

>> It is 10:01, so I'm going to say good morning, everyone. Welcome to the accessibility webinar series. This session will be recorded shortly. My name is Randi Turner and I'm the accessibility and disability rights coordinator from the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. With us we have Sharron Rush talking about the best access for web access. You will have poll questions. I want to do a little housekeeping before we start recording. This is going to be an interactive session as well as an opportunity to put comments into the chat box. If you have questions for the presenter, she is leaving about 45 minutes at the end for Q&A so we can take lots of questions. Please put those in the Q&A box. You see a Q&A icon on your tool bar. You may have an opportunity to unmute yourself at the end of the session but feel free to go ahead and start posting questions in the Q&A box if you have them. The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities has people appointed by the governor and seven must have disabilities. The committee does very important things. As my director, Ron Lucey says, we listen. We create a report due at the end of every biennium and we make reports to the legislature. You have an opportunity to be part of that if you either e-mail us at gcpd@gov.texas.gov and our next committee meeting will be in July. If you go to gov.texas.gov you can see when your meeting is but I know it will be in July. I'm going to repeat a little bit of what I said, so here we go.

>> Recording in progress.

>> Welcome, everybody. My name is Randi Turner. I'm the accessibility and disability rights coordinator from the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. This is our accessibility and disability policy webinar series. Today we have Sharron Rush with Knowbility and she's going to talk about the 20 plus years of standards of best practices for web access. Sharron, I'm going to turn it over to you.

>> Thank you, Randi. It's always a pleasure to work with the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. I think the next slide has the details of this

presentation, we're celebrating Global Accessibility Awareness Day this year on May 19th and we're going to look a little bit at the -- well, the next slide is the agenda but I want to thank the governor's committee for having me and say what a pleasure it is to work with this committee. We're going to do a quick poll after I read the agenda items. My approach to speaking is to -- it's funny when you said the governor committee listens. That's what I true to do, too. I will talk and give you background and foundations. I really do want to hear a lot from you and your journey through digital accessibility through this Global Accessibility Awareness Day celebration and how standards have impacted your work or life. To begin, we'll do that poll and then we're going to have an interview with the GAAD cofounders. I'm going to try to do a quick review of web accessibility history. I'm assuming that most of you who are here know how it's evolved but we'll do a quick reminder to ourselves about what some of those milestones have been. Considering these history, I want to hear from you and how that's been going. We have the standards in place, we have had the law, we have been working as a community to enforce that law. I asked Randi before if she could gather from the community an idea of what are your own current challenges? So we're going to look at some of those that were submitted but the community. And then let's all put our heads together and figure out how to keep this ball moving. I think the title of this is is the web accessible yet? And I think we can all agree that maybe we're not all to the point of perfection, but together we can continue to improve the web and access for all. I'm happy to take comments and questions as we go. As Randi said, put those in the Q&A box. We'll get to them as we can and, of course, the poll comments are going to really guide our discussion as well.

So, here we are together on happy Global Accessibility Awareness Day, referred to as GAAD. It was launched in May of 2012 and it's celebrated the third Thursday of every May. This is the 11th celebration. There's a lot of noise on Twitter today that says why do we even have to have Global Accessibility Awareness Day? Shouldn't every day be Global

Accessibility Awareness Day? I kind of appreciate we have this one day that we can recognize the community, the movement, many, many of you who are here today who work on this all as your daily work, as accessibility coordinators. So can we launch that first question, Randi, and hear from folks about who they are? Who are you? What's your role? How do you address the question of web accessibility or digital accessibility? What's the --

>> Who is attending is our first question.

>> Right. Who are you? Who are you?

>> And we're getting answers. So far we have about -- well, let's wait. The numbers are still ringing up here. Mostly Texas state agency representatives. A few from other state agencies and higher ed so we have one person who is small business. We don't have start up business, large corporations, one municipality now. It's mostly state and local government and higher education.

>> And we're not surprised at that. Did we close that first question?

>> I did. Do you want me to share the results?

>> Yes, I would love to hear the results.

>> Let me share them but I believe it will cover up the CART so I'm going to share and then we'll -- so don't talk during that time. Okay.

>> Okay. So the reason that we have GAAD is to get folks talked to each other, really. Thinking and talking about digital access, thinking about inclusion and for many people, it's a chance to even learn about how to people with disabilities use the web? The next question for y'all is have you celebrated GAAD before? Have you done activities in the past 11 years? And if so, how many times?

