BRANDING & WEBSITE DESIGN

Case Study

DisabilityAdvocates

JSL MARKETING & WEB DESIGN

DisabilityAdvocates

Project Background

Disability Advocates of Kent County came to us with a problem. As an organization that advocates for accessibility both on and off-line, their site and logo weren't serving the very people who needed to be served the most.

Disability Advocates faced a difficult challenge, as they hold themselves to a high standard, but their website just wasn't measuring up. They work tirelessly to create an accessible environment for all, so, when their own branding and website proved to be not only outdated, but inaccessible, they turned to JSL for help.

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BEFORE

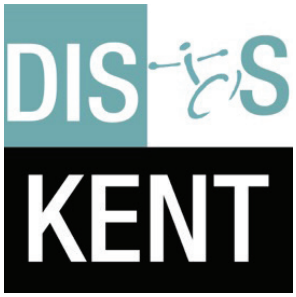
The Logo

The original Disability Advocates logo, though well-intentioned, was far too specific for their needs. First, they serve more than just the communities in the Kent County area. And second, their logo depicted imagery that was too specific to mobility-related disabilities. Disability Advocates serve a far broader handi-capable spectrum than their original logo led the average viewer to believe.

The original logo was also difficult to see for those with vision impairment. The faint lettering and the closeness of the colors between gray and teal made it challenging to see and read for many of the people that Disability Advocates serve.

This is what might have led to the multiple versions of their logo. By creating multiple versions, they lost the original integrity of their logo, along with brand recognition.

As an organization built on equity and inclusivity, we needed to make sure they had a logo that was reflective of their core values and would stand the test of time.



Beginning Concepts

JSL Marketing & Web Design starts every branding project off by getting to know you, your company, message, and most importantly, your "why." From there, we funnel those core principles into a creative process that transforms your verbal mission into a visual point of focus.

After a one to two-hour discovery meeting, our team works to create three strong logo options to present. Take a look at what we created as the first initial concepts for Disability Advocates of Kent County:

OPTION 1

Based on the principle of Equity vs. Equality, the platform above "Dis" symbolizes how Disability Advocates provides everyone with the platform and resources they need to succeed. All while emphasizing "Ability" over "Disability."

OPTION 2

For the previous option, we avoided iconography in favor of typographical elements. But to convey the principle of "inclusivity through intersectionality," we created a minimalist icon depicting a braid or woven fibers.

OPTION 3

Our third option aimed to be friendly with an approachable look and feel. The original thought was to make it look like it was being held together by hands as a way to symbolize "support," but the hands looked a little too cheesy. So, we went with the marks instead.

Concept to Color

The client selected Option Two as the base, and from there, we began a series of changes and fine-tuning calibrations to take the logo concept from an idea to a rough sketch, and finally, to a fully-formed logo and focal point for the brand.

With the logo established, it was time to move on to colors. In any branding project, choosing colors is a unique challenge. But in the case of Disability Advocates, their colors had to be more than just eye-catching. We needed to choose an effective color scheme that could accurately represent the brand while fulfilling its primary mission of being accessible and inclusive.

For Disability Advocates' colorblind and vision-impaired users, the colors needed to be optimized to ensure maximum readability. And even if the user couldn't determine the colors, the different shades had to be easily distinguishable.

With this in mind, JSL Marketing presented a series of color scheme options, each one optimized for easy readability. We then worked with the client until we came to a blue and orange color scheme. Before finalizing, the staff and potential users tested the colors to confirm legibility.

