

Haben Girma, Esq.

Human Rights Lawyer, Author, First Deafblind Graduate of Harvard Law School

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Activism / Philanthropy / Civic Engagement
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Journalism / Literary / Author
- Law
- Technology / Alternate Technology
- TED-Talks

About Haben Girma, Esq.

The first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, Haben Girma is a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. President Obama named her a White House Champion of Change. She received the Helen Keller Achievement Award, a spot on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list, and TIME100 Talks. President Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Chancellor Angela Merkel have all honored Haben.

Haben was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she currently lives. The New York Times, Oprah Magazine, and TODAY Show featured her memoir, *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*. The book takes readers on adventures around the world, including her parents' homes in Eritrea and Ethiopia, building a school under the scorching Saharan sun, training with a guide dog in New Jersey, climbing an iceberg in Alaska, fighting for blind readers at a courthouse in Vermont, and talking with President Obama at The White House. Warm, funny, thoughtful, and uplifting, this captivating book is a testament to Haben's determination to resist isolation and find the keys to connection.

Haben believes disability is an opportunity for innovation, and she teaches organizations the importance of choosing inclusion. Disabled people are the largest historically underrepresented group, numbering over one billion worldwide. Reaching a group of this scale creates value for everyone. Organizations that prioritize accessibility benefit by gaining access to a much larger audience, improving the experience for both disabled and nondisabled people, and facilitating further innovation.

Haben provides consulting and public speaking on accessibility, diversity, and leadership. Her presentations have touched organizations as wide-ranging as Apple, GE, Lenovo, Microsoft, the New York Times, Oxford Law, Pearson Education, Stanford, and SXSW. The daughter of refugees and a black disabled woman, Haben built her path to success on the belief that inclusion is a choice. We all have the power to advocate. Her engaging presentations ignite audiences to make positive changes in their communities.

Select Keynotes

- **Disability & Innovation: The Universal Benefits of Inclusive Design**

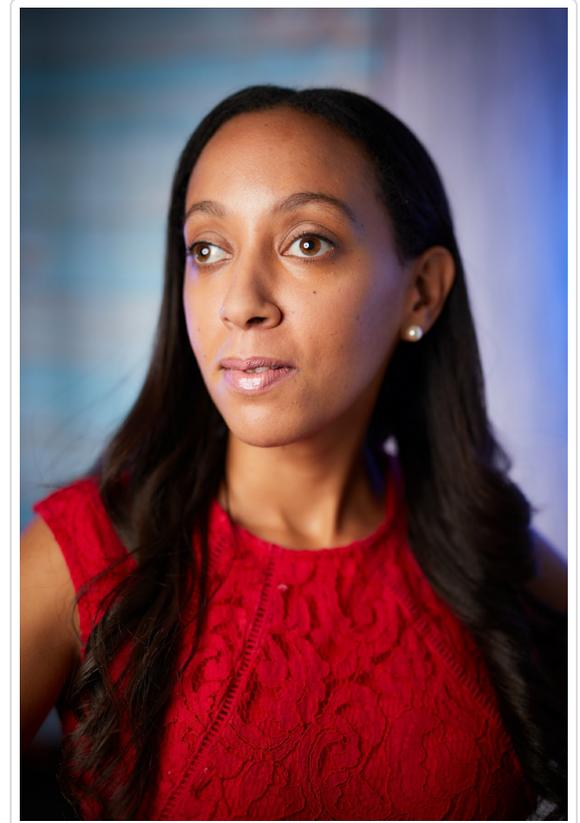
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Select Book Titles

- **2019:** *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*

Select Articles

- [The Robots Occupying Our Sidewalks](#)



How would autonomous robots react to disabled pedestrians?

- [Hey, Texas. Students Need to Learn About Helen Keller. Don't Remove Her.](#)

Disability rights leaders such as Helen Keller offer students important life lessons.

- [Break Down Disability Barriers to Spur Growth and Innovation](#)

Disability is an opportunity for innovation.

Select Testimonials

Thank you so much, Haben, for that amazing introduction, and for working to make sure that students with disabilities get a world-class education, just like you have. So please give Haben a big round of applause.

— *President Barack Obama*

She got out of Harvard, and you know what she's doing? She is an advocate for opportunities for people with disabilities. Because in fact they have enormous ability, and all over the world that ability is going untapped, diminishing their lives and the rest of ours as well. So let's give her a big round!

— *President Bill Clinton*

I wish to take this opportunity, as well, to recognize you for your lifelong advocacy for people with disabilities, especially for the deaf-blind community. As a teacher and Prime Minister, I am particularly grateful for your work to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the tools they need to thrive at school and beyond. When our society is inclusive, we are all better off.

— *Prime Minister Justin Trudeau*