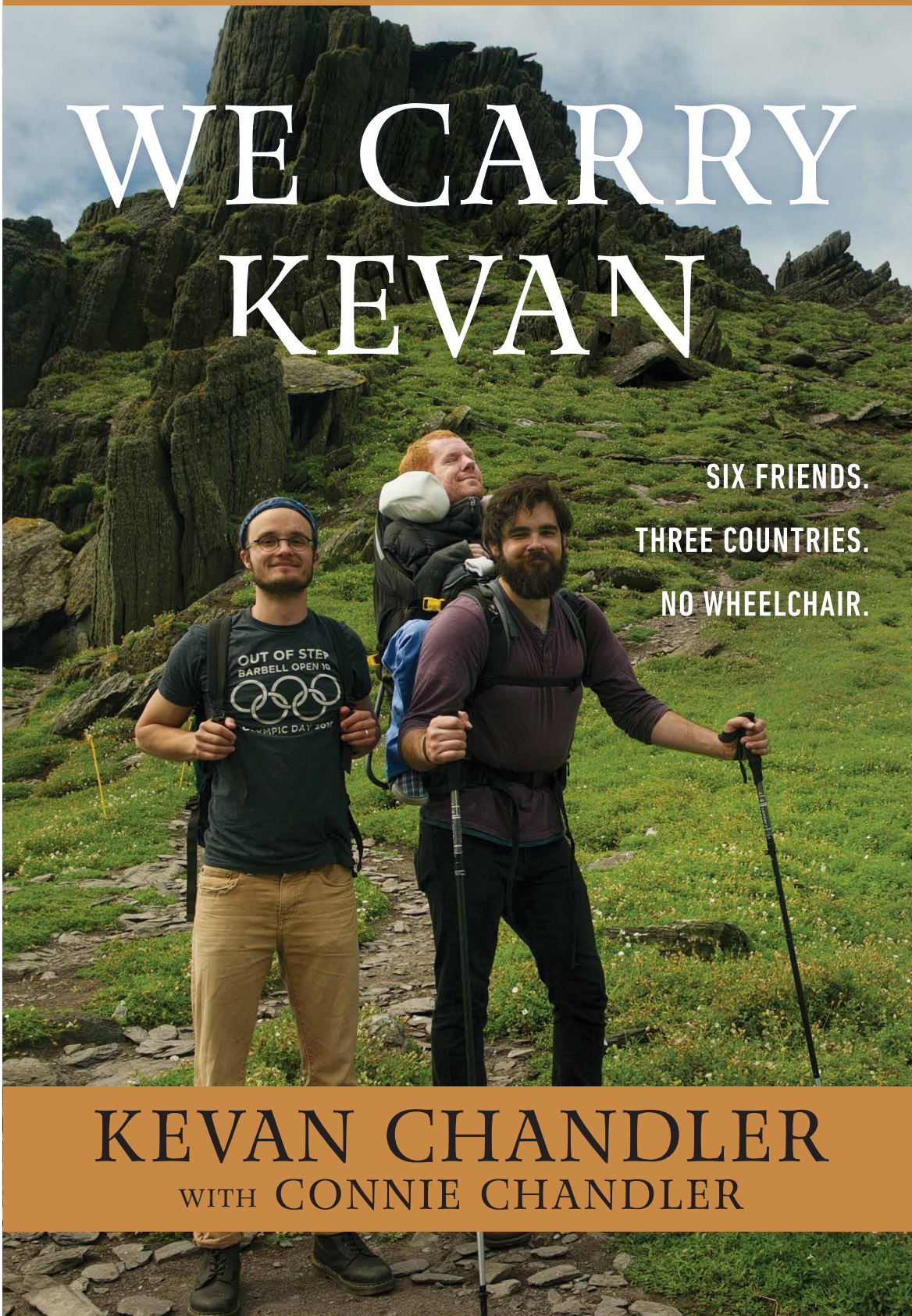


DISCUSSION GUIDE

# WE CARRY KEVAN

SIX FRIENDS.  
THREE COUNTRIES.  
NO WHEELCHAIR.

