

Changing What's Possible: S.2 Ep. 0 Transcript

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SPEAKERS

Dr. Marie McNeely, Jocelyn Cohen

D Dr. Marie McNeely 00:01

Hello, and welcome to Changing What's Possible: The Disability Innovation Podcast brought to you by Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation or CPARF. I'm your host, Dr. Marie McNeely. And I am excited to be joined today by Jocelyn Cohen, Vice President of Communications and Engagement at CPARF. So Jocelyn, welcome.

J Jocelyn Cohen 00:21

Thank you. It's good to be back and talking with you, Marie!

D Dr. Marie McNeely 00:25

Well, Jocelyn we are thrilled to be here with you and to be starting our second season of the show. And listeners, Jocelyn is here to tell you more about what's new at CPARF and what to expect in season two of the show. So let's get started first with some introductions, Jocelyn. For listeners who haven't met you yet, can you first tell everyone a little bit more about yourself?

J Jocelyn Cohen 00:44

Sure. So you know, as you mentioned, I'm the Vice President of Communications and Engagement at CPARF. I've been here for about four years, and I'm an adult with cerebral palsy. So our mission and what we are looking to achieve is quite close to my heart and motivates my work every single day. And when I first started here, we were solely focused on funding US- based cerebral palsy research. Over the last year, we've expanded our mission to also include innovation for people with all disabilities and implementation of the cerebral palsy research that we're funding. And this podcast is really meant to focus on the innovation side of things, and then look deeper as it applies to how it connects with the research or the implementation that we're doing over here.

D

Dr. Marie McNeely 01:33

Oh, that is wonderful. And listeners, I'm looking forward to serving as your host again this season. I'm a PhD trained neuroscientist, science communicator and avid podcast enthusiast. And my research background is in movement disorders. And of course, I cannot wait to introduce you to more amazing people with disabilities, experts and innovators on the show this season. And Jocelyn, maybe we can dive in a little bit and get our listeners up to speed on the progress that CPARF has made in the past year in this innovation space. So what are some of the key updates from CPARF over the past year?

J

Jocelyn Cohen 02:05

The biggest update is that we just launched the second Remarkable US cohort with six US-based startups earlier this month. And this builds on the success of the pilot cohort from last year. Several of the US-based startups from last year focused on technology that will help people with cerebral palsy. And one of them was focused on technology that was created for people with visual impairment but has really positive implications for people with CP and other disabilities. And even people who aren't disabled, but just need a little bit of technological help. I think that's one of the most exciting things about the technology that we're supporting through our accelerator is that yes, while we're disability tech focused and we are a disability organization, one thing to really keep in mind is that ultimately, disability is at the forefront of innovation. And a lot of times what's created for people with disabilities then helps the population at large in the future. And I know that's something you'll hear more about even in our first episode this season.

D

Dr. Marie McNeely 03:08

Absolutely. And I love that the innovation that you're supporting is not just helping people with CP, but it really impacts a wide range of people. So can you talk a little bit more about why it is so important for CPARF to support innovation for people with cerebral palsy and other disabilities?

J

Jocelyn Cohen 03:22

Absolutely. So cerebral palsy is the most common lifelong physical disability in the world. And along with CP, people have co occurring conditions. So, many people can be visually impaired, their hearing can be impaired, their ability to communicate can be impaired. And so we look at the ability of technology to help people with all disabilities because so many disabilities intersect with the life of someone with CP or can intersect with the life of someone with CP. And we also understand that were part of this gigantic disability community- there are a billion people in the world with disability I think it's one in four folks in the world have disability. And so we know that it's not a monolith, that it's not a singular experience. If you know my disability story, my CP story, you know, mine. And this podcast exists to highlight other voices and show all the different sides of disability and our accelerator exists to do the same on the technology side, and to enable people with disabilities to live full lives.

J

Jocelyn Cohen 04:26

So not just focused on what you think someone might absolutely need, but also what someone might want to do with their lives. Like all the aspects of someone's life, deserve to be amplified, deserve to be experienced. And that's why disability technology is so crucial. One of the other reasons that the work we're doing at Remarkable US is so important is that we are funding only affordable disability technology. It's widely known in the disability community that it is almost prohibitively expensive times to be disabled in the US. And that technology can become so expensive that it's just impossible for someone to get. And we don't like that it's impossible or nearly impossible for someone to get the wheelchair that they need the device that they need the help that they need to just live their life. So the tech that we are funding through the accelerator is going to be affordable and accessible. We are making accessibility accessible through the Remarkable US accelerator.

D

Dr. Marie McNeely 05:27

Definitely, well, I'm really looking forward to hearing more of these stories and learning more about these new innovations. And we have a fantastic lineup of podcast guest this season. So Jocelyn, can you tell our listeners what to expect in season two of changing what's possible?

J

Jocelyn Cohen 05:43

Sure. So season two builds off of season one, but it is a little bit different. We're going to have some folks on the podcast who aren't necessarily disability tech startup founders, but who are important voices in the disability space. And then we're going to highlight the startups in this year's US based cohort. So I can't tell you just yet who those people are. But I know that their products and services are amazing. And you're going to want to hear their stories and why they got involved in the disability tech space. We'll be highlighting lived experience as well, whether it's from a founders perspective, or a user's perspective. And I think each startup has quite an interesting story to tell this season. And our other special guests really round out the disability conversation.

D

Dr. Marie McNeely 06:35

Wonderful. I think the anticipation is building for this big reveal of the lineup of guests. And for our listeners who haven't subscribed yet, who should listen to the show and why.

J

Jocelyn Cohen 06:46

I mean, I think everyone should listen to the show. Because I've really learned over the last year that disability tech shouldn't exist in a bubble. So we want everybody to know about this because there might be something created for people with disabilities that would help someone without a disability. Um, that said, if we're getting a little bit more targeted, anyone in the technology industry, anyone who considers themselves a creative person or an innovator should listen. Certainly anyone with a disability or someone who cares or love someone with a

disability should listen. Anyone who just wants to be up on the latest things happening in the world should listen to this podcast, I mean, innovation uncovers things that you wouldn't otherwise see in your life. And this podcast is a window into that.

D Dr. Marie McNeely 07:32

Well, Jocelyn, we're looking forward to sharing these stories with everybody. And I know the publication schedule for our podcast is going to be a little different this season compared to season one. So when can guests expect new episodes to be coming out? And where can they go to find them?

J Jocelyn Cohen 07:46

So the first episode is going to come out on Friday, May 12. And then we'll be releasing episodes every other week on Friday, all the way up to October 6, which is World CP Day. You can find us on your favorite podcast platform wherever you get your podcasts.

D Dr. Marie McNeely 08:05

Excellent. Well, Jocelyn, it was wonderful to catch up with you today. Listeners get excited for season two. And I appreciate you sharing your insights in this season two introductory episode, Jocelyn.

J Jocelyn Cohen 08:17

Thanks so much Marie! Can't wait for the rest of the season.

D Dr. Marie McNeely 08:21

Well, we are excited listeners. Thank you for joining us for this introductory episode as well. Don't forget to subscribe to the show on your favorite podcast platform. And we can't wait to connect again in the next episode of Changing What's Possible.