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Visionary Women: Champions of Peace & Nonviolence

Each year The National Women’s History Alliance selects the theme for Women’s History Month. The theme for 2019 honors, “the women who have led efforts to end war, violence, and injustice and pioneered the use of nonviolence to change society.”

In recognition of Women’s History Month, the CAPTIVATING! editorial team selected five phenomenal women from around the world to be on the cover of this month’s edition. Each of these women are not only living their best lives with a disability- they are also acting as the voices of change to create a more inclusive world. Congratulations to our #WeRCaptivating cover models: Krystle Allen, L.A., Kym Dekeyrel, Grace Nzomo, and Shaini Saravanamuthu.

We were thrilled to say that our search went global! We received amazing entries from the United Kingdom, Canada, Europe, and the United States. Every single person who submitted a photo was truly CAPTIVATING! and we thank you for helping us spread the word about our mission. None of this could have been possible without the extraordinary work of our Staff Writer, Rebecca Holland, who led our first global social media campaign—thank you Beckie!
Editor's Note

While this month’s theme partially revolves around the empowerment of women, in recognition of Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month, you will also meet a young boy named Freddie who is Defying The Odds with a Smile. Our Staff Writer Martha Harris shares some excellent wardrobe tips in Fashion Basics and Helpful Tips for Working People with Disabilities, and Media Reviewer Catherine Boldt shares her review of the children’s book When Charley Met Emma, by Amy Webb.

March 1st is also International Wheelchair Day. We bring this to your attention because at CAPTIVATING! it is our goal to work to remove negative perceptions regarding wheelchairs and the people who use them. Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are tools of freedom and allow their users the opportunity to live life more abundantly.

We hope you enjoy this issue of CAPTIVATING! Magazine. We invite you to submit questions, articles, and ideas to: editor@captivatingmagazine.com.

CAPTIVATING! an inclusive digital magazine about living and thriving with a disability. Is for everyone.

*Note: For more information about Women’s History Month, please visit: www.womenshistory.org/events/womens-history-month
“A GIRL SHOULD BE TWO THINGS: WHO AND WHAT SHE WANTS.”

COCO CHANEL
Women's History Month
Ask Chelsea & Stephanae

by Chelsea Nguyen & Stephanae McCoy
Q&A | Chelsea

Q: Who is the most influential woman you know and how does she inspire you?

A: For me, the most influential woman that I know is probably Mother Teresa. I learned about her when I was in middle school I believe. When I saw pictures of her being so loving and kind and compassionate to people who are sick, homeless and in need of help I was very moved. She wasn’t a woman of great wealth and did not have movie star beauty or fancy expensive clothes. She was a humble, simple and kind woman who believed in the goodness of all humanity, devoted her life to helping and loving others and spreading compassion around the world by first leading by example and making it her life mission fight hunger and poverty.

Q: List three important qualities women should have and why?

A: I believe that the three most important qualities that women should have in order of priority are:

1. Self-Confidence
2. A Positive Pleasant Attitude
3. Financial and Social Intelligence

In my opinion, there is just something so beautiful and attractive about a woman that is totally comfortable in her own skin. One who is unapologetic for who she is, loves being who she genuinely wants to be, and can laugh at her own flaws and mistakes. She accepts them as part of being human while also learning from them to elevate herself as she continually grows, learns and evolves while she matures and gains life experiences.

As for having a positive pleasant attitude, I think it makes any person more attractive and enjoyable to be around. That kind of positive happy energy that they put out into the world is a magnet to people because there’s just so much unhappiness and negativity out there already and it’s rare, but refreshing to experience first hand with others.

Q: What types of stereotypes do people have about women and how can stereotyping be dangerous?

A. There are lots of different stereotypes out there about women. For example, if a woman is in a higher corporate position or upper management, she must be a “bitch” or that she “slept” her way to the top.

- Women are better cooks and homemakers than men.
- If women are wearing tight, attractive and then they want and are inviting physical intimacy.
- Beautiful women are conceited and not usually
Stereotyping can be dangerous for all people because it generalizes them and puts them into a box of what society automatically believes about a specific group of people. And in the case of how stereotyping can be for women, there are women around the world that can be wrongfully hated or disliked for being beautiful and attractive before people have even gotten to know them.

In the case of women being in leadership and management roles, if she is hard-working and successful, then people assume that she is mean, more masculine and a bitch to work with. This can cause bad feelings and be very discouraging for more women to strive to be in leadership roles in the workplace.

In the situation with attractive, tight and revealing clothing, women have been raped, molested and killed for people’s misleading stereotypes that they want physical intimacy by dressing a certain way.

Q&A | Stephanae

Q: Who is the most influential woman you know and how does she inspire you?

A: The most influential woman I know is one who helped me out of a highly charged situation over 25 years ago. For her safety, I cannot reveal her name but she literally saved me and my children's lives.

It was during a time in my life when I was in a bad marriage with an abusive man. The problem was...
Q: List three important qualities women should have and why?

A: I feel the most important qualities women should have revolve around self-care and extending outward.

1) Knowing Their Worth
2) Obtaining and Sustaining Independence
3) Lending a Helping Hand to Other Women

The first important quality would be knowing their worth. I see too many women with lots of potential just settling. They're afraid to let themselves shine and sometimes hide their sparkle due to the expectations of others. I know talented women who are afraid to ask for a raise because they don't think they're worthy. When you know your worth you are in a position to negotiate your terms. If you can't reach a logical agreement be prepared to walk, then do so.

Learning how to become independent is critical to self-preservation. This doesn't mean going at it all alone but being able to recognize when to ask for help can be an extremely powerful thing as stated in my answer to the first question. The outcome could have been fatal had I not allowed myself to become vulnerable.

The last point again, going back to my answer of the first question, had it not been for someone lending me a helping hand I wouldn't be here. We should encourage and empower one another because this is a win win for everyone.

Q: What types of stereotypes do people have about women and how can stereotyping be dangerous?

Unfortunately stereotypes continue to prevail for all people. With women in particular we have a tendency to lump us all into one category of overly emotional, drama thirsty vindictive people. Yet when we take a stand for what we believe in this is also seen as a negative attribute.

To be equal to men we must work twice as hard for less than we are truly worth and when we call it out we're 'evil feminists' or just ungrateful. Then there's social scenarios when meeting someone for the first time and the very first thing that's commented on is our appearance. Yet in the same exact scenario people will react differently to men. I have the privilege of being part of several marginalized groups that allows me to see this form numerous viewpoints. Not only does my being a woman factor into the stereotypes but race, age, and disability also play a large role in how I'm treated by others.

Stereotyping is dangerous because we are operating on assumptions. As humans we are complex and each of us have unique attributes that set us apart from our peers--this should be celebrated!
Krystle Allen is a Newark, New Jersey native. She is a millennial entrepreneur and non profiteer. Krystle presently serves as a second term AmeriCorps Vista member in a non-profit The Girls Scouts Heart of New Jersey located in Montclair, NJ.

