

Cornell University Disability Colleague Network Group (DCNG)

DCNG Website includes option to join the listserv, E-Board Bios, contact information, and Resources
<https://hr.cornell.edu/colleague-network-groups/disability-cng>

Who we are:

The Cornell University Disability Colleague Network Group is a university-sponsored employee resource group. Our mission is to raise awareness, serve as an educational resource, provide support, and offer peer mentorship for those working with short-term or long-term disabilities - their supervisors, colleagues, allies, and other supporters. Through both disseminating disability-related information and resources via various campus communication mechanisms, and networking opportunities, we hope to increase the work/life balance, recruitment and retention of faculty and staff with disabilities.

What we do:

Our group has weekly opportunities to come together informally. Once a month we come together for a meeting which usually features a presentation or facilitated discussion around a topic of significance for the Cornell staff/faculty disability community. We also network with other groups both internal and external to Cornell and organize opportunities to support our community. We also identify opportunities for staff and faculty with disabilities to engage with University leaders in efforts to create a more positive campus climate, and enhance workplace inclusion, for our community.

If you are interested in becoming more active with the DCNG or have any ideas to share, please let us know:

Aubrey Lang, Co-Chair: AJL63@cornell.edu
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Definition of Disability and Resources to Assist

What are Disabilities?

Disabilities are physical or mental impairments that limit one or more major life activities, such as walking, seeing or hearing. Disabilities present themselves in many forms. Some are visible but most are not apparent. Non-visible disabilities include partial sensory impairments, such as low vision or hearing loss, chronic medical conditions, mental health conditions, and learning disabilities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 20 million of 68 million families in our country have a member with disabilities. People with disabilities are the largest minority of the U.S. population.

- Above definition was pulled from the following Cornell website: <https://accessibility.cornell.edu/event-planning/>

Resources to assist:

- **Cornell University HR website:** <https://hr.cornell.edu/>
 - Includes information regarding Job Opportunities, Benefits/Pay/Perk, HR Policies, Wellbeing, Career Development, Our Workplace
- **Cornell University Medical Leaves & Accommodations:** <https://hr.cornell.edu/benefits-pay/leaves-disability>
- **Cornell University Disability Colleague Network Group (DCNG) Website:** <https://hr.cornell.edu/colleague-network-groups/disability-cng>
- **Cornell University Accessibility website:** <https://accessibility.cornell.edu/>
 - Accessible IT, Campus Access, Campus Events, Disability Inclusion, Event Planning, Strategic Plan
- **Cornell University Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability:** <https://www.yti.cornell.edu/>
 - For nearly 60 years, the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability has advanced knowledge, policies, and practice to support people with disabilities in workplaces, schools, and communities.
 - **Yang-Tan Institute Work/Life balance and disability testimonials:** <https://work-life-disability.org/#home>
- **Job Accommodation Network:** <https://askjan.org/index.cfm>

Why we're here today...

- **CONCERN:** Employees with disabilities are reporting lower levels of positive campus climate and experience compared to those without disabilities.
- **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS?:**
 - **DATA:** Belonging at Cornell Survey Results are consistently showing across units that staff with disabilities are reporting less positive workplace experiences and climate, with as much as 20% differences in responses in certain specific areas (i.e. career growth, climate, feeling valued by colleagues, etc).
 - **LIVED EXPERIENCE:** those of us who have disabilities or chronic health conditions are living it every day and hearing about it from colleagues.

EA's Question to DCNG:

How can we support employees with disabilities?

- Ask more questions to understand what might be causing less positive experiences for employees with disabilities...
 - How is the “disability identity” viewed overall on our campus? How is it discussed/reacted to?
 - Is disability explicitly included in diversity and inclusion efforts?
 - What makes an employee feel valued and that they belong?
 - What can we point to that would show employees with disabilities that the University cares about their workplace experience?
 - Conversely, what can be pointed to that might demonstrate the opposite?
 - Where does the responsibility for improving campus climate lie?