**Sandi Klink ADA Oral History Interview Transcript**

DONNA DESTEFANO: Hello, my name is Donna DeStefano and today I am here interviewing Sandi Klink for the ADA in Tennessee Oral History Project. The date is April 30th, 2025. And Sandi is in Memphis. And I am in Nashville. Both in the state of Tennessee. Sandi, I'm really happy that you are here. The major goal of this project is to contribute to a historical understanding of the disability experience. And the ADA in Tennessee. So let's get started. Sandi, tell us a little bit about yourself

SANDI KLINK: Okay. I am a person with a significant disability. I grew up in Tennessee. And acquired my disability at age four. When I joined Disability World, I was about 17. Because I didn't know up till then that I was any different than anybody else. When I acquired my disability and joined Disability World. I… It was before the ADA. Considerably. I guess that was probably in the 60s. And there were a lot of things going on in the 60s. But… I have… was not really a part of that kind of thing. I was a sweet little, cute little, tiny little girl. Who walked with a little bit of a limp. But got done what needed to get done.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Great. Thanks, Sandi. So, Do you think that the ADA has made a difference in your personal life. And if so, in what ways? Because you've talked about the fact that you were born before the ADA, and so I'm sure that you've seen things pre and post the ADA coming into effect.

SANDI KLINK: Yes, the ADA made huge strides for many of us. I took my first job in disability world in the 80s. And met an incredible woman who was fighting for her rights and the rights of others. Her name was Deborah Cunningham. And she taught me so many things that I had been unaware of, really. I had gotten my first job on my own, but just because I could write well. And… She taught me that there were a lot of people out there that weren't getting employed. At all. Because of their disabilities. And I was like- why? And she said they they just weren't being given a chance. I've seen so many of our young people that joined disability connection after the ADA that didn't realize it either, really. They had grown up after the 504 was passed they got a pretty typical education and a pretty typical education They came up expecting to work. And they did. And that was just so fabulous that these folks were being given a chance to show their stuff. And we helped them do that. And I remember the marches And I remember fighting for those rights. And my first job outside of nonprofit world. They were gonna "give me a chance” because they thought they were going to be required to hire people with disabilities. So here was this person that was basically thrown in their lap by an employer who was working with people with disabilities uh employment agency And so they made me go through all the tests and everything like that. And quite frankly, they were amazed. I scored very high on their test. Especially for a person who'd never been to college. So I worked for them for about three and a half years. And then had to leave for disability issues. Health issues that kind of jumped on me. Badly. And so I had to leave for a while. But after that, I went to work for a temp agency. They never thought a thing about my disability. They just sent me out to do work and I did it.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Wow. Thank you. That's great.

You talked about the first employer being amazed. How did they express that? What did they do?

SANDI KILINK: Well, there was a lot of oversight in that in the first couple of months. They had expected to have to do a whole lot of extra training and that kind of thing. And I got ended up just having the typical few weeks training like anybody before. And dove right into it. And I even had the general manager come by and kind of look at Brenda and look at me and she'd give me a thumbs up and you know, he was great. “So glad you're here and uh if you need anything, please let me know”. Do you need special parking? Do you need this? Do you need that? Okay. And even in those days, I wasn't using the chair full time. And so I just used my manual chair part time. And so they knew on days when I rolled in that I wasn't feeling particularly chipper. But I came to work. I did my job. And I showed them that people with disabilities worked twice as hard. To maintain what they needed. Because they weren't given a chance. So once they had one They made it shine.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you. Thank you. That's very helpful to know. So it seems like it wasn't really said that there was just sort of a coming by looking at you, making sure that you were okay. Is that how this is

DONNA DESTEFANO: Okay Great. Good.

SANDI KLINK: You don't see the general manager coming by very often to check on a new employee.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Right.

SANDI KLINK: So it was kind of their way of making sure that the team was okay and that I was in a good spot and that kind of thing.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Good. Good. Thank you. And then the subsequent employer really didn't have that kind of oversight it seems.

SANDI KLINK: The next employer were temp agencies. And as long as I went to the job did what I was supposed to they were supposed to ecstatic. So they never cared about my disability. It was not ever really brought up. They followed the rules of the ADA. And I just I was receptionist. I was secretary. I was an administrative assistant. Did a little bit of everything, had two different employers want to hire me full time. And I said, I just, I can't work full time and I appreciate your faith in me and but I just can't physically do full-time work yet. Of course, when Deborah called me it was a whole different thing.

DONNA DESTEFANO: So you went to work for Deborah.

