DEAF-INITELY IRONIC...?
"CRIPPI NG"
THE
COMICON
APRIL 1, 2016, 8:30 AM TO 8:30 PM
304 ABC & PANASI LOUNGE, SCHINE STUDENT CENTER
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

HOW I MET THAT DEAF GUY.
HOW I MET THAT HEARING GIRL.
Matt and Kay Daigle, Creators of Webcomic, That Deaf Guy

WRITING ON MY OWN BEHALF:
THE CREATION OF EL DEAFO AND ITS IMPACT
ON MYSELF AND OTHERS
Cece Bell, Newbery Honor Recipient
Author and Illustrator

PLENARY SESSION: DEAF-INITELY IRONIC...?
NOTES FROM THE FIELD
Moderated by Diane Wiener, with Matt and Kay Daigle, Kanisha Ffriend, Kate Pollack, Carlisle Robinson, and Gilles Stromberg

PLUS: A LATE NIGHT SCREENING!
Disney/Pixar’s Inside Out, with open captions and audio description.
In collaboration with Orange After Dark (Gifford Auditorium, HBC)

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
REGISTER ONLINE OR ON-SITE!
FOOD HERDS EXHIBITORS ARTISTS GAMING WORKSHOPS PHOTO BOOTH
QUIET AREA GREAT PRESENTATIONS, AND MORE!!!

This symposium is made possible by the Co encontrary Departmental Initiative Program within the Division of Student Affairs, and co sponsored by the Disability Cultural Center, the Center on Human Policy, and the Disability Student Union. Special thanks to Rachael Zubal-Ruggeri, DSA Technical Services, Student Centers and Programming Services, and the awesome Orange After Dark team in the Office of Student Activities.

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
DISABILITY CULTURAL CENTER
http://cripplingsum.com
@crippingsum
#CRIPCON

POSTER DESIGN BY: RACHAEL ZUBAL-RUGGERI AND STAR BUNNY STUDIOS
DEAF-INITELY IRONIC...?
"CRIPPING" THE COMIC CON 2016

April 1, 2016
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Syracuse, NY

Schine Student Center, 304 ABC & Panasci Lounge

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30-9:15 A.M.</td>
<td>REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST BUFFET</td>
<td>Panasci Lounge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Also in the Panasci Lounge, at various times during the day:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matt and Kay Daigle and Carlisle Robinson will be greeting guests, selling artwork and related items, and signing autographs.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gilles Stromberg, Illustrator and Co-Creator of the Access Avengers, will be greeting guests, signing autographs (check your &quot;swag&quot; bags!), and collaborating with YOU in creating/introducing new Access Avengers.</td>
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<td>Tabling, cosplay space, and art exhibit area.</td>
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<td>Photo Booth (2:15-6:15 P.M.)</td>
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<td>PLUS: A swanky, groovy lounge (Schine 302) and our Quiet Room (Menschel Gallery: Schine 303) will be available all day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15-9:30 A.M.</td>
<td>WELCOME TO OUR CRIPCON!</td>
<td>Schine 304ABC</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30-10:30 A.M.</td>
<td>KEYNOTE</td>
<td>Schine 304ABC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Matt and Kay Daigle</td>
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<td>10:30-11:00 A.M.</td>
<td>BREAK, ART EXHIBITS, AND TABLING</td>
<td>Panasci Lounge</td>
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<td>11:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.</td>
<td>KEYNOTE</td>
<td>Schine 304ABC</td>
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<td>Writing on My Own Behalf: The Creation of El Deafo and Its Impact on Myself and Others (presented via Skype)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cece Bell</td>
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</table>
12:00-1:00 P.M.  LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:00-2:30 P.M.  CONCURRENT SESSIONS #1

OPEN SPACE  Schine 304A

Open Space is an opportunity for participants to create spontaneous and/or planned topical interactions with other participants—in other words, Open Space will be a venue for you to create your own symposium “sessions.” (You can create topics in advance at the Touching Base table in the Panasci Lounge or just visit 304A and join the emerging conversations!)