>> All right. So I have launched the poll. People are responding. Most of them this is their first one. Still have a couple of people responding. I'm going to end the poll and share in just a second.

>> Well, look at that. 80% this is my first one. That's great. Well, welcome. In a way, I'm really thrilled because I think one thing that we're learning about GAAD and you'll hear in a minute from the two founders, is that this movement has really grown beyond their expectation. Did we skip the -- okay.

>> Sorry, my fingers move too quick.

>> That's okay. And for our CART provider this is captioned so you don't have to worry about that.

[Captioned video.]

>> No, we don't want to hear it again. [Laughter] Yes. It was very nice of them to be with us but we don't want to hear it again.

>> That was great, Sharron. This is Randi. That was great. Thank you for doing that for this session today.

>> Oh, of course. They were pleased to do it, too. Neither of them could be here for AccessU so this was their next best to be with the community in Texas. I think one of the things that Joe said at the end was for people to be more aware of the statistics so I thought quickly we would talk about the fact that there are more than a billion people around the world who live with disabilities, at least 20%. I think that's an undercount. There are temporary disabilities, situational disabilities but that's the figure we typically use. Among the states in the U.S., Texas has the second highest number of people with disabilities. More than 50% of our elderly people over 60 are categorized as people with disabilities. I think it's important that

we remember that when you make inaccessible websites, you're locking these people out of equal participation.

When we talk about these, it's also important to realize that these statistics reflect the lives, the actual lives, of people with disabilities and when the Internet doesn't work for them, a lot of daily function doesn't work for them and we say that especially during the pandemic as more and more of our basic interactions with the world had to move online.

When we talk about accessibility, you know, often people who are unfamiliar with the idea of disability access and when we say digital accessibility, they're like, well, what do you mean? They don't have Internet connections? They don't have computers? What's the problem? Doesn't everybody have a phone? And it's not access in that sense, that you don't own a phone or have a computer, but it's the design implications and the idea is that when you design with accessibility in mind, when you incorporate these global accessibility standards that people with disabilities can get the same information, I think some of the statistics around COVID information that was posted in different states is that many, many, more than half of them were not designed in a way that could be accessible for people with disabilities. Also since the web has become so interactive, we want to ensure that the tools that you need to create web content are also accessible so that people with disabilities will be active producers and have those interactive, online experiences of gaming or even ordering groceries that's equivalent to any other user.

Just a quick reminder that we're talking about real people. These are pictures of people from our community, veterans, college professors, students, mothers who have disabilities both visible and not so visible. Hidden disabilities are something that often are overlooked because people with cognitive disabilities or emotional behavioral disorders, those are not always understood as well and the design challenges for that group are often misunderstood as well. This is just a quick reminder that these are real people, real lives and

the next slide reminds us especially of the older users. Joe talked about that, too, the fact that he's now over 50. He doesn't see as well or hear as well and that this whole issue of disability access is becoming very, very personal to him. Disabilities tend to increase with age.

So we mentioned the global accessibility standards. Where do those standards come from? I think one of the, probably the mother lode, the source of the legal and technical standards come from the W3C, the World Wide Web Consortium and they have the web accessibility initiative which makes a standards which is really a definition of how to design a technical standard that says how do you design content that's accessibility for people with disabilities? It was first published in 1999. It's revised periodically so we have lived with these standards now for many, many years, more than 20 years. On that standard, which is a technical standard, a policy standard, companies, governments, state agencies and the European union build legal requirements. So the European directive. There are laws in Japan. Section 508 in the U.S. That's part of the U.S. federal rehabilitation act as section 508 is updated and the Texas administrative code -- excuse me. I had the COVID this week finally after two years of dodging that bullet, I finally got it so my voice is still a little rusty, so I apologize for that. The Texas administrative code 206.50 and 213.10, 213.17, that's based on WCAG. The FCC requirements specific to emergency communications connecting back to the WCAG. That's the WCAG which is the W3C accessibility guidelines. It used to be known as the web content accessibility guidelines but since 1999 they have also folded in requirements for browsers, for user agents and for authoring tools so now it's the W3C accessibility guideline still referred to as WCAG. Also the air carrier access ability was updated specific to the web in 2016. You start the see the pattern of, yes, there are legal requirements by they map back through the labyrinth to the W3C global standard developed by consensus by member organizations.

