTUALLY BE LENDING OUT THIS ITEM FOR PEOPLE TO TEST IT OUT ON THEIR OWN. SO THAT'S COMING OUT. DON'T WANT TO SPEND AN HOUR, HOUR AND A HALF ON THAT.

I ALSO WENT TO EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS. I ALSO WENT TO ONE ON FACEBOOK. A LOT OF NOTES. YOU ARE WELCOME TO LOOK AT IT.

I WANT TO TALK ABOUT INSPIRATION, TALK ABOUT THE OPENING CEREMONY. AND I JUST WAS SO IMPRESSED.

TOM HARKIN -- SENATOR TOM HARKIN WHO IS NOW UNFORTUNATELY RETIRED, AND ME AND KATHERINE. HE WON THE ADVOCACY HALL OF FAME AWARD. HE WAS ONE OF THE KEY AUTHORS OF THE A.D.A., AND THE REASON HE GOT SO INVOLVED WITH DISABILITY RIGHTS IS BECAUSE HIS BROTHER IS – WAS – HE PASSED – WAS DEAF. AND WHEN HIS BROTHER WAS COMING UP IN THE WORLD, IT WAS LONG AGO, AND PEOPLE WOULD CALL DEAF PEOPLE "DEAF-AND-DUMB." AND HIS BROTHER WOULD SAY "I MAY BE DEAF BUT I AIN'T DUMB."

WHAT'S REALLY SAD IS WHEN HE WAS LOOKING FOR A JOB – I HAVE IT ON HERE. THEY TOLD HIM HE COULD DO THREE THINGS. ONE WAS BE A BAKER, THE OTHER WAS A CONSTRUCTION JOB, AND I FORGET THE THIRD ONE. BASICALLY THE MAN, FULLY INTENT HUMAN BEING WAS TOLD HE COULD ONLY HAVE THREE JOBS. AND HE ENDED UP BEING A BAKER, AND HE HATED IT. BUT HE DID IT. AND HE HAD A CUSTOMER KEPT COMING IN. "YOU ARE SO GOOD AT THIS JOB, YOU LIKE IT?" HE SAID "NO, I HATE IT." THE CUSTOMER SAID "I RUN THIS ELECTRONICS PLANT. ARE YOU

INTERESTED IN PUTTING TOGETHER ELECTRONICS?" "YEAH, ANYTHING BUT GETTING UP AT 3:00 IN THE MORNING." HE WENT TO WORK FOR THIS MAN, FANTASTIC AT PUTTING TOGETHER ELEMENTS. THEY FOUND OUT HIS DEAFNESS WAS A VERY GOOD THING BECAUSE IT MADE HIM FOCUS AND IT WAS A VERY NOISY FACTORY FLOOR.

THIS EMPLOYER WENT OUT AND HIRED A BUNCH OF HARD-OF-HEARING AND DEAF PEOPLE, IN THIS CASE.

THESE ARE THE KIND OF HORRIBLE SITUATIONS PEOPLE USED TO FACE. SO TOM HARKINS PRETTY MUCH SPENT HIS ENTIRE LIFE FIGHTING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE. HE USES ASL BEAUTIFULLY. HE'S STILL FIGHTING, BECAUSE THEY ARE TRYING TO DO – TRYING TO ACTUALLY DO A LAW THAT WILL STRENGTHEN – I FORGET WHAT THE TITLE IS – THE A.D.A. WHAT'S HAPPENING IS THE A.D.A. SAYS ALL THESE REALLY GOOD THINGS BUT THEN THE COURTS KEEP CHISELING AWAY AT IT.

IN TENNESSEE DISABLED PEOPLE SUED BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T GET INTO THE COURT HOUSE. HAD TO GO ALL THE WAY UP TO THE TENNESSEE SUPREME COURT. AND IT ONLY PASSED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE RAMPS, ET CETERA, 5 TO 4. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A CIVIC DUTY. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO TAKE PART IN EVERYTHING TO DO WITH CITY, STATE GOVERNMENTS.

WORKING ON THAT ACT.

ALSO WORKING ON ANOTHER LAW. IT'S A LAW THAT WILL BASICALLY FOLLOW THE PERSON AND THEIR NEEDS AS OPPOSED TO GIVING MONEY TO INSTITUTIONS. WHAT THAT MEANS IS, FOR INSTANCE, AN ELDERLY PERSON OR A PERSON WITH DISABILITIES, THE HELP WILL GO TOWARDS WHAT THEIR NEEDS ARE, MEANING IF THEY HAVE NURSES COME TO THEIR HOUSE, MAYBE THE MONEY WILL GO TOWARD A NURSE COMING TO THEIR HOUSE OPPOSED TO AN INSTITUTION. MAYBE THE MONEY WILL COME TO PART OF THE FAMILY THAT HELPS THEM OPPOSED TO AN INSTITUTION. BASICALLY A LAW. I THINK IT'S CALLED "MI CASA," THAT FOLLOWS A PERSON AND THEIR NEEDS, RATHER THAN YOU RUN A HOME FOR THE DISABLED, HERE'S MONEY.

I WAS AS EXCITED POSING WITH HIM AS I WOULD WITH BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN. HE RAN FOR PRESIDENT IN 1992, DROPPED OUT FOR BILL CLINTON.

THE NEXT PARTY THAT WON AN AWARD WAS THE REGAL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, A THEATER CHAIN. I GO TO REGAL ALL THE TIME. AND I WANT TO TELL ONE STORY THAT THE MAN WHO ACCEPTED THE AWARD TOLD THAT I JUST LOVED.

HE SAID REGAL JUMPED IN FAST, BECAUSE NANCI LINKE-ELLIS CALLED. THEY WERE WONDERING IF IT WAS WORTHWHILE. THIS WAS QUITE A FEW YEARS AGO, 15-20. YOU KNOW WE NEED MORE ADVERTISING. SO THEY WENT TO A DEAF SCHOOL. SAID WE ARE GOING TO DO A KIDS' FILM AND INVITE STUDENTS. HE WENT. PART OF THE AUDIENCE.

