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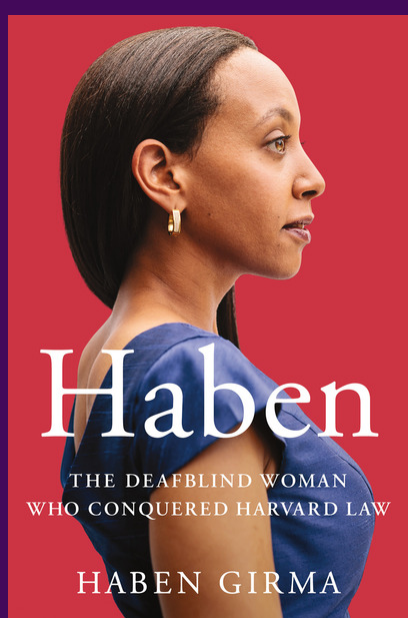
## Haben Girma to Deliver 2021 Opening Plenary

The first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, Haben Girma advocates for equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

The daughter of refugees Haben built her remarkable career on the belief that inclusion is a choice. We all have the power to advocate.

Her recent memoir, *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*, is a thoughtful and captivating testament to Haben's determination to resist isolation and find the keys to connection.

To view her Ted Talk, "Why I Work to Remove Access to Barriers for Students with Disabilities", [click here](#).



## Director's Comments

Choosing accessibility is not just about legal requirements and good business, it is the right thing to do. People with disabilities represent the largest minority group, numbering over one billion worldwide. Organizations, especially universities and faith based institutions, that prioritize accessibility improve interactions for both disabled and non-disabled users, and facilitate innovation.

In a recent article Haben argues that "people with disabilities drive innovation. Disability creates a constraint, and embracing constraints spurs inventive solutions. Our history has numerous examples of people with disabilities leading advances in science, technology and other fields."

Old myths allege that people with disabilities are a burden on society and stem from unfounded fears of those who are different. Contrary to those myths, Haben both identifies persons and personally testifies that difference drives innovation

Haben provides consulting and public speaking on accessibility, diversity, and leadership and her presentations have persuaded organizations as wide-ranging as Apple, Microsoft, the New York Times, Oxford Law, Stanford, and SXSW.

In the words of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, "As a teacher and Prime Minister, I am particularly grateful for [Haben's] work to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the tools they need to thrive at school and beyond. When our society is inclusive, we are all better off."

For all of these reasons and more, I am pleased that Haben Girma will open the 2021 CSC on June 9 and engage in deep and important ways.

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