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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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Hi, good morning. And good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our plenary on dismantling ablest immigration policies at our GCIR, binomial convenient 2022.

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This session, we'll be talking about

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a little bit of the history of ableism throughout the history of immigration policy, and also what's happening today in terms of helping to dismantle some of those policies, as well as you know, challenging the Immigrant Justice Movement to really think about intersectional identities and those with lived experiences living in like as immigrants or refugees with disabilities or those with disabilities, who are also immigrants and refugees.

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I'm very excited to be having this discussion today. It's

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admittedly fairly new for diesel. And so I really want to be able to dive on as deeply as we can and the 90 minutes that we have together. This session will be streaming. It's the only workshop that we're streaming from the convening. And as you can see, we also have remote participation from our parts of our panel. And so with that, I want to introduce our illustrious moderator, Sandy Ho. She's with the Borealis philanthropies disability inclusion fund who's appearing remotely

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And we're very excited to have her and our panelists today. And with that, I'll pass it to Sandy.

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Thank you, Ivy. And welcome.

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Morning. Good afternoon that to everybody. And thank you so much for joining us in this conversation, dismantling it was policies and immigration,

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with my two co conspirators in that field as an ice entity and Nike, whose work in Disability Justice, immigration and refugee advocacy really have both been informative and transformative in my own understanding as both a community organizer and now as a resource mobilizer. But before we get to our discussion today, I do want to begin by giving an image description of myself. So my name is Sandy ho i use she her pronouns in joining remotely today from the unseeded and Massachusetts, Pottekkatt people. I am an Asian American woman with a short, wavy dark hair and wearing round quarter shell glasses and a bright blue and white shirt.

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So when thinking about creating our conversation, and when this opportunity came about,

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really interested in thinking about, okay, how do we move beyond just talking about disability justice? I'll share that coming from an activist background. I'm an activist because I am impatient.

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And I think that's that's a

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sense that many of us can probably resonate with. And now as a resource mobilizer in the sector, who is a part of a community of like minded funders and our

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collective impatience and begging for a more just and actually inclusive and equitable world can and must do more than just talking

must do more than just talking.

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So that being said, I do want to begin by welcoming, again, all of you to the space and our conversation. So whether you are already somewhat familiar, or you are arriving newly to disability justice, into our shared time and space together, guided by the principles of disability justice. And so this way of showing up remotely in person together in this room, is I invite all of us is our to own and Bill, however resonates with our body mind. And I do want to give a shout out to our remote audience members as well.

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So, that being said, I want to take a moment to acknowledge too that for some of you in the room, this might be the first conference and travel experience in a while. And so I wanted to thank the organizers of Kieser for their thoughtfulness and flexibility in creating this convening.

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And I also encourage folks to take care of and be attuned to their body mind in order to be more present. And so if that means pacing, getting up and moving, do that, does that mean stretching, go for it reach for the sky, if it means figuring moving during, I welcome and encourage all of this. Because I think too often and particularly in social justice spaces, we come to these meetings in conversation with our fullest self. But then the design of the environment itself that expects us to be these 2d, flat or all beings rather than the complex human and humanity filled. It's not old people that we all actually are.

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So if you're unfamiliar with disability justice principles, I encourage you to do some homework, right we in the sector, we like it when under do their homework and learning about disability justice as it is situated across movements, whether it's trans liberation, reproductive justice, I'm injustice.

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Because here's the thing.

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You don't need to be disabled, to experience ableism you don't need to be a disabled activists. No one cares about disability.

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But if you are someone who thinks of themselves and their work, and the organizations that you represent as movement align, as Justice Alliance, know that the way you are already moving resources is already having an outcome brand new on disabled.

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So you might not be calling it Disability Justice,

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or disability inclusion, but it is already happening and has been happening.

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So while disability justice exists as a framework, combining it with that spirit of impatience and activism, and as some of us might think of ourselves as liberators of the coin in queue movement spaces. I also encourage

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Excel came body at principles as a co conspirator in all movement work.

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So, now I'd like to provide an overview of the structure of our engagement together.

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The first part will be a discussion on the tools and frameworks are involved in innovation policy. The second portion will delve into how some of those golden framework

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are also a container for the tension that disability justice can lift up.

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And then finally, what are some of the actions that funders can move on that support and expand the way resources are accessed at the intersection of disability justice and immigration and refugees.

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So we'll be taking also a two minute break after our discussion so that our audience, both remote and in person can absorb and consider the questions they have for books as a

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so let's get right into it. I'd like to first begin by asking as I can here to produce themselves

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name pronouns with any and images spoken and in your introduction to hear how you are in connection.

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Thank you, Sandy. Hi, everyone. My name is Aza Yoshi, they pronouns I am a black femme presenting person, I'm wearing a gold headscarf, and big silver hoop earrings and a white blouse. I am so honored and humbled to be in shared space with Dear comrades and friends to be here with so many people who share this commitment to justice. And I am a Senior Policy Manager at an organization called the liberation in a generation. We are a movement support organization. And our goal is to dismantle what we call the oppression economy, and to build in its stead a liberation economy that ensures that all people who experience marginalization may finally live free of the fear of state repression, to have our needs met, to be valued in all of our complexity, and to build the kinds of social systems and economic arrangements that sustain those kinds of liberatory community formations. We do that through various ways. We do it through resourcing and supporting grassroots formations, providing technical support trainings. We do that through policy and research. And we engage with partners, whether in kind of the policy space and advocacy space and at the grassroots level and ensure that we are all in community with one another and committed to centering those who are most directly affected and following their leadership. On a personal note, the way that I connect to this issue is my lived experience. I am the child of Sudanese migrants. I live in Northern Virginia the unseeded lands of the metaphoric people. I am multiple the disabled and chronically ill. And we are gathered here amid a mass disabling and mass death event. We have some 1.2 million more people that we know of who are disabled this year than we had last year in the United States. It is the policies of what Ruth Wilson Gilmore and abolitionist geographer describes as organized abandonment. It is the policies that choices that have been made to abandon those of us whose value is questioned, undermined and not seen or held. And that is what shaped my experiences growing up. It is why my family lived and navigated economic precarity. It is what thrust me into this space of organizing of activism of agitating because without it without what my community came together to do, I would not have had access to the resources needed to simply live to survive. And so that is what brings me into this work. That and a deep commitment and a deep belief in our ability to enact real social transformation and to build something truly liberatory and so that is a little bit about me, and I'm sure we'll get more into some of those pieces but I'll pass it over to cozzia to introduce yourself. Thank you so much as a and Sandy. My name is cozzia Naki and I use she her pronouns. I am an Indian and Muslim American woman and I have medium brown skin. Today I have shoulder length curly dark hair, and I'm wearing a blue and black

