

Beyond the Comfort Zone:

Understanding and Eradicating Injustice, Racism and Inequality in the Field of Developmental Disabilities

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

May 18, 2022

AHRC
N A S S A U


The Arc

ahrc.org/deiconference
[#ahrcdei](https://twitter.com/ahrcdei)

Please note: this program is provided as a supplement to the online program for printing. It is not intended to replace the program on ahrc.org/deiconference, which includes digital rooms and links to your training itinerary.

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Breakout Sessions will include sessions dedicated to each track:

Track 1: Race/Racism/Anti-racism

Increasing understanding of the impact and trauma of racism and oppression, as well as the role of social justice on the lives of people with I/DD, diverse communities that we support or want to support, and society in general.

Track 2: Disparities/Barriers in Society

Examining race and racism through the structures that create separate and unequal systems in the intersection of race and I/DD and for those who support them. In addition, effective strategies for engaging the I/DD community and the public in holding local, state and federal governments accountable for creating equity, inclusion, and justice will be shared.


Track 3: Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality

Working within or with the corporate/business community to create organizational structures and systems that maximize the recruitment, retention and professional development of a more diverse workforce and better supports people with I/DD.

Track 4: Best Practices

Sharing best practices and effective strategies for moving a progressive agenda forward that encompasses support for leadership within the I/DD community, including families, self-advocates, ombudsmen, government, disability advocates and policymakers. Innovative concepts and a re-imagining of public/private partnerships that create lasting and sustained change for people with I/DD and the staff who support them.

Please look at for this symbol:  which signifies continuing education credits available for the **National Association of Social Workers - New York State Chapter.**

Also, this symbol:  indicates “combined sessions” which are a type of breakout session, where presenters of similar topics independently present then share a joint 10-minute Q&A following their presentations

Welcome Letter



There is an urgent need for a space where constructive conversations can be held on the intersecting issues of race and disability; where people of all experiences and abilities can meet, connect and learn; and self-reflection is supported and celebrated.

It is this ethos of individual empowerment and collective action, where meaningful social change happens and why I am so pleased to welcome you to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Virtual Conference, co-presented by AHRC Nassau and The Arc of the United States.

This event is offering a full day of the latest research and insight, while also providing many opportunities to share experiences, perspectives and questions. Our conference theme clearly captures this objective and we welcome you to join us in stepping “Beyond the Comfort Zone: Understanding and Eradicating Injustice, Racism and Inequality in the Field of Developmental Disabilities.”

Together, we will explore the history, challenges and opportunities impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as the staff who work with them. And, together, we will learn new approaches to better serve as advocates and allies. I believe full inclusion starts with increased visibility and engagement—and that partnerships transcending the public and private sectors as well as international boundaries are critical.

Together, we will build connections that undoubtedly will contribute to a more equitable future for all.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stanford J. Perry". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stanford J. Perry
Chair, DEI Virtual Conference
CEO, AHRC Nassau

Conference Overview

8:30 - 8:45 a.m.

Coffee Break; Meet & Greet

8:45 - 9:45 a.m.

Welcome

Stanford J. Perry, Conference Chair

CEO, AHRC Nassau

Opening Plenary Session

“Meeting Challenges: Strengthening the Direct Support Workforce and Advancing Equity and Inclusion”

Kerri E. Neifeld, Commissioner, Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), New York State

9:55 - 10:55 a.m.

Plenary Session

“Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the I/DD Space: The Essential Role of Cultural and Linguistic Competence”

Tawara Goode, Associate Professor and Director, Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence; Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Choose Sessions From 4 Tracks:

Track 1: Race/Racism/Anti-racism

Track 2: Disparities/Barriers in Society

Track 3: Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality

Track 4: Best Practices

12:05 - 12:20 p.m.

Lunch

12:20 - 1:50 p.m.

Keynote Session

“Social Innovation, the Transformational Power of Lived Experiences and the Diversity of Thought”

Atif Choudhury

CEO and Co-Founder,

Diversity and Ability

Stanford J. Perry, Conference Chair

CEO, AHRC Nassau

2:00 - 2:50 p.m.

Plenary Session

“Picking The Lock: How Access To The American Dream Is A Test In Fortitude”

Presented by Alonzo Kelly, Principal, Kelly Leadership Group

3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Choose Sessions From 4 Tracks:

Track 1: Race/Racism/Anti-racism

Track 2: Disparities/Barriers in Society

Track 3: Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality

Track 4: Best Practices

4:10 - 5:10 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Choose Sessions From 4 Tracks:

Track 1: Race/Racism/Anti-racism

Track 2: Disparities/Barriers in Society

Track 3: Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality

Track 4: Best Practices

5:20 - 5:55 p.m.

Closing Plenary Session - Federal Panel

“Forging the Path Ahead”

Scott Robertson, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Shannon Hills, Regional Administrator, Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement (OPOLE), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

5:55 - 6 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Stanford J. Perry, Conference Chair
CEO, AHRC Nassau

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Coffee Break; Meet and Greet

8:30 - 8:45 a.m.

Start a day of learning and networking by sharing a virtual coffee with fellow conference attendees.

Conference Welcome

8:45 - 9 a.m.

Presented by Stanfort J. Perry, Conference Chair; CEO, AHRC Nassau

Opening remarks for a day of learning on issues at the intersection of disability and race.

Opening Plenary Session

9 - 9:45 a.m.

“Meeting Challenges: Strengthening the Direct Support Workforce and Advancing Equity and Inclusion”

Presented by Kerri E. Neifeld, Commissioner, Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), New York State

ASL is available for this session.

Commissioner Neifeld will discuss how New York State is working to stabilize, professionalize and strengthen its direct support workforce following the pandemic, while also advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the developmental disabilities field. The Commissioner will provide an overview of federal and state-funded investments in the direct care workforce, as well as agency goals to address parity and promote equity within that diverse workforce. Additionally, the Commissioner will share the agency vision and the commitment to accomplish these goals in the agency and throughout the field.



Plenary Session

9:55 - 10:55 a.m.

“Achieving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the I/DD Space: The Essential Role of Cultural and Linguistic Competence”

Presented by Tawara Goode, Associate Professor and Director, Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence; Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

ASL is available for this session.

We in intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) lag far behind other fields in efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). In fact, not only is DEI often used as an acronym, many fail to discern the difference between the meaning of these related yet different terms, concepts, and practices. Of particular significance is equity, which has become the term of choice among many in human services. Yet, we have yet to define equity, and more specifically, what it means in the I/DD space. This plenary presentation will: a) explore these concepts and their meaning in the I/DD contexts; and b) delineate the role of cultural and linguistic competence in our collective efforts to advance DEI.

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Objectives:

- Define and differentiate diversity, equity, and inclusion in the I/DD context.
- Define culture and cultural diversity.
- Describe frameworks for cultural and linguistic competence and their implications for advancing DEI in I/DD supports and services.

