

Emmanuel Ford

UN Speech

International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2014

Chairperson, Distinguished Panelists, Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen, I am proud to be here today, and I welcome you to the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2014!

I would like to talk to you about the importance of assistive technology, especially for people with disabilities.

Speaking from my own experience, the Braille Note has become a necessary part of my school day and my homework time. The Braille Note has helped me produce documents such as reports, letters and notes quickly, easily and efficiently. Most importantly, it can provide these documents in both braille and print. Learning to use the Braille Note, has made me a better-prepared and more organized student. The Braille Note also serves as my personal, portable dictionary for checking the correct spelling and meaning of words. In the future, I will be practicing how to manage my daily calendar, and how to access the Internet on the Braille Note. These are functions which will continue to make me a successful student, and prepare me for the world of work.

Another valuable example of assistive technology which I enjoy using is my digital book reader, also known as the

Victor Stream. It gives me full listening access to printed materials such as books for academic work and books for pleasure reading. The Victor Stream also allows me to listen to music, and serves as a tape recorder. I can simply speak into the Victor Stream and record my notes from class. I am lucky to have these assistive technology devices to help me both during school and leisure time.

In closing, I would like to thank the UN for this extraordinary opportunity to speak and celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. I would also like to thank my Mom and my teachers for giving me the best education through these tools of assistive technology.

Thank you very much!