



Event Speakers & Entertainment



Keynote Speaker: Catarina Rivera, MSEd, MPH, CPACC

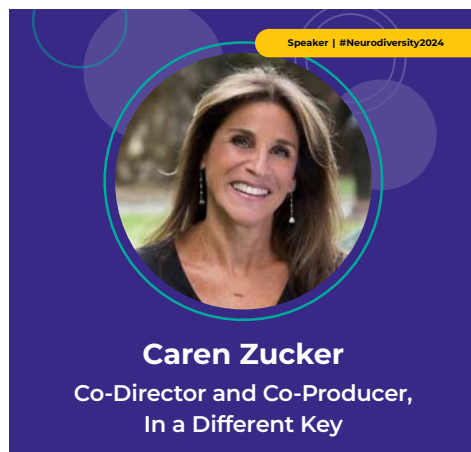
Catarina Rivera, MSEd, MPH, CPACC, is a disability public speaker, content creator, and diversity, equity and inclusion consultant with over 14 years of experience in the public sector. Catarina works with companies to improve disability awareness, inclusion and accessibility. She is the founder of Blindish Latina, a platform-smashing disability stigmas through storytelling and advocacy. Catarina has worn hearing aids from a young age and was diagnosed with a progressive vision disability at 17 years old. She is a member of the global KeyNote Women Speakers Directory. She has been featured on Nasdaq.com, ABC News Live, POPSUGAR and Telemundo. She was named one of LinkedIn's Top Voices in Disability Advocacy, and is a 2024 Webby Awards Nominee. Catarina is a TEDx speaker, and her talk "Creating Inclusive Workplaces for All" has over 44,000 views to date.

Speaker: John Donovan

John Donovan is a veteran network correspondent for ABC, CNN and PBS, and host and moderator of Open to Debate, which is heard on public radio and by podcast. During his journalism career, in addition to anchoring such broadcasts as ABC's Nightline, John served as chief White House correspondent, and held multiyear postings in London, Moscow, Jerusalem and Amman, Jordan. The winner of four Emmys and the Overseas Press Club Award, he became interested in autism's impact on families upon meeting his wife, Ranit Mishori, MD, whose brother is profoundly affected by autism. They have two children and live in Washington, D.C.



Speaker: Caren Zucker



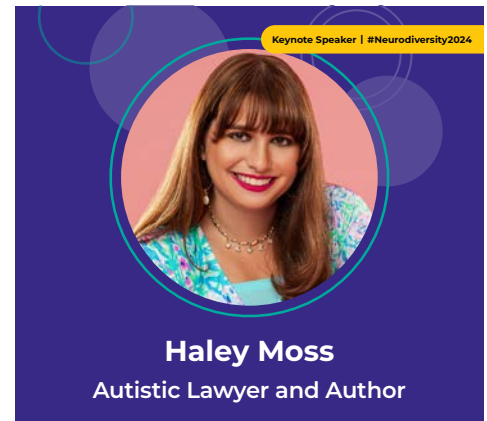
Caren Zucker is a director, producer and journalist who has told stories for more than 25 years across a broad range of subjects. As a producer for ABC's World News and Nightline, working alongside Peter Jennings, Charlie Gibson, and Diane Sawyer, she covered economic summits, presidential campaigns, social trends and the Olympic Games. She was honored for her role in ABC's coverage of 9/11 with two of television's most prestigious prizes, the Peabody and the Alfred L. DuPont awards. Zucker was the producer and co-writer of PBS NewsHour series Autism Now. Her oldest son Mickey's autism diagnosis inspired a new direction in her reporting—to bring a better understanding of autism's realities. Zucker and her husband, senior coordinating producer John McGuinness, have three children and reside in New Jersey.



Event Speakers & Entertainment (continued)

Keynote Speaker: Haley Moss

Haley Moss was diagnosed with autism at 3 years old. Her parents were told she might never finish high school or get her driver's license. Today, Haley is a lawyer, neurodiversity expert, keynote speaker and educator, and the author of several books that guide neurodivergent individuals through professional and personal challenges. She is a consultant to top corporations and nonprofit organizations that seek her guidance in creating an inclusive workplace, and a sought-after commentator on disability rights and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Her articles have appeared in outlets including The Washington Post, Teen Vogue, GQ, Bustle, Fast Company, Law360 Pulse and the ABA Journal, published by the American Bar Association.



Speaker: Cody Clark

Cody Clark is a professional magician and autistic self-advocate from Louisville, Kentucky. He places his magic within real life's magic moments, giving his shows a personal and relatable touch. He also shares the honest ins and outs of being autistic, both in his shows and in his "magi-talks" that he gives to educators, students and corporations. Cody's biggest honors are sharing the Louisville Palace Theatre stage with magic legend Lance Burton, receiving the Society of American Magicians' Rising Star of Magic award, and being given the title of Kentucky Colonial by his home state for making an impact on Kentucky's arts and social advocacy scenes. This is Cody's second time presenting at Kennedy Krieger's Neurodiversity at Work conference.

Plenary Speaker: Rick Guidotti

Rick is the founder and director of POSITIVE EXPOSURE, a non-profit organization that promotes a more inclusive world through award-winning photography, film and educational programs. POSITIVE EXPOSURE has significantly impacted the fields of human rights, mental health, medicine and education by providing new opportunities to see each individual as a human being and valued member of our society.



Event Speakers & Entertainment (continued)



Plenary Session: Neurodiversity at the Central Intelligence Agency

A professional panel discussion featuring neurodivergent officers employed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sharing their extensive insights and experiences gained over many years within this distinct organization. During the session, the panelists will reflect on both the obstacles and successes encountered throughout their careers, detailing their strategies for overcoming challenges, navigating organizational transitions, promoting inclusivity and leveraging their distinctive viewpoints to enhance the Agency's overall objectives.