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on top with a caller, and I am the creator and host of the podcast down to the struts about disability design and intersectionality. I'm also a lawyer I began my career representing immigrant women and girls who survived domestic violence both in their home countries and here in the United States. And I later ran, implemented and designed National Legal Services programs that served unaccompanied immigrant children and other immigrants facing deportation at the Vera Institute of Justice and Equal Justice Works, and on a on a. I'm also currently a guest lecturer at CUNY Law School's immigrant and non Citizen Rights Clinic where I guest lecture on the intersection of disability and immigration. I also recently spoke at a wonderful conference that I wanted to flag, the new coalition. It's called the mobilities conference, it was the inaugural event. It's a collaboration between Loyola law schools, quello Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation, the Barnard human rights program and IRAP. And is wonderful beginning to a bigger conversation about this work, which is very similar to what's happening here today. On a personal note, I come to this work, because I am a disabled, I was disabled, I am disabled, I am blind, and I was an immigration attorney for a number of years. And this work has really brought together to areas that I care deeply about. I also am the daughter of Indian Muslim immigrants. My family was divided by partition between India and Pakistan, which is one of the bloodiest migrations in our history and human history. And so this this idea of disablement through migration, and the separation of families is very close to my heart. And I'm, I'm so honored to be in community with all of you and I thank Sandy and Aza and also Sebastian Margaret, who was not able to be with us, but who was instrumental in conceiving this panel. And so I'm really I'm really looking forward to the conversation. And I'm going to turn it back to Sandy.

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Thank you both.

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So the first question I have is one of the three lines and experiences of marginalization of abandonment that as I was speaking to, that is enforced, legislated, and then contribute to disability, immigration and migration is poverty. And I heard both of you touching upon that in your introduction. So I'd like to begin by asking Jada, one of the principles of the disability justice framework is this idea of anti capitalist politics.

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But how do you situate this principle in the context of the oppressive forces that have shaped the US and global economy and the ways

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that immigrants with disabilities experienced marginalization?

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I love that question. Thank you, Sandy. Um, so to begin with, and bear with me, I think the place to start is to do a bit of historical grounding and some level setting, right. So I think one disability itself as a term can sometimes be confusing, because disability is actually an extremely complex and very multifaceted

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identity. It is a social coalitional identity. It is a political and politicized identity. And it is deeply entangled with race, with gender, and with class. And so to really understand why one of the 10 central tenets of disability justice is a commitment to an anti capitalist politic, we have to actually understand how the various structures of oppression, how racism ableism and this economic extraction and exploitation that is inherent to capitalism, work together, right. So within the context of the US, in particular, what we see in terms of how disability is understood and categorized, right, you have legal definitions establishing who is and is not disabled, and it changes over time. The state has, at times very restrictive definitions of what constitutes disability. For example, when it comes to benefits determinations, the definition is very, very narrow because the state is not interested in providing benefits and resources to just everybody so it creates narrow definitions of disability, but in other contexts, it's more expensive but

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One of the interesting and important historical through lines to understand is that the way that disability is understood in this country is always entangled with labor. The story of race in the United States is the story of labor. The story of disability in this country is the story of labor. We have been in this country a slave economy longer than we have not. Okay, and so the actual project of slavery of chattel slavery, the actual project of the economic arrangements we have today was one that was focused on maximizing labor output at the cheapest possible costs. And if we understand ableism, to be a system that ranks and categorizes bodies and minds as either normative or deviant, as either valuable, or a drain, as either worthy of protection and support or disposable, then you understand that ableism is necessarily a racist system, and that racism is necessarily an ableist structure, and that both of these structures of oppression exist to sustain what we call liberation and degeneration and oppression economy, one that creates value through extraction and exploitation. And this is why nothing short of complete social transformation will actually make Disability Justice and collective liberation a reality. So if we understand then how these systems not only interact but depend upon one another, then we can really begin to contend with the ways that our immigration system perpetuates these very dynamics, we begin to understand why, for example, much of the way that immigration law and much of the way that our systems determine how and who can get into this country, who can obtain citizenship, who can access what resources is very much tied to which categories of people can produce

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it they cannot produce, then they are categorized as people who will be charges of the state. And the subjects there is not particularly subtle, it is to say that if you are not going to be capable of a certain level of labour, output and production and contribute to the economy, then you do not carry the same value. You are someone who needs to be managed either through carceral forms of social control. So

those are people who are vulnerable to forms of institutionalization or you are deported or you are not let into the country to begin with, right. But the entire kind of set of systems and legal structures is tying one's value to their labor output. That is why our health insurance system is one that is tied to people's wage labor output. It is why the fact that if you do not have work, you are not guaranteed access to something as basically life sustaining as healthcare. It is a system of rationing access to resources that are life sustaining. It is a system of organized abandonment, that is what creates these forms of social stratification. And that is what is reified and encoded, encoded within our immigration systems, pulling together the forms of oppression and racism and anti blackness specifically in ableism. And in capitalism, to continue to perpetuate the concentration of wealth and power, and ever fewer hands.

