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Final Project: Accessibility Review

Chosen Webpage: <https://leadersandbest.umich.edu/>

Review role: QA

Wave Results: 7 total errors were found when running the Leaders and Best homepage through the WAVE extension. 5 of the errors were linked images with missing alt text, and the remaining 2 are instances of empty buttons. There are also 8 contrast errors present, but it is important to note that all 8 instances are text on gradients, and are well-contrasted from a color choice perspective (Blue text on yellow and white text on a dark gray gradient).

Keyboard Navigation: I was able to navigate to all fields and links except for the sub links under each nav link heading. I also noted that the page had a "skip to main content" link that was accessible with a keyboard. However, it only moves the page down past the page's small heading.

Screenreaders: Screen readers can access all content on the homepage except for the sublinks under navigation headings. Even when hover over these links with a mouse does not give a screen reader access to link text.

Architecture and hierarchy: Both of these features make sense for this website. This website is focused on informing donors on what kinds of university initiatives and projects they can donate to. With this purpose in mind, the site's navigation links are separated into 6 headings: info about the campaign, why support, what to support, how to support, careers, and contact. Each of the links below these headings makes sense, and provides more granular information on topics related to the main heading. Content is arranged in a logical way. Furthermore, headers exist and most clickable elements are identified. However, a user is not able to access navigation sublinks with either a keyboard or with a screen reader like voiceover. Additionally, the links at the bottom of the page are in a very small font size, and are difficult to read.

Chart/Image Alt-Text: All images and charts have alt-text except for the 5 noted in the WAVE validation on this page. These images are all located below the main link carousel.

Decorative images: There are no decorative images on the Leaders and Best homepage.

Improvements:

The first improvement I would suggest is changing the backend code to support tabbing in the siblings in the site's nav bar. Currently, a user cannot tab through these links, and can only access them through clicking. Adding something like a tab index to each of the list items in the site's HTML should help ensure that the website is navigable with a keyboard.

Secondly, in addition to keyboard navigability, further markup should be used in the site's HTML to make navigation sublinks exposed to screen readers. Currently, a user cannot hear what links are under the navigation headings, and may miss a bulk of the content the website offers. To address this, DOM elements should be more specifically categorized.

The next improvement I would recommend would be to increase the font size of the sitemap at the bottom of the page. Currently, the font size of the footer is smaller than 8pt, and while this is fine for non-essential content such as a copyright line, it is too small to be usable for navigation links. This could be done in several ways. The arrangement of links could offer more than one row of headings, or link titles could be shortened to be able to increase font size without changing the number of columns.

All 3 of the above issues may warrant a need to adjust page hierarchy to not have so many links under a nav heading. Perhaps allowing for one more level of page hierarchy will prevent having too many links on a single page, and make navigating with a keyboard, screen reader, or with a disability easier.

The last suggestion I'd have for an improvement is changing the image/link carousel that is the main focal point of the Leaders and Best homepage. Currently, the images below the carousel that can be clicked to show more information in the carousel have no alt-text. Without alt-text, someone using a screen reader, with a vision difficulty, or having trouble with a page loading will not know what information will show in the carousel until they click an image. Adding alt-text to these images would be a good start, but perhaps a design can be considered without images that act as links below the carousel. I'm thinking of a list of stylized, dynamic links to the right of a large highlighted image with a description on the bottom-center of the image.