

>> SLIDE 1

**BACK TO THE
FUTURE** 2024

 **NCIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON INDEPENDENT LIVING**

2024 Annual Conference on Independent Living

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Presented by the National Council on Independent Living

>> SLIDE 2

Innovation in Technology, Entrepreneurship and Well-being

Presented by:

Synergies Work, CareSource & NCIL



>> SLIDE 3: Introductions



Solomon Parker
Director, IDD
Program Strategy
CareSource



Aarti Sahgal
Founder & CEO
Synergies Work



**Mary-Kate
Wells**
Program
Director, NCIL



**Dominique
Dunford**
ENDependence
Center of North
Virginia

>> SLIDE 4: About Synergies Work



**Building one world
where people with
disabilities belong.**

We are the largest startup hub for disability-led businesses that serves over 300 founders through our pre-incubator, incubator, accelerator, and venture hub programs.

>> SLIDE 5: A Personal Mission

A Personal Mission



>> SLIDE 6: A Tale of Two Worlds

People with Disabilities

- Limited opportunities and choices
- Success is measured at every point
- Effort is not valued

General Population

- Abundant opportunities
- Failure is an opportunity for growth
- Difficulty & overcoming struggle is applauded

>> SLIDE 7: Intersectionality of Disability

68.9 Million
Americans
have a disability

Unemployment
has been stagnant at
20% for over 30 years

People of Color
are significantly more
likely to have a disability

50%
of people living in
poverty are disabled

>> SLIDE 8: The State of Entrepreneurship in 2023

- 33 Mn Entrepreneurs employ over 61 Mn people
- Surging new business applications from 2020-2022. In 2023- 5.5Mn applications filed.
- 99.9% of businesses in the US are small businesses; 43.5% of entire US GDP
- 8 out of 10 businesses do not have any employees

>> SLIDE 9: Growing Independent Workers

- There are 64 Mn freelancers in the US (38% of the workforce)
- Contributing 1.27 Trillion to the US economy
- 47% of all freelancers provide knowledge services such as computer programming, marketing, IT, and business consulting in 2023.
- Gen Z & Millennials are more likely to be freelancers

>> SLIDE 10: Massive Potential For Change

People with disabilities are **2x as likely** to be self-employed as those living without a disability.

Self-Employed as a Percentage of the Population and Labor Force
by Disability Status, Age 18 and over, 2019

	Disability	No Disability
Self-Employed as Percentage of Population	4 percent	8 percent
Self-Employed as Percentage of Labor Force	17 percent	11 percent
Labor Force Participation Rate	26 percent	72 percent

>> SLIDE 11: Barriers to Entrepreneurship

Barriers to Education

- Education is focused on limited skill development
- No clear career paths
- Higher education is very limited

Barriers to Health

- Choices limited by health, illness, loss of insurance, and physical limitations
- Requires them to sacrifice their health in order to work

Barriers to Finances

- Lack of opportunities for savings and earnings
- Limited capital to launch businesses
- Forces them into labor-intensive industries

Barriers to Networks

- No interaction with larger business community
- Lack of guidance
- Segregation by socialization