SANDI KLINK: Yes. Twice.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Twice. Okay. So can you tell us a little bit about that and and the experiences that you had there and related to the ADA making a difference or not.

SANDI KLINK: Well, when I met Deborah. Mid-late 80s. The ADA was not law. There were a lot of protests going on. There were a lot of uh work being done on the sidelines and letters and et cetera, et cetera, being happening. I went on my first march, it was against APTA. In the late 80s. And…

DONNA DESTEFANO: Can you- can you tell us what APTA is?

SANDI KLINK: Okay, it's the American Public Transit Association. And… Currently, I know a little bit about more about APTA than I ever had before. In those days, I don't know, I just knew that we wanted to be able to get on the bus. It was not a matter of where we sat on the bus it was just in those days we couldn't even get on the bus. They would give us a little paratransit occasionally, little buses. But as far as… going out, getting on a fixed route and just going five miles down the road on fixed route, we couldn't get on it. We had to schedule paratransit. So I took part in my very first march. In the late 80s. Against APTA who were meeting here. In Memphis. They were having one of their conferences here. And knowing Deborah we were going to let them know that people with disabilities were not pleased with not being able to get on the bus. I did not take part in the further action. I took part in the march, but the action part of it, I was not ready for. They took the doors at the Peabody and protested for the day and there were threats of arrest, but none were made. So that was a little bit beyond me. Said I've got two children. I'm still fighting with my ex-husband over custody. I cannot get in trouble. So she understood that and uh then when I went to work for her the second time I had to go on an ADAPT action. But the first time I was her secretary. And her transcriptionist. She needed somebody that could take her tapes and put them on our forms that we used for our consumer action

consumer work and services. And know where to put what. Figure all that out and type her letters and sometimes type the boss's letter. Just had made myself quite at home. The agency was only was only two or three years old. We were still working on policies and procedures and early committees. I worked with some fabulous people in those days, Fred Dinwiddie, Lewis Patrick. They were all part of the early crew that had moved over from Easter Seals when the center first began. And I had the privilege of working on policies and procedures and working with those guys to make sure that they were understandable yet complied with the laws and things like that. I learned by looking them up. Old-fashioned ways, you know, go into the library or there were all those wonderful things about looking things up on the internet.

DONNA DESTEFANO : Right, right. So you would have to, you know, get out and go to the library. How accessible is the library for you?

SANDI KLINK: It was pretty good. They had really thought ahead. And had quite a few folks that use their services. That had disabilities. So they at least had a ramp. They were always willing all the front desk people were always willing to help pull things if they were out of my distance. Because even without my chair, I’m a little bitty thing. There were a lot of books and things like that above my head. Got to know a few folks at the library as well as in the workplace and uh we learned together about what our needs were. Worked with some of the other nonprofits in the city. I meet Carlene Leaper from The ARC Mid-south. Back in the beginning and then I met Carol. In the early days, too. And it's been a wild ride in Tennessee, but it's been fun. We've done a lot of things, some through legislation and some through protest and some through actions. And so we've had uh I went to Washington many times. In the first few years trying to make sure that the ADA was solid and that some of the things weren't taken away. And some of the things that we wanted in the ADA that had not been included, such as home and community-based services. We continued to work and fight for that. We still are. But uh with the new cuts coming and it's just ridiculous.

We have to go back to 30 years ago and start over. But that's what advocates are for, right?

DONNA DESTEFANO : Yeah. That's right. Those are definitely the threats and stuff. So when you first went to um Washington, were you then, was that the second time that you were employed by what is- what was the Memphis Center for Independent Living? And can you talk a little bit about what kinds of things that you did once you got to Washington?

SANDI KLINK: The first time I went to Washington representing the center was in 2000. And it was the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. And we had had uh

