

Detailed Schedule

Kelly Thomalla



The Autism Society of Minnesota invites you to participate in the 24th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference at its new location, the **Minneapolis Marriott Southwest**. During this event, we will join our voices as a passionate community to inspire learning, hope, and innovation. Experts, parents, caregivers, educators, paraprofessionals, mental health professionals, service providers, and individuals on the spectrum will have a platform to connect, collaborate, advocate, and educate.

Conference participants will be issued certificates of attendance at the conference. AuSM has secured Continuing Education Units (CEUs) from the **Minnesota Board of Psychology**, the **Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapy**, and the **Minnesota Board of Social Work**.

Audience Guides to Help Plan Your Conference Participation

[Caregivers/Parents](#)

[Educators](#)

[Therapists/Professionals](#)

[Individuals with Autism](#)

Sensory Accommodation: Because the loud noise of applause can be a challenge for those with sensory sensitivities, we are asking audience members to show their appreciation for conference speakers by using American Sign Language clap, which looks a little bit like jazz hands but is silent. We appreciate your understanding and your willingness to make this minor adjustment to help make the conference more inclusive for our community.

Thank you, overall conference sponsors!



LINDAMOOD-BELL
LEARNING PROCESSES



Wednesday, April 24, 2019

6-7 p.m. Registration and AuSM Bookstore Open

7-9 p.m. Keynote Presentation Sponsored by Cargill



Theresa M. Regan, PhD, CBIS, CAS

Autism Spectrum Disorder in Adults and Aging Adults: Lessons Learned

Dr. Regan will combine vignettes, personal stories, and specific strategies to illustrate the lessons she has learned (sometimes the hard way) on her journey to serve those on the autism spectrum. The presentation will cover her preferred approach toward diagnostic assessment with adults, goal setting, and interventions, particularly in the areas of adaptive behavior and emotional regulation. Dr. Regan also will share personal lessons about having a positive impact, coping with complexity, and doing difficult things well. Whether you are an individual with autism, family member, teacher, or clinician, you will leave with inspiration and practical strategies to equip you in your journey.

Dr. Regan is an adult neuropsychologist, parent of a child on the spectrum, and a Certified Autism Specialist. She has worked for more than 25 years in medical settings with adolescent through geriatric patients. When her son was diagnosed with autism at age 5, she began to recognize the undiagnosed disorder in aging patients. Dr. Regan established the Adult Diagnostic Autism Clinic for adolescent through geriatric patients at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Illinois. She works with patients, families, counselors, and medical teams to improve quality of life and medical outcomes for those on the spectrum. She is the author of *Understanding Autism in Adults and Aging Adults* and *Understanding Autistic Behaviors*.

Thursday, April 25, 2019

AuSM is pleased to announce that on Thursday, April 25 during the

24th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference we will celebrate Autism Acceptance. Participants are invited to wear red as part of the #RedInstead movement encouraged by autistic advocates to move beyond awareness and embrace acceptance. Please join AuSM in wearing red on April 25 to support Autism Acceptance.

7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration, AuSM Bookstore, Exhibits Open

8:30-10:30 a.m. Keynote Presentation Sponsored by St. David's Center for Child & Family Development



Patrick Schwarz, PhD

From Possibility to Success: Achieving Successful Student Outcomes

With the goal of building lifelong skills, Patrick Schwarz will offer authentic processes and supports to help educators plan lessons and units while embracing students' interests and passions. Learn how to work toward students' dreams, promoting leadership, self-advocacy, self-determination, and membership in both school and the community. Through an overview of supports and compelling stories of how they have helped real students in real classrooms, Schwartz will empower participants to combine the science and art of teaching all learners.

Patrick Schwarz is a dynamic and engaging professor, author, motivational speaker and leader in education and human services. He is the CEO of Creative Culture Consulting, LLC and Professor Emeritus at National Louis University, Chicago. He is the author of *From Disability to Possibility*®; *You're Welcome* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Just Give Him the Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Pedro's Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); and *From Possibility to Success*.

10:30 a.m. Break – AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

11 a.m.-12 p.m. Breakout Sessions I

1. Myths of Autism in Childhood and Families presented by AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services

Therapists and autistic adults discuss the following myths: 1. all autism is

genetic; 2. all non-verbal children with autism are intellectually disabled/all autistic children are gifted/have special abilities; 3. children with autism do not want friends; 4. having a child with disabilities destroys families; 5. autism goes away at age 18

AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services therapists have more than 80 years of combined experience serving individuals with autism. They strive to help those on the spectrum understand their diagnosis and address both the challenges and gifts that it can bring.

2. Universal Design, Differentiation, and Curricular Adaptations presented by Patrick Schwarz, PhD

Universal design is providing access to curriculum for all learners through use of multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.

Differentiation is use of educational strategy, technology, materials, sequences and procedures to support successful learning for all students in a classroom.

Curricular adaptations are individualized strategies to help a learner who needs further educational support to participate meaningfully in the classroom. During this session, learn how definitions, universal planning processes, and examples of student supports can be applied to classroom, teaching, and learning situations.

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3. Understanding the Benefits of Positive Behavior Supports Across All Settings presented by Elizabeth Freese, MS

Learn why positive behavior supports at home, in the classroom, and in the clinic are critical to the success of the individual with autism. Discuss strategies on implementation in all settings and how to generalize skills once a successful foundation of positive behavior supports exists.

Elizabeth Freese is a Behavior Intervention Specialist with Academy of Whole Learning and has been in the applied behavior analysis field for six years. She has worked in various settings providing ABA therapy services in Minnesota and Washington.

4. Advancing Social Coping Mechanisms from School to the Workplace presented by Allen Mavis

Take an in-depth look at how social coping skills used in the home and at high school can be advanced into those that will facilitate success in the workplace. Learn what behavior is needed out of a competitive coping mechanism and how to identify gaps in present skills. Understand how to use analogies, props,

and interests and hobbies to create student perspective, self-confidence, and consistency in skills. Strategies for transitioning coping mechanisms also will be discussed, with a focus on balancing continuity and change.

Allen Mavis earned a Bachelor's degree in Behavioral Science from Bellevue University and also is a certified as motivational interviewing practitioner and trainer. He has spent the last 10 years working as a transitional career specialist to build social and vocational skills for those with autism, anxiety disorder, ADHD, and learning disabilities.

12-1 p.m. Lunch Sponsored by Accra – AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

1-2 p.m. Breakout Sessions II

1. Myths of Autism in Adulthood presented by AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services

Therapists and autistic adults discuss the following myths: 1. all autistic adults are computer geeks; 2. all autistic people lack empathy; 3. all autistic adults like Sci-fi/Star Wars/Star Trek/etc.; 4. all autism is apparent/visible; 5. self-advocates' "favorite" myth

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2. Just Give Him the Whale presented by Patrick Schwarz, PhD

Learn how fascinations, passions, and interest areas can become positive teaching tools that calm, motivate, and improve learning. Discussion will include learning standards-based academic content, developing social connections, minimizing anxiety, boosting literacy learning and mathematics skills, expanding communication skills, and much more.

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Possibility®; *You're Welcome* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Just Give Him the Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Pedro's Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); and *From Possibility to Success*.

3. An Introduction to Applied Behavioral Analysis Strategies for the Classroom presented by L. Lynn Stansberry Brusnahan, PhD; Erin Farrell, MA, BCBA; and Deeqifrah Hussein, MA

The science of Applied Behavior Analysis has strong research support (NSP, 2009) for individuals with ASD. Educators, however, often struggle in

discerning which techniques and interventions fall under the ABA “umbrella.” In this session, learn the definition of ABA and some simple strategies you can use in classroom ABA to prevent challenging behaviors, teach behaviors, increase pro-social behaviors, and maintain and generalize skills already learned. Simple strategies will include: antecedent-based intervention; task analysis; shaping; chaining; prompting; time delay; reinforcement; differential reinforcement; extinction; and functional communication training. Also learn some complex behaviors for which simple ABA strategies can be applied including eating, sleeping, toileting, and hygiene.

L. Lynn Stansberry Brusnahan is the parent of a young adult with autism. She coordinates the autism spectrum disorders certificate, license and master’s program at University of St. Thomas. She has served on boards for the Autism Society of America, Autism Society of Wisconsin, Autism Society of Southeastern Wisconsin, and Council for Exceptional Children Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities. In 2012, she was awarded the Autism Society Professional of the Year.

Erin Farrell is a board-certified behavior analyst and serves as a behavior specialist in a school district. She is a doctorate student specializing in autism spectrum disorders.

Deeqaifrah Hussein is district-wide Autism and Emotional Behavior Disability (EBD) Itinerant Teacher for Minneapolis Public Schools. She supports special education teachers with evidence-based interventions for children with autism and EBD. Currently, Hussein is pursuing her Doctorate in Educational Leadership with focus on Autism, and she is working on a Behavior Analysis Certification through the Florida Institute of Technology. She is a community advocate and the vice president of Somali Parents Disability Network. Hussein is a LEND Fellow at the University of Minnesota.

4. Join the Inclusion Revolution: Practical Inclusive Strategies for Schools presented by Nick Cedergren, MS and Suzi Pierce Fish, MS

Learn about Unified Champion Schools, a movement aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change. With sports as the foundation, the three-component model offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classroom, and school climates of acceptance where students with disabilities feel welcome and are included in all activities, opportunities, and functions.

Nick Cedergren is the Schools and Leadership Manager at Special Olympics Minnesota. He earned his BA in Sports Medicine from Bethel University and MS degrees in Sport Management and Educational Leadership from Minnesota State University. Cedergren currently serves on the Board of Directors for PAI MN.

Suzi Pierce Fish is a Special Education Teacher and ASD specialist at

Shakopee High School. She earned her BS in Education from Winona State University, an MEd in Special Education at the University of Minnesota, and ASD Licensure from the University of St. Thomas. Pierce Fish is the Special Olympics Liaison for Shakopee and has been advisor of a Unified Club for five years.

2 p.m. Break – AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

2:30-3:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions III

1. To Share or Not to Share: Decisions Around ASD Disclosure presented by Barb Luskin, PhD and Jen Reinke, PhD, LAMFT, CFLE

Little is known about how, when, and to whom individuals on the spectrum choose to disclose their autism diagnosis. Learn the results from recent research on the various pathways adults with autism take regarding disclosing their diagnosis to family, friends, potential romantic partners, and others in their lives. Individuals on the spectrum, families, mental health clinicians, and other professionals who support people with autism are encouraged to participate and learn about the positive and negative aspects of disclosure.

Dr. Jennifer Reinke is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Stout and a Couple and Family Therapist at AuSM. Dr. Reinke has worked with individuals and families affected by autism for more than 15 years in community living, agency, school, and home settings.

Dr. Barb Luskin, an AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services psychologist, has worked closely with children and adults with ASD for more than 30 years in professional and home settings. She specializes in providing both assessments and counseling to individuals with ASD and those who support them. She helps people understand ASD, teaches them creative and effective interventions, helps them evaluate progress, and provides guidance when adjustments are needed.

2. Transition From School to Post School Best Practices presented by Patrick Schwarz, PhD

Learn about longitudinal transitional practices from school to post-school. Discussion will include definitions, key players, when to start, and other important information. Through real-life learner examples, participants will be guided into creating a plan for an individual they represent for a meaningful application that can be used immediately.

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Possibility®; You're Welcome (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Just Give Him the Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); *Pedro's Whale* (with Dr. Paula Kluth); and *From Possibility to Success*.

3. Essential Elements in Your ECSE ASD Classroom presented by Kris Smallfield, MA and Jennifer Coughlin, MEd

Learn about the essential materials, strategies, and evidence-based practices used in an inclusion or special education Early Childhood classroom. Toys, activities, and basic visual and sensory supports will be demonstrated, and participants will have opportunity to explore materials and ask questions. Gain strategies and ideas to use immediately in an Early Childhood classroom.

Jennifer Coughlin has taught for 18 years in a Bloomington Schools Center-based classroom for ASD. She performs assessments and evaluations, provides consultation to inclusion classes, and conducts home visits.

Kris Smallfield has taught for 17 years in a Bloomington Schools Center-based classroom for ASD. She performs assessments and evaluations, provides consultation to inclusion classes, and conducts home visits.

4. Proactive Strategies to Create a Positive Learning Environment for Students with ASD Presented by Camille Brandt Dr. of Ed

Inclusive teaching to and learning for the student with autism only may occur successfully when planning extends beyond the academic, social, or behavioral goal and reflects the level and type of environmental support required to maximize learner engagement. Knowing and understanding the complex traits associated with ASD is important; implementing strategies that address learning needs stemming from these traits is essential. The practice of altering learning events and environments that more fully immerse learners requires three things on the part of the teacher: willingness to explore alternative practices, commitment to collaborate with others, and proficiency in observing students and interpreting their needs through behaviors, communication, and other responses. Explore current practices impacting environmental modifications for individuals with autism.

While teaching in public and private schools, Dr. Camille Brandt developed a passion for autism. She pioneered efforts toward inclusive educational practices in her school district while pursuing her Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree in special education. Dr. Brandt is a faculty member at Bemidji State University, where she teaches courses in ASD, Due Process, and Literacy Challenges. Her most recent publication addresses antecedent-based learning environments, reflecting the work she has facilitated in both school and community settings.

6-7 p.m. Registration and AuSM Bookstore Open

7-9 p.m. Keynote Presentation Sponsored by Minnesota

Independence College & Community



Jennifer O'Toole

Connecting to Others and Understanding Social Rules through Counterculture

When you live the Aspie life, other people can be incredibly tricky. Life for folks on the spectrum is like playing a game where everyone knows the rules... except you. Even harder is when theory of mind leaves us wondering what other people are thinking and feeling, and even struggling to identify our own motivations, anxieties, and wishes. As an aspie herself, O'Toole gets it and wants to level the playing field with a guide to all those (secret) social rules. Learn from funny, honest, real scenarios with first-hand advice that will help you understand those confusing expectations AND give you tools for using popular culture as emotional vocabulary (Elsa from *Disney's Frozen* clearly is loneliness, right?). Help your inner Spock with improved relationships, better self-awareness, and a chance to boldly go where no communication tool has gone before.

Jennifer O'Toole, a serious lover of shoes and glitter, is a celebrated author, award-winning international speaker, and advocate of geektastic awesomeness everywhere. O-Toole was identified as being on the spectrum in 2011, just after her children's diagnoses. Over the following five years, she wrote the six-book *Asperkids* series and created the AK (Asperkids), a multimedia social re-education company focused on being "Different. Together." O'Toole currently sits on the Autism Society of America's Panel of People on the Spectrum, has been recognized as one of the "World's Top Aspie Mentors," is the winner of the Temple Grandin Global Contribution Award, has advised the President's Council at the White House, addressed Their Royal Highnesses the Princess Sophie of England and Princess Marie of Denmark, and was named one of the 50 Most Influential Women in North Carolina. In her memoir, *Autism in Heels: The Untold Story of a Female Life on the Spectrum*, O'Toole courageously smashes stereotypes of what it means to be autistic and female.

9-10 p.m. Jennifer O'Toole Book Signing

Friday, April 26, 2019

7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration, AuSM Bookstore, Exhibits Open

8:30-10:30 a.m. Keynote Presentation Sponsored by MN LEND



Sue Swenson, MBA

How to Change the World

How do we work together to make things better for autistic children and adults? Is it even possible? Sue Swenson has been a parent, advocate, federal official, and national and international leader. She has seen and participated in change across the country and around the world, and she has seen too many people give up after trying the same thing over and over. The stories and ideas she has lived and collected along the way are woven together into a theory of change that works across ages, places, philosophies, and political persuasions to help you find the inspiration you need to find your own path -- whether you are a parent, sibling, teacher, human services professional, civil servant, community leader, or a person on the spectrum.

Sue Swenson served the Obama administration as deputy and acting assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services, leading more than 200 staff to manage the nation's largest disability policy office, and over \$15 billion in federal funding. She is currently president of Inclusion International, the UN-recognized disabled people's organization for children with disabilities, their families, and adults with intellectual disabilities. She serves as a volunteer. Sue learned about disability from her middle son Charlie, who lived for 30 years with profound disabilities. Charlie was included in school and lived in the community. Sue is a 1989 graduate of Partners in Policymaking in Minnesota, was a Kennedy Fellow in the US Senate, was commissioner for developmental disabilities in the Clinton administration, and has been executive director of the Kennedy Foundation and The Arc of the United States. Sue was educated at the University of Chicago and holds an MBA from the University of Minnesota.

10:30 a.m. Break – AuSM Bookstore, Exhibits Open

11 a.m.-12 p.m. Breakout Sessions I

1. Understanding Emotional Regulation in Autism presented by Kari Dunn Buron, MS

“Emotional regulation” is an often-used term among parents and educators who support someone with autism. However, it sometimes is misunderstood or too broadly used. Gain a framework for understanding compromised emotional regulation in autism and learn about the seven characteristics of autism that may contribute to emotional dysregulation. Learn how to provide effective support.

Kari Dunn Buron is the co-author of *The Incredible 5-Point Scale* (Revised Edition), and the author of *When My Worries Get Too Big* (Revised Edition and winner of the 2013 Mom’s Choice Award); *A 5 Could Make Me Lose Control*, *A 5 is Against the Law!* (2008 ASA literary award winner); and *The Social Times* curriculum. She is the co-editor of a textbook for educators titled *Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators* (2009 ASA literary award winner) and author of a newly updated chapter on emotional regulation.

2. Historical Trauma and Autism: Using Trauma-Informed Care to Heal the Disability Community by Andrea Zuber

How does historical and cultural trauma impact the experience of people with IDD, and the people and communities who support them, as it relates to social determinants of health and wellbeing, their overall quality of life and their ability to thrive and prosper in modern society? What implications may there be for greater life success and a collective healing using a trauma-informed lens in providing community supports and shaping disability policy? In this session Zuber will highlight her research on trauma, as well as lead a discussion on opportunities for healing and prosperity in the disability community.

Andrea Zuber is the Chief Executive Officer of the Arc Minnesota, providing executive leadership, vision and strategic direction for The Arc Minnesota to ensure consistent, essential services to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families throughout Minnesota. She was previously Director of Social Services for Dakota County and has spent her entire career leading the development and delivery of social services with extensive experience in transforming supports for people with disabilities and their families. Her 22 years of experience in the disability field also includes work as a direct support professional in residential, day training & habilitation and employment services, as well as advocacy and public policy work.

3. The Divine Maze: How Two Non-Speaking Siblings Discovered a Shared Voice presented by Meghana Junnuru, Chetan Junnuru, Indu Eati, and Chris Martin

Each person contains a world of expression, including non-speaking individuals with autism. Learn how two non-speaking siblings, with the help of their mother and a poet, freed their expression and transformed their lives.

Meghana and Chetan Junnuru will present poems, essays, and aspirations that will illustrate their evolving story. Indu Eati, their mother, will help tell the story and bring a vision for the future. Chris Martin will share his educational philosophy and process, built around a passion for teaching poetry.

Meghana and Chetan Junnuru are siblings with autism and intellectual abilities beyond their ages, but traditional testing and teaching methodologies failed to uncover their potential. After learning how to use a keyboard, they now are showing their family and others what they are capable of and what it feels like to be in their bodies. They are joyful, savvy, and adventurous poets and writers with critical thinking skills who aspire toward improving lives of those on the autism spectrum.

Indu Eati, Meghana and Chetan's mother, strongly advocates for her children. For the last several years, she thought she was doing her best. Once they started typing, it became clear that she had barely understood their needs over the years. This has kindled a passion in her to fully support her children and others in finding their voices and creating their future. In partnership with her children, she co-started ASU, a non-profit that is developing an autism center and a sustainable supported-living housing model for those with autism.

Chris Martin is the author of three books of poetry, most recently *The Falling Down Dance* (Coffee House, 2015), winner of a Midwest Independent Booksellers Choice Award. He is the recent recipient of NEA and MN State Arts Board grants for poetry. In 2015, Martin co-founded Unrestricted Interest, an organization dedicated to helping unconventional learners transform their lives through writing, and Unrestricted Editions, a press dedicated to transforming poetry through the voices of neurodiverse writers. He also teaches at Hamline University and Carleton College.

4. Consumer-Directed Community Supports: A Program That Works for Individuals and Their Families presented by Julie Lux, BA; and Shantel Jaszczak, BA

Participate in an engaging conversation about Consumer-Directed Community Supports (CDCS). A panel of experienced professionals, who have had success with the CDCS program for more than 15 years, will share the successes of the program and recent changes. Bring your questions about the service and discuss with panel members how CDCS can help support individuals with autism and their families.

Vicki Gerrits, Chief Strategy Officer at Accra, has worked with people with disabilities and their families since 1983. She has 20 years of experience with self-directed programs.

Shantel Jaszczak, President/Chief Financial Officer of Consumer Directions, has been in the social services field since 1988.

Julie Lux, Strategic Relations Manager has worked in the human services field for 15 years, with the majority of her work in self-directed programs.

5. *MN LEND Session

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: In Schools, and At Home Via Telehealth presented by Maci Brown, MA, BCBA; Adele Dimian, PhD; and Jessica Simacek, PhD, BCaBA

Students in special education are disproportionately exposed to punishment procedures and consequences in school that are linked to detrimental outcomes, like persistent unemployment. Schools are adopting multi-tiered frameworks (MTSS) to support a continuum of evidence-based practices that address student behavioral, mental, and social health. Positive behavioral interventions and supports, PBIS, a type of MTSS, promote routine data-based decision making and the use of evidence-based practices (EBP). Receive an outline of the components of PBIS, learn about school-based examples, and obtain research results from the University of Minnesota on using telehealth to coach parents to implement these evidence-based practices in their homes.

Maci Brown, MA, BCBA is a PhD student in Special Education. She is a board-certified behavior analyst and licensed special education teacher in autism spectrum disorder. Prior to attending UMN, she worked as the autism and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports specialist at the Minnesota Department of Education. Brown also has worked as an autism specialist in Osseo Schools, Houston ISD, and Alaska. She is currently is a graduate research assistant for the TIES project at the Institute for Community Integration and is committed to conducting research and providing services that positively impact teachers, students, and families.

Adele Dimian, PhD is a MNLEND Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration (ICI). She received her PhD in Educational Psychology, Special Education and has a minor in Epidemiology from the School of Public Health. Dimian co-leads the ICI telehealth laboratory and her research focuses on the early development of self-injurious behavior among young children at risk for and with intellectual and developmental disabilities (e.g., autism); assessment and intervention for challenging behavior; and providing coaching and support for families and early intensive behavior intervention providers via telehealth.

Jessica Simacek, PhD, BCaBA is a Research Associate at Institute on Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota. Her PhD is in Educational Psychology, Special Education from the University of Minnesota. Simacek directs the ICI telehealth laboratory and conducts research in the areas of early intervention for children with autism and related neurodevelopmental disabilities, particularly in the use of telehealth as an intervention delivery mechanism. She also serves as faculty in the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND). She has more than 10 years of clinical experience in early intensive behavioral therapy for children

with autism and related neurodevelopmental disabilities, spanning home, center, and school-based settings.

**12-1 p.m. Lunch Sponsored by Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC
- AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open**

1-2 p.m. Breakout Sessions II

1. Navigating Minnesota's System of Supports for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with ASD presented by Nicole Berning, BBA; Erin Farrell, MA, BCBA; Shawn Holmes; and Abbie Wells-Herzog

The focus of this interactive panel presentation is to support families with children, youth, and young adults with autism by offering a clearer understanding of Minnesota's system of supports. Representatives from the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services will provide an overview of services available in education, health care, public health, and social services, as well as tips on how to best access those services. Learn how to coordinate services and bring your questions for the panel.

Nicole Berning is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and works with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Disability Services Division as the Autism Clinical Lead for the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI) benefit. The EIDBI benefit is a medical benefit that provides treatment for people with autism and related conditions up to age 21. Berning currently provides consultation and technical assistance training to early intervention providers across the state on EIDBI policies and procedures. She also provides training to parents and caregivers of children with ASD and related conditions on the services and supports available and how to access them.

Erin Farrell is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and works as an Autism Spectrum Disorders Specialist for the Minnesota Department of Education.

Shawn Holmes is the Early Identification and Intervention Coordinator with the Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Section at the Minnesota Department of Health. She manages a statewide developmental and social-emotional screening program provided through local public health departments for children age birth to 36 months who are at risk of health or developmental issues. Holmes provides statewide technical assistance and training for local public health and other early childhood providers on the use of standardized screening instruments, typical development resources, referral procedures, and connection to local evaluation and early intervention services.

Wells-Herzog has worked for Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) for almost 19 years. During those years she developed a passion and interest in working with young adults and adults on the autism spectrum. She

currently serves as the Autism Specialist for VRS, an agency within the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. She also has two daughters on the autism spectrum.

2. Expanding Early Childhood Strengths-Based Strategies for Autistic Children presented by Sonya Emerick

Learn from an autistic parent of two autistic children as she objectively contrasts neurotypical early childhood development with autistic early childhood development, considers three areas of autistic strength, and discusses support services and educational goals that use and respect those strengths. Session content is based on the presenter's experiences, as well as her personal navigation of early childhood services for her younger child, who has complex communication needs. Learn the value of including the perspective of autistic adults in understanding and supporting the developmental needs of autistic children.

Sonya Emerick is an autistic mother to two autistic children. She's passionate about supporting parents and professionals to develop strengths-based frames for supporting autistic children, and advocates for access to robust Alternative and Augmentative Communication as a comprehensive and evidence-based component of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education for children with complex communication needs.

3. Using Reading to Teach Cognitive, Communication, and Social-Emotional Skills Through Story Grammar Marker presented by Jennifer Iverson

Learn how to use and effectively implement Story Grammar Marker (SGM), created by Maryellen Rooney Moreau. This visual and organizational tool can be used across curriculums and throughout all grade levels targeting cognitive, communication, and social-emotional skills. Students learn to understand and retell stories they have read, tell their own experiences, recognize emotions and motivation of others, take perspective, and improve their written expression.

Jennifer Iverson is a special education teacher in the Mounds View School District. She has been working with students with autism for more than 27 years. Iverson currently works in a Level 3 elementary autism program with students of various levels of social-cognitive learning challenges and is passionate about teaching students to "think" social and uses stories, visuals, and many media sources for understanding and gaining social skills.

4. A Sensory Diet for Adults presented by Olivia James

Finding ways to balance one's sensory needs is an important part of staying emotionally and physically regulated for someone on the spectrum. However, many of the tools and tricks we learn as children and young adults are not work-appropriate or may seem juvenile to adults trying to navigate their world. Learn how to balance professional expectations, adult life, and your

own maturity with your sensory needs to create a sensory diet that is right for you.

Olivia James is the Marketing and Communications Specialist at AuSM, a MN LEND Fellow, and an autistic woman diagnosed at 25. With the unique position of working at an autism organization, James has the ability to balance her professional life with her personal accommodations and share those lessons with other adults on the spectrum.

5. *MN LEND Session

Equity in Autism Identification and Intervention: Challenges, Opportunities, and Local Advances presented by Amanda Sullivan, PhD, LP; Cindy Hillyer, BSN, LSN; Suad Salad, Mariana Walther, and Eleanor Chenoweth.

Obtain an overview of issues of equity in identification and treatment of autism. Part 1 will provide an overview of trends at various levels (national, state, local); research on potential contributors to and implications of disparities; and promising professional approaches to enhance equity and children's outcomes. Part 2 will focus on a school-based initiative, *ASD Families Connected*. The project builds equity in service delivery through family input, data analysis, and continuous improvement to create new services and cross-system coordination to support families from diverse backgrounds in timely access to resources and supports. Speakers include MN LEND Community Fellows.

Dr. Amanda Sullivan directs the School Psychology Program at the University of Minnesota. She also is a licensed psychologist and formerly a certified school psychologist. Dr. Sullivan's scholarship addresses issues related to identification and treatment of special needs among children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, disparities in the educational and health services they receive, and ethical-legal issues in school psychology and special education service delivery. She also has worked with several federally-funded technical assistance centers that addressed civil rights in education and equitable special education identification, placement, and outcomes for diverse learners and high-need students.

Cindy Hillyer is Director of Early Childhood Education at Minneapolis Public Schools. She oversees city-wide programs that serve more than 15,000 children and families each year. Hillyer provides community-wide leadership by serving on several advisory committees and boards addressing health and education outcomes of young children. She uses her passion for creating innovative system design models to build systems change strategies that scale and spread, support organizational effectiveness, and improve health and education outcomes for children and their families.

MN LEND Community Fellows:
Suad Salad

Mariana Walther
Eleanor Chenoweth

2 p.m. Break - AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

2:30-3:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions III

1. Addressing Challenging Behaviors With Parent-Implemented Functional Communication Training presented by Jaclyn Gunderson, MA

Research shows there is a relationship between communication deficits and challenging behavior. Functional Communication Training (FCT) is an intervention that focuses on reducing challenging behavior by understanding the function of the behavior and then teaching an appropriate communication response to replace that challenging behavior. Parents and caregivers are becoming more and more equipped to face barriers to services by instead providing services themselves. Gain a better understanding of parent-implemented FCT and explore factors that may affect the outcomes related to parent-implemented FCT.

Jaclyn Gunderson has a master's degree in counseling and psychological services and 10+ years' experience working with individuals and families in behavioral services. She has worked in early intervention as an individual and family behavior therapist as well as in educational settings. Jaclyn worked for 4 years in autism research at the University of Minnesota and is currently completing her PhD in educational psychology.

2. 15 Music Therapy Strategies for Incorporating Music in the Classroom and Home presented by Lyndie Walker, MT-BC; and Alexa Rosenbaum, MT-BC

Want to use more music with your students and kids, but you're not sure where to start? We can help! Learn how to incorporate music into everyday activities and routines through 15 adaptable resources created by board certified music therapists that work with clients of all ages and ability levels. Discuss goals in areas including self-help, academics, daily living activities, emotional awareness, transitions, and reciprocal communication skills. No music training or experience is required for participation.

Lyndie Walker is the owner and a Board-Certified Music Therapist at Toneworks Music Therapy Services. She works with groups and individuals of all ages and ability levels in schools, homes, and facilities. As an avid supporter of neurodiversity, she provides professional development for educators on inclusive music experiences; hosts the Target Atrium Sensory-Friendly Concerts with the Minnesota Orchestra; and is the director of *Toneworks Camp Art*, a partnership with AuSM.

Alexa Rosenbaum is a Board Certified Music Therapist and Resource

Coordinator at Toneworks Music Therapy Services. She works with groups and individuals of all ages with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Down syndrome, emotional behavior disorders, cerebral palsy, and sensory processing disorders. She provides music therapy services to students ranging from early childhood to transition age at several public, private, and charter schools in the Twin Cities metro. Rosenbaum also provides consultations and services for clients individually in their homes and in the Toneworks clinic.

3. Develop Meaningful Social Skills with Adolescents on the Spectrum: The PEERS Program presented by Jessica Muszynski, EdS; and Christine Peterson, PhD

Discover the importance of helping adolescents develop meaningful social skills by learning about brain development, links between social skills development and mental health, and instructional best practices. Understand the PEERS curriculum, an evidence-based social skills intervention that helps students make and keep friends. This program shifts the focus from what skills adults think students should know to what actually works for students. Presenters will infuse their unique perspectives as researchers, academics, and school-based providers.

Jess Muszynski, EdS is a co-director of the PEERS program and adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin – Stout. She is a certified provider of school-based PEERS through UCLA and has facilitated more than 10 school-based PEERS groups in three school districts. Muszynski also works as a school psychologist for the South Washington County School District.

Dr. Christine Peterson joined the faculty at UW-Stout in 2009 and has served as program director for the school psychology program since 2010. Prior to UW-Stout, she worked at the University of Rochester and Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities in Rochester, NY for seven years, teaching and providing clinical support and consultation to individuals with ASD and DD in clinical; classroom; and school-wide/district settings. Dr. Peterson serves as Co-Director for the UW-Stout PEERS program.

4. Social Narratives: Not Just for Kids presented by Jillian Nelson

Social narratives are a commonly used accommodation for children on the autism spectrum. What if we could expand this support and use it in a variety of contexts with individuals throughout the lifespan and across the spectrum? Learn how to write a basic social narrative while reviewing traditional uses, then jump into innovative uses for individuals that might be seen as “independent”. The session will finish by showing how social narratives can be used to mitigate unexpected behaviors, redirect undesirable behaviors, manage anxiety, increase executive function, and promote self-advocacy and independence.

Jillian Nelson, Community Resource and Policy Advocate from Autism Society of Minnesota, was diagnosed with autism as a young adult. With a degree in

human services and a background in self-advocacy, she has dedicated her career to helping others with autism achieve their goals, advocating for system change, and spreading a message of education and autism acceptance. Nelson currently sits on The Governor's Council for Developmental Disabilities and is a Community Resource and Policy Advocate for AuSM. She also has worked in employment services, helping others with autism secure and retain appropriate, successful employment.

5. *MN LEND Session

Supporting the Transition of Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder presented by Rebekah Hudock, PhD and Kelly Nye-Lengerman, PhD

The transition to adulthood is an extremely stressful time for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families. Many young adults with ASD are disconnected from their communities, underemployed or unemployed, and not enrolling in post-secondary education and training programs at the same rates as their peers. Obtain information and strategies that will assist young adults with ASD and those who support them as they pursue community engagement, community living, employment, and education and training. Preliminary results regarding evidence-based transition programs for families of adolescents and young adults with ASD also will be discussed.

Dr. Rebecca Hudock is a pediatric neuropsychologist and assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, University of Minnesota. She is an expert in diagnosis and therapeutic intervention for individuals with ASD across the lifespan, with particular expertise in serving transition-aged adolescents and young adults. Clinically, Dr. Hudock conducts comprehensive diagnostic evaluations and coordinates treatment programming specifically designed to assist individuals with ASD and their caregivers in accessing supports and navigating the transition to adulthood. Her research focuses on services for individuals with ASD and their families, including social skills intervention, social-emotional development, parenting stress, and transition.

Dr. Kelly Nye-Lengerman is a Research Associate at the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration (ICI). Her work encompasses a broad range of research, evaluation, training, and technical assistance projects. Dr. Nye-Lengerman's research includes projects related to social security programs, employment service innovations for individuals with disabilities, workplace accommodations, and person-centered and inclusive practices supporting community living. Her work provides critical linkages between research and service implementation with a strong emphasis on accessibility to individuals with disabilities and diverse communities. Dr. Nye-Lengerman's work supports transition-aged individuals and young adults as they enter the workforce within their communities.



6-10 p.m. AuSM Fun & Games Gala

Join AuSM for an enchanting evening of food, drinks, games, silent and live auctions, and a celebration of those serving as true inspirations to individuals affected by autism. Gala proceeds benefit programs and services for the Minnesota autism community. [Click here for more information.](#)

Saturday, April 27, 2019

7:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration, AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

8:30-9:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions I

1. Cannabis and Autism Spectrum Disorder presented by Andria Botzet, MA, LAMFT; Linda Skalski, PhD, LP; and Jenna Triana, MD

In this session, members of the University of Minnesota Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science will discuss cannabis and its role in the treatment of autism. Learn about the legal status of cannabis in Minnesota and other information pertaining to medical cannabis, including a review of qualifying conditions, how conditions are determined to be appropriate for medical cannabis, and what role providers play. Gain information about the science surrounding how cannabis might affect ASD symptoms, including both pros and cons, and leave better-equipped to discuss this topic and make well-informed decisions about the use of cannabis in the treatment of ASD.

Andria Botzet is a family therapist within the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota, assisting adolescents, young adults, and families who struggle with substance use and other addiction issues, as well as anxiety, depression, autism, and other life circumstances. She also has more than 20 years of experience working at the University of Minnesota's Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research, conducting research studies on a variety of topics related to adolescent substance use. Botzet also has collaborated with multiple agencies as a subject matter expert in positive parenting and brief intervention techniques.

Dr. Linda Skalski is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at the University of Minnesota. Prior to joining the faculty in 2018, Dr. Skalski completed her PhD in clinical psychology at Duke University and fellowship in addiction at Brown University. Her current research examines

whether concurrent cannabis use impacts treatment of other substance use disorders and psychiatric conditions.

Dr. Jenna Triana is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellow at the University of Minnesota where she also completed medical school. Before her fellowship, Dr. Triana completed her general psychiatry training at the University of Colorado in Denver, where she developed a specific interest in the medical and legal issues around cannabis, seeing many of the pros and cons first-hand.

2. Parent-Implemented Models for Autism Early Intervention: Research, Key Elements, and Implementation presented by Richard Solomon, MD

Most practitioners and policy makers are not aware of the most recent rigorous research on parent-implemented models that use a developmental and relationship-based approach (PIM DRB) for autism early intervention. These models coach and empower parents to provide intensive early intervention through playful interaction. Learn about the recent scientific evidence for PIM DRB, view video examples of the key methods used in these models, and explore the important public policy implications that PIM DRB have for serving un-served and underserved children with ASD.

Dr. Richard Solomon is a developmental and behavioral pediatrician with 25 years of experience helping children who have behavioral and developmental conditions. He has an active clinical practice at The Ann Arbor Center for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics in Ann Arbor, Mich. where he sees hundreds of children with autism and their families every year. As an internationally recognized expert in the field of autism services, Dr. Solomon presents about autism science, autism early intervention, and parent-implemented models.

3. Parent Perceptions of Barriers and Facilitators to Obtaining a Diagnosis of Autism, presented by Pang Chaxiong, MA: Alefyah Shipchandler, BA; and Jennifer Hall-Lande, PhD

Early intervention can make a significant difference for individuals with autism; however, access to intensive intervention typically requires a clinical diagnosis. For many families, obtaining such a diagnosis is challenging. In this session, learn about what parents report as barriers and facilitators to obtaining a diagnosis of ASD for their child. Topics will include: what barriers prevent families from accessing an early diagnosis of autism; what parents can do to support other parents in seeking a diagnosis for their child; and what researchers, health professionals, and school personnel can do to better support parents through the diagnostic process.

Pang Chaxiong is a doctoral student in the Educational Psychology - Special Education program and a MN LEND Fellow. Pang has a strong interest in identifying children with ASD and connecting individuals with ASD and their families to evidence-based practices earlier. At the heart of this work, Pang is

interested in examining the role of culture and how it influences the identification and treatment decisions of families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Pang also is a proud sister of a brother with autism.

Alefyah Shipchandler is a doctoral student in the Educational Psychology, Special Education program at the University of Minnesota. Shipchandler is interested in social and cultural variables that affect obtaining diagnoses and services for individuals with special needs, especially autism and severe disabilities. With her diverse background, the identification of services in low resource areas and the establishment of effective intervention is an area of research interest for her.

Dr. Jennifer Hall-Lande is a Researcher, Educational Psychologist, and MN LEND faculty at the University of Minnesota. She conducts research in autism prevalence and early identification of developmental delays. She is a principal investigator on the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network and has led many “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” projects. Dr. Hall-Lande was selected to serve as CDC’s Act Early Ambassador in Minnesota from 2014-2018. Through her work, she has built many strong partnerships with families and built many community connections.

4. Autism in Pink: Growing Up Female on the Autism Spectrum presented by Nemeh Al-Sarraj

Nemeh Al-Sarraj has lived a unique journey with autism: diagnosed late in life, her autism did not present in the same way as it did for her brother. She grew up as a caretaker, both as a PCA and for her brother, before she learned that she also was on the spectrum. Learn about the challenges of being female and on the spectrum, as well as how she helped to educate her community while managing her own struggles.

Nemeh Al-Sarraj is an alumna of Metropolitan State University, where she graduated with a BA in Human Services with an emphasis in Disability Studies in 2016.

9:30 a.m. Break - AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

9:45-10:45 a.m. Breakout Sessions II

1. Community Building: Current Activities, Groups, and Initiatives in the Autism Community presented by Tom Cox and Laura Dettloff

Community building is vital because autistic people and their families are too isolated. Friendships, organizations, and informal networks give strength to a community, support individuals, and drive change in society. With our growing numbers, autistic adults have the opportunity develop a thriving community, along with our families and other allies. In a community, we can

support one another and empower individuals to contribute to society based on personal strengths. Different approaches are being used for activities, groups, and other initiatives. These include social groups, support groups, mentorship programs, accessible culture and arts events, and programs in secondary and post-secondary education. Learn about issues and activities in community building and how leaders and groups are actively involved. Meet people who are making changes in our community and connect with groups that could become part of your life.

Tom Cox pursues community building as an AuSM Board of Directors member and other nonprofit organizations. Cox has been an entrepreneur, an IT consultant, a writer, an advocate in the GLBTQA community, and a restaurant owner.

Laura Dettloff was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome at the age of 39. She has since discovered that most of the thinking and research about autism done to date revolves around children, and that little consideration has been given to the needs of adults on the spectrum. Dettloff serves on AuSM's Board of Directors and is an administrator and writer for a peer-to-peer mental health support site.

2. Understanding Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits presented by Nate Gurol, JD

Is your child or young adult unable to work due to his or her autism diagnosis? Many parents are unaware that their child with ASD may be eligible for a Social Security benefit called Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Learn about gathering necessary information and documentation needed to apply for SSI benefits, how an attorney can help with your application, the application timeline and process, and how the Social Security Administration makes a determination on your claim.

Nate Gurol graduated from the University of Oregon School of Law in May 2015. Since graduating from law school, he has worn many different hats, including holding positions as a Legislative Fellow for the New York State Senate and an Attorney Editor at Thomson Reuters. Gurol joined Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC. as a Staff Attorney in 2018. In that position he has assisted numerous individuals and families with special needs in a variety of areas of law, including guardianship petitions, divorces, child support, criminal expungements, and applying for Social Security benefits.

3. Accessibility for All: Leveraging Community Partnerships to Provide Inclusive Spaces presented by Robyn DeCourcy and Renee Grassi

Learn how AuSM and the Dakota County Library have partnered to improve programs, services, and spaces to intentionally support autistic individuals and their families. Obtain tips and strategies for community organizations, families and caregivers, and disabled self-advocates in using public resources

to gain informal learning experiences and develop communication, job, literacy, and life skills.

Robyn DeCourcy has been working with individuals on the autism spectrum for more than 11 years. She specializes in early intervention for children with autism, having spent eight years as an early childhood autism educator for ISD 196. In addition to a self-designed BS degree in Liberal Arts and Autism Studies, DeCourcy also obtained a Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders from the University of Minnesota. She currently serves as an AuSM Education Specialist, where her duties include leading community trainings, developing social skills curricula, and consulting about sensory-friendly and inclusive spaces.

Author, blogger, speaker, trainer, and librarian, Renee Grassi is a nationally-recognized leader in library services for individuals with autism and other disabilities. In 2012, Grassi was named Library Journal Mover & Shaker for her work in this area. She was one of the founding Board Members of Illinois's Targeting Autism Initiative and co-founder of S.N.A.I.L.S., an Illinois networking group dedicated to developing more accessible libraries. In addition to being Youth Services Manager at Dakota County Library, she chairs her library's accessibility team.

4. Sensory Differences: Tools and Treatment Options for Chronic Pain in Autism presented by Erin Dykhuizen, MA, MSW, LICSW

Chronic pain often looks different in autistic individuals. In this presentation Dykhuizen will discuss how autistic individuals may experience chronic pain differently and the factors involved in this. She will discuss ways in which psychotherapeutic treatments for chronic pain can be especially helpful for autistic individuals with chronic pain. She will also demonstrate a technique that participants can use for chronic pain management and lead a discussion among participants of how traditional pain management services can be made more accessible for autistic people.

Erin Brandel Dykhuizen, MA, MSW, LICSW, is a psychotherapist in private practice in St. Paul. She specializes in working with adults with chronic pain and trauma. Her interest in ASD stems from having children on the spectrum and working with autistic adults with chronic pain. She is a Diplomate of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy, certified in Prolonged Exposure therapy, trained in EMDR therapy, and has advanced training in clinical hypnosis. She holds an MSW from the University of St. Thomas and St. Catherine's University, a Master's Degree from Yale University, and a Bachelor's Degree from Grinnell College.

10:45 a.m. Break - AuSM Bookstore and Exhibits Open

11 a.m.-12 p.m. Breakout Sessions III

1. Autism, Relationships, and Sexuality: Having Fulfilling Relationships presented by Robert McCauley

People on the spectrum frequently are portrayed as lacking empathy and having a childish mindset. These perceptions, along with difficulties with social interactions, create barriers to fulfilling romantic and sexual relationships, something of which adults with autism are capable. Understand these barriers and explore methods of approaching them effectively.

Robert McCauley graduated from Widener University, known by many in the field as the “Harvard of sexuality education.” They currently work at Choices Psychotherapy in St. Louis Park as an outpatient therapist with specialization in relationships and sex therapy. McCauley has years of experience in both professional and personal realms with people on the autism spectrum, and has helped people on the spectrum as well as their partners to have more fulfilling relationships.

2. APPy Hour: Apps for AAC-A Feature Comparison presented by Bridget Gilormini, MST-SLP, ATP

In this fast-paced APPy Hour presentation, learn how to navigate through the many communication app choices by doing a feature comparison. Features such as language system, cost, technical support, and more will be compared across a smaller set of robust AAC apps. Gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences between apps for communication and feel empowered to make better decisions when matching a user’s need to the features of a communication app. Discussion also will include case/stand options; speaker/amplification; and options for purchasing as a dedicated device through insurance.

Bridget Gilormini is a RESNA certified Assistive Technology Professional and has been in the field of assistive technology and special education for more than 20 years, first as an SLP in the Lakeville, MN public schools from 1998-2007, as Director of PACER Center's Simon Technology Center 2007-2018 and now as an Assistive Technology Specialist with Forbes AAC. She has been a public speaker for more than 15 years speaking nationally at Closing the Gap, ATIA, and many local and state events. Gilormini is passionate about helping those without a voice find their voice.

3. Promoting Family Community Integration: The Interplay of Family Adaptation, Resilience, and Culture presented by Beth Dierker, PhD; Amy Gunty; and Pang Chaxiong, MA

Families of children with ASD report experiencing extremely high levels of stress and social isolation; however, many families maintain and even increase family functioning and find ways to integrate into their communities. Learn from a visual model of a family’s journey navigating ASD. Presenters will use this model to supplement existing family resilience theories, embracing the realities of families' day-to-day lives. The role of culture and its impact on family experiences, perceptions, assumptions, and world-view will be

highlighted throughout. Obtain a more complete picture of family resilience and strategies for fostering it.

Beth Dierker, PhD is a writer, researcher, and parent of two children, one of whom is on the spectrum. She is Executive Director of Communities Engaging Autism (CEA). As a former MN LEND Fellow and through her role with CEA, Beth seeks to build bridges between research, practice, and everyday life.

Amy Gunty is a researcher in the Institute on Community Integration and a doctoral student in the Department of Family Social Science, both at the University of Minnesota. She has worked with children and families for 20 years, 14 of which she has spent supporting children with developmental disabilities or emotional and behavioral disorders and their families. She has also worked in research for nine years, focusing on a variety of topics that all center around recognizing and enhancing the strengths and resilience that are inherent in all people.

Pang Chaxiong is a doctoral student in the Educational Psychology - Special Education program and a MN LEND Fellow. Pang has a strong interest in identifying children with autism spectrum disorder and connecting individuals with ASD and their families to evidence-based practices earlier. At the heart of this work, Pang is interested in examining the role of culture and how it influences the identification and treatment decisions of families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Pang also is a proud sister of a brother with autism.

The overall sponsors of the 24th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference are Accra, Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes, and MN LEND. The event also is sponsored by Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC and Minnesota Independence College & Community. Thank you for your support!

Conference Registration Policy

Registrations will not be accepted without payment or purchase order. Registration confirmations will be sent via e-mail by April 19, 2019. Please include your e-mail address on the registration form. Refunds less a \$15 processing fee will be given for cancellations received in writing to events@ausm.org seven business days prior to the conference. Following this date, no refunds will be given. Requests for transfers of registration to another individual will be considered on a case-by-case basis.