

Video: Beyond Compliance: Building Accessible Travel with Pride and Joy

Transcript (Captions + Visual Description)

This transcript includes spoken dialogue and written audio description for accessibility.

Created: Jan 2026

Note: This combined version integrates spoken dialogue and visual description into a single linear format. It reflects the creator’s lived experience and intentionally includes warmth, pride, and joy as part of Disability Pride storytelling.

Opening (0:00–0:05)

Lakshmee, a woman of Indian-Caribbean descent with dark hair, wearing glasses and an orange blazer, stands in a bright, airy venue surrounded by lush greenery. A name tag on her blazer reads “Lakshmee Lachhman-Persad.” She walks past the camera, smiling widely, and waves.

Lakshmee:

I’m Lakshmee Lachhman-Persad, the founder of Accessible Travel NYC. For seven years, I’ve worked with destinations and organizations embedding accessibility as business strategy, centered in disability pride and disability joy.

Early Story + Montage (0:06–0:44)

Lakshmee appears wearing a yellow sweater that reads “Caribbean,” presenting in a classroom with a projector screen at Fordham University.

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Montages show Lakshmee and her sister Annie, a wheelchair user, posing with display boards in outdoor Brooklyn Botanic Garden settings. They are vibrantly dressed and laughing together.

Lakshmee, her husband, two children, her mother, and Annie appear in multiple scenes across New York City. A woman in a blue T-shirt pushes Annie's wheelchair through varied spaces: a garden path with stone columns and a pond, a dark room with colored lighting, a gallery lined with portrait walls, a modern building lobby, and museum hallways.

Annie waves and looks out a window toward the Statue of Liberty.

Lakshmee and Annie pose together in front of a large disco ball at Lincoln Center, smiling.

A group photo appears on a city street at night.

Lakshmee:

Early on, my sister Annie and I made a decision in defiance of societal norms surrounding people with disabilities. Annie was born with cerebral palsy, so traveling long distances was never really an option for us. But I realized that even if we couldn't travel the world together, we had a lot of the world right here in New York City.

Lakshmee:

Say hi.

Annie:

Hiii.

Lakshmee:

When we started going out, I couldn't find meaningful accessible information. There was barely any representation, and what existed was buried in footers or reduced to a checklist that didn't reflect real life. This wasn't about attitudes. It was about systems that were never designed with disabled people in mind.

Presentation Slides (1:00–1:08)

Two presentation slides appear. One reads “Barriers to Disability Pride & Joy,” showing six yellow circles with text about disability models and barriers. The second slide reads “Disability Market Segment,” displaying market statistics.

Lakshmee:

Then I found a number that stopped me. One in four people in the U.S. are disabled. I had been in tourism marketing for over twenty years and had never thought of disabled people as a market segment—and that changed everything. So in 2018, I launched Accessible Travel NYC.

Museums, Website, and Outings (1:08–1:30)

Lakshmee, Annie, and their mother explore music and a tabletop exhibit at the Louis Armstrong Museum. The scene shifts to the Museum of the City of New York, where Lakshmee and her mother raise their fists in celebration in the Women’s Liberation exhibit, smiling as Annie looks at Lakshmee with a beaming smile.

The Accessible Travel NYC website homepage appears with a New York City skyline background.

Lakshmee, her daughter, her mother, and Annie hold flyers in a bright gift shop at Queens Museum.

Two photos show the entire family of six dressed in vibrant Indian clothing at SUMMIT One Vanderbilt, smiling and embracing, with the Empire State Building visible in the background.

Lakshmee, her mother, and Annie walk and wheel through a historic hallway at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Lakshmee:

What began as documenting our family vacations became a repeatable way to

evaluate access, improve communication, and center real disabled experiences. My work helped organizations move beyond compliance to build trust, strengthen brand sentiment, and support growth and recognition.

