

NAPSEC Annual Leadership Conference

January 15-18, 2023

The Hotel Monteleone New Orleans, LA



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WELCOME

Welcome to the luxurious Hotel Monteleone in the heart of the French Quarter and the 2023 NAPSEC Annual Leadership Conference!

After cancelling the 2021 and 2022 Annual Leadership Conferences, the NAPSEC Conference Committee was excited to plan for a return to an in-person conference. As the conference moves west from Savannah, we welcome you to New Orleans, Louisiana. Nicknamed the "Big Easy," New Orleans is known for its round-the-clock nightlife, vibrant live-music scene and spicy, singular cuisine reflecting its history as a melting pot of French, African and American cultures.



In addition to the Hotel Monteleone's historic location and luxurious amenities, the conference committee has designed a diverse program that continues to support NAPSEC's strategic goals of Growth, Advocacy and Leadership. Nationally recognized keynote presenters as well as presentations from Member Programs will highlight many of the week's activities. Change Your Story: The Power of Resilience in Cultivating Healthy Leaders and a Healthy Team, Leave Average Behind by Embracing Neurodiversity, Positive Exposure, Legal Updates affecting NAPSEC Member Programs, Addressing Staff Retention and Satisfaction, Setting Students up for a Successful Transition and much more!

As we spend this week together, I challenge all of you to spend some time exploring this beautiful city and networking with your fellow attendees. NAPSEC's greatest resource continues to be its members. Networking with member programs will bring so much added value to your visit.

A special thank you to the NAPSEC Conference Committee and Danielle Damm, NAPSEC's Executive Director/CEO for all their hard work on the conference.

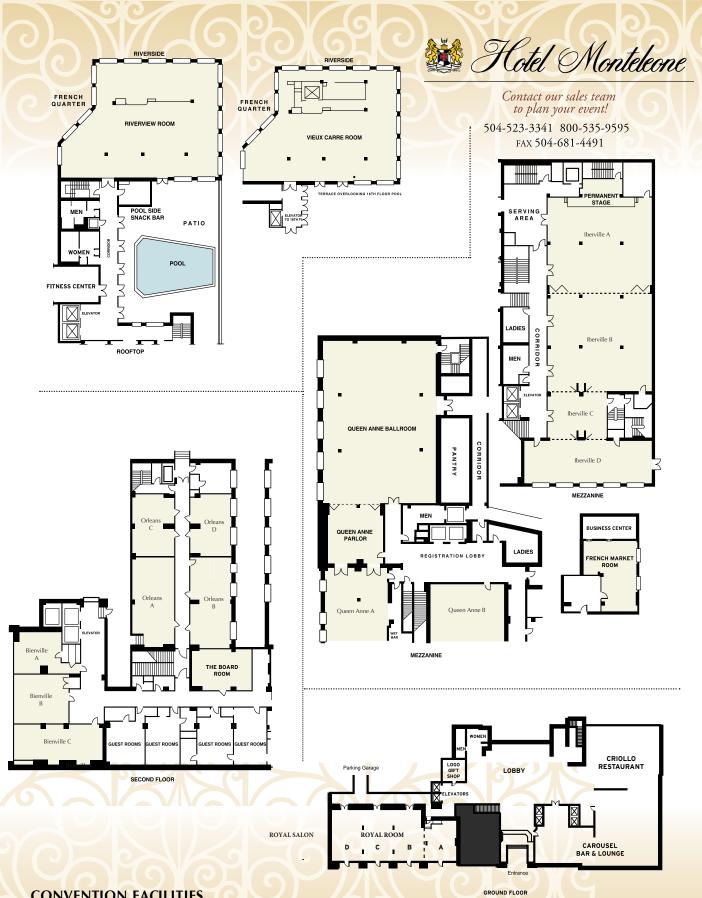
Finally, save the date for our return to Savannah, Georgia, January 14-17, 2024.

Jonathan Evans

ACCEL

NAPSEC Conference Committee Chair





SUNDAY, JANUARY 15TH

12:00pm - 5:00pm

Queen Anne Mezzanine

Conference Registration

12:00pm - 1:00pm

Orleans D

NAPSEC Board of Directors/NCASES Commission Luncheon

1:00pm – 3:00pm

Orleans B

NAPSEC Board of Directors Meeting

1:00pm – 5:00pm

Queen Anne Parlor/Queen A

Exhibitor Set Up

3:00pm - 4:30pm

Orleans A

NCASES Commissioners Meeting

6:00pm – 7:00pm

Riverview

VIP Reception for New Attendees

This reception provides an opportunity for first time attendees to meet NAPSEC Board Members and other new attendees in a smaller setting immediately before the Welcome Reception.

7:00pm - 8:30pm

Riverview

Welcome Reception

This event is the perfect time to catch up with colleagues and friends and to meet new ones as we kick off the conference.



MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH

7:30am - 8:00am

Queen Anne Parlor/Queen A

Breakfast

7:30am - 2:30pm

Queen Anne Mezzanine

Conference Registration

8:00am – 9:30am - Keynote

Queen Anne Ballroom

Change Your Story: The Power of Resilience in Cultivating Healthy Leaders and a Healthy Team Chad Hymas

A motivating presentation must be accompanied with solutions that change and inspire lives. Today more than ever, people are looking not simply for entertainment, but for direction and solid answers. Chad Hymas has spent the last ten years developing solutions that transformed his life. His stories are moving, his courage unprecedented, and his insights ... profound. His accomplishments provide a powerful litmus test to the validity of these dynamic principles! In this presentation Chad will teach you to:

- Conquer the *emotional paralysis* that robs vision and momentum.
- Turn obstacles into incredible opportunities.
- Harness the power of change and rise above to progress.
- Tap into unseen personal power and inner strength to accomplish seemingly impossible dreams!

10:00am - 10:30am

Queen Anne Parlor/Queen A

Coffee Break

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal A

A. Performance Reviews - How Do You Rate?

Harry Schaeffer, Joelle Rossi

A truly effective performance review system should have an outcome of quality improvement for the organization as the result of the improved individual performance of each employee. However, all too often, the entire review process including the planning, preparation, and review meeting is often viewed by employees, including leadership, as nothing more than a necessary ineffective and unpleasant task. This presentation is not intended to be a lecture about how to conduct performance reviews, but rather a discussion about performance review related activities. Each presenter will share his/her experiences conducting and participating in performance reviews and offer perspectives of both reviewer and reviewee. Attendees will be encouraged to do the same in this collaborative search for a meaningful performance review system.



MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal B

B. Legal Update

David Rubin

This session will review developments in Congress and the courts over the past year of interest to private special education schools including liability for IDEA and Section 504 claims, relationships with sending districts, employment issues, the applicability of "stay put," COVID-related rights and obligations and other legal matters affecting your institution.

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal C

C. Setting Students up for a Successful Transition, Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Future Success Stacey Herman and Becca Colangelo

Neurodiversity, system collaborations, and transition services for youth with disabilities are some of most cutting edge topics discussed amongst educators, families, and individuals with disabilities. Fostering cooperation between different programs is critical to achieving transformative results for people with significant barriers to employment and community engagement. This session will provide an overview of best practices to set students up for a successful transition to adulthood, discussing the various pathways post-high school, and the importance of engaging stakeholders in the process. This multi-disciplinary, person-centered approach empowers youth with disabilities and their families to educate themselves, to be able to make a well-informed decision about their future. The Neurodiversity at Work program at the Kennedy Krieger Institute is built on a foundation of interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration. This session will discuss critical lessons learned and emerging practices for other youth serving agencies, organizations, and programs.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Queen Anne Ballroom

State of the Association Annual Meeting & Federal Update - lunch provided

1:30pm - 2:30pm

French Market and Parlor

NAPSEC Board of Directors Meeting

1:45pm - 2:45pm

Orleans A

How to Prepare for NCASES Accreditation

Participants will be provided with an overview of the accreditation process (i.e. origins, philosophy, mission, organizational structure) and a summary of the NCASES process from the time a program applies for accreditation through the completion of the site review and the final report.

1:45pm - 2:45pm

Orleans B

NCASES Site Reviewer Training

Help support our mission to promote excellence in special education. This session will train participants to be a NCASES Site Reviewer. Once complete, participant names will be placed on the NCASES Site Reviewer list and you will be notified of opportunities to participate in upcoming site visits for applicant programs across the United States.

3:00pm - 6:00pm

Vieux Carre

Exhibitor Reception and Wine Tasting

Join our conference exhibitors for a glass of wine, a bite to eat, and another invaluable NAPSEC networking opportunity.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17TH

7:30am - 8:15am Queen Anne A

Breakfast Roundtable - Staff Retention: Coaching and Mentoring

An informal opportunity to join a facilitated discussion with other conference attendees.

7:30am - 8:30am

Queen Anne Parlor/Queen A

Breakfast

7:30am - 12:00pm

Queen Anne Parlor/ Queen A

Conference Registration

8:30am - 10:00am - Keynote

Queen Anne Ballroom

Leave Average Behind by Embracing Neurodiversity

Tom D'Eri

Tom D'Eri will share his experience in building a thriving business that employs individuals with autism for 80% of its staff. His family's business, Rising Tide Car Wash, is successful not in spite of his team's differences but because of them. Tom will share how embracing both the strengths and perceived weaknesses of neurodiverse talent has helped Rising Tide improve quality, create delightful customer experiences and improve all aspects of operations. Whether you're trying to help businesses in your community see the value in employing the neurodiverse, interested in launching a social enterprise or simply looking for a unique strategy for improving your organization, Tom's talk will help you see that everyone wins when anyone can win.

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Session

Royal B

A. Hire, Train, Motivate, Retain: Addressing Retention and Staff Satisfaction

Rory Conran, Jason Kudelka, Michael Farrelly and Tracy Lee

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, annual total employee separations in the field of educational services was 30% in 2019, 42% in 2020 and 26% in 2021. The COVID pandemic notably skewed these statistics, as well as heightened the need for schools to support staff mental health and prevent burnout. As a result, school leaders and administrators have had to rethink tools to recruit staff and equally important strategies to retain staff across all job categories. The ultimate goals are to strengthen the consistency of student instruction and team cohesiveness, particularly for students with notable and complex special education needs. During this session, presenters and attendees together will share and dissect financial considerations, staff incentives, creative school culture, recruitment and overall displays of kindness and appreciation. Please come prepared to grow together as a network of special education leaders and administrators!



TUESDAY, JANUARY 18TH

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Session

Royal A

B. Switching to Plan B

Thomas K. Hyatt

In these challenging and changing times, opportunities abound for reimagining your organization. Whether you are looking to sustain or grow, to streamline, to affiliate or merge, or to gracefully wind down, it is a good time to have a Plan B. This session will address options for each of these paths and will consider risks and opportunities that may arise.

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Session

Royal C

C. Working Effectively with the Media

Abbie Fink

Abbie S. Fink, vice president/general manager of HMA Public Relations will provide insider information on how to effectively work with the media, both traditional and digital. She'll provide tips for getting your news and information out to your target audiences. Whether that be through news releases, story pitches, special events and seminars or through digital media such as blog content and social media, Fink will help you make friends with the media and influencers and how to make the most of those relationships. Participants will have the chance to practice what they learn as part of this interactive workshop.

12:15pm - 1:45pm

Queen Anne Ballroom

Celebrating NAPSEC Awards Luncheon

During this special event we will recognize NAPSEC Awardees and the NCASES programs which were NCASES accredited this year. You don't want to miss this!

2:00pm - 3:00pm

Bienville C

Public Policy Meeting

This meeting is open to any interested attendees. Learn more about NAPSEC's policy priorities and advocacy efforts. Bring your questions, ideas and experiences.

3:00pm - 4:00pm

Bienville B

NCASES Process Committee Meeting

4:00pm - 5:00pm

Bienville B

NCASES Standards Committee Meeting

5:30pm - 6:30pm

Royal D

NCASES Gathering

Stop by at the end of the day to relax and learn more about NCASES. We encourage current site reviewers to attend so we can thank you for donating your time and expertise on behalf of NCASES.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18TH

7:30am - 8:15am Queen Anne A

Breakfast Roundtable - Adult Services Subcommittee

An informal opportunity to connect with other adult service providers to discuss workforce issues, recruitment and retention, service delivery models, and other issues of importance.

