



The Think Inclusive Podcast

Season 3, Episode 2

Russ Ewell | Inclusive Sports Programs

Tim Villegas (00:00):

In 2012, Carly's Acon and Danielle Weisberg founded the skimm from their couch. Now six years later, their morning newsletter gives over 7 million subscribers, the news and information they need to start their day. When they started the company, they got a lot of advice from other female entrepreneurs. Now they're sharing those conversations and more on their podcast, skimm from the couch. Every week you'll hear from women like Arianna Huffington, the founder of the Huffington Post, and thrive on why she puts her phone to bed at night or Melanie Wheeland, CEO of soul cycle on why she has a millennial mentor or how actor Taraji P. Henson got over her first rejection and learned how to negotiate for herself. It's a podcast about the real stuff, tips and tricks to launch, grow or change your career. The only rule on the couch, no bs checkout, skimm from the couch or wherever you listen to podcasts.

Tim Villegas (01:05):

Recording from my living room and Beautiful Marietta, Georgia. You were listening to the thick, inclusive podcast. Episode nine brought to you by Brooke's Publishing Company. Now I'm your host, Tim Vegas. Today I'll be speaking with rescue, the CEO of digital scribbler, founder of hope technology group, which started hope technology school and nationally recognized full inclusion school and founder of Isacur, an all volunteer inclusive soccer program. I had the pleasure of visiting with him one evening in November of last year. Rest and I discussed the beginnings of Isacur and how for all intensive purposes it happened by accident. We also talk about how sports programs can become more inclusive when everyone has the right attitude and gets training on how to be proactive instead of reactive receive. It makes me blush near the end of the interview, so make sure to listen to the entire podcast. So without further ado, let's get to the conclusive podcast. Thanks for listening.

Tim Villegas (02:10):

Joining us today on the inclusive podcast is rescue all the CEO of digital scribbler, which is the creator of Communication App. Quick Talk. A C is also the founder of Hook Technology Group, which started hope technology school, a nationally recognized full inclusion school and also he's the founder of Isacur and all volunteer inclusive soccer program dedicated to empowering both typical and special needs children. Of all abilities. I'm Russ, thanks so much for taking some time to speak with us.

Russ Ewell (02:47):

It's a privilege to be on your podcast. That inspires me.

Tim Villegas (02:53):

Well, thanks Russ. You are a, uh, a man of many hats. That is for.

Russ Ewell (03:00):

Yeah, I guess I, I don't know how it happened.

Tim Villegas (03:07):

Um, and uh, so, uh, I just read that description. Um, it, it seems like a. Did you set out to start something like this or how did, how did this happen exactly?

Russ Ewell (03:25):

Well, you know, I, I know I did, I didn't set up any of these things and uh, you know, my wife's probably deserves credit. She's the executive director for technology school and she's a real person who put it together, both technology group which I worked with pretty much, you know, raise the money and in and continued to support the work financially and in, um, in regard to technology, but basically as a parent of a special needs kids who have special needs, I was looking for a way with my sons. My two boys went to school job. I was looking for a way to eat something, a father. Same kind of experience with them. This is going to be a mid nineties, mid to late nineties. And um, I, I, I joined, uh, some special needs of sports and they were enjoyable and, and, and my son and I liked him, but having grown up in a, as an athlete and experiencing all of the levels of economics I didn't realize until I became a big part of it is it's a family experience, the athletics and it's a community experience in your athletics.

Russ Ewell (04:45):

So what I realized in that special needs for, so I was involved in, we were off to a different side of the field or the court while everyone else was into another place with a typical children. Um, and I, that is very different than how I grew up and I wanted my kids to experience what I experienced, which is a complete community which we now you and I feel to college. For me it's just life. And because I was at typical developing a kid and uh, and so I came home one day, I remember it well and I, I, I told my wife, I said, I just don't know how much longer I can do this because you know, I'm sitting here and I'm looking at, I'm going, I want my son to be, to be with his friends who are in the typical program.