>> SLIDE 12: Limited Financial Access

People without Disabilities

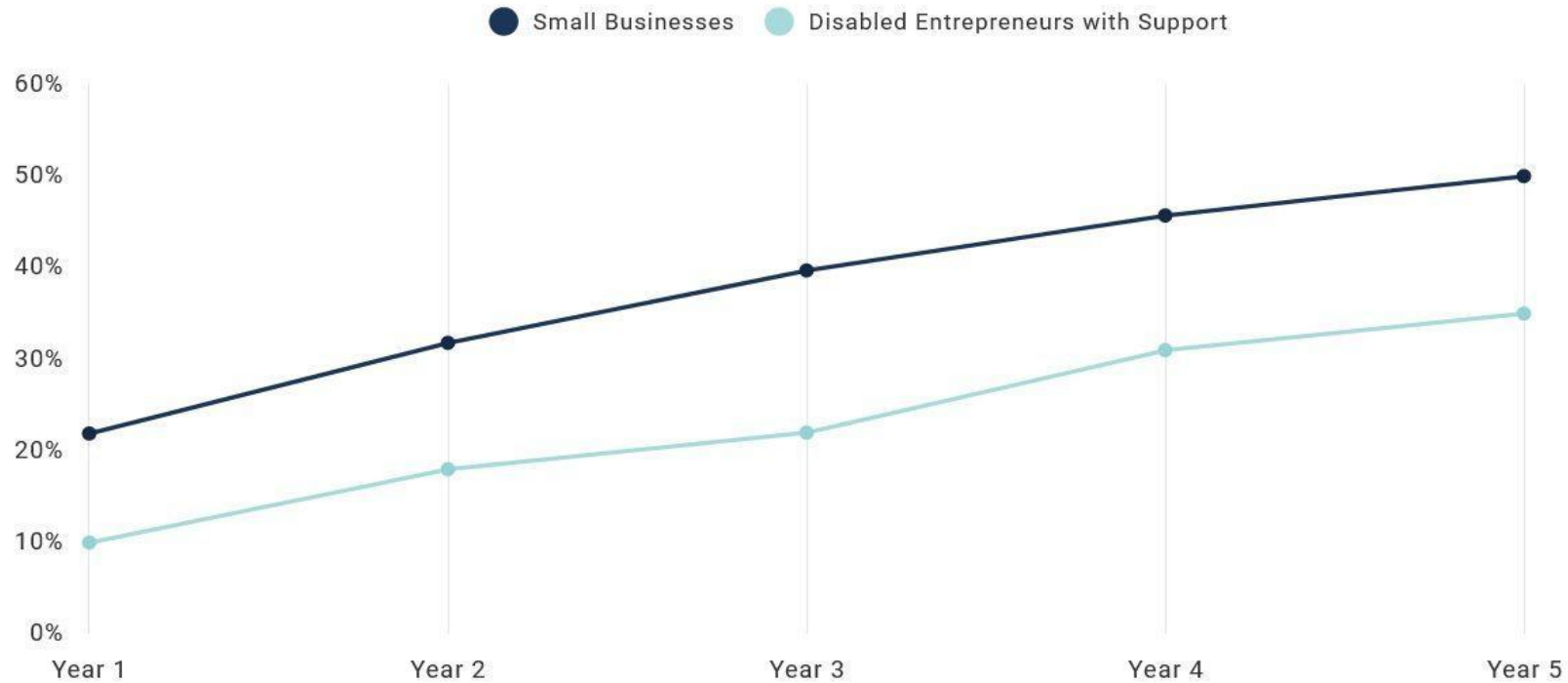
- 19% Underbanked or Unbanked
- 15% Have No Mainstream Credit
- 37% Do Not Save for Unexpected Expenses
- 6% Use Alternative Financial Services (Pawn Shops, Cash Checking, etc)

People with Disabilities

- 43% of People with Disabilities are Underbanked or Unbanked
- 40% Have No Mainstream Credit
- 61% Do Not Save for Unexpected Expenses
- 12% Use Alternative Financial Services (Pawn Shops, Cash Checking, etc)

>> SLIDE 13: Is Disability an Advantage? Breaking Misconceptions

Business Failure Rate



>> SLIDE 14: Carving Their Own Path



>> SLIDE 15: Synergies Work: Igniting a Movement

- Nurturing the Grassroots
- Building Collective Action
- Creative Pathways to Capital



>> SLIDE 16: Why Entrepreneurship?