(SOMEONE'S PHONE IS RINGING).

HE SAID THEY WERE SO HAPPY. REMEMBERS TO THIS DAY, HE GOT ON THE BUS, AND THEY ALL WERE SIGNING "I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU." HE SAID HE REALIZED --

DANNY: SOMEBODY'S PHONE IS RINGING, "HEY, NOW, YOU'RE A ROCK STAR."

>> ALICIA: BASICALLY HE WAS SAYING THAT WHEN HE SAW THAT BUSLOAD OF KIDS, IT HIT HOME TO HIM THAT ALL PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS WANT (PHONE STILL RINGING) --

REGAL HAS KEPT UP WITH TECHNOLOGY ALL ALONG, AND WHY THEY WON THIS AWARD FOR THEIR WORK. THAT'S WHAT IT IS. IT'S DRIVING THAT POINT HOME, ALL OF A SUDDEN FINDING SOMEONE TO UNDERSTAND THAT ALL PEOPLE WITH LIMITATIONS WANT TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE.

AND THE THIRD ENTITY WAS MICROSOFT. THEY CERTAINLY HAVE THE MONEY TO ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE, FORWARD-LOOKING COMPANY.

I FOUND ALL OF THESE SPEAKERS TREMENDOUSLY INSPIRATIONAL. SHOWS HOW FAR WE'VE COME, HOW FAR WE ALL NEED TO GO, AND WE ALL NEED TO PUSH. THERE IS SO MUCH INFORMATION. I WILL LEAVE THESE THINGS UP HERE. YOU ARE WELCOME TO LOOK, KEEP THEM, WHATEVER YOU WOULD LIKE.

THANK YOU.

>> LISA: I WANT -- COUPLE THINGS -- THANK YOU ALL FOR SHARING. I WILL TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT A COUPLE WORKSHOPS I WENT TO, AFTER THE BREAK, BECAUSE THEY RELATE TO WHAT WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IN OUR RAP SESSION.

WE ARE GOING TO TAKE A BREAK, BUT I WANTED TO -- COUPLE THINGS BEFORE THE BREAK.

THE FIRST IS I WAS INFORMED THAT ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, A VERY SPECIAL MEMBER, IS CELEBRATING A BIRTHDAY ON MONDAY. SO I WANTED TO GIVE THIS TO MARCIA. [APPLAUSE]. WE LOVE YOU SO MUCH. YOU ARE SUCH A WONDERFUL PART OF THIS CHAPTER.

[APPLAUSE]

MARCIA IS HERE AT EVERY MEETING EARLY. SHE STAYS TO HELP CLEAN UP. SHE COMES TO ALL OF OUR EVENTS AND VOLUNTEERS.

WE REALLY ADORE YOU. AND HAVE A WONDERFUL BIRTHDAY.

>> MARCIA: THANK YOU.

>> LISA: THE SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT IS GRACE, SHE WON AN AWARD FROM HAMILTON RELAY, AND I HAVE TO FIND WHERE I PUT THIS -- UH-OH. IT'S BETTER HEARING -- IT'S A LONG -- BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH, SO SHE WON THE 2015 BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH RECOGNITION AWARD FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. AND PAUL STEUSSY, A GOOD FRIEND OF OURS, JUST GOT RELOCATED TO VIRGINIA AND COULDN'T BE HERE TODAY. HE PRESENTED THIS AWARD -- YOU HAVE THE CERTIFICATE. THERE IS CAKE OUT THERE.

HE WANTED ME TO READ THE PRESS RELEASE.

GRACE TIESSEN OF PASADENA HAS BEEN SELECTED AS THE HAMILTON RELAY 2015 BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENT FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. FOR OVER 30 YEARS SHE HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO PROVIDING EDUCATION AND RESOURCES TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE HARD-OF-HEARING.

GRACE BECAME ACTIVE IN SELF HELP FOR HARD-OF-HEARING, NOW KNOWN AS THE HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, HLAA, IN 1984. SHE SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CHAPTER FROM 1985 TO 1990. GRACE ALSO PARTICIPATED IN HLAA AT A STATE LEVEL, SITTING ON THE CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES FROM 1997 TO 2011, SERVING IN VARIOUS ROLES INCLUDING CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, VICE-PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT. SHE IS CURRENTLY THE EDITOR OF THE HLAA-CA STATE NEWSLETTER, "THE HEARING LOSS CALIFORNIAN."

IN ADDITION TO HER WORK WITH HLAA, GRACE SERVES AS AN ADVOCATE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING LOSS IN HER COMMUNITY. SHE WAS A MEMBER OF CALIFORNIA EDUCATION ADVISORY TASK FORCE FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING AND THE CITY OF PASADENA COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY. GRACE ALSO SAT ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE HEAR CENTER, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT OFFERS AFFORDABLE HEARING AND SPEECH SERVICES TO RESIDENTS IN THE PASADENA AREA.

WE COMMEND GRACE FOR HER MENTORSHIP AND TIRELESS ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE HARD OF HEARING AND ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT HER WITH THE HAMILTON RELAY 2015 BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH RECOGNITION AWARD FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

THIS LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO YOU BY HAMILTON RELAY. [APPLAUSE].

ON THAT NOTE, WE WILL TAKE A BREAK NOW.

QUICK ANNOUNCEMENT, AND ENJOY CAKE AND PASTA OUT THERE DURING THE BREAK.