Break Out Session Speakers



Jeffrey Abel

Vice President, Programs
Special Olympics Maryland

Jeff Abel is Vice President, Programs for Special Olympics Maryland. In this role, he works with a dedicated team implementing inclusive Special Olympics Programming in Community Sports, School Programs, Inclusive Health & Fitness, and Volunteer Management.



Kristin Austin

Vice President of I.D.E.A.S. (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access)
Rewriting the Code

Dr. Austin serves as Vice-President of I.D.E.A.S. (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) at Rewriting the Code, Inc., a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to disrupting and dismantling racial and gender inequality in the technology sector by equipping and empowering college women in tech. Along with her professional work, she engages in speaking, teaching and pushing visibility for many inclusion topics, especially those related to neurodiversity. Holding identities of ADHD and learning disabled, she loves to create and hold space for neuro-spicy brains. She holds a Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership & Administration, and a Professional Certificate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Andrew Begel

Associate Professor
Carnegie Mellon University

Andrew Begel is an Associate Professor in the Software and Societal Systems Department at Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to this, he spent over 16 years as a Principal Researcher at Microsoft Research. Andrew's goal is to create inclusive workplaces where all people, especially those with disabilities and the neurodivergent, can be successful without discrimination. His recent work has helped people on the autism spectrum gain employment and facilitate social interaction, helped blind software developers collaborate with their sighted colleagues, and used affective computing and biometrics to better understand how software developers do their work.



Shea Belsky

Senior Software Engineer II
HubSpot

Shea Belsky is an autistic self-advocate and changemaker. He is a Senior Software Engineer II at HubSpot, and the former Chief Technology Officer of Mentra, an inclusive hiring platform connecting neurodivergent jobseekers with gainful employment opportunities. Shea brings several unique perspectives to the discussion on neurodiversity: He is the manager of neurodivergent & neurotypical employees, has reported to neurodivergent & neurotypical managers, and has advocated for the needs and wellbeing of all who seek to be heard and understood in the workplace. Shea has championed neurodiversity for organizations like Novartis, the Organization for Autism Research, Confluent, Northeastern University, among many others. He's excited to share his perspectives on neurodiversity and how to be a meaningful ally and advocate!



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Jaclyn Benigno

Research Associate

MU Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment

Jaclyn Benigno is a Senior Research Associate at the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment. She is currently the lead instructor and coordinator for the STRIVE Program. Through this program, she works with adults with autism on career development. She previously worked as a Site Facilitator for the CSBC Center and focused on training and technical support for teachers using the Social Competence Intervention. She has her master's degree in Special Education with an Emphasis in Autism.



Courtney Bosnick

Master's student

Towson University

Courtney Bosnick is a graduate student research assistant currently pursuing a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology at Towson University. She enjoys engaging with her clients at the Towson University Speech and Language Center, and aspires to specialize in working with pediatric and adolescent clients diagnosed with autism and other developmental disorders upon completing her degree.



Kyle Britt

Workforce Development Project Coordinator

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

Kyle Britt is the Workforce Development Coordinator for the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma. He is a certified autism specialist with a master's degree in human resources. Kyle has many years of experience working with and advocating for individuals with disabilities. Kyle is passionate about serving the community and providing educational opportunities to promote inclusivity and advocacy for people on the autism spectrum.



Nicholas Burton

Principal

N. Burton Consulting

Nick Burton is the principal at N. Burton Consulting. He has over 20+ years working in the field of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) focusing on programmatic design, implementation, and evaluation. Nick is committed to equity, equality, social justice, and ensuring that people have what they need to be their most successful. Nick lives in the great city of Baltimore, Maryland with his husband Thomas and our two cats Gary and Lois.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Emily Calhoun

Co-founder
Neurodiversity Consulting

Emily Calhoun is a passionate educator with a focus on the science of learning and understanding the autistic brain. She focused on continued learning and work in developing executive functioning and social skills curricula while teaching and working as an Executive Function Coach.



Katie Cappelen, MS

Business Development Manager
Els for Autism Foundation®

Katie Cappelen, MS, is the Business Development Manager for U Can Employ™, powered by Els for Autism®. Katie Cappelen has a master's degree in Sport Management from Florida State University, where she played sports with neurodivergent children and adults.

Katie also has experience as a recruiter and business development specialist throughout a variety of industries. Her focus at Els for Autism is to support companies in their enrollment as U Can Employ (UCE) members, and to help businesses understand how they can foster an autism-inclusive workplace.



Michael John Carley

Neurodiversity and Leadership Advisor
League School of Greater Boston

Michael is an author, school and business consultant, and former executive director in the autism, neurodiversity, mental health, disability and DEI worlds. He runs New York University's Connections Program for Global Students in Autism, and is the current Neurodiversity and Leadership advisor for the League School for Autism.



Briella Baer Chen, PhD

Assistant Professor
Towson University

Briella Baer Chen, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at Towson University. She completed her doctorate in Special Education at the University of Maryland, after working as a senior research assistant at the Interactive Autism Network (IAN) at Kennedy Krieger Institute and completing her master of Health

Science in Mental Health degree at Johns Hopkins University. Her primary area of research is in supporting autistic young adults as they transition from high school to postsecondary employment, education and independent living, with particular emphasis on the ways in which employment systems can better support, accommodate and advocate for autistic employees.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Elina Clavelli
Technical Writer
ASRC Federal

Elina Clavelli, a seasoned technical writer at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center's Space Weather Observations Programs Division, leverages over ten years of expertise in creating comprehensive technical documentation. An alumna of Georgetown University with a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in Technology Management,

Elina specializes in distilling complex concepts into clear, engaging narratives. Her neurodivergence, shaped by ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnoses, enriches her communication style and advocacy efforts. Elina uses her voice to champion the value of diverse cognitive approaches in advancing science and technology, celebrating the strengths that neurodivergent individuals contribute to the workplace and beyond.