The Americans with Disabilities Act provisions are a little tricky since it was passed way

before we used the Internet the way we do now. It's not codified specifically within the ADA but our courts have said the Americans with Disabilities Act does apply to the web and they have used that idea of being equally accessible to public space by saying that the web is a public space and therefore it must be made accessible to people with disabilities.

>> We have a question that kind of ties into that so I thought I would ask it now.

>> Sure.

>> Or a comment, kind of a comment question I guess. There is a difference between equivalent experiences and identical experiences. I find that the interpretation of WCAG2 is often the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law. Your thoughts on that?

>> I agree that it's often the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law. I think in some ways it's unfortunate that we have adopted this idea that WCAG is a technical standard because actually it's more of a policy guide. It was written in policy language, not technical specification language and it's one reason that developers get so frustrated and confused with WCAG. It talks in this broad, vague policy language and the developers just say just tell me what to do and so what's needed is the translation of that policy into actionable techniques and, you know, the W3C has tried to do that. Their education and outreach working group which I'm a member of tries to take those policy statements and turns it into more practical, testable kinds of guidance for developers but I agree with you that there's a difference between equivalent and identical. Maybe therein lies some of the problem because people are trying to figure out just what is an equivalent experience. For me it always comes back to that idea of, well, ask your users. Can someone with a disability do the same thing? Can they get that job done? Can they register to vote? Can a person with a disability get their groceries from H-E-B like someone without a disability with the same amount of effectiveness? And my hope -- and actually, my expectation is that as the community makes its needs more clearly understood, which is part of what Global Accessibility Awareness Day is good for, that we start

listening to users and that rather than it being understood as a technical standard where you can just check the box, yes, I did this, I did this, I did this, we start including accessible design into user testing. We get direct feedback from users, because, you know, as people are doing design, there is an increased reliance on user testing. Well, it's still not done that we're including people with disabilities in those user tester banks. So my hope is that as we do more of that, the focus will move from that where you can just check off the box and say I did this, I did this, I did this. I put in alt text. Does it really mean anything to somebody who can't see? We need to listen to the users and incorporate that into the design process, in my opinion. Did that answer your question or comment?

>> Yes, ma'am, it looks like it did.

>> Okay. So, since we have 80% state government agencies, I thought we would look at this in the context of that's who we are. That's our main concern is how do we make our agencies responsive to all our citizens, right? And the urgency there is undeniable to me. What y'all do is some of the most important stuff that's done on the web and effective communication can save lives. I mentioned the fact that COVID information in many cases and Texas was not one of them but many states did not have accessible COVID information out there about what was going on in the community. The way that I think this can be done most effectively within the context of state government agencies is to make sure that your policy is tied to state and federal law within your agency. You include people with disabilities in planning. You integrate the accessibility provisions into your planning so as you're saying we're going to buy a new HR software or scheduling software or whatever, purchasing on planning the tools that both your citizens, your external constituents and your staff are using, that you ensure that accessible provisions are considered in the purchase and creation of those.

Another thing that I think is really important, and maybe if y'all feel like talking in the

chat and letting me know how many of you out there are accessibility coordinators, because I think it's wonderful that our state agencies create an accessibility coordinator in the agency, but it can't just stop there, right? That coordinator has to have a network of people distributed throughout the organization who share information, share resources, remain aligned so that we have -- so that we're not just trying to do this alone because accessibility can never be done by one person in an organization unless, you know, it's a three person organization or something. But even then, everybody should have shared understanding of the goals and the processes that support accessibility throughout the organization. The policy commitment, the tools that we use, the procurement, all that stuff has to be disseminated, shared and commonly agreed on and understood and that usually happens with periodic training, reenforcement and this is a fluid environment. The technology is changing and evolving so we have to make sure we're keeping up, too. Social media, today, oh my gosh on Twitter there's so much about GAAD at least in Knowbility's Twitter feed. There's no alt text to celebrate happy GAAD day so we all make bloopers from time to time. You just need to be real conscious of the fact that if you're doing social media outreach you use the accessibility features that people have fought hard to make sure they're included. We gave Twitter a really hard time because there was no way to put alt text and now there is so we have to use it. And those feedback loops are really, really important. Hearing when someone put an inaccessible images -- one of the things I saw, a friend of GAAD put in a message without alt text and I saw in a DM, thank you, friend, for that happy message. You might want to know you don't have an alt text and they fixed it right away by those feedback loops to let people let you know how are we doing? And when we screw up because we will all do sometimes, don't come down like a ton of bricks. Help elevate your ally there. Accessibility is a journey, not a destination. We will probably never get to, okay, the entire Internet is accessible so that's important to know.

