

DISABILITY EMPOWERHER NETWORK



EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

Each year, a diverse group of disabled young women will be invited to the Adirondacks for one week to learn about disaster preparedness basic survival skills, while also developing independent living skills and leadership skills, as well as connecting with disabled mentors. Youth will be invited to D.C. the next summer for a reunion trip to explore how they have grown as leaders, meet with FEMA, the Red Cross, and Congress to discuss disaster preparedness and the Disability Community. During the year between the first trip and the reunion trip, disabled youth will create a yearlong local project involving inclusive disaster strategies.

Disabled youth will work on their project throughout the year and check in with their mentor monthly. Projects will be individualized for each young woman based on her interests. For example, one camper may work with an emergency shelter to make access improvements, whereas another camper may work with a wheelchair manufacturer to create function so wheelchair users can alert emergency responders of their location via the bluetooth in their joysticks. Mentors will assist with the yearlong project, as well as general mentoring about school, disability issues, and empowering the young women to achieve their goals and continue setting bigger goals for the future.

MOTIVATION

1 in 5 people with disabilities do not have a high school diploma, compared to 1 in 10 people without disabilities.

We can change that by teaching independent living skills and motivating youth with disabilities to success!

SURVIVAL SKILLS

People with disabilities are 2 to 4 times more likely to die or sustain a critical injury during a disaster than people without disabilities.

We can change that by teaching young women with disabilities about disaster preparedness and basic survival skills!

MENTORSHIP

Research shows that disability has not been a targeted population for mentoring and that disabled youth often do not have positive disabled role models.

We can change that by having successful disabled women camp with the disabled girls and be paired together for a 12 month mentoring relationship. Mentees will create a project on inclusive disaster strategies to complete in their own communities over one year and mentors will help them complete their projects.

Disability EmpowHer Network will be led by Stephanie Woodward, a Disability Rights attorney and activist, and Leah Smith, an advocate and PR specialist in the Disability Community. Both women have extensive experience in mentoring and leading successful national projects.

Disability EmpowHer Network will host their camp at John Dillon Park, a fully accessible wilderness facility located in the beautiful Adirondacks. The girls will sleep in lean-tos, learn to build fires, discover how to use a compass and map, learn how to make hard decisions and how to work as a team, and more.



Through a camping program, young disabled women discover basic survival skills, further develop their life skills, practice leadership, increase their independence and become more confident.



All donations to Disability EmpowHer Network are tax-deductible thanks to our fiscal sponsor, Portlight Strategies, Inc. Portlight is a 501(c)3 which was founded in 1997 to facilitate a variety of projects involving people with disabilities, including post-disaster relief work, and to foster inclusive disaster planning and response for all people with disabilities.

DISABILITY EMPOWHER NETWORK OFFERS YOUNG DISABLED WOMEN:

01

Development of independence, leadership, and survival skills.

02

Year-long mentoring relationship with successful disabled women.

03

Opportunities for civic engagement and meeting with national leaders!

04

Life long friendships and support network for future success!