TELEVISION/STREAMING  Schine 304B

A Neat Little Circle:  Dr. Gregory House's Struggle with His Disability Identity  Cara Liebowitz

"You Don't Feel Like Such A Freak Anymore": Representing Disability, Madness, and Trauma in Litchfield Penitentiary (presented via Skype)  Lydia X. Z. Brown

Laughing at the Disabled Other: Grimm Depictions of Rape, Racism, and PTSD (presented via Skype)  Katie Murphy

COMIC BOOKS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS/ MEMOIRS  Schine 304C

Breaking the Fourth Wall: Deadpool, The Disabled and Mad Antihero  Layla Dehaiman and Rachael Zubal-Ruggieri

Collaboratively Generated Graphic Novels Centered Around Disability Culture and the Disability Experience (presented via prerecorded, captioned video)  Arianna Warner

“Mundane Stories”: Chronic Illness and Crip Time in Graphic Memoir  Crystal Yin Lie

2:30-2:45 P.M.  BREAK, ART EXHIBITS, AND TABLING  Panasci Lounge

2:15-6:15 P.M.  PHOTO BOOTH  Panasci Lounge

2:45-4:15 P.M.  CONCURRENT SESSIONS #2

WORKSHOP  Schine 304A

Cosplay and Disabilities: How Cosplay Helped Me Overcome My Disability!  Joseph Munisteri and friends, Dopple Cosplay
COMEDY, HUMOR, AND IRONY

Conceptualization of Disability and Humor in the Folk Tale of Don Juan Tenorio
Miguel Balbuena

Lost in Interpretation: Making Fun of Sign Language Interpreters in Comedy Shows
Drew Robarge

The Ironic Pokemon Hierarchy: An Exploration of Disability in the Pokemon World
Danielle Luchese

MIX IT UP

Disability Identity in Young Adults Using Social Media
Matthew Conlin

"I Spy With My Little Eye...": Exploring Diversity and Representation in Children's Books
Kanisha Ffriend

Continuing Highlights of Disability Representations in Webcomics
(presented via Skype)
Katherine Deibel

4:15-5:15 P.M. BREAK, ART EXHIBITS, AND TABLING Panasci Lounge

5:15-6:15 P.M. DINNER BUFFET Panasci Lounge

6:15-8:00 P.M. PLENARY SESSION Schine 304ABC

Deaf-initely Ironic...? Notes from the Field
Moderated by Diane Wiener, with Matt & Kay Daigle, Kanisha Ffriend, Kate Pollack, Carlisle Robinson, and Gilles Stromberg

8:00-8:30 P.M. CLOSING 2016 AND PLANNING FOR 2017 Schine 304ABC

9:15 P.M. (4/1)-1:00 A.M. (4/2) Orange After Dark Screening and Discussion: Inside Out
**With Open Captions and Audio Description**
Gifford Auditorium (Huntington Beard Crouse)

9:15-10 P.M.: Inclusive and accessible snacks
10:00-11:45 P.M.: Film
12:00-1:00 A.M.: Discussion

Visit the Orange After Dark website at: http://oad.syr.edu/
KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

HOW I MET THAT DEAF GUY, HOW I MET THAT HEARING GIRL

Matt and Kay Daigle have been comedy partners since 1993, when they met and were cast together in a Deaf/Hearing touring theater company. After touring a year with the company, Matt attended Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota and received a degree in Advertising Design. Kay went on to get her Masters Degree at Gallaudet University in Interpreting while Matt toured with the Tony award winning National Theater of the Deaf. Over the years, Kay and Matt have collaborated on several projects together, performing in variety shows and community theater. On a trip to a cartooning convention in Marceline, Missouri, the Daigles met Lynn Johnston (of “For Better or For Worse”) and Mike Peters (of “Mother Goose and Grimm”) both of whom encouraged Matt to “draw what he knows about and to be inspired by his own life.” It was during that trip that Kay approached Matt about writing the comic strip “That Deaf Guy.” Having worked as a comedy actress for over 15 years in theme parks, theaters, and variety shows, Kay had learned how to write for sketch comedy and wanted to try her hand at writing for cartoons. Matt, having an already established cartooning career with his single panel cartoons “In Deaf Culture...” “Extreme Interpreting” and “Deaf Reel,” made them a perfect match. The result was a cartoon about everyday life with a mix-lingual family: a deaf guy, hearing wife, and CODA son, and how life can be really funny when you throw them all together at home and into the world. “That Deaf Guy” made its webcomic debut in November, 2009 and is visited by hundreds of thousands every week. Kay and Matt have been married for 20 years and live in Burbank, California with their son Hayden. Visit the official “That Deaf Guy” website at: http://www.thatdeafguy.com/

