Hello my name is Sarah Young and my pronouns are she, her, and hers. Today I will be talking about my research Implicit Bias Towards Individuals with Disabilities. Now what is implicit bias? According to the American Psychological Association ": a negative attitude, of which one is not consciously aware, against a specific social group." (APA, 2022) In other words this can be your 'knee jerk' reaction when encountering a social group, be it your own or others. Another great way to think about it is kind of like that first thought that you have when you encounter a stimuli. For example: Let's say that you get cut off on I-205 by an older driver, your initial reaction may be 'umph of course they are older' confirming the implicit bias towards older individuals. Now for the research question "How does implicit bias affect how individuals with disabilities are perceived as competent?" In this study we will be using the Harvard Implicit Association Test. This was created to measure implicit bias in all individuals, be it you are in a place of privilege or not. This test measures an individual's implicit bias by quickly showing them the pictures, words relating to a concept, and even words outside of the social group that is associated with good and bad and measuring the amount of time it took the individual to place the photograph or words in the correct area for that step of the test. Basically it is like pong but for unconscious bias and, well, better graphics. This test became popular recently regarding the discussion of current racial tension against people of color in America showing up on websites such as Buzzfeed. It is important to note that only tests administered and reviewed by a qualified individual are to be taken with any sort of weight. This will be done in my research by showing the participant full body photographs of an individual in a wheelchair and full body photographs of an individual standing unaided. Along with words typically associated with being disabled such as the word 'wheelchair,' or 'ramp.' There are five (5) parts to the IAT or Implicit Association Test. Number One (1): This first part is associating descriptor words with an individual and having the individual pair the word with the social group. Number two (2): The second part is showing a word that is usually associated with good or bad things to a participant and they have to mark whether the word 'good' or 'bad'. An example of a good thing may be a cookie, whereas an example of a bad thing may be spilling an iced coffee. Number three (3): For the third part an individual has to go against the bias being tested and put the pictures and concepts of the social group that is often prejudiced against in the good category and the group that experiences less prejudice in the bad category. Number four (4) The categories of good and bad switch from step two (2). Number five (5):Finally the steps that are conducted in step three (3) switch to copy the social biases of the cultural norm. Now, how are these steps measured? To assess the results of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) the time difference between step three (3) and step five (5) are measured to assess the results of the test. If step five (5) took less time for the individual than step three (3) than that would indicate a greater bias towards the social group with less stereotype, in this particular case it would be able bodied individuals. If step three (3) took less time than step five (5), that that would indicate less bias towards individuals with disabilities. At this point you may be asking yourself, well why wheelchairs? The wheelchair is used in the International Symbol of Access and can be found on things such as parking spaces, license plates, recreational areas, and workplaces. This is something that is recognizable no matter the culture background or ability level of the individual. It is important to note that this does exclude many other disabilities such as mental illnesses, speech impairments, sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, chronic illness, and even some other mobility disabilities. It is also important to note that even the term disability bands together

many different experiences, even unique cultures (i.e. Deaf culture), into one unit with more diversity in it than outside of it. Current literature. A review of the discrimination cases by Graham et al (2019) filed against employers unveiled a trend when comparing physical disability to other types of disabilities. It was found that the majority of the 354, 923 accusations of discrimination were that concerning a physical disability, no matter what the concern (Graham et al., 2019). Other work conducted by McDonall et al. in 2019 measured the implicit bias towards the competency of blind individuals. Blindness professionals showed less implicit bias towards the blind individuals seeking employment than the employers who were not blindness professionals (McDonnall et al., 2019). While this study does offer hope that the simple act of education can reduce the amount of bias that individuals with disabilities face in employment. This shows that employers may doubt the competency of the sight impaired individual that they are going to hire. Hope for the future. While it may seem like this bias is inescapable for the average human, it is important to note that the implicit biases that we carry are something that can be changed. The American Academy of Family Physicians came up with a helpful acronym to reduce effects of Implicit Bias. This acronym is easy to remember, simply I.M.P.L.I.C.I.T. I : Introspection: Explore and identify your own prejudices by taking implicit association tests or through other means of self-analysis. M : Mindfulness: Since you're more likely to give in to your biases when you're under pressure, practice ways to reduce stress and increase mindfulness, such as focused breathing. P : Perspective-taking: Consider experiences from the point of view of the person being stereotyped. You can do this by reading or watching content that discusses those experiences or directly interacting with people from those groups. L : Learn to slow down: Before interacting with people from certain groups, pause and reflect to reduce reflexive actions. Consider positive examples of people from that stereotyped group, such as public figures or personal friends. I : Individuation: Evaluate people based on their personal characteristics rather than those affiliated with their group. This could include connecting over shared interests. C : check your messaging: As opposed to saying things like "we don't see color," use statements that welcome and embrace multiculturalism or other differences. I : Institutionalize fairness: Support a culture of diversity and inclusion at the organizational level. This could include using an "equity lens" tool to identify your group's blind spots or reviewing the images in your office to see if they further or undercut stereotypes.T : Take two: Resisting implicit bias is lifelong work. You have to constantly restart the process and look for new ways to improve.After this long spiel you may be asking yourself 'well, why should we care?' One of the more unique features of disability bias is the fluidity of what is considered disabled. Something as simple as a broken leg or the physical effects of getting older is enough to limit the physical range that an individual may be able to use their body. It is also important to note that many disabled individuals have perspectives, skills, educations, and abilities that could improve many individuals lives in areas such as the workforce and social circles. This acknowledgment could also benefit the mental health of individuals with disabilities.At the end of the day, regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability or otherwise, it feels good to be recognized not only as a human being, but a human being that comes with a wide array of emotions, interests and knowledge. Sources. Ask me anything.