Disability EmpowHer Network

2021 Annual Report

When Disabled Girls Lead, We All Succeed

A message from the Executive Director & the Chair of the Board

Dear Friends,

We're thrilled to share our first annual report with you!

Disability EmpowHer Network's mission is to connect, motivate, and guide disabled girls and women to grow, learn, and develop to their highest potential and have the confidence to lead.

During our first year, we launched three programs that embody our mission: EmpowHer Camp, Letter From a Role Model, and a Public Speaking & Career Coaching program. Each program is led by and for women and girls with disabilities, centers disabled girls and women, and has the ultimate goal of helping disabled girls and women recognize their own value and believe in their own abilities to be leaders.

We've made incredible progress in just one year, and we are so excited to continue to grow together with all of you! Thank you so much for your support and for believing in the potential of girls & women with disabilities!

Sincerely,

Stephanie Woodward Leah Smith

Executive Director Board Chair

2021 Board of Directors

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University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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All directors serve as volunteers

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Jenny Border, Kathryn Carroll, Paul Timmons

EmpowHer Camp Application Review Workgroup

Dr. Davi Kallman, Johileny Meran, Sophie Poost

EmpowHer Camp Planning Committee

Curran Brown, Abby Ritter, Alexis Treichel

Social Media Committee

Kathryn Carroll, Sophie Poost, Alexis Treichel

All Committee & Workgroup members serve as volunteers  
  
Special thanks to Abby Ritter & Steph DeNormand volunteering their time & talents to help make this Annual Report accessible.

Our First Year

On Nov. 23, 2020, we launched Disability EmpowHer Network with a mission of empowering girls and women with disabilities. We asked for your support and you blew us away!

We've had more than 250 people sign up to volunteer with us, more than 340 individual donors, more than 1000 volunteer hours logged, and added more than 2000 social media followers!

Your support has allowed us to:

* Run three programs
* Help 11 girls & women with disabilities land new jobs
* Bring 18 girls & women with disabilities to EmpowHer Camp
* Match more than 70 girls and women with role models
* Impact more than 200 girls and women with disabilities

We cannot thank you enough for supporting Disability EmpowHer Network & helping us to empower girls & women with disabilities!

Letter from a Role Model

2021 Fast Facts

* Over 70 matches made
* Girls report feeling less alone
* Parents report feeling encouraged
* Expanded program to girls and women of all ages!

Connecting Girls & Women with Successful Disabled Women Role Models

Disabled girls often do not have disabled adult role models to be positive influences in their lives. We’re changing that!

We connect girls and women with disabilities from across the country to receive a personalized letter from a positive disabled woman role model! We match girls and women with role models based on their backgrounds, interests, disabilities, and personalities!

Since launching Letter from a Role Model, girls & women of all ages have reached out seeking a role model, from children to young professionals to older women - only proving that you're never too old to need a positive influence from a disabled woman role model!

"I felt like I could finally relate to somebody"

- Ava, 14

“My daughter suffered a spinal cord injury & paralysis following a car accident 1.5 years ago… Being a teenager in general is hard. I see her struggling with self-esteem and motivation. Thank you so much for all you do. It so SO NEEDED for these girls and our families!”

- Ava's Mom

EMPOWHER CAMP

Fast Facts

NATIONWIDE IMPACT

Our inaugural EmpowHer Camp program has mentors & participants from Oregon to Vermont, and many states in between! Communities across the country are being impacted by EmpowHer Camp!

100% GROWTH.   
  
100% of our participants reported experiencing growth in at least 7 categories, including problem solving, teamwork, & public speaking! What's more, 100% of parents reported noticing growth in their girls!

CONFIDENCE SOARING

100% of participants reported an increase in confidence and 100% of mentors reported an increase in their life satisfaction!

Quick Recap

EmpowHer Camp began in August 2021 with nine girls with disabilities from across the country coming together to camp with nine successful disabled women mentors for one week in the Adirondacks. While camping, we learned survival, independent living, and leadership skills! Each girl selected a mentor to be paired with for a year and her mentor is helping her complete a community impact project! Girls meet with their mentors regularly to work on their project and talk about school and life. They will all complete their projects and in July 2022, we'll reunite in Washington, D.C. where they will present their projects, meet with Congress, & explore how they have grown as leaders!

PUBLIC SPEAKING & CAREER COACHING

Women are more likely to fear public speaking than men, & this fear can be even worse for disabled women because we often have lower self-cognition and lower self esteem than our nondisabled peers. Women with disabilities also experience higher rates of unemployment, and women with disabilities who are employed often earn less than their nondisabled peers.

Evidence consistently shows that poor public speaking and communication skills can negatively impact wages and promotion potential. For example, a 2017 survey of 959 employers revealed that communication skills ranked highest among the skills that employers consider most important, and by 2020 the same survey revealed that 61% of employers believe that strong communication skills are now more important as a result of COVID-19.

These are just a few reasons why Disability EmpowHer Network decided to offer public speaking & career coaching programs to women with disabilities! We know that confidence in communication can lead to positive career outcomes, and we've already seen amazing things happen for the girls and women that we've been working with!

"Working with Disability Preparation with Disability EmpowHer Network I received a competitive promotion to management level position with a 10% salary increase! I have also been able to connect with other professional disabled women who continue to empower me to be a stronger advocate for the Disability Community." - Katie Shelley

"By completing Job Interview EmpowHer Network for public speaking class helped me land a new management-level position with a 50% salary increase! Moreover, I have been able to make connections with peers with disabilities and achieve a sense of community, as well as a greater sense of comfort with my identity as a disabled woman.” - Izzie Bullock

Fast Facts

* Public Speaking & Career Coaching sessions can be one-on-one or in a group session.
* We've helped 11 girls and women with disabilities land new jobs!
* Participants report feeling more confident, reaching their goals, and feeling more connected with the Disability Community.
* We're now seeking grant funding to be able to offer these sessions to more women and girls!