Breakout Session [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.

“Pretending Not to Know: Breaking the Silence of Systemic Racism”

Presented by Linda-Marie Miller, CEO, Empowered Speaking and Living, LLC

The majority of white people hold on desperately to the notion that there are “good” white people and there are “bad” white people and they always see themselves on the “good” end of the spectrum. As a result of feeling like they aren’t part of the problem, they usually feel like there is nothing for them to do other than perhaps make a donation to Black Lives Matter. Linda-Marie Miller is an inspirational interruption to the silence of these good white people. Miller starts her with a story that is about 7 minutes long, then leads the audience into an interactive conversation about the causes of their continued silence and the prices they pay and the world pays for that privilege.

Objectives:

- The silence of “good” white people is the reason that systemic racism continues.
- You are strong enough to step in, step up and be the voice of change.
- Once you know, you can no longer pretend not to know.



Combined Breakout Session

11:05 - 11:30 a.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

“Building Practices To Lead Self and People for Race Equity Impact”

Presented by Monica Biswas, Director, ProInspire, and **Namira Islam Anani**, Director, ProInspire

Most social sector organizations inherently demonstrate characteristics of white supremacy culture which uphold structural inequities that disadvantage anyone holding one or more non-dominant identities. The ProInspire Leadership Model for Race Equity Impact outlines practices to disrupt white supremacy culture and advance race equity from the perspective of four windows - self, people, organizations and systems - each with a core commitment.

In this session, participants will peer through the first two windows of the Leadership Model to identify practices each individual must commit to in order to authentically engage in efforts to disrupt racial inequities in their organizations or at a systems-level. Through reflection and peer sharing, participants will increase their understanding of social identity categories, power and privilege, and learn practices to support interpersonal relationships built on trust, mutual accountability and care.

Objectives:

- Discuss the current context in the nonprofit sector, including shifts from charity to justice and recognition of inequities across society.
- Review practices and core commitments to advance racial equity and inclusion based on ProInspire’s research.
- Learn from other participants around success and challenges that can use for advancing racial equity at the individual and interpersonal levels.

11:30 - 11:55 a.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

“Cultural Humility: Changing Lenses for Changing Times

Presented by Christopher Frank, Director, Eleversity, and **Sara Taylor**, Training Specialist and Community Liaison, Eleversity

The DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) landscape can be complicated and confusing with both pitfalls and opportunities. Viewing DEI efforts through the right lens is essential. This training will teach you how to use the key principles of Cultural Humility to approach service provision with humility and empathy in order to create an authentic and sustainable foundation.

Objectives:

- The differences between Cultural Humility and Cultural Competency.
- Barriers to practicing Cultural Humility.
- The ways Cultural Humility impacts service provision.

Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Health System’s Learning Journey During the COVID-19 Pandemic”

Presented by Dr. Debbie Salas-Lopez M.D., M.P.H., SVP, Community and Population Health, Northwell Health

COVID-19 taught us that low-income and minority communities were disproportionately affected. Northwell partnered with New York State Department of Health to offer free testing in faith-based locations across New York City, Long Island, and Westchester County. In December 2020, vaccine emergency use authorization was offered and Northwell Health established a Health Equity Task Force to ensure the safe, effective, and equitable distribution of the vaccine to high-risk, underserved communities and communities of color on Long Island. We partnered with faith-based communities, and agencies such as United Way to ensure education and outreach and community planning to get communities vaccinated. We listened and learned from communities. Our mission saved lives by providing access to our most vulnerable communities. We are preparing for the future to meet the health and wellness of all communities we serve.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness of how COVID-19 affected low-income and minoritized communities.
- Describe how the Health Equity Taskforce ensured the safe, effective and equitable distribution of the vaccine.
- Discuss the Social Determinants of Health and how they impacted an individual’s health regardless of age, race, or hnicity.

Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Linguistically Sustaining Instruction: Situating Language in the Work of Educational Equity for Emerging Multilingual Children with Disabilities”

Presented by Dr. Maria Rosa Brea, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Bilingual Extension Track Dept of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, New York University

This presentation will center culturally and linguistically sustaining intervention as the horizon for inclusive teaching for students with disabilities, who are also emerging multilinguals. The presentation will incorporate an overview of theories of multilingual development, as well as an analysis of common conceptions and misconceptions regarding culture as a construct, linguistic power and diversity, and their intersections with disability. Evidence-based pedagogical practices and instructional strategies that can be used to support and center various linguistic repertoires, cultural funds of knowledge, and learning variability in all learners will be briefly summarized.

Objectives:

- Identify and interrogate dominant misconceptions regarding language and ability.
- Define culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining pedagogies.
- Provide examples of how languages and learning variability can be centered in instructional sessions.

Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Self Esteem and Confidence as a Means to Address Sexual Ableism”

Presented by Kathy O’Connell, Director, Radiant Abilities, LLC

Living in a society where people with disabilities are treated equally and fairly is the goal of any good organization that helps this population. But there is a huge element that is rarely addressed if at all in many groups that are stifling the equality of people with disabilities. If we want to see holistic success we have to address the whole person which includes giving training to the staff to deal with how to help their clients navigate the world of dating and healthy relationships.

Healthy relationship training is a standard at most colleges where young adults are creating their identity of self as an adult but where is it in the community for adults with disabilities? Oftentimes employees have to deal with circumstances, stemming from people not having relationship skills, that make them feel uncomfortable and inadequate. Sometimes in knowing how to address such issues, they get swept under the rug.” Imagine if you were told your natural feelings toward someone else were wrong and should be avoided?

Objectives:

- Transform societal myths that result in “sexual ableism” for people with disabilities and impacts on their social and emotional development.
- Properly foster self-esteem and confidence as the most effective way to promote healthy relationships.
- Develop strong boundaries and skills for relationship success as well as protect people with disabilities from sexual assault.

Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“Inclusion Benefits All: An Employment Success Story”

Presented by Karleen M. Haines, MPS, Chief of Member Relations & Advocacy, Partners Health Plan & Care Design NY, and **Ackeem Duggan**, Detective Administrator, NYC Police Department - Office of the Police Commissioner

For our presentation, we will provide an overview of Ackeem Duggan’s journey, as he seeks to continue his successful path to independence and community involvement. We will explore how those who supported him along the way made a difference and how he gained the confidence to seize opportunities, or to create them where they did not exist.

We will share statements from his employers and others on the importance of recruiting, hiring, and maintaining a workforce inclusive of those with I/DD. General advocacy efforts and the future of employment for neurodiverse individuals, in the country and in New York will be discussed. In addition, presenters will touch upon the significance of social determinants of health; how overall physical and mental health and access to care are crucial in order to grow, work, and live a fulfilling life.