>> KEN: SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE READ – I SENT A COUPLE EMAILS OUT. WE HAD A CPK FUNDRAISER. WE WILL TRY TO RAISE \$300 TO GET SOME PASTA FROM CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN. WE ARE ABOUT \$245. I LOVE THAT PASTA SO MUCH. THERE IS PASTA OUT THERE FOR YOU. THERE IS A KITTY JAR IF YOU WANT TO GIVE IN TO THAT \$300. ENJOY.

ONE OTHER ANNOUNCEMENT. I WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE THAT TIM IS PART OF A LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SOFTBALL TEAM. [APPLAUSE].

>> LISA: TAKE 10 TO 15 MINUTES. MEET YOU BACK HERE IN ABOUT 15 MINUTES.

(15-MINUTE BREAK TILL 11:22)

>> LISA: EVERYBODY, PLEASE SIT DOWN.
A COUPLE THINGS. NANCY GRAY MADE THIS BOOK FROM THE CONVENTION. I AM GOING TO PASS IT AROUND. I TOLD YOU IT'S A LOT OF FUN, AND THERE ARE ALSO EVENTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

>> MITZI: WE DIDN'T GET OUR ARCH PICTURE.

>> LISA: MITZI AND – WE WENT -- FUN OUTING.

>> MITZI: IF YOU ARE NOT CLAUSTROPHOBIC.

>> LISA: THAT WAS FUN.

THANK YOU EVERYBODY FOR SHARING ABOUT THE CONVENTION. I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE, WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL AFFECTS OF HEARING LOSS. I PASSED THIS AROUND, THE HEARING LOSS REVOLUTION. THERE ARE SOME ON THE PODIUM. THIS WOMAN, SHE'S ACTUALLY AN HCAA MEMBER. I THINK SHE STARTED A CHAPTER IN NEW JERSEY AND SHE'S THE PRESIDENT. SHE STARTED THIS, WHAT SHE CALLS "A HEARING LOSS REVOLUTION." THERE IS A WEBSITE. THERE ARE NINE PRINCIPLES SHE CAME UP WITH. AND I THINK THIS IS A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR OUR DISCUSSION TODAY, TALKING ABOUT HOW WE CAN CHANGE OUR OWN ATTITUDES ABOUT HEARING LOSS.

ONE OF HER MAIN THINGS IS THAT IT'S UP TO US TO CHANGE THE ATTITUDES, BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES ASSOCIATED WITH HEARING LOSS, AND WE WEAR THEM, WE BUY INTO THEM.

SHE SAYS OUR LIVES DEFINE US, NOT OUR HEARING LOSS. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT OUR HEARING LOSS DOESN'T DEFINE US, THAT THE NEGATIVE BELIEFS THAT OFTEN COME WITH HEARING LOSS, LIKE YOU FEEL INCOMPETENT OR STUPID OR BORING, THAT WE FEED TO LET GO OF THESE BELIEFS AND FOCUS ON THE THINGS WE CAN DO.

WE ARE INTELLIGENT, ENGAGED, AND VALUED IN SPITE OF OUR HEARING LOSS.

WE ARE HEROES OF OUR HEARING LOSS. WE ARE NOT VICTIMS. WE ADVISE PEOPLE WHAT WE NEED THEM TO DO SO WE CAN HEAR BETTER.

WE ARE HONEST WITH OURSELVES AND OTHERS. WE DON'T PRETEND TO HEAR WHAT WE DON'T HEAR. A LOT OF US ARE GUILTY OF BLUFFING OUR WAY THROUGH THINGS.

WE USE ASSISTIVE LISTENING TECHNOLOGIES PROUDLY AND ADVOCATE FOR INSTALLING THEM IN PUBLIC PLACES.

WE SEE THE HUMOR WHEN WE MISUNDERSTAND WHAT PEOPLE SAY, AND WE ARE ABLE TO LAUGH ABOUT IT. I THINK KEEPING A SENSE OF HUMOR IS SO IMPORTANT.

WE ACCEPT WITH GRACE THE HEARING CHALLENGES WE CANNOT CHANGE.

AND WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR OUR COURAGE AND STRENGTH IN LIVING THESE PRINCIPLES.

TO ME THESE LAST THREE, KEEPING YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR, ACCEPTANCE, AND HAVING GRATITUDE FOR WHAT WE CAN DO. IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN A POSITIVE OUTLOOK.

ANOTHER WORKSHOP I WENT TO, I WILL SHARE A VIDEO. IT'S ABOUT TEN MINUTES. THIS WORKSHOP WAS ABOUT LIVING WELL WITH HEARING LOSS.

TWO OLDER GENTLEMEN FROM THE UK. THE FIRST PART OF THE VIDEO HE'S JUST BASICALLY SAID HE LOST HIS HEARING DURING THE WAR. I WILL START IN THE MIDDLE. WHAT I LIKE ABOUT THIS VIDEO IS IT SHOWS ALL THE FRUSTRATIONS AND CHALLENGES. HEARING LOSS IS REALLY HARD TO DEAL WITH AND IT SUCKS, BUT YOU CAN MAKE AN ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, CHANGE YOUR LIFE AND STILL HAVE A FULL LIFE. AND I THINK THAT THIS IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW THESE TWO GENTLEMEN DID THAT.

I WILL JUST PLAY THIS AND THEN WE CAN TALK.

[VIDEO]

IT'S CAPTIONED TOO. SO JANE CAN TAKE A BREAK.

THE VOLUME IS NOT WORKING. SORRY.

>> LISA: I AM GOING TO TRY ONE THING. I AM GOING TO TRY TO TURN THE VOLUME ON. THAT'S AS LOUD AS IT WILL GET.

