

Free Event

Haben Girma: The First Deafblind Harvard Graduate

Date: Wednesday 4 September

Time: 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Location: Science Theatre, UNSW Kensington

Price: Free

Tickets: [Click here to book tickets online](#)

Event Description

Haben Girma would prefer not to be called inspiring. But, as the first Deafblind woman to make Harvard history and living in defiance of great social and physical barriers, it is a term often used to describe her achievements. Girma developed a powerful path to success despite facing many social and physical barriers. Overcoming all with an insatiable appetite for social justice as well as a wicked sense of humour, she's become a leading advocate for people living with disabilities. Girma has been named one of the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 and was awarded the White House Champion of Change, presented by former President of the United States, Barack Obama.

In her memoir, *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*, Girma shares how her parents' harrowing stories of refuge from Eritrea during its 30-year war with Ethiopia inspired her to embark on a quest for knowledge; traveling the world in search of the secret to belonging. In conversation with ABC's Nas Campanella, Girma will unpack some of these adventures and explain how they led her from feelings of isolation to conquering Harvard Law.

How to Arrive & Access Information

Wheelchair Access

The Science Theatre is located at UNSW Sydney's Kensington campus ([highlighted red on this map](#)). The closest accessible drop-off point to the Science Theatre is towards the rear of the building, with access via Gate 2, High Street. Vehicles can drop off patrons directly adjacent to the Business School west wing which is then a 200 metre walk approximately. More information on getting there can be found via our interactive accessibility map available [here](#).

Hearing Loop

The Science Theatre has hearing assistive technology available. Patrons wishing to utilise this service must collect a Roger™ inductive neck-loop receiver from the venue staff, and this system can be used with a hearing aid or cochlear implant with a T-coil, or with headphones.

Live Captioning

This event will be live captioned. Please select a live captioning ticket when you register for your tickets. Front of house staff can assist in identifying captioning seats on arrival at the venue.

Auslan

This talk will be Auslan interpreted. Please select an Auslan interpreted ticket when you register for your tickets. Front of house staff can assist in identifying Auslan seats on arrival at the venue.

Contact

To book and discuss access services, please call the Centre for Ideas on 02 9065 0485 or email centreforideas@unsw.edu.au.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT & PARKING

The Science Theatre is easily accessible via public transport and the closest light rail stop is UNSW Anzac Parade (L3 line). The closest bus stop is UNSW Gate 2, High Street (348, 370). For more information please call the Transport Infoline on 131 500 or visit transportnsw.info.

Free parking is also available in the Barker St Car Park (Gate 14) from 5.30pm. For access to free parking, event patrons must park in the *UNSW Permit Holder* bays, available on all levels. The Barker St Car Park (Gate 14) parking station is located [here](#).

Paid casual and visitor parking is offered via the CellOPark App and 'pay by plate meters' in all other UNSW car parks. For more information head [here](#).

CONTACT

For all the other enquiries, please email centreforideas@unsw.edu.au or call the Centre for Ideas on 02 9065 0485.

The Centre for Ideas is happy to receive phone calls via the [National Relay Service](#). TTY users, phone 133 677, then ask for 02 9065 0485. Speak and Listen users, phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 02 9065 0485. For more information on all other relay calls visit [here](#).

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Haben Girma

Haben Girma is the first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School. Believing disability is an opportunity for innovation, Haben advocates for equal opportunities for people living with disabilities, and travels the world teaching the benefits of inclusion. Former US President Barack Obama

named her a White House Champion of Change. She received the Helen Keller Achievement Award, and a spot on the enviable Forbes 30 Under 30 list. She now serves as one of the first Commissioners for the new World Health Organisation Commission on Social Connection.

Nas Campanella

Nas Campanella is a journalist and newsreader with the ABC and triple J. Nas is totally blind and has a neurological condition called Charcot-Marie-Tooth which means she can't read Braille. After humble beginnings as an ABC cadet, to experience as a regional reporter in Bega, NSW, in 2013 she became the first blind newsreader in the world to read and operate the studio for herself live to air.

Nas travels the world advocating for inclusive education, adaptive technology, accessible travel and the importance of empowerment and leadership for women. Nas has a Bachelor of Communications from the University of Technology Sydney, is an ambassador for the Motivation Australia and the Royal Institute For Deaf and Blind Children, and is a board member for disability NGO, Fighting Chance.