Russ Ewell (05:35):

So Frankie, he was on all week long and then maybe at times sports and I was like, I got to do something, but I didn't, you know, what, what was I going to do there with their were belonged this special needs for a team or you tried to be any regular program but there's no way, you know, he could sustain at the speed they are moving and all of that. And so, um, long story made short and I'd come back, yes. But I reached out to my friends who were all from neuro typical families and with neuro typical kids and development. And I happened to, I didn't really realize that that happened. It happened about six screens. We were all high level soccer care for soccer players and I had been reading and studying because I do that a lot. That's how I try to figure out what to do next because today as you well know, there's a lot of information for parents with special needs kids.

Russ Ewell (06:27):

But in the nineties, eighties, the seventies, even before we came along and this experience there was as much so you had to figure it out. So I read that east, that soccer was more pocketed worldwide in many reasons. That is because I thought soccer was totally boring, you know, you only scored like one to zero and I just slept. I play basketball and so I read it and it said that one of the reasons it's one, it's not expensive, seen canvas, a coordination comes factory even hand eye coordination and I thought about my own kids and how they were and I thought, you know, to be true. And so we watched them to what

eventually became new soccer. Now the answer your questions too long winded there, but what happened is I just got my friends together and said, you know, I really want my kids to experience with mean everybody else's.

Russ Ewell (07:15):

To see that I have friends. I have friends with kids without kids and ended up across the street from the house in the middle school, getting about 15 of us out there with about five and one slash 20th out here for about six to eight kids and we just started doing little drills with soccer and my big vision was a. anybody who volunteers at the teenager and middle schooler will help them to become really good at soccer so they can pray at the high school level of beyond. We went out to physical kids, special needs kids to develop fine motor, gross motor, whatever. We can eliminate development and get them friendships and then the parents you get to hang out on the sidelines like a lot of parents do and gets into other people and enjoy what really is given the experience. So I did that and it started knowing and I was happy.

Russ Ewell (08:05):

My kids are happy and we had a nice small group. I take it topped out at 25 and everybody can be there on a Saturday and then have one mother came by and she was like, Hey, can I be a part of this program? And I wasn't, well, it's not really appropriate, you know, we don't really have people joining that. They think about it and I went on with my life. I go, how many want to add people? We got it now I'm not trying to start anything. And she said to me, are you really going to lead this, you know, poor mom all by herself with a kid and they'll help. And I felt so terrible that I said, okay, I'll let her in. That led to hundreds of new people joining over time for everything I've done. The ethos or the software development, all these things has not been on purpose. They'd been on a date then by, by necessity, by chance. And then I thought it was helping people. So that's sort the answer to that. Sorry.

Tim Villegas (08:57):

No, no, that's, that's really interesting because like you said, um, you know, part of what inclusion is, is that community, right? Um, and um, it really is, it really is a best when it's kind of this organic thing that just happens because you're not trying to, you're not trying to force or know, um, recreate this a situation where, you know, typical kids and, and you know, kids with special needs or you know, put together and it's supposed to magically happen. It, it, it's, it was much more organic adult like you said, necessity. So, um, I think, I think in that sense, um, you know, it was easy to see that as being an authentic inclusive experience and really not even like really trying to do inclusion. You just wanted your kids to experience what everyone else is experiencing, you know? Right. So, um, now how, where did it go from there as far as the east soccer goes and the e in soccer is stands for everyone, is that correct?

Russ Ewell (10:15):

Hey, it if not equal as added their own thing. We didn't scan it for the dance floor and for the time, exceptional. And, and, and for us it was a word that is used a lot for kids programs and, and now that he tends to stand for what the person is attending. Thank you for super exceptional. And that was because we were trying to say if this program is different than all the other programs, we can take anybody and we can help anybody. I've the experience of what we call inclusion today. What happened is we started at a part of. I mean we started at the middle school across from my house. So many people start eating. When we added to a park, it was fairly big. So many people kept coming. We never really do the largest park in a city called foster city California where I live, why we live while we were working there, we

ended up maxing out, I think at about 100 to 925 kids and these kids were coming from all areas of the day.

Russ Ewell (11:27):

Some people are driving an hour to an hour and a half to get there on a Saturday because they said there was nothing like it. One of the unique things that happened to me at that time, not 25, was that um, a couple came walking by and stopped and they kind of required that losing charge, which nobody really was in charge, but I was sort of one who got many coaches, you know, into a team effort, but the, they were sent to me and they said, hey, just wanted to say we really love your program. I said, Oh, you do, you have kids. Kids will know going to kick it off. I said, Oh, I wish. They said, well, we were driving by it. We were looking for houses and we kept driving through the various communities and we kept coming here and every time we came here on the weekend, we will see you out there.