“It’s given me a drive, a purpose. I feel fulfilled when I get up in the morning.” - **Brandon Cantrell, Owner of Brandon’s Crochet Shop**

“Being an entrepreneur has allowed me to be my best self without having to be at the mercy of the ADA or the able bodied world. I’m my own boss and decide my own future.” - **Madeline Smith, Owner of Blind Bear Designs**

“After graduating with a degree, I still could not find options for employment. This is the most accomplished I have felt in a longtime” - **Joshua W., Founder of Handi Acc**

>> SLIDE 17: Framework of Support

1. **Ignite (Aspiring Founders):** Igniting Ideas Program
2. **Incubate (Early Growth Stage Startups):** Incubation to Impact Program
3. **Finance (Late Growth Stage Companies):** Synergies SEED Fund
4. **Sustain (Supporting Sustainability):** Community Hub

>> SLIDE 18: Impact in Numbers: 2023

- **3,600+** People Impacted (Founders, Families, Networks)
- **300+** Founders Supported to Date
- **130+** Active Founders in Our Community
- **1150+** Hours of Business Coaching Provided
- **449** Professionals trained on empowering disabled founders

>> SLIDE 19: Diversity of Disability

The next wave of entrepreneurial innovation comes from diverse disabled founders.

- 46% of our founders are people of color
- 54% of our founders are women

Self-Identified Disabilities Among our Founders

- 56% IDD
- 6% Mobility
- 24% Sensory
- 12% Mental Health
- 2% Other

>> SLIDE 20: Building Social Capital

Our community consists of world-class leaders from across geographies, industries, and backgrounds to mentor, coach, and support our founders.

ASHISTH THAKUR (Atlanta CEO Council)

SHAKIR MOIN (The Coca-Cola Company)

LYNETTE BELL (Truist Foundation)

GINA KLEIN (Enable Ventures)

ERNESTO GONZALES (Latin American Assc.)

JAGDISH SHETH (Emory University)

RACHELLE KURAMOTO (Panoramic Ventures)

SHAN COOPER (Journey Forward)

JOSEF SCARANTINO (AllRaise)

TIFFANY KIRK (Pinnacle Financial Partners)

DANA COGAN (Carabiner Communications)

ROBERT LUDKE (The Harkins Institute)

>> SLIDE 21: The EDDIE Awards



>> SLIDE 22: Beyond Inclusion

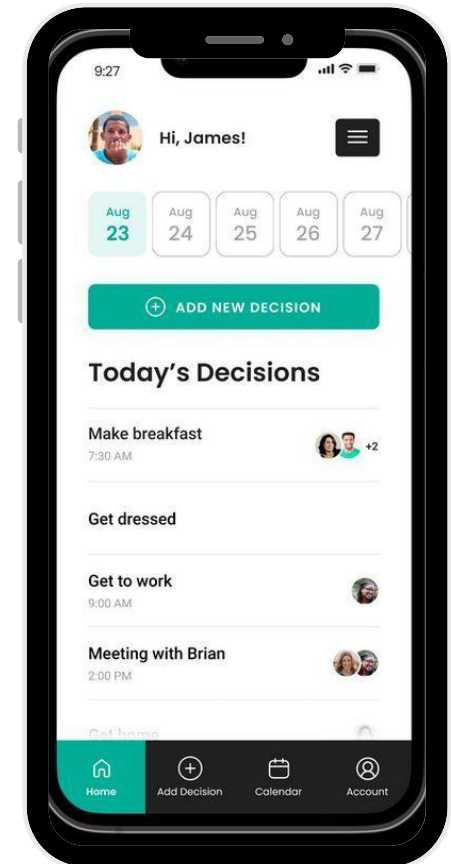
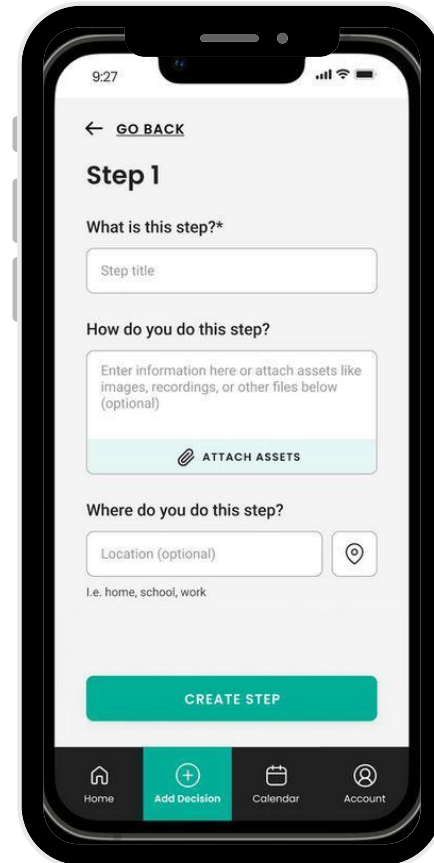
**Led by and With,
Not for and To**