Speaking Engagements (1:30–1:45)

Lakshmee sits with another woman, both gesturing and laughing during a conversation, with a large screen behind them.

A screen displays CART information near a stage with flags. Tables nearby hold brochures, fidget spinners, and KN95 masks.

Lakshmee stands at a podium delivering an acceptance speech as a Baruch College Changemaker Alumna.

Audience members cheer and applaud.

Lakshmee:

Together we are—

Crowd:

Unstoppable!

Lakshmee:

Thank you so very much.

Disability Pride Symbols (1:45–2:01)

Lakshmee and Annie stand on opposite sides of a pillar labeled “New York Disability Rights Archive,” looking at each other warmly.

Lakshmee, her daughter, and her mother lift Disability Pride education flyers at the New York Botanical Garden while Annie smiles from her wheelchair.

A close-up shows Lakshmee’s hand holding a circular pin with a rainbow shooting star design—the Disability Pride Flag designed by Annie Nishwani Lachhman.

Behind it, SUMMIT One Vanderbilt glows in Disability Pride flag colors for ADA 35.

Pins and lanyards with various Disability Pride designs are displayed in Lakshmee’s

and Annie’s hands, followed by close-ups of lapel pins featuring flags, stars, wheelchair symbols, and bold colors.

Lakshmee:

Over time, I realized that access alone isn’t enough. My work centers disability pride—being visible without apology—and disability joy—creating access so joy is possible. Not as buzzwords or inspiration, but as a practice that changes culture.

Recognition and Awards (2:02–2:27)

In a reflective balloon-filled room, Annie laughs as Lakshmee gently bounces a balloon off her head. Their mother wheels Annie as they share a warm-hearted moment together.

Lakshmee appears on stage accepting a Women in Tourism Award, with a screen behind her reading “LAKSHMEE LACHHMAN-PERSAD, Community Service, Accessible Travel NYC.”

Mayor Eric Adams, wearing a suit, presents Lakshmee with a certificate.

A group photo shows the family of eight and a wheelchair-using tour guide in front of a castle-like building in Flanders, Belgium, alongside a golden retriever wearing a yellow vest.

Lakshmee, in her orange blazer, holds signs reading “New York Accessible Travel Conference.”

She appears holding glass awards against a New York City skyline backdrop, walking a red carpet at a Power Women Award event, and holding a Webby trophy with her mother and Annie for a Lincoln Center partnership.

Another image shows the family huddled together with text overlays noting Webby Honoree recognition for a SUMMIT One Vanderbilt partnership.

In the mirrored spaces of SUMMIT One Vanderbilt, five family members hold awards and certificates while Annie sits at the center in her wheelchair, smiling broadly.

Lakshmee:

I've worked with organizations across tourism, culture, and government—from city to global levels—through strategy convenings, knowledge exchange, and award-recognized leadership.

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities:

We are proud to applaud Accessible Travel NYC for working to forge a better future where all New Yorkers can thrive.

[Audience cheering]

Conference Presentation (2:27–2:42)

Lakshmee receives an award on stage from Mayor Eric Adams.

She speaks at a podium with “New York Accessible Travel Conference” displayed on a large screen behind her.

Audience members sit attentively in the conference hall.

Lakshmee:

When disability pride and joy are centered, organizations reduce friction, build trust, and grow their audiences—not just expand access. I help organizations build belonging with measurable impact.

Closing (2:43–2:54)

The entire family is reflected from above in mirrored surfaces inside a glass elevator, surrounded by shifting light patterns.

The Accessible Travel trademark logo appears with the text “Disability Pride, Disability Joy, Exists!”

The AccessibleTravel NYC logo appears with the words “Inspire, Empower, Enrich.”

Text reads “Learn more” with the website www.accessibletravelnyc.com.

Text reads “Connect” alongside a QR code on a yellow background.

[Crowd chanting: “Disability Pride, Disability Joy, Exists!”]

AUDIO: [Music plays]

END