Russ Ewell (12:19):

And we thought this is the kind of community we want to be in. You want to be in a community that has kids together, special needs services. So we ended up buying a house right there across the street because we left the program so much and the city of foster city this great, they didn't even charge us for the field. We became sort of, and we're still there to this day. We sort of became a part of the community in. Let me for the parking today, we were forced to start other ones just because he felt terrible. Right. So now it's probably closer to keating, about four to 500 kids every Saturday come to these various programs. We've had college students and New Sacred Center restate wrote about the program because the kids who began with me in 1996, seven, both kids are now all college age or nearing graduation or just graduated.

Russ Ewell (13:12):

And so they, it hasn't made launched clubs on the campuses. They went to different ones like a cow. So he stayed and a lot of the students in these places started versions of ie soccer there. So it really has been Stein and, and, and along the way, I think one way that the state of California sort of, uh, and, and I guess nationally, they sort of paid attention and encouraged me to the program and hoping it would spread as I was switching enough to get the Jefferson award, which was started by Jacquelyn Kennedy Onassis and several of the Kennedy Group, um, in, in a, an award for community service and work done to effect a positive change in the community. And then coupled with that, a congressman in California, we understand e a N. I joke when I first got the call from his office tracking house, I want you to come on here. We want to get your impression of citation. Yeah. I was like, I didn't even know what that was all about. And the guy who followed me to my office, I was on the road. He said eight compensated in his office. They decided to give you a congressional citation. And I thought he was playing with joke. I go, I don't believe this. I'm not going to get me. And it turned out to the beach.

Russ Ewell (14:36):

I, I asked the applicant, why are you, why did you pay attention to me? I mean, what I mean, I'm just that little program here that he said because these are the kinds of things that make our community better and what we wanted to be. And it only comes from people doing things for the community. I thought that was very elegant. It's a lot like what I've seen you do in your work, which is, it's the same thing. The government can only do so much in money honestly, than I do so much. People can do a lot. And uh, so it's, it's been thrilling. It's going to. Now there's different ones in Africa. Uh, the one in Las Vegas, the first time they held bears, they have 100 people come the first day. So I'm battling was

outstanding and we have a number of other cities that are beginning to launch them and wanting to launch them.

Russ Ewell (15:28):

And is they're all different kinds of, um, you know, the television, a opportunity to have to be on TV, spread around in the web has helped a lot of parents and families decide to launch their own versions. And so that's injury rewarding. I learned a lot. And uh, the biggest thing I've learned is there's something incredible about parents of typical children that sometimes parents of special needs children just don't, don't always know. And that is if we, we have so many parents of typical children, he say he want to be a part of it because we want our kids to grow up in an environment and a world. It's diverse and where they need to give back. And I just always think about taking. And I've had kids as executives that are very high ranking in silicon valley. Their parents bring them basically. I've got one reason I bring him my kid because I don't want them to only know this world that we're in. I want him to know where the surgeon and getting himself. It's been very encouraging and rewarding to see all the ways that it spread and change lives.

Tim Villegas (16:39):

That's fabulous. I wanted to know about if there's any sort of restrictions on who can participate, I know that that would be kind of interesting with an inclusive soccer program, uh, but uh, you know, if there's kids who want to participate that hey, you know, has some real significant challenges whether they are, you know, either physical, um, whether they're in wheelchairs or you know, or if they have some scene efficient behavioral challenges. Is that something that you work with or is that, is that planned out? How, how does, how does that work?

Russ Ewell (17:28):

That's a great question. We answered it can try to give you a little sort of background and how he, how we get, here's how we train it. But uh, you know, in the all these years and it's a little bit out of my control, what happens everywhere. So I can't speak for every single program. It's called the soccer, but the ones we do are the gay area. Um, we never had anybody that we turn away and um, we'd probably get, you know, fewer people who out with physical disability that is, um, significant. Um, uh, we didn't get a lot of kids like that, uh, but we do get some and our, our attitudes, if I started off with the program, they train, I wouldn't, I was, the guys are today is probably good, but I wouldn't let anybody get on the road to work with a kid until they trained for five weeks.