[VIDEO]

>> LISA: ALL RIGHT. I ENJOYED THAT VIDEO. AND WHAT I WANTED TO TOUCH ON WAS HOW HE SAYS, THEIR LIVES ARE LIKE SIMPLER NOW, BUT DOESN'T MEAN NOT AS RICH. AND THEY FOUND OTHER ACTIVITIES WHERE THEY CAN STILL ENJOY THEIR LIVES. THEY'VE GONE TO SMALLER DINNER PARTIES. THEY GO TO THE BALLET NOW INSTEAD OF THE THEATER. AND ALSO HE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR; HE'S ABLE TO LAUGH AT SOME OF THESE SITUATIONS, EVEN THOUGH WE CAN ALL RELATE TO HOW FRUSTRATING IT IS AT THE DOCTOR, AND OTHER SITUATIONS.

I'VE BEEN IN THAT SITUATION WHERE I AM WITH SOMEONE THAT CAN HEAR AND THEY DON'T EVEN TALK TO ME. YOU REALIZE YOU ARE GOING TO DEAL WITH THESE DAILY CHALLENGES AND THAT SOME DAYS WILL BE WORSE THAN OTHERS; THAT YOU HAVE TO KEEP BEING HONEST ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS AND KEEP FOCUSING ON WHAT YOU CAN DO, AND KEEPING YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR.

>> ALICIA: I WANT TO MENTION I HAVE A NEW JOB, AND ONE OF THE THINGS THEY WERE THRILLED WITH IS THAT I AM BILINGUAL. AND I LOVE TALKING TO SPANISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE. THE PROBLEM IS THEY GET REALLY EXCITED BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND THEM, AND THEN THEY TALK REALLY, REALLY FAST. AND – I'M FROM ARGENTINA. AND WE HAVE DIFFERENT ACCENTS, COLUMBIANS, ECUADORIANS. YES, I SPEAK SPANISH BUT I'M DEAF. THEN I HAVE TO SAY "PLEASE CALM DOWN AND TALK SLOWLY. I DO SPEAK SPANISH, BUT YOU ARE GETTING TOO EXCITED WHICH I DO TOO, AND YOU ARE TALKING WAY TOO FAST FOR ME." LIKE I SAID, I LOVE DOING IT, BUT IT'S BROUGHT ITS

OWN CHALLENGES AT THE SAME TIME. LUCKILY MOST PEOPLE ARE SWEET AND THEY HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR, AND SO DO I, BECAUSE OTHERWISE –

>> DANNY: I LIKE WHAT HE SAID ABOUT LIKE THE SPONTANEOUS CONVERSATIONS ARE GONE. I HAVE TO SAY IN OUR RELATIONSHIP THEY ARE NOT GONE, BUT IT IS A CHALLENGE. FOR EXAMPLE, I MIGHT BE COMING IN ARE FROM THE FRONT DOOR, SEE THESE BEAUTIFUL PURPLE FLOWERS THAT REMIND ME OF HER MOM. I WILL COME IN THE HOUSE AND SAY “THE PURPLE FLOWERS – YOUR MOM’S PURPLE FLOWERS ARE LOOKING REALLY GOOD.” “PARDON ME?” BY THE TIME SHE HEARS WHAT I AM SAYING IT’S (LOUDLY) “THE PURPLE FLOWERS OUT FRONT, YOUR MOTHER’S, ARE LOOKING GOOD.”

ON THE FLIP SIDE, I MIGHT SAY SOMETHING SWEET AND MY TONE IS NICE. “YOU ARE LOOKING BEAUTIFUL TODAY.” “OH, THANK YOU, WHAT DID YOU SAY?” SHE CAN HEAR WHAT I SAID WAS SWEET BUT NOT REALLY WHAT I SAID.

>> LISA: I ACTUALLY – I HAVE A BOYFRIEND NOW THAT HAS HEARING LOSS SO I KIND OF CAN RELATE NOW TO BEING ON THE HEARING PARTNER’S SIDE. I USED TO BE THE HEARING – THE HARD-OF-HEARING PERSON IN THE RELATIONSHIP, AND I DIDN’T REALLY CARE IF I COULDN’T HEAR SOME OF THESE SPONTANEOUS THINGS MY BOYFRIEND WAS SAYING. BUT NOW WHEN I WANT TO SAY STUFF – I CAN RELATE TO BOTH SIDES NOW. I CAN SEE THE FRUSTRATIONS.

>> KEN: IT’S COMING BACK TO HAUNT YOU.

>> LISA: ANYONE ELSE HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT HOW YOU STAY (INAUDIBLE) WHILE LIVING WITH HEARING LOSS?

>> NANCY G: I THINK WHAT YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER IS YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER. JUST BECAUSE YOU TOLD THE NURSE YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS DOESN’T MEAN SHE TOLD THE DOCTOR. OR SHE TOLD THE LAB TECH. SO IT’S REPETITIVE – YOU GET ANGRY. YOU MAY GET ANGRY. I TOLD HIM. OKAY? BUT YOU NEED TO TELL EVERY PERSON. I WORK IN A HOSPITAL, AND I KNOW YOU JUST HAVE TO – WE UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS, BUT THE LAB TECH MAY NOT. AND YOU HAVE TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF.

>> LISA: I LIKED IN THE VIDEO WHERE HE TALKS ABOUT HE GRABBED THE DOCTOR. I’M INTIMIDATED BY DOCTORS SO I TRY TO BE POLITE. I HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT. GRABS HIM AND SAYS STAY THERE.

NANCY G: I HAD A PROCEDURE, TOOK MY IMPLANT OFF. PUT IT IN A CUP. “OH, DO THOSE THINGS WORK FOR YOU?” DUH, I’VE WORKED WITH YOU FOR 25 YEARS, ON THE PHONE WITH YOU. HE’S AN ANESTHESIOLOGIST. I DIDN’T EVEN EXPLAIN TO HIM. THEY DON’T KNOW. YOU HAVE TO EXPLAIN OVER AND OVER AGAIN. WITH A SPINAL.

