Diversity Day 2015 program at East Carolina University College of Nursing focused on individuals with disabilities.

**Guest Panel:** Mother of a panelist and three young women with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

**Participant responses:**
- “I never realized that people with disabilities represented the nation’s largest minority and it’s the only minority that anyone can join at any time.” In fact, each of us has a 20% chance of becoming disabled at some time in our life.
- “Diversity Day 2015 made me realize that individuals with disabilities have “Divers-Abilities” because they do have unique abilities and talents that need not go unrecognized.”

**Take Home Message:**
*Individuals with Divers-Abilities want to be a part of the everyday world. They have the same feelings, desires, and goals as all people.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References/Acknowledgments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Special thanks to Nina Buckman and Sandra Buckman for sharing their stories; thanks to Sandra for editorial assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Beta Nu Chapter of STTI for sponsoring Diversity Day 2015 and providing financial support to attend this conference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Promote an Inclusive Environment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of saying:</th>
<th>Try saying:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled person or the disabled</td>
<td>Person or people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicap parking</td>
<td>Accessible parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired</td>
<td>Low vision, hard of hearing, or uses a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidden disabilities</td>
<td>Non-visible or non-apparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodations</td>
<td>Adjustments or modifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffers from, challenged by, or struggles with</td>
<td>Just describe the situation such as, “Someone who uses a wheelchair”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Beautiful Eyes**

By Cheryl Elhammoumi

Inspired by a child with Down Syndrome

So tiny, so soft you came
That fear rose in me.
Were you fragile and ready to crumble?
Would I cause you to break?

Your hands so delicate with a single line
Fingers to grasp on mine
To cling in trust.

Your eyes, deep pools of wonder, flickered open to your New World marvels, then closed again.

Elation rose to praise; I plummeted in despair
Convinced I could never give you all you asked.
So we began you and I...

Me learning and teaching, you teaching and learning

Tears and fears, bumpy knees and bruised hearts—Beautiful Eyes, you did not ask, you gave

---

**East Carolina University**

Divers-Abilities: Just a Part of the Everyday World

Cheryl Elhammoumi MSN, RN, CCRN; Melissa Schwartz Beck PhD, RN, RNC-OB

Diversity Day 2015

East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina

E-mail:
Elhammoumic@ecu.edu
Schwartzme@ecu.edu