7:30am - 8:15am Queen Anne B

Breakfast Roundtable - Restraint and Seclusion

Join other private special education providers for a facilitated discussion on the use of physical restraint and seclusion in schools.

7:30am - 8:30am

Queen Anne Parlor/Queen A

Breakfast

8:30am - 10:00am - Keynote

Queen Anne Ballroom

Positive Exposure

Rick Guidotti

Rick Guidotti will share his journey as a fashion photographer disenchanted with the narrow parameters of the beauty standard to forming POSITIVE EXPOSURE a non profit organization that utilizes the arts to celebrate the beauty and richness of our shared humanity. Beginning with the genetic condition albinism, Guidotti will highlight a series of events that sparked this transition and continue to drive the organization 25 years later. You will be given opportunities to see beyond disease, beyond diagnosis and will be introduced to the authentic beauty of individuals living with physical, genetic, intellectual and behavioral differences from around the globe in a celebration of human diversity. CHANGE HOW YOU SEE, SEE HOW YOU CHANGE!

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal A

A. Maryland's Fight for Teacher Salary Parity

Dr. David Stone, Sue Barnes-McLendon

This workshop will follow the efforts of Maryland's statewide organization, MANSEF, and its members in their fight to achieve salary parity with public school teachers, culminating in the passage of supplement funding in the 2021 legislative session. This multimedia presentation will include commentary from contributors to the effort. Each will share their piece of the story of the efforts and persistence from the capital to the classroom that led to their success. Opportunities for questions regarding your specific state's issues will be available.



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18TH

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal B

B. Nonprofit Boards: The Good, The Bad and The Awful

Ken Berger and Jamie Stewart

What are the qualities of nonprofit boards that work well and those that don't? Two seasoned nonprofit CEOs will share their expertise and recommendations for best practices, as well as how to address various challenges you are likely to encounter. One of the CEO's will provide suggested best practices for a more traditional board structure and the other will discuss the Carver model. Along the way, examples of their own real world experiences with good, bad and awful boards will be shared. In addition, a variety of helpful tools and resources will be recommended to further your knowledge in this area.

10:30am - 12:00pm - Concurrent Sessions

Royal C

C. Undoing Racism: Organizing Principles for Leaders

Dr. Kimberley Richards, Ronald Chisom

Through dialogue, reflection, and presentations, this session invites participants to reflect on their own socialization and racialization process. The process also explores how people, programs and organizations can work together to elevate humanity while learning from history, sharing culture, understanding race and racism, developing leadership and accountability, networking, and gatekeeping. These are the anti-racist principles and values The People's Institute brings to organizing and racial equity work in both communities and the institutions it serves.

12:15pm - 12:45pm

Queen Anne Ballroom

Raffle Drawings and Farewell

1:30pm - 5:30pm

English Turn

Rich Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament



CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

Tarpey Group

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CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Sunday, January 15th

Welcome Reception Partlow Insurance

Monday, January 16th

General Session/Keynote
Kennedy Krieger School Programs
Coffee Break
Mackey Mitchell

Tuesday, January 17th

Breakfast ScenicView Academy

Rich Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament Partlow Insurance Agency – Hole-in-One Sponsor

Golf Hole Sponsorships Tarpey Group

Golf Tournament Drink Cart Bancroft

Wednesday, January 18th

Breakfast Ukeru Systems

Coffee Break Kennedy Krieger School Programs



2022 Educator of the Year

Lois Mays, LiFT Academy

A Florida native, Lois Mays was born and raised in St. Petersburg by passionate public servants: a schoolteacher and a firefighter. A graduate of Pinellas County schools, she continued her education at the University of South Florida. As President of Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society, Mrs. Mays led the charge for inclusivity in opposition to self-contained learning.

She graduated from USF in 1994 with a degree in Elementary Education and spent the next 11 years teaching reading and language arts to middle school children. In 2005, she earned her Masters' Degree in Educational Leadership and left the classroom to become a middle school administrator.

Mrs. Mays has served as a school principal in Florida, Tennessee, and Alabama, specializing in turning around failing schools. Much of her success has come from overhauling the special education programs within the schools she has led with her passion, leadership, and commitment to her students' success.



Since 2017, Mrs. Mays has served as the Director of LiFT University Transition Program and LiFT Adult Day Program, where she has worked to establish meaningful partnerships in the community to afford her students increased and better opportunities in education and employment so they may expand their capacity to live independently. Mrs. Mays is an innovator and believes every young person can be a flourishing part of their community. She devotes each day to making this happen, ensuring that her students receive the essential skills they need to be self-sufficient while living with neurodiversity (autism, Down syndrome, ADHD, developmental delays, and other disabilities). In her four years at LiFT, she and her team have grown the Transition and Day programs by creating a LiFT specific life-skills curriculum, created a mobile classroom to utilize out in the community, created partnerships with over 25+ local businesses/organizations that provide internship opportunities, and created three self-sustaining microbusinesses that employ our neurodiverse adults.

Mrs. Mays has the unique gift of being able to find her students' innate talents and leverage them to do something they never thought they would have the ability to do. Each student that enters LiFT is positively changed by the work that Mrs. Mays does each day. When she is not in the classroom teaching or at an internship providing one-onone job coaching for one of her students, she is out in the community spreading the world about LiFT's programs and encouraging employers to embrace diversity and inclusion in the workplace. She serves as an advocate for her students, a supporter for their family members even during their most challenging times, and as a leader in the landscape of equity for the neurodiverse. She lives by the LiFT's motto: "Change a Life, Change the World," and knows that education doesn't just stop in the classroom.... That's just where it begins!





2022 Direct Care Worker of the Year

Amber Wood, ScenicView Academy

Amber Wood is one of those staff members who stands out in a very big way for her exceptional warmth, kindness, and customer service to our students and their families and all those with whom she serves. As a member of the Admissions team at ScenicView Academy, one of Amber's primary roles is to work closely with our potential students, new students and their parents - supporting them as they explore and transition into our program. Amber is often the first person from ScenicView Academy to talk with a potential family on the phone, and to welcome them for a tour on our campus.