Objectives:

- The business case for inclusion of neurodiverse employees in the workforce.
- How can “circle of support” teams advocate in the current state of employment for those with varying abilities, the social determinants of health and their impact on overall wellness.
- A personal journey of employment, independence, community connections, and living a meaningful life.

Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“Creating a Pathway to Employment for the Differently Abled and the Neurodiverse”

Presented by Mike Miller, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Price Chopper / Market 32 Supermarkets, and **Yvonne Clark-Rogers, SPHR**, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Acting on their understanding that true diversity and inclusivity goes beyond racial and gender identities, Price Chopper & Market 32 Supermarkets, shares how they built what has become a pillar program in their DEI arsenal. They walk us through the framework created to carve out a pathway to employment for students and young adults in the differently abled and neurodiverse community.

They outline the skill building, partnerships and processes established to deliver just part of a community-oriented solution to the issue of disproportionate under-employment. Being a grocery retailer with many operational areas and functions, presents a multitude of opportunities, but also has its challenges. They give examples of success stories and lessons learned.

Objectives:

- How to identify and leverage quality community partnerships to drive your outcomes.
- What parts of the hiring process you should customize for this talent pool.
- How a well-designed employment pathway program benefits the participant and the organization.



Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“Moving Forward with Board Diversity: Readiness, Recruitment & Onboarding”

Presented by Jeanne Allen, Consultant-Master Trainer, Facilitator & Consultant, Jeanne Allen Training, and **Johnathan Meagher-Zayas**, Director, Community Engagement, Villa of Hope

What does board commitment to equity/diversity/inclusion look like at this moment in time? This workshop explores 3 key elements:

1. Board readiness: Bringing in new people won't change anything if the board isn't ready to listen and change. What questions can boards ask to invite meaningful self-assessment and change?
2. Recruiting: Boards generally spend minimal time on recruitment and lack good systems to build pipelines. Let's examine good recruitment practices and apply to a DEI lens.
3. Onboarding: From the first hello to the first few meetings, dissect which intentional actions create a pathway for new members to become a meaningful part of the board.

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Objectives:

- Discuss ways to integrate board assessment into your board recruitment and DEI strategy.
- Explore recruitment tips from cultivation to extending an invitation to join.
- Identify intentional actions during board onboarding that build your board's DEI goals.



Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“Driving the Change: A Preview of AHRC Nassau's Journey to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion”

Presented by **Dr. Barry Donowitz, Ph.D.**, Associate Executive Director, AHRC Nassau; **Shaun Weathers**, Senior Director, AHRC Nassau; **Dr. Hassan Abdulhaqq, Ph.D.**, HR Director, AHRC Nassau; **Bridget Cariello**, Assistant Director, Projects, AHRC Nassau

At AHRC Nassau, we are grounded in person-centered philosophy and dedicated to putting people first. Learn about our organizational goal to create an open transparent organization where diversity is acknowledged and honored—ultimately, creating a greater sense of belonging, for the workforce and people we support, now and into the future. Join us as we seek to ignite a movement and drive greater social change.

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Objectives:

- Explore AHRC's DEI journey over the past 6 years.

- Deep dive into AHRC's best practices, strategies and activities including language barriers and digital access.
- Learn about AHRC's Self-Advocate leadership and DEI at the organization. Meet one of the DEI Advocacy Ambassadors and examine the evolution of our work with a DEI Consultant and the evolution of our May 18 DEI Conference.
- Learn more about the call for action to join us post conference as we move into the next phase of DEI work through data, a Provider Tool kit (designed to mentor others), and a DEI Advisory for change. Together, we will explore where we are headed organizationally and systemically as we move to drive this movement for powerful social change.



Breakout Session

11:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“Access, Equity, and Inclusion: Sharing Best Practices in Organizational Transformation”

Presented by Ariel Simms, Esq., CEO, RespectAbility

ASL is available for this session.

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are members of various diverse and marginalized communities, including communities of color and the LGBTQIA+ community. Yet, in our work, we don't always have a good understanding of how these identities may intersect and change an individual's life experience. In this session, the presenter will highlight the importance of intersectional approaches and how to shift our thinking from diversity-only to ensuring meaningful access, equity, and inclusion.

If we want our advocacy and services to be accessible and inclusive of an incredibly diverse I/DD community, we need to share information, create services, and host events that are welcoming to all. We also need to be equitable. This means working with and prioritizing the needs of underserved and marginalized communities. This includes communities of color, refugees, immigrants, the LGBTQIA+ community, religious minorities, older adults, and those who communicate in languages other than English.

Organizations don't always know where to start. In other cases, they're not sure how to take their efforts to the next level. Drawing on a variety of best practices, the presenter will share practical strategies for organizations to start and grow their access, equity, and inclusion work. The presenter will also discuss strategic planning as a way for organizations to move toward transformational change, inside and out. Throughout the workshop, attendees will be encouraged to share experiences with equity work in their communities and within their own organizations to ensure the material presented is highly relevant and timely.

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Objectives:

- Explain the importance of intersectionality and shifting from diversity-only to a broader approach of ensuring access, equity, and inclusion.
- Describe at least 3 practical strategies for improving access, equity, and inclusion.
- Identify at least 3 resources to support their access, equity, and inclusion work, including strategic planning.



Combined Breakout Session

11:05 - 11:30 a.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“DEI Advocacy Ambassadors: Self-Advocates Leading the Way”

Presented by Coleen Mackin, Statewide Advisor, Immediate Past President, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State, and **Colleen Tapia**, DEI Advocacy Ambassadors Advisor, QI Administrator, AHRC Nassau

At AHRC Nassau, we are grounded in person-centered philosophy and dedicated to putting people first. This workshop will highlight the many ways that AHRC Nassau partnered to learn from self-advocate leadership and increase DEI both internally and system wide with Human Services. This session will also present the varied pathways that self-advocate teams have taken to share information, experiences, and methods that not only strengthen the ambassador cohort but the agency and beyond.

Objectives:

- How self-advocate leaders at AHRC Nassau are sharing information on respectful interactions with self-advocacy councils, board members and staff.
- Leading organizational initiatives to increase DEI at AHRC Nassau.
- Empowering a team of DEI Advocacy Ambassadors to develop an interest survey, advisory, and with “A Self-advocates Guide to DEI,” handbook and an accompanying video.
- Sharing these tools with other self-advocates as a resource for creating more inclusive self-advocacy groups.

11:30 - 11:55 a.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“TechKnowledgeMe: Learning How Technology Can Help You Find Your Voice”

Presented by Michael Rogers, Regional Organizer, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State and **Sophia Roberts**, Regional Coordinator/Senior Management, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State

Throughout the past couple of years, video conferencing has become a major part of our society. People with developmental disabilities in particular have benefited from virtual meetings. Meeting in this way there is no need to worry about transportation, planning a trip, or getting ready to leave: people just click a link and start to communicate. We have seen people gather on a daily basis to discuss topics like racial equity, social justice, the meaning of disability itself, and the Civil Rights Movement as a whole, just to name a few. For this reason, we were very excited to be involved in a groundbreaking project.