L.A is an MS warrior who practices self-care and patient advocacy. She’s unable to work but her limitations don’t stop her passion —writing poetry. Through her words and love for makeup, she finds ways to sparkle her battle scars and inspires others.

Kym Dekeyrel is an on the go wife, mother, athlete and business owner from California. Between work and family, Kym trains as a competitive CrossFit athlete. She hopes to motivate, others who are living with vision loss realize they can achieve greatness.

Grace Nzomo is a 24-year-old lady positively living with albinism and a psychology graduate from USIU-Africa. Many people are unfamiliar with the term “albinism,” but nearly everyone has heard of “albino.” This is one of many misunderstandings that I face.

Shaini Saravanamuthu is a 29 year old who lives in Montreal, Canada. Diagnosed in 2011 with Retinitis Pigmentosa she is an Accountant & National Young Leader of Canada for the Visually Impaired who works to empower others who are losing their sight.
Krystle Allen

Krystle is no stranger to work that involves community development, social change, and grassroots efforts. She works at The Girls Scouts Heart of New Jersey to develop volunteer programming, reuniting daughters in the girls scouts troops with their mothers who are incarcerated and building troops under their Juliette’s House transitional housing program.

She served her first VISTA term during the winter of 2017 for the Jewish Renaissance Medical Center. Here she assumed the role of the marketing planning and development coordinator. Her responsibilities held a strong influence toward her professional development in the areas of social media marketing, network building, sponsorship acquisition, and planning/developing the organization’s small and large scale programs and events. Krystle’s service as an AmeriCorps Vista member is a year commitment to be apart of the fabric that recruits positive change in underserved communities. Simultaneously, Krystle serves as the founder and president of a budding nonprofit organization called Eyes Like Mine Inc. Eyes Like Mine Inc. has a mission to share awareness about the abilities and potential of individuals with vision loss through community service initiatives, comprehensive empowerment workshops, and innovative social change awareness events.

Krystle also serves on the access committee with a Jersey City nonprofit organization called Art House Productions Inc. For the past three years, Young Nonprofit Professionals Network of New Jersey since the start of 2018, board member with Community Lifestyle Inc. Since 2017, and previously dedicated herself to working with the Montclair YMCA for eight years in the extended care program. Assisting communities in working toward their greatness is a passion of hers. In addition to her involvement with the community, she is a disability advocate on a mission to be on the forefront where she is proactive about disability rights and injustices.

Although her work is at its beginning stages, she is building a reputation of accolades from the local and government levels. Her education is a derivative of Newark Public Schools where she graduated in the class of 2003. She continued to further her education with a major in social science at Essex County College Newark campus. Currently, she is actively pursuing enrollment in the Leadership Newark class of 2020 in an effort to further strengthen her leadership abilities. Lastly, Krystle will be completing a leadership training program through the Greater Newark L.I.S.C.E program. She presently serves with the National Federation of the Blind community service division alongside numerous advocates who happen to be blind and vision impaired around the country. In spite of her vision loss; she has a vision gained to impact one community at a time with dedication to serve.
Hi, my name is L.A., and I have Relapse Remitting Multiple Sclerosis. I was diagnosed on February 4, 2011, at the age of 19. I since I was born two months premature, I have been dealing with health issues all of my life. After I received this diagnosis, my life has changed now. It has affected my activities, my social life, my emotions and of course my employment status. I went from working every possible position to now feeling hopeless when I have no energy. Multiple Sclerosis is a debilitating illness that disrupts the flow of information within and between the brain and the body. Within the Central Nervous System, the immune system causes inflammation that damages the myelin, the protective barrier on our nerves. This causes unpredictable and varied symptoms that a patient can experience. What I deal with on a daily basis is extreme fatigue, nerve pain, imbalance, cognitive impairment, numbness and tingling and the inability to walk. It has been increasingly difficult as time goes on.

However, even though my position in life has changed, I want to bring more awareness to this illness because it is very common. The issue is many aren’t as open about it as I am, which is completely understandable. It can be embarrassing and frustrating because a majority of those with this type of MS don’t look visibly sick. I started having more photos of myself with a cane on social media and writing about what I deal with. I wanted to create this environment where people can feel and look beautiful, even if they are in pain. I love to write poetry and express my feelings and frustrations that way. That’s how my page “Speakunspokenly” began two years ago. I am a woman who loves to feel beautiful no matter what, and I don’t like to look how I feel. Even though I get the “stares” with my cane, I rock it with confidence, and I hope to inspire so many others and show them their pain and stories are VALID.
My story of vision loss began before I can even remember. My parents received my retinitis pigmentosa diagnosis when I was five. I can only imagine the devastation they must have felt when they were told their bright blue-eyed daughter would most likely be totally blind by the age of 18. Without hesitation, they began to prepare me for life. I started learning braille and taking weekly mobility lessons. All throughout school, I learned cane travel and carried around ridiculously large print books. Yes, I was made fun of. No, it was not easy being the kid with the weird orange glasses who could not go out for P.E. But, my parents put me in dance lessons, and dance became everything to me. I was a natural performer and never felt like the blind kid when I was in the spotlight.

Even though I was the poster child for RP, I became an anomaly to doctors because my vision loss did not progress like typical retinitis pigmentosa. I lost my central vision first and was left with scattered islands of peripheral vision. Because of this, I honestly never felt like I was understood by other visually impaired people. I was not in denial of being blind, but when I was mourning the vision loss throughout my life, it simply became a part of my day-to-day challenges. My life carried on. I went to college and earn my degree in dance and kinesiology. After I went to massage school, I met my husband at my first job at a doctor’s office. It was about this time when life punched me in the gut with a diagnosis of lupus symptomatic of rheumatoid arthritis. The agony I suffered for three years made being blind seem like a walk in the park.

By this time, I had one son named Cooper and knew that I could not live a life worth living if I could barely move. After doing research, my husband helped me go on an extremely strict diet which saved my life. Within six months of changing my diet, I was back on a treadmill and ready to have our second son, Easton. I never returned to dancing, but two years ago, my husband brought me into a CrossFit gym. I was terrified. How could I do anything if I could not see anything? But, by the end of my first class, I knew I had found my new passion. Now, I am trying to become an empowered representation of the visually impaired in the adaptive CrossFit world. I not only want to show visually impaired people they can do anything, but I want to show my children there are no excuses not to be their best. At the age of 37, I am the blindest I have ever been; yet, I feel more unstoppable now than ever before. Being blind is hard, but when I live by faith and not by sight, anything is possible.
Grace Nzomo

When I was a child, I was enrolled in a school where the teachers had no idea what albinism was nor how they could deal with it but they did their best. In every new class, my mother explained to the teachers that I had to sit at the front of the class. Since I was short-sighted, in order to see well, I had to be very close to the board.