>> JUDY: I’VE BEEN HARD-OF-HEARING ALL MY LIFE. AND IT’S SLOWLY DECREASING. THE THING THAT AMAZES ME ABOUT HAVING GONE THROUGH TWO HCAA CONVENTIONS NOW, HOW LONG IT TOOK

ME TO FINALLY REALIZE AND HAVE IT SINK IN HOW IMPORTANT SELF-ADVOCACY IS. I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT A GROUP OF US. I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT JOINING A COMMITTEE. I'M TALKING ABOUT JUST ONE, AND THAT IT'S HARD WORK, AND THAT I HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DO IT.

AND I DON'T KNOW WHY. HERE I AM, 64 YEARS OLD, AND I'M FINALLY GETTING IT, AND I GOT IT. AND I'M STILL WORKING, AND SO ONE THING THAT THIS CONVENTION TAUGHT ME THAT I THINK YOU BROUGHT UP WAS THAT YOU HAVE TO SELF-ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF. YOU HAVE TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY. AND KEN WAS TALKING ABOUT MICROSOFT AND ALL OF THESE BIG COMPANIES. THE POINT MADE THERE WAS THAT THEY DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR HEARING LOSS IS. YOU HAVE TO STAND UP AND SELF-ADVOCATE AND EXPLAIN TO THEM WHAT YOUR HEARING LOSS IS, BECAUSE THE ASSUMPTION IS NOT THAT THEY UNDERSTAND ALREADY. IT'S A DAY-TO-DAY PROCESS, AND YOU HAVE TO JUST STICK WITH IT. SOME DAYS IT'S WITH A SMILE AND SOME DAYS IT'S SARCASM. AND I JUST WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT INDIVIDUALLY WE ARE EACH RESPONSIBLE FOR OURSELVES TO ADVOCATE.

>> LISA: I FULLY AGREE WITH THAT, AND I SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE. I USED TO HIDE MY HEARING LOSS. HIDE MY HEARING AIDS. I WAS JUST SO ASHAMED OF IT. I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW. THIS GROUP HAS TAUGHT ME HOW TO SELF-ADVOCATE. NOW I DON'T CARE. I'M SO MUCH HAPPIER NOW. I STILL HAVE BAD DAYS AND I GET FRUSTRATED. IT'S SO MUCH EASIER NOT TRYING TO BLUFF AND HIDE ALL THE TIME. IT'S ALL ABOUT, LIKE YOU SAID, SELF-ADVOCATING.

>> MITZI: I KNOW WHAT THE TURNING POINT FOR ME. I WASN'T REALLY TRYING TO HIDE IT. BUT I WOULD BE GOING TO MEETINGS ALL THE TIME. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, NON-PROFIT, AND YOU ARE PART OF A COALITION. AND WE WOULD MEET AT UNION STATION EVERY MONTH, AND THE PLAZA RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE MONUMENT, IN FRONT OF THE FOUNTAIN. I KEPT MENTIONING IT TO PEOPLE. I DIDN'T WANT TO IMPOSE ON PEOPLE TOO MUCH, BUT I DID TELL THEM. IT WAS WHEN WE STARTED HAVING A MEDIATION MEETING WITH AEG OVER THE PROPOSED FOOTBALL STADIUM DOWNTOWN, WITH THAT GROUP. HIGH-LEVEL ATTORNEYS. I WAS MORE OPEN ABOUT IT.

I STARTED RIGHT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING, "I HAVE HEARING LOSS AND PLEASE SPEAK UP OR WE WILL NEED TO GET SOME SOUND EQUIPMENT IN HERE BECAUSE I NEED TO HEAR EVERY WORD YOU SAY. IT'S CRITICAL." AND WHAT WAS INTERESTING WAS THE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE OF EVERYONE IN THE ROOM. TURNS OUT THEIR LEAD ATTORNEY HAD JUST GOTTEN HEARING AIDS AND HE WAS HIDING THE FACT. OUTSIDE OF THE MEETING HE TALKED WITH ME, AND HE HAD BEEN SO ADVERSARIAL, AT ONE POINT THE MEDIATORS TOOK HIM

AND OUR LEADER OUT INTO THE HALLWAY, AND SAID "YOU TWO NEED TO SHUT UP."

AFTER THAT, IN TALKING TO ME ABOUT THE HEARING LOSS, SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS, CHANGED THE WHOLE ATMOSPHERE THERE BECAUSE THERE WAS A BOND OVER THIS. THE OTHER EXECUTIVES WERE MIDDLE-AGED MEN LOSING THEIR HEARING. I ACTUALLY ADVOCATED FOR EVERYONE IN THE ROOM. THERE IS MORE HEARING LOSS OUT THERE THAN THEY ADMIT. YOU GET THE SITUATION SET UP SO YOU CAN HEAR, OTHER PEOPLE TO DO, BECAUSE THEY ARE ALL BLUFFING AND FAKING IT.

>> LISA: I DO THINK THAT BEING PART OF THIS GROUP WE ARE FURTHER AHEAD THAN A LOT OF PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. IT IS UP TO US. WE DO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY, I THINK, TO KIND OF GET RID OF SOME OF THOSE NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES. BECAUSE, LIKE YOU SAID, IT'S SO COMMON. THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE OUT THERE NOW DEALING WITH HEARING LOSS THAT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN OR ARE TRYING TO HIDE IT.

I TRY TO WEAR MY HAIR UP MORE, PEOPLE SEE "THIS PERSON HAS HEARING LOSS. SHE'S NOT 85 YEARS OLD." HOPEFULLY WE CAN START CHANGING THOSE IMAGES.

ANYONE ELSE? KEN?