Amber is the ideal person in this role, as she has a knack for setting people at ease. We consistently hear from many about the huge impact Amber has on bringing comfort, reassurance, trust, and confidence to people as they get to know our program. Amber's love and compassion is not only felt by those who interact with her, but these attributes make a huge difference in helping students feel cared for.



Amber's efforts also have a big impact on students' parents, helping them feel more confident and reassured in sending their young adult child to reside with us. At a recent student graduation at ScenicView, multiple parents embraced Amber with emotion to express gratitude for the care and concern she provided them. Amber is an outstanding advocate for Autism services in the community. She represents ScenicView Academy in the community as a leader in the Autism Resources of Utah County Council, connecting families with needed resources and services. In addition, Amber is a leader and organizer for AutCon, a ScenicView hosted convention for autistic adults. Amber is also the liaison between ScenicView Academy and a non-profit community theater organization that provides free theater tickets to our students as a result of the services and facilities that Amber and ScenicView provide to the theater.

Here are some quotes about Amber from staff:

- "Amber is consistently going the extra mile to make sure that our students and their families are comfortable and empowered. She builds relationships so easily."
- "Amber has a unique ability to make instant connections and help everyone she communicates with feel valued and important. She greets everyone with a warm smile and makes you feel like you are the most important person in the room."

Here are some quotes about Amber from new students:

- "I could tell from the start that Amber was someone who cared about me. She helped me and my parents feel comfortable and excited about coming to ScenicView."
- "Amber has a great smile. I know I can ask her anything and she will help me. She doesn't leave people hanging. She makes sure they are helped."

Amber is extraordinary with her efforts to connect with entities in the community on many levels. The tremendous impact she has on each and every student and their family is something that sets Amber apart. She has truly changed the lives of many people due to her high level of genuine warmth and caring.

Amber is the epitome of one of ScenicView Academy's founder's principles: "Remember the one."



2022 Related Service Provider of the Year

Lisa Bell, Chapel Hill Academy

Lisa Bell is an extraordinary school nurse. In her eight years on our staff, I have been impressed with her dedication and commitment to our students. She strives to teach the students independence by handling their own medical issues, educating them so that they can identify and understand what is happening in their bodies. Our asthmatic, diabetic and students with seizures have a better understanding and control which in turn enables them to focus more on the classroom and learning. With this elevated level of understanding, we see fewer behavioral incidents over control of medical concerns. Our ADHD students have a better understanding of how diet and medications can interact to influence how they feel and act. From COVID and illness to medication identification and purpose, Lisa ensures that each student (and staff member) in her care are fully aware and educated as to how to be the healthiest they can be.

Lisa presents with a level headed calmness and unflappable persona which she honed over the years working in and eventually running an OR within a hospital. She was presented with Lincoln Park's Civil Service Award by the Mayor and Chief of Police for her quick actions when one of our students was severely injured in an accident within our halls. Lisa's quick response and medical skill saved the student's life from a severed artery.



Our students, staff, and families have benefited from Lisa's commitment to the health and safety of our school. Lisa has always worked in conjunction with Lincoln Park's Health Department to assure that our school is up to and above the standards needed to maintain a safe and healthy environment. During the COVID epidemic, she checked on many disabled and elderly residents to make sure they were able to schedule vaccinations and receive medical care and supplies if needed. Actually making and coordinating the transportation to the appointment if necessary. She has spent countless hours working with our administration to learn and develop COVID protocols. Our school was able to open in July 2020 because of her hard work and dedication. We were used as an example of how the protocols should look and what the classroom structure could be. Lisa toured many school administrators and nurses, representing both public and private schools, throughout our building to assist them in developing their own opening plans. Due to Lisa's diligence, we have not had a confirmed COVID transmission with the school. In her spare time, Lisa sews masks for anyone who asks, creating over 1000 masks so far AND crochets superhero hats to donate to children with cancer.

In February 2020, as the rise of COVID panic started, Lisa was contacted by another school nurse and was asked if she knew anyone in the State she could talk to about the virus. Seeing a gap in knowledge and communication, Lisa organized a zoom meeting with a few fellow school nurses. The first meeting was on March 18th. A mere five days after NJ schools were closed. The nurses met 3 times a week and started with 8 participants. The main focus of the group was dissemination of information, as updates and guidance were coming from multiple channels. This guidance was used to help inform school administrators as to how and when schools could be ready to reopen. They had no idea that the state would be closed until July. Over the Spring, the nurses' group grew to include 86 nurses made up of private and public schools. Lisa kept attending all of the state and federal webinars and read all the guidance updates. Working in conjunction with administration, Lisa helped in creating protocols and procedures for the staff, students, and families. So that everyone returning felt comfortable re-entering after 4 months away.

Our Reopening Plan documents were shared with all ASAH schools and anyone who needed it. As the virus continued to change, so too did the focus of the Nurses' Group. With proven procedures in place, the group began to focus on the anxiety levels of the students and parents from being at home. Working with staff on implementing and encouraging students to follow those procedures. Most importantly, they continued to meet on a monthly basis to make sure each evolution of the virus, public policy, federal guidance, or mandate was understood by the entirety of the school stakeholders.

Lisa's leadership and all of our school nurses' were honored at our recent ASAH conference in November. We are proud of Lisa and her contributions to our school, community and field of special education!



2023 Educator of the Year

Stephanie Royer, Trousdale School

Stephanie Royer, Lead Teacher of Trousdale School, is extremely deserving of the Educator of the Year Award for 2022. She has tirelessly committed herself to the students and staff in pursuit of our vision – Learning for Life. She also completes our leadership team while navigating the nuances of husband-andwife directors (HA!). We are appreciative of your support with this award, but more importantly we honor the opportunity to celebrate with her.

Stephanie started her career at Trousdale School innocently enough. In the spring of 2010, she requested to join a prospective student who was seeking a tour exploring transition options after high school. Shannon Clark, Executive Director, asked if she might consider teaching at Trousdale School; she declined a full-time position but accepted a summer role. After three weeks in her temporary spot, she asked if we might reconsider the offer for a full-time role. The last twelve years have been rewarding to watch her personal and professional growth.



The school sought NCASES accreditation as a requirement for State of TN Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities licensure. Stephanie was a pioneer blazing a trail for adults with intellectual disabilities by building the education staff and developing the academic curriculum. Stephanie knows opportunities don't just happen; you create them.

Following accreditation, Stephanie took the challenge of building the vocational program. Our students work independently in the community, but the program needed a framework to promote our students. Stephanie was diligent in developing goals and objectives to expand our students' strengths. Stephanie knows opportunities don't just happen; you create them.

Following graduate school, Stephanie developed a pipeline to communicate with local high schools. Each year, Stephanie takes a group of our students to visit area high schools serving as ambassadors exhibiting life as an adult with life choices, a job and developing independence. Stephanie knows opportunities don't just happen; you create them.

In conclusion, Stephanie would say her drive is inspired by Trousdale School. But we all know Trousdale School is driven because of Stephanie. Someone once stated, "You really can change the world if you care enough." How does Stephanie accomplish this? She makes herself available and lets others know her goals. She is continually creative and innovative because she dives deep in her work and passion. Stephanie is willing to explore new ideas, get out of her comfort zone and push herself to learn new skills.

Stephanie knows opportunities don't just happen; you create them.





2023 Direct Care Worker of the Year

Jackie Kocak, LifeScape Specialty Schools

Jackie Kocak, Lead Teaching Assistant at LifeScape Specialty Schools, is the embodiment of everything you would expect of this year's Direct Care Worker of the Year. Each day Jackie shows up to work for her students, for her team, and for the mission of empowering people to live their best lives.

As a young, newly married woman, Jackie began her career in 1982. She worked in the classrooms supporting children with complex medical needs for six years. With two young children at home Jackie struggled to part from her students but ultimately decided to open her own in-home daycare and ran that successfully for 14 years. In 2002, Jackie's heart was calling her back to her students and she returned to the classroom and has spent the last 20 changing the lives of her students. She laughs with them. She holds their hand when they need it.



She helps support them to achieve bigger and better. She is their voice when they cannot speak it on their own. She does with them vs. for them. She is their cheerleader. She is their friend.

Jackie has continued to grow in her role over the years, but never wanted to leave the classroom. She has continued to grow her skills to ensure that she is always best supporting her students. Jackie is EVERYTHING that you can ask for: she mentors other staff; she supports her teacher; she is a quiet gentle presence in the lives of her students; she comes to work with an amazing positive attitude; she is thorough and ensures that all of the other staff are too because she understands that the work they are doing in the classroom is exactly why these students are here - what happens today makes a difference tomorrow and 10 and 20 years down the road; she is an advocate for her students, for her role, and for the field; Jackie is always the kindest team player you will ever meet!

This year when the school year comes to a close, so will Jackie's career at LifeScape. After nearly 30 years of supporting children with disabilities, she will retire to spend more time with her husband, David. People like Jackie are simply irreplaceable, but her impact at LifeScape will be felt for years to come! There is no more fitting way to honor Jackie and her career, than with this award.





2023 Related Service Provider of the Year

Lauren Ventura, Benway School

Lauren Ventura, LCSW, was chosen to be nominated by the Benway School for her countless contributions to the school and the Passaic County, New Jersey community. She has collaborated with a number of organizations such as the Wayne Alliance, Alliance for Private Special Education Schools, Global Advisors on Smoke Free Policy, and State Street Global Services to provide the best services possible for the special needs students.

Most recently, Lauren has implemented a 3 day a week program with her Therapy Dog where students utilize Lucy for mindfulness, shared reading, self regulation, and so much more. Lastly, this holiday season thanks to Lauren applying for a \$2,000 sponsorship all of the Benway students will be receiving a gift from their wishlist at the Benway Holiday Brunch.



Lauren personally gathered feedback from parents and teachers about the students interests, shopped for the gifts, and organized a wrapping party. Many of the students served at Benway are in low income households.

We could not be more excited to celebrate the holidays together as their second family.



NCASES

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NCASES

National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services

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The Education Center at the Watson Institute and LEAP Preschool, Sewickley, PA

The New York Institute for Special Education, Bronx, NY

The Phoenix Center, Nutley, NJ

Trousdale School, Cleveland, TN

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A special thank you to our volunteer site reviewers!

You are appreciated for your time, efforts, and expertise.





UKERU SYSTEMS



Ukeru, (the Japanese word for "receive") is a restraint and seclusion-free crisis management method. By providing training on the conceptual ideas behind the method - including trauma- informed care, conflict resolution and physical

techniques - Ukeru can help create safer environments for both staff and students.

BECOME RESTRAINT-FREE

The behavioral health experts who created Ukeru are available to train professionals in the conceptual and technical elements of the system. Our training, which is customized for every school/organization, will teach your staff:

- Trauma-informed practices
- Managing and de-escalating conflict by converting/diverting aggressive behavior
- Building an environment focused on comfort rather than control
- Physical techniques including stances, releases, blocking, and redirection

The relationships that we are able to build with students by not putting hands on them is incredible. When students hear teachers tell them that they are in a safe space and they really believe it, it changes everything. Racquel Stewart, Special Education Teacher

ReLife School

UKERU IS RECOGNIZED BY LEADING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING:

EXPLORE OUR WEBSITE











For more than 20 years, we have been helping schools solve difficult problems and navigate strategic challenges through design that maximizes human potential by fully understanding the school's values, unique student population, and approach of instruction and therapy. Our experience includes:

Speech and Hearing Therapy/Treatment

Deaf Education Learning Spaces

PT / Gross Motor Therapy Suites

OT / Life Skills Fine Motor Skills Therapy Suites



Autism / **ABA Exchange** Therapy Suites



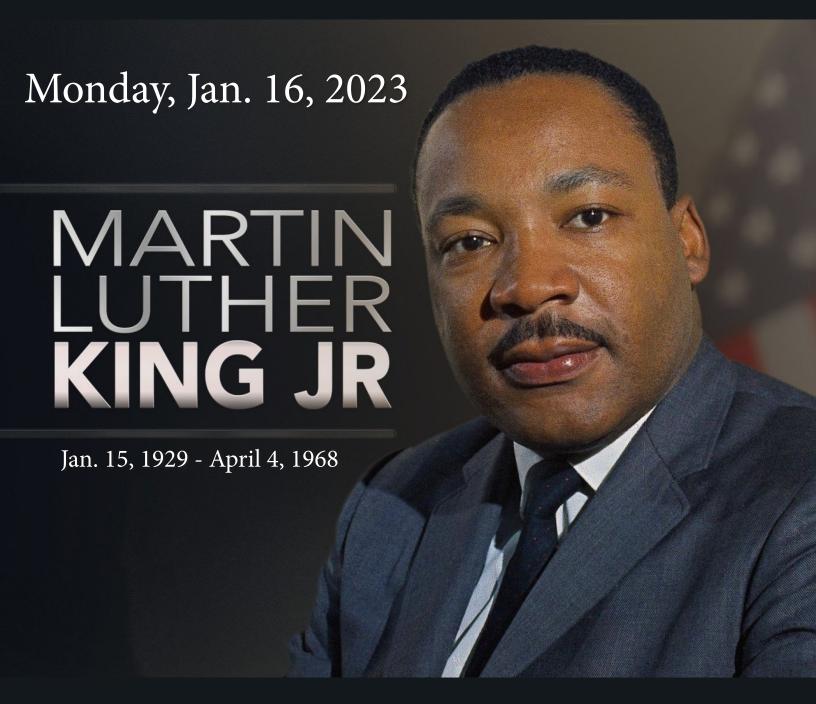
Special Education
Schools and Centers







Mackey Mitchell worked with the Magnolia Speech School in Jackson, Mississippi on designing a new school facility to serve its students with various speech and communication disorders. The new school demonstrates versatility in sensory design with increased acoustics, clear visual sightlines and wayfinding, and considerate transitions between classrooms and therapy rooms. As we remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. this week, NAPSEC thanks you for granting us the opportunity to support you in your dedicated service to individuals with disabilities.



"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?" –MLK, Jr.





NCASES

NCASES Mission

Ensure that special education programs and services maintain excellence through demonstrable adherence to a set of established national standards.

About Us

NCASES was established in 1992 by the National Association of Private Special Education Centers (NAPSEC) in response to a need for an accreditation process that uniquely addresses private special education programs and the populations they serve.

A subsidiary of NAPSEC, NCASES is overseen by a Board of Directors and managed by a Commission composed of experts in the field. All NCASES Board members, Commissioners, and Site Reviewers serve on a voluntary basis.

Why Seek NCASES Accreditation?

- Achieve recognition for excellence in special education based on expert peer review
- Improve services through adherence to national standards of best practice
- Demonstrate the high quality of your programs to students, families, referral sources, funders, and other stakeholders
- Establish agency improvement goals

NCASES provides an accreditation process that effectively and systematically evaluates private special education and adult learning programs. The entire process welcomes diversity of educational practice and innovation and recognizes the importance of evaluating services to meet student/client needs.

Accreditation is based on a self-study of compliance to fifty standards covering the range of processes, procedures, and practices critical to the functioning of a special education setting After submitting the self-study, applicant agencies undergo a comprehensive site-review performed by a highly trained team of experts in the field of special education.

Now offering the option for an **integrated accreditation** through our partnership with the **Council on Accreditation (COA)**.

Contact Us

Danielle Damm, Executive Director
200 Massachusetts Ave, NW | Suite 700 | Washington, DC 20001
202.434.8225 | napsec@napsec.org | www.ncases.org



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MANSEF-Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities

www.mansef.org

MASSACHUSETTS

MAAPS-Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools www.maaps.org

NEW JERSEY

ASAH-Serving The Private Special Education Community Since 1974 www.asah.org

VIRGINIA

VAISEF-Virginia Association of Independent Specialized Education Facilities

www.vaisef.org





Chad Hymas

The Wall Street Journal calls Chad Hymas "one of the 10 most inspirational people in the world!" Chad inspires, motivates, and moves audiences, creating an experience that touches hearts for a lifetime. He is one of the youngest ever to receive the Council Of Peers Award For Excellence (CPAE) and to be inducted into the prestigious National Speaker Hall Of Fame. In 2001, at the age of 27, Chad's life changed in an instant when a 2,000-pound bale of hay shattered his neck leaving him a quadriplegic. But Chad's dreams were not paralyzed that day – he became an example of what is possible. Chad is a bestselling author, president of his own Communications Company, Chad Hymas Communications, Inc., and is a recognized world-class wheelchair athlete. In 2003, Chad set a world record by wheeling his chair from Salt Lake City to Las Vegas (513 miles). Chad's speaking career in the areas of leadership, team building, customer service, and mastering change has brought him multiple honors. He is the past president of the National Speakers Association Utah chapter and a member of the exclusive elite Speakers Roundtable (one of twenty of the world's top speakers). As a member of the National Speakers Association, Chad travels as many as 300,000 miles a year captivating and entertaining audiences around the world



Rick Guidotti

Rick Guidotti, an award winning photographer, worked in NYC, Milan, Paris and London for a variety of high profile clients including Yves St Laurent, Revlon and L'Oreal. His work has been published in newspapers, magazines and journals as diverse as GQ, People, the American Journal of Medical Genetics, The Lancet, Spirituality and Health, the Washington Post, Atlantic Monthly and LIFE Magazine. Rick founded POSITIVE EXPOSURE after a chance encounter in 1997 with a young lady living with albinism at a bus stop in New York City. As an artist, Rick was taken by her extraordinary beauty. In a quest for a better understanding of albinism, Rick sought out medical textbooks, where he was affronted by the dehumanizing images depicting disease, lacking all humanity. It was this experience which forced Rick to turn his lens from the more traditional ideas of beauty, to the beauty and richness of human diversity.



Tom D'Eri

Tom is the Co-Founder and COO of Rising Tide Car Wash a social enterprise that employs over 80 individuals with autism in a successful car wash business. He is also the Co-Founder of Rising Tide U an organization dedicated to teaching others how to create better organizational systems by designing for extreme users. Tom is a Forbes 30Under30 social entrepreneur, an Uncharted Fellow and a Startingbloc Fellow.





Jason Kudelka

Jason Kudelka is a Chief Operating Officer. In this role, Mr. Kudelka oversees and supports therapeutic day schools in both Illinois and Arizona. Prior to this role, Mr. Kudelka was a Special Education Teacher in a private school. After that Mr. Kudelka was a Principal of a therapeutic day school. Mr. Kudelka has a master's degree in Educational Leadership. He also has a Special Education teaching license and is endorsed as a Director of Special Education. In this current role, Mr. Kudelka is heavily involved in hiring and employee retention. He has worked with his team to develop innovative ways to improve employee retention.



Rory Conran

Rory is the Chief Operating Officer for a nonprofit school who's mission is solving critical problems in education and human services. Rory has been in the field of special education for 17 years first as a paraprofessional, then a special education teacher, principal, and now serving in his current role. He recently completed his Doctorate in Educational Leadership and completed his dissertation on how funding allocations impact staff retention in low-income areas. He sits on multiple Illinois state commissions and is involved at the state level in both Illinois and Arizona. He has taken on initiatives within the organization which focus on hiring and staff retention best practices.



Joelle Rossi

Joelle Rossi has been in the field of special education for 27 years; twenty-five in the classroom and the last two as a lead teacher. She is currently in her principal internship and slated to complete her Masters in Administration this spring. She is a site-reviewer and a member of the Process and Standards Committees for NCASES. She is very actively involved in her school on many committees, leads in planning many school events, active in her community and volunteers with her town's basketball program. She loves spending family time camping, travelling, playing games and going to the beach with her husband of 23 years, 21 year old daughter, 18 and 17 year old sons, and rescue dog.



Mark your calendars for upcoming NAPSEC conferences!

2024

The Westin Savannah Harbor Savannah, GA







David B. Rubin, Esq.

David B. Rubin, Esq., is an attorney in private practice in Metuchen, NJ, and of counsel to The Busch Law Group. David represents public school districts and private schools throughout New Jersey, as well as numerous NAPSEC-affiliated private schools. He is a graduate of Duke University and Rutgers Law School, and has argued numerous precedent-setting cases generating over 50 published opinions from the state and federal courts. He is a former Chair of the National School Boards Association's 3000-member Council of School Attorneys, a former President of the New Jersey Association of School Attorneys and a frequent author and lecturer in the field of education law. Further information available at www.rubinlaw.net.



Becca Colangelo

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. Prior to moving into this role, she was the Project SEARCH Coordinator at Kennedy Krieger for 3 years. During her time at Project SEARCH, she worked with individuals with a variety of abilities to support them in meaningful internship experiences at Kennedy Krieger. In 2018, Dr. Colangelo finished up 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 the Assistant Director, Becca serves as adjunct faculty member for the University of People and serves as an advisory board member for the Center for Dignity in Healthcare for People with Disabilities.



Ken Berger

Ken Berger is a seasoned executive with decades of leadership and direct service experience. He has recently focused on leading special needs agencies and has also worked in positions focused on positively transforming the entire social sector. He's an active speaker, teacher, and writer on a wide range of issues of concern to the social sector. He also works on behalf of the social sector as a Leap Ambassador, a community of thought leaders who believe that mission and performance are inextricably linked.



Sue McLendon

Sue McLendon has been in the educational field for 22 years, serving Maryland children with special needs in the classroom, as a school administrator, and now as an Associate Vice-President of Arrow Child & Family Ministries. She holds degrees in Psychology and Special Education, and further endorsement in Instructional Leadership. Sue lives with her husband Mark in Maryland, and enjoys her time with family and curling up with a good book. The passion that drives her each day is knowing that all students are worthy of the very best of services, and she loves being continually surprised at her students' resilience and gifts.





Thomas K. Hyatt

Tom is a partner in Dentons' Washington, DC office and serves as co-chair of the US Nonprofit Entities practice. He focuses on corporate, nonprofit regulatory, and tax-exempt organization issues for nonprofit organizations. Tom is widely known for his work on behalf of health care organizations and nonprofit public and private universities and colleges and institutionally related foundations. A substantial portion of Tom's practice involves counselling nonprofit organizations on governance and transactional matters. He frequently works with nonprofit governing boards and board committees to address such issues as regulatory compliance, fiduciary duty, conflicts of interest, bylaws development and revision, senior management compensation and benefits, CEO transition, succession planning, fundraising, lobbying and political campaign activity, board development, membership matters, policy development, corporate restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, and joint ventures. He also makes educational presentations and serves as an advisor to boards of directors on current issues, conducts in-service training and facilitates board discussions and retreats.



Harry Schaeffer

Harry Schaeffer is mostly retired but still open to doing some consulting work. Prior to retirement Harry spent over 35 years in senior leadership at an organization that provides services to individuals with significant developmental disabilities and medically complex. Programs offered include Early Intervention, School, Adult Day, and Group Homes for children and adults. Harry's responsibilities included operational oversight of all programs and services, budget development, strategic planning, quality assurance and quality improvement. He is an NCASES site reviewer.



Stacey Herman

Stacey Herman is the Assistant Vice President of Neurodiversity and Community Workforce Development at Kennedy Krieger Institute. Her role includes the creation and supervision of programs designed to support individuals with disabilities as they transition to the workforce and access their community. This role allows Stacey to interact directly with individuals while working with multiple departments inside Kennedy Krieger Institute and the business community to raise awareness, train and develop employment opportunities for individuals of all abilities. Stacey lead's Kennedy Krieger Institute's Neurodiversity at Work program, working with community leaders, business professionals, and policy makers to realize the Institute's long-term goal of improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Stacey is currently the president of the Association of People Supporting Employment First Maryland Chapter, and is an appointed member of the Governor's Workforce Development Board in Maryland. Stacey is a leading member of the Maryland Project SEARCH Leadership Committee.

Stacey graduated from Syracuse University with a degree in Inclusion Elementary and Special Education.





David Stone

David Stone, Ed.D. is the Assistant Vice President of Operations for Special Education at the Kennedy Krieger Schools. Dr. Stone has 32 years of experience in the field of special education, both as a teacher and an administrator, for students ranging from Pre-K to grade 12. He holds Doctorate in Education from Johns Hopkins University, with a focus on special education finance. He has Maryland teacher certification in special education grades 1-8 and 6-12, as well as school administration, including a superintendent endorsement. Over the last 10 years, Dr. Stone worked with his State organization (MANSEF) and the Maryland Department of Education (MSDE) by designing a Compensation Survey administered every four years to all MANSEF schools since 2012 and by serving on MSDE workgroups examining Salary Parity with public school teachers over the past year. Previously, Dr. Stone was Director of Charter Schools for Baltimore City Schools. In addition, he served as Vice Chairman of the Baltimore City School Board for nine years. He lives in downtown Baltimore with his wife and three sons.



Ronald V. Chisom

Ronald V. Chisom is co-founder of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB). He is also a 2006 inducted senior fellow of Ashoka's Global Academy, a program for men and women seeking solutions for the world's most urgent social problems. He has organized workers and poor people throughout the South for forty years. In the 1990s, he co-founded and served as associate director of the Treme Community Improvement Association, which won several significant Louisiana victories in New Orleans. His legal suit, Ronald Chisom v. Charles E. Roemer, Governor of Louisiana et al., challenged the Louisiana Supreme Court to achieve equal representation for the predominately Black City of New Orleans. Ron has served as an organizer, advisor, lecturer and consultant to a wide variety of community, legal, and church groups. He has led numerous workshops around the country on Undoing Racism®, community organizing, leadership, and strategy development. His networking and community organizing extends throughout the United States and South Africa. Mr. Chisom's many prestigious awards include: the Bannerman Fellowship, the Petra Foundation Award, the Pax Christi Bread & Roses, and the Tenant Resource Center Achievement Award. Ron is married to Mrs. Jerolie Encalade Chisom.



Tracy Lee

Tracy Lee is a member of the administrative team at the Gramon Family of Schools in Fairfield, NJ and a certified Speech-Language Pathologist. With over 20 years of experience working in special education, Tracy has been tasked with helping to guide the organization's growth and improvement plans. Tracy recently led her team through a successful Middle States Accreditation and leads many other innovative initiatives to advocate for students, families, staff and community stakeholders in the special education arena. Tracy has also presented at numerous professional conferences on various topics in special education.



Michael Farrelly

Michael Farrelly is a Director at the Gramon Family of Schools (GFS) in Fairfield, NJ. Over the past 20+ years, Michael has also held many other positions in Special Education including principal, teacher, transition coordinator, supervisor and vice principal. Michael has helped develop the GFS vocational and transition program and was instrumental in starting New Beginnings for Tomorrow, an adult day habilitation program. He has developed partnerships with local universities to develop research that will ultimately benefit the instruction of students with special needs. He is also on the Advisory Board at Felician University.



Kimberley Richards

Kimberley Richards, Ed.D is the Interim Executive Director, Core Trainer/Organizer and National Organizer with The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. Kimberley served as Executive Director of Southwest Gardens Economic Development Corporation until 2006. Southwest Gardens Economic Development Corporation is a neighborhood organizing, community-based organization in Farrell, PA. Kimberley Richards is a graduate of Clark College, where she studied Education and Theater. She received a Master's degree in education from Westminster College, PA. Richards completed a doctoral program of study in Education at the University of Pittsburgh as a Lilly Endowment Fellow in 1995. Kimberley Richards has studied education and theater arts and in London, England, and fabric arts in The Gambia, West Africa. As a classroom educator, Dr. Richards has worked with children and their families in Atlanta, Washington DC, New Orleans, and Farrell, PA. Currently, Kimberley Richards resides in Picayune, Mississippi. Kimberley has been involved and serving the The People's Institute of Survival and Beyond (PISAB) since 1989. She began as a participant in the Undoing Racism (URW) workshop. Richards became an organizer of URW trainings during the time she served as director of the MAC Education Fund in New Orleans. Kimberley, then, became a board member and in 1997 she earned her position as Core Trainer. Dr. Richards' interests are reflective practice and assessment, as well as documentation and evaluation from a humanistic and anti-racist approach. She is, now, Interim Executive Director and Core Trainer/Organizer at The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond.



Jamie Stewart

Jamie Stewart is currently the President & CEO of Grafton Integrated Health Network (Grafton), an entity with an over 60-year history of serving children and adults in the behavioral healthcare space. Jamie has a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Kentucky, a Master of Business Administration with Healthcare Administration concentration from Indiana Wesleyan University and was Certified by the Kentucky State Board of Accountancy in 1991. Beginning his career working as a CPA and audit manager at a regional accounting firm, Jamie specialized in Non-profit and Governmental sectors. His continued career growth in the roles of Controller/Assistant Business Administrator, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Administrative Officer in the behavioral health industry prepared him for his current position as Chief Executive Officer at Grafton, which he has held for the past 6 years. In all, he has over 29 years of experience as a key administrator in the behavioral healthcare industry. Jamie has successfully led teams to implement three separate general ledger software implementations and led teams in four separate electronic health (EHR) and practice management software implementations. The implementation of EHR software at the Center For Behavioral Health during Jamie's tenure as CFO was awarded the Organizational Davies award by HIMSS in 2006.



Abbie S. Fink

Abbie S. Fink is vice president/general manager of HMA Public Relations and has been with the firm since 1993. Her varied marketing communications background includes skills in media relations, digital communications/social media strategies, special event management, community relations, issues management and marketing promotions for both the private and public sectors, including such industries as healthcare, financial services, professional services, education, economic development and real estate, government affairs and tribal affairs, as well as not-for-profit organizations. Fink serves as HMA's primary media and digital communications trainer. She has conducted training sessions for a variety of organizations including professional services organizations, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies and trade associations. Fink is often called upon to present to a wide variety of business and civic organizations on such topics as media relations, social media and digital communications strategies, issues/crisis communications and special events management. Fink has both a master's degree in mass communications and a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism/ public relations from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University. She was an adjunct faculty member at Arizona State University and Phoenix College.



Building Awareness + Changing Lives

1st Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey

ACCEL

AchieveKids Allegro School Allendale Association

Alpha School

Alpine Learning Group

Alternatives for Children American School for the Deaf

ARC of Essex County's Stepping Stones School

Arrow Center for Education Schools

Bancroft School Banyan Upper School **Beacon Day School Beacon School Benway School**

Bergen Center for Child Development

Bonnie Brae School Boston Higashi School Bridge Academy Brookfield Schools **Calais School**

California Alliance of Child and Family Services (CACFS)
California Association of Private Special Education

Services - CAPSES

Camