

>> Thank you for joining us this afternoon for the launch of the Empowered Cities webinar series. Today's topic is Financial Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities. We'd like to thank Citi Community Development for their support and partnership of Empowered Cities. My name is Michael Roush and I'm the director of the Real Economic Impact Network at the National Disability Institute. Before we get started in the content for today's webinar, I would like to turn it over to my colleague Shahida Brown who's going to go over some housekeeping tips for us, Shahida.

>> Good afternoon everyone. For listening to today's webinar, the audio is being broadcast through your computer. Please make sure your speakers are turned on or your headphones are plugged in. You can control the audio broadcast via the Audio Broadcast panel. If you accidentally close the panel, you can re-open by going to the Communicate Menu at the top of the screen and choosing Audio Broadcast. Next slide please. If you do not have sound capabilities on your computer or you prefer to listen by phone, please dial in. You can dial 1-650-479-3207 or use the toll-free line 855-244-8681. Our meeting code is 660 282 451 and you do not need to enter an attendee ID. Real-time captioning is provided during this webinar. The captions can be found in Media Viewer panel, which appears in the lower right-hand corner of the webinar platform. If you do not see the captions, you may need to open the Media Viewer panel by selecting the Media Viewer button in the upper right corner of the webinar platform. If you want to make the Media Viewer panel larger, you can minimize the other panels like Chat, Q&A and/or Participants. For Q&A, please use the Chat box or the Q&A box to send any questions you have during the webinar to Michael Roush or NDI Admin and we will direct the questions accordingly during the Q&A portion. We do hope you will send in Q&A, so please feel free to use those options. If you are listening by phone and not logged in to the webinar, you can also ask questions by emailing mroush@ndi-inc.org. Please note that this webinar is being recorded and the materials will be placed on the National Disability Institute website at www.realeconomicimpact.org. If you experience any technical difficulties during the webinar, please use the Chat box to send the message to the host NDI Admin, or you can also email Shahida Brown at sbrown@ndi-inc.org.

>> Great. Thank you for that information. So, what I'd like to do is I'd like to share with you our agenda for today. We have a packed agenda for this hour to share with you some really great information. And so to start this up, we're going to provide an overview of Empowered Cities. We're also going to share with you insight on this growing demographic of the disability community. We're also going to address why financial empowerment and financial inclusion matter for persons with disabilities. We're also going to highlight key strategies from the field and we're going to share with you some tips and explain how you can get started to build a fully inclusive program for persons with disabilities. Before we get into the content, we would like to-- I would like to turn this over to Michael Morris, the executive director of the National Disability Institute, to provide some opening words. Michael, I'll turn it over to you.

>> Thank you Michael. And it's a pleasure to be with all of you across the country as you join in today on this launch of our first webinar of Empowered Cities. What I want to share with you is just a little bit of background about the National Disability Institute. I am its founder and executive director. Many of you know us from our work across the country. We're a national nonprofit organization dedicated to building a better economic future for people with disabilities. We became an organization back in 2005 when we were designated our