a torch relay come through the United States celebrating that fact. And Memphis was the only city in Tennessee that the torch came through. And I was fortunate enough to work on that team. And as a contractor. And worked with Judy Neal and Tim Wheat and Deborah and others and uh helped plan and put that all together. I recruited volunteers to carry the torch. Set out a map of different sites where the torch would be passed. And because of that work that we had done here in Memphis, we were invited to represent in D.C. We were invited to participate in the march which unlash the torch in the torch at the Capitol. And now we also were invited to a party at the vice president's home. As a way of thanking those volunteers. And I met Tipper Gore and her husband and other… celebrities, in my mind. And one of the greatest memories I've ever had of of that particular trip was having the opportunity to meet Justin Dart. Not only to shake his hand, but to have a few minutes to talk with him and that starstruck Sandi in 2000. You know, if I'd met some Broadway or Hollywood star would have been okay but nothing beat an advocate meeting her hero. Because he made it happen. And so I met Justin that trip and just trip and another trip, I met Senator Harkin. And so those, just having the opportunity to talk to those two guys and and really know that I was sitting in grandeur. You know it was just fabulous. And just good old boys. You know, both of them were really just good old boys They were so down to earth and so sincere about caring for… for everybody. Just everybody and wanting justice. For all of us that something that I will never… have again. Something that… I'm honored to say I met Justin Dart. Of course I met Yoshiko several other times after that, but that um just that was so meaningful to me that gave me even more determination that I was going to continue to fight for this law and for the justice that we all deserved.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you. That's great. That had to have been really something to me to meet those guys because they really - They're the ones that helped to get the ADA through. Yeah, thanks. That's amazing. So that was the first time you went to DC, right?

SANDI KLINK: Yes.

DONNA DESTEFANO: And so how many, roughly how many, other times have you been to DC? And what have you done?

SANDI KLINK: Most of the rest of the times I was in DC were for ADAPT actions. I did go to a couple of conferences with NCIL, which is the National Council on Independent Living. So I went to a couple of NCIL conferences. That we combined usually around the 4th of July and used July as the month that we celebrated independence. And several of our ADAPT actions would either follow or be right around that time too. And we would go to our legislators and go, you know. We got lots of states that are not compliant. They're not doing their thing. They're not even beginning to make offices and courthouses and other things ADA compliant. Which led to some division among the ranks because of the court case against the courts of Tennessee. And everyone got really nervous about that one because we were afraid that it would go against us. And then we'd have to start all over again. Luckily, it didn't. And Tennessee was smacked on the hand and told you know you will comply with the ADA and you better get your courthouses. accessible. That was a little scary, but it was kind of fun.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Yeah. Um Yes, and that was the Lane and Jones case that went to the Supreme Court.

SANDI KLINK: Yes.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Went all the way up through the ranks of the judicial system. Yes. Yes, and lots of advocates and activists were were holding their breath over that one and it came back at a five four decision favoring the plaintiffs in the case that um had been discriminated against because of their disabilities. So yeah, so we are into your advocacy and activism stage full on. And you had talked about ADAPT And so… And I know sort of going, I'm going back a little bit, but ADAPT was a formidable group. Can you discuss Talk a little bit about who ADAPT was and what the mission was and then Maybe describe a couple of the actions or one of the actions that you were involved in.

SANDI KLINK: Adapt started out as for accessible public transit for all. And they began basically in Denver, Colorado. Protesting the inaccessible buses. And they were led by a man named Wade Blank. And Wade didn't have a disability. But he had worked in nursing homes. And had seen some of the horrors in in nursing homes and some of the kids that were as soon as they were aging out were being put in nursing homes because they didn't have any services or supports. So he began not only Atlantis community In Denver where he opened basically a community apartment building with services and supports, and moved out some of those young people from the nursing home that he'd been fired from because he would take the kids out for activities such as to a rock concert and other things like that. So that kind of got him in trouble for taking those youngins off campus and making them aware of a life outside of a nursing home. Wade took ADAPT to the streets of Denver. And they were all adults with disabilities who wanted a real life. So they hit the streets, they blocked buses, they blocked intersections. They protested. They marched. They marched sat-in and and they did APTA and other conferences where they block doorways and chanted and caused a little mayhem. Nothing violent. They were protesting in the ways of Dr King. And it was all nonviolent protest. And they were afraid to go to jail. But it was interesting for the cops to take them to jail.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Can you describe that?

SANDI KLINK: Not personally, but…But I did know Deborah Cunningham was proud of every arrest she ever had and talked about one where she was taken to jail for a couple of days and they had uh the jail had to figure out personal attendance services Because I never arrested anybody like her before.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Because Deborah had some physical disabilities.

SANDI KLINK: Oh, yes. Deborah was quadriplegic. She had been affected by polio as a little bitty, itty bitty. And spent much of her first few years in an iron lung. And had some subsequent breathing issues once she got out of the iron lung but her lungs did improve to a point where she didn't need a vent until her later years. But she used a power wheelchair from the time they were invented almost. And… used uh whatever devices were up and coming and figured out ways to make things work and she went to college. She got her master's got her in counseling and uh she was a very strong advocate. And I must admit the first time I ever met her I was scared to death. I was just a little bitty shy girl that had come out of a not so great marriage and was trying to build some self-esteem. And here was this woman in all this contraption. And I'd never met anybody with a dis- with that extent of a disability. And I was just like, and the power that she just emanated She was just… strong and self-empowered and you know feminist and she's just so much larger than life. That when she talked about her arrest and stuff like that, I'm like. What am I getting myself in for? I told my mother about it. Mama's going. “You will not get arrested.”