I want to hear from y'all about your Internet use during the pandemic. We'll do the poll

on the next slide but some of the things I did and that increased for me when I started working from home, my son was going to school from home. His kids were going to school from home. Grocery shopping, doctor's appointments, I registered my car online, I renewed my voter registration online, I got voting by mail online. All kinds of civic engagement. Austin was having town meetings online. I know people who went to weddings online, funerals, social and family events. People were doing their professional development on line where maybe previously they had gone to conferences in person and now they're all online again and probably more. We're going to open the next poll question and how was your use of the Internet impacted by the pandemic?

>> All right. I have released the poll. Just FYI, every now and then people can't access the polls. Our answers are not really much different, I used it a bit more but mostly just more of what I was already using it for. I used it a lot more for the things like work and school. I used it all the time for social and entertainment as well. I used it so much I'm considering treatment to get help with it. And other.

>> And if other, if there's another category that applies to you, feel free to write more about that in the chat.

>> Right. I opened the chat so usually it's just to respond to the panelist but I opened it so can see everyone's answers if you click on everyone. All right. Looks like we're about done so I'm going to end the poll and post the results.

>> I'm with the ones I used it so much I'm considering treatment. That's why I put that one in there. I really got used to doing things online now that I don't probably need to be doing online and, you know, my son says mom, you should get out of the house more. But I was -- can I see that again, Randi? I was surprised that so many people said it was not that different for them. I guess I just assumed it was. Yeah, most people, so it's about a third said it was not that much different so that's very interesting to me. I'm going to mute for a

minute.

>> I will add that also a third said I used it a lot more for things like work and school than I had ever used it before so that's about 60% of our answers there.

>> Okay. Forgive me. Onward. All right. So how are we doing in this idea of accessibility on the web. We raised awareness. Have we made the web any more accessible at all? These were some articles and I'm just going to read off the titles of the articles for those of you who don't see the slides. I read a really interesting one. COVID-19 highlights gaps in accessibility for people with disabilities. You will get these slides so you can follow up on these that interest you. Disaster preparedness and of course COVID was a disaster for the country and disaster preparedness for people with disabilities same but different and FEMA's attitude toward communication with the communities of people with disabilities and what they needed to do and what it occurred to me they doesn't really think about. Communication accessibility during a state of emergency. And then the last one on this is the WebAIM million and that's a website, WebAIM is another nonprofit that works in this digital accessibility space and every year they do an automated scan of the homepages of a million websites, the top million websites that they consider the top million websites in the world and they do a scan to see do they meet the WCAG requirements? And according to their automated scan, somewhere between 95% and 98% of the homepages of websites around the world do not meet minimum requirements. It might be something fairly simple, but it might be complex and it's just kind of an indicator of are people paying attention to standards? Are they applying them? At least 98% of them are failing to some degree or another, so that's another interesting initiative that you might want to check out.

We asked y'all to submit some challenges and some of the challenges that you have and first I want to acknowledge that some people submitted their own personal challenges, like the difficulty of getting to a Spurs game in a wheelchair, which I sympathize with. That's really

not good and not fair, but it's kind of outside the scope of what we were talking about with digital accessibility so those of you who sent in the challenges will get the book whether it was a personal challenge but these are more related to the digital issues that we spoke about.

One person said that organizations such as health and human services and the housing authority are not following the rules properly and perhaps they are even falsely representing individuals when service is requested or required. Now, we didn't ask for very specific information there, so I would just suggest that -- because I know that health and human services has an accessibility initiative and that for the most part they are working hard to meet accessibility requirements, so that might be a case where you want to make sure that as people have, as people encounter barriers, there's a very clear way for them to report those barriers to someone who can actually act on them and do something about it so that your stakeholders feel heard. What's the next one, Randi? Municipal and public websites are not accessible to JAWs and having pictures without descriptions. The lack of alt text, to me, is something that we certainly thought would be one of the first things that was solved but what happens is that now there are automated things that will fill in alt text if you don't in order to pass a checker and the alt text might say photo or picture or image or something like that so it passes the checker but you don't really have information. In this case, I would advise that if you have such an automated checker, that you also train your staff to be sure that they're looking at the quality of the alt text and, again, give the person who encounters that barrier a chance to know about it. What's the next one?

