**SAG TEACH Access Reflection**

Alison Palmer

The TEACH Access Study Away trip to Silicon Valley deepened my understanding of how disability and technology interact at a personal level. In my previous experience with disability related work, I focused mostly on how to make the physical world more accessible. This trip primarily focused on ways to increase accessibility in the digital space. I had no previous knowledge of how to make a website or a phone available to everyone. This broadened my perception of how access to online resources and information can really impact how a person interacts with the world.

The team project was a transformative experience for me. My group worked on a prototype for an application that provided users with limited mobility accessible routes on public transportation and sidewalks. Working with other students from all over the country showed the variety of difficulties that people with mobility impairments may face. Two of the students in the group lived where they relied solely on ridesharing apps for transportation. Another student from Seattle brought up the idea of an incline limit for some people in certain locations. This also made me appreciate the work I’ve done at Olin for how to team and communicate properly.

Talking to professors from other universities about their research inspired me. There’s always an interesting set of challenges to solve. It’s motivating me to find the challenges that resonate and become my passion.

I learned that all the things I put out into the world can and should have accessibility in mind, even the way I interact on social media by putting in alt text.