

EP 4- HARRISBURG DISABILITY PR...DE AND CAPITOL CRAWL INTERVIEW

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SPEAKERS

Phill Rosen Voice Over, Jimmi Shrode, Phill Rosen Interview, Phill Rosen, Vicki Landers

P Phill Rosen Voice Over 00:00:00

Welcome to the Living Loud and Proud Podcast, brought to you by Disability Pride Pennsylvania. If you need a link to the transcript for this episode, please visit our accessible website at www.disabilitypridepa.org/podcast. And now, here is your host, co producer, Phill Rosen.

P Phill Rosen 00:00:31

Hey everyone. Welcome to the Living Loud and Proud Podcast. This is episode four: All About Harrisburg Disability Pride. And we're going to have a Capitol Crawl similar to what happened in DC in 1990. But first, before we get started, I want to thank our corporate partners at Highmark Whole Care for sponsoring the Living Loud and Proud Podcast. Today, I have our Executive Director of Disability Pride, Pennsylvania, Vicki Landers on and she's going to tell us all about what's happening in Harrisburg on the 1st of May. Hi, Vicki.

V Vicki Landers 00:01:19

Hi, everyone. Yeah, I'm so excited about May 1. But I wanted to talk a little bit about the Capitol Crawl that happened in D.C. on March 12, 1990. We had 68 people get out of their chairs, throw their crutches away, put away their walkers, and actually climbed, I believe it was 78 stairs to the top of the Capitol building. In you know, and this was one of many actions that happened to get folks to sign off on the ADA Act. And it's so important to remember that it's important to remember the folks that have made history, you know, that are a part of our history, the disability history. So we wanted to honor that. And let make sure everybody knew about what that is. There's a really great article on issuu.com. And that's [I. S. S. U. U. .com](http://I.S.S.U.U.com) if you want to look that up and learn more about it. I just wanted to make sure that we held a place for that. Remember to honor our past. And I'm really excited because we are going to be hosting our own Capitol Crawl in Harrisburg on May 1. The rally starts at 12, press conference starts at 1, and we'll lead the charge to start the climb. And I'll tell you much more about that afterwards.

But first, we wanted to give some a story about what one person's recollection of what happened that day. And we wanted to hear, have you hear about what that what that felt like? And so our Producer Phill Rosen sat down to interview Jimmi Shrode about his partner Erik von Schmetterling's experience at the Capitol Crawl in DC. Unfortunately, Erik is not with us anymore. And but we are so excited that Jimmi was was able to talk to us about this. So we're gonna let you're going to hear from Jimmi now.

P

Phill Rosen Interview 00:03:56

Jimmi, so the Capitol Crawl happened in Washington D.C. in 1990. What was it all about?

J

Jimmi Shrode 00:04:07

The Capitol Crawl was basically, the ADA was stuck in Congress, stuck in both houses, I can't remember which, but it was stuck. And ADAPT really wanted to call the need to get this passed, because they had been fighting for for a couple of years. And ADAPT had reached out to many different disability organizations and saying, 'if we give one big push, one big push, we could get this through. And we could get this signed into law.' And it was really to call attention to the fact that around the United States, there was no real basic access and when we're talking about access, the most fundamental access is your ability to go out into the community and interact in the community. I was dating Erik then, and we have been dating for about like, almost a year. And there will be times if we wanted to go to a restaurant or something, I would have to go in to the restaurant and tell the manager, you know, 'my date is outside, and he would like to come in. And, you know, but you have steps. So, do you have something that you do for people with wheelchairs?' And a lot of times they would look at you like, "somebody in a wheelchair is outside? They're not in the hospital, or they're not in a back room somewhere?' But that's the way the idea was. And they would look at you like, it was like Candid Camera. You know, but so the idea was that we really needed basic physical access to stores, to coffee shops, libraries, a lot of different public accommodations. And the idea to demonstrate that need was that a lot of people, you know, especially people in wheelchairs would have to sometimes have their wheelchair brought inside, and then they'd have to kind of crawl up the steps or be helped up the steps. So what better way to dramatize, what was everyday life experience for a person with a physical disability, especially people who use wheelchairs, then to climb up the steps of the U.S. Capitol, which there was a whole lot of them. And do what you have to do at your community to really say, 'Look, this is really something we need.' And it was a big undertaking, they, a lot of different disability organizations didn't always agree with ADAPT, and their direct action and everything. But somehow the stars aligned. And a lot of people came together and did this dramatic thing, going up the Capitol steps one, by one, by one, by one. And Erik told me that's when he was going down, he was going down to Washington to do a regular ADAPT action. But, the last day was going to be the Capitol Crawl. You know, and he asked me to take care of Muggsy, his cat for you know, and while he did it, and I was intrigued, you know, I began getting very interested in like, 'Man', I was in college at the time, but I'm like, 'Man, I got to go on one of these things. These sound really awesome.' But that was it to really say, this is what people with disabilities face every day just for basic public access. And here it is dramatized for the free world to see people up, up, up, up, one step at a time.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:08:23

