

To: SSSP Board of Directors
From: Laura Mauldin, Chair, Accessibility Committee
Re: Annual report Date: July 16, 2020

The Accessibility Committee met at last year's 2019 Annual Meeting. In this meeting we acknowledged Val Leiter's previous service as Accessibility Committee Chair and I began my term. At this meeting we discussed a change in protocol for who contacts disabled registrants should there be questions or concerns. Rather than Michele doing this contacting, we agreed that it should be the Accessibility Committee Chair. We also discussed that for future in-person meetings, all presenters and organizers should receive an email from the Accessibility Committee Chair regarding information on how to give an accessible presentation. At the same time, we also agreed that we encourage people not to stop there, but to also think about access during the meetings in general and to set a tone that access concerns are for everyone, not just disabled attendees. That is, we stressed an ethos that shifts from accommodation focused on individuals as a reaction to features of the broader event to focusing on hosting accessible meetings that take a variety of needs into account with the goal that individual accommodations be rendered unnecessary. We also discussed making sure that in communications to presenters and organizers that we remind them that access isn't just the responsibility of the Accessibility Committee, but rather that it is a collective responsibility and to always assume that there are disabled people in the room. These are conversations we are committed to continue having with SSSP.

This summer, SSSP announced a half-day virtual conference. I contacted Michele about this plan and stressed the importance of using a platform that is accessible to blind users (Zoom is accessible, WebEx is not) and providing live captioning during the meeting. This request was positively received and SSSP will be providing captions for the meeting and using Zoom as the platform. I also requested that announcements regarding the half-day virtual conference include this access information. This was also positively received and there will also be a contact for access questions listed.

Because of the pandemic and the cancellation of this year's meeting, the committee discussed (via email) whether or not to hold a virtual meeting and agreed not to. Committee members also agreed that the half-day conference should be accessible and for SSSP to include accessibility information in advertisements.