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And this is cozzia. I would I would just add to piggyback on that, that our immigration system not only perpetuates everything that as I just described, it has also created the conceptualization of disability I'd like to recommend a book that was published last year by Jay Timothy dommage is called disabled upon arrival, and it describes how ports of entry like Ellis Island and others he speaks of in Canada as well did the same thing actually employed immigration policies and the concept of public charge to define disabled bodies to create racism and disablement

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By deeming people worthy or unworthy simply by a by looking upon them and determining their alienage. So, so this is very much also ingrained in the way in which our immigration system was developed, it was developed upon the foundations of eugenics and ableism.

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Thank you both again for for that offering and for providing that, undergirding peripheral understanding, continuing on that and building upon that. So the container that we are framing this discussion together is Disability Justice. And so I'd like to open it up to both of you to respond to this next question, which is why our Disability Justice and abolition important tool for political analysis in the way that we understand and aggressed systems of oppression and migration work and both provided that response already. But we're also interested in hearing from like one or two examples of how this has shown up and community

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movement leaders

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this is Aza I'll go first and then pass the tickets. Yeah. So I think in terms of the the connections, and really the demands of of disability justice to apply an abolitionist politic and praxis. I think it's

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one of the places the entry points for me and understanding what abolition is calling for us is geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore's refrain, that abolition is about presence, not absence, right? Abolition is a positive project. It is about building the systems and structures and sustaining the kinds of social relations that make carcerality that make prisons and policing that make these forms of violence obsolete. Right. So it is not just about imagining that we're tearing down prison walls, it is about what are the kinds of social relations, what are the kinds of resources, life affirming and life sustaining resources that we can guarantee to everybody such that systems of policing and incarceration and state violence, these death making institutions are not just obsolete, they are unthinkable. We just can't imagine ever needing to rely on such forms of violence to address social needs. And if that is our understanding, one of the other things that she offers is that put simply, word life is precious, life is precious. So if we can build systems that value our body minds as they are completely detangled, from whatever our perceptions are of their their potential for economic output, then we can make liberation possible. And so within this context, what that means to me is both in terms of the kinds of the obvious connections that are drawn with abolition, immigration, justice and Disability Justice, looking at the forms of incarceration, and the kind of border violence and the violence of our immigration enforcement in this country. And those are all things that we must contend with the particular ways disabled people are marginalized within those spaces, the particular ways that they are more vulnerable to deportation to policing, violence and all of its forms. And also, I would call upon us to think about how expensive abolition needs to be. And what I mean by that is, the reach of carceral systems goes well beyond just the obvious policing and institutionalizing of people. carceral systems also exists in our logics, in how we interact with one another in how normalized extremely intrusive forms of surveillance are in our workplaces and schools, in the ways that we punish people, if they make mistakes in their benefits, applications processes, the numerous pathways that exist toward criminalizing and pathologizing as tools of social control the sea uses, and because of all of the ways that we see those carceral logics infused in all of our social arrangements and institutional arrangements, and then abolition and Disability Justice necessary

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Are we mean, all of them need to be transformed. And if we want to create a world where life is precious, then that means we must be as concerned with the ways that the state is stealing people's lives and engaged in violence that kills people. As much as we are also concerned with the indirect ways that the state condemns us to premature death by withholding those resources and forms of support we need to.

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And the immigration system has exists at this nexus, where it is engaged in all of this forms of violence, but often in ways that are less visible and less apparent to the public. And for disabled people in particular, we navigate this

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this form of violence in which our lives and what we navigate are very invisible. And so part of what what we miss do is to make visible the ways that ableism has compounded the forms of violence in

the forms of marginalization and oppression that we experience on the daily. Yeah, I want to take this as could see, I want to take what as I said, and kind of provide some applications of that. So I want to talk about four air specific areas of the immigration system and process and I want to get to two things that as I lifted up, how these processes perpetuate the utter invisibility of disabled people, which which is ironic given that the system was designed specifically to exclude and oppress them, but yet they are invisible inside of it in the way it operates in the in our modern era. And then secondly, the insufficiency of our Disability Rights frameworks as they currently exist. So I'll start with kind of a big bucket of apprehension, detention and enforcement. So in this area, we there is my my current research has revealed there is very little data that is collected about disabled people in detention in apprehension in, in, in the enforcement process. So we don't know we don't have a scope on this issue and what the experiences are of disabled people inside of these processes.

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And so they're they're utterly invisible. And then I'd like to lift up an example of a more recent impact litigation case, free hotly ice, which was the case brought under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, alleging significant violations in terms of the provision of reasonable accommodations and access to basic health care in detention, ICE detention facilities. This is a great example of that cases for up for review on bunk before the Ninth Circuit, the panel remanded and basically the injunction remains in place. However, that case is very precarious. And it it really lifts up this idea that our disability civil rights laws as they exist, are not sufficient to achieve carceral abolition in this context. And, you know, in addition to all of those things, our immigration system itself, detention apprehension enforcement, disabled people, I was just reading an article that someone sent to me recently about horrific injuries that people experience while trying to climb our border walls, significant harms that people experience in our detention facilities, issues like forced sterilization, lack of care for people with mental health disabilities, unbelievably high suicide rates. Our system itself is disabling bodies, and also continuing this, especially with regards to sterilization, continuing this project of eugenics that the system was originally designed to achieve. The other areas I wanted to talk about our immigration benefits with, as I mentioned, a great example of where intersectionality is so key is in DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that President Obama implemented in starting in 2012. You know, the idea of achieving some sort of pre immigrant immigration protection for young young immigrants and you know, mostly benefiting immigrants of color was premised upon achieving employment and attaining higher education. And we know this did not consider the fact that most disabled immigrants and disabled people in the United States in general