WRITING ON MY OWN BEHALF: THE CREATION OF EL DEAFO AND ITS IMPACT ON MYSELF AND OTHERS

Cece Bell is an author and illustrator of books for children. She lives in an old church and works right next door in a new-ish barn. Her graphic novel memoir, El Deafo, which chronicles her childhood experiences with hearing loss, received a Newbery Honor and an Eisner Award in 2015. Cece’s other books include the Geisel Honor book, Rabbit & Robot: The Sleepover, I Yam a Donkey, Chuck and Woodchuck, Bee-Wigged, and the Sock Monkey series. Visit Cece’s website at: https://cecebell.wordpress.com/
**PLenary session**

“DEAF-INITELY IRONIC...? NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Panelists:
- Matt and Kay Daigle, Creators of Webcomic That Deaf Guy
- Kanisha Ffriend, Author, I, Too, Am a Dancer
- Kate Pollack, Master’s Student, Cultural Foundations of Education and Disability Studies
- Carlisle Robinson, Cartoonist and Creator of The Satrians
- Gilles Stromberg, Co-creator and Illustrator of The Access Avengers

Moderated by Diane R. Wiener

“Notes from the Field,” will ask panelists (and the audience) to focus on the following three questions, among others:

1. Why is “Cripping” the Comic Con important to you?
2. What does it mean to you to identify as an artist who is part of the Deaf cultural world and/or Disability rights world?
3. In what ways would you describe your roles and life as an artist?

**Panelists**

**Kanisha Ffriend** is a Syracuse University senior in the School of Education, majoring in Selected Studies in Education with a focus in Disability Studies. Ffriend has published an illustrated children’s book, I, Too, Am a Dancer, the story of a Black, hard-of-hearing girl who challenges ideas of (dis)ability. Ffriend has maintained leadership roles in the Disability Cultural Center, the Disability Student Union (2013-14 Events Coordinator), and the Office of Disability Services (2014-15). She is the creator of The Girls’ Room, which aims to empower young women, building self-esteem through social skills and the promotion of healthy body image. Kanisha volunteers with the Prison Outreach Program at Grace Episcopal Church. She plans to continue working in education and media to complicate single-narrative stories and to create an inclusive atmosphere in urban communities.

**Kate Pollack** is a second year Master’s student in the Syracuse University School of Education. She is pursuing an MS in Cultural Foundations of Education and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Disability Studies. Kate, who identifies as Deaf, is the Co-Activities Chair of the Disability Law Society; her academic work is directed toward advancing human rights and disability rights both internationally and in the U.S., with a focus on Deaf issues. She is a Graduate Assistant for the Disability Cultural Center, and runs ’Cuse ASL, Syracuse University’s ASL Club. Kate received her undergraduate degree from Hunter College, where she majored in History. She also holds a degree in Fine Arts from Munson Williams Proctor Institute in Utica, NY, now a part of PRATT Institute. Kate is from Eugene, Oregon, where she started her career as a cartoonist. From ages 11 to 14, her work was published monthly in the Eugene magazine, InTown. In 2001, Kate returned to the publication; it had by that time been renamed Comic News, and she wrote and drew a semi-autobiographical weekly strip called “Katewy: Comic News Volunteer” which was very popular and featured her coworkers at the magazine. Kate has been drawing since age four and never stops, but did take some time to focus on her career and academia. She is now returning to her cartoons and would like to branch out to the world of webcomics.
Carlisle Robinson is a deaf genderqueer comic creator and illustrator. They are passionate about educating the public with rarely told stories by minority groups, especially deaf people. They went to Gallaudet University for undergrad. They graduated from The Center for Cartoon Studies in Spring 2015 with a Master of Fine Arts. They currently reside in Massachusetts with their cats. Visit Carlisle’s website at: http://www.carlisle-robinson.com/

Gilles Stromberg attended Syracuse University between 2008 and 2012, where they received a BFA in Illustration, and minored in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies. Gilles was an engaged student at Syracuse, being part of OUTCROWD Magazine, the LGBT Resource Center, the SUMB, and the Chimemasters. Since 2011, they have worked in creative, executive, and advancement roles for both national and local LGBT-based nonprofit organizations in the Washington, DC/Baltimore metropolitan area. Currently, Gilles mentors and supervises students as a Program Coordinator within the Student Activities Office at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, MD. While their main job consists of supporting student organizations and major campus events, they have provided critical input in the creation of resource guides for both Trans students and for faculty who work with Trans students, and have worked with HR on campus to have ‘Gender Identity and Expression’ included within MICA’s Non-Discrimination policy as well as Trans healthcare coverage for all MICA community members. Since “Cripping” the Comic Con’s inception in 2013, Gilles has played an active role in the symposium, particularly as the co-creator and illustrator of the Access Avengers, our team of superheroes, all of whom are proud of and out about their disability identities. Each Access Avenger, in their own ways, disrupts and calls into question mainstream representations of superheroes.

