Disability Lead is a network of people with disabilities who are using our power to create an equitable and inclusive society.

Vision
People with disabilities will lead with power and influence for full participation and equal opportunity.

Mission
Increase civic engagement and diverse leadership in the Chicago region by developing and building a network of leaders with disabilities.

Connections: Linking our Network to professional and civic opportunities, ensuring tables of power shape a more inclusive, just, and equitable society.

Network: More than 200 Fellows and Members have access to events, mentors, exclusive professional development opportunities, and more.

Institute: Emerging leaders explore leadership skills, disability identity, and leadership goals in our year-long program.

How we create an equitable and inclusive society.

1 Increase disability understanding
We educate around the power of people with disabilities.

2 Influence and activate change
We communicate the impact of leaders with disabilities; influence disability inclusion, and convene peers, partners and communities to reveal equitable and inclusive solutions.

3 Make our vision real
We develop leaders with disabilities and connect them to opportunities.
Our experiences, ideas and leadership as people with disabilities are powerful and vital to achieving equity.

In 2016, a few determined people frustrated with the absence of disabled people in leadership positions developed groundbreaking programs — the first of their kind in the nation — to bring greater disability inclusion to tables of power and influence in the Chicago region.

We pursue our work with a strong belief that creating a more equitable and inclusive society matters and is an obligation of everyone. Disability is a natural part of the human experience and exists in every facet of society including in Black and Brown, immigrant, LGBTQIA+, and Indigenous communities.

Support our work

There are many ways to get involved with Disability Lead. We are looking to engage with partners, investors and allies who believe that disability is critical to creating a more inclusive, just and equitable society. To learn more visit disabilitylead.org or email eblum@disabilitylead.org.

“The training of future leaders with disabilities is critically important to ensure our presence at tables where decisions are being made about us.” — Andrés Gallegos, Disability Lead Member and Board Member

200 (and growing)

Members reflect the diversity of disability, (inclusive of visible, invisible and acquired disabilities) and the Chicago region. 40% of Members are people of color.

100%

of Members serve in a civic capacity, from board service to volunteering in their local community.

1,000 (and growing)

Connections made for our Members to professional and civic advancements as well as speaking and other leadership opportunities. 80% of Members have made a significant professional or civic advancement since joining Disability Lead.

Disability Lead

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