



August Rocha is a Chinese American advocate, speaker, writer, and content creator living with Behçet's disease, a rare form of vasculitis that can cause severe pain, inflammation, and mobility impacts. Adopted from China, Rocha has built a public platform around disability awareness, trans joy, and intersectional advocacy, using social media and speaking engagements to share lived experience and foster greater understanding of the disability and LGBTQ+ communities. (Conversation Piece Podcast, *August Rocha: The APAHM Conversations*, 2023)



Jessica Cox is a Filipino American speaker, advocate, athlete, and pilot born without arms due to a congenital disability. She made history as the world's first licensed pilot without arms, earning her sport pilot certificate after years of training and becoming internationally known for flying a plane with her feet. Cox is also a fourth-degree black belt in taekwondo, a certified scuba diver, and the founder of the Rightfooted Foundation International, which promotes disability rights and expands opportunities for people with disabilities around the world. (Rightfooted Foundation International, *About Us*, 2026)



Sujeet Desai is an Indian American musician, self-advocate, and speaker born with Down syndrome. An accomplished multi-instrumentalist, he has mastered seven instruments and has performed across the United States and internationally. Desai made history as the first person with Down Syndrome to perform at Carnegie Hall, and he has received recognition for both his musical talent and his advocacy, including honors from the Global Down Syndrome Foundation and induction into the Buffalo Music Hall of Fame. (Global Down Syndrome Foundation, *Sujeet Desai*, 2011)



Marisa Hamamoto is a fourth-generation Japanese American dancer, speaker, and founder of Infinite Flow Dance. A spinal stroke survivor and diagnosed with Autism in adulthood, Hamamoto has become a leading voice for disability inclusion in the arts and workplace. Through Infinite Flow Dance, she has helped expand visibility for performers with and without disabilities together on stage, and her work has earned national recognition, including being named by People as one of its "Women Changing the World." (Sylff Association, *Fellow Profile: Marisa Hamamoto*, 2026)