As a person with albinism, I lack the pigment (melanin) in my eyes which leads to reduced vision. The degree varies from person to person and only an ophthalmologist is competent enough to assess that level. My high school teachers took one look at me and determined I couldn’t learn chemistry, physics, and geography due to my ‘poor’ eyesight. I was also informed that since I was visually impaired, I had to learn braille as I would be using it in my final exam. It took me some time to accept this since I felt they were indirectly saying I was blind. To make it worse, I never got along with the braille instructor and I ended up self-taught. Using braille in mathematics was like trying to teach someone the Greek language and that’s a whole chapter of challenges on its own.

It seems people with albinism are worth more dead than alive because when we are born, we are hidden away from the discriminative society. When we grow up and can no longer be hidden, then we are hunted down for our body parts to make the most potent portion. A potion that guarantees wealth, success, fertility... you name your problem, even our bones will solve it. Such violence in its many forms is too close to home and this is the albino mentality by the society that we need to eradicate.

Supporting the efforts of Dr. Choksey Albinism Foundation is in the interest of my work to improve the lives of people with albinism. As its former programs officer, I still dedicate my time and skills to provide workable resources to children with albinism and their parents who may have never had the hope of living fearlessly in this discriminative society. Looking into the eyes of a beautiful young lady and providing encouragement is the spark I need to continue in my mission to empower people with albinism. I am very passionate about education and ensuring its accessibility to the less disadvantaged.

I envision a society in which persons with albinism are fully integrated, appreciated and empowered to realize and live up to their full potential. Being able to brighten the lives of those I come into contact with is only the beginning and accepting opportunities of impact will take me even further. (Visit www.captivatingmagazine.com) for the full article.
In February 2011 I went in thinking my prescription changed but instead I found out that I was suffering from a rare eye disease called Retinitis Pigmentosa. Being from a south Asian community I felt like I had to hide my diagnosis/disability as our society needs us, women, to be “perfect” in order to be accepted. I grew up with so much pressure to look a certain way, act a certain way, get the highest marks in school, and to make sure I didn’t speak back to others, to be this perfect girl that society would accept and applaud for obeying what our culture demanded of us.

So I kept quiet for a couple of years, but the lying was getting so hard as my vision was slowly getting worse. I couldn’t always play the drunk girl card every time I tripped or missed a step, it was getting repetitive.

So I decided enough was enough and shared my story in February 2015. I was prepared to lose everything, I had so much fear of not being accepted, by my community, by my colleagues and even my clients. My story went out and it was the beginning of my new future!

My story went viral and was accepted by so many people and so many others shared their struggles with me as they were hiding it as well as a fear of how society would perceive them. So all that fear I built up in my head since 2011 was just a scenario in my own head.

Telling my story helped me become the national young leader of Canada for the visually impaired, where help other people with visual impairments! Get to share my story to help inspire and motivate them that our life does not need to end because of a diagnosis. I’d like to think that my diagnosis/disability has given me a purpose and I have been able to share my story, the opportunities, the struggles, the good and bad days, so they can see that our life will go on and progress!

I am forever grateful for everyone I have met along this journey, as much as I get to help others, everyone I meet helps me in every way possible. They remind me of why I opened up about my story and why I need to keep fighting and raising awareness. I want people who are recently diagnosed to find me and see that life doesn’t need to stop, we just need to take a step back and make adjustments to make things work for us. Take your time, embrace the journey, live in every moment, laugh along the way, love one another & learn from your experiences. Get ready for the ride my loves, the possibilities are endless ❣️❣️❣️
“I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S NEXT BUT I'M STEPPING FORWARD WITH GRIT ANCHORED IN GRACE.”
Several weeks ago, I was sitting in my office when I received an e-mail. It read simply:

“I would like to ask you a personal question- I’ve read your blog at BeckieWrites.com and I know from your writing that you have vision problems just like me. I just wanted to write to you and ask: What is it like to have a full time job? I’ve been searching for one and I’m worried that I will never find one. How did you do it? How did you make it?”

I was so stunned by that message that I had to read it three times before I finally managed to process it.

That letter was an epiphany for me. After reading it, I realized that the person who had written to me was correct: I had “made it,” in the truest sense of the word. I was working at a job that I absolutely loved and pursuing my passions. I woke up every day with a sense of purpose and excited to go to work. In fact, I’m so happy with my job that it often doesn’t feel like work at all.
In a country where, according to the Bureau of U.S. Labor and Statistics, 80% of people with disabilities are unemployed, I know that I am incredibly blessed to have this position. It has been a long and difficult journey. Along the way, I’ve learned many lessons. In honor of Women’s History Month, here are the three lessons I wish that I had learned earlier in my career. Whether you work in the church or the secular world, if you are a woman with a disability, hopefully you will find these lessons helpful.

**Lesson #1: You will be judged more harshly than your able-bodied colleagues.**

Here is the cold hard truth that I wish someone had told me years ago: People will judge you based on your appearance. You will have to work twice as hard to be taken half as seriously as your able-bodied colleagues. If you also happen to not be white, you will face even harsher scrutiny.

I'm sorry. It's not right and it's not fair, but it is most certainly true. As a female pastor, I work in a profession that is largely dominated by men. Some estimates show that only 12% of clergy are women. Although women have made great strides in today's world, we still have a long way to go in order to achieve full equality.

It is a simple fact that when a person looks at me, if I’m using my white cane, the first thing that they will notice is my disability. If I want them to see a strong, intelligent, capable, and professional woman, I must make a concerted effort to present like one.

That is why I always make an effort to try to dress professionally. What the sighted world defines as “professional,” can be confusing, so I encourage you to do your research. (My friend, Martha Harris, has a great article that you can refer to right here in CAPTIVATING! I encourage you to take a look at it.)

For me, I know that I feel most confident and professional when I am wearing:

- Small heels
- A pencil skirt
- Stockings
- A tailored blazer
- A small amount of makeup

I wish I could go back and tell my past self to start dressing like the professional woman I aspired to be as soon as I started my first internship. I’ve learned the hard way that in order to change the way the world views disability, perception is half of the battle.

**Lesson #2: Nobody cares how you feel. They care what you accomplish.**

When I was in high school, I missed 27 days my senior year because I had two emergency eye surgeries. The recovery time was long and incredibly painful. In my thirty years on this earth, the feeling of stitches in my eyeball is the most painful thing I had ever experienced.

When I finally returned to school, I asked one of my teachers for extra time in order to complete an assignment that I had missed. I was in Advanced Placement classes and I had missed so much work that I felt as if I was drowning.

I was mortified when my teacher looked at me and said bluntly, “Fine. I will give you more time- but I don’t think you really need it. You should be recovered by now. It’s been over a
month. You’re just lazy.” tried to explain to him that I wasn't lazy- I was in pain!

He responded, “Make sure the assignment is completed by next week.”