KEVAN CHANDLER  
WITH CONNIE CHANDLER



*We Carry Kevan Discussion Guide*

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# 1

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## POINT OF DEPARTURE

What is a dream for your life that you have already attained? What was it like to begin the pursuit of it?

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Kevan wanted to visit Europe because of his family and literary heritage. What is a dream that you have for your life? Where did it come from?

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Kevan's wheelchair was a big obstacle to his dream of going to Europe, but there were many other issues that he and his friends realized through their urban spelunking adventure (wolf spiders, for example). What obstacles or fears stand in the way of attaining your dream?

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Kevan's friends carried him into houses for community events. These preliminary smaller steps led to and inspired the bigger dream of carrying Kevan around Europe. What are the simple acts of thoughtfulness, resourcefulness, and creativity that you are you able to do for others now?

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## LAYING OUT THE FLEECE

Kevan referred to the story of Gideon in the Bible (Judges 6:36–40). Tell about a time in your life when you were faced with making a decision and sought out a sign of confirmation and clarity through external circumstances.

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Kevan involved some important people in the initial planning stages of his dream. Who are the VIPs in your life who could help you attain your dream? What critical role would each of them play?

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Kevan compared Ben to Lord Moran, Winston Churchill’s personal physician who cared for his physical and emotional well-being in stressful times of his life. Who is your “Lord Moran”—someone who knows you better than most and understands how to care for you in times of need?

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Ben said he could relate to Aaron and Hur as they helped Moses in Exodus 17, being in a supportive role to uphold and encourage. Who is a “Moses” in your life, and how are you upholding and encouraging them?

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## PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

Share about a time when you embarked on a new experience—a trip, a performance, a competition, etc. How long did you spend planning it, and what did you do to get prepared?

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Kevan understood and acknowledged his physical and financial limitations. What is one area of your life in which you are limited (ability, proficiency, etc.)?

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Kevan invited people to join him to overcome his limits. Do you know people who are stronger than you are in this area? What would it look like for you to invite these people to help you accomplish something new?

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In the beginning, it was a little awkward and challenging for Tom and Philip to learn how to care for Kevan's needs. Have you been in a situation where you were outside of your comfort zone in serving or learning to serve? How did it stretch you, and how did you grow from that experience?

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## GATHERING THE CREW

Tell about an experience you've had when things went better than you expected.

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For Kevan, clicking the button to launch the fundraiser page was a small but very significant move: “this was the propulsion forward.” What is a small yet important step that you can take to propel you forward in your own journey?

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Kevan met several people during this stage of his story—Kaitor, Hans, Robbie—who wanted to join him in attaining his dream. When was a time when you had the chance to accept a new friendship or receive assistance offered to you? What are the benefits and risks in accepting something new?

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What do you see happening around you (other people's dreams or journeys) that you would like to join? How can you contribute your unique gifts and resources to benefit their efforts?

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## GEARING UP

Think of your most comfortable place to sit—a chair, couch, tree, etc. Why is it comfortable to you?

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Kevan’s backpack needed to be modified to provide unique safety, support, and control for optimal experience. What are some modifications in your world that provide you with these things?

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Eric Liddell said, “I believe God made me fast, and when I run, I feel his pleasure.” What is something that you enjoy doing? How can you do this in a way that honors God and encourages others?

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Tom, Philip, Ben, and Robbie understood that their lifestyle choices would affect their ability to carry Kevan safely. How are your lifestyle choices affecting those around you? What adjustments can you make in caring for yourself in order to provide better care for others?

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## LEARNING TO FLY

Share a little bit of your own family history and some of the values you learned at a young age.

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The value of human life and sense of adventure were strong in the Chandler family, and they shaped the decisions Kevan made as he grew up. What is one way in which you can see how your family's values have shaped your decisions in life?