Wow, that's, that's really powerful. I, you know, you know, I had heard about the Capitol Crawl before, you know, I knew a little bit about it, but, you know, I only knew, like, kind of the surface level of stuff. And so like, you know, you're talking about Erik, he was there. What was his experience like? Do you like, remember what he, you know, any stories he had?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:08:49

Yeah, it was a warm day, you know, and it's Washington D.C. in springtime, and it can sometimes get really warm. It was a very bright, and sunny day and everything. And for him, he had problems with his heart at that time, so, you know, for him breathing, he needed oxygen, you know, so for him going up those steps was really excruciating for him. He almost passed out twice, you know, he had to stop and rest and everything, and somebody offered to kind of boost them up the way, but no he wanted to do what everybody else was doing. But it was really warm and he almost felt like he passed out twice. It was really difficult, because of the weather. It was warm, it was sunny. You know, people have been a lot of the ADAPT people had been doing actions already. They were kind of tired and everything. And I don't know how many steps there are going up to the Capitol. There are a lot you know, and it was very physically demanding for a lot of people. And some people did kind of pass out doing it. Because, you know, a lot of people weren't in the greatest physical shape because they, you know, how many times do you do something that physically demanding? I think even for us if we had to do it?

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:10:24

Yeah, I think that would be a tall task. Tall Order.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:10:27

Yeah.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:10:28

For me, for sure.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:10:31

It was, you know, there were a lot of tourists in D.C. around that time, the weather was warmer, and people were just watching. And their mouths were hanging open that's what Erik told me and he said people were just stunned. And it really caused reverberations throughout the U.S. Congress and made, you know, a lot of people, and George Bush, the First really wanted this done. And so this really caused reverberation throughout Congress, and all through Washington, D.C. And it was the final push needed where the ADA got signed into law. Where it finally moved. It passed both of the House and the Senate and then went to George Bush's

desk, and he signed it. So, no great ceremony, but that was later in July. And Erik, and a lot of people who had crawled up the Capitol steps were invited to be at the White House lawn for the signing of the ADA.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:11:43

Yeah, you know, that's really interesting that you talk about George Bush really wanting that piece of legislation. I think it's one of the pieces of his legacy as a President that...

J Jimmi Shrode 00:11:55

Yeah.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:11:56

...I find really striking. Even as someone who may not agree with all of his perspective on everything, right?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:12:02

Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:12:03

But, you know, the fact that he kept talking as he got older about how the ADA was integral to his life, as he got older, and he became, you know, more dependent upon, you know, technology, like wheelchairs, and other mobility aids and such. And how important that was, I think, for him because of that. So, so it was stuck in Congress at the time. You know, you say you don't necessarily recall which house it was stuck in. Were there any prominent members of Congress that were particularly like, against it that you remember, at the time?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:12:50

