



# MDA DISABILITY IS DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

MDA Disability Is Diversity Challenge

*Sponsored by Muscular Dystrophy Association*



Create a focused **Disability is Diversity** presentation that highlights the obstacles and experience of navigating an educational environment with differing abilities. The goal is to learn first-hand about the barriers encountered by a student with a disability and determine how you can advocate for needed change within your community. Work in teams of one to three DECA members to pitch your strategy and share the results of the activation in a four-minute video presentation.

**The Challenge:** Spend a day focused on what it might be like for a student with a disability navigating a typical high school or college campus. Choose a disability presentation (ex., visually impaired, hard of hearing, mobility-impaired) and keep it forefront of mind as you go throughout your day. With permission from the individual, you could also shadow a student with a disability for a day. Document the obstacles, successes, and experience of being a student with a differing ability AND based on your findings, how you will advocate for change within your local community. Suggested resources should you require assistance with your project include the MDA, your school, or your community. Work solo or in teams of up to three DECA members to document your experience and present your advocacy plan.

**BONUS:** Host a Cause Raising campaign of your own design to raise funds to help send kids to MDA Summer Camp where they learn the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves and live more independently.

## CHALLENGE OVERVIEW

- This event consists of **two** major parts: documenting your experience and creating an advocacy plan in a **presentation video** that is a maximum of **four minutes** in length. (See Presentation Guidelines.)
- Each event entry will be composed of **one to three members** of a DECA chapter. Chapters may submit multiple entries for consideration.
- The participants will spend a day AS a student with a differing ability OR shadowing one in school. Document your experience, noting both the successes and obstacles encountered.
- The participants will then develop an advocacy plan to advocate for change at school or in the local community.
- The participants will then present their findings and advocacy plan in a video that is a maximum of **four minutes** in length posted on YouTube. (See Presentation Guidelines.) The audience is your school or community leadership. Videos over **four minutes** in length will not be evaluated and will not be eligible for awards.
- The participants must fully complete and submit the online registration form at [www.deca.org/challenges](http://www.deca.org/challenges) no later than **December 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET** to be eligible for awards. Late entries and entries over four minutes will not be accepted.
- MDA will evaluate all submitted video presentations and select the top three overall teams. The MDA executives will select an overall winning team.
- DECA Inc., and MDA are not responsible for lost, damaged, mislabeled or misdirected entries.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPED

Participants will demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to address the components of the project as described in the content outline and evaluation forms.

Participants will also develop many Career Competencies, in the following categories, desired by today's employers:

- Critical Thinking Thinks critically to understand and solve problems.
- Communication Communicates clearly, effectively, and with reason.
- Decision Making Considers the impacts of decisions.
- Innovation Demonstrates a creative and innovative mindset

## PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

The participants will present their marketing and communications plan to MDA executives in a video that is a maximum of four minutes in length. All videos must include the following components:

- I. Introduction
  - a. Description of the Muscular Dystrophy Association
  - b. Description of the target market, back to school population, including demographics and psychographics
- II. Documentation and Findings
  - a. Description of chosen disability using disability language
  - b. Prediction of experience when navigating with chosen disability
  - c. Findings: explain, document obstacles and successes
- III. Proposed Advocacy Plan
  - a. Objectives and rationale of the proposed advocacy plan, clearly define goal
  - b. Proposed activities and timelines, be specific
  - c. Proposed metrics or key performance indicators to measure plan effectiveness
- IV. Video Presentation
  - Focus on key points to stay within four minute guidelines
  - Be visually creative when presenting findings and plans
  - Include art, style, tone, and sound that is relevant to your target audience (school or community leadership)
  - Incorporate video footage, pictures, and comments from day of experience where possible
  - Animation, soundtrack and/or any special effects may be used to enhance your overall video presentation, not distract from purpose
  - Refer to Disability Language Guide to incorporate appropriate language
  - Consistent volume with audible voices, playback video speed at normal

For evaluation details, please see the Presentation Evaluation Form.

For resources, you may wish to consult the following:

- MDA Website: [www.mda.org](http://www.mda.org)
- Quest: [mdaquest.org](http://mdaquest.org)
- Quest Podcast: [mdaquest.org/quest-podcast](http://mdaquest.org/quest-podcast)
- Your school or community leadership
- Disability Language Guide: [ncdj.org/style-guide/](http://ncdj.org/style-guide/)

## PRESENTATION JUDGING

Judges will select the top three overall teams. From the final three teams, the overall winning team will be selected. The presentation by the grand winning team may be shown during the International Career Development Conference (ICDC) at the MDA exhibit booth.

## AWARDS

The top team will be featured in Quest blog or magazine. The top three teams will be recognized on stage during DECA's International Career Development Conference in Anaheim, California. Eligibility to attend DECA ICDC is determined by the chartered association advisor based on their policies. Finalists should consult with their chartered association advisor for eligibility guidelines and gain approval from their school advisor to attend the conference.

## TIMELINE

|                                                       |                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Challenge begins                                      | September 2026    |
| Challenge registration deadline/video posted deadline | December 18, 2026 |
| Top 3 teams announced                                 | February 2, 2027  |
| Top 3 teams recognized at ICDC (Anaheim, CA)          | April 17-20, 2027 |



1-3 PARTICIPANTS



4 MINUTES  
PRESENTATION TIME



1 VIDEO  
ENTRY



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## PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member Names: \_\_\_\_\_

| Did the participating team... |                                                                                     | Novice  | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary | Judged Score |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| PERFORMANCE INDICATORS        |                                                                                     |         |            |            |           |              |
| 1.                            | Determine the nature of MDA's organizational goals.                                 | 0-1-2-3 | 4-5-6-7    | 8-9-10-11  | 12        |              |
| 2.                            | Demonstrate clear understanding of chosen disability.                               | 0-1-2-3 | 4-5-6-7    | 8-9-10-11  | 12        |              |
| 3.                            | Document and clearly express obstacles encountered and areas that need improvement. | 0-1-2-3 | 4-5-6-7    | 8-9-10-11  | 12        |              |
| 4.                            | Develop, implement, and evaluate an effective advocacy plan.                        | 0-1-2-3 | 4-5-6-7    | 8-9-10-11  | 12        |              |
| 5.                            | Employ communication styles appropriate to target audience.                         | 0-1-2-3 | 4-5-6-7    | 8-9-10-11  | 12        |              |
| VIDEO PRESENTATION            |                                                                                     |         |            |            |           |              |
| 6.                            | Pitch advocacy plan and implementation timeline to client (MDA).                    | 0-1-2   | 3-4-5      | 6-7-8-9    | 10        |              |
| 7.                            | Acquire knowledge of client (MDA's) back to school population.                      | 0-1-2   | 3-4-5      | 6-7-8-9    | 10        |              |
| 8.                            | Communicate clearly.                                                                | 0-1     | 2          | 3-4        | 5         |              |
| 9.                            | Show evidence of broad understanding of accessibility issues and employ creativity. | 0-1-2   | 3-4-5      | 6-7-8-9    | 10        |              |
| 10.                           | Overall impression of the video.                                                    | 0-1     | 2          | 3-4        | 5         |              |
| TOTAL SCORE (100 points)      |                                                                                     |         |            |            |           |              |