

Hi my name is Amber Logan. I thank you for having me here today to tell my story. Hopefully I can be of help to those special education students in school today. I was in special education for 12 years due to a traumatic brain injury at birth and even though I grew up in a positive atmosphere at home school was very hard and sad for me. I remember starting to feel very self conscious and down about myself during my middle school years and also through high school. I had no self confidence and always walked with my head down. I had no self-esteem. If you would ask any of my classmates they would not believe I would be doing any public speaking but now that has all changed. I also use diverse ability and not disability. We all have abilities.

During my transition meeting in high school I felt like everyone talked about me like I wasn't there. They didn't talk much about my abilities and that was a terrible feeling. It was not a positive atmosphere and they asked me very little about what I wanted to do with my life. After graduating my transition fell apart. I had no role model with a diverse ability to lean on. What would I do? I knew I had abilities. My mom started getting me into the community and that's when things got better for me because that's where I knew I belonged. I will shorten my story by telling you what I am doing today. My mom and my sister and I started a group fitness class for individuals with diverse abilities called superstars at our Y. I flew with my family to Rhode Island to train with Carrie Ekkins the creator of the workout to get my certification. It was 2 long days but I did it. Now I am the first person in the United States with a diverse ability to get certified in drums alive. This was life changing for me. Now we have well over 80 enrolled in our program at our RVR Y and they have hired me as an instructor and to help with the socials that we have. I love being a role model and a leader. I have now built confidence in myself and I am taking that into the community. I love to encourage others! I am busy teaching superstar classes and inclusion classes. I know how important inclusion is and it has been great seeing our superstars in the community and gaining confidence. They see me as a leader and know that they can be a leader too!

I am also on our county commissioners diverse ability board where we work on issues in our community.

I have also had the opportunity to share my story at conferences, the ARC rally here at the capital, and at Bloomsburg University to students going into special education. I remind them to believe in their students and encourage them to be the best that they can be. I don't want these students to feel the way I did in school. I am hoping today by sharing my story that it will make a difference and that you will pass this important bill that I am very excited about. I would love to be a part of this and help encourage these students.

Well now I am active working and serving in my community and I love my everyday life. You remember that girl I told you about? I no longer walk with my head down I walk with my head up and I'm am proud to be me.