I don't really remember, I should have probably read up before I did it. But you know, I'm getting older now. So my memory isn't as great as it once was, and everything. It was just one of those things where it was kind of languishing. It wasn't that, you know, there were people who were against it, like as an unfunded, you know, government mandate you know. And how it would impact business, because business people really concerned like, 'Now I'm going to have to build elaborate, you know, ramps and elevators and whatnot, you know, to make my place accessible. Do I even want these people in my business?' You know, which is another, you know, attitude of society and everything, which was more prominent and 1990. You know, you know, so I can't remember but it was just kind of languishing. It was like one of those things, it wasn't like a big burning priority for either, you know, chamber but at the same time, it's something that was really needed and ADAPT had been working towards that for a long time. It

started when they took over a bus on Alameda Street, I believe, in Denver, Colorado, the original Gang of 19. And, you know, that's where it all began. Wade Blank had, you know, taken people out of nursing homes and developed the Atlantis Community and that idea of independent living and everything, but now that we've got out of the nursing home or in the community, we need to be able to thrive in the community and to thrive means that there has to be access. So but it was languishing, so there was no burning need for it.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:15:04

Yeah, you know, I think it's interesting, too, that you were talking about how ADAPT, you know, teamed up with a bunch of organizations that were, you know, they're all activist organizations, right? But they don't always necessarily agree with each other. What kind of, I mean, do you happen to have any knowledge of what led to them kind of aligning together, you know, becoming an alliance for this one event, because I know that ADAPT still has some organizations that don't love them, right?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:15:38

Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:15:40

You know, because they are so in your face and direct action-minded.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:15:45

This was more. It was more I guess, theatrical and more of a demonstration than what ADAPT would usually do. ADAPT would usually like, if there was a Senator or Congress person against the bill, ADAPT would go into their office and take it over and wouldn't leave until they talked to the person and the person gave them some kind of commitment. And a lot of people, you know, not even the disability community, but a lot of people in general are not comfortable with direct action. That involves going into the places of power and seizing it and forcing the people to talk to you a lot of people, you know, feel embarrassed, scared. What if I get arrested? You know, what, if they take my Social Security away? There was a lot of that. You know, the thing about ADAPT was, it was a lot of people who had been forced up against the wall, they had nothing left to lose. And so you either shut down, or you fight back, and ADAPT would fight back. But this, the idea of doing this, it wasn't taking over somebody's office, it wasn't doing anything directly confrontational, it was making a big show of why this was important by going up the steps. And so a lot of people felt like, 'Yeah, we can do that.'

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:17:26

Yeah, and I think that's part of what makes it such a powerful sort of action, right? Because it's one thing to go in behind closed doors and bully someone into agreeing with you. But you know, when you're doing something and people are watching in public, it's like, 'Oh no! What's

going on? What does...'

J Jimmi Shrode 00:17:46
Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:17:46
'You know, what does this mean? I don't understand.' And they start learning a little bit more about it and they're like, 'Wait, why not? Why is this a problem?' You know, it's interesting, too, because, like, you know, a lot of younger people nowadays, they they experience, like the, 'Oh, I have to talk to someone inside, do you have a ramp to get up into this one step?' And like, yes, that's annoying. But, you know, like, you were saying before, you had to go in and people would literally carry the wheelchair in. And people would have to crawl and it's like, you know, yes, it's, you know, a big brouhaha. Yes, it's a lot of effort and everything to go about your daily life doing that, you know, if you have to go into like, say, 15 different places in a day. And you have to ask each one, do you have a step, you know, or a ramp into the, you know, that I can use, but that's still a lot better than literally having to crawl up and, and, you know, kind of that sort of embarrassing sort of display, right? Because, like, you know, nobody, nobody wants to crawl unless, you know, at all, you know, unless they absolutely need to, right.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:19:00
Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:19:00
So it's like and I think that's one of the things that's really you know, you know, really powerful about it as well, because it's like, yes, things maybe aren't as good as they could be, but they're sure a helluva lot better than it used to be right?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:19:19
It's better and one thing to I mean, I was dating Erik around that time and everything. And Erik told me like, dating people sometimes would be difficult because you would try to go to a restaurant or something like that. And it would be too much like, the person you're dating, their mind is like blown. You know...