Russ Ewell (18:27):

So you had to be under fine line watch and learn for five weeks. And then I have physical therapists, occupational therapists, and special education teachers who were part of helping to train our coaches, our coaches August train still, they do it over a weekend now and instead of over a five week period, which is that in this time we sort of showed him how do you work with kids who have behavioral challenges? So when a parent, many parents who have behavioral challenge come, they assume they're going to be rejected, but they're going to try and we don't need that. We, we, we, we have usually have every 10 coaches. There's three to four who are who are experienced and worked with kids like different challenges that they try to ask the parents to do is let us work with the kid onto the cdot and let the parents step back a little bit.

Russ Ewell (19:20):

Some parents are insecure or uncertain about that, but with our groups got to be pretty good because one of the most important things I think when kids come who may have something in their minutes that make it appear as though there'll be difficult to work with, a lot of times very difficult to be working with, has to do with the attitude of people receiving them and that's what we teach all of our coaches. That if you. If you address or approach a kid who has neighborhood challenges, assuming he's going to be jumping in the and he does something that seems wrong, then you're going to. You're going to automatic and sediments and we spend a lot of sensory issues. Correct. Our folks a lot of times at getting them to take responsibility. Like, I do this with my kids were ready to scale. If a kid has trouble.

Russ Ewell (20:08):

I tried it first question myself that I approached too quickly that I'm not, you know, not know the kid well enough if I had gotten an advice from the parents and then we'll do things where like we had place where the kid comes in for the first three weeks he comes, he sits on the sideline who was caring and the work. Then the fourth week he walked out in the field, five or six steps the this week he walked out on the field 12 steps and kicks the law and sometimes it'll take us about three months. And the miracle is if you'll come on that third month and he's out there playing with other kids. Um, so that's Kinda how we never go down.

Tim Villegas (20:51):

That's a wonderful how you are able to, I guess, convey that to the people that you work with and that take the time to do that. Um, that a not only in, you know, quote unquote special programs or you know, programs where were students with disabilities, children with disabilities are involved, but in schools, uh, you know, I wish people would take the time to talk with teachers or paraprofessionals about how to deal with challenging behavior because, um, you know, I hear stories and I read stories and I see things with my own eyes that if only we had that background knowledge a week, you know, uh, we would be able to handle those situations a little bit better. Um, and I, I'd like to kind of transition us from talking about Isacur to hope technology school, which you had a hand in, in, in founding or creating as well. Is that correct?

Russ Ewell (22:09):

Uh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I think it was a team effort and uh, and my wife, you know, silicon valley is booming in the nineties and we happen to be living here, a number of our friends from different walks of life, um, me and we're having great success. And uh, I went to a graduation of a private school in Los Angeles where a, the mind goes, his daughter was graduating, getting into very, very exclusive school, meaning extremely well known. And so I was invited in and I was supposed to send me. So I said, hey, you know, I should go and help me with that family. And shrinking the speaker. Got Up in this beautiful campus at the high school for Qantas is sunny day. Um, I think, uh, Leonard Nimoy was there a number of actors and actresses. The executives are walking around, you know, I'm looking at, I know that magic, you know, and it's one of those situations where you wonder, how did I get that here?

Russ Ewell (23:22):

But I'm sitting there and then the commitment speaker gets up and he begins to talk about the school. And he says, you know, school, we didn't have all these beautiful buildings. It was a set of trainers up there on the hill and everything else. Everything else was Mike. And um, and it was, uh, you know, being developed and being dealt. And he said, and that's when the school began. And that's where I learned and he's speaking to all these kids. Of course didn't go through that period. I've turned to one of my

friends and I said, you can start a school. I mean if that's all it takes, five or six straightened. Yeah. It never occurred to me before

Russ Ewell (24:08):

I came home and I was talking to my friends and I don't. It's amazing how you can actually start a school if you wanted to. It could be. And I started talking to my wife was like, you know, yeah, we had to do that. And of course the first question you asked is how you pay for anything. It's intimidating, you know, I grew up public education when my kids were in public school. And I was like, how do you do that? Because you see all the infrastructure and you think it's impossible. But then the teacher, by the way, she's one of my first call. And I said, hey mom, you know, can you start a school and still looks good. It's not that hard. I said, I know I can teach.