DONNA DESTEFANO: So did you ever get arrested when you were doing actions with Deborah? But Deborah was arrested certainly that first time that we talked about and talked about. And other times, I presume was she?

SANDI KLINK: Oh, yeah. Deborah had, she was proud of every one of her arrests and I know there were over 22.

DONNA DESTAFENO: Wow.

SANDI KLINK: Most of the time they were like tickets Yeah, they would ticket everybody But there was always that chance. And even our Nashville action When ADAPT came to Nashville before CHOICES waiver. Um. They did take… about 10 of our activists to jail. Deborah did not go. But that time she was beginning to use her vent at night and things like that so she didn't feel that an arrest at that time was safe for her. We all agreed. I had, by that time, recognized that I have an anxiety disorder. That not claustrophobic to a grand extent but semi. And you put me in a crowd. Especially in a closed-in crowd, and I start to get like hyperventilate. Get very anxious, to say the least. And so it became quite clear that I was not going to be a "frontliner" in ADAPT. Because my very first action in San Francisco I was on the front lines. And… the cops decided at the state building, the state officers decided that this tiny little person in her tiny little wheelchair would be easy to get hold of and get out of the crowd. So they picked me up, chair and all, got me about two feet off the ground and realized that the chair and me together weighed considerably more than they thought they would. And he dropped me.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Whoa.

SANDI KLINK: um, so I landed still in the chair and everything. But it was severe enough to jar me. And I have rheumatoid arthritis. I have juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Which means every joint in my body is affected by this. By that time, I'd had one neck surgery and two hip replacements. And was looking at another possible back surgery. And so when I landed so hard it jarred me emotionally as well as physically. And I lost it. I lost it. And my teammates. Then pulled one of them put her whole body over me. And I will never forget that. And told the cops to leave her alone. You've hurt her. Let us get her out of here. You know, she's hurt. She needs to get out of here. Let us get her out of here. And by then, Michael, my significant other, I had… slid under a couple of other folks and around, and put his hand on my foot and ankle. To calm me, to give me that extra support to calm me. And it was…The most intense thing I'd ever been through. But it was also one of those where you respect the people around you so much that the love just surrounds you. And I had felt it in the march. Because there were hundreds of ADAPTers on that San Francisco march and you look ahead and you look behind and there's nothing but people with disabilities marching together for a cause they believe in. And the emotion that you feel to be part of something like that was just amazing. Something I will never forget. And never be ashamed that I was part of and be proud of it. Because it was just…an emotion that you'll never feel again. That first time to be part of something like that. It's just… It's hard to describe it.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you. Thank you. I mean, that's a real personal sharing of… a deep experience. Thank you for sharing that. I have to ask whether you've were you physically hurt? Being dropped. Did you go to the hospital? I'm just sort of wondering if no. So no medical treatment or stuff, but so folks came in to just basically back the police off from you.

SANDI KLINK: And they allowed them to clear a path and get me out so that I can move over with the folks that weren't going to get arrested. So I could still cheer them on and then I went back to the hotel and took a pain bill. So there were quite a few arrests at that action but uh you know uh everyone respected each other, whether you were arrested or not. It had been really pushed on us that being arrested is really important how much it you know meant to the group you know how once you get the spirit you're there that you're just going to want to be arrested you know you're going to want to stay the course and I couldn't, but… Later on, I was told by some of the leaders in ADAPT that you know I showed courage by even being there. I said, well, I didn't know I had a panic disorder until you put me in this situation. And I didn't go to another ADAPT action for several years. But then Bob Kafka and Stephanie Thomas, who were big leaders in ADAPT came through Memphis to pick up some equipment and stuff and cornered me. I said, why haven't you been back? And I'll explain what had happened to the action. She went, “I know. But there are all kinds of jobs. That you could do without being in the thick of it.” And I'm like, really? Really what could really She said… “there are things. You come back. We need you.” And I became the… hamburger girl for the next five or six actions.