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Kevan said, "I could see from Connie's experience that people could help people, beyond just our parents." Who is someone whose example has helped you realize potential in your own life?

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Kevan told about a time when a prison inmate used his mechanical experience to fix Kevan's wheelchair. Give an example of when someone else's need provided opportunity to redeem your own.

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## READY FOR TAKEOFF

What is a quote from a book, movie, or song that has special meaning to you, and why?

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Jim Elliott said, “Wherever you are, be all there! Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God.” Think of an example of what this could look like in your life.

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Kevan recalled the time the group spent waiting in the airport. When is a time you could do nothing but wait? How did you feel and respond in this situation?

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Kevan’s mom says that she prays for her children and grandchildren. Who are the people that you pray for consistently? How have you seen those prayers affect their lives, and yours?

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## PARIS

What is the most beautiful or spectacular view you have ever seen? How did you respond when you saw it for the first time?

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Kevan told about an attendant in the airport who was helpful in some ways and not in others. Have you ever been the recipient of unsolicited assistance or favor? How did you respond?

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When the team looked out the window of their flat in Paris, they realized that their crazy dream had come true. Think of a time when you accomplished a goal or saw a dream fulfilled. What were your thoughts or emotions in that moment?

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Luke expressed gratitude for the gift of being able to experience this trip with Kevan. In what ways can you find joy in participating in someone else's dream?

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## THE CITY OF LIGHT

Tell about a time when you got lost in a new or unfamiliar place.

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Kevan said that he hurt less when he was dancing, that he was “physically relieved and spiritually released.” What is an activity that you do that brings you to this point?

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Kevan and his friends were invited to be prayed over for healing at a church, but they felt God had already provided a miracle for them in their opportunity to travel together in such a unique way. Has God done something great and wonderful in your life that you feel other people don't really understand? How did this affect your relationship with God?

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Philip mentions ways that he and the team were able to briefly join multiple social groups as they carried Kevan through the streets of Paris. How can serving others position you in social and cultural circles that you would otherwise not experience?

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## BAND OF GYPSIES

If there was a soundtrack to your life, what would be some of the featured songs or musicians?

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Spending time with the gypsies, Kevan saw glimpses of the kingdom of heaven. Considering the context of Isaiah 55, what is a social setting in which you've seen the kingdom of heaven reflected, and how?

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Kevan was especially invested in meeting this group of gypsies, in a way that his friends were not. But he invited them to participate with him, and in doing so they learned more about Kevan and the world. How can you invite your friends into an aspect of your life that may be new or different for them?

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Kevan felt like Ben was the perfect person to accompany him, because of his personality and the dynamics of their friendship. How might your unique gifts or relationships present you with the opportunity to serve in a way that no one else can?

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## CROSSING THE CHANNEL

Complete this sentence: “I have done a great many things, but I have never . . .”

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Running through the train station was one of the most exhilarating and frustrating moments of the trip for the whole team. Discuss a time when you thought you knew exactly what you were doing, but then realized that you didn't. How did this affect your mood, your plan, and your experience?

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Kevan and the team met a man from Wales on the train, who invited them to his town. Have you ever found yourself following a plan when you were presented with an alternative? In that situation, did you continue on with the original plan or change?

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It is often true that the hardships we face put us in a position to relate deeper to the challenges of others, such as in the case of Mike and Claire. What is something you have struggled with, and how do you think that experience could be used to bless and encourage someone else?

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## IN SEARCH OF THE BOY WHO NEVER GROWS UP

Share about a place that you have only read about but would love to visit. What makes you want to go there?

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Kevan describes how different the world looks from the shoulders of his carriers, in comparison to his perspective from sitting in a wheelchair. Have you had the opportunity to view the world from a different angle—either higher or lower than your normal position? What did you notice that was different?

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Consider your own responses to the question Kevan asked himself while sitting beside the statue: “What am I building? And what will the world do with it?”

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Lauren talks about this group of friends being “woven together by self-sacrificing, honoring love.” How can you honor those around you through acts of love?