MODERATOR

Diane R. Wiener, who is obsessed with all things Spider-Man, has published on subjects related to diversity, social justice, inclusion, pedagogy, and empowerment, with attention paid to interdisciplinarity (including feminist and queer media studies, sociolinguistic and medical anthropology, critical theory), cross-disabilities perspectives, and the Mad Pride movement. Diane holds a Ph.D. (U. Arizona, 2005: Comparative Cultural and Literary Studies), an M.S.W. (Yeshiva University, 1989), and a B.S. (Rutgers University, 1987), as well as a Postgraduate Certificate in Medical Anthropology (U. Arizona, 2005). She is licensed as an L.M.S.W. in New York State. Diane joined the Syracuse University Division of Student Affairs as the Director of the Disability Cultural Center in the fall of 2011, after being a full-time faculty member at Binghamton University, and having worked in the social services, education, and mental health activist fields on the east coast and in the southwest. Diane self-identifies as an educator, administrator, social worker, advocate, poet, and artist, among other roles. She has longstanding commitments to mindfulness, interfaith and secular contemplation, humanism, and exegesis. Diane is delighted to be teaching, currently, “(DIS)ABLING COMIC BOOKS, or: WHAT IS S.U.’S ‘CRIP CON’ ALL ABOUT...?” for the Reneé Crown University Honors Program at Syracuse University.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS #1

TELEVISION/STREAMING

A Neat Little Circle: Dr. Gregory House’s Struggle with His Disability Identity
Cara Liebowitz

This presentation will focus on Dr. Gregory House, title character of the hit medical drama series House, M.D., and his continual struggle to find a balance between his disabled identity and his desire for a cure.
“You Don’t Feel Like Such A Freak Anymore”: Representing Disability, Madness, and Trauma in Litchfield Penitentiary (presented via Skype)
Lydia X. Z. Brown

Netflix’s popular show Orange is the New Black features many characters whose portrayal suggests disability, madness, or trauma, as well as many other disability-related motifs. Nevertheless, disability is often missing from otherwise critical discussion of the show’s queer and trans characters, characters of color, and other marginalized people.

Laughing at the Disabled Other: Grimm Depictions of Rape, Racism, and PTSD (presented via Skype)
Katie Murphy

By applying black feminist histories to the fantasy procedural Grimm, this presentation explores how people—with and without disabilities—use humor as a coping mechanism when faced with a disabled subject whose existence challenges the social order. In particular, this presentation discusses historical narratives of race and rape.

COMIC BOOKS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS/MEMOIRS

Breaking the Fourth Wall: Deadpool, The Disabled and Mad Antihero
Layla Dehaiman and Rachael Zubal-Ruggieri

In this presentation we will discuss the complexity of the character, Deadpool. It is our aim to describe Deadpool’s multiple disability labels: terminal illness, physical disfigurement, and mental illness.

Collaboratively Generated Graphic Novels Centered around Disability Culture and the Disability Experience (presented via captioned, prerecorded video)
Arianna Warner

A socially engaged collaborative graphic novel project pairing up comic illustrators with people with disabilities to create educational and experiential graphic novels. Arianna welcomes presentation feedback via email: arianna.f.a.warner@gmail.com. Visit Adrianna’s website at: http://www.ariannawarner.com

“Mundane Stories”: Chronic Illness and Crip Time in Graphic Memoir
Crystal Yin Lie

Using a critical disability studies lens, this paper explores Julia Wertz’s The Infinite Wait and Other Stories (2012)—which centers on the author’s diagnosis with systemic lupus and discovery of comics—as an opportunity to theorize how graphic form forcefully and humorously articulates other temporalities and plotlines beyond the curative.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS #2

WORKSHOP

Cosplay and Disabilities: How Cosplay Helped Me Overcome My Disability!
Joseph Munisteri and friends, Dopple Cosplay

Panelist(s) will bring hope to others by sharing their personal stories about how cosplay and geek/nerd culture have helped them cope with and overcome their disabilities, making them stronger people. They discuss how they have used these experiences to help and strengthen their communities.