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:19:43
Right.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:19:43

J Jimmi Shrode 00:19:43

And it's such an affront to your personal dignity because not only are they carrying the wheelchair in, you're scooting yourself up the steps, the steps are dirty, you wanted to dress, you know, we want to dress and look nice when we go out on a date and everything and your hands are getting dirty, your clothes are getting dirty, you know, you're crawling on the floor and everything, you know, so and there's just a generation now of kids that you know, will never know that.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:20:18

Right? And you know, forget about if it's raining.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:20:21

Knock on wood, it could always swing back.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:20:24

Right? Well, and I was just saying, I wasn't trying to cut you off. But you know, forget about if it's raining, right? Like that screws up your entire night, right? You don't want to have a wet butt sitting in the restaurant. No, you don't.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:20:37

Unless you're into that.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:20:41

Well, some people I'm sure. But

J Jimmi Shrode 00:20:43

But no, no you know, and that would and weather would actually determine that. 'Do we want, do you want to go out to eat tonight at a restaurant, it's supposed to rain, if you have to crawl up those steps.' Going to the movies, the wheelchair would have to park in the aisle. You know, and you would get the manager saying, 'Well, this could be a fire hazard if there was a fire, if there was an emergency.' You know, now they have like the one they have thing where they've taken out some of the seats so a wheelchair can pull in. You know, I'll think it'll be perfect if they take out two seats. So two wheel, people in wheelchairs dating can sit side by side and not have to sit separated from each other. But yeah, there was so much just to live an ordinary life involved all these logistics.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:21:45

P PNIII Rosen Interview 00:21:45

So I've actually been reminded here, I've completely blanked on just asking you who Erik was. So who was he?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:21:56

Erik von Schmetterling? He was my partner for 31 years and outspoken Disability Rights Activist. Before that he was a cardiologist. And he had been working in, you know, Cleveland, Ohio, you know, as a young doctor, young cardiologist working in the emergency rooms, and then he began losing feeling in his legs. And, you know, he couldn't move very well and could have, he was losing his feeling. And they didn't know why, then he had a pulmonary embolism. So he became disabled. And, you know, he began looking for, 'Well, what do I do now?' And moving to Philadelphia, he met, you know, other people with disabilities like Cassie James and everything. And she, she went to college, at the old Community College on 11th Street, where she had to crawl in to get in there, just to get an education. You know. So Disability Rights really became his life, and he really was fiercely passionate about it. And, you know, when I had met him, you know, it was a part of his life. And he asked me, how did I feel about that? I said, 'Doesn't bother me.' You know, I've done stuff with act up, so, and also protesting for gay rights and everything. And so I was like, 'Wow, I think it's great that you have a social conscience and see, social activism is a viable way of doing it.' So, um, but yeah, that was his life's work. And that's what he really fought passionately for. And he became like a leader in National ADAPT for time as well as local ADAPT and everything. And you know, it was just amazing that you know, but we went through that together as a couple and everything and I got involved in it myself, and you know, saw the need for this and I understood the need for it.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:24:41

Yeah. And actually, I actually, to follow up with that. I do want to ask you, what is ADAPT? Because I realize some people might not know,

J Jimmi Shrode 00:24:52

ADAPT, began originally as American Disabled for Accessible Public Transport. That's what it began, because the original idea was to get accessible transportation over the road buses that, and from there the push, and to do that the ADA was part of the key to kind of get that if we can get a national disability, you know, access law passed, then buses would have to become accessible. You know, so that was the main focus was accessible transportation. And the rest of it just went from there. You know, and after the ADA was signed, and everything ADAPT, said, 'Well, what's next? Now that we're making society acceptable, what's the main reason why people are put in nursing homes?' Because society has an attitude that you need to be taken care of. In, you can't be a part of the world because the world is not made for you. So now the idea was, let's get people out of nursing homes, so they can begin enjoying the fruits of the ADA. And with the Olmstead decision, the ADA figured that a state entity, you know, and had to provide the most integrated setting in the least restrictive environment. So the ADA affected the Olmstead decision, which said, you know, you have the right to self determine, you have the right to live someplace, that's the least restrictive environment, which is an institution, an institution, you're there, you're locked up behind four walls, like you're in prison, and you do