DONNA DESTEFANO: That's that's that's great. Sandi, your story really underscores when we talk about advocacy and activism, oftentimes we have something in our mind and clearly getting arrested was a big piece of what those actions were about. But that really, you really exemplify that his variety within that advocacy and activism that has to be individualized to the person based on who they are. Their experiences and their experiences and sort of what sort of kinds of things that are okay for maybe them to be arrested, but other times not necessarily And… And then being away from it and then having Bob and Stephanie recognize that. And tell you No, there's more. Things to do like hamburger girl That's… Wow, that's really rich. That's really a rich experience. That um That's a great contributor to our history of the ADA in Tennessee. It really is. I really appreciate your sharing that intense personal experiences.

SANDI KLINK: We all have stories to tell. And… some are… Bob and Stephanie stories. You know, who helped shape policy went to jail and and spoke before the legislature. All of those kind of things. I was more the letter writer and was not good at the phone calls, but I was a great letter writer. And once email came, it's like, yes. I can do this. But uh you know, it takes everybody. Everybody learning how to tell their story. Learning what their needs are so they can express those. From little bitty, I encourage kids to learn. How to talk about their disability. You know, what what help do you need? Do you need help fixing a tray in the cafeteria? Do you need help eating your food? Do you need help going to the bathroom, you know all those things that you know, maybe kind of embarrassing to talk about. But learning how to express it because it's part of you. Don't be ashamed of that. You know, just… It's part of your life and you need to know how to tell somebody else about it. Because you want to participate in everything. And if they don't bring a van with a lift, then you can't go to that play or you can't go see your friends play softball or baseball or you can't get on the field and play. So what makes us us? And be proud of it. Be proud.

DONNA DESTEFANO: So and that's and that's

your part of your role in the Independent Living Center is then working with younger folks and the kids, as you described just now to to help them know how to be in the world and demand their rights in some ways you know or

and you've done that for a number of years.

SANDI KLINK: Yeah. It's my favorite part, really. Is talking to others about their disability. I loved my teaching at Partners in Policymaking. When I've talked about the history of the ADA and history of independent living, and history of disability. And how far we've come and how far we’ve backslid. But you know um doing it with a little humor. A little show and tell and just… being honest and being honest wishing that people had been more so with me. As a kid. Um because

I didn't know I was a person with a disability.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Interesting so what yeah, so what would you… In hindsight, what would you have liked people to do then? In terms of, you said, being honest with you.

SANDI KLINK: Umm let's see, if I had realized that I had an anxiety disorder. Then I would have been more aware of what triggered it and that kind of thing. And it was part and parcel of my arthritis. I knew when I was little bitty in elementary school. That for the first three years of school, I ate lunch every day in the principal's office. With the secretary. Because I couldn't stand the noise. And the… all the kids, you know. Think of an elementary cafeteria. There's tons of kids. They're all talking ninety to nothing. You've got a noise level that's just banging away at this little girl's head. And somebody spills their milk and they start crying and it’s somebody you know. It's chaos. And this teeny little person didn't deal with chaos well. But they made accommodations for me. And this was before the 504 was ever passed. But my brothers and sisters had gone through the same elementary school. My sister was taking education at the University of Memphis and my elementary was located on the campus. But it was a neighborhood school but all of the teachers that needed to do their student teaching. We always had multiples of those come through. Jane wasn't allowed to do her student teaching there because, well, because I was there. But she did when I was ill. I had a couple of hospitalizations when I was little. And she would come to the school and pick up my books and talk to the teachers about my lesson plans and what I had to do. And what were not as critical learning steps at that time. And Jane would come home and we'd work on it in pieces, you know, whatever stamina or energy I had. And… So I had my built-in teacher.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Wow. That's great. And the fact that they clearly just made accommodations. Without the rule of law forcing them.

SANDI KLINK: Right.

DONNA DESTEFANO: That's pretty that's pretty amazing. That's a great experience. So you know, where we are, there's been lots of progress in terms of the ADA. And yet, we'd still like to see more done. What- what would the world look like? If the promise of the ADA was realized.