COMEDY, HUMOR, AND IRONY

Conceptualization of Disability and Humor in the Folk Tale of Don Juan Tenorio
Miguel Balbuena

The folk tale of Don Juan Tenorio has been around since the early seventeenth century and has persisted in the form of films, parody, plays, novels, poems, etc. My presentation examines the roles that disability and humor have played in this legend.

Lost in Interpretation: Making Fun of Sign Language Interpreters in Comedy Shows
Drew Robarge

Comedy shows on television have spoofed sign language interpreters interpreting prominent news conferences and events in recent years. This presentation will look at this trend and analyze it from many different lenses, providing insights into one of the most visible parts of deaf culture: sign language and interpreters.
The Ironic Pokemon Hierarchy: An Exploration of Disability in the Pokemon World
Danielle Luchese

My presentation will focus on the ironic ways that “abilities” and Pokemon type match ups affect battles. Each type has types that it is strong or weak against. Depending on which types compete in battle, winners can easily be determined. There have, however, been moments when unlikely victors have emerged.

MIX IT UP

Disability Identity in Young Adults Using Social Media
Matthew Conlin

The Internet is a relatively new medium. Through mobile applications and websites, young people can connect in ways that were once not possible. My project discusses how young people engage with disability identity, be it social justice, humor, or peer association.

“I Spy With My Little Eye...”: Exploring Diversity and Representation in Children's Books
Kanisha Ffriend

As the author of I, Too, Am a Dancer, Kanisha was happy and grateful to have so much feedback from an array of constituents and readers, altogether, and, in particular, during last year’s “Cripping” the Comic Con. Now embarking upon her second children’s book (with a hoped for publication date of December 2016), Kanisha wants to share her creative plans and again brainstorm with everyone about their ideas and suggestions. She would like her second book to be even more of a community effort than the first.

Continuing Highlights of Disability Representations in Webcomics (presented via Skype)
Katherine Deibel

At the past several “Cripping” the Comic Cons, I have discussed and presented the many positive and varied portrayals of disabilities found in webcomics today. This talk will continue this tradition. Again, I will share my ongoing pleasure of finding multiple webcomics that incorporate disability into the medium. This will further my argument that the publishing freedom inherent to webcomics not only frees the artists to present diversity but also integrate disability issues as a common, normal aspect of everyday life and story.

SCREENING

Disney/Pixar’s Inside Out

Emotions run wild in the mind of a little girl who is uprooted from her peaceful life in the Midwest and forced to move to San Francisco in this Pixar adventure from director Pete Docter (Up, Monsters Inc.). Young Riley was perfectly content with her life when her father landed a new job in San Francisco, and the family moved across the country. Now, as Riley prepares to navigate a new city and attend a new school, her emotional headquarters becomes a hot bed of activity. As Joy (voice of Amy Poehler) attempts to keep Riley feeling happy and positive about the move, other emotions like Fear (voice of Bill Hader), Anger (voice of Lewis Black), Disgust (voice of Mindy Kaling) and Sadness (Phyllis Smith) make the transition a bit more complicated.

VENDORS, INFO. TABLES & ART EXHIBITORS

Amy Kendrat
http://www.etsy.com/shop/RabbitEaredGirl

Kate Pollack
http://petroleusesletter.wordpress.com/

Syracuse Nerd
http://www.facebook.com/SyracuseNerd/
http://www.syracusenerd.com

Syracuse University Bookstore
http://bookweb.syr.edu/

Youth Power!
www.YOUTHPOWERNY.org

Wibbly Wobbly Timey Wimey
http://www.wibbilywobblytimeywimey.com/
A Word on “Cripping” the Comic Con

Our symposium “crips” the idea of a comic con by disrupting and redefining deviance, normalcy, wellness, health, and, of course, disability, in relation to a variety of social identities throughout our world. “Nothing About Us Without Us” is the guiding principle of our work.