Russ Ewell (24:54):

And, and, and she goes, no, you can do it. And so that became pretty clear that the frankly had, they were like, hey, let's do it, we'll all pitch in and we'll be able to raise the money. It's, it's, it's doable, you know, people, you know, people. But she's talked about it and was able to put the money together. And once we did that, my wife, she took the reins and in and developed a recruiting teachers and she started off with one class that was experimental over the summer to see how it would go to a number of typical and special needs kids. And there was a, there were some elements in elementary school in the day that a student population dropped so much that a third of the building with it. And somebody we knew found out about that, contracted with them. She repeated it. So I think two or three classes starting with three classes after that summit.

Russ Ewell (25:51):

And from there it grew to k through eight now. And I mean she's got a set of educators. I mean, I, I don't have anything to do with the running of the school. Um, but she got to set up their educators and teachers, um, that a big actor creditation there, California accreditation. I recently finished it and uh, they, they marveled at what has taken place because they said paraeducators are rock stars because they've gotten more if we have masters degrees and they were just done. And so yeah, it, it increases it. I actually get the percentage, I think it may be a 60 slash 40, 60 percent. Typically it's a, it's got speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists on campus. They work, they're great administration group. Uh, and uh, it, it's inspiring, but not really about private education. But apparently you been, you've been talking about today and what you've talked about and written a lot about what's possible when teachers appearance get on the same page and work together and the parents will stay with the teachers, know the parents and the teachers call from the parents would fade. No, it's been extraordinary to watch it. I think it's a vision for education will go into the future in public.

Tim Villegas (27:23):

Yeah, I agree. The, the, the potential that is there when teachers and parents are on the same page and that there's a. and there's trust that is built. I think that is a big key to what is missing. And um, you know, when we have, when we have idps that are, you know, five or six hours long and you know, and advocates and lawyers and all this stuff, you know, I've written about that before, you know, that it's, it's a, it's a trust issue. I think, um, because if we did trust each other and if we did have open communication and we did, we were on the same page, then we could go a lot farther, which sounds to me like what you're trying to do with hub technology, school, you know, and, and also is starting so small. You know. Um, I think with public education it's so hard because it's, it's such a big system, you

know, not just, not just district wide or eating, not even just school. Why do you get your district and then you have the state and then you had the federal components and no one seems to be talking to each other.

Russ Ewell (28:51):

It's interesting because, you know, the public education system takes a beating sometimes from different places. Right. Having grown up with a mother who worked in Public School when my dad was in the next, but my mom was, I was, I was trying before I got to school and um, my view educators and teachers is pretty high degree of respect because I watched my mom work all day, come home and take care of us and then go back and work all day. I went to a suburban school that we're going to keep part of the community. That was, you know, it was great and she didn't, she wasn't going to see what teachers in my school. So because she felt African American kids in the inner city to help people out where I was in school. And when I, when I learned that and believe now is, you know, when you, you, you get the teacher empowered in the classroom, be able to do the kind of work I know a lot of teachers can do and they have the support of the administration in this case or something.

Russ Ewell (30:05):

What are the administration if the behind their ideas in. And then they also have everybody's input. It's shown me to stay there. Some teachers at the school, you know, they were. But it shows me why, uh, I saw a study recently where it said that a number of teachers in private education on actually making this much money or peaches in public equities. And I was. One of the reasons for that is, you know, you get a little bit less money, but a lot more freedom in your life is easier and smoother and you get your here is um, that's attractive I think to teachers. But I look forward to what happens in the classroom. But yeah, when you're talking about three levels, when I, I, I equate it to apple computer where you don't have to right here. I know there's a shadow that I'm, one of the things they talk about marriage and when you walked in, if you had to make a decision for great happened.