In this presentation, we will share an innovative new series of videos entitled “TechKnowledgeMe: Learning How Technology Can Help You Find Your Voice.” The main purpose of the videos are to help those who have never connected through video conferencing get comfortable with the idea of virtual meetings and use the various platforms to express their advocacy. Conference attendees will get a brief overview of the project and view the videos. Since we want the videos to be used by Direct Support Professionals, Self-Advocacy Leaders and anyone who knows a person with a developmental disability that wants to connect, we will show participants how they might access the material and encourage using the videos as a permanent resource for their group or organization.

Objectives:

- What is videoconferencing?
- How to join a video conference.
- Videoconferencing iquette.
- Managing your links.
- Virtual self-advocacy.

Lunch

12:05 - 12:20 p.m.

While enjoying lunch, hear the latest from lawmakers.

Keynote Session

12:20 - 1:50 p.m.

“Social Innovation, the Transformational Power of Lived Experiences and the Diversity of Thought”

Presented by Atif Choudhury, CEO and Co-Founder, Diversity and Ability, and **Stanford J. Perry**, Conference Chair and CEO, AHRC Nassau

ASL is available for this session.

Inclusive settings don't just happen. They're the result of anticipatory strategic approaches that foster well-being, encourage psychological safety and ultimately cultivate a culture that celebrates diversity of thought and experience. In an interview with AHRC Nassau CEO and DEI Conference Chair Stanford Perry, international social entrepreneur Atif Choudhury will present strategies for leaders and allies to create authentic outcomes. Through case studies and lived experience, Choudhury will explain how to create a foundation of anticipatory welcomes and proactive acknowledgment of intersectionality, creating an environment that upholds accountability and enables real social action.

Objectives:

- Evaluate where your organization is at on the journey to an inclusive culture.
- Respond to the difference between diversity and inclusion.
- Facilitate an anticipatory welcome and proactive acknowledgment of intersectionality.

Plenary Session [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

2:00 p.m. - 2:50 p.m.

“Picking The Lock; How Access To The American Dream Is A Test In Fortitude”

Presented by Alonzo Kelly, Principal, Kelly Leadership Group

ASL is available for this session.

America is indeed the land of opportunity designed with a unique set of rules and systems. As with all complex systems, there requires a great bit of stamina, endurance, fortitude, and luck. For some, access to education, healthcare, and other basic human rights requires the ability to find and achieve through loopholes and courtrooms. This discussion will highlight how the most vulnerable in our communities have been forced to achieve through tactics rather than exercising their “freedoms.”

Objectives:

- History of access by racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- History of access by those with disabilities.
- Actions we can all take to address access issues by those in our communities.



Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

“Their Lived Experience, A Train-The-Trainer Presentation About Blended Identities and Disability Bias”

Presented by Erica Dennison, Special Projects and THINK+change Manager, The Arc of Aurora

The lived experience of those with disabilities who have blended identities varies. But, unfortunately, one in three people shows an unconscious bias against those with a disability, higher than levels of bias based on gender or race (Disability: A Research Study on Unconscious Bias. ENEI 2014, www.enei.org). What might that data intimately translate to as a person with a disability or family member who has lived that experience?

The Arc of Aurora’s training and education program, THINK+change, journeyed into people’s lives with disabilities who have harmonized self-identities and filmed their perspectives concerning race, disability, and bias. That voyage produced two multi-part, mini-documentary storytelling TALKS series titled Breaking the Barrier of Disability Bias and The Intersection of Race and Disability. To date, those series combined have had nearly 10,000 video impressions worldwide.

To help promote a better understanding of living with blended identities, this presentation will introduce video clips of each TALKS series, and attendees will discover, and be provided a no-cost Train-The-Trainer guide about race, disability, and bias. The guide will provide step-by-step instructions, carefully chosen questions, suggested answers, and TALKS video web links for even the greenest trainer to facilitate a discussion within their organization. The guide can be used at a work retreat, as an icebreaker, new hire orientation, or as part of overall employee training because its curriculum will allow it to be used in its entirety or cut into shorter pieces. Together we can spur conversation, recognize inclusion, and understand how to be a better ally for those with disabilities and their families.

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Objectives:

- Promote a better understanding of what it’s like having blended identities.
- Support those with disabilities in breaking the barriers of bias.
- Use the no-cost Train-The-Trainer guide as a training resource within their organization.

Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

“Parents and Educators Advocating in Allyship: Navigating the Complex World of Autism Spectrum Disorder for Children and Adolescents of Color”

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

Presented by Danyale Sturdivant, Parent Advocate, MSSW, Owner, Living Autism Out Loud, LLC, and **Alicia Balfrey**, Autism Training Specialist and Diversity Manager, STAR Autism Support

How can families and educators work together to be effective advocates for children and adolescents of color? How can we utilize culturally responsive practices to effectively support students with autism and

developmental disabilities? Providing meaningful support to families and children includes recognizing them as whole people who are products of intersectional identities, including race, gender, cultural background, and ability. In this facilitated discussion involving personal narratives, a parent advocate and special educator will share their perspectives on what constitutes meaningful, culturally competent engagement with caregivers supporting students of color.

Objectives:

- Learn the importance of including caregivers in educational decision-making and recognize that this is not a one-size-fits-all practice.
- Learn the uniqueness of early diagnosis of autism in children of color, and the importance of cultural competence when discussing autism/intellectual developmental disabilities with parents of color.
- Identify culturally responsive strategies for supporting children of color with autism/IDD and their families.

Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Professional Identity and the Direct Support Professional: The Need for a Standard Occupational Classification”

Presented by Joseph Macbeth, President & CEO, National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals

The Standard Occupational Classification System and Direct Support Professionals: Direct support professionals (DSPs) assist people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in realizing their full potential and becoming valued and participating members of their communities. Their work is complex and goes well beyond caregiving, requiring skills including independent problem solving, decision making, behavioral assessment and prevention, medication administration, health and allied health treatment, teaching new skills, crisis prevention and intervention and more. Currently, DSPs are inaccurately classified in labor reports under other positions, such as a nursing assistant (CNA), home health aide (HHA) or personal care assistant (PCA). The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) is leading a nationwide effort to establish a Direct Support Professional (DSP) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) and this session will provide the information on what needs to be done and why it is necessary in order to collect accurate data, trends and projections for the future of services for people with disabilities.

Objectives:

- What is the O*Net System?
- The three primary issues related to why an occupational classification is necessary for the direct support professional occupation.
- The data that supports the statement, “not all direct care occupations are the same.”
- The path forward to secure a standard occupational classification.



Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Achieving Health Equity in the I/DD and Neurodiverse Populations”

Presented by Dr. Stacy Popkin, Psychologist, Director of Behavioral Health, Advantage Care Health Centers, and **Dr. Mary Mulqueen, M.D.**, Primary Care Physician, Advantage Care Health Centers

Health equity is achieved when everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Health inequities are reflected in differences in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, death; severity of disease; and access to treatment. People with disabilities face many challenges to achieving optimal health and accessing high-quality health care. Research indicates one in four, or 61 million adults in the United States, reported a disability. Compared to people without disabilities, people with disabilities have less access to health care, have more depression and anxiety, engage more often in risky health behaviors such as smoking, and are less physically active.

The mission of Advantage Care Health Centers is to provide the highest quality comprehensive primary, dental, mental and behavioral health care services. Advantage Care Health Centers is the leading health center offering a variety of medical, dental, and behavioral health services to all members of the community with a commitment to those who might otherwise be excluded from the health care system, especially those with developmental disabilities. We will share our knowledge to provide attendees with ways to improve health equity for patients with an I/DD or ASD diagnosis.

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Objectives:

- Historical inequality of health services in the I/DD/ASD populations.
- Importance of health equality on improving medical and behavioral health outcomes.
- Strategies for working with individuals with I/DD/ASD in a medical and behavioral health setting.

Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track 3 Org Diversity Systems People Culture Intersectional](#)

“Creating Employment Opportunities for Individuals With Disabilities: Lessons Learned from NYSID”

Presented by Dr. Laura Schultz, Ph.D., Executive Director of Research, Rockefeller Institute of Government; **Maureen O'Brien**, President & CEO, NYSID; and **Michael Seereiter**, President & CEO, New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation

New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. (NYSID), and the NY Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation commissioned the Rockefeller Institute of Government to quantify the economic impacts New York's disability service providers have on New York State. The report explores the scope and scale of the social enterprises run by these organizations. To achieve their goals of creating workforce training and integrated employment opportunities, many disability service providers have created businesses that provide a range of services to public and private customers and generate revenues that enables them to offer additional

services. This presentation will highlight organizations and programs from across New York that have been successful in lowering employment barriers for individuals with disabilities and the broader impacts of these efforts.

Objectives:

- There are a wide range of social enterprises in New York focused on creating training and employment opportunities. for individuals with disabilities
- Partnerships with local employers and nonprofits are critical tools for creating opportunities.
- Creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities promotes economic activity and investment for their local communities.



Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track 3 Org Diversity Systems People Culture Intersectional](#)

“Cultural and Linguistic Competence Learning Community for Developmental Disability Service Providers”

Presented by Tedra Jackson, Grants Manager, Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council; **Robert Sheehan**, CEO, Community Mental Health Association of Michigan; and **Sheryl Weir**, Culture Competence Learning Community Facilitator

As a partner in Michigan’s Community of Practice in Cultural and Linguistic Competence, the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan established a Learning Community for member organizations who wanted to learn and work together to serve the people they serve in a culturally competent manner. Three members of the Michigan CoP will share their model in this session. Their program includes team-based learning from 8-10 different agencies to explore principles, practices and actions organizations must adopt in order to move toward cultural and linguistic competence. Each team identified goals they wanted to achieve with the support of a coach. We invite you to learn about this Learning Community model and explore how it could be done in other states.

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Objectives:

- Learn strategies to explore principles, practices and actions in moving towards cultural competency.
- Understand the Michigan’s Learning Community Model - a team based increasing to cultural competency in DD service provision.
- Envision how the model can be adapted and implemented across the country.

Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track 3 Org Diversity Systems People Culture Intersectional](#)

“Intersectionality: People with ID/DD Who Identify as LGBTQIA+”

Presented by Pamela Boyle, Socialization and Sexuality Specialist, AHRC Nassau; **Shameka Andrew**, Community Outreach Coordinator, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Claire Miller**, Program Without Walls Specialist, FREE; **Rick Banner**, Director Advocacy and PCP, People Inc.; and **Brian Potvin**, Coordinator for Person Centered Approaches, The Arc of Monroe

PrideAbility groups, both regional and statewide, have been meeting and growing throughout New York State for several years. With a mission of reaching the LGBTQIA+ community of people with I/DD, a group that has been too often overlooked and underserved, PrideAbility groups seek to help reduce feelings of isolation and disconnection while also increasing advocacy skills and reducing discrimination. Despite the unprecedented challenges of COVID, the PrideAbility community is continuing to thrive with virtual meetings providing a safe, welcoming space, one that for many people, was previously non-existent. Staff working in the field of ID/DD are increasingly eager for resources to improve their services and supports to people who identify as LGBTQIA+. This presentation will highlight the development and growth of the PrideAbility movement, and how it addresses intersectionality. A blueprint for initiating the development of regional groups will be provided. This presentation will also highlight additional resources and essential information and provide helpful tools for those working with LGBTQIA+ individuals with ID/DD.

Objectives:

- Individuals with ID/DD who identify as LGBTQIA+ are often an unacknowledged, isolated and underserved group.
- PrideAbility groups offer individuals with ID/DD who identify as LGBTQIA+ safe spaces that enable them to develop a positive sense of themselves including pride in their sexual and gender identity.
- Staff working with individuals with ID/DD who identify as LGBTQIA+ are often anxious to learn and benefit from access to information, tools and resources in their efforts to provide respectful, helpful support.



Combined Breakout Session

3:00 - 3:25 p.m. [Track 4 Best Practices](#)

“Why Training Accessibility Matters”

Presented by Tim Hylka, Curriculum Specialist, MORC, and **Shane Potis**, Senior Trainer, MORC
ASL is available for this session.

This presentation will cover the effectiveness of on-demand training in replacing live instructor-led training for onboarding, certification, and retention of staff. Additionally, content will cover the key role that accessibility has in the ability to onboard new staff more effectively. Presenters will demonstrate how their approach supports the independence, dignity, and respect of all learners by addressing and eliminating historical inequities in training opportunities by using technology to support those with learning difficulties and creating more career possibilities for those with disabilities.

Objectives:

- Recognize how ADA compliant trainings benefit, celebrate, and honor the diversity of our learners by providing them equal access and inclusion.
- Learn about the key benefits of using on-demand training for onboarding of staff and decreasing staff turnover and liabilities.
- Identify common methods used to format trainings to meet Web Content Accessibility (WCAG) 2.1 AA guidelines.

3:25 - 3:50 p.m. [Track 4 Best Practices](#)

“Conscious Equity- Leading Beyond Bias”

Presented by Talia Fox, M.Ed., CEO, KUSI Global, Inc.

Conscious Equity encourages teams to actively accept external pressures and become more actively inclusive, but how do these principles actually manifest in an organization’s culture? There are both individual and collective strategies that organization leaders should embrace to incorporate Conscious Equity into their cultures.