What “Cripping” Means

Using the terms “crip” and “cripping” is one way of “taking back” language and power from the people who and the institutions and systems that have used it historically (and, in some cases, presently) to harm and demean people with disabilities, including certain at times “crippling” physical disabilities (like Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, etc.). Language, control, and social power are thus asserted by people with disabilities and our allies, who have the right to speak for ourselves and act on our own behalf. Therefore, by using the terms “cripping” and “crip,” instead of “cripple” or “crippling,” one may claim, strategically, that a host of well-meaning diagnoses, labels, treatments, options for intervention, and medical cures have the potential to be unwelcomed by—if not harmful to—the individuals they are designed to “help.” An extreme illustration of certain “curative” approaches is eugenics. Individuals with disabilities and disability identities have the right to exist, to make our own choices, and to be expected, included, and welcomed in all societal spheres. Individuals who are disability identified have ownership of our own bodies, minds, ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

SPONSORS

ENORMOUS GRATITUDE TO THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS’ CO-CURRICULAR DEPARTMENTAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM FOR FUNDING THE LION’S SHARE OF THIS SYMPOSIUM!

Disability Cultural Center
http://sudccc.syr.edu

Syracuse University’s Disability Cultural Center (DCC) coordinates campus-wide social, educational, and cultural activities on disability issues for students, faculty, staff, and community members with and without disabilities. The DCC is a gathering place for all individuals who seek an inclusive and diverse environment where respect, appreciation for one’s identity, and cultural differences are of the utmost priority. The DCC sponsors a variety of programming that aims to heighten awareness and understanding, as well as to promote dialogue and learning, about disability rights as human rights and as forms of cultural diversity. The DCC serves as a resource for sharing information on media, periodicals and other readings, web sites, services, advocacy groups, and local, regional, national, and international organizations that focus on disability issues, including the history of disability, pedagogy and disability, and disability culture. S.U.’s DCC is the first of its kind in the United States to be located within a division of student affairs and to be directed by a full-time professional staff member.

The Center on Human Policy
http://thechp.syr.edu

The Center on Human Policy (CHP) is a Syracuse University based policy, research, and advocacy organization involved in the national movement to insure the rights of people with disabilities.

Disability Student Union (DSU)
https://www.facebook.com/DisabilityStudentUnion

“We’re a student group comprised of people with and without disabilities of all kinds, interested in promoting disability culture and identity. ‘Disability’ is not a dirty word. We believe in the student voice. Join us and think differently, to leave this place a little nicer than we found it, or just to get in touch with your bad ‘crip’ self.”
THANK YOU!

- The incomparable Rachael Zubal-Ruggieri
- Laurie Heuser, Star Bunny Studios  
  http://starbunnystudio.wix.com/welcome
- Dan White, The Department of Ability  
  https://www.departmentofability.com/
- Everyone in the Division of Student Affairs, especially Rebecca Reed Kantrowitz, Kristen Jones Kolod, Tammy Hoffman, Radell Roberts, Kevin Costello, Shannon Feeney Andre, Virginia McBride, Linda Her, and all of the DellPlain MDAs
- Bridget Yule, Casey Morris, Scott Casanova, and the entire rock star team from Student Centers and Programming Services
- Dave Sargalski, Courtney Jones, Lorena Silva, and everyone from the Office of Student Activities and the Orange After Dark team. You’re all the best, INSIDE and OUT!
- Larry Quaglia, Dayle Nguyen, and Nicole Foster, our dedicated wizards from Technical Services
- Hetsie Veitch, Kate Pollack, Gabby Goodsell, Kate George, and Pamela Cortés-Ortiz, the fab Spring 2016 student staff team in the Disability Cultural Center
- Claudia Chen, our energetic Volunteer Coordinator
- Alexis Pratt and Gerald Brown, rock stars
- Christy Kalebic, Jordan Feldman, and all of DSU, for multi-format music (and everything, always)
- The René Crown University Honors Program
- The LGBT Resource Center, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the Slutzker Center
- The Office of Disability Services
- Terre Slater (President), Mareike Larsen (ASL Interpreter Coordinator and Team Leader), and the stellar team of ASL interpreters from Empire Interpreting
- Doreen Radin and the exceptional staff at Caption Advantage, for providing CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) and post-production video captioning
- Catherine Brozaitis and the awesome Schine Catering staff
- Amy Maxwell and Dee Bailey at Parking Services for their unwavering assistance
- Sharon Trerise for helpful YouTube consulting
- Syracuse Photo and Imaging, for keeping it real
- Mary Kasprzyk and the top notch team from the Video Production Unit
- Nancy Perry and all of the great staff at the Schine Copy Center
- Karen Spencer, Ray Sahm, and Jerry Colella from the University Book Store – huzzah!
- The ever-artful and unflinchingly kind Helen Krauss and Aileen Kopp from the University Book Store Framing Department
- Jason from Syracuse Nerd, for assistance with PR and recruiting vendors
- Chris Keevil from the Copy Center in the Marshall Square Mall
- Eric Clark from All Event Entertainment (for our Photo Booth rental)
- Mary Lee Hodgens from Light Work, for providing us with access to and usage of the Menschel Gallery as a quiet and low stim room during the entire symposium
- Eric Schwedes from Logo Incentives
- Fredrick Stamps, American Sign Language Instructor, for permission to use his fingerspelling chart
- Bonnie Townsend and Kim Sauer from Purchasing
- Allison Sarno DeVoe and Jennifer Russo in the School of Education
- The members of the anti-imperialist “Hoople Nation,” for their vibrant support
- Our families and friends
- All symposium keynotes, plenary session panelists, presenters, vendors, info. tablers, exhibitors, participants, and volunteers (with shout outs to Priscilla Mahabali, Darron Wallace, and Angel Cai)
- The Disability Cultural Center Advisory Board
- And, of course, thanks to all of the comic universes and multiverses for the inspiration!
MEET THE ACCESS AVENGERS (2016)