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experienced significant exclusion and discrimination when it comes to accessing both employment and higher education. So that is where a Disability Justice intersectional framework would have assisted in designing a policy that was inclusive and that provided protection to all including disabled people. Another area is in

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Gratation court once again, invisibility, there is EOIR, the agency within Department of Justice, that impulse that runs our immigration courts does not collect systematic data about disabled people. And the Franco V. Gonzalez case, which provided access to counsel for immigrants with mental health

disabilities in removal proceedings was a positive step forward, but again, represents the limitations of our disability rights laws and achieving liberation. For disabled immigrants. Let's didn't address the many needs of immigrants with physical disabilities in immigration court, and isn't has not been fully sufficient in ensuring that people can with mental health disabilities can be liberated from detention,

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have custody Redeterminations and other factors. So that's another area. And finally, I would like to mention

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our immigration legal advocacy infrastructure. And I want to lift up two things here, which I think well as and I will come back to later. One is designing structures of advocacy, that I recognize that agency and the power of disabled people we don't really track outcomes for,

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or the services that are provided to disabled immigrants specifically. So again, they are invisible, and we don't structure our advocacy in a way that lifts lifts up these communities and gives them agency. And then secondly, we need to create a leadership pipeline and opportunities for disabled immigrants to become immigration advocates in an environment that is inclusive, non oppressive, and that provides access in a way that is meaningful.

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Thank you. Thank you. And I think that what you all, what you both just spoke to is the fact that your existing records and systems are not working, and the folks who are a part of moving resources into this work. You're not be aware of the nuances, but also the political analysis that you both just presented there. Clearly. I do want to just take a moment to read one of the comments that just came through in the chat. This person said, wow, ableism in the design of DACA. Thanks for that reality check. This panel is giving this person so much to think about at a personal and organizational level. So

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wanting to share that on it before we move on to the next part of our discussion, which is to continue this new understanding of what it is that the tension? What are the tensions that exist, which both have just alluded to? And how can we shift power in these moments in these tensions? So my next question is how do you or policies and Immigrant Movement contribute to the anti blackness and its connections specifically to eugenic? And how can abolition help shift power perspective and outcomes in this work towards actualizing? collective liberation?

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This is outside. Thank you for that question, Sandy i. So I'll begin by uplifting a framework that we use at liberation in a generation and the name of the framework It was recently coined is black women best, it is actually an economic framework that was coined by a black woman economist named Janelle Jones, who was observing something that we see across movements, which is in the ways that we understand how our economic systems are arranged. All of the ways that we examine and try and assess the health of the economy tend to focus on just the aggregate or just how is everyone generally doing. And by failing to specifically focus on those who are most marginalized by failing to specifically identify and address the ways that black women are experiencing this economy. We are continually pushing policies that don't ever actually meet their needs, and in so doing completely invisible lysing their experiences of oppression and marginalization. And one of the things extraordinary about this framework is that that contention can really apply to any issue area that anyone here will ever touch. And it caused for something really simple. It states that if we center our work on those who experience the most intense forms of marginalization, and we center them both in making sure we are following their lead that the processes that we use to arrive at the kinds of interventions and organizing formation

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is an actions that they are shaping that process, that the outcomes are assessed in terms of whether or not they achieve what we want them to by their impact on those communities, then we will be able to shape interventions that will actually transform conditions, right. And in the one of the things that we have done so we published a report that applies this framework across various issues, including how it interfaces with disability justice. And one of the things that I reflected on is that

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it is often raised, why focus specifically on anti blackness, why is anti blackness named and why not just keep it to racism generally. And the reason why anti blackness needs to be named specifically is because one, to understand the solutions, we have to understand the origins of the problem. And you cannot understand that without understanding the the project of racialization in this country is one that is specifically anti black, because it is rooted in and designed to have supported, codified and legitimize chattel slavery. And then, after the abolition of slavery, to continue to find ways to maintain this labor supply, and to maintain the forms of extraction needed to keep power and wealth concentrated at the top. And one of the reflections that I hold to is that when we send her black people, when we send her black women, black disabled folks, what we are doing is not saying that the experiences of oppression and marginalization faced by other people don't matter. What we are saying is that when we focus on them, because the violence that we've faced, the marginalization and oppression that we navigate is so rationalized, normalized, and routinized in this country, that if we can finally get to the place where that violence is unacceptable and unthinkable, and that we're able to do well, then every other marginalized community will necessarily also be free. That is what the Combahee collective named back in 1971, when they first gathered, that gathering of black women named specifically, that the freedom of black women in this country would necessitate the freedom of every other marginalized person. And so when I call for us to be very specific in naming anti blackness, it is because failing to do so will not actually bring about collective liberation, it will bring advancement for some groups at the expense of others. And one of the key things to understand about the dangers of that is the way the state creates conditions which pit communities against each other. And this is why being intersectional is necessary. It tries to portray immigration as an issue that doesn't affect black people, as though Black migrants don't exist, as though Black

people are not more likely to be deported, more likely to face violence in detention, more likely to lack the access to resources and supports to navigate the system of violence. Now imagine how compounded that is when it is black disabled people without access to those resources. Immigration is a black issue. And we know this, I mean, shout out to the folks here from Black Alliance for Just Immigration and all those who have been mobilizing and advocating for us to see that. And so part of the project of abolition is understanding that we cannot usher in that transformation. We cannot do the positive part of abolition and build an liberation economy. Nor can we successfully dismantle the structures unless we are able to name anti blackness, which is its root, which is why we have the systems as they exist today. And which is why we need to dismantle that in order to also dismantle ableism and other forms of oppression.

