



589 Broadway Fl 3
New York, NY 10012
212.334.8720
DisabilityUnite.Org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: July 6, 2026

CONTACT: Matt Axel, maxel@projectaccessforall.org, 718-928-5775

**PROJECT ACCESS FOR ALL & NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
ANNOUNCE SEVENTH ANNUAL HYBRID DISABILITY UNITE FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING DISABILITY PRIDE**

*Commemorating the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding
and the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act,
the Disability Unite Festival promotes disability pride and an inclusive future for all.*

New York, NY — Project Access for All with the NYC Commission on Human Rights announce the seventh annual Disability Unite Festival, celebrating disability pride through arts, culture, and community on Sunday, July 12, 2026, at the Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., with simultaneous virtual performances through the DisabilityUnite.org [Live Stream Center](#).

The Disability Unite Festival brings together the global disability community and has grown into one of the largest disability pride events in the country, drawing thousands of attendees each year. With in-person and virtual programming, audiences everywhere can participate. The in-person event will feature 50+ community organizations hosting resource and advocacy tables, while a livestream of stage performances brings the experience to everyone.

As we commemorate 250 years since the founding of the United States and 36 years since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, our 2026 Disability Unite Festival theme, "A More Accessible Union," connects the nation's founding ideals of freedom and equality with the ongoing work to make those promises real. It underscores that disability rights are human rights, and that the promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be accessible to all.

The festival is a disability community-driven – for the community by the community – that brings together advocates, artists, policymakers, and organizations from across the country to share best practices in accessibility and inclusion.

The festival will also include a range of accessible activities and interactive experiences, including:

- A dynamic lineup of live musical performances & interactive art installations
- Accessible workshops, including yoga, loom weaving, and dancing
- Wildlife activities from the Central Park Zoo
- Resource sharing from city agencies and community partners, advancing innovative strategies to advance disability rights and access.

Matthew Axel, Founder of Project Access for All's Disability Unite Festival said "A More Accessible Union is both a reflection and a challenge. As we mark America's 250th anniversary, it's a moment to ask whether the promise of freedom and opportunity truly includes everyone, and how we can uplift one another so that becomes a reality. Disability Unite brings together artists, advocates, policymakers, and community members to show what that future can look like in practice — where accessibility isn't an afterthought, it's part of how we design our cities, our culture, and our public life. This festival is about celebrating disability pride while pushing the conversation forward, so the next chapter of America's history is more inclusive, more connected, and more accessible than the one before it."

Christine Clarke, Commissioner and Chair of the New York City Commission on Human Rights said "New Yorkers with disabilities deserve equal access to housing, jobs, public transportation, and medical care, including the necessary tools and accommodations to fully participate in public life. We cannot fulfill the promise of equality while spaces continue to exclude people with disabilities. Disability Unite is a powerful celebration of community, and a reminder that we all have a role to play in building a more equitable future."

"In an environment of heightened federal hostility towards people with disabilities, spaces that connect and celebrate our community are more important than ever," said **Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities' Commissioner Nisha Agarwal**.

"Disability Unite brings people together to recognize the disability community, uplift voices through arts and culture, and organize the fight for lasting change. We are grateful to Disability Unite and excited for their Disability Pride Month celebrations ahead."

"I am proud to be the first elected official in the United States known to have Tourette's - and even prouder that others have come after me," said **Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**. "July is Disability Pride Month, where we celebrate our experience and reflect on the barriers that remain for people with disabilities in accessing opportunity, housing,



589 Broadway Fl 3
New York, NY 10012
212.334.8720
DisabilityUnite.Org

and other fundamental necessities. The first step towards creating a city that combats discrimination and truly supports every New Yorker with a disability is cultivating public understanding of these conditions. That's why I recently passed legislation to recognize Tourette Syndrome Awareness month to destigmatize and promote accurate information on the condition. When we show up, we open doors, so I thank Project Access for All for bringing us together in community and I look forward to continuing this work together."

For more information on transportation, run of show, and performers, please see our FAQ document available [here](#).

###

About Project Access for All

Project Access for All was launched nationally in 2010 with a Working Group of the Obama Administration. Project Access for All is an "umbrella" community consortium for disability rights organizations in NYC and across the nation.

About the New York City Commission on Human Rights

The New York City Commission on Human Rights is the agency responsible for enforcing the NYC Human Rights Law, one of the most comprehensive civil rights laws in the nation. The Commission works to promote equality and combat discrimination in New York City through law enforcement, community relations, and public education. If you have witnessed or experienced discrimination, contact the Commission at 212-416-0197 or visit www.nyc.gov/reportdiscrimination.