Although that was a very difficult lesson for me to learn, I’m glad that it came relatively early in my life. I’m happy to report that I did complete the assignment in time. Not only that, but I managed to graduate fifth in my class out of 144 students.

My advice to you is this: Over prepare for every meeting, study for hours for every exam, and always give 110% to any task or assignment. Then, give another 25% just for good measure.

We all make snap judgments about people, whether or not we realize it. For example, one of my least favorite compliments is, “You preach so well- for a blind person.” Make sure that you are able to overcome any of your colleagues or superiors inherent biases by working harder than everyone else at the table.

As a person with a disability, you will have to be extraordinary to simply be perceived by the able-bodied world as ordinary. In order to stand out, you will need to make certain that your performance is truly remarkable.

Lesson #3: Don’t just network- make real connections. You can’t do it alone. Behind every successful person is an entire village of supportive people. I began to realize this fact when I was only a year into my current position. After less than a year of full time ministry, I once more needed another eye surgery.

I told myself that I wouldn’t make the same mistake regarding time off that I had made in high school. Then, about a week before my scheduled surgery, I had the opportunity to share lunch with a friend who is also a colleague of mine. She asked me how much time I planned to take off from work in order to recover.

“I’m not taking any time off,” I told her earnestly, “I don’t need eyes to preach.”

As we talked, I confessed to her that I especially wanted to prove that I could perform my job without sight because there is a chance that I may eventually lose my eyesight entirely. I reminded her that the church does not need to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. I also confided that one of my deepest fears was that I would be terminated if I lost my eyesight entirely.

At last, she responded, “You need to take some time off. I won’t tell you how much time- but it’s clearly necessary.”

Before I could object, she continued, “Don’t worry. Someone will cover for you. We will find someone to lead worship. Even God rested on the seventh day.”

I couldn’t argue with that logic. I will also admit that I was incredibly grateful.

I cannot begin to list the number of people who helped me get to where I am today. I’m grateful to my family, friends, colleagues, and mentors. I am also deeply grateful for the love and support of my church family, who accepted me exactly the way I am.
If you are also a working professional with a disability, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to make real friends in your work place and to form genuine connections. Join professional organizations and participate in extracurricular activities with your colleagues outside of work. Being a part of groups like the Chi Rho Singers (my church’s clergy choir), the Order of St. Luke, and the local Women’s Clergy Luncheon, has enriched my life more than I can possibly explain in the space of this brief article.

In the end, I did take the time off I needed from work after my surgery. Thanks to the love and support of all the amazing people in my life, I was able to take the time to rest that I so thoroughly needed. Nobody does it alone.

**Use Your Voice to Lift Up Others**

In 2018, the same year that 80% of people in my country with disabilities were unemployed, I was ordained by the United Methodist Church. It was the happiest day of my life. As of 2018, the church has covenanted with me to provide me with a job until I am 72 years old. I have promised to always serve the church and love God. In return, the church has promised to always provide me with a congregation to serve and love.

I no longer need to fear that I will be terminated due to my poor vision, but I know many people who continue to struggle to find gainful employment. That is why I am writing this article. My goal is to use my voice to help others.

If you find anything in this article useful, then I hope that you will feel free to apply it to your own journey; however, please remember that everyone’s journey is unique. Only you can know what decisions make the most sense for you.

Whatever life choices you make and whatever career opportunities come your way, please know that your value is not determined by whether or not you have a job. Perhaps you will decide that employment doesn’t make sense for you at this point in your life for any number of reasons.

Whatever you decide, I hope that you will chase your dreams, put your best foot forward, and live your life to the fullest.

Never be ashamed of your disability.
Don’t be embarrassed when they look at us because we are different.

It makes sense that they stare. They stare because blind is beautiful.

They stare because We Are CAPTIVATING!

"We all make snap judgements about people, whether or not we realize it. For example, one of my least favorite compliments is, “You preach so well- for a blind person.” Make sure that you are able to overcome any of your colleagues or superiors inherent biases by working harder than everyone else at the table."

~Rebecca Holland

About the Author:
Rev. Rebecca L. Holland holds a Bachelor in the Science of English Education and a Master of Divinity. She is the chair of the Disability Ministry Task Force of the Susquehanna Conference and the pastor of Christ Community United Methodist Church in Altoona, Pennsylvania. Rebecca is passionate about making both the church and the world more accessible for people with disabilities.

Her chapbook, Through My Good Eye: A Memoir in Verse is available in paperback and on Kindle from Amazon. Rebecca blogs about faith, books, and disability awareness on her blog at BeckieWrites.com. Find her on Twitter and Instagram @BeckieWrites
Freddie was born two years ago; we thought we had a healthy little boy, but little did we know the amount of complications he was going to have along the way. It wasn’t until he was a month old that I noticed something was off with his right arm because it wasn’t moving. The arm was very stiff, and his hand was always clenched.

After months and months of going to the doctors, things were getting worse because he wasn’t sitting up; he still couldn’t move his arm and acted as if his right arm never existed. When Freddie was 8 months old, he started to undergo tests, and we had appointment after appointment and eventually an MRI. Then, we finally got our answer. We were told Freddie had a Pediatric Stroke in the womb (we don’t know the cause or precisely when it happened during the pregnancy).

Freddie was later diagnosed with cerebral palsy, right-sided hemiplegia with mild brain damage. After doctors saw Freddie’s MRI results, they told us it would be unlikely for him to reach his milestones, and he might not be able to walk. Despite everything Freddie has been through, our little boy always has a big smile.

Because of his determination, strength and hard work, we can proudly say Freddie has achieved all his milestones and started taking his first steps in October 2018. He can now walk independently. Freddie has also started Pre-school, which he loves, and he’s doing so well there.

We are so proud of Freddie, and every day, there is something new he has achieved. We still have a long way to go, but we are looking forward to our son’s future.

**About Freddie:**

Freddie is a two-year-old little boy, who always has a smile on his face. He is a typical boy who has a love for his football and toy cars. Freddie enjoys outdoors and is intrigued by the planes in the sky and will happily stand watching them while pointing and waving as they fly by.
"YOU MUST NEVER BE FEARFUL ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING WHEN IT IS RIGHT."

ROSA PARKS
Fashion Basics and Helpful Tips for Working People with Disabilities

MARTHA HARRIS

Fashion, like many parts of life, is easier for some people than others. Maybe it’s something that has always been interesting; you experimented with style until you found the items you like, or you grew up with family and friends who were good with fashion advice. I’ve always been blind and grew up in a mostly blue-collar family, so I didn’t see people wearing suits or know about tailoring. These are some of the tips and tricks I’ve learned over the years for trying to figure out my personal style as well as tips for people with other disabilities.

Tailoring and Fit

Many times, something you buy just doesn’t fit correctly. For petite people, often getting pants, skirts, or dresses hemmed as well as having the sleeves shortened or the shoulders taken up can drastically improve how clothes fit. This is especially true for a suit jacket or a blazer; however, it’s much harder and more expensive to find someone to adjust shoulders, so ensuring it fits properly in that area is crucial. Additionally, when purchasing a new suit jacket, skirt, or dress, take scissors and cut the x, two small threads, that hold shut the jacket and skirt vent in the back or walking slit.

It’s always important to figure out what works for you and your body shape; someone tall and thin doesn’t need the same clothing
and/or alterations as someone shorter and curvy. When possible, it’s always easier to start with the correct clothing from the petite, tall, plus-size, or petite plus size section either in store or online. Maybe pants, skirts, or dresses fit in the hips but not in the waist, so they could be taken in. Maybe an item fits in the bust, but the waist and hips need to be let out if possible. Also, if people are busty and want to wear button down shirts or dresses, someone can sew in hidden hook and eye closures or snaps between the buttons to avoid the gap. Sometimes, for tall people, hems can be let down if an item is close to fitting.

It’s Okay To Ask For Advice
I am always asking friends “What do you think I should wear for this event,” or “How does this look?” when we go shopping together. If you don’t have people whose fashion-sense you trust or just want to shop alone, the sales associates can be helpful. Some department stores, such as Macy’s or Nordstrom, have personal stylists where you can make an appointment, tell them your budget or style if you know it, and they can pull pieces for you to try. Furthermore, if you can afford it, there are image consultants who can individually work with you to figure out colors, fabrics, accessories, and outfits for a specific style or event. This was helpful for me because I have a color pallet and document to refer to when I’m shopping. Others might find this service beneficial if they are preparing for a specific event or trip or if they are transgender, non-binary, or questioning their gender expression; however, if trans and gender-nonconforming people are looking for this service, it could be difficult in some locations to find an accepting consultant.

It’s also ok to ask for this kind of information at work. A good place to start is the HR department or recruiter if you want to know the dress code for a job interview, usually a suit, but some offices expect suiting separates or a dress with a topper. I found more detailed dress code information in the employee handbook after I was hired. I also asked team members what they and the people around me usually wear as well as where they shop for the clothes they wear to work. For my workplace, most people where casual to business casual clothing with a few people wearing more professional dress. We can wear jeans and t-shirts or leggings with a tunic or other longer shirt, whereas those outfits are completely discouraged in other industries or offices.

People With Different Disabilities Can Have Different Clothing Needs
For me as a blind person, besides premade and personally made braille tags and closet organization, I have shirts and dresses with different textures because that is one way I can identify my clothing. When I go shopping by myself or with other blind people and don’t know exactly what I’m looking for, I walk through the different sections of the store and pick up any items with fabric, texture, or other details I like, and I ask a sales associate about color and sizes.

Some people with sensory disabilities need wide, flat seams or seamless items, no or easily removable tags, or softer, natural fabrics. Others need shirts or pants with magnets in place of buttons. Some wheelchair users need clothes where the zipper unzips at mid-thigh or boots with zippers that go down to the bottom of the boot. Some wheelchair users might need wide-leg pants or jeans to fit over
prosthetics, pants or skirts with no buttons or other embellishment in the back to avoid pressure sores, or prefer flowy clothing such as maxi skirts or dresses. Others might prefer skinny pants or more fitted, bottoms or sleeves if they are concerned that they will be caught in their wheels.

Other Random Clothing Tips
- Pills, the little fabric fuzzies that are on some clothes and sweaters after they have been in the dryer, can be removed with a fabric shaver or sweater stone.
- Fashion tape and safety pins are good emergency items to keep in a bag or desk for problems such as a gap between buttons or missing button, a wrap dress that needs more closure, or a falling hem.
- For people of color, there are nude-for-you items, such as t-shirt bras, panty hose, camisoles, shapewear, or shoes. These items are sometimes difficult to find in stores if they stock beige as the only nude option.
- There are petite wooden and velvet hangers to help avoid the weird bumps in the shoulder and stretching from standard-sized hangers.
- To help keep shoes, especially dress shoes, looking nice, you can carry them with you or leave them at work, and where a different pair of shoes for commuting. Also, a cobbler can help with shining, resoling, adding rubber soles, fixing straps, or replacing heel caps.

Fashion is one of many ways to show personal expression. Sometimes, disability matters when making fashion decisions, and sometimes, it isn’t a factor at all. These are just a few of the tips and tricks that help me or other people with disabilities, and hopefully, they are a good starting point or refresher when thinking about fashion and style.

About the Author:
I was born in Paraguay, lived in Baltimore, grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania went to grad school in Louisiana and now live in Minneapolis. My undergrad degrees are journalism and sociology. I studied for a Masters in teaching blind students, worked on an adult literacy certificate, and took online courses to learn about web and app accessibility. I also read constantly, especially realistic fiction books that make me think and anything to do with social justice and intersectionality. My previous job was teaching braille and assistive technology to blind children and adults, and I am currently a web accessibility tester.

Finally, I love trying new foods, blogging occasionally, learning any new software or hardware, making bead and charm bracelets, shopping, listening to musicals, especially Hamilton, going to plays and concerts, spending time with my fiancé and friends, and playing with my dog and cat.
in your determination for a myriad of reasons. But how you rise from those circumstances determines your wellness.

I reclaimed my strength and resilience by grieving my recent decline in vision. I recognized that a clinical trial would not make me a better person, it would not take away the power I have to encourage others to pursue every avenue of research and care.

I also realized that the hopes I had for a better surgical result didn’t make me naive. Hope is what propels life forward. Hope is what keeps me looking for the good in everything even when I can’t see it. So, while the month of February derailed my physical fitness, it has surely bolstered my inner strength, my hope, and my ability to see without sight.

Rebounding From Loss
JENNIFER DUTROW

When the team at CAPTIVATING! Magazine approached me for a health and fitness article this month, I was all set to decline. February was a very stressful, depleting, and bleak month for me. I had two cataract surgeries, and my hopes of being in a clinical trial were dashed. To say I was defeated, was an understatement. How could I possibly write anything encouraging about being well?

Here is the secret sauce to being well, my friends. You will not always be at tip-top physical strength. You may falter in your

About the Author:
Jennifer is a retinitis pigmentosa warrior who found her post-diagnosis purpose in helping others. She is an advocate for fitness and finding one’s own way through life, no matter what that may look like.

“Sometimes the most beautiful path is the one you’re not meant to see, but to feel.”
Blinded Soul Sister

BY VICTORIA CLAIRE

Now most of you that read CAPTIVATING! Magazine know me as the resident artist and I write about my sculpture career. However, what with March being Women’s History Month and International Women’s Day, I would like to share one of my many passions. This, of course, includes a creative process as well.

I create the brand Blinded Soul Skateboards, these are bespoke, solid wood retro skateboards. I also am a keen skateboarder myself. Skateboarding is somewhat of a male-dominated activity, most people associate either guys or children with skateboarding, it is very rare to hear someone talk about an adult female skater. I would like to celebrate all female skateboarders in this article, congratulating all of us that break down boundaries and stereotypes. I also hope by sharing my love of skating as a registered blind woman it showcases that despite our adversity we are capable of achieving whatever we desire.
So, what came first, the skateboard making or the skating? Well, for me I was inspired to create Blinded Soul Skateboards because of my love for skating. I used to skate a bit when I was a kid. I remember the retro skateboard I used to have back in the 80s, my mum would make me wear knee pads, which I wasn’t overly keen on! It’s strange but since beginning to skate again about 3 years ago, I am more fearless now as a blind woman on a skateboard, than I was as a sighted child!

In honesty, it took me a while to release myself from limiting beliefs about skating, what was stopping me initially was the fact that I was a 40-year-old woman who’s registered blind! During this period of suppressing my inner skater, I would feed the interest by buying and making my nephew skateboards. In fact, whenever I would see him with his longboard skateboard I would steal it off of him and ride off with it! I remember him saying, “don’t you think it’s about time you got your own board now Auntie Vicky”? So with that, I couldn’t fight it any longer, I went and bought a longboard skateboard. This was just before I began to get trained with my long cane. My now friend Dan Mancina, was a great source of inspiration. A professional blind skateboarder who also happens to have RP like myself, he gave me advice on what tips to use with my long cane when skating, he is one incredible skateboarder, there is not much that guy can’t do on a skateboard!

Initially, I was skating in very quiet places so that I would be safe, at that time I wasn’t a cane user. However, as soon as I had been trained with my cane I began to always use it when on my board. I can now go skating pretty much anywhere and more importantly on my own. Before the cane, it was very much an activity that I had to do with my husband. He would ride along in front of me or to the side, guiding me by giving me audio cues. Now I am completely independent and go skating on my own with just my board and my cane.

This has become a great way of educating the public, when people see me skating along the canal path I often get stopped and asked about my cane. I tend to use my purple long cane, of course, this is not the typical white cane, however as I refuse to be stereotyped I prefer to have the freedom of choice and use a coloured cane, that’s my right as an individual. This prompts people to ask what the cane is for. I respond with telling them that I am a visually impaired person and the cane is how I navigate my surroundings. People are often astounded by this and congratulate me on pushing the boundaries and for not allowing my blindness to dictate my life.

After about a year of skating, I decided to create my own cruiser skateboard, being a sculptor and using the medium of wood lent itself perfectly to creating skateboards. I made a retro style board with a fishtail, I entitled it The Retro Wood Fish, I shaped the deck by hand from a plank of Tulipwood, giving it a single kick and a v-shaped fishtail, this board was made with cruising in mind, so it was quite wide for stability but shorter than a regular double kick board. I designed a logo and put the artwork on the bottom of the board, I then got my husband to fibreglass the board for added strength and flexibility. Continued on pg 30
Most skateboards are made of 7 ply plywood, the layers of what is usually Maple wood makes the board strong, light and able to flex well. Solid wood skateboards are heavier, less flexible and can damage easier, by fibreglassing them it gives them added strength, durability and also a very nice glossy finish. I then put clear grip tape onto the deck. I fitted it out with longboard trucks and wheels with bearings that were more suited to cruising. That board runs like a dream, it rolls forever. This then inspired me to create the brand Blinded Soul Skateboards.

I have created many boards now for clients, this includes full length longboards, small cruisers and single kickboards, in fact Dan has a Blinded Soul skateboard deck. This is a Meranti wood deck that is a single kick, mini cruiser with a concave deck. I called it The RP, this was a nod to both Dan and I’s eye condition but also translated as Retro Predator.

I really enjoy creating skateboards, it diversifies my skills as a sculptor and is a lot of fun. The great thing about the boards is, like my sculpture, they are one-offs, I never create the same board twice, the process is also all by hand.

I hope this inspired you to try something that maybe you would like to do but have been a little afraid of trying. For me skating with my long cane has been the solution for solo skating, this gives me such a sense of freedom, I am also a surfer, this I’ll share at another time, however, skating gives me another outlet for when the waves are flat. I can just grab one of my many skateboards and go and shred it up on the pavements!

About the Author:
Victoria Claire is a registered blind Professional Artist in Contemporary Sculpture, Public Speaker, Retina UK Ambassador, Writer, Musician, Sight loss Mentor, and Advocate. Based in the UK her artistic career spans 25 years, her work is owned all over the world and she has had many solo exhibitions in the UK including Central London. Speaking as an inspirational speaker all around the world, she shares her journey of sight loss and the beauty within blindness, proving that with a positive mindset, an openness to adaptivity and accessibility a wonderful life is there for the taking, full of success, achievement, and joy.

To find out more about Victoria please visit: www.victoriaclaire-beyondvision.com or www.victoriaclairesculpture.com
“YOU HAD THE POWER ALL ALONG MY DEAR”

GLINDA THE GOOD WITCH
This review is unusual as it is actually three reviews of three different media platforms by one author -- Amy Webb. Webb is an artist, writer, blogger, Instagram influencer and parent of a child with a disability. Her blog is entitled “This Little Miggy Stayed Home” and shows snapshots of her life. She has recently documented the process of renovating a fabulous mid-century home to make it more accessible and more stylish. As a designer myself, stylish and accessible are generally considered mutually exclusive, if not a downright oxymoron. Webb has deftly accomplished this to enhance the lives of her whole family and to provide full accessibility to her daughter who has a limb difference and is a wheelchair user.

Much of Webb’s content on her social media platform is about parenting a child with a disability in the shared context of her entire family. She has used her experience and exposure to reach out to other parents and people with disabilities in the section of her blog called “Special Needs Spotlight.” In this section, she interviews people about their
experiences with disability and truly gives a face and voice to our lives. As a parent of a child with a disability, Webb paints a vivid picture of what is involved in visiting each classroom of her child’s school --- namely, to educate the entire school community on how to engage her daughter and to make her classmates comfortable asking questions. The ultimate goal is to make her daughter feel welcome and included in her school’s community.

Webb has expressed frustration in encounters with parents and their children when parents don’t take the lead in modeling behavior when meeting a person with a disability. I suspect this is the motivation in writing her new children’s book, “When Charley Met Emma.” This book is about a typical childhood experience of meeting someone new on a playground. In this case, young Charley meets Emma who is a wheelchair user with a limb difference. Charley’s mother models welcoming behavior and has a motto that difference is not weird but just different. Charley learns that although he and Emma have differences, they have much more in common. Webb shows that there are others with and without disabilities on the playground as well, including a white cane user and a child with a rollator (walker).

Webb is cagey in that this children’s book will undoubtedly be read aloud by many a parent, teacher, and grandparent. This will accomplish her goal of modeling behavior when navigating the discussion around disability.

By featuring other children with disabilities, Webb makes the reader familiar with many kinds of disabilities. There is even a dedicated page with a four-step plan to help parents find ways to encourage their children to have encounters with new people with disabilities. This was featured in a “USA Today” article. (link to article) The illustrations by Merrilee Liddiard are charming and adorable.

I am very pleased to have a much-needed tool to offer parents and my fellow educators that will lead to interesting conversations about disabilities. However, I am especially excited for children with limb differences or wheelchairs or white canes who will now be able to see themselves represented in a book. One of the consistent themes that Amy Webb talks about is the lack of visibility in the media by people with disabilities. We are the largest minority in the world yet there is such little representation of our imagery in all forms of media. Yes, we are finding each other on social media. And yes, like Amy Webb, CAPTIVATING! Magazine is taking media visibility into our own hands.

If you want to connect with more people with disabilities, please go to the Special Needs Spotlight on Amy Webb’s blog, This Little Miggy Stays Home. If you would like to raise the profiles of people with disabilities in your own neighborhood, send an email to your local library and request that they carry the book “When Charley Met Emma” by Amy Webb. You could even go a step further and volunteer to read it at a Saturday-morning story time with some questions and answers.
afterward. Now that is grassroots activism. I plan on donating a copy to my local Children’s Hospital where I see my neurosurgeon.

Perhaps the most entertaining part of Webb's feed is her expert and exuberant dancing. It brings me great pleasure and joy to open her Instagram stories to discover that she has dropped a beat and watch her dance. It's just something that brings a lift to the day and is made even sweeter knowing that her dancing brings great embarrassment to her father-in-law.

Dance is involved in my favorite moment of “This Little Miggy” Instagram feed. It is not Amy but her middle child's moment of childhood self-expression and joy that has struck my heart. Amy Webb caught her daughter called Lamp on the Internet, in a classic moment of childhood, dancing and singing along to the song “This is Me” from the film, “The Greatest Showman.”

“This Is Me” is worthy of being called the anthem of the disabilities community. It is especially poignant when you see this beautiful child sing along to the words, “I am brave. I am proof, I am who I’m meant to be. THIS IS ME!!’ When in her dance we see wee Lamp leap over a box of Cheerios in pure triumphant pride. This is not the mainstream image of how a child with a disability is portrayed. This is the opposite of all the “Tiny Tim” moments in our mythology of disability. Lamp is not isolated and alone; she is out of her wheelchair moving freely, confidently, and comfortably. Search this out in This Little Miggy's Stories on Instagram, in the highlights marked “This Is Me”. This young child is showing all of us what disability pride looks like; the defiant expression on her face shows us what it feels like. This pride is made possible by the excellent parenting of the remarkable Amy Webb.

About the Author:
Catherine Boldt has spent her adult life being a disability advocate. She is a designer and works in the Education Outreach Department and provides accessible tours at Taliesin, Frank Lloyd Wright's Estate. She is a past President of The Canadian Research Institute For The Advancement of Women, where she presided over an International Conference on Women with Disabilities and initiated a national essay contest and book called "That Body Image Thing".
San Marino: The Oldest Republic

BEATRIZ GARCÍA MARTÍN  Originally Published on 13 March 2019 on blindcanegirl.com

San Marino and its history are a unique example of a small state which has remained independent and autonomous through the centuries. This country is the most ancient Republic in the world and one of the few existing City-State.

The legendary origins talk about a refugee called Marinus, who arrived in Rimini. He founded a sort of community on the safest part of the Mount Titano. That was around 301 A.D. Over the centuries, the people of San Marino opposed any attempt of expansion but they kept control over their territory.

The size of San Marino is just over 61 km2, with a population of 33,562. Its capital is the City of San Marino, with a population of around 4,000 people. It is located near the centre of the country and set high on the western slopes of Mount Titano. In 2008 the mountain and the historic centre of the city were together named a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Historically, San Marino has been a good shelter. Three fortresses dominate the territory of the country from the top of Mount Titano.
The First Tower, called also Rocca Guaita, is the largest and oldest. The second tower, Cesta, is now a weapon's museum. The third tower, Montale, is not open to visitors.

The old town has narrow streets and some squares. The houses are small and made of stones. It is a cute place with delicious food. We had lunch in the Antica Trattoria Jole, which I strongly recommend. Nearby there is the statue of Lady Liberty in the middle of a square.

San Marino is the least visited country in Europe, even so, it has an accessibility project called San Marino for all. The objective is to open the Republic of San Marino to the "accessible tourism". San Marino considers: “although the hilly nature of the landscape, as well as the medieval structure of the capital town, must be considered when planning a visit, San Marino - a World Heritage Site - could and should be accessible to people with disabilities, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.”

Right now you can find information in Braille, accessible toilets and free entrance to museums. It is very nice to see how such a small country is working on accessibility to make San Marino a destination for all with no barriers.

How to get to San Marino?

San Marino is not the best-connected
country in the world. There are no airports or train stations, you can only reach San Marino by car or by bus from the Italian city Rimini. This service is operated by Bonelli Bus and is €5 one way. You can find the complete winter timetable for this particular bus service here, and the summer one here.

About the Author:
Beatriz is a visually impaired woman and a travel blogger who loves to explore new places. She holds a master's degree in Communication and works on an entrepreneurial project selling dolls online. Losing her sight due to Retinitis Pigmentosa, she chooses to enjoy and share her passion for traveling now. You can follow her adventures in theblindcanegirl.com.
Closing Remarks

CHELSEA NGUYEN & STEPHANAE MCCOY

As we were wrapping up this edition of CAPTIVATING! we tried to find a photo that adequately expresses what we are all about. After doing an extensive online search for people with disabilities doing everyday things like working, playing sports or simply enjoying life we came up empty. Then we had a light bulb moment: we already had such a photo in our possession. One of our #WeRCaptivating cover models, Kym Dekeyrel, is a perfect example of who we are and what we stand for. In the header image on this page Kym is doing what she loves, working out in the gym. She is squatting while holding 90 pound barbells straight over her head.

If you’ve gotten nothing else out of this edition of CAPTIVATING! it is our hope that you won’t dismiss the capabilities of anyone without knowing them. Stereotypes are plentiful for those of us among the ranks of people with disabilities. The value of a person should never be driven by mere appearance and the fact that each of us are unique should be celebrated.

And now for a few more March Awareness Days:
• Developmental Disabilities Month
• Down Syndrome Awareness Day March 21
• Deaf History Month March 13-April 15
• World Kidney Day March 14
• Purple Day for Epilepsy March 26
1-5. Front cover: on the top quarter of the cover page is the logo and name of the magazine, captivating, written in bold white capital letters except for the V in the magazine name is drawn with an artistic style font in bold red and looks like a big check mark. And at the end of the word, captivating is also a red bold exclamation mark.

In recognition of Women's History Month, on the cover we present the #WeRCaptivating women from all over the world: (clockwise from the bottom left) is:

- Grace Nzomo is wearing a red scope neck sweater and her long wavy red hair is swept over her left shoulder
- Krystle Allen who has dark shoulder length hair is behind L.A. wearing a white blouse with a silver and gold medallion statement necklace.
- L.A. is in the center. She has dark curly hair and she's wearing a black dressy top and bright red skirt.
- Kym Dekeyrel has long blonde hair parted in the center and while it can't be seen in this photo she's wearing a red and black floral dress with spaghetti straps.
- Shaini Saravanamuthu is in the lower right corner dressed in a black cold shoulder gown. Her long gold statement earrings are a nice contrast against her jumpsuit and black wavy hair swept to the left.

6. Page 4: For Down Syndrome Awareness Day is a stock image of a young girl with red hair and freckles wearing a pink sweater is on the left margin of the table of contents.

7. Page 5: Our model on the left margin of this page is Freddie, who is featured on page 22. In this photo he has a big smile and shining blue eyes. He is wrapped in his bright yellow coat and rides his red tricycle at the park.

8. Page 6: The photo on the right margin is of two attractive women sitting at a desk reviewing some paperwork.

9. Page 7: A sleek blue power wheelchair is on the right margin.

10. Pages 8: On the header of page 8 are four women in varying age groups representing several ethnicities. Immediately under this photo is the Women's History Month title followed by - Ask Chelsea & Stephanae.

11. Page 9: Bottom left corner: is a professional profile photo of Chelsea smiling and looking forward with her makeup on, long black hair with copper and caramel highlights, wearing a black silk top with slits on the sleeves and a silver necklace with a circle pendant in the center.

12. Page 11: Upper right-hand corner of page 11 is a side angled profile photo of Stephanae McCoy smiling and looking straight at the reader of the magazine. She is wearing a rich red lipstick, black eyeliner and very soft natural makeup on. Her rich brown hair is short and stylish and accented with golden copper highlights. She is also wearing a professional black jacket and accessorizing it with a silver chained necklace adorned with white diamonds in the shape of a flower with a blue sapphire center stone in the center of each flower. On that same necklace, there are also round peach colored stones throughout the necklace as well.

13. Unnumbered Page: Contains 5 headshots of each of our cover models (in alpha order) with short bios to the right of each of their photos.
14. **Page 12:** Krystle Allen's full length professional body shot (all the remaining photos are in the same placement as this one) is on the left margin and it shows her complete outfit of white blouse, bright red pants, and black heels. She looks like a sassy diva with her left hand on her hip.

15. **Page 13:** L.A. sparkles while posing with her black support cane in her right hand. She is wearing a bright red skirt and black blouse.

16. **Page 14:** Kym Dekeyrel is wearing a black and red floral asymmetrical cut dress. Her straight long blonde hair frames her face and is draped over the front of her dress.

17. **Page 15:** Grace Nzomo is dressed to the nines at a wedding reception in a red gown with black heels. In this photo she is wearing eyeglasses and her hair is a darker shade.

18. **Page 16:** Shaini Saravanamuthu's complete black cold shoulder gown can be seen in this photo along with her gold accent jewelry.

19. **Page 17:** The header image on this page shows Rebecca on the day of her ordination on May of 2018. Many wonderful people helped her to get to this point in her life, including her beloved husband and her clergy mentor, Rev. Evelyn Madison (both pictured here). In this photo, Rebecca is smiling broadly as she displays her hard earned new stole. The stole is a sign of ordination in the United Methodist Church.

20. **Page 20:** The photo is in the upper left corner of the page Rebecca stands in a confident pose with her arms crossed. She smiles and has dark curly hair. This photo was taken in 2017, the year before she was ordained. Note that although she wears a white robe, she does not have a stole around her neck. In the United Methodist Church, the stole is a mark of ordination.

21. **Page 21:** The larger image in the lower right corner shows the people of Christ Community United Methodist Church smiling as they stand in the front of the sanctuary. Everyone in the image looks friendly and welcoming. Rebecca stands in the front left. She wears a black clergy dress with a white clerical collar. She is also wearing a green stole.

22. **Page 21:** Small circular author bio photo A photo of our author Rev. Rebecca L. Holland shows her with a big smile wearing her Pastor's collar. Her long dark hair is swept over her right shoulder. She is wearing fashionable eyeglasses and pink lip color.

23-24. **Page 22:** In the upper left corner is a photo of little Freddie, with a big smile and shining blue eyes, is wrapped in his bright yellow coat and rides his red tricycle at the park. Small circular image 24 is the same photo of Freddie next to his bio.

25. **Page 23:** A blurred image of clothing hanging on a rack at a retail store.

26-27. **Page 26:** A stunning image is in the upper left corner of the page showing sunbeams bursting through several trees and landing on a lush green lawn. It is a serene setting. Image 27 is a circular bio photo of Jennifer Dutrow. Jen has shoulder length brunette hair, a megawatt smile, and hypnotic sparkling hazel eyes.

28-30. **Page 27:** The header image shows 5 of Victoria's skateboards leaning against a picnic
37. Page 34: The header image on this page is a photo of the view of the top of Mount Titano

38-40. Page 35: Three images on the left margin are as follows:
38 - The third tower, Montale
39 - Statue of Lady Liberty
40 - Views of San Marino and Italy

41-42. Page 36: The header image is Inside the second fortress and Beatriz is in the photo. Image 42 is the circular author bio photo of Beatriz standing outside in a gray winter coat. As she is on one of her many travels, in the background of the photo are blurred images of people and several indistinguishable buildings.

43. Page 37: The photo of Kym Dekeyrel is described in the article.

31-32. Page 29: Two more larger photos of a green Blinded Soul and a striking purple and yellow skateboard.

33-34. Page 30: A larger photo in the lower right corner is of Victoria skateboarding with her purple cane. Looks like it's brisk weather as she is wearing black gloves, white jacket and a burgundy knit cap. The smaller circular bio photo shows Victoria sitting, leaning forward, looking directly at the camera. Her straight blond hair parted in the middle frames her face. Wearing minimal makeup she is stunning with pink frosted lip color and is wearing a sleeveless black dress with a keyhole neckline.

35 Page 31: This photo is one of the most adorable images I've seen a while. It's the partial book cover of Amy Webb's "When Charley Met Emma" Children's Book. It's a drawing of a little girl in a wheelchair and a little boy is standing next to her. There are a couple of little trees on either side of the children. The image actually looks like a watercolor painting.

36. Page 33: A circular bio photo of Author, Catherine Boldt. Catherine looks fabulous in a geometric print dress in varying shades of purple and topped with a pink cropped cardigan. Her red hair is shoulder length with bangs and her lip color coordinates perfectly with her outfit. She is posing with color coordinated canes.