>> SLIDE 23: LetMeDoIt Platform

To Empower People With Disabilities To Make Informed Decisions And Have their Own Voice with a goal to build a community to share our collective experiences.

A Structured Decision Tree And Task Management Platform



>> SLIDE 24: Meet Our Team



**Aarti
Sahgal**
Founder &
CEO



**David
Eckoff**
Accelerator &
Operations
Director



**Paola
Blanco**
Program
Manager



Jennifer Parr
Multimedia &
Strategic
Initiatives
Manager



**Madeline
Smith**
Social Media
Manager

>> SLIDE 25: Synergies Work Board



**AARTI
SAHGAL**

Founder of
Synergies
Work



**ATHAR
KHAN**

Delta Air
Lines



**PETER
BARON**

Carabiner
Communications



**CHARLIE
MILLER**

Georgia Council on
Developmental
Disabilities



**ARJUN
SAHGAL**

Ascent
Platform



**DR. SERENA
LOWE**

AnereS
Strategies



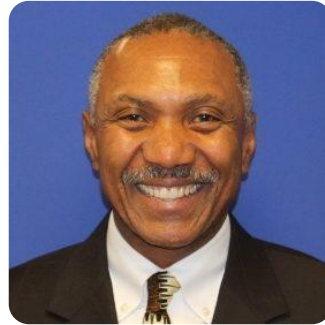
**STEVEN
HARTMAN**

General Electric
(Formerly)

>> SLIDE 26: Synergies SEED Fund Board



AARTI SAHGAL
Founder of Synergies Work



HON. JOHNNY R. MASON, JR.
Judge, State Board of Workers Compensation, State of Georgia



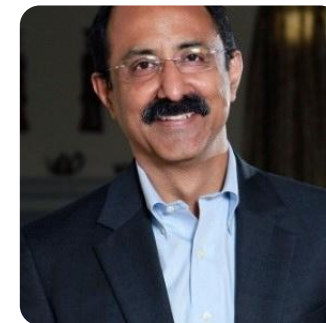
SITARA NAYAK
VP of Programs at Parent To Parent Of Georgia



LISA ASHBY
Director Of Client Services Foundation and Endowment Specialty Practice at Truist



RUBY MOORE
CEO at Georgia Advocacy office



AMIT SAHGAL
Cofounder, Letmedoit.org and formerly Director, The Coca-Cola Company

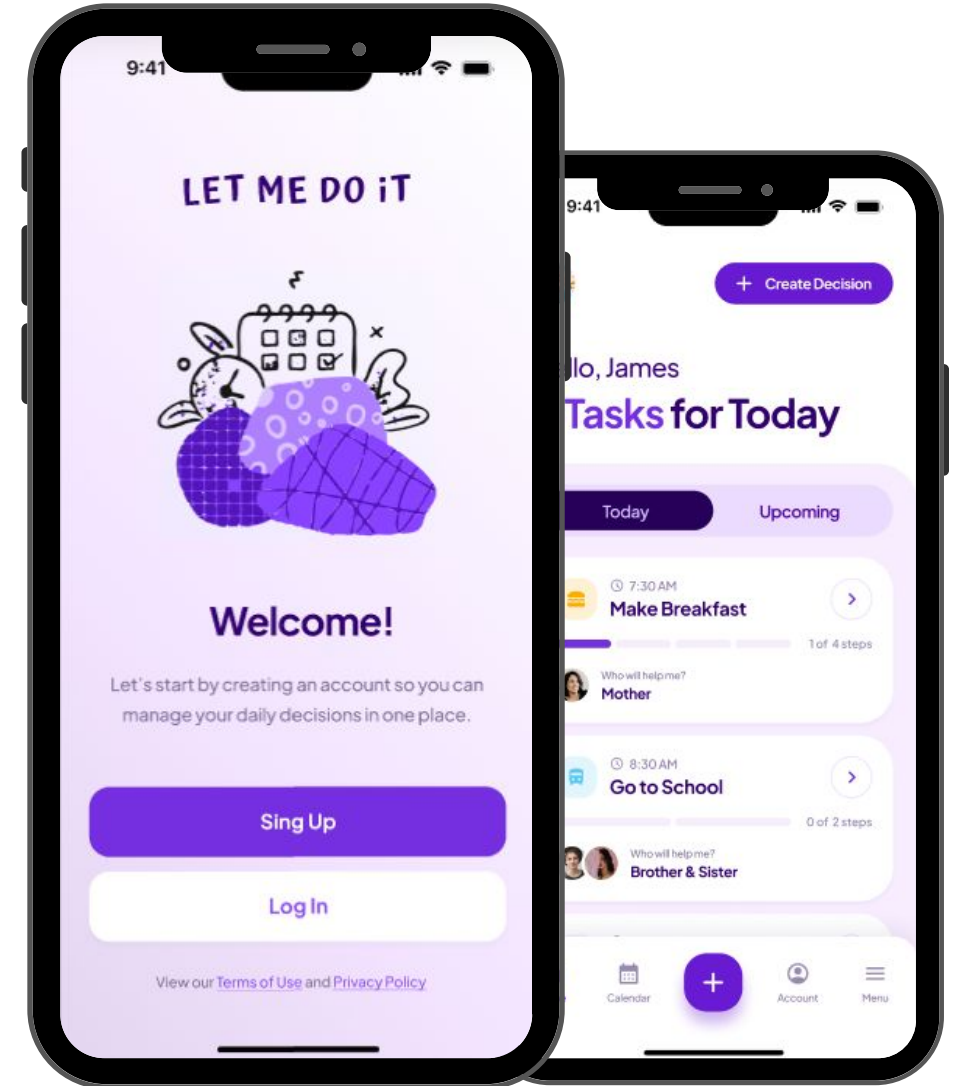
>> SLIDE 27: Partner with Synergies Work

- (404) 491-9549
- synergies@synergieswork.org
- www.SynergiesWork.org
- Join our community at www.app.SynergiesWork.org

>> SLIDE 28

LetMeDolt Empowering Independence

Presented by:
Angad Sahgal



>> SLIDE 29: I am not broken. I do not need fixing.



- Student at GSU - IDEAL program
- I am a black belt in karate
- Avid Soccer fan
- Georgia Youth ambassador for Supported Decision Making

>> SLIDE 30: Cause and Effect

Cause

- Misguided perception of limitations
- Systemic disregard of potential of people with disabilities.

Effect

- Exclusion from social, civic and Economic engagement
- No Choices, No Right, No Independence.

Don't let your **ASSUMPTIONS** become my **REALITY**

>> SLIDE 31: THE SOLUTION



**Welcome to the
world of
Empowerment and
Acceptance.**



>> SLIDE 32: I DECIDE

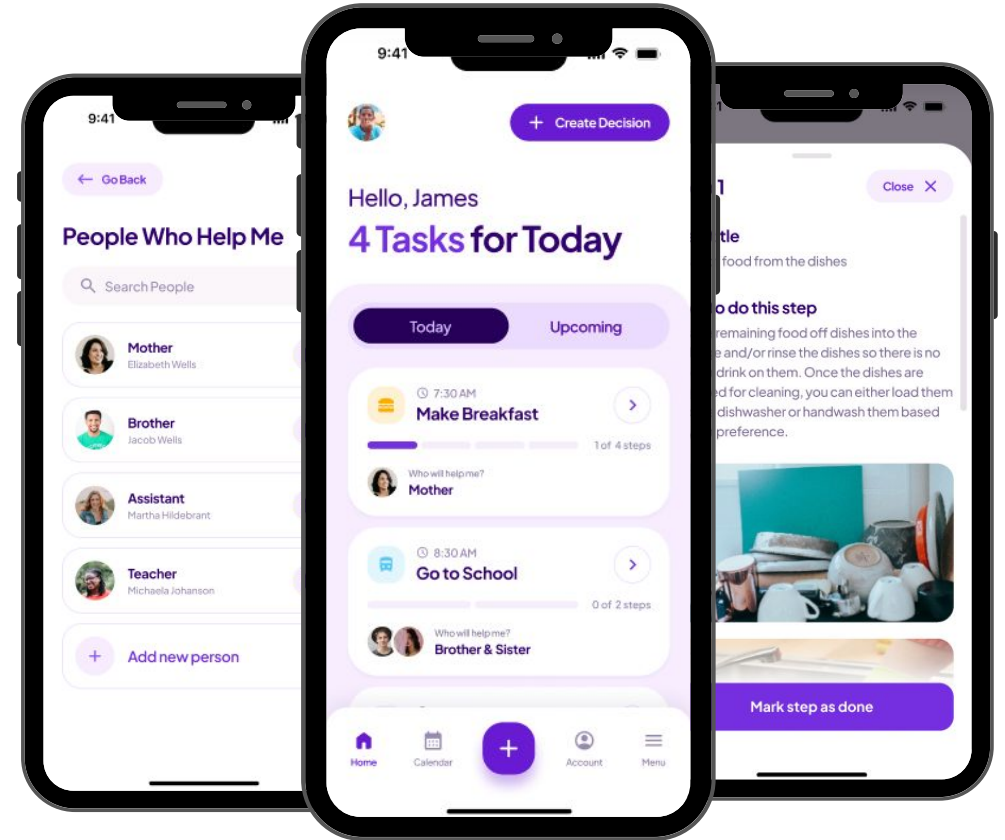


LetMeDolt
**BRIDGING THE SOCIAL
& ECONOMIC GAP**

>> SLIDE 33: Empowering Independence

Structured activity flow, enabling user driven customization, managed by the user & their support network

- **I can add** decisions and decision steps
- **I can add** decision aids which can guide and help me
- **I can add** people who can help



>> SLIDE 34: LetMeDoIt Platform



Raising Awareness for Supported Decision Making



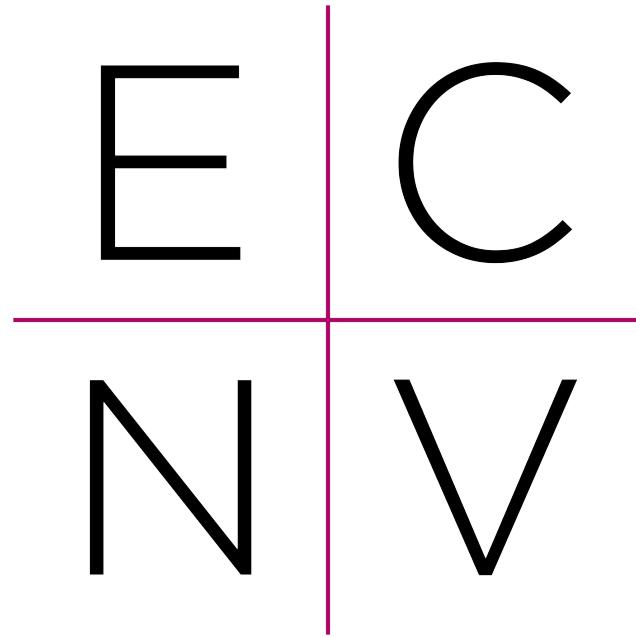
>> SLIDE 35: CONNECT WITH US



tech@letmedoit.org

>> SLIDE 36: ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia

Dominique Dunford, Executive Director



>> SLIDE 37

Questions?