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I don't have much to add, I think as a has really set it all in on this topic. But the two things I also wanting to lift up that just elevate further what as has laid out here is that in addition to the immigration movement,

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not centering anti blackness. This has also been true in the history of the disability rights movement, which is to say that the rights framework that was developed in you know, starting in the 50s 60s and 70s focused on disabled veterans focused on

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unemployment focused on issues that were not at the center of the oppression of black people and did not incorporate the voices of black people. And so making sure that the disabled black voice is at the center of immigration is another example of picking up the gaps that the disability rights movement left out because it did not send her anti blackness. So I think that is something that is really, really critical to lift up here.

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Thank you, both of you. And I think you what

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I'm taking away from the comments that are being shared is that the policies and records that exist currently also do so in part because

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they are immediately, in some ways, have the outcomes and outputs that can be measured, that can be categorized that can be, quote, unquote, valued. And benchmarks can then be built from this. And

what we've just heard from what you've heard is the ways that he then reify and contribute back to the economy of oppression of anti blackness of ableism. And so the next question I have is, and he did already touch upon this a little bit earlier, but

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I mean, from your your background as an attorney, and you know, in your earlier comments about knowledge in the right base framework is not enough. How might erase be approach and practitioners be English solidarity or more closely aligned with disability justice to support disabled immigrants and refugees? That's a great question, Sandy. So I want to here is where I think the Disability Justice Movement and disability justice principles can further buttress and lift up and help us to use the tools that we have the disability civil rights tools as lawyers and advocates, to dismantle to decarceration. And to liberate disabled immigrants in particular, I wanted to sort of provide you all with some concrete applications of this. And in doing so, I want to lift up four of the 10 principles of disability justice in particular. So those include anti capitalism, interdependence, leadership by the most impacted and intersectionality. So I'll start with anti capitalism. In order to apply anti capitalism in our immigration advocacy, we need to divest our immigration system of this capitalistic concept of the value of bodies based upon their labor, which started with, you know, the Immigration Act of 1882, which included Chinese exclusion and the creation of a concept of public charge, which still exists today. So and public charge, why should a body of migration across our border be dependent upon their ability to participate in wage labor that is a way in which we can use our advocacy to dismantle and advance anti capitalism. Second, interdependence, we are interdependent with immigrants, including disabled immigrants, immigrants of color, they pick our food, they work in our restaurants, they are inherently a part of our communities, in myriad ways I haven't even mentioned. And so we must approach our advocacy and our theories of change. With this understanding of this interdependence that we have with immigrant communities and disabled immigrant communities in particular, leadership by the most impacted, I touched upon this earlier, we need to invest in our community, our organizations that are led by and for disabled immigrants, need to make sure that disabled immigrants have a seat at every single table that involves issues that impact their lives. And we need to create a leadership pipeline to give power to those who are most affected and most stand most harm from these systems.

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And finally, intersectionality, and we've talked a lot about this and I just want to go back to the DACA example, approaching DACA in a completely different way, considering the intersectional needs and oppression of disabled people of color. And black disabled people in particular, is the way to get to the best policy that is the most protective that is

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The more liberal Tory that has the most

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brings us closest to decarceration and to abolition. So those are just some examples of how we can use the tools in our toolbox. better and more effectively, if we think about these principles of

disability justice and apply them in everything that we did.

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This is as a when one thing I also want to pull out from what Cassia just mentioned, too, is I often reflect on the inherent absurdity of some of the ways that we think about accommodating people who are in detention and ensuring that they have access to care within a structure and system that is inherently violent, and therefore disabling. So I,

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I have in reflecting on this come to realize that inherent in that is actually a tool for advancing and accelerating decarceration. Right. So this notion that we have to make sure people have access to mental health care while they are in detention is framing the possibility that you can hold someone in a cage and that somehow that's can still be therapeutic, that you can provide some sort of care or something therapeutic to a person you are holding in a cage. And instead of kind of just avoiding taking on and grappling with that absurdity, we should be naming that at every opportunity, because the logical end of that is, these are systems that are disabling and violent. And so there's no way to render care within that the only solution is to not put people in cages. And so I think about both in terms of I think that pulls out exactly what you're naming about some of the limitations of the Disability Rights Framework, which seeks to operate within the laws and systems that we have to get people access to resources and to shift their conditions. And Disability Justice emerging as a point of departure that was named and built on by black and brown, queer disabled folks who recognize that the laws and the systems that we have today are not in the know themselves capable of delivering for those of us who are most marginalized. And so I, I invite us to deal with and take on those complexities, because that is actually the place where through struggle, we can find new and innovative ways to build more laboratory systems and to transform how we relate to and with one another. Yeah, and I had just to kind of follow up to that as well, I think, I mean, that is essentially like we have to we use this term intersectionality. So much now it's become so common in our parlance. But this is what ASA has just said is the root of what Kimberly Crenshaw meant in coining this term, which is you we have to re examine critically, the legal frameworks upon which these systems were built, and understand how they cannot fully address the particular harms that exist when you hold multiple of these identities when you're, you're a woman, or female identifying and of color and disabled and an immigrant. And so if we look at our legal system through this lens, we start to see the croc of the cracks and the fissures in it, and we start to and then we can also start to see a path forward to change the systems and even our existing laws. As I gave a great example of people with mental health disabilities in, in detention, there is a Supreme Court case, the Olmstead case that can be used the spirit of that case, these people shouldn't be in a community based setting, they should not be in a carceral setting. And there is Supreme Court precedent that tells us so, so yielding those tools, you know, you know, within the framework of disability justice, can put us closer to a path of collective liberal liberation.