Objectives:

- **Emotional intelligence (EI):** Emotional Intelligence remains a fundamental component of Conscious Equity. Members of organizations should turn empathy and compassion into a communication strategy to support inclusive teams. Greater awareness of both the strengths and limitations of individual team members with emotional intelligence drives organizational change through both diverse and high-performing teams. Learn about the key benefits of using on-demand training for onboarding of staff and decreasing staff turnover and liabilities.
- **Systems Thinking:** Conscious Equity functions most effectively when members of an organization embrace a Systems Thinking approach to communication. Learning on principles in metacognition, systems thinking encourages employees to actively think about the multiplying impact of their communication. Together, systems thinking empowers employees to develop strategic intelligence to understand people, culture, and processes related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Cultural Competence:** Employees should be able to understand an organizational culture at both a local and global level. Appreciating how values manifest at both the individual and organization-wide level fosters more authentic and inclusive team practices.



Breakout Session

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“The Power of Collaboration to Drive DEI Change”

Presented by **Dr. Jacqueline Hayes, Ph.D.,** Diversity & Inclusion Program Specialist, New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC); **Dr. Jenean Castillo, Ph.D.,** LEND Program Director / Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD); **Diana Rodriguez, LMSW,** Social Worker/Diversity Coordinator, Rose F. Kennedy Center, UCEDD/LEND; and **Cynthia Stewart,** the Ramirez June Developmental Disabilities Navigator, Office for New Americans, New York State Department of State; and **William Tronsor, Esq.,** staff attorney, Disability Rights New York (DRNY)

The New York Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities (CoP) is a team of representatives from 9 organizations and agencies in the developmental disabilities field New York State. We have found by working together over the last 5 years that collaboration is a powerful tool to advance cultural and linguistic competency work. By convening regularly to share experiences, tools, resources, and best practices, we’re able to address technical challenges involved in implementing the work more quickly. The team also serves as a support and sounding board when more significant challenges arise.

During this session, members of the New York CoP team will share about the initiative and highlight some best practices in cultural and linguistic competence that we have learned over the last 5 years. By providing a perspective from organizations both large and small, we hope that participants will be able to learn some tips and strategies for implementing culturally competent practices at your organization. Our CoP team receives ongoing technical assistance from the Georgetown National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC).

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Objectives:

- A best practice for driving CLC change.
- Tips for implementing CLC at your organization or agency.
- CLC resources that are available in New York.



Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 1 Race/Racism/Anti-racism](#)

“Appreciating the Lived Realities of Black Young Adults with I/DD: Parents’ Voices”

Presented by Dr. Keith A. Alford, Ph.D., Dean and Professor; University at Buffalo, School of Social Work; **Lisa Dunn Alford**, Executive Director, ACR Health; **Charles W. Bickley**, Instructor 3, East Central Regional Hospital; **Felicia Black**, Therapist; **Carol D. Charles**, Business Teacher, Nottingham High School; and **Merrill Charles**, Associate Professor at SUNY Morrisville.

Our society is ever-evolving in spaces associated with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). The pandemic of Covid-19 has taught us that issues of racial equity (or inequity as some would put it) and racial trauma are far greater than we imagined in American society. The last two years have forced us to rethink our understanding of racial co-existence. Specifically, we have been forced to think about our interpersonal interactions in transformative ways.

For Black parents, in general, of young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), there is a desire for greater appreciation for both the challenges and strengths of the Black experience. This is also true for the uniqueness of Black children/young adults with I/DD. Eradicating racism requires us to listen to the voices of those who have had to be creative in navigating human service systems and other entities so that their young adult children are not judged by pejorative standards.

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Objectives:

- Appreciation of racial understanding relative to the Black experience for young adults with I/DD and their families of origin.
- Intentionality of purpose aligned with racial equity in service provision for Black young adults with I/DD and their families of origin.
- Application of guiding principles and a strengths-based perspective germane to the Black experience for young adults with I/DD and their families.



Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 2 Disparities/Barriers in Society](#)

“Racial Disparities in Community Living: Developing Resources for Self-advocates”

Presented by Gregory Robinson, Policy Analyst, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, and **Zoe Gross**, Director of Advocacy, Autistic Self Advocacy Network

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network developed a series of toolkits for self-advocates that provides background on the impact of racial disparities across six domains of community living: Emergency Management, Employment, Long-Term Services and Supports/Home and Community Based Services, Criminal Legal Interactions, Housing, and Health Care. We additionally provide policy proposals for addressing these impacts and guides for additional discussion on these topics. We will discuss the objectives of our toolkits as well as our process for developing a set of resources that are accessible and relevant to self-advocates with a range of backgrounds and familiarity with the subject matter.

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Objectives:

- Racial inequities impact community living in a wide range of substantial ways across many domains.
- While racial disparities and equity are complex, challenging topics, we can and should develop accessible and useful racial equity resources for audiences with I/DD.
- Important considerations for developing accessible resources about racial equity and disparities.



Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 2 Disparities/Barriers in Society](#)

“The Direct Support Workforce and COVID-19: Racial Disparities and Important Policy and Practice Strategies”

Presented by Dr. Amy Hewitt, Ph.D., Director and Professor, University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration

ASL is available for this session.

There is a critical shortage of direct support professionals (DSPs) who support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to live in the community. This shortage has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Research data will be shared about how the pandemic effected DSPs and various disparities that exist within the direct support workforce. For the vast majority of DSPs, staying home during the COVID-19 pandemic was not an option.

DSPs support people in a variety of areas (e.g., employment, daily living, relationships, and health) and their work involves a high level of skill. However, the high-skilled and varied nature of this work is not reflected in DSPs’ wages, which remain low. A high level of responsibility for providing supports to people with significant support needs, low wages and life circumstances have contributed to the high turnover and vacancy rates.

The pandemic makes work more difficult for DSPs and it increases their risk of getting COVID-19. Over half of DSPs have supported someone with I/DD who tested positive for COVID-19. Most DSPs are working more hours than usual and an overwhelming majority of DSPs have experienced health and

wellness challenges during the pandemic. There are clear disparities between DSPs who are white and DSPs who are black. Organizational culture and DSP support are critical to ensuring equity and improving retention. Significant change in approaches to policy advocacy is necessary.

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Objectives:

- Identify disparities in wages, hours work and other key areas for black DSPs compared to white DSPs.
- Identify at least three organization strategies to improve direct support workforce turnover and vacancy rates.
- Identify at least three policy strategies to address the serious challenges faced by the direct support workforce.



Combined Breakout Session

4:10 - 4:35 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Adapting Our Services to Meet the Needs of Our Diverse Community”

Presented by Bradford R. Watts, Community Relations and DEI Manager, People Inc., and **Pam Bos Kefi**, Associate Vice President, People Inc., Executive Director, Deaf Access Services

All of us are community engagement change agents no matter our role or title. We must always engage in breaking down barriers. The process of engagement builds relationships that create opportunity through diversity, equity and inclusion. Barriers to equity are not only systemic, but can be personal and individual.