what they want you to do: arts and crafts, you know, playing bingo, you know, rotting slowly away on the inside, you know, and you'll go to bed when they say you go to bed, and you'll get up when they say get up and everything, and the entire world goes on outside of those four walls. So the ADA really opened up so much of that. So, you know, it became Americans Disabled for Attendant Programs Today. And the idea was now for ADAPT to get rid of the institutional bias, to get people out of institutions in the communities and that being disabled means that you don't have to be locked away, you're not a dirty secret. And the whole idea was that you can be just like everybody else, you can have what everybody else has. You know, and so that's what ADAPT's main focus has been. And the push for attendant programs and getting people out of nursing homes and institutions has become a more controversial, more difficult fight. Because the nursing home lobby is so deeply entrenched.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:28:42

Right.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:28:42

It receives federal funding, a lot of people don't know that nursing homes, get funding from HUD from Housing and Urban Development under the program 232. Now, I don't know if this is still true, but I knew it was then. But I mean, it was like the 232, they would help buy institutions like stuff that they need and help with the rent and everything so you could be locked up. You know, so and we're, you know, ADAPT has also been focusing, and if we get people, out of institutions they need somewhere to live.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:29:24

Well, thanks for being on, jimmi.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:29:25

I could say one more thing, now.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:29:27

Oh, yeah. Go right ahead.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:29:27

And I want to talk to the young generation. And I'm going to say this. It's like, don't take these things for granted. Don't think just because you have it, they won't try to take it. They will. I can tell you that as a gay man. They'll give you things and then they'll try to take it back, you know. So it's really up to this generation to keep this movement going and push more and harder and further. Demand everything. You know, demand everything until you really have true 100

percent equality and everything, like really push for healthcare, attendant care and everything. And there's kind of this thing where it's called, like, the new giant supermarket open down here, so the ground level is there. And then you have to go up these escalators. Well, they have these revolving doors, and then the other doors are push. So if you're a person with a disability, you have to go in through the garage, the parking garage to get to these automatic doors that open to get to the elevators. So it's really kind of like this. Yeah, we're giving your accessibility, but instead of you coming in the street, you're going to have to roll in through the parking garage. You know, so that's just something, that's a trend that's starting in some places, it's like, accessibility is like at the Whole Foods. You know, it's the entrance level, you need an elevator to get in. And there's one elevator. So if you happen to go food shopping that day, and that elevators broke, you're S O L. So...

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:31:30

Yeah...

J Jimmi Shrode 00:31:31

...the only thing I would say is to the younger generation, keep this going fight, push and demand and don't ever take for granted that your rights are always guaranteed. They're not.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:31:47

Right. Well, I think a lot of people have gotten a rude awakening over the last, you know, couple of years at least.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:31:54

Oh, yeah.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:31:55

Who may have felt otherwise.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:31:58

Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:31:59

You know, the the other thing about that Whole Foods is you're talking about the one on Pennsylvania Avenue, right?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:32:03
Yes.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:32:04
Yeah, there is another elevator. But that garage is impossible to get into. Yeah. In a wheelchair. It's, yeah, like the, you know, the one at the Giant is bad and difficult, although, I would love to see someone park a wheelchair in one of the spots and just like one of the compact car spots and just go up.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:32:27
Yeah, I mean, and to me the whole thing is like at that it's like, you got to go into the garage. So you got to breathe carbon monoxide. But already, it's like a separate entrance. Like, you know, you're not coming in the front door directly or coming in, you know, unless you drove your wheelchair accessible, then it's great. You know, but otherwise, you know, now it's not so great. And kind of like, what accessibility is sometimes is getting defined more by able-bodied people. And disabled people need to speak up more and say, 'Why should I have to suck down carbon monoxide on my way into the supermarket? Why can't I come into the front door?'