54:25

Thank you. And before we move on to the next question, I want to add to what he was just commenting on about me, the Olmstead decision was in 1999. And two decades later, more than two decades later, we're still talking about community integration as part of collective liberation.

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And so I think, you know, we're segwaying right into or a final portion of this discussion, which is some of the ways

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in which folks in the sector can move resources, and be in solidarity with the leaders. So that being said, Now, I open it up to both of you. But how might and how can funders incorporate just we get the framework into their grant making and strategy and ways that they are engaging with and reaching out to immigrants and refugees who are disabled.

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So I have a list for you all I came prepared.

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And that list is also available in the slide deck that was circulated, I did not use the slide deck, I didn't want it to be distracting in this conversation with Sandy and Aza but I hope that you can refer to it as a reference. But I will enumerate the list that I came prepared with and I would like as a to contribute as well. But

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so the first is to support organizations built by and for disabled immigrants, as I mentioned earlier.

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Very importantly, support immigration organizations to provide and build access and inclusion in a sustainable manner, manner for their staff, create opportunities for leadership by disabled immigrants in this work. As I mentioned, I am a dissident, I was a disabled immigrant immigration lawyer in this space. And we have a lot further to go to ensure sustainability care, and all the principles that we apply in our advocacy we apply inwardly. And as philanthropic institutions, you all have a huge role to play in making that demand of these organizations.

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And we also want to build the capacity of immigration organizations to incorporate a lot of the things that we just talked about in the advocacy itself, applying disability rights, applying Disability Justice frameworks, thinking about intersectionality, in their advocacy, whether that is direct service, impact

litigation, or policy advocacy at a national level, and you know, I have and making myself absolutely available to provide those trainings, I've been doing that of late and so I offer myself up as a resource in that regard.

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And then finally, fund research. As I mentioned earlier, disabled immigrants are invisible in a system that was inherently designed to exclude them, we need to invest in research, and use data to help us understand the scope of this problem, so we can engage in a process of dismantling it. So those are just some examples of things that this sector can do to to further disability justice, and collected liberation in our immigration system. And I want to turn it over the final word on this. Thank you. Unsurprisingly, everything that I could see it just named spot on, which is why I was like, you take this one first.

58:16

There's one one of the the examples that you named is one I want to spend a little bit more time on.

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And I want to shout out a dear friend and comrade of mine DESA Cosmo, who leads the Detroit disability power organization, and she tells me, every time we talk, how we do the work, is the work. And that means quite simply, that in determining how to shift resources in ways that will center those who are most marginalized and most affected, and that will be aligned with the key Disability Justice principle of sustainability, of doing the work in ways that honor and affirm the needs of our body minds and create systems of care so that people can show up as themselves. That to do so we must also have organizations that are committed to treating their workers in ways that allow them to have the same sets of access and supports that we're fighting for immigrant communities to have on the outside, right. The people who are in these formations and in these organizations, we are from the communities that we are trying to reach the support and help. And yet something that often happens within nonprofit organizations within smaller groups is that the workers are being paid low wages are working extraordinary numbers of hours each week, are expected to do so.

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Because the mission is really important, and to accept poverty wages and 80 hour work weeks as though that is somehow

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at all compatible with Disability Justice, it's not. It's not my body mind cannot sustain 80 hours of work a week. Our communities, we disabled people are twice as likely as the general population to live in poverty. So paying people poverty wages is not consistent with the disability justice or any justice framework. And I name this because in determining how we show up and how we resource movement spaces, those are questions we need to be asking because there is no universe in which a project

whose kind of external contributions to the movement are worth sacrificing the lives of its workers, if the processes and the systems in place internally are extractive and oppressive than anything produced by that project, by that formation by that organization is suspect, it is suspect. So one of the things I call upon us to do is to be really thoughtful about how we ensure incentivize and shift resources in ways that equip organizations to actually apply internally the liberatory principles of disability justice, so that we can actually make it a reality externally to that means that when we determine who isn't isn't eligible for things, we are asking, how are your workers involved? Are they unionized? Do you support that? Who is represented? Do you have black disabled immigrants at all levels of that organization at all levels of that formation? Are the communities that you seek to represent? How are you practicing accountability? How are you accountable to them? And if those questions aren't bringing the right answers, right, it's like, oh, we don't really engage our workers that way, or like they're fine being paid really low wages are working these extra hours, that should bring us pause. If we can engage with each other and in our movement spaces, in ways that are affirming and liberatory, how can we possibly get to the place where we can transform entire social institutions and formations and bring about the kind of transformation we've been talking about here? Abolition is a praxis and that means it needs to be internally applied to. So how we do the work is the work is the thing that I would ask each of you to continue to continue to say to yourselves as you're determining what it looks like to allocate resources in ways that blaze a path towards collective liberation.

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Honestly,

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I mean, I hope people are frantically in the room, were writing down everything that is being lifted up, that has been said here.

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And, you know, I think that and plus one as IQ, the shout out of DESA. No, I know, we, as

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in the sector, we often like to think of ourselves as mobilizing resources and expanding capacity and no implementing or embedding strategy, but where and how those algae are originated, how they were developed and created.

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Often come like after the fact, creating relationships with folks in the community, both are already doing this work. And so that's one of the first things that I did in the fall of reaching out to our grantee partners and saying, what is his body of work, and help me understand where it is that we are trying

to get to? Because as organizers as funders, I've always thought of our roles, and not folks who are determining the finish line for a movement, but aren't we hoping to whisk it off and move it in ways that are heading

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the digression and the priorities of our communities?

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So the last question that I have

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is, some folks in in this conversation were listening in may already be familiar with Disability Justice and the other or not. And then one of the most common questions that the three of us often get in our work is

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No, I don't know where to begin.

