

“Perspectives on Value & Talent” Cast Video Transcript

“Perspectives on Value & Talent” is a short video featuring behind-the-scenes interviews with cast members appearing in the “Celebrating Value & Talent” public service announcement. It features interviews with Darone Rollins, a wheelchair user working on a construction site; Cody Hart, an AI data annotator who is neurodivergent; and Evelyn Valdez, a federal worker who is blind. Cut-aways show scenes of the three individuals in various workplaces. Evelyn is also shown commuting using public transportation. As the narration concludes, a graphic slate appears showing the Campaign for Disability Employment logo, the website address *WhatCanYouDoCampaign.org*, the U.S. Department of Labor seal, and the Freedom250 logo.

The Audio Flows as Follows:

Daronte Rollins: My name is Daronte Rollins.

Cody Hart: My name is Cody Hart.

Evelyn Valdez: My name is Evelyn Valdez.

Evelyn: I have a retinal degenerative eye condition. I have now been blind since my senior year in high school.

Daronte: I live life as a T4 paraplegic as a result of a motor vehicle accident at the age of 17. I navigate the world a little bit differently, but I still have the same opportunities, as I am an active individual in the community.

Evelyn: People with disabilities, because we have to be so on-the-spot problem solvers, most of the tasks are something that we have to think quick on our feet. I think that that's what makes us part of innovation, because we're looking, we're constantly coming up with creative solutions on how to tackle different tasks.

Cody: One of the biggest ways my neurodiversity helps me on the job is how it causes me to hyperfocus, to be very attentive to the details and stick to the task at hand for long stretches of time.

That strong ability to focus and to get the project done is part of why I am able to work fast, and why I'm able to work with a lot of detail-oriented work.

Daronte: We offer so much in the space of creativity and problem solving, you know, just being able to navigate a world that wasn't constructed for us.

Cody: When it comes to misconceptions, when people think of neurodivergence or neurodivergent people, they sort of just think of, you know, a lot of the tropes and a lot of the stereotypes when really we're just other people with differences, aspects about our personality, aspects about our physicality that, just causes us to have to approach life a little differently. But then again, everyone approaches life a little differently.

Evelyn: I just only use one accommodation at work and that's having my JAWS software. So all it is is a text-to-speech software that is downloaded onto my work laptop, and that's how I am able to do all of my work.

We're just like everyone else. We're probably doing things slightly different than others. Not entirely different. I have to produce the same amount of work that my sighted counterparts have to do, and there are no excuses because I don't have excuses for myself.

Cody: When it comes to accommodations, I've been using them for so long that I barely notice them. They're just another part of the daily process. Some of the accommodations include a timekeeper, a little reminder just to keep me on task or to remind me that I've been working too long. Sometimes I can, like I said, hyperfocus too much and end up working for way longer stretches than I should be.

Evelyn: For someone that's young and they're getting ready for the workforce one day, whatever that looks like, first of all, it's not going to be as daunting and scary as you may think it is. Number two, make sure that you equip yourself with the job readiness skills.

Use those opportunities as stepping stones to the next thing, because you're going to have so many experiences in your life that are going to enrich you to where you want to be next.

Daronte: I would tell them to set their own ceiling and not allow for others to, you know, make their space any smaller. And also, come forth with an open mind and understanding that we have different challenges and different needs that we shouldn't be ashamed to request aid, and also just be proud of who we are, as an individual. Just given the opportunity, a person with a disability can far exceed any expectation or any glass ceiling that is set for them.

Narrator: America works best when everybody works, including people with disabilities.

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