SANDI KLINK: People with disabilities would just be part of the community. They'd work. They'd have children. They not have to worry about where they got their services and supports from. They could pay a family member to do that and get reimbursed for it and their family members wouldn't have to give up jobs and livelihoods just to make sure that their child or their spouse had the care they needed. It'd just be life to… go to the store and see your friends and your cashier that that's working behind the cash register is person who's sitting on a stool because their crutches are sitting beside them. You know, you just, there wouldn't be any barriers per se. You'd be able to go where you wanted to go. You could take public transit and save the environment. You could be part of whatever you wanted to be a part of. And nobody would… give you a second glance. Other than to say, hey, can you serve on this committee? Or you get a call from the mayor a week after you retire and he says, “hey, I got a job for you. You won't get paid, but you know you'll work your butt off.” Okay. You know, it just life would just be life. You know the pursuit of happiness would be a reality. Not pursuit of survival. The pursuit of happiness.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you. Thank you. I know. And you said something a little bit about this, the threats that we're seeing today to the ADA. And can you speak a little bit to what you see. That meaning and that meaning what kinds of actions or efforts can people with disabilities take? As a result of that. I know that's a lot.

SANDI KLINK: Make relationships with your legislatures. You're, you know. Regardless of what their beliefs are, tell them your stories, people. Learn your stories. Know what you need. Know what your friends need. Know what changes to the Department of Education are going to mean to your children and your grandchildren. um golly

That's one of the ones that I fear the most is the destruction of the Department of Education and what that means to the people like us that may need a few accommodations. A few, you know, a few extras that we're having we're having to fight for so hard already. And now what? What does this mean? I mean, the Department of Education gone the Department of the Administration on Community Living gone. These things that have that supported us and given us hope and given us the tools that we needed. To live active inclusive lives. What does that mean to our children? With disabilities. My grandchildren with disabilities. How? How are they going to continue to get an education to ask for the things that they need. It's terrifying. It's absolutely. Terrifying. We had barely broken the services on home and community-based services. And HHS is taking hits. You know, Medicaid is taking hits. And if things continue the way they are Medicaid will be destroyed. Medicaid's what pays for most of the people with significant disabilities to have personal assistance. Even nursing homes are paid by Medicaid. I mean, Lord help us. I never want to go to one of those places. They're horrible and they're a place you go to die not to live. But… Sometimes rehab is necessary. For a few weeks. And there are some long-term care that does provide some rehab, some real rehab. Medicaid pays for that. It's, it's… It frightens me. Terribly. Frightens me, especially at this stage of my life where I look down the road, not even probably three to five years, and I'm going to need personal assistance. And… there are things that… you know transferring is becoming more and more difficult. Things like washing my hair is becoming more difficult. Things people don't think about. You know, those kind of simple things to anybody who has good upper body strength and movement and those kind of things. Are not simple for me. And I will have to have someone to help me do those things.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you. So… It is a grim. They are grim times. There's no getting around that. But do you see… Do you think that because of the ADA. It's 35 years this year. Because of the ADA, Have we seen… enough progress that people that who grew up not knowing anything else. But the protections of the ADA and the rights under them. Do you think that that that is going to be helpful in standing up against the threats. Today?

SANDI KLINK: It will be helpful in some ways. For the… leaders that have… hired, and continue to hire, people with disabilities have made inroads. You know, we're talking big employers, Amazon. Nike, Sephora. Many of the larger manufacturing type places and Fedex. Employers. that have stepped up. To hiring, to making hiring people with disabilities a priority. Not a just because, you know. It's the right thing to do. They do it with a mandate. They do it as a concentrated effort. I think there's been enough head roads there. That even with the demolition of things like vocational rehab and the Department of Education. Things like that. There's already enough start. Thanks to the ADA. That people will continue to find employment. I'm still not as a greater rate as we'd like to see yes but at, um. In companies that are are already making the effort. Because these kind of cuts are not going to affect who they pay. And the accommodations they're already making are built into their systems now. They've got training programs they're doing some good things there already. so i think I think that's… a definite thing that all this is not going to stop. I just don't think it'll stop it. uh It it's the old folks like me. That'll be in trouble. But our younger people coming up and those that have experienced the positives of the ADA that will I think they'll continue to receive many of those things. Because they're just in place. They've we've had 35 years. They're there now. And you're not going to come in and just wipe it out. People are going to realize that people are going to realize that power doors are great for everybody. You know, shoving open doors with packages in your hands to get out is a pain. But having the handles where they're supposed to be. And having the access It's pretty commonplace. And, you know, you just sort of expect it. And even people without disabilities look for that button to help me get into a doorway. You know, and I'll spot the button before they do, but… They're not real sure what to look for, but they know there should be a button to open that door.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Well, thank you, Sandi. As we wrap up, is there, are there any last thoughts that you want to share?

SANDI KLINK: Regardless of where we are in history. Make sure that you speak up for yourself. To stand beside your brothers and sisters. Work together to make this world a better place. Be kind to everyone.

DONNA DESTEFANO: Thank you so much.