Disability Advocates

Initial Concept

DisabilityAdvocates

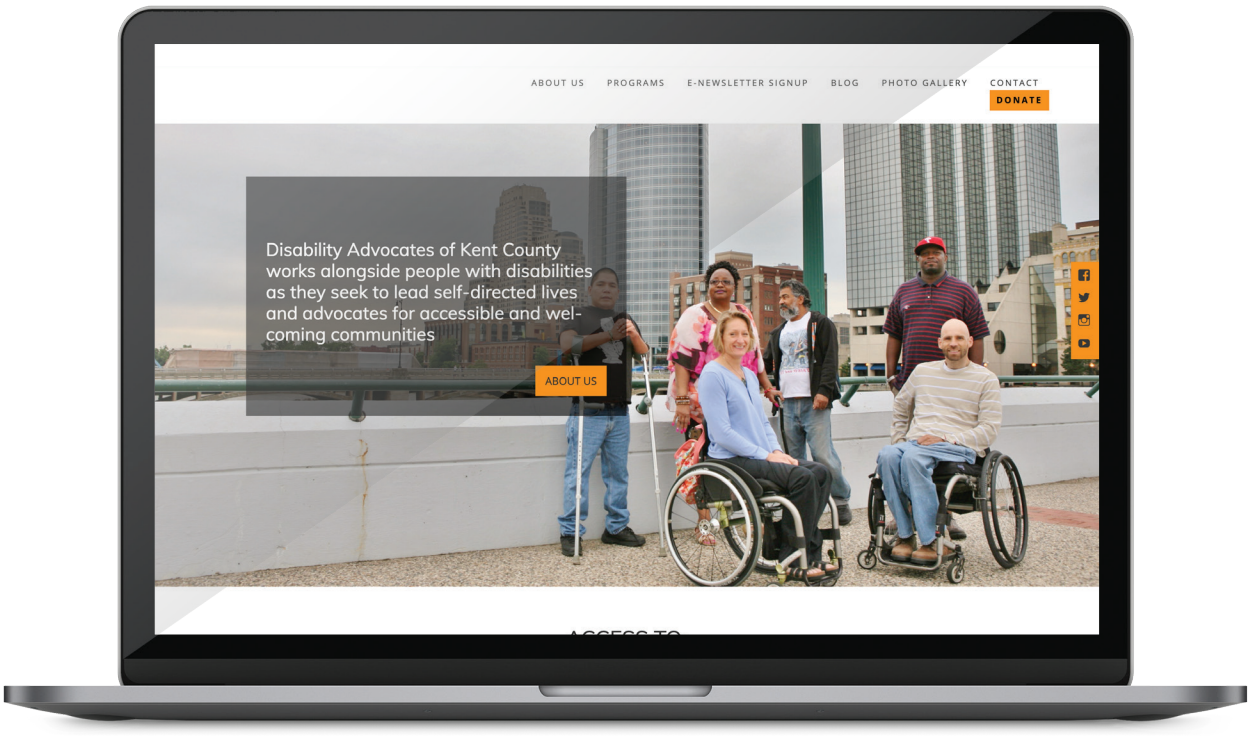
Final Logo

The Site

With the new branding created, tested, and approved, it was time to move on to the website.

Their old site presented a host of problems for Disability Advocates and the community they serve. The site itself was not ADA compliant, making it inaccessible for most of their users, it was not responsive on tablet or for mobile users, and their branding was not reflected at all. Even their old logo never made an appearance in the design of their site; neither did their colors. Instead of their branded gray and teal, they used black and orange.

These types of inconsistencies were among the first to be corrected by JSL.



They didn't show their logo on their website except for scattered photos.

Awkward placement of the "Donate" button created confusion.

Ineffective calls-to-action due to a lack of clarity in content hierarchy.

Images were not using "alt-text" which made them inaccessible.

Presentation of the different programs available was confusing and lacked consistent formating.

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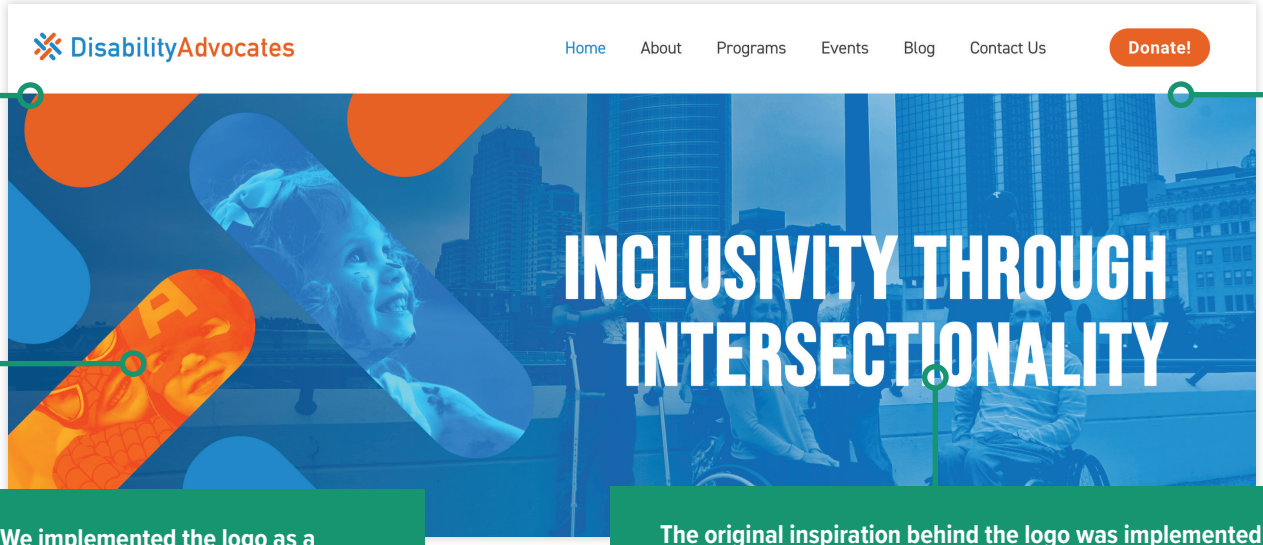
Navigation and Hero

One of the first orders of business for redesigning the Disability Advocates website was to design an effective navigation and hero-header section that would entice and maintain the interest of users from the moment they enter the site.

JSL made certain to include the new logo in the upper left corner of the navigation, making it clearly visible.

An appropriate amount of space was attributed to the Donate button, making it stand out effectively as a call-to-action.



We implemented the logo as a stylistic variation to create interest and maintain the focus that Disability Advocates is about and for... people.

The original inspiration behind the logo was implemented as the hero-image content. The client liked this so much that they have also opted to make this their new tagline!

General Content

One of the main points of updating the design was to create a hierarchy within the copy that was efficient and made sense.

Modern and relateable imagery was used to bring the site into the new decade. And to make sure that it's accessible for all, JSL made a point of including alt-text with EVERY image on the site to make sure everyone can appreciate the updated design.

THE DISABILITY ADVOCATES VISION...

Help us remove barriers

Disability Advocates works alongside people with disabilities as they seek to lead self-directed lives and advocates for accessible and welcoming communities.

The vision of Disability Advocates is that each person, regardless of their abilities, has equal rights and opportunities and that our communities are accessible and welcoming to all. We are changing the way people see accessibility, so find out how you can start making our community a better place today!

Learn More About Our History

More calls-to-action were placed liberally throughout the site to ensure their users always know exactly what to do.

Mobile & Tablet Friendly

No JSL web design is complete if it is not also fully responsive on all platforms; desktop, tablet, and mobile.

JSL's web design team took special care to make sure every facet of the design was optimized for easy viewing across all devices, regardless of size, operating system, or model.

It was our mission to give Disability Advocates and the community they serve a mobile-responsive site, especially since more and more users visit websites from their smartphones.

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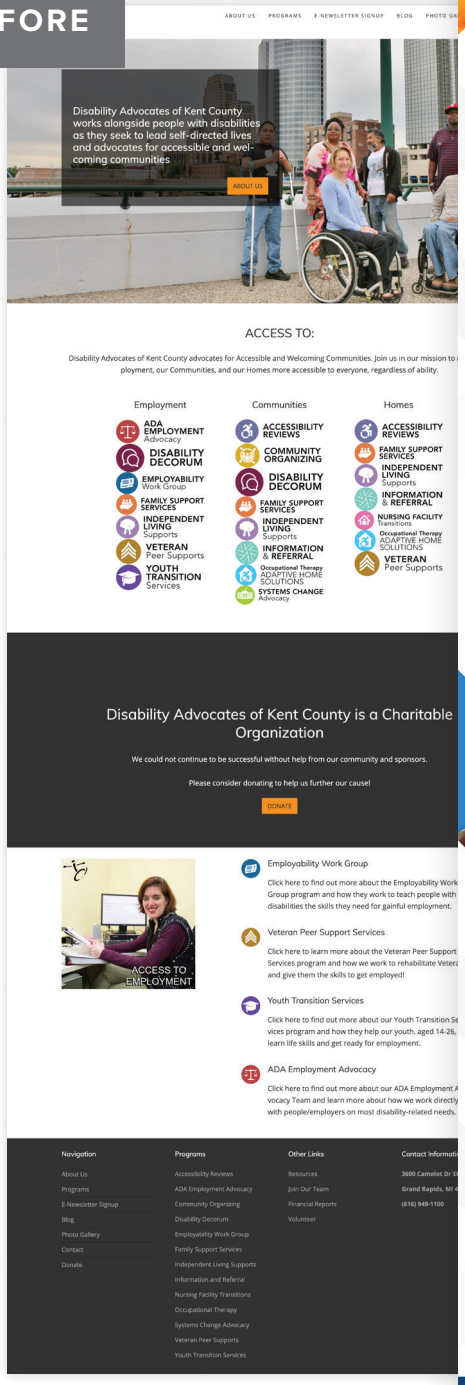
BEFORE



AFTER

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Want to learn more about JSL Marketing & Web Design?
Ready to get started on your next big web design project?
We'd love to hear from you! Get in touch with
us today using the information below:

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