>> Oh, school districts. This one is one that just makes me -- it just really makes me so frustrated. I can't imagine a constituency that we should care about more than kids in schools. Kids with disabilities were so disadvantaged because all the scaffolds they have in the classroom, which so many people thought were already inadequate, when they had to try to participate from home, they were pretty much just left out they were just deprioritized and as

much as two years went by without those kids being able to make any progress as all. This person says I have been fighting every single day for years with my children's schools to make them aware of the inaccessibility documents on their website and help them find ways to fix them. And, you know, God bless the teachers of America right now. I know they were really, really under so much pressure, but kids with disabilities can't be deprioritized in that way. This is a case where I think we need, as a community, to put pressure on the tool makers so that the tools that teachers use to make digital products then become more natively responsive. You can't put an image without an alt text. You can't create an interactive form without proper labels, that the tools themselves have to have more accessibility features not just built in but mandated, that you can't submit and create these curriculum products until they meet a certain accessibility requirement. Teachers, it's just really hard to put all the burden on the teachers to learn to do this if the tools themselves are not able to produce accessible material and don't have accessibility features built in. So authoring tools here is a big -- companies like Adobe and Microsoft. Microsoft is working hard but that we have to keep asking for those things, I think Google is another company that's working hard on improving, but they're not there yet and we have to keep making noise around and advocating for accessible tools for the teachers to use. I see somebody in the chat April Martin says teachers need better student/teacher ratios. There's not another program or rule that can replace the need for help in the classroom and I think that's true as well. I think the last one was about audio and video description or sometimes called audio description, where to start and how to do it in a timely, cost effective manner. I want to say, Angela, I think I have a pretty good, pretty good, not a perfect answer, but you know that here in Austin we have a company called Art Spark and it does audio description in movies and all that. In much the same way that you can send yore videos to Rev to be captioned, you can send them to this company to be audio described. I think Rev is about a dollar a minute to get captioned. I think these guys are twice that but still.

If you had an hour video, you would add \$120 to the cost of your video to publish it to the web so I have to build that into the budget which is easy to say and sometimes harder to do to find that budgeting but another thing that Art Spark does is they provide training for how do you script a video so that the narrative is sufficient and you don't need an audio described track. You can do a lot of things with the scripting and the narrative, so I think that training is something that's also very useful to look for and to look into if your agency can swing that. They're really good and they're very, very experienced. I'm happy to recommend a local homegrown resource. Celia Hughes and Art Spark Texas. Giving these challenges now, are they different from 10, 20 years ago? Are they the same? Have we changed? Have we moved the needle at all? Let's take another poll and see what you think about that.

>> Okay, poll has been launched.

>> What is the impact of accessibility awareness been after these ten years with GAAD? There's no change at all. Awareness has increase bud the digital world is not more accessible, the digital world is somewhat more accessible or accessibility has significantly improved on the Internet and other digital platforms. We have to consider artificial intelligence and virtual reality and that technology itself is evolving.

>> Looks like about everybody has answered. Let's see. We're still getting a few answers. I will give it another couple of seconds.

>> Julie Lewis, only the host can read the chat? It's gotten exponentially harder to conform to the standards says Julie Lewis.

>> It depends how they put their comment in the chat. They can send it to the host, panelists, or everyone. I'm going to end the poll and show the results.

>> Okay. That's interesting. No one said there was no change. I'm glad to hear that. That's encouraging. Awareness has increased was 28%. Now I can't see it anymore.

>> Oops.

>> 58% says it's somewhat more accessible so there's a moving of the needle and 15%, so that's great. 73% thinks it's increased at least somewhat. That's progress and it may not be as fast or as much as we want, but progress is a good, good thing.