IN THE NEWS!

Our dedication to empowering girls and women with disabilities resonates with people across the country. We've had hundreds of women reach out to us to tell us that they wish the Disability EmpowHer Network had existed when they were young. Additionally, disability-led and mainstream media look to us as experts and have featured our work! Here are some of the places that we were featured in 2021:IN THE NEWS!

Teen Vogue

Penned by a young disabled woman journalist, this article emphasizes the need for disabled woman role models & highlights how our Letter from a Role Model program is addressing this issue!

Bloomberg

Bloomberg on the anniversary of the ADA, Bloomberg reviewed transit barriers that still exist and consulted with our Executive Director for this article.

Spectrum Life Magazine

This grassroots community publication highlighted Kimi, one of our participants, and the role model we matched her with in our Letter from a Role Model program.

WXXI

This Rochester PBS affiliate featured our work twice in 2021! The first time was on the Connections radio show where Maddie, a young program participant, talked about the benefits of being connected with a mentor. The second time was an article where a mentor and mentee in our Letter from a Role Model program talked about how the program helped them connect and grow together.

THANK YOU!

Because of you, we've been able to help girls and women to grow, learn, and develop to their highest potential and have the confidence to lead.

Top Donors 2021

Monthly Donors

Jim Dukette & Tony Nary

Laura Van Tosh

$1,000 - $2,500

Sarah Launderville

Kelly & Paul Timmons

Matthew & Jacqueline

Wentworth

$500 - $999

Gregg & Linda Chalmers

Dave Wickstrom

$250 - $499

John Ball

Mark & Jan Derry

Joan Gallivan

Hannah Vickner Hough

Special Day Donors  
Many thanks to the following people who raised funds by generously donating their birthdays or disability anniversaries to Disability EmpowHer Network

$1,000 - $2,500

Jennifer Gilliland

Katie Shelley

$500 - $999

Sophie Poost

Abby Ritter

$200 - $499

Charlee Bentley

Danielle Bentley

Alejandra Ospina

All listed donors consented to being recognized as a Top Donor in our Annual Report. We appreciate the generosity of all of our donors and respect the privacy of the individuals who wished to remain anonymous. If we omitted or misspelled your name, please accept our apologies & contact Stephanie Woodward at [Stephanie@DisabilityEmpowHerNetwork.org](mailto:Stephanie@DisabilityEmpowHerNetwork.org)

BIG THANKS!

Our grantors and corporate partners help us to give disabled girls and women what they need to succeed - mentors to guide them, programming to empower them, and an environment that allows them to grow to their fullest potential.

Corporate Partners

John Dillon Park International Paper

Quantum #1 for Rehab Power

Kelly’s Kitchen

Charlee Marie & Me Craft Studio

Artisan Church

Anthem

FFORA

Landscape Structures

Brown & Brown of New York, Inc.

Wegmans

3PlayMedia

Grant Supporters

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation Paralysis Resource Center

Golisano Foundation

Numotion Foundation

Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation

2021 FINANCIALS

Because we launched in Nov. 2020, the financials below cover Nov. 1, 2020 - Dec. 31, 2021. Future annual reports will cover Jan. 1 - Dec. 31.

Support & Revenue

Grants: $47,950

Donations: $42,178

Corporate Partnerships: $29,611

In-kind Donations: $17,351

Other: $3,163

Expenses

Program Expenses: $32,220

Program Personnel: $11,361

Fundraising Expenses: $6,740

General & Administrative: $6,400  
Office & Related: $1,212

EmpowHer Camp is our premier program that requires the most significant investment on many levels including financially. The majority of the support we receive goes towards supporting that program. We spent a significant amount of our budget on preparing our inaugural Adirondacks trip by purchasing many camping supplies that will be reused throughout the years. Additionally, to ensure that finances never prohibit a young leader from participating in our programs, we cover the cost of travel (up to $500) for each participant and mentor.

We know that the Leadership Reunion Trip in Washington, D.C., which is the capstone of our yearlong leadership program, will require an even larger investment. For this reason, we have allocated a considerable amount of our 2022 budget to the Leadership Reunion Trip.

IN THEIR WORDS

"EmpowHer Camp helped improve my confidence unexpectedly. I accomplished things I did not know I could do and EmpowHer Camp was a safe place to try new things and not fear failure or judgment."

* Curran Brown, EmpowHer Camp Mentor

"My favorite part of camp was meeting other girls and women with disabilities because I was glad to know I wasn't the only one. I feel a lot more confident since camp. I feel more independent and grown up doing such hard things without my parents."

* Kimi Dyment, EmpowHer Camp Participant

"I just have to say I love what you do for disabled women and girls. You have empowered Kimi in ways that are indescribable. She has so much more confidence and pride now. I'm so appreciative of the ways you have enriched her life and mine. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to this program and these amazing young women."

* Brandi Dyment, Kimi's Mom

"Being a role model is important to me because I truly believe Disability representation is vital for young people! My young disabled self lacked guidance from disabled adults so I hope I can help fill that gap for other young women."

* Arielle Rausin, Letter from a Role Model Mentor

"As a mother, I felt so much hope for her future and a sense of connection that someone who’s navigated the path she’s on will be there to encourage, celebrate with, and help her along the way. This is such a beautiful concept and organization. Thank you for providing a priceless treasure."

* Barbara Bennett, Parent of Letter from a Role Model Participant

Disability EmpowHerNetwork

When disabled girls lead, we all succeed!

Thank you for believing in the potential of girls & women with disabilities!

We'd love to talk!

Stephanie Woodward

Executive Director

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