The mortar that builds barriers is ingrained in systemic racism, and is stimulated when we allow differences to be marginalized by economics, culture, ability, beliefs, lifestyle, color, sexuality, regionalism, language and other so-called “non-traditional” standards of society. The result is inequity in housing, education, health, and other rights to live in an accepting society despite our differences.

This workshop will present information about barriers that exist in mainstream traditional service delivery. We will challenge many of the accepted norms that we have all been trained in. The goal is to build upon the foundations of service delivery and move towards a more human and community-centered approach that focuses on all aspects of our diverse community.

The workshop will combine lecture and group interaction through case studies. Topics will include:

- Explore Cultural and Linguistic diversity
- Educational information about bias
- Strategies for individuals to develop personal capacity
- Organizational adaptive strategies to service delivery

Objectives:

- Increased personal empowerment through better understanding of roles as change agents within organizations and communities.
- Strategies for organizational change.
- Awareness of community engagement strategies.

4:35 - 5 p.m. [Track 2 Disparities Barriers in Society](#)

“Living the Life of an Anti-Racist Organization”

Presented by Matt Seubert, Associate Executive Director for Communication, Development and Equity, AccessCNY, and **Randi Bregman**, Co-Executive Director, Vera House

AccessCNY has taken on being an anti-racist organization since 2020. In this session, AccessCNY executive leadership will share their experiences and process for moving the organization in a direction where all staff, those served and board leadership are actively working to ensure not just equality, but equity for all. This session will also include staff from Vera House who is working with AccessCNY on becoming anti-racist organization.

Objectives:

- How to create structure to begin anti-racism work.
- How to create a culture where experiences are openly shared and managed through accountability and education.
- It's OK to mess up! We'll share missteps and how we grew from those instances.

Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“Ableism, Employment and Diversity”

Presented by John Robinson, CEO, Our Ability, Inc.

Our Ability facilitates communications designed to promote a disability inclusive culture that goes beyond compliance. Our customized, holistic approach guides employers through education, exposure and discussion, giving management, HR, co-workers - and even outside stakeholders and clients - the foundational skills to reduce the impact of bias, increase retention and lower turnover.

Having lived as or with people with disabilities ourselves, Our Ability leverages our firsthand knowledge in order to implement positive strategies that reduce fears and raise awareness. Underscoring that a deep understanding is key to any successfully inclusive workplace culture, we emphasize reality and straightforward, practical advice. Together, we'll also explore real-life scenarios through our exclusive series of disability awareness videos, created by people with disabilities.

Objectives:

- Reducing barriers, increasing sensitivity and promoting tolerance.
- Ensuring open dialogue and mutual respect.
- Instilling inclusivity language and communication skills.

Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“D.A.R.E.: Diversity, Ableism, Race and Equality”

Presented by Tony Phillips, President, Board of Directors, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Tim Elliot**, NYC Grassroots Field Assistant, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Jessica Campbell**, Long Island Grassroots Field Assistant, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Uly Ramos**, NYC Grassroots Field Assistant, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Chester Finn**, Self-Advocate and Special Assistant, New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities; **Cynthia Gilchrist**, Regional Coordinator, Senior Management, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; **Sophia Roberts**, Regional Coordinator, Senior Management, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State; and **Evan Yankey**, Assistant Coordinator and Policy Advisor, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State

Community is not a community unless we are all included. Everyone’s voice should be heard. Self-advocates from the Self-Advocacy Association of New York State will talk about race, gender and disability.

Objectives:

- People will be educated that Diversity is a Good Thing
- Show them that we are whole people and have many aspects of ourselves
- How to challenge bias.



Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 3 Organizational Diversity – Systems/People/Culture/Intersectionality](#)

“How AHRC Nassau and Its Affiliates Use Data to Promote DEI and SDOH Outcomes”

Presented by Winston Thompson, Assistant Director of Data Analytics, AHRC Nassau, and **Doug Golub**, President, MediSked, LLC

AHRC Nassau has always believed that all people must be treated with dignity and respect with a commitment to diversity and cultural sensitivity that is essential. Using data from long-time partner, MediSked, AHRC Nassau will share their findings over a ten-year period, examining changes in race, ethnicity, and service/program delivery, down to the zip code level. The presenters will share where equity measures are improving and areas that should be targeted for diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

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Objectives:

- If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it. Collecting accurate race and ethnicity data can be difficult. Presenters will share best practices for how to collect and analyze data to identify opportunities for improvement to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- AHRC Nassau is CQL accredited and we will examine aggregated CQL Personal Outcome Measures to assess outcomes.
- Discuss improvements that can be made in outreach and supports to a more diverse audience.



Breakout Session

4:10 – 5:10 p.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“Intersectional Identities and Barriers to Postsecondary Opportunities for Students with I/DD”

Presented by Beth Myers, Ph.D., Executive Director, Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education, Syracuse University; **Katie Ducett**, Doctoral Candidate, Syracuse University; **Thomas Wilson**, Inclusive Higher Education Student, InclusiveU, Syracuse University; **Majolyn Nunez**, Inclusive Higher Education Student, Melissa Riggio Program, CUNY;

Mackenzie Gleason, Inclusive Higher Education Student, InclusiveU, Syracuse University

This panel presentation will focus on the intersectional identities that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) bring in the transition to postsecondary opportunities and how those identities are reflected in inclusive higher education. Historically, individuals with I/DD have been excluded from full and equitable participation in aspects of society, e.g., education, employment, community living, housing, government.

Individuals with I/DD experience significantly less positive education and employment outcomes than students with other types of disabilities (Newman al., 2010; Griffin al., 2010) and face more barriers than peers with other disabilities in independent living and community participation (Newman al., 2010). Uniquely and racially diverse individuals with I/DD face multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and experience poorer post-school outcomes than their white peers (NLTS-2; Lipscomb, 2018).

This panel, which will include scholars and students with I/DD enrolled in college, will discuss: (1) the increase in inclusive postsecondary transition programs in NYS and the US; (2) access to inclusive postsecondary opportunities for students with IDD and additional minoritized identities; (3) barriers to postsecondary transition opportunities for students with I/DD; (4) opportunities for improved access and inclusion. Anti-racist practices must be purposefully integrated into efforts supporting students with I/DD as they transition from K-12 schools into postsecondary opportunities. Understanding race, ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and other minoritized identities as they intersect with I/DD is critically important in supporting access for people at all levels. Understanding systemic and personal barriers can increase efforts towards more inclusive spaces for all.