>> KEN: I THOUGHT IT WAS VERY INTERESTING THAT THE COUPLE ACTUALLY WENT THROUGH CHANGES THAT THEY – INSTEAD OF GOING TO LIVE THEATER THEY WENT TO THE BALLET. ONE THING THAT I STRUGGLE WITH IS CHANGING MY OWN BEHAVIOR OF WANTING TO DO THINGS THAT I USED TO BE ABLE TO DO WITHOUT A PROBLEM BUT NOT UNDERSTANDING MY OWN LIMITATIONS. CHANGING THE ENVIRONMENT, MY OWN BEHAVIOR, CHANGING WHAT I DO. I MAY STILL BE ABLE TO DO THEM BUT NOT WITHOUT A LOT OF FRUSTRATION AND STRESS AND ANXIETY.

AND HOW DOES THAT AFFECT EVERYONE ELSE AROUND YOU? AND IS IT REALLY WORTH IT? THE EXAMPLE IS TRAVELING. THAT I USED TO LOVE TO TRAVEL. AND I STILL DO. AND GO TO PLACES AND RUN ALL OVER THE PLACE. HAVE TO ASK PEOPLE FOR DIRECTIONS. BOOK HERE, BOOK THINGS THERE, AND IT WAS STRESSFUL BACK THEN. BUT I COULD DO IT. AND IT WAS FUN. BUT NOW HAVING TO DO THAT IS JUST VERY, VERY STRESSFUL, AND SOMETIMES IT CAN CAUSE STRESS ANXIETY WITHIN YOURSELF. AND IF YOU ARE TRAVELING WITH SOMEBODY ELSE IT AFFECTS THEM TOO AND JUST BECOMES NOT WORTH THE EFFORT. SO MAYBE I CAN CHANGE MY OWN BEHAVIOR AND THE ENVIRONMENT. MAYBE WE CHANGE, YOU KNOW, WE DON'T GO TO A MILLION DIFFERENT PLACES AND WE HAVE MORE OF A RELAXING VACATION. THAT'S ONE THING THAT I CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE WITH, AND I FOUND IT HELPFUL TO TRY TO PUT SOME EFFORT INTO MAKING THOSE CHANGES.

>> MITZI: I'M SORRY KEIKO ISN'T HERE. SHE'S GONE TO PORTLAND. SHE'S IN NURSING SCHOOL. AND SHE FINISHED HER BACHELOR'S DEGREE DOWN HERE, AND SHE SAID THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE TWO SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS IS INCREDIBLE. IN PORTLAND THEY ARE SO ATTUNED TO HEARING LOSS AND THEY HAVE SUCH GOOD EQUIPMENT FOR HER THAT SHE FEELS "NORMAL" IT'S THAT GOOD, AND HOW DIFFERENT IT IS. AND HOW SHE WAS ALWAYS STRUGGLING HERE.

THAT'S THE OTHER THING WE DO HAVE TO ADVOCATE IN PUBLIC PLACES FOR THE ACCOMMODATION, BECAUSE ALL THE TECHNOLOGY IS WHAT MAKES US ABLE TO PARTICIPATE.

THREE OF US HAD LATE FLIGHTS BACK FROM THE CONVENTION [LAUGHTER], AND THERE WAS A TORNADO WARNING. NOW, WE WERE AT DIFFERENT GATES, SO I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED WITH ALICIA AND RACHEL. WHAT I HEARD WAS -- I WAS WALKING THROUGH THE AIRPORT, I HEARD A TONE AND A SOFT VOICE, I HEARD "TORNADO." THAT'S NOT GOOD. I WENT UP TO ONE OF THE SOUTHWEST DESKS AND ASKED ABOUT IT. SHE SAID "WE GET THOSE ALL THE TIME. IF IT WERE REALLY IMPORTANT SECURITY WOULD MOVE YOU AWAY FROM THE WINDOWS." LIKE OUR EARTHQUAKES HERE, WE JUST RIDE THEM OUT.

BUT I'M WATCHING. AND IN A LITTLE WHILE SECURITY CAME AND MOVED US TO AN INNER CORRIDOR. DIDN'T TELL US ANYTHING. KIND OF MOVED US AWAY, AND WE FOUND PLACES TO HUDDLE. NO INFORMATION WHATSOEVER. I FOUND OUT AFTERWARDS THAT ALICIA, SHE DIDN'T HEAR THE ANNOUNCEMENT, BUT SHE TOLD THEM SHE WAS TRAVELING DEAF --

AND THEY CAME AND GOT YOU? NO? MAYBE YOU SHOULD TELL THE STORY --

>> ALICIA: I WAS OFF TO ONE SIDE OF THE GATE BECAUSE I WAS PLUGGING MY CELL PHONE IN. SO I WAS LOOKING DOWN AND I HEARD A BUZZ AND THEN I HEARD AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE THING. I LOOKED UP. I TOLD THEM I WAS DEAF, BUT NOBODY DID ANYTHING. AND EVERYBODY ON MY SIDE OF THE ROOM WAS LEAVING, AND I HAD NO IDEA WHY. OH, THEY CHANGED THE GATE? I STARTED FOLLOWING PEOPLE, AND THEN THEY WERE HUDDLED AROUND THE ESCALATOR. I WAS WONDERING WHY ARE WE HUDDLED AROUND THE ESCALATOR? THEN IT RAN AGAIN, AND I CAUGHT THE WORD "TORNADO." AND THEN RACHEL CAME ZOOMING BY, AND I COULD TELL SHE HAD NO IDEA. I GRABBED HER AND I TOLD HER WHAT WAS HAPPENING. BUT NEITHER ONE OF US HAD ANY HELP WHATSOEVER. NO IDEA. NO FLASHING LIGHTS OR ANYTHING. THAT COULD HAVE BEEN REALLY A DANGEROUS SITUATION. IT TURNED OUT TO BE FUNNY, BUT IT REALLY COULD HAVE BEEN DANGEROUS.