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## INTO THE ENGLISH WILD

What is a moment you can clearly recall, which was not captured by technology, that lives on in only your “God-given memory”?

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While Philip jumped fences, Kevan realized, “I had to forfeit my preconceived notions of what was possible and trust the experience and wherewithal of my friends.” Have you ever been in this position before? What was the outcome, and what did you learn through it?

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The trek through the woods and fields was challenging for everyone involved, but in the end it was worth all the trouble. Talk about an experience that was difficult for you, but the result made you glad that you did it.

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What is something that comes easy to you, that you do every day, that you can take time to be thankful for today?

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## TURBULENCE

What is an injury or obstacle you have faced that reminded you of your mortality?

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Kevan battled with some negative thoughts and lies that tried to defeat him. What thoughts do you struggle with, and how do you fight against them?

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Kevan was able to overcome despair by reminding himself of the “six fighters in [his] corner.” Who are the fighters in your corner—the people you can count on to help you through dark times?

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“Carrying” someone doesn’t always require physical action; sometimes it means just sitting with them, holding them, or being present in some way. How can you care for a loved one who is in pain?

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## SKELLIG MICHAEL

Tell about a time when your plans were delayed. How did you fill the extra time?

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In reflecting on Psalm 29, Kevan said, “Suddenly the wild world . . . played a beautiful role in revealing Christ.” What is an aspect of creation that reveals Christ to you, and in what way?

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The team decided to go off the “beaten path” for an adventure that was risky and possibly illegal. Reflect on something dangerous that you have done. Why did you do it, and how did you survive?

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The team took a different route back to the path, rather than retracing familiar steps. Think of something that has become easy for you through repetition and familiarity. What could it look like to try doing it a different way?

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## ASCENT

Share about an experience in your life that you can look back on and say, "I can't believe I did that!"

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Kevan thought that he would have a special encounter with the Lord while he was on Skellig Michael. Recall a time when you expected to have an encounter with the Lord but didn't.

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What aspect of Christian history has significant meaning to you? What does it inspire you to do?

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What is something in nature/creation that fills you with awe (and maybe fear)? What would you do if you encountered it?

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## THE VIEW FROM HERE

Share about a time when you realized the love of Jesus through the actions of a friend.

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Kevan shares about a conversation he had with Jesus, which contained some hard questions. What is a hard question you have asked of God? And what is a hard question he has asked of you?

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Tom admits that carrying Kevan on the boat was difficult and painful. What act of love have you done for someone else that caused you pain?

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How can you portray the love of Jesus to someone in your life?

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## REENTRY

Go back to the personal dreams you expressed in the discussion for chapter 1, and share them again.

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Kevan talks about how Tom knows him so well that he knows how to best encourage and challenge him in pursuing his dreams. Think of how you can encourage and challenge someone in this way today, and then do it.

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How can your group work to fulfill each other's dreams?

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The team understood that as this one dream was fulfilled, a new dream would come into place. And this new dream was to encourage others to “carry” more people to reach their goals. As you begin to see your dreams come true and look beyond yourself, how can you and others work together to carry someone else?

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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KEVAN CHANDLER grew up in the foothills of North Carolina with his parents and two siblings. The youngest of the bunch, he was the second to be diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy, a rare neuromuscular disease. He has a bachelor's of arts degree in counseling from John Wesley College. In the summer of 2016, Kevan and his friends took a trip across Europe, leaving his wheelchair at home, and his friends carried him for three weeks in a backpack. An avid storyteller, Kevan has authored several books and speaks worldwide about his unique life with a disability. He is also the founder of We Carry Kevan, a nonprofit striving to redefine accessibility as a cooperative effort.

**For more information:**

[WeCarryKevan.com](http://WeCarryKevan.com)

**For speaking requests:**

[AmbassadorSpeakers.com/site/schedule-a-speaker](http://AmbassadorSpeakers.com/site/schedule-a-speaker)