Becca Colangelo, EdD
Assistant Director of Meaningful Community Services
Kennedy Krieger Institute

Dr. Becca Colangelo is the assistant director of Meaningful Community Services at Kennedy Krieger Institute. She helps to oversee the Project SEARCH and CORE Foundations programming at Kennedy Krieger. In 2018, Dr. Colangelo completed her doctorate in Educational Leadership from Drexel University. Her research explored the

transitional challenges that families face when adolescents with more severe diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder transition from traditional school settings to placements with adult service agencies. In addition to her role as assistant director, Becca serves as an adjunct faculty member for the University of Maryland and the University of the People.



Loden Coleman, MSW
Assistant Manager of Employment Programs
Els for Autism Foundation®

Loden Coleman, MSW, is the Assistant Manager of Employment Programs at Els for Autism Foundation®. She graduated from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she received her master's degree in social work. Loden has experience utilizing and implementing different evidence-based strategies and therapy modalities across

the lifespan. Loden has prepared clients for paid employment, implemented strategies to attain client goals and provided supported employment for clients throughout the community. In her current role, Loden collaborates with the Associate Director of Adult Services to develop, plan, implement and assess employment programs.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Julia Cosentino-Tich

Communications Manager of Special Projects
Chase Brexton Health Care

Julia is the Communications Manager of Special Projects at Chase Brexton Health Care. She works concurrently with the Institute of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion and the Marketing Departments. In her role, she ensures that both internal and external marketing initiatives, awareness campaigns, videos, policies and communications are inclusive, validating and accessible. Her areas of expertise include LGBTQIA+ education/advocacy, ageism and neurodiversity, with a focus on accommodation and personal choice. She is also a queer and neurodiverse self-advocate. She holds MSW and MSNPL degrees from The University of Pennsylvania. Personal interests include crochet, libraries, Disney and spending time with family.



Tona Craviotto

Program Director, Employment Services
SEEC

Tona Craviotto is the Program Director of Employment Services. He runs a person-centered and evidence-based program aimed at obtaining competitive integrated employment, providing job coaching, employer outreach, and employee retention services to the people SEEC supports. Tona joined the nonprofit world in 2005 after 10 years in the financial-banking field. He worked as a director for three large nonprofits in the DMV area dedicated to supporting the immigrant community, people experiencing homelessness, and returning citizens with long incarceration sentences. He developed and implemented vocational and life skill trainings that uplift people and communities through the power of employment.



Lori Ann D-J.

Director, Office of Acquisition Management in the Directorate of Digital Innovation
Central Intelligence Agency

Lori Ann currently serves as the Director of the Office of Acquisition Management, in the Directorate of Digital Innovation. She has served at CIA for 16 years leading information technology development and Agency acquisitions. Prior to working at CIA, she worked in industry at both Boeing and Toyota Motor Credit Corporation. She has a Bachelor's of Science in Business from Wright State University and a Master's Degree in Management Information Systems from Bowie State University.



Kevin Davis

Principal
EPIC Insurance Brokers & Consultants

Kevin has more than 25 years of experience in benefit sales and consulting. Kevin is known for his diligent service and dedication to being an industry expert. He provides expertise in the areas of benefits compliance, strategic planning, mental health, neurodiversity, holistic wellbeing, employee engagement, culture and communications. He serves on the Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare Education & Wellness Committee. Kevin earned his bachelor's degree from St. Joseph's. An active member in his local community, Kevin is a board member of Habitat for Humanity of the Lehigh Valley and a board member of Neurodiversity Employment Network.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Doug DeHaan, MEd

Director

Hussman Center for Adults with Autism / Towson University

Doug DeHaan is the Director at the Hussman Center for Adults with Autism at Towson University (TU). He is a graduate of the TU Teacher as Leader in Autism (TALA) program. Doug is excited about the opportunities that TU provides for autistic individuals to engage with non-autistic peers via programming, research and day-to-day interactions. Doug has been involved at the Hussman Center since 2014. Outside of this role, Doug enjoys being outdoors and spending time with his wife and two children. He will be leading a new site for the Autism Hiring Program at Towson beginning in 2024.



Jennifer DeLaporte, BCBA

Board-Certified Behavior Analyst

MU Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment

Jennifer DeLaporte is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and has a master's degree in special education. She taught High School in a Behavior Intervention Classroom for students with Autism in Memphis, TN before moving to Columbia, MO. As a BCBA, her goal is to merge the worlds of education and applied behavior analysis to better support individuals with Autism transitioning from high school to adulthood. She currently works at the Thompson Center for Autism, where she is the program coordinator for the Accessing Career Experiences (ACE) program, a nine-month post-secondary employment program for individuals with autism and an intellectual disability.



Anthony DiArcangelo

Neurodiverse Solutions Senior Service Delivery Manager

CAI Neurodiverse Solutions

Tony who self identifies as neurodivergent, has over 26 years of global information technology experience, focusing on software development, quality assurance, project management, service delivery management, and sales. Over the last 10 years, he has been employed by CAI, as a Senior Service Delivery Manager, as part of the CAI Neurodiverse Solutions portfolio and Commercial sector, overseeing the day-to-day operations of various client partnerships. Tony currently resides in Havertown, Pennsylvania, and has been a lifelong resident in and around the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is the proud father of 3 neurodivergent children.



Kathy Dow-Burger

Friedman Director of Neurodiversity & Autism Transition Services in HESP/Clinical Professor
University of Maryland

Kathy Dow-Burger is a Clinical Professor in the University of Maryland Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences (HESP) and a speech-language therapist with over 30 years of experience in the evaluation and treatment of autism and other communication needs across the lifespan. She is the Friedman Director of the Neurodiversity and Autism Transition Services (NATS) program, which includes the 1) Social Interaction Group Network for All (SIGNA) college student program, 2) EFFECT program for college-bound teens, and 3) modified PEERS adolescent and parent social interaction groups. Dow-Burger is also one of the co-organizers of the annual Neurodiversity at Work Research Conference.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Lauren Eaton
Senior Director of Operations
Itineris

Lauren Eaton is a Behavior Analyst and the Senior Operations Director for Itineris, a non-profit that supports adults on the autism spectrum. Outside of Itineris, Lauren is a co-founder of the Clay Hill Public Charter School and on the Board of Directors for Bluebird Education Network. Lauren recently became an Advisory Board member of a collaborative project of the National Science Foundation and Digital Harbor Foundation, and is a founding board member of Sankofa's Choice.



