



Relay Resources Announces Speaker Lineup for Second-Annual DisabilityNext™ Summit

National disability inclusion and workforce mental health leaders to headline conference coinciding with National Disability Employment Awareness Month

PORTLAND, OR, UNITED STATES, July 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Relay Resources](#), the Pacific Northwest's leading social enterprise nonprofit advancing disability inclusion in the workplace, announced the featured speaker lineup for the second-annual [DisabilityNext™ Summit](#), taking place October 6–7, 2026, at the Hyatt Regency Portland.

The event coincides with National Disability Employment Awareness Month ([NDEAM](#)) and builds on the momentum of the inaugural DisabilityNext™ Summit in 2025, which drew hundreds of attendees to Portland State University last April for a day of action-oriented dialogue on disability inclusion in the workplace. This year's summit expands to two days, with each session thoughtfully designed to deliver takeaways that employers, HR professionals, and advocates can put to work the moment they leave the room.

"DisabilityNext™ exists because disabled people still face double the unemployment rate and half the opportunity," said Dr. Jennifer Camota Luebke, president and CEO of Relay Resources. "This summit is where employers and leaders come to move beyond conversation and into action. Our 2026 speaker lineup reflects the full breadth of what disability inclusion looks like in practice, from workforce mental health to neurodivergent-first technology to the business case for accessible hiring."

Salesforce, the Diamond Sponsor for this year's Summit, notes, "at Salesforce, we know that inclusion drives innovation — and the Relay Resources DisabilityNext Summit is where that belief becomes action. Companies can no longer overlook the talent, perspective, and purchasing power of the one billion people worldwide living with disabilities. The time to build accessible, disability-inclusive workforces is now." In addition, Amy Wood, Accessibility Manager at Salesforce, will be speaking on behalf of the company at the event.

Featured Speakers

The 2026 DisabilityNext™ Summit will feature more than 15 speakers representing the leading edge of disability inclusion thought leadership. Among those announced:

Marisa Hamamoto, the summit's opening keynote speaker, is a dancer, activist, and founder of Infinite Flow, a professional dance company featuring disabled and non-disabled performers. Hamamoto has been recognized globally for her work bridging disability representation and the performing arts.

Zach Anner is a comedian, author, television writer, and disability advocate, bringing humor and lived experience to conversations about disability representation, accessibility, and belonging. Born with cerebral palsy, Anner first gained national recognition with his travel series Rollin' With Zach. Since then, he has written for acclaimed television series' including Speechless and Best Foot Forward, authored the memoir If At Birth You Don't Succeed, and built an audience of millions through his comedic storytelling, helping reshape public perceptions of disability through entertainment, media, and advocacy.

Grant Harris, MBA, CDE® is the founder and president of GTH Consulting, a minority- and disability-owned management consulting firm, and also runs Compliance to Community. He's a Certified Diversity Executive, three-time published autistic author, and globally recognized keynote speaker who helps HR leaders, executives, and educators rethink how they identify and support talent, drawing on his own late-life autism diagnosis. His work centers on neurodiversity and inclusion, spanning federal agencies, K-12 and higher ed, and corporations, built around frameworks like his "Human-Centered Performance" approach and the SCAN leadership model.

Dr. Victoria Verlezza, Ph.D., is a nationally recognized disability inclusion strategist, researcher, and workplace culture expert whose work focuses on neurodiversity, psychological safety, and equitable organizational design. Drawing on both academic research and lived experience, Verlezza developed the Cognitive Equity Leadership Model™ and advises organizations on creating disability-inclusive workplaces through leadership development, policy design, and systems change.

Dr. Joe Grasso, Ph.D., Vice President of Workforce Transformation at Lyra Health, brings clinical and organizational expertise on the intersection of mental health, disability, and inclusive workplace design. A clinical psychologist by training, Dr. Grasso leads Lyra's development of educational content on psychological wellness and consults with employers on programs, policies, and communication strategies to support workforce mental health at scale.

Jhillika Kumar, Forbes 30 Under 30 Social Impact awardee and founder and CEO of Mentra, a neurodivergent-first talent platform that matches neurodiverse individuals with employers using AI-powered assessments. A TEDx speaker and self-identified neurodivergent, Kumar founded Mentra after her personal experience as the sister of a nonspeaking autistic person and was recognized by the Biden administration as the most innovative solution to address the disability employment divide.

Dr. Hung Jen Kuo and Sarah George lead the GREAT Lab at Michigan State University, a nationally

recognized accessibility and inclusion research initiative that leverages technology to remove barriers for disabled people in workplace settings.

Lacey J. Henderson is the mental performance coach with the Portland Timbers. She is a Paralympian, broadcast host with NBC, a record holder, and a former Div 1 athlete. She applies both lived experience and accessible evidence-based practices to enhance performance at all intersections of life.

Full speaker announcements will roll out via Relay Resources' email and social channels in July.

About DisabilityNext™ Summit

The DisabilityNext™ Summit is a multi-day conference produced by Relay Resources, dedicated to accelerating disability inclusion in the American workplace. Programming includes keynote addresses, DisabilityNext™ Talks, panel discussions, fireside chats, and structured networking for leaders across the corporate, government, nonprofit, and higher education sectors. Topics will span neuro-inclusion, accessible technology, workforce mental health, and scalable workplace accessibility strategies.

In keeping with Relay Resources' mission, the summit will offer a full suite of accessibility features, including ASL interpretation, live screen captioning, assistive listening devices, sensory break rooms, reserved wheelchair seating, sighted guides, service animal relief stations, sensory bags, and accessibility-trained support staff throughout the venue.

Event Details

What: DisabilityNext™ Summit 2026

When: October 6–7, 2026

Where: Hyatt Regency Portland, Portland, Oregon

Registration: summit.relayresources.org

About Relay Resources

Founded in 1951, Relay Resources is the Pacific Northwest's leading employer of disabled people and a leading disability social enterprise nonprofit. Relay employs nearly 1,000 team members across four lines of business — building solutions, document solutions, supply chain solutions, and disability inclusion and accessibility consulting — with approximately 62 percent of employees identifying as disabled. Relay also provides pathways to employment in the community through its Competitive Integrated Employment and abil-IT Cybersecurity Training programs. For more information, visit relayresources.org

Kate Nance

EARLY PR
+1 832-273-5249
kate@earlypr.com

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