Russ Ewell (30:59):

It used to be at a company that that's fine. Studies isn't in, in all kinds of red tape, but he would walk in and go, let's do it. Let's start now. And in smaller environments in certain private schools, if you could just move so much more quickly because the students that the teachers have the ability to say, Hey, I'm going to do this in my class. Um, and then this is done. They came to me. One of the teachers came in and said, hey, you guys are going to digital distributor, can we get this in here? And we talked to people in apple and people who volunteered to go, hey, I've got, I think within, you know, like Saturday, they're beyond because this was a while back where they were up and running. Just things like that where they can have. I'm looking forward to that system where the teacher can make the call and that it needs to be for students. And he doesn't have to be at the seminary, different layers and different forms. I know I'm probably, I get listed in dreaming, but

Tim Villegas (31:53):

no, it's my home. Well, you know, we can all be, we can all be that way. I suppose. You know, I, I definitely have my lofty dreams about education and in particular about public education, you know, um, there is a, there is a place for public education. It's unfortunate that we have to work so hard at getting the things that we want. Um, and it, it does take a long time, you know, just to, you know, we're talking about technology, you know, just as just a little example. But I have a particular software that I use, um, I'm not gonna, you know, promoted or anything. But um, you know, I didn't have the updates

for the software. It's not like I can just go and download the updates, you know, I have to have someone else do that for me, you know? Yeah. And you know, and also everything is blocked. We don't have this free Internet free reign on the Internet. Everything is blocked and filtered. So things in websites that would be of good use that, that I can use, I cannot use or informational websites, you know, I can send them my colleagues, you know, they can't see that or read that at school. They have to do it at home. So that gets a little frustrating. Um, so, uh, you know, we just have to do the best with what we have and unfortunately, um,

Russ Ewell (33:32):

and, and it's complicated obviously. So I, I, I, I think, you know, the truth is everybody faces challenges, but that's part of the reason we wanted to start the different programs that we've started. It's not as much as a. like I was happy at the public school system for myself. My wife went to public school for my kids while they were there, but at some point you want to innovate and sometimes I think the best way to get started is that a campus me send me some examples of it because when you have those small, shiny examples, hopefully they'll eventually have an impact. And that's why I like, you know, I, I wanted to just take a moment to say fly. I liked what you, you're doing. It was a lot of teachers who are on the ground. It can a different. I liked what they were doing because there's nothing like for someone like me can develop software.

Russ Ewell (34:32):

I mine nine degree teacher here in, in, in, in both the typical classroom special education class in the inclusive classroom to tell me what they need. I wish I had more time to be more of what I hear is needed. But I think probably one of the reasons I wanted to be on your podcast because the work I see you do and I get inspired when I look at it because I think we can get in the hands of teachers like yourself and others, the tools they need and give them the freedom I think be taken care of in the education system. I think the hard part is, you said it's big, it's hard for that, but I, you made you made some kind of plowing away as we write articles. Is it mobilized people like me and parents to contribute and collaborate? You may wonder if it's making a difference in I pocket that you at least, you know, every two or three weeks here with somebody,

Tim Villegas (35:30):

just

Russ Ewell (35:30):

one thing I read on your site or you've ended up interacting with someone I know and I'm in a with regard to how hard I think you work it. And I go, you know, it reminds me of my mom. My mom didn't work at school. She was, she was, she was spending my microwave money

Russ Ewell (35:52):

and I knew it. I was like my mom, my mom, she, she insisted that if she says my classroom's going to be the best classroom design and, and, and, and inspiration and energy and things, the kids like if I have to pay for it myself, sometimes we didn't get what we wanted because she said, hey, I had to get, I had to get closer to my classroom. You have to wait. And uh, and, and that's how I learned about public school teacher. So I just wanted to say, well, I hear that. Thank you for what you do. And for all you right, and the way you emote alive, some days when I'm doing all the different things I'm doing, I think I can't write another word. I can't do another thing and I'll see you or something.

Russ Ewell (36:43):

That's how I think change happens. I don't, I don't think anybody's I to before and after years of work there and I only you guys gonna walk into the door of the White House and stay overnight. It's going to be people on the ground who are in the classrooms and there are a few more than teachers. Um, and that are in the classroom interacting. I've encouraged to become teachers because I tell him that I remember I can need, you might teachers Mrs Sherman in Fourth Grade, you know, Mr Wood in fifth grade. I can name the teachers Mrs Young in ninth grade. It changed my life. And um, and, and I, I, there's nothing really jumped out unit with me for. I know it even impacted by how much it means that I've done something useful with my laptop. So I wanted to say that at your thinking police work is, is, is, is the reason that I wanted to take it on here because I admire what you've done and all the effort you make, the creativity, it's outstanding and I'm not sure to hear that enough, but I've been feeling that a long time having written you continue to know.