So the next slide is talking about how there are other motivators and one of the things I'm thinking is that the legal aspect, and I know this is a policy series so y'all are really concerned and focused on policy and legal mandates and such, but a lot of studies now show that accessibility does more than meet the legal mandate. It also has these benefits that I think businesses and entrepreneurs and people outside of governments can maybe be brought into the fold with and that maybe if we start talking about accessibility and the fact that it drives innovation, the people at Microsoft and Google talk often about how some of their tools that they've created that are widely accepted now were started because of accessibility mandates so changed like Siri and talking devices and voice control. Those things were meant for their disabled constituents but were widely adapted so they have noted that -- I think one of our keynotes a few years ago said that people with disabilities are the original life hackers. They live their daily lives with innovation and so by meeting that need with products that are flexible and designed to be inclusive you start including audiences you didn't anticipate so maybe that needs to be part of our message.

Brand awareness, these diversity and inclusion efforts. Are those including people with disabilities sufficiently? Do we need to really make our cause part of our inclusion effort in a more significant way to get companies to realize and there are some initiatives that do that. There's the valuable 500 is an effort to get 500 CEOs of major corporations to make an accessibility commitment, so there are some efforts like that, maybe it's good for us on awareness day like this to think about that and strategies for becoming more integrated into that diversity and inclusion initiative. I'm going to start coughing again. I'm sorry. And then, of course, there's the market share argument because people with disabilities are a huge

minority. It's been said it's the world's largest minority. So that's part of your market that you don't want to ignore. Excuse me. Next slide, please, Randi.

So is it time for new strategies? Let's go ahead and look at all of them. I would like y'all to think about what new approaches might change global accessibility awareness day into an action day, like how do we take this awareness and make it actionable? One of the things that Jennison mentioned, how do you put the global into global accessibility? What outreach strategies can we do that reach across borders and around the world? Because, of course, ability is not just a Texas thing or an American thing, but is a global issue for sure. This, what we talked about, do corporate diversity and inclusion efforts sufficiently address disability inclusion and how do we move the needle? And what do we do about the schools? That's I think a question for all of us. I wish that slide was a white board and we could share your thoughts. If you don't mind sharing your thoughts in chat with an open -- make sure it's not just to hosts and panelists so that everyone can see it. Angela said people who are aging don't think of themselves as disabled even though they present with the same needs. It is a large consumer base. I think that is an excellent point. My mother. Well, she died in December, but she was 93 and she had macular degeneration and she knew that I worked with the disabled and she would say they and I would say mom, you should say we and she would say I'm not disabled I just can't see very well. Angela, you are so right about that. People who are aging often don't think of themselves as disabled so we need to make sure our definitions are more inclusive. Anyone else have thoughts about what actions you think you could take or we as a community could take?

>> I'm just going to go back and show the questions again that you asked so people can comment on them. I think it might be difficult to just remember.

>> Great.

>> We have another comment.

>> Maybe we could offer accessibility clinics where people could visit tech demo centers and see it in action, read a website with a screen reader to see what it is like. I think that's a great idea and I think people have done something similar to that on YouTube but people would have to know to go see them but I think that's a good idea. There's nothing like seeing. The human experience. Knowbility, we encourage developers to learn about accessibility and use their skills in a contest to see who can build the most accessible website and compete for a bowling trophy. They don't get a trip to Aruba or anything, but it's those demos. Developers, designers, people who work on the web, they want their stuff to be usable and if they see someone using a screen reader and they realize oh my gosh, my site completely breaks for this person, they are definitely motivated to learn how to make it so that that does not happen.

Okay. We're not getting a lot more input, so I think we would just go ahead and move on. We have been talking here for an hour. I'm happy to announce and I will turn it back over to Randi, that the governor's office has done something for Global Accessibility Awareness Day and why don't you talk about that, Randi?

>> All right. The governor has written a proclamation and you can find it at our website. There's an image of it on the screen so I would suggest just going to the website. Gov.texas.gov/disabilities. On the right side you will see a few links there and one of them is proclamation so you can find it there if you want to look at it right now. Anyway, it is to just make people aware of Global Accessibility Awareness Day day and the importance of it.

>> This is Ron Lucey. I just want to add to what Randi said in that in the governor's proclamation, he links the progress of our state and our state's growing economy to accessibility. We can't grow as an economy and grow as a state without including everybody moving forward with digital accessibility and Texas is an economic success story and it's because of our efforts to include everybody with digital accessibility.