About the Access Avengers: The Access Avengers is a team of multi-cultural, multi-gendered, and multi-ethnic Superheroes with Disabilities, who together assure that we live in an accessible world and seek justice. They also join forces to disrupt the masculinist “sea of whiteness” and other problematic representations that are so common in mainstream comics and popular culture.

Janice
Age: 43. Joined the team: 2013. Powers: Dimension and Time Travel, Martial Arts. Bio: Warped into the future from the 1960s with her recently discovered powers, her beehive hairdo, and a pleather onesie, Janice is energized from her activist work back in her time, and ready to help the future that is now! Her retractable cane also acts as a bō, as she is a 10th Dan black belt. Janice is proud of her Latinx heritage and is in ongoing negotiation with her parents’ Southern U.S. roots. Image description: A large, light-skinned woman of color with cat eyeglasses and a brown beehive hairdo, Janice is wearing a full shiny latex, dark grey bodysuit with sleeves reaching all the way to her wrists. On her latex bodysuit in the square middle of her chest is the Access Avengers logo in gray. She’s wearing a black belt with a seatbelt-like mechanism in the center. She is holding a bō diagonally across her body in a fighting position. Her lips are coming together as if she is ready to smile.

Skipper
Age: unknown. Joined the team: 2013. Powers: unknown. Bio: As Janice’s loyal service animal, it is unclear if Skipper has changed as a result of traveling through time. Regardless, he is tirelessly dedicated to Janice and to the Access Avengers. Image description: A large, light-skinned woman of color with cat eyeglasses and a brown beehive hairdo, Janice is wearing a full shiny latex, dark grey bodysuit with sleeves reaching all the way to her wrists. On her latex bodysuit in the square middle of her chest is the Access Avengers logo in gray. She’s wearing a black belt with a seatbelt-like mechanism in the center. She is holding a bō diagonally across her body in a fighting position. Her lips are coming together as if she is ready to smile.

Trevor
Age: 23. Joined the team: 2013. Powers: Super Technical Intelligence, Engineering Prowess. Bio: Trevor returned home disabled after doing a tour in Iraq, having served as a member of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, and began working for a large weapons manufacturing company. He left this industry in order to dedicate himself full-time to pursuing accessibility as a form of social justice. Trevor is a work-in-progress when it comes to his white male privilege. Image description: A muscular, light-skinned white man with a duck-butt blonde hairdo, Trevor is seated in a long-distance, athletic wheelchair. His black and white wheelchair has teal accents that are the same color as the Access Avengers logo on the front of his uniform. He has a gray, full latex bodysuit. Trevor’s legs end at his knees. His friends probably would say that he looks like a younger version of Anderson Cooper.

Alexxus/Visor
Age: 20. Joined the team: 2013. Powers: Super Speed, Invincibility. Bio: Also known as “Visor,” Alexxus developed his powers during adolescence in Harlem, having initially hid them due to a fear of exploitation and unacceptance. After meeting Janice and the Access Avengers, Alexxus began using his super speed and invincibility to support the empowerment of his local community and the Access Avengers. Alexxus is very open about being a Black, Genderqueer, DeafBlind superhero. Image description: Alexxus is a muscular, androgynous, dark-skinned person of color of average height, wearing a 360° circular visor that goes around the closely cropped hair on his head. They are wearing a full gray latex bodysuit. On the left and right sides of his chest are images of two American Sign Language (ASL) fingerspelling hands denoting “AA” (Access Avengers). His gloves, his glasses, his boots, and the ASL images on his chest are dark pink. They are hunched over in a ready-to-run position. Alexxus is signing “C” (for “cripping”) in an assertive manner with his right hand behind his.

Fiery
Age: 21. Joined the team: 2013. Powers: Flight, Invoking Fire, Telepathy. Bio: Thought missing after taking part in a privately-funded space mission to Mercury, Fiery came back mysteriously onto the scene, spouting fire from her hands and eyes, flying through the air, and with a keen knowledge of others’ thoughts and feelings. Fiery is proud of her Dominican American heritage. Image description: A tall, feminine, dark-skinned woman of color, Fiery is wearing a sleeveless, full latex, dark grey to black bodysuit that shows off her “sick guns” (arms). Her long hair, flowing up toward the sky, is the color of fire. Her eyes emanate a white burning brightness, the same as the sun. The front of Fiery’s bodysuit / uniform has a red Braille “F” (for Fiery).
**Dalton**

*Age: 55. Joined the team: 2014. Powers: Super Strategic Intelligence, Innate Electricity.* Bio: At the HQ of the Access Avengers, Dalton works to ensure, in every way he is able, that his fellow teammates are up to speed and have all of the information necessary to get any job done. When Dalton’s electrical powers are activated, his neuron arm tattoo appears. He is a leader in the international neurodiversity pride movement. Dalton is Jewish and bleeds orange without apology. 

*Image description:* Standing tall, wearing a white dress shirt and gray slacks, Dalton is a middle-aged man with orange skin and bright blue hair and beard. On his shirt pocket is the Access Avengers logo in bronze hue. He has bushy blue eyebrows and a very stern look. On his shirt collar is a grey infinity symbol representing neurodiversity.

**Al**

*Age: 20. Joined the team: 2016. Powers: Animal Husbandry, Survival.* Bio: Living in the Pacific Northwest near Yosemite, Al grew to love nature and all the animals therein. The only problem was, he wasn’t able to access the trails and camps he wanted to go to! Al joins the Access Avengers in order to make nature more accessible for all. Both he and his owl companion use an Assistive Device on his Falconry glove, typing to communicate with each other and the world. Al is a first-generation Vietnamese-American who is happy to have joined the team in April, as it celebrates AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) Heritage Month (and in 2016, the Centennial of the U. S. National Park Service). Al is a vibrant member of the CP (Cerebral Palsy) pride movement. He seeks to raise awareness about mental health issues within refugee communities.

*Image description:* Seated in his power chair, Al emits astuteness and a wise confidence. Wearing a light grey, all latex bodysuit with sleeves that go all the way to the wrists, his uniform bears a dark grey Access Avengers logo at the center of his thin, angular body. The zipping mechanism for his bodysuit goes around the logo. Al is of Asian descent and has a light complexion. His gelled hair looks like a great horned owl’s ears. The brown Falconry glove worn on Al’s right arm includes a high-tech keyboard.

**Background:** The Access Avengers and the team’s logo were designed by amazing and super-talented Syracuse University alum, Gilles L. Stromberg, especially for “Cripping” the Comic Con. For more detailed information on how the Access Avengers rose to prominence in 2013 and have continued their work, ever since, please access Gilles’s 2015 symposium keynote address, “Don’t Call Me an Ally: The Journey Toward Meeting the Access Avengers.” In this presentation, Gilles provides background into the creation of the Access Avengers, and how Gilles’s journey through comic books informed the Avengers’ creation, along with Gilles’s understanding of the importance of representation within media. In their presentation, Gilles also provides a critical analysis of the word “ally” and the idea of “intersectional activism and advocacy.”

Gilles L. Stromberg’s 2015 “Cripping” the Comic Con keynote address (with an introduction by Diane R. Wiener) can be found on the Syracuse University Disability Cultural Center’s YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAh6JK3TcAc (captioned).

To access the Access Avengers with images, visit: http://crippingthecon.com/meet-the-access-avengers-2016/
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

Mareike Larsen
Interpreter Coordinator

Jim Brown

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