

# Institutional Disability Access Management Strategic Plan for Cornell University July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2019

The disability access management strategic plan is the university's roadmap for disability access. This plan is used to enhance the university's compliance with disability laws and regulations. Further, this plan supports the university's ongoing inclusion and diversity effort. The plan is designed to:

- Encourage colleges and administrative units to include disability access initiatives as a component of their diversity plan under Toward New Destinations.
- Educate the university community about the responsibility of ensuring equitable access for individuals with disabilities.
- Provide educational opportunities to improve the university community's understanding of disabilities and their impact on members of our community.
- Expand the university's commitment to community relations with organizations that advocate for individuals with disabilities.

The disability access management strategic plan is not intended to encompass all of the efforts related to disability access that occur on campus. This plan highlights only some of the efforts that facilitate a culture of inclusion for people with disabilities. To the greatest extent possible, the implementation of the 2016-2019 disability access management strategic plan will take place within existing university administrative departments as part of their ongoing work. Disability accommodations will continue to be carried out through the colleges and administrative units as part of their general operations.

The university is fully committed to meeting the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), Section 504, and NYS regulatory compliance obligations. In accordance with our ADA obligations, all new construction and renovations will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. At the same time, we agree to remove existing accessibility barriers to current programs, services, and activities, as required by the ADA, to allow equal opportunity in the most integrated setting. Accordingly, to make progress toward full access for individuals with disabilities at Cornell, the ADA Coordinator Team will oversee a three-year access plan. The plan focuses on two discrete areas; Information Technology (IT) and educational programming. These two areas are critical because they cross over multiple priority areas (i.e. employment, educational programs and services, communications and technology). They also impact all Cornell constituents (students, faculty, staff and visitors). The ADA Coordinator Team will collaborate with and utilize the expertise of staff across the campus to accomplish these strategic initiatives

## **Focus Area 1 Accessible Information Technology (IT)**

**Objective** – To increase the accessibility of high-priority, existing websites and to establish a means for ensuring accessibility of new websites and IT technologies.

### **Action Items/Deliverables**

- Identify top 20-30 web sites on campus
  - In conjunction with the ADA Coordinator Team
    - Decide on the list of websites
    - Initiate communication with website owners
    - Encourage use of web accessibility email address to accommodate and track issues encountered by website users
      - Raise awareness of web accessibility resources and importance of ADA compliance
      - Request that website owners indicate whether they are compliant with WCAG 2.0 AA standards
        - Include information about fee-based options to increase compliance
  - Generate report and recommendations
- Add accessibility considerations/compliance to the project charter process for capital IT projects
- Develop and disseminate the curated list of web accessibility resources
- Develop and implement the protocol for assistive listening systems

### **Key Metrics:**

- **Top 20-30 websites**
  - Total number of websites reviewed
  - Number/percentage of websites that are compliant with WCAG 2.0 AA standards
  - Number and type of issues collected through accessibility reporting email address
- **Classrooms**
  - Total number of classrooms
  - Total number of classrooms with assisted listening devices installed

## **Focus Area 2 Educational Programming**

**Objective** - To increase awareness of disability and create a climate of inclusivity.

### **Action Items/Deliverables**

- Develop a series of educational programs on a range of disability issues for the campus community.
  - Topics include: event planning, emergency preparedness new building code and accessibility, employment and disability, disability awareness and inclusion topics.
- Initiate a lecture series bringing in prominent speakers to address issues of disability, chronic health conditions and inclusion for our students, faculty, staff, visitors and other members of the Cornell community.
- Develop and partner with appropriate units to create a communications campaign to raise the awareness of disability culture on campus. Work with campus partners to educate the community about the range of conditions that qualify as disabilities. The awareness campaign will include articles in the Chronicle, PawPrint and Cornell Daily Sun as well as with New Media initiatives to facilitate a greater awareness of disability as an aspect of diversity and inclusion.

### **Key Metrics:**

- Pre/Post surveys from all educational programs and lecture series to measure awareness from educational programs.
- Increase percentage of employees who self-identify as an individual with a disability.
- Conduct assessment of submitted Event Registration Forms to determine whether there has been an increase of accessibility features by event planners.

The activities in this plan will be carried out over three years. Reports will be prepared annually to highlight progress and to refine activities based on emerging key metrics or as otherwise needed.