>> MITZI: NOW MIND YOU, I HEARD THE FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT 15 MINUTES BEFORE THEY START MOVING PEOPLE. THAT'S

HOW LONG IT WAS GOING ON, AND WE DIDN'T HEAR. IF YOU GO ON YOUTUBE, YOU SEE IN 2011 IT BEING DESTROYED BY TORNADO. A HUGE GLASS WALL THERE RIGHT WHERE THE GATES ARE. WATCH THAT YOUTUBE AND THEN YOU KNOW WHY WE HAVE TO ADVOCATE STRONGLY FOR VISUAL COMMUNICATION, WHATEVER THEY NEED. ESPECIALLY FOR THESE DISASTER WARNINGS. THIS ISN'T FUNNY ANYMORE. THIS PART ISN'T FUNNY. WE CAN LAUGH, BUT IT'S NOT FUNNY WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED.

ALSO I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU FOUND OUT IT WAS OVER. I WATCHED PEOPLE DRIFTING BACK. OF COURSE, PEOPLE WERE DRIFTING THE WHOLE TIME, DON'T KNOW IF THEY WERE UNCAUTIOUS IDIOTS. I FOUND OUT MY PLANE WAS BOARDING. I ALREADY MISSED IT? THERE IS NO REASON FOR IT TO NOT BE ON SCREENS, ESPECIALLY ON THE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE SCREENS; NOBODY'S GOING ANYWHERE. THEY CAN CERTAINLY USE THOSE SCREENS AND ALL THE OTHER SCREENS WITH ESPN ON IT AND FOX NEWS.

>> KEN: THAT STORY MIGHT BE VERY -- WRITING A LETTER TO -- WHO IS THE GENTLEMAN THAT CAME AND SPOKE TO US WITH THE CITY?

>> KAT: RICHARD RAY.

>> KEN: HE'S ON THE FCC. HE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THAT. HE COULD PROBABLY TAKE AND PUSH BECAUSE THAT'S A SAFETY ISSUE. AND HE COULD PROBABLY PUSH AND COULD ASK FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION FOR PEOPLE THAT ARE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING IN AIRPORTS.

>> LISA: WE DO HAVE TO WRAP IT UP A LITTLE BIT.

>> ALICIA: AIRPORTS ARE PLACES WHERE A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T SPEAK THE LANGUAGE, SO IT'S NOT JUST HARD-OF-HEARING AND DEAF PEOPLE, ALSO PEOPLE THAT WILL HAVE TROUBLE WITH ANNOUNCEMENTS. THEY NEED VISUAL CUES.

>> LISA: THE WHOLE UNIVERSAL DESIGN CONCEPT. A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT CAN HEAR CAN'T HEAR THE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

>> RACHEL: I WAS ON THE SAME FLIGHT AS ALICIA. I WAS HEARING THE BEEPS, THE EMERGENCY ALARM. BUT WHEN THE PERSON WAS TALKING, I DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING. I WAS WALKING TO MY GATE. OKAY, I DON'T SEE ANYBODY AROUND. FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON WHEN I GET THERE. HAPPY TO SEE ALICIA THERE. SHE HAD IT FIGURED OUT.

>> LISA: TRAVELING CAN BE VERY STRESSFUL FOR PEOPLE WITH A HEARING LOSS.

I DID WANT TO -- I KNOW YOU WERE HERE LAST MONTH, JENNA. WE LIKE TO HAVE THE NEW MEMBERS INTRODUCE THEMSELVES. SO MANY OF US WEREN'T HERE. WOULD YOU MIND INTRODUCING YOURSELF BRIEFLY?

>> JENNA: I AM JENNA OR JEN OR JENNIFER, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL ME. I AM HARD-OF-HEARING. I HAVE HAD A HEARING

LOSS FOR 10 YEARS. IT'S GENETIC. MY MOM HAS IT. MY SISTER HAS A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, AND I AM A COCHLEAR IMPLANT CANDIDATE.

I AM THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF MARKETING FOR AN ACCOUNTING FIRM HERE IN GLENDALE, ACTUALLY. SO FOR ME IT'S JUST DEALING WITH BUSINESS AND VERY DIFFICULT. I AM FORTUNATE – AND I WAS SAYING TO KEN – THAT MY BOSS, VERY COINCIDENTALLY, WAS BORN HEARING-IMPAIRED, AND HE'S FOUR YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME. WHEN I SAT DOWN FOR THE INTERVIEW, I THOUGHT "HOLY CRAP, THIS IS COOL!" I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.

I'M TRYING TO COME OUT OF THE CLOSET. I STILL HIDE MY HEARING LOSS IN BUSINESS, FOR THE MOST PART.

WHAT I WANTED TO SAY QUICKLY, AND MAKE THIS SUPER FAST BECAUSE I KNOW WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. SOMETHING I – I AM LOOKING FOR ADVOCACY, OBVIOUSLY. I THINK THAT ALL OF THESE ASSISTIVE DEVICES ARE INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE. I FIND MOST INSURANCES DO NOT COVER A LOT OF THIS STUFF. SO WE ARE OUT OF POCKET EVERY THREE TO FIVE YEARS IF WE HAVE HEARING AIDS.