Amelia F.
Intelligence Officer
Central Intelligence Agency

Amelia has served with the federal government for 20 years, and has served in multiple roles with the CIA. She has Master's degrees in International Studies and East Asian History. Amelia is also a certified leadership coach, yoga instructor, and meditation instructor.



Cortney Fish, MSW, BCBA, LBA
Director of Training
University of Missouri Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment

Cortney Fish, MSW, BCBA, LBA, is a Licensed Board-Certified Behavior Analyst who specializes in working with individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Cortney has established and led behavior programs for children of all ages and facilitated social, communication and employment groups for young adults with autism. Currently, Cortney is the Director of the Thompson Center's Training Core, where she's involved in a variety of training initiatives including STRIVE, a program for young adults with autism and Autism Friendly Business. She also conducts trainings for parents, professionals and first responders throughout the state, and coordinates the Thompson Center's national annual conference.



Susan Fitzell, MEd, CSP
Founder & President
Susan Fitzell & Associates

International speaker and author Susan Fitzell, MEd, CSP, has decades of experience working with education and business communities to maximize human potential in the learning & growth space. Diagnosed with neurodivergence alongside her child, Susan understands dyslexia, ADHD, and auditory processing disorder firsthand. She also identifies with many characteristics of autistic adults. Susan's 'lived experience' as neurodivergent uniquely qualifies her as an expert in this field. A recognized authority in learning and collaboration, Susan empowers audiences with practical and positive strategies, focusing on creating learning cultures that enhance organizational competitiveness and employee ROI.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Gil Gershoni
Co-founder
Gershoni Creative

For over 30 years, Gil Gershoni has been keeping brands like Google, Apple, Spotify and Nike ahead of the curve. As his agency, Gershoni Creative, has expanded, Gil realized that his dyslexia had benefits within the creative process that helped his team and clients thrive. Through his advocacy, Gershoni is helping others discover something he's long known:

there's a little bit of magic in dyslexic thinking. In 2017, Gil founded Dyslexic Design Thinking, a program that teaches people how to leverage dyslexic strategies to enhance how they work, think, create and problem-solve.



Noah Glaser, PhD
Assistant Professor
University of Missouri

Noah Glaser is an assistant professor at the University of Missouri's School of Information Science & Learning Technologies and director of the Information Experience Lab. Dr. Glaser earned his PhD in Instructional Design and Technology from the University of Cincinnati. He specializes in design research, focusing on learning interventions through

technologies like VR, video games and AI, particularly for neurodiverse learners. His research incorporates EEG and eye tracking to understand technology interactions. Dr. Glaser has published extensively and actively contributes to academic communities, serving on the AECT Design & Development Division board and planning for the Immersive Learning Research Network.



Marina P. Gross
Lead Strategist & Facilitator
Dopamine Chasers, LLC

Marina P. Gross (she/her) specializes in leading teams through hard conversations they enjoy. She is a trained memory scientist and holds certifications in consulting and diversity, equity and inclusion facilitation. Marina's superpower is thinking in systems, partly due to her professional experience, partly due to navigating the human world with a neurodiverse

brain. As an AuDHDer, she leverages a lifetime of navigating obstacles of an ableist world to help individuals and organizations design more inclusive work and community spaces. Change- and outcome-obsessed, she enjoys collaborating with participants to dream up new worlds and plan action steps towards building them.



Rose H.
Chair, Neurodiversity Advantage
Central Intelligence Agency

Rose is an ADHDer with a variety of other neurodivergences and is the Chair of CIA's Neurodiversity Advantage, a corporately recognized Independent Workforce Advocacy Group aimed at improving working conditions for CIA's neurodiverse population. In this role, she engages with senior leaders across the Agency and the wider intelligence

community. Professionally, she is a Project Manager and has served in three different career fields in the last 5 years.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Maria Hannah, PhD

Assistant Professor

Augustana College

Maria Hannah (PhD, Ohio University) is an assistant professor of interpersonal communication at Augustana College (Rock Island, IL, USA). Her primary area of research is instructional communication, which is the study of the teaching-learning process as a communication process. Much of her scholarship focuses on the lived experience of neurodivergent educators and educators' communication behaviors as they are informed by neurodivergence. Maria is published in several communication journals, including Communication Education. She has also contributed book chapters related to college student resilience, compassionate pedagogy and cognitive learning.



DeArndra Hendricks, EdD, HS-BC

Sr. Instructional Strategist

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Dr. DeArndra Hendricks, ODNI's IC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Program Manager, drives organizational change through research and innovation. Before ODNI, she served as a State Program Officer for local health departments, focusing on HIV care. She also led several state-funded programs for behavioral health and community-based services for men, women and children with developmental disabilities. Dr. Hendricks, with a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), a master of science degree from the University of Baltimore, and a Doctorate in Education from Wilmington University, is also credentialed as a Human Services Board-Certified Practitioner.



Lauren Howard

Director of Operations

Sensory Tool House, LLC

An advocate, neurodiversity expert and nationally recognized leader, Lauren has spoken around the country and works with organizations to decrease barriers in the workplace for those who are neurodivergent and disabled. She was named Green Beret Spouse of the Year in 2023, received the Lewis County Inclusion in Business award, and was recognized by Soroptimist Olympia as one of the 2024 South Sound Exceptional Women. Lauren runs Sensory Tool House, LLC, as Director of Operations, modeling inclusion in the workplace, and continues to create numerous community impacts for inclusion.



JiWoong (Joon) Jang

PhD Student

Carnegie Mellon University

Joon Jang is a PhD student at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Computer Science, where he focuses on research about understanding, designing and building AI-equipped assistive technology (AT) and how such tools affect and alter existing social dynamics in intro- and extra-spective ways. His previous projects have tackled stigma and the AT adoption/abandonment problem amongst individuals with visible and invisible disabilities, with ChatGPT-like models for social advice and autonomous wheelchair design. Prior to academia, Joon worked as a social worker and disability-rights advocate in Korea and the U.S.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Ellie Jeffries

Senior Project Support Specialist
ASRC Federal

Ellie Jeffries is the co-lead Senior Project Support Specialist for NASA's Sciences and Exploration Directorate, under ASRC Federal's Program Analysis and Control (PAAC) V contract. She won Robert H. Goddard Awards in 2022 for Exceptional Achievement for Secretarial and Clerical, and in 2023 for Quality and Process Improvement. Ellie is an active proponent of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA), having helped to set up The Unique Minds of Goddard neurodiversity speaker series, and is currently working with colleagues to establish a new Neurodiversity Employee Resource Group at NASA.



Erica Jones

Founder
Neurodiversity Consulting

Erica Jones holds a doctorate from The George Washington University, a master's degree from the University of Virginia, and a bachelor's degree from Shepherd University. With a background in special education, Dr. Jones works to develop neurodiverse work environments by providing training, support and resources to organizational leaders.



John Katz

Program Director
Sunflower Bakery

John joined Sunflower in May 2020. He brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and networks from the food and hospitality industry to Sunflower. John has started the Hospitality Program, created a Job Services department, and has recently started a Culinary program. Sunflower, under John's leadership, has increased enrollment by over 50%, while also finding job placement for 65% of graduates. John is excited to further develop a robust employment training program to enable our graduates to secure job and career opportunities in the pastry arts and hospitality industries.



Thomas Lane Jr.

Senior Direct Support Professional
Itineris

Thomas Lane Jr. is a proud Senior Direct Support Professional, born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. Since second grade, Thomas has been diagnosed with (formerly known as) Asperger's Syndrome and has grown up learning how his condition affects him. Now, fully aware of how to succeed on the spectrum, his ultimate goal at Itineris is to share his knowledge and experience, all for the pursuit of his clients' success and independence.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Julie Lewis

**Sr. Manager of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
T. Rowe Price**

Julie Lewis is a Sr. Manager of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and a Vice President at T. Rowe Price. Julie has been an associate at T. Rowe Price for more than 25 years serving in a variety of roles. Currently, Julie supports the Business Resource Groups (BRGs) at T. Rowe Price. Additionally, Julie oversees T. Rowe Price's inclusive Speaker Series, At

The Intersection. Julie also leads the firm's disability inclusion strategy. Outside of work, Julie serves on the board of Itineris, a social agency in the Baltimore area focused exclusively on supporting autistic adults exiting the school system.



Lirone Losoff, MBA

**Neuroinclusive Culture Strategist
Lirone Losoff LLC**

Lirone Losoff is a Neuroinclusive Culture Strategist dedicated to creating thriving, inclusive workplaces. With extensive experience as a management consultant for leading firms, combined with an MBA and graduate training in clinical and relational counseling, Lirone offers a unique mix of strategic business expertise and human-centered insight

to help transform organizational culture. She collaborates with HR innovators, operations leaders, and DEI advocates to unlock the potential of neurodiverse talent and drive cultural transformation. Through her consulting, coaching, and workshops, Lirone equips leaders to build environments where every mind is valued, fostering growth and innovation.



Lindsay Lyons, MS, CCC-SLP

**Speech-Language Pathologist
Sheppard Pratt Health System**

Lindsay Lyons, MS, CCC-SLP, is the Senior Speech-Language Pathologist for Sheppard Pratt School Hunt Valley and Related Services Manager for Sheppard Pratt School Glyndon. She has had a passion and interest in AAC since her graduate coursework at Loyola University Maryland. Lindsay is also part of an inter-disciplinary diagnostic team

at the Sheppard Pratt Center for Autism, and assists in the diagnostic process and comprehensive care plan for neurodivergent individuals throughout the lifespan.



Kurt M.

**Analyst
Central Intelligence Agency**

Kurt is an analyst at the CIA responsible for assessing the military implications of emerging technologies. He previously served on the National Intelligence Council as the Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Science & Technology (S&T) and is currently the co-lead for a tech-focused hard targets campaign.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Judy Martini, MEd

Doctoral Student
Towson University

Judy Martini, MEd, is a student in the Autism Studies PhD program at Towson University under the mentorship of Dr. Kaitlyn Wilson and Dr. Briella Chen. She holds a master's degree in Special Education and a Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies. In her twenty-year teaching career as a special educator, she worked with autistic children prekindergarten through third grade and was a mentor teacher for Towson, preparing undergraduates to be special educators in the field. As a current research and teaching assistant, her interests include transitioning to employment for autistic adults and the impact of music on autistic preschoolers.



Katherine McLaughlin, MEd, AASECT Certified Sexuality Educator

Sexuality Educator and Trainer
Elevatus Training

Katherine McLaughlin, MEd, AASECT Certified Sexuality Educator, is the Founder, CEO, and Lead Trainer for Elevatus Training. She has been a sexuality educator and trainer for over 30 years. As a national expert on sexuality and intellectual and developmental disabilities, she trains professionals and parents, as well as individuals, to become sexual self-advocates and peer sexuality educators. She has worked closely with Project SEARCH to create a curricula titled "Building Healthy Relationships at Work." She has spent her 30+-year career committed to elevating the status of all people, which is why the name of her company is Elevatus Training.



Katie McMurray

CEO
Sensory Tool House, LLC

For over 17 years, Katie has worked with the neurodiverse community as a teacher, volunteer, vocational counselor and certified disability management specialist. She is the founder of Sensory Tool House, LLC, and co-founder of Equity Access Solutions, LLC. Katie is an award-winning neurodivergent business owner who has proven that increasing access to employment and providing a culture of support for all increases productivity, retention and innovation. Her model of inclusion in the workforce earned her Boss of the Year in 2023 and Washington's Small Business Development Council's Star Client of the year. She has been featured in various publications and podcasts.



Laura Meyer

Change Management Lead
ASRC Federal

Laura Meyer is passionate about making change easier for people. She is the Change Management Lead for NASA's Mission Support Directorate, under ASRC Federal's PAAC V contract, and assists leadership in refining their thinking about the impact and value of change management. She set up NASA's Change Center for Mission Support, and runs the Change Community of Practice. Before NASA, she was a change management leader for government, nonprofit and private sector organizations. Laura is active in autistic self-advocacy and in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) in general. In her free time, Laura enjoys recovering from her non-free time.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Dayana Milien

Team Leader
SEEC

Dayana Milien is the team leader for Learn to Earn at SEEC, where she oversees the day-to-day operations of the program. Her responsibilities include community engagement skill building, coordinating with Community Engagement Coaches, and maintaining monthly contact with families. Dayana brings a diverse background in medical, criminology, and social sciences to her role. Her passion for supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities began during her volunteering at the University of Maryland's summer camp.



Heather Moorshead, MS

Product Analyst (BRG Lead, 2024)
T. Rowe Price

Heather Moorshead, MS, is a product analyst at T. Rowe Price for their client experience team. She has additionally served as the Communications & Marketing Lead for the inaugural year of T. Rowe Price's fifth and newest-to-launch business resource group (BRG), "THRIVE". THRIVE promotes awareness, education and support for those affected by the broad range of conditions impacting holistic wellness and functioning. Heather obtained an MS in counseling psychology from Loyola University Maryland in 2015, and has been with T. Rowe Price since 2016. This is her second year attending the "Neurodiversity in the Workplace" conference alongside co-presenter Julie Lewis.



Julie Muckerman

Autism Training Specialist
University of Missouri Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment

Julie Muckerman, MPH, is a training specialist at the University of Missouri Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment. Previously, Julie spent 7 years managing research studies focused on early identification and improving quality of life for autistic individuals. Julie is currently involved in a number of initiatives, including coaching educators on how to support language development, the TALK program, which provides AAC devices and individualized training for caregivers and Autism Friendly Business trainings which educate businesses across Missouri and the United States with the knowledge and skills needed to provide effective support for adults with autism.



Kristine Nellenbach

Resource Finder Program Coordinator
Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities at Kennedy Krieger Institute

Kristine Nellenbach is the program coordinator for Resource Finder, a project of the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities at Kennedy Krieger Institute. She connects professionals, families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to resources tailored to their needs. Kristine holds a master's degree in instructional technology and was an elementary school teacher and media specialist for twelve years, prior to her current role. Kristine is diagnosed with autism and ADHD, and works to advocate for individuals with disabilities within her role and beyond.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Eliana Neuwirth

**Manager of Leadership Development
Special Olympics International**

Eliana Neuwirth focuses on youth leadership development at Special Olympics International Unified Champion Schools. Prior to her role there, Eliana spent 2 years in Ecuador working at Manna Project International and grassroots community center “Corazón Comunitario”; There, she focused on building access to educational opportunities and economic inclusion. Eliana received her Bachelor’s and Master’s of Public Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park. Her studies focused on nonprofit leadership and equitable access to education. Eliana also served in several nonprofit roles, including Lead Provider for So What Else Inc. and Programs Assistant for Candid (formerly Guidestar and Foundation Center).



Julia O'Connor

**Assistant Professor, Director of Day Treatment Services, NBU-OP
Kennedy Krieger Institute**

Dr. Julia O'Connor is a research scientist and psychologist at Kennedy Krieger Institute. She is the director of day treatment services for the Neurobehavioral Unit Outpatient Clinic in the Department of Behavioral Psychology and an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She completed her master’s and doctoral training at the State University of New York in Binghamton in clinical psychology where she worked with children with autism and pervasive developmental disorders.



James Orman

**Program Coordinator
People On the Go Maryland**

James Orman serves as the Program Coordinator for People On the Go Maryland (POG). He received a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Indiana University, and has a passion for social justice and equity. James is the Vice President of the Autism Society of Baltimore Chesapeake (ASBC) and runs a weekly, virtual group for Autistic adults, in addition to organizing in-person events. He believes all people have a right to obtain the resources and support necessary to help them fulfill their potential, and works to bring understanding and awareness of disability rights to the broader community.



Kelly Paparazzo

**Program Director, Community Engagement
SEEC**

Kelly Paparazzo is the Program Director for Community Engagement at SEEC. Kelly oversees and guides front-line supervisors and their teams in their tactical implementation of SEEC’s mission and vision. Before joining SEEC, Kelly provided leadership for several programs including vocational services and the Community Living program. While the scope of her work is wide, Kelly uniquely maintains a personal touch with the people she serves, their families, and her dedicated staff.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Becky Pike

Sciences and Exploration Directorate (SED) Assistant Director for Engineering Operations at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center
NASA

Becky Pike is the Sciences and Exploration Directorate Assistant Director for Engineering Operations at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Formerly Chair of the Women's Employee Resource Group (ERG) and Network, Becky is now leading the effort to establish a new ERG at NASA dedicated to neurodiversity. Becky's previous positions include Quality Engineering Branch Head at NASA and Flight Assurance Manager on the GEO-Star line and propulsion engineer at Orbital (now Northrup Grumman) Dulles. Becky holds a BS in Aerospace Engineering and an MS in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. In her free time, Becky enjoys painting and gardening.



Kat R.

Contracts Specialist
Central Intelligence Agency

Kat is a private sector mid-career hire for the Agency currently working as a certified Contracting Specialist with three year' total contracting experience, and is a former HR Officer with three years' experience. She has brought to the organization a wealth of knowledge in regards to HR Policy, EEOC and internal disciplinary procedures, and familiarity with broader federal rules and regulations. She has been a strong advocate for Neurodivergent Staff and Contractor officers, and is well-versed in both areas of personnel rights and protections as afforded under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Rehabilitation Act, and other relevant legislation and policy.



Matt R.

Program Manager, Neurodiversity Outreach and Recruitment
Central Intelligence Agency

Matthew has been a Career CIA officer since May of 2001. He spent 22 years of his career as a software developer and technical analyst before becoming the Agency's first lead for Neurodiversity Outreach and Recruitment, and he is building the program from the ground up in partnership with Agency leadership, their neurodiversity employee group, and organizations across the federal government and private sector who are committed to increasing employment opportunities and improving the workplace for neurodivergent people. Matthew is Autistic, ADHD, Dyslexic and Dyspraxic. He recognizes that needs in the workplace overlap. Improving accessibility and inclusion for neurodivergent people benefits everyone.



Elizabeth Redcay, PhD

Associate Professor of Psychology
University of Maryland

Elizabeth Redcay received her PhD in Psychology and Cognitive Science from the University of California San Diego, and completed her postdoctoral work in the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at MIT. In 2011, she joined the faculty at UMD as an Assistant Professor in Psychology. Her research examines the development of social interactions and well-being in autistic and nonautistic adolescents and adults. She also is developing trainings and programs to support neurodiversity. Dr. Redcay's research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, the NSF ADVANCE program and the Autism Science Foundation.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



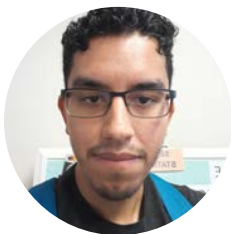
Melissa Rosenberg
Executive Director
Autism Society of Maryland

Melissa joined the AUSOM staff in 2016, a nonprofit specialist with over 25 years of experience, and has worked to offer opportunities for meaningful employment, independent living, social connection, inclusion and acceptance. Melissa received her bachelor's in Journalism from the University of Maryland and a master's in Nonprofit Management from the UMD University College. She is a graduate of Leadership Howard County and serves on the boards of the Association of Community Services, Columbia Center for Theatrical Arts, Howard County Local Children's Board, and Maryland's Autism Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs.



Heidi Royer, BA
Autism Training Specialist & Student Experience Coordinator
University of Missouri Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment

Heidi Royer, BA, is an Autism Training Specialist and the Student Experience Coordinator at the Thompson Center for Autism & Neurodevelopment. Heidi supports students, residents and post-doctoral fellows across diverse disciplines in gaining valuable experience in the field of autism. Heidi also provides Autism Friendly Business trainings to organizations across the state of Missouri, and engages in networking opportunities to expand the reach of business participation in the program.



Abraham Sanchez Valadez
Production
Pete Pappas and Sons

Abraham Sanchez Valadez is a 2022 graduate of the Autism Hiring program. He recently celebrated his second anniversary as an employee with Pete Pappas and Sons, MD, a produce grower and distributor in Jessup, MD. Abraham was diagnosed with Autism at the age of 3. He enjoys playing video games, working out, being outside and all kinds of sports. Abraham is a student at Howard Community College, working to obtain his associate degree in business and technology systems. He plans to transfer to Towson University upon graduation.



Matthew Schmidt, PhD
Associate Professor
University of Georgia

Matthew Schmidt, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the University of Georgia (UGA) in the Learning, Design and Technology department. His primary research interest includes design and development of innovative educational courseware and computer software with a particular focus on individuals with disabilities, their families and their providers. His secondary research interests include learning in extended reality (inclusive of virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality) and Learning Experience Design.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Jason Schriml

Vice President, Athlete Leadership
Special Olympics Maryland

Jason Schriml is currently the Vice President for Athlete Leadership at Special Olympics Maryland, but has been part of the global Special Olympics movement for many years, having held Special Olympics positions in Marketing and Communications and Sports. In his current role, Jason empowers Special Olympics Maryland athletes to gain skills and confidence in serving as leaders on their teams, in their programs, and in the communities.



SPIRIT Club

SPIRIT Club is an inclusive fitness organization dedicated to providing universally designed exercise programs that support people of all abilities. SPIRIT Club offers personal training and group exercise classes designed to promote physical and mental well-being in a supportive and accessible environment. All services are available both in-person throughout Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia, and virtually. Whether you're looking to improve strength, coordination, or overall health, SPIRIT Club's dual certified trainers are here to help you achieve your goals through customized, fun, and engaging workouts.



Cari Sullivan

Senior Physical Therapist
Kennedy Krieger Institute

Cari obtained her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Misericordia University. Cari has worked with complex medical and critically ill patients throughout her 19-year career; first in the neuro trauma and ICU/PICU settings, where she specialized in program development for early mobility to promote functional recovery. Cari now works at Kennedy Krieger Institute on the inpatient rehabilitation unit, treating children from infancy through young adulthood with acquired brain injury and other pediatric movement disorders. Cari identifies as neurodivergent after diagnosis in 2023.



Marley Swisher

Behavior Support Services Director
Itineris

Marley leads with values to support her clients at Itineris. She started in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) at Rollins College. From there she obtained her Master's in ABA from Ball State. In 2016, she joined Itineris as a direct support professional (DSP). While completing her supervision, she rose to Senior DSP, Program Supervisor and Program Manager. Once certified, she explored outside Itineris and worked in the school and clinic setting. She then had the opportunity to return to Itineris as a Behavior Analyst. In 2023, she was promoted to BSS Director.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Katelyn Szymanski

Program Director
Itineris

Katelyn is a licensed social worker and a Program Director for Itineris, a non-profit that supports adults on the autism spectrum. Katelyn started at Itineris as an intern, and over the years grew to Senior DSP, Program Supervisor, Program Manager, Workforce Manager, Behavior Associate, QA and now Director. Katelyn is an autistic self-advocate and fiercely passionate about social justice, disability rights and neurodiversity-affirming practices. Outside of Itineris, Katelyn has worked as a mental health clinician, a crisis counselor for 911 and a suicide prevention instructor. A fun fact is that Katelyn was recently a guest on her first podcast!



Teresa Thomas

Program Lead, Neurodiverse Talent Enablement and Engagement Strategist, Cyber Infrastructure Protection Innovation Center
The MITRE Corporation

Teresa Thomas is The MITRE Corporation's Program Lead for Neurodiverse Talent Enablement, and has a long history of advocacy for neurodivergent individuals. She has been a house parent in a group home for adults with high support needs, is now a parent of an adult with autism spectrum disorder, and is active in MITRE's inclusion and diversity programs. Teresa brought together an advisory council consisting of private organizations, universities, self-advocates and federal agencies to develop and pilot the Neurodiverse Federal Workforce program. She also designed and now spearheads MITRE's internal Neurodiversity Internship program.



Richard Tregaskes

Senior Project Manager
AtkinsRéalis

Richard was diagnosed as Dyslexic in the second year of his Engineering degree, and is using this experience of approaching 30 years in the architecture, engineering and construction industry to lead the Neurodiversity Employee Resource Group in the Americas region for AtkinsRéalis. AtkinsRéalis is a world-leading design, engineering and project management organization that connects people, data and technology to transform the world's infrastructure and energy systems. The Employee Resource Group represents both Neurodiverse colleagues and parents and family members of Neurodiverse children to help the strengths that different Neurodiverse conditions bring to be valued within the workplace.



Sara Uram, LCSW-C

Clinical Social Worker
Sheppard Pratt Health System

Sara Uram, LCSW-C is a social worker in the Hospital Outpatient Clinic Neurodevelopmental Disability Clinic and the Center for Autism at Sheppard Pratt. She obtained her bachelor of science degree from Towson University, and earned her master of social work degree at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Sara was trained at Kennedy Krieger Institute, and completed the Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND) Program. She is passionate about working with transitional age youth and young adults with autism spectrum disorder and other neurodevelopmental disabilities.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Chinmay Vyas

President

CV, Inc.

Chinmay Vyas has over 30 years as a civil engineer in both the government and private sectors. With a client-centric mindset, Chinmay focuses on management techniques to navigate the complexities of each project. Chinmay has experience in small business management, project planning, land development, civil engineering, site construction, highway design and build, stormwater, and LEED Green principles. He received a master's degree from Texas A&M and a bachelor's from LD Engineering, India. Chinmay is passionate about bringing technology to the industry. He is a valued employer partner with the Autism Hiring Program and employs two of its graduates.



Lindsay Wagner

Director of Neurodiversity & Community Inclusion

League School for Autism

Lindsay is an occupational therapist who has been practicing in the field of autism for 19 years. As the Director of Neurodiversity and Community Inclusion at the League School for Autism, she consults to community-based organizations, employers and schools on autism education and neurodiversity-affirming practices, and leads implementation of the program's SCERTS® Model. Lindsay is a certified Autism Spectrum Disorder Clinical Specialist and a doctoral candidate in Bay Path University's Health Sciences department.



Hannah Wayne

Director of Meaningful Community Services

Kennedy Krieger Institute

Hannah began her career at Kennedy Krieger Institute's Center for Autism Services, Science and Innovation (CASSI™, formerly known as the Center for Autism and Related Disorders, or CARD), where her experience as a therapeutic assistant with preschool-aged children sparked a passion to pursue a career in special education. Hannah is passionate about working with young adults and their families, developing new partnerships in the local community, and mentoring staff. Hannah is thrilled to be joining the Meaningful Community Services team and looks forward to meeting everyone who is a part of this dynamic community!



Sara Weir

Senior Advisor

ABLE today/National Association of State Treasurers

Sara Hart Weir is a national ABLE expert, executive and disability activist. Weir is the Executive Director of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities and a Senior Advisor to ABLE today. Weir is the former President and C.E.O. of the National Down Syndrome Society, where she led the passage of the landmark Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act in 2014.



Break Out Session Speakers (continued)



Jennifer Wessel

Associate Professor of Psychology
University of Maryland

Dr. Jen Wessel is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Maryland in College Park. Her research examines workplace obstacles for individuals who are in the minority or otherwise marginalized, with the overarching goal of providing high-quality research that can help organizations meet the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds, as well as provide individuals from diverse backgrounds with tools to thrive personally and professionally at work. In her more recent work on autistic employees, Dr. Wessel prioritizes a multi-disciplinary approach, self-advocate collaborations and autistic community input.



Alexander Williams

PhD Candidate in Aerospace Engineering
University of Maryland—College Park

Alexander is a second year aerospace engineering PhD student at UMD. As an autistic STEM student and researcher this project is important to him. Participating in research during undergrad helped him to develop social and technical skills that built his confidence and opened up opportunities. He believes that research is an invaluable experience for undergraduates and differences in neurotypes and ability shouldn't bar students from these opportunities. He is part of this project because he wants research to be an empowering experience for other autistic students, the way it was for him.



Kaitlyn Wilson, PhD, CCC-SLP

Associate Professor and Department Chair
Towson University

Kaitlyn Wilson, PhD, CCC-SLP, worked as a speech-language pathologist at the KKI high school and completed a post-doctoral fellowship through Johns Hopkins University and KKI. Currently, Dr. Wilson is an Associate Professor and Department Chairperson in TU's Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Her research focuses on improving personnel preparation, assessing communication, employment and self-advocacy supports for autistic individuals across the lifespan. She is the program director for TU's Ph.D. in Autism Studies, and is on the evaluation team for the TU branch of the Autism Society of Maryland's Autism Hiring Program.



Jessi Wright

Director
Maine CITE

Jessi Wright identifies as a person with multiple hidden disabilities. She has worked in the disability field for over 15 years in various capacities, and is currently the director of the Maine assistive technology program, Maine CITE. After graduating with a BA in Psychology and later an MA in Business Administration, Jessi enjoys problem-solving and helping others achieve their goals and independence through the use of assistive tools. Over the years, she has worked with people of all ages and abilities to create safe, inclusive environments for people of all abilities.

