



Remarks by DOF Co-Founder and Director of Administration Nanci B. Freiman at DOF's 10th Anniversary Celebration

Corrine, thank-you for your beautiful words.

Hello every one, welcome to DOF's 10th anniversary celebration. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Nanci Freiman. Marianne D'Erario and I are the administrators of the Disability Opportunity Fund.

Can you imagine that 10 years ago there was no iPhone or android?? Lehman Brothers fell and the country was in one of its worst places financially.

And that's where the DOF story begins. In a tiny office in Albertson, New York. Charlie's idea became a passion.

The Disability Opportunity Fund had \$97,000 in the bank. We were nobody in the world of CDFI's, we had no experience and no money. Imagine a "club" that was not so easy to get into- we had no skill set in the nonprofit arena and we were introducing a new concept, a CDFI that focused only on people with disabilities. We were adamant that we were not only going to be a fundraising machine, but a business serving the biggest untapped market in the country, the disability community.

So, where to start, we decided to start with the borrowers. If we could prove there was a market, a need, we believed that we could get the CDFI industry, banks and others to believe too. Once we started looking for opportunities, our pipeline exploded with deals all over the country.

Today we are in 17 states, and we are happy to welcome many of our borrowers here today from California, Florida, Maryland, Wisconsin, Arizona, and NY just to name a few. And so our vision that the need existed and that there was a community across the country to be served came to be.



Now imagine life without Facebook, twitter, Instagram.....the social media frenzy was just beginning.....what was your social media site of choice?

And DOF was deciding where to put its first \$300,000 investment to work. Housing was a natural first step, as a place to live opens up opportunity to a more fulfilling life. The decision to live with who you want, where you want and under what circumstances was new to people with disabilities and their families.

Choice, over one's own destiny was to become and is an integral part of every project that the DOF participates.

Over the years we have partnered with many innovative ideas and the concept of choice continues to grow within the disability community. Our model now includes schools, community centers, and businesses as well as housing.

With the innovation of You Tube, 24 hour cable news, amazon kindle, google maps and Netflix just to name a few, there was new access to overwhelming amounts of information but also gave people more control over what they did and didn't want to partake.

With growth and stability come access and DOF's ability to access capital over the past 10 years has grown more than 100-fold the original investment, this has allowed us to enter new arenas not only in lending but in policy making and technical assistance. Our pipeline has proven to be a worthy ally and we continue to watch it grow. We are in constant awe of the new ideas that come our way.

The access to social media and awareness of the world community has provided people with disabilities with a new and exciting path. The ability to have control. Social media has made us all conscious citizens of our own world. The unimaginable is imaginable and we look forward to seeing the different projects and programs that come to be.



10 years later, the stock market has quadrupled and we can't live without technology.

So you've learned DOF's mantra or really Charlie's mantra: community, choice and control.

We are all entitled to it and its Charlies vision that everyone should have it in their lives.

DOF started with Charlie's passion and has now layered on capital and mission which provides us with focus into the future.

We want to thank all of you for being part of our ride. There are so many people, too many, that have been with us since the beginning and helped us become a fully functioning CDFI. It is a "club" we are proud to be a part of and to be able to partner with.

We look forward to seeing where the next 10 years takes us. Thank you.