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So the question to both of you is, know what are some suggestions that you have provided in this community who, you know, are already well experienced and well versed?

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in that race based practice, but really have not yet explored just disability justice,

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and are maybe doing counting by

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a place to start.

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This is as I can begin briefly, and then I'll let concea add. So the very, very first place that I sent anyone to who wants to figure out what what is Disability Justice, and what does this mean, for me is Sins Invalid. That is the formation that incubates and is made up of the people who are really the principal architects of this framework, go to sins and ballads website, the 10 principles of disability justice are named there with real examples of what that looks like an application, they have now published two editions of their kind of text that is written excessively in plain language with all kinds of applications across movement spaces, it's called skin, teeth and bone. And the second edition is out, I highly, highly recommend engaging that text that should be really the grounding text for for figuring out where to begin. And beyond that, there are I mean, so many people that I learned from constantly I've had the honor and privilege of organizing with, I just want to lift up a few examples of this formations. I want to lift up the name of Talia Lewis TL. And the organization that to has led called heard helping educate and advanced the rights of deaf communities so heard is the acronym and heard focuses on supporting disabled folks and deaf disabled folks who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated. And they've just generated such tremendous resources on carceral, abolition and disability justice. So it is a wonderful beginning resource and repository. And they are constantly looking for folks to support to invest in and resource their work. And I also want to lift up people's hub, which is a phenomenal kind of phenomenon, exactly what it sounds like people's hub is a place where people get to come together and be in struggle with each other a place of shared learning and practice, but also a place where disabled organizers get to come together to exchange best practices to be ourselves to rest to learn from one another. They offer all kinds of resources on how to create accessible hybrid spaces for organizing on tools for and technical assistance for smaller movement formations that are trying to navigate what it looks like to interface with one another in a pandemic, where many of us are at really increased risk. So those are just a few of many examples. And I will also be sharing some more and follow up resources. There are so many groups doing really phenomenal things. But those are a few minutes left here. Yeah, thanks for that. As an I would add to that I I'm I'm a big reader. And I feel like grounding myself in history is really important. So there's two pieces of work that I want to lift up in terms of specifically on this intersection between disability and immigration. So the first I mentioned earlier, J Timothy dommage, disabled upon arrival, the other is Douglas C Baynton defectives in the land, and I can provide the links to all of this in follow up resources, I also really want to lift up the work of justice shorter, we just got to make sure we know who works on Disaster Resilience at the National Disability Rights Network, who is a phenomenal and powerful voice on these issues as well. And then I also wanted to point folks somewhat selfishly to a podcast episode that I did, and not so much for the podcast episode for the two people in it. So it was the first episode of my second season called law policy and disabled immigrants featuring Catherine Perez, who was the director of the cuello Center for Disability Law Policy and Innovation that I mentioned earlier. And Rukhsana Mousavian, who is the co founder of Pangea legal services in San Francisco and is doing, there's some great collaborative coalitional work going on in California at this intersection of disability and immigration. So those are just a few and I can share others and follow up.

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Thank you. So I want to create space for pause and to support my body access in this moment. So we're not going to shift into a two minute break before we get into the q&a portion. But I believe that there are what he makes around to focus in

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Room this is a time to absorb the incredible amount of awkward that have been shared and also to

room, this is a time to absorb the incredible amount of awkward that have been shared and also to the books online please submit any questions you have into the q&a?

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Okay, so as folks are getting we settled

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and have done some thinking and you're watching on here, I like to open up to the q&a.

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I want to IV for support for the q&a in the room.

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I'm happy to begin with one of the questions that has come through the doodle chat. So this is where as

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the person asked, How can we organize the whole, quote unquote, progressive nonprofits accountable for disability injustice?

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It's a great question. So

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I think in terms of within, within nonprofit spaces, within the places that I work in, spend a lot of my time organizing, one of the things that I have been especially grateful for in the past few years,

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is labor organizing, very proudly, the last two places that I worked was part of our union formations within there, and we got really progressive contracts.

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And I lift that up, because I have often found throughout my life that in every space that I occupy, I ended up being one of the few if not the only black disabled person. And that was very much the case. And in each of the places I've worked previously, that was very much the case, even within this, like labor organizing formation. And what I have found to be extremely powerful and extremely generative. And that work is that by shaping our collective efforts to shift and set our working conditions in ways that would meet the needs of people who are not typically centered or seen or valued, we were able to make things better for everybody in very immediate and apparent ways. And I think there are so many examples we can draw from particularly again, as we're all navigating COVID-19 And this mass death mass disabling event, but many of the things that became available to folks were things that disabled people had been fighting for for years and denied routinely opportunities to be able to engage in places remotely to have hybrid convenings to have less kind of time regulated and structures that require arbitrarily that I start work at this time and work at this time. And the real lessons that I drew from that in terms of

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When the possibilities that emerge when we are centering the experiences of people who don't share our experiences, and we create space for uplifting their needs, and it was a reminder that unless our organizations and their leadership are accountable to, and unless there are real costs for their failure to be accountable to those who are most marginalized, we are at real risk of replicating the very oppressive structures we are trying to dismantle. And so what I would what I would lift up as is the thing that's on my spirit. Now, the way that we can practice this is how do we create spaces and containers for the kind of collective decision making and shared collective power building that will ensure that accountability is actually meaningful that the communities who are most affected are the ones who are driving the decision making and helping shape working cultures and environments within these nonprofits. And there's a huge, huge role that Philanthropy plays here by incentivizing and setting the conditions right of like, if you want your work to be resourced, then it is not enough to just be like we are producing change in these ways externally, show us how you have applied that change internally, show us how you have cultivated working environments and conditions that would actually make it possible for disabled people to work there. Because if you're expecting people to work for poverty wages and 80 hours a week and not be able to have any accommodations, like working from home and forcing them back into the office prematurely, and on and on and on, then, of course, you're not going to have disabled folks or multiple marginalized folks represented. And then you're not going to be able to craft the kinds of laboratory interventions that this moment urgently needs and calls for.