>> Thank you, Ron. Yeah. That's really true. I'm going to look at the Q&A questions. There are three of them here. Someone wants contact information for Joe Devon. I will put here his Twitter handle. He's very active on Twitter. And then if you would like to contact me, Rosemarie, my e-mail address is on the last slide there. I can send you an e-mail introduction to him. Lucia Romano asks if anyone has been on TWC's website lately. It is a nightmare in terms of accessible. It is not easy to navigate at all much less for someone who needs accessibility features. I'm sorry to hear that. I thought they made progress on that but it was several years ago that I looked at it. I'm sorry to hear that and I wonder if you've looked for -- have you looked for a place to provide that feedback to them? I think that would be very useful information to them. I know that they have a stated commitment to accessibility and maybe somebody left their position. It's hard to know how that dynamic gets broken. It's very important that especially within large agencies that we work together with people in procurement, in development, in maintenance and that people also understand that they put new content on the web and that it has to be folded into that process. It's not fair that the burden has to fall to us to bring that to their attention. You would hope they have internal monitoring but when that happens I recommend you do make your voice heard. The W3C, besides the terrible, hard to read WCAG they have a education and out reach working group and there are all kinds of really useful resources on there that are completely open and free and mooning them is how to complain when you find an accessible website. It gives you templates, some nice language to use, so that you can make your voice heard without being hostile or, you know, it just turns people off and then don't want to listen. How to make your case strongly but politely and respectfully.

>> To add something to that, Sharron, how long is reasonable for them to fix the problem that they have been made aware of at least a year.

>> Oh, I see. How long is reasonable? If it's longer than a year, yes, I think, well,

I'm glad that you're with disability rights Texas, then, because you've got resources that a regular letter writer doesn't have, right? You write a letter on legal letterhead so that's probably going to bring a different level of attention. You know, I know some of the people in development at TWC so maybe if you want to contact me, we can get a side conversation going if the -- I think sometimes the people in the trenches really want to do the right thing. Like people who understand a lot of times you will find developers who are strong advocates for accessibility but they're not given the buy-in and support from the top and from the leadership. If you can find them and write to them and give them something, some of that, your experience to share with your leadership and they can start saying we're hearing from constituents that maybe the leadership will listen to stakeholders differently. That's always a hope. They did create an online form to fill out but it's hard to find the needed resource on the website. Accessibility products like recite me and others, should agencies or companies be encouraged to use these or products. Oh, overlays. I do not support the overlays that say click this button and you will have accessibility feature because of the fact that they just don't work. It's a great idea if we could wave a magic wand and have an accessible website. I think as artificial intelligence gets better perhaps there's a future, but it's not fair for them to put that on a website now and have us be their guinea pigs. You're going to have a miserable experience but it's going to help us figure out how to get better. So my feeling about those overlays is that as it is right now they are not useful and could be seen as fraudulent. I don't think they set out deliberately to be fraudulent. They're coming after a human problem with an engineer's mentality and they want to think it will work. We have a screen reader user on our staff and he's got it fine. Well, yeah, he's a Ph.D. computer science engineer, too. That's different than the experience of somebody like my mom learning to use a screen reader at the age of 78 when she developed macular degeneration. She's not going to have those skills so, no, I don't endorse those products.

>> There's another question that I think you might have missed from Ron Lucey.

How did WCAG 2.2 change over previous versions?

>> Well, I think one of the main things that 2.2 tried to bring in was the mobile experience and the experience of people with cognitive disabilities because the first few rounds were very focused on abilities, hearing impairments, vision impairments and then all of a sudden everyone was on their phone so mobile was part of it and they tried to address the cognitive disabilities like timing, flashing, moving content and defining those barriers in a way that developers could understand and measure and avoid.

>> I don't see any other questions.

>> Well, y'all, I know I went on for a long time, but it was just a pleasure, as always. I am proud of Texas' accessibility efforts. I think those of you from Texas state agencies, I just heard about TWC but I do thank you there is good will and if you find the right resources, I think there's a lot of support for access within the community of state agencies and, of course, we're always, always happy to work with the governor's committee and any of y'all. We just wrapped up AccessU but we have a lot of the materials online. We have a lot of online learning and always happy to pitch in and help if it's useful.

>> And I shared the competition information in the chat box. I think that's a wonderful opportunity for somebody learning this process to give back to the community and help some nonprofits develop their own website. So if there are no other questions, I guess we will close for today. Sharron, I thank you so much for your time and willingness to provide this. Thank you for sharing the video from the GAAD founders. That was pretty exciting, and I just want to say happy Global Accessibility Awareness Day to everybody and have a great rest of the day. Thank you for joining us.

>> Thank you.