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Objectives:

- Inclusive postsecondary transition programs in higher education are increasing in NYS and across the US, but still exist at fewer than 5% of institutes of higher ed across the nation.
- Students with I/DD from minority groups attend postsecondary transition programs less often than their white peers.
- There are many barriers to postsecondary transition opportunities for students with I/DD, including admission criteria, cost, availability, payment options, c. as well as opportunities for improvement within the field.



Combined Breakout Session

4:10 - 4:35 p.m.: [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“The Power of a PAL”

Presented by **Sarah Van Mackelbergh**, Supervisor, Volunteer Services, St.Amant; **Melanie Forbes**, Training and Development Facilitator, Corporate Education, St.Amant; and **Kristina Kircher**, Manager, Corporate Education, St.Amant

People with IDD are more likely to be surrounded by people in paid positions and experience increased levels of loneliness. Isolation, systemic barriers and a lack of education and training all perpetuate these circumstances. COVID 19 has highlighted the effects of isolation, as many of us have dealt with restrictions. However, these issues are not new to the disability community, and are a daily reality that many have lived with for years.

St.Amant, a Canadian organization, provides multidisciplinary supports for children and adults with IDD and/or autism. As a CQL Accredited organization, we are committed to removing barriers, and building community connections for the people we support. We have developed the PALS Program (Partnership through Activities, Learning and Sharing) that aims to combat isolation and loneliness by pairing people with a PAL, and creating opportunities for their natural friendship to flourish. This is achieved by fostering a culture that believes in and fully supports person-centered approaches, meaningful connections, advocacy, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. We go even further by providing educational opportunities to broader members of our communities by presenting our own conference, Beyond Limits: Canada’s Conference for Diversity and Accessibility.

Join Sarah, Melanie, and Kristina from St.Amant as we highlight how to implement a PALS Program, share key features of the training offered to staff and volunteers, and how we have expanded to the broader community. You’ll hear from disability self-advocates as they share their experience being part of the PALS Program, and hear how the St.Amant Research Centre supports the training and other corporate initiatives. At St.Amant, we know that people should not be confined within bubbles of access. The PALS Program, our training, corporate initiatives, and expansion to the broader community aims to build connections and allies so that doors can be opened, and barriers removed.

Objectives:

- Identify key steps to implementing the PALS Program.
- Highlight the types of research required to support training needed to create a system that is barrier free.
- Learn how to expand your practices beyond the walls of an organization.

4:35 - 5 p.m. [Track: 4 Best Practices](#)

“The Epidemic of Loneliness and the Effects on Health and Healing”

Presented by Kym Juntti, Director of Training, MORC, Inc.

Loneliness is not a formal diagnosis or specific disability. However, it is a common condition co-existing with disabilities and it can have potentially serious medical and emotional implications. Loneliness is a universal human emotion, yet it is both complex and unique to each individual. What we do know is that studies have shown that loneliness is on the rise and made worse by the pandemic and workforce crisis.

In order to provide supports that lead to meaningful positive relationships and community we must assess and address levels of loneliness experienced by those we serve and those who serve. Join this conversation on what research is telling us, how we can assess and address the levels of loneliness experienced, and discuss strategies to reduce levels of loneliness.

Objectives:

- Utilize assessment questions to determine levels of loneliness
- Identify five health conditions exacerbated by loneliness.
- Name six strategies to decrease the effects of loneliness.

Closing Plenary Session - Federal Panel

5:20 - 5:55 p.m.

“Forging the Path Ahead”

Presented by Scott Robertson, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and **Shannon Hills**, Regional Administrator, Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement (OPOLE), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

ASL is available for this session.

Federal officials will connect on issues impacting the disability community, from inclusion to employment. Panelist Dr. Scott Robertson will discuss key efforts to help advance neurodiversity at work and drive gainful employment for job seekers with disabilities who come from diverse backgrounds, i.e., how the lived experience of disability can intersect with race, hnic status, gender, sexual orientation, and other key life aspects. Panelist Shannon Hills will share insight on DEI initiatives at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, specifically how CMS achieves its mission and realizes its vision.

Closing Remarks

5:55 – 6 p.m.

Presented by Stanford J. Perry, Conference Chair and CEO, AHRC Nassau

Conference Chair and AHRC Nassau CEO Stanford Perry will share closing remarks, wrapping up a day of insight and learning focused on creating a more inclusive and equitable future.

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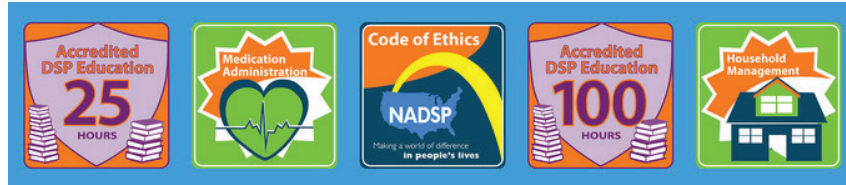
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Advantage Care Federally Qualified Health Center congratulates AHRC Nassau and the National Arc on launching this pivotal Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Conference and celebrates in the opportunities for growth.

Our best to all the distinguished speakers including Advantage Care's Dr. Mary Mulqueen and Dr. Stacy Popkin-Zang.

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*Thank you to the Advisory Council
for their insight, support and dedication to increasing understanding and awareness
of meaningful social justice issues at the intersection of disability and race.*

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Public Relations Specialist, Suffolk County Department of Public Works

Keith Alford

Dean/Professor, University at Buffalo School of Social Work

Shameka Andrews

Community Outreach Coordinator, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State

Louis Chesney

DEI/Neurodiversity Advocate & Researcher

Angela Epps Castillo

Georgetown Center for Cultural Competence

Chester Finn

Self-Advocate and Family Advocate, New York State Office for People with Developmental
Disabilities

Michelle Flood

SANYS Administrator, Self-Advocacy Association of New York State

Marlia Fontaine-Weisse

Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, Care Design New York/Partners Health Plan

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CEO, The Arc New York

Cynthia Gilchrist

Capital District Coordinator, DEI Lead Self-Advocacy Association of New York State

Jackie Hayes

Program Planner for DEI Community and Systems Change Committee, NYS Developmental
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Tedra Jackson

DDPC Council Lead, Michigan Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council

Alonzo Kelly

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Michael Miller

Vice President of Human Resources, Price Chopper/Market 32

Shelly OKure

Statewide Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, New York State Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

Maria Pinkleton

Public Relations Director, Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

John Raffaele

Director of Training, National Association of Direct Support Professionals

Michael Seerierter

CEO, New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation

Ariel Simms

Director, AEI, The Arc of the United States

Danyale Sturdivant

Speak-Intersectionality-Race-Educ. Equity Parent Advocate, Albany, DDP, MSSW, LCSW

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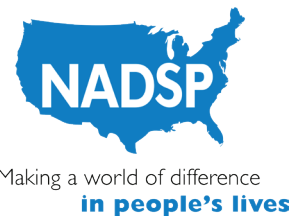
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