1:16:59

We have one question in the room. Hi, I'm Serena from the Brooklyn Community Foundation. I'll speak louder. Thank you for the reminder. So I am Sabrina from the Brooklyn Community Foundation. Thank you so much for the panel today. It's been a wonderful conference. And I hope that next year or next conference is gonna be on the main stage, because this was the best session I've attended.

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You all discussed, you know, an intersectional approach. And I was just wondering, and discussed, you know, DACA, and certain examples where age is also a factor. And I was just wondering how you all think through ageism in your work, particularly as it relates to maybe older adults since

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the fields are related? So that's a really great question. And I can this is could see I can I can start with an answer and then pass it to Aza to contribute as well. I definitely experienced this. So a significant part of my career was spent working on issues related to unaccompanied immigrant children. So those who cross the border alone, and one of the greatest things I learned in communing with advocate advocates in this space is and I think this is very applicable to older adults in this situation, as well, and I think there's like many, many sort of intersections and direct relations between disability and an age and ageism. I mean, this this statement is so true to mean, disability is disabled people accounted for about a quarter of the US population disability is the biggest minority that you could become a part of at any time, and that many people ultimately will become a part of. And if we think about disability in the framing of disability justice, it results in greater care, kindness, access inclusion for our the older adults in our communities included, including older adult immigrants. And so one of the pieces of advice that I've gotten from the work with the UAC is is that you must assume the competence of your clients and the communities that represent them and that they are a part of, you must assume their agency and you must lift up their agency and their voice as advocates so like that. That's that's one of the things I think of and I think that is universally applicable, especially with our young people. And

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this is, this is as I mean, I don't have too much to add those so perfectly said I, the one thing that I want to name two in terms of both the intersections of ableism and ageism. And the ways that we have been talking about abolition and when when example or just thing that came to mind, is the ways that

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many of us in the disability community are engaged in abolition

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In a way that looks at the institutionalization, mass institutionalization that our communities have long been faced with and threatened with, and the ways that medical incarceration is extremely normalized and extremely widely practiced. And so for many aging adults, and we were talking about the Olmstead Supreme Court decision, which stated that we have a right to receive care in integrated home and community based settings. And just as an aside, as a legal realist, I do not believe in if it right is named, but not enforced, then is that right? I don't think so. So to the extent that we know we have that, right, that right has not been protected, it has not been applied, it has not been accessible and black disabled people, black disabled, older adults have been especially vulnerable to this form of violence, through medical incarceration, in nursing facilities, in metadata in psychiatric institutions and facilities. And so I lift this up, in part because I think, through engaging these various intersections with the disability community has actually been grappling with for ages, it, it helps us to identify the particular ways that we have failed to account for how systems of oppression are actually very dynamic. And they shift and they can shape shift, they can look different they can.

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And they do so because we are constantly innovating in our organizing and in our own resistance movements, right. So it just calls upon us to be sure that we are in community with everyone who has been affected, and that we are centering and presuming their competence and their agency, that we are following their lead. And that we are not internalizing or replicating the kinds of narrative constructs that are so prominent within ableism and ageism, particularly, which say that we don't know what's good for us, we don't know what we need, and that presume that our lives are inherently less valuable and less worth living, which is why disappearing people on mass into these institutions is considered a normal and acceptable thing to do in this country. And I hope that that helps answer your question, but just wanted to offer that to you.

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Thank you, and, um, there isn't a time for me to respond to that question. But just to add that as just some fun is using the what our disabled movement leaders have been saying, the way that cross generational and just really justice informed advocacy has been happening, and not new to our community. But it is, I think, an emerging and a new year murky area of opportunity for funders to pay attention to. So I do want to lift up our grantee partners, including San Francisco, Senior and Disability Action and their work on the cross generation between older people with disabilities and younger folks, if we cannot envision a future if we don't know where we had been. And so thinking about some of the origins and kind of initial activism that occurred in our community, when the ceiling was already set for us,

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before we weren't even offered a right then it is unsurprising why so many disabled white groups are not only dismantling this new system, but then seating and developing alternatives.

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And so, to that point, I you know, I look to health justice Commons and imbalance which has already been lifted up here and it's time rotation, Disability Justice Culture Club, the mutual aid networks, community is not just a way to connect and get resources in terms of food and nourishment and medication. But it is also an inherently disabled and crude way of doing.

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So, I find again, people as I hear, for everything that you've shared, thank you for allowing me to be a part of this discussion and I've learned so much and

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in and thank you also to our audience members in the room. and online. I want to hand it over to Ivv

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Thank you

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Can we give a round of applause for our speakers and moderator please

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I've been looking forward to this session for months now. So I'm really excited that we've been able to be in community together, not just here in this room in Houston but also remotely and having Sandy participate remotely has been remarkable and I'm really grateful for her presence virtually.

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There's a lot to unpack, there's still a lot of learning to continue to do. There are some resources that we already shared virtually through the app. And as a as Aza shared and any of our speakers including Sandy if they want to share any other additional resources post convening. We will make those available to you as well.

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With that, some housekeeping please complete your evaluation in your app.

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If you participate remotely, please feel free to email me at gcir.org If you have any

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other remarks feedback, we really want to invite you to please share them with us. We have recorded this session

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as a video and we also have an other transcript. So both are available both in written form and visually an audit audio wise

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Thank you very much for joining us from wherever you are in the United States and here in Houston that concludes our session thank you

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thank you so much Sandy.

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Yeah, I mean I use it to adaptively use in my lectures

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and I also having

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said about

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that