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:33:23
Right. And that's a very good question. And honestly, too, that Giant also has way too few accessible spots down there in that garage. I...

J Jimmi Shrode 00:33:34
Yeah.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:33:34
...I mean, it's, you know, I'll go there and buy groceries sometimes because it's just like, you know, it's convenient. It's nice. It's easy, but you know, when there's like only two spots, and there's like a whole corral for carts where there could be accessible spots instead. It's like, why are we doing this? This seems like a waste of space.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:33:55
Yeah, it is. It really is. And it's like, backhand accessibility. Its accessibility after the fact. But it's kind of back end.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:34:07

Yeah.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:34:08

Lacking and I don't know how many parking spaces they there are offhand but there's a certain fraction that should be for, you know, vans that are have wheelchair lifts or accessible for people. There are people in wheelchairs drive cars, and...

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:34:28

Right.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:34:28

...Strong upper body paras that can you know, whip their wheelchair out of the back of the car and, [unintelligible, 34:35

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:34:35

Yeah, like the little manual wheelchairs that can fold up.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:34:38

Yeah, yeah, but it's like, you know, but a lot of people who live downtown and they're more people with disabilities living downtown now, you know, you have to go in through a garage and it's not the most pleasant place to go through.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:34:55

Right well, and also, at least one of the streets going into that garage had a partial also in part to it as well, right? Like, Cherry Street around there is cobblestone?

J Jimmi Shrode 00:35:03

Yeah, it's all cobblestones. Yeah, so if you're running over that your wheelchair, it's like bump, bump, bump, you know, really uncomfortable.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:35:15

Gosh I can't even believe that was a thing when you know horse and bunnies was the was the

Yeah, I can't even believe that was a thing when, you know horse and buggies was the, was the way of transporting people around like that was just the way that they paved Philadelphia at that time. It's like that could have been that comfortable for rich people at the time.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:35:31

No. No it couldn't have been. But you know, now here we are is like nearly a quarter of century into the 21st century. Like why do we still have these things?

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:35:43

Right? Yeah, it really doesn't make that much sense.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:35:47

Some nostalgia? Nostalgia for what you weren't even alive in the 1800s. You this style check. You know, come on. We don't need cobblestones. It's 2024, who grew up with cobblestone. Come on.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:36:07

Yeah, and honestly do like, you know, even walking on cobblestone sucks because like, you slip your, you know, I have ankles that are a little, they're not soft, but they easily tilt.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:36:19

Yeah.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:36:20

You know, 15 years of tap dance will do that to you. So, you know, my, my ankles will roll sometimes. And they'll just end up in the middle of the cobblestones. It's like you get at least a twisted ankle, maybe a sprain, if you're lucky, it's mild.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:36:37

Right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:36:37

Right, but it's just like c'mon.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:36:39
Yeah, like nobody needs it. Get rid of it.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:36:43
Yeah. All right. Well, thanks for coming on, Jimmi.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:36:50
You're welcome.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:36:51
I'm so excited that you were able to do this. You know, this is great that we're able to talk about this, you know, about a month before we're gonna do our very own crawl in Harrisburg, so...

J Jimmi Shrode 00:37:05
Oh, wow. Okay. I definitely want to be there for that.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:37:08
...Yeah, yeah, May 1.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:37:11
Okay. Awesome!

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:37:12
Make sure you be there!

J Jimmi Shrode 00:37:13
All right.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:37:15

All right.

J Jimmi Shrode 00:37:17

Okay. Thanks a lot, Phill. Good talking to you.

P Phill Rosen 00:37:21

All right. Well, that was great. Thanks, Jimmi, for coming on and doing that interview with me. I felt like I learned so much from this interview. It's wild.