Russ Ewell (37:57):

So I thought your podcast be a good place for me to interject and say that I really think what you're doing even more than basically here actually to the classroom on the front line and I'm hoping software, it's not, it's not usually behind it. So thank you for all you do. Want to make sure I said that.

Tim Villegas (38:20):

Thank you very much for us. It means a lot coming from you. Uh, you'd have to definitely have a, I have a beetle or respect, um, uh, for you as well. And uh, the work you do with digital scribbler also with the, the quick talk ac, which actually I have, I have that on my ipad. Um, uh, we, uh, I wish I used it more. It's just not something that I'm, I'm able to right now, but I have shown it to other people. So, um, it's good, you know, and I, like I said, you know, I appreciate those words. I'm very, very, very much. Um, yeah, sometimes it's hard to know, engage, you know, what kind of impact you're having, um, when you're a blogger. So, um, but, you know, it's, it's good. I, I'm, I have this kind of cognitive dissonance every time I go to work because, you know, I'm in this, I'm in a self contained environment.

Tim Villegas (39:26):

Um, and I have been since day one since my first day being a teacher. Um, but I've always had this inclusion mindset, uh, with my kids and even when I taught in, um, uh, in Pasadena, California, I taught four years in a self contained autism class. Um, so I would, I would take my kiddos and we'd go into fourth grade Gen ed for a math segment or you know, we would go in, um, you know, that when I first got there they wanted to have us go into this, separate the, into the preschool playground to play. And I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, no, we need to be out with everybody else, you know, we need to mingle and you know, we can't, we can't be invisible, you know, and it was a, it was a different, it was a, just a different mindset, you know, and I, I tried to really, you know, a buck the system as far as that goes. Um, and I, I continued to do it and sometimes you know, you get the feeling like you're being annoying. You

Russ Ewell (40:44):

need to because is really been comfortable for the status quo because we are globalized city by the bay. You have people from all different walks of life, all different languages. You sit in the coffee shop here, you could be anywhere in Europe. It is, it is. You're hearing. It reminds me that the oldest is increasingly getting diverse. Think keeping discussions for a disability or any kind of condition that can just stay on moral grounds. It, it just uses a healthy society and it's also a mistake on, on sort of creative breakthrough, I think if it hadn't been first day, especially needs kids. There's a lot of the technologies

that are beginning to explode a little bit that people wouldn't not have the drive to be able to, q to developers, engineers at hp had happened at Google and I've yet to meet one who didn't become passionate about what they were doing because they send out a child.

Russ Ewell (42:22):

The child was more isolated so he got to make contact with people that emotionally was able to be included as a people socially because of their technology. Smart. I sat in a room with all the engineers who developed the hands and fingers and when they found out what we were doing with both critical and especially in the case of the classroom using it can't say all. I can say that when you're on the playground and you're doing those things for those kids, teachers to do that because we're not going to have fear. People that have unique needs or disabilities. I know every time I go to the hospital for a checkup or whatever and I'm walking through the clinic. There's typically in a hospital or sick people sick and you realize that something every man is going to lead vehicle and if you develop a society completely sick, you have no weaknesses.

Russ Ewell (43:26):

Then eventually everybody outside of it. So I get when I see you out there, you know, pushing to make sure your kids are accepted. I think it's pushing society to say, you know, we can't just say it's only for people who can survive because in the city it's got to be for everybody and there's something we all gain from it and that's one of the reasons I stay driven. I just think it's not going to work. I was that kind of kid growing up. To be honest. I, I, I met my academic, my school, my grades, my scores on cash. You know, what schools I wanted to go to and I had all that and I kind of ignored everybody. Got To college and I realized when I was in college, I went from a small county in the city of Boston. I realized, wow, the world is bigger than my small bubble. And that was a process of change. At the time I had kids with special needs. I had already pretty much bought into you don't just steal your exclusive little world, the one side kicks and special needs. I said, look, this whole issue of talent, your greatest window, if I get erased my whole, my whole frame and start all over here that I did. So when I hear what you're talking about it, I just keep getting, keep adding every teacher and guaranteed fatty because society is being introduced every day.

Tim Villegas (44:44):

Yeah. Well thank you. I, I, I definitely think that, um, you know, I'm speaking from speaking with different people so far on the podcast and other, you know, just conversations. I think that the changing kind of your heart and mind about what inclusion is, it's really going to be the thing that's going to change people because although research is really great and in research can be useful, especially in the school system because they make everything. They pretty much make all decisions based on research. Um, but the teachers that are in the classroom that are working with the kids, if a, if there's a way, if there's a video I can show them or if there's an, you know, an article by a self advocate, I can show them or if there's an example I can give them about how you can include a student with significant disabilities.

Tim Villegas (45:54):

Um, in a typical classroom. Um, I think those are where the, those are where the really big Aha moments come. And then I, you know, it, it, it was the same thing that happened with me when I went into my teacher training. Um, I thought there's no way I could, you know, include a student with severe autism in a general education room. There's no way why, why would that ever work, you know, and it wasn't until my professors and my, you know, um, the educators that were telling me actually it can and this is

how you can do it and you know, these are the steps. And then once I saw it, I was like, oh, well that's not at all what I thought it was going to be. Or, you know, or I totally understand that, you know, and in fact, I remember when I first, when I first got into my, um, uh, my education program and uh, I was picking my classes and I had a, you know, my advisor, she had had mentioned inclusion, especially for students with significant disabilities.

Tim Villegas (47:11):

And I was completely against it. I said, no, no, no, no. They need, they need specialized instruction. They need to be in a safe environment. And I was saying all the things that I hear, you know, when I, when I bring up the conversation and she's like, actually, no, you should check this out, read this, you know, look at this. And slowly but surely my eyes were open and um, and now I, there's no way I can go back to where, where I was because I've, I've seen with my own eyes that it can work. Um, you know, it doesn't mean that there isn't challenges are the, you know, there's certain environments that aren't ready, you know, for our kids, you know, and that's, that's real, that's a real discussion. But you know, to, to say that it doesn't work or to say that, um, you know, it'll never happen or whatever. That's just, you know, because we haven't seen it yet. So yeah. Well, um, this has been a really great discussion. Um, I wanted to kind of wrap things up and give you a chance to, um, maybe plug some of your stuff. I'm like, I know soccer is, I'm moving to a, um, other kinds of sports. I didn't know if you wanted to talk a little bit about that or if you wanted to talk about quick talk Ac. Uh, you know, I'm, I'm happy to plug that. Yeah, I know what

Russ Ewell (48:41):

people want to check it out, check it out. But I actually came on just enjoyed the podcast. I want to, I know needed to, you know, asking for those things. I'm, I'm excited to encourage people to listen to your work and read your work and follow you more often. So that's why I wanted to be.

Tim Villegas (49:12):

Well, thanks a lot russ. I appreciate it. Um, if, uh, if anyone is interested they can check out digital scribbler.com, I believe. And then you also tweet at, at digital scribbler or is it a underscore digital scribbler I can't remember. Yeah. And then, um, and then you also can a google east soccer. There's a lot of really great information about that. Uh, so thanks again. Rest for being on the program.

Tim Villegas (49:40):

Thank you very much. That concludes this edition to the think inclusive podcast. For more information about rescue all and east soccer, you can visit his website, digital scribbler.com, or on twitter at underscore scribbler. Remember, you can always find us on twitter at underscore, inclusive or on the web@thinkinginclusive.us. Visit our sponsor at Brooke's publishing a dot. Come and receive 25 percent off your order using Promo code t l m b e d 25. Today's show was produced by myself talking to USB headphones back book pro garageband and a skype account bumper music by Jose Galvez. With the song press, you can find it on itunes. You can also subscribe to the podcast, feed the itunes music store for automatic.com, the largest community of independent podcasters on the planet from Marietta, Georgia. Please join us again on the inclusive part. Thanks for your time and attention.

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