



BE OPEN

> **Chaz Kellem**

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When I applied for my current job, one of the interview questions I was asked was how I would feel as a man in a women's organization. My opinion is that we need men to get on board with the women's movement. I'm a person of color. I'm someone with a physical disability. I've been in a wheelchair since age 8. So, I also believe we need walking people to support the disability movement. Coming together like this builds "a community of we."

Marches don't change minds. Inclusion has to be an everyday process, with small and big things given attention. For example: I was carrying stuff in a grocery store a few days ago, and a person from the opposite world stopped what they were doing to lend a hand. That matters. I overheard a group of men talking about women inappropriately. I intervened with a simple word: "Ouch." One of them asked why I said that. My response was, "I have a mom, I have a fiancée. I'd be doing them a disservice if I didn't comment. It impacts me if you degrade women."

We need clear benchmarks for our behavior every day for each person, each community. I've been encouraged by the work of the Pittsburgh Leadership Conference on diversity and inclusion and the amount of participation in our city's Summit Against Racism. These efforts elevate the level of conversation. That can make people uncomfortable, but change is uncomfortable. You have to open yourself up to begin the process.

— Interviewed by Christine O'Toole