V Vicki Landers 00:37:32

Yes. Thank you so much. We love you, Jimmi. And we miss Erik. So I wanted to talk to everybody about what's happening May 1. We are, we're so excited. We as of today, we have over 70 people registered for the event. And so May 1, we're asking everybody to come to Harrisburg. come in at to the Main Rotunda and check in with Disability Pride Pennsylvania, we're going to be able to give you a packet of information about all the points that we want you to go over and to or to leave with all your representatives and senators. The reason why we picked May 1 is because everybody has to be there for the day. So it's a perfect day for everybody to come in. We've asked folks to make appointments, to see as many as in many folks as they can in their area. And then for those folks who can't, to be able to go through and drop off this packet of information that includes information about accessible, affordable, integrated housing. It's going to talk about accessible transportation in Pennsylvania. It's going to talk about direct care support and how we are in such a crisis. Because we're, because they're not being paid. They're not, they're not getting the respect that they deserve. And we're also going to be talking about guardianship and the alternative to guardianship. So you're going to be able to come in, you're going to pick up the packets, we have them already for you inside that, all in that packet will also be an invitation that you're going to hand to the folks to come out and join us at 1 o'clock for a press conference at the front of the building. So we're gonna have, we're going to start a rally at noon, out in front of the building. And from 12 to 1 we're going to be talking to folks about what's going on, some of the other points that folks would like to make there'll be snacks and waters and then at 1 o'clock, we're going to have a press conference. We're going to get to hear from Theo Braddie, who is the Executive Director of the National Council on Independent Living. We're going to hear from Brittany Boyd-Chisholm, who is the new CEO of the Center for Independent Living in Central PA, which is the Harrisburg area. We're going to hear from Misty Dion, who is the Roads to Freedom CIL CEO. We're going to hear from Thomas Earle, who is the who is a disability rights attorney, and also the CEO of the Liberty Resources CIL. We're also going to hear from a young advocate, and represent, State Representative Joe Hoenstein, who is always a huge supporter of the work that we do, as a person with a disability really understands this, this goal and this, what we want to accomplish. Somewhere during that press conference, we're going to let everybody know that it's now time and we're going to start the, we're going to start the crawl. And folks will again, get out of their wheelchairs, throw away their walkers, their crutches and climb the overwhelming number of steps that it takes to get to the Harrisburg State Capitol Front Entrance. For me, I made a choice last year was like, 'What did we want to do?' Disability pride because disability pride is all about being being true to yourself. It's about self advocacy.

Because when you advocate for yourself, you know, you feel better. It gives you pride in what you're doing. So to me, like all of this makes sense together. So I decided that I was tired of having to go in the back door. It's pretty fun. It lights up in different colors. But I want to go in the front door of the Capitol Building like everybody else. And so we're going to ask Josh Shapiro, Governor [unintelligible, 42:14] Josh Shapiro to make the front entrance of the of the Capitol Building accessible for all Pennsylvanians. Because it is a civil right to be able to come in the door like everybody else. As the disability community, we have to go through the back door, because it's the only way it's accessible for us to get in. You know, so I wanted to make sure that we made a statement, we have a Governor, who I believe will take notice, at least have a conversation about it. Hopefully, we'll at least think about what the, what the options could be. And so that is what we're planning. And we're asking folks to come in. You don't have to you don't have to crawl if you if that's not something you can do. Come and support the folks who are come as allies and support us. There's nothing that says that you have to be a person with a disability to join any of our events. This is something for everybody. We create any of our events for the community. We just focus on disability while we're there in that space. So I'm super excited. We have such excitement going on. You can learn more on our website. If you go to disabilitypridepa.org and go to the Disability Pride Harrisburg Day at the Capitol Event. And, again, we want to make sure that we thank Jimmi for giving us his time. Thank you, Phill, for doing that interview.

P Phill Rosen 00:44:11
Yeah, of course.

V Vicki Landers 00:44:13
We want to again, thank our corporate partners Highmark Whole Care for sponsoring this podcast. And we want to make sure everybody has a great day. And please join us May 1.

P Phill Rosen 00:44:30
All right. Well, I think that's it for our episode today.

P Phill Rosen Interview 00:44:33
Everyone, have a great day. Hope to see you at Harrisburg. Please visit our accessible website at www.disabilitypridepa.org. You can find us on social media @Disability Pride PA on Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok.