

Presented by Brett Heising, Interim Executive Director, Mesa For All Foundation and Meredith Tekin, President, International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES).

OVERVIEW

The Mesa For All Foundation Speaker Series explores the economic and human impact of accessibility across tourism, hospitality, workplaces, and community spaces. These presentations combine lived experience, research, and global best practices to help organizations create environments that welcome autistic, sensory-sensitive, and physically disabled individuals. All speaking proceeds benefit the Mesa For All Foundation.

AVAILABLE TOPICS:

The Accessibility Advantage: Welcoming Autistic Visitors & Visitors with Permanent Physical Disabilities

This session explores how destinations, attractions, and hospitality organizations can create welcoming experiences for autistic, sensory-sensitive, and physically disabled visitors. Through case studies and practical strategies, attendees will learn how accessibility can increase engagement, enhance brand reputation, and better serve this often-overlooked audience.

Disability in Travel & Tourism

Designed for upper-level university students, this course explores the history of disability and how hospitality organizations serve and market to guests with autism and physical disabilities. Through real-world experiences, students gain insight into accessibility in practice, develop problem-solving skills, and understand the difference between compliance, empathy, and meaningful inclusion.

WHY ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

Accessibility is one of the most significant and underserved opportunities for destinations, employers, and organizations. One in six people experience sensory needs or disorders, and one in 31 children is diagnosed with autism. Organizations that proactively address accessibility expand their reach, improve customer experience, and create environments where every individual can thrive. Additionally, approximately 25 percent of the U.S. population has a permanent physical disability.

Further, this often-overlooked demographic has money to spend. Despite lower overall income, working-age people with disabilities have a total disposable income of ~\$490 billion.

Unlocking an Overlooked Talent Advantage: Why Hiring People on the Autism Spectrum and/or With Physical Disabilities Makes Your Organization Better

This session examines the value of neurodiverse talent, common workplace barriers, and practical strategies to recruit, support, and retain employees with autism and physical disabilities. It also highlights how organizations can create more inclusive environments, navigate accommodations, and tap into overlooked talent pools.

The \$490 Billion Opportunity: Winning the Loyalty of Consumers with Disabilities and Autism

This keynote reframes disability as a powerful driver of consumer loyalty and brand growth. Backed by data and real-world insights, it highlights the size and spending power of this market and shows how brands can close accessibility gaps across marketing, design, and customer experience to better serve — and win — this audience.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR YOUR BRAND:

A customer who uses a wheelchair remembers which dealership had a sales rep who never talked over them to their companion. An autistic shopper remembers which store had clear signage, a calm checkout lane option, and a staff member who didn't rush them. These customers come back — and they bring their families and networks with them. Word-of-mouth within the disability and autism community is powerful precisely because accessible experiences are still rare enough to be remarkable.

This session will transform how your marketing, operations, and customer experience teams think about one of the most loyal, underserved consumer segments in the country.

SUPPORTING THE MISSION

All speaking proceeds directly support the Mesa For All Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing accessibility, inclusive tourism, and community programs that empower individuals with autism and physical disabilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SPEAKING FORMATS & ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS

Mesa For All Foundation offers flexible speaking formats designed to meet the needs of conferences, corporate teams, destinations, and academic institutions. Each engagement can be tailored to focus on tourism, workforce, or community accessibility.

Virtual Keynote (45–60 minutes) — \$2,500

A high-impact virtual presentation designed for conferences, corporate teams, and associations. Includes live delivery, audience Q&A, and actionable takeaways participants can implement immediately

In-Person Keynote (45–60 minutes) — \$5,000

An engaging, in-person keynote ideal for conferences, leadership meetings, and industry events. Combines storytelling, research, and real-world examples to shift how audiences think about accessibility and opportunity.

Half-Day Accessibility Workshop (3–4 hours) — \$7,500

A more interactive session designed for organizations seeking practical application. Includes deeper operational guidance, case studies, and facilitated discussion tailored to the audience's specific challenges.

Full-Day Accessibility Strategy Session (6–8 hours) — \$10,000

A comprehensive working session for organizations ready to act. This option includes:

- In-depth assessment of current accessibility practices
- Customized recommendations across operations, customer experience, and communications
- Collaborative working sessions with leadership and key stakeholders
- Practical roadmap development for implementation

Academic & Experiential Workshop (Custom Pricing)

Designed specifically for universities and training programs, including the Disability in Travel & Tourism course. This format may include:

- Classroom instruction
- On-site experiential learning (e.g., hotel or venue walkthroughs)
- Real-world application exercises