BUT WHAT I DID WANT TO SAY QUICKLY, AND HAPPY TO SPEAK TO PEOPLE AFTER. WHAT I NOTICED WITH MY HEARING LOSS IS THAT I VERY STRANGELY COULD HEAR CERTAIN FREQUENCIES VERY WELL, TO THE POINT OF IT WAS LIKE SOMEBODY HANDED ME MY HEARING BACK. AND ONE OF THOSE THINGS WAS WHEN I GOT ON THE BIKE AT THE GYM. I NEVER LISTEN TO THE TV AT THE GYM. I NEVER HEAR TV. I THOUGHT I WOULD READ THE SUBTITLES. I PLUGGED IN MY EAR BUDS AND I HEARD EVERY SINGLE SOLITARY WORD. WHAT IS UP WITH THIS? SO I CALLED MY HUSBAND, "I AM LISTENING TO CNN. I CAN HEAR EVERY WORD." I STAYED ON THE BIKE FOR 2½ HOURS. LONG STORY SHORT, I STARTED TO SPEAK TO SOME ENGINEERS, AND I SAID SOMETHING TELLS ME, BECAUSE MY LEFT EAR IS DEAD, AND THAT'S WHERE I NEED MY COCHLEAR IMPLANT, BUT WHEN I HEAR WITH CERTAIN FREQUENCIES I CAN HEAR PERFECTLY. WHAT I FOUND OUT WAS -- AND I AM SORT OF IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS NOW AND HAPPY TO UPDATE PEOPLE. THERE IS A DEVICE I FOUND POCKET TALKER, USES A FREQUENCY ABOVE WHAT WE HEAR AND BELOW WHAT WE HEAR.

I NEED THE POCKET TALKER. HE WROTE ME BACK, SHOCKINGLY, THIS LONG EMAIL. HE SAID YOU ARE RIGHT. AND I SAID, I'M SORRY, BUT THIS IS LIKE I WENT TO THE ENGINEER AT UC IRVINE AND HE TESTED ME WITH MY HEARING AIDS OUT, AND I HEARD 0% OF MY WORDS AND 6% OF MY SENTENCES.

WITH MY POCKET TALKER I HEARD 85% SENTENCES AND 95% OF THE WORDS. THE GUY WAS LIKE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY ABOUT THIS. I SAID I AM TELLING YOU MY COCHLEA ISN'T DEAD, BUT I NEED TO HEAR AT A DIFFERENT FREQUENCY, AND THAT FREQUENCY DOESN'T EXIST IN HEARING AIDS.

I AM IN THE MIDDLE OF DEALING WITH THE CEO OF POCKET TALKER. HE SAID TELL ME WHAT YOU WOULD WANT. POCKET TALKER

IS REALLY CLUNKY. I NEED SOMETHING THAT GOES IN MY EARS. IT'S REALLY EXCITING. I DO BELIEVE – AND NOT FOR ALL, OBVIOUSLY, BUT I THINK FOR A LOT OF US THAT HAVE HEARING AIDS WE CAN HEAR AT CERTAIN FREQUENCIES. AND THAT DOESN'T EXIST IN THE WORLD WITH HEARING AIDS. ALL THAT'S DOING IS AMPLIFYING. HE WROTE ME THIS LONG EMAIL, TELLING ME ABOUT THE KILOHERTZ AND FREQUENCIES. I AM CURIOUS TO SEE IF OTHER PEOPLE CAN HEAR AS I DO WITH THIS DEVICE. I AM A COCHLEAR IMPLANT CANDIDATE. AND IF I CAN HEAR 95% OF THE WORDS IN WITH THIS DEVICE – POCKET TALKER IS \$125 BY THE WAY. I AM EXCITED. WORKING ON THAT. AND HAPPY TO KEEP YOU ALL UPDATED. DOESN'T APPLY TO EVERYBODY. FOR SOMEBODY LIKE ME, I AM NOT READY TO GET A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. SOME OF THIS TECHNOLOGY IS INTERESTING. BUT THIS TECHNOLOGY INTERESTS ME AND IT'S CHEAP.

>> MITZI: I USED THE POCKET TALKER FOR YEARS. MY FIRST HEARING AIDS DIDN'T ADDRESS THE REVERSE SLOPE. POCKET WALKER WORKED FOR ME BETTER THAN HEARING AIDS FOR A LONG TIME. SHE'S ON TO SOMETHING.

>> LIL: THIS IS SOMETHING NEW TO ME. WHAT IS A POCKET TALKER AND WHERE DO YOU GET IT?

>> JENNA. I HAVE IT WITH ME.

>> MITZI: I SELL THEM.

>> JENNA: YOU CAN BUY IT ON AMAZON.

>> MITZI: YOU ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW THIS, BECAUSE I TALKED TO THEM AT WILLIAM SOUND, BECAUSE I AM A DEALER. A NEW ONE COMING OUT VERY SOON, REDESIGNED. IT'S NOT OUT YET. YOU DON'T KNOW THIS. YOU DIDN'T HEAR IT.

>> LIL: SOMETHING YOU HOLD IN YOUR HAND IN ORDER TO HEAR. THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WHAT YOU JUST SHOWED ME.

>> JENNA: IT'S THIS. YOU PUT YOUR EAR BUDS INTO IT. IT'S A COOL DEVICE.

>> HILL: HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON? WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD OF THIS BEFORE?

>> LISA: WE HAVE TO WRAP THIS THING.

STAY AROUND AFTER THE MEETING AND TEST IT OUT.

ONE MEETING WE HAD WAS TECHNOLOGY, SHOW-AND-TELL.

PEOPLE BROUGHT IN THINGS THAT WORK FOR THEM. WE MAY DO THAT AGAIN.

DEFINITELY AFTER THE MEETING, TEST IT OUT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BRINGING THAT. I AM INTERESTED.

ANYTHING THAT'S CHEAP THAT WORK IS – I THINK ALL OF US ARE INTERESTED.

I DO WANT TO THANK JANE QUICKLY. WE KEPT HER LATE.

THANK YOU, JANE.

WE HAVE TO WRAP IT UP, I'M SORRY. WE ARE LATE.

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JUST REMEMBER NEXT MONTH IS THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT
AUDIOLOGIST FROM HOUSE.

SEPTEMBER, STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS. KEEP YOUR
EYE OUT ON THE YAHOO GROUP AND WE WILL HAVE MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT THAT.

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING. IF YOU WANT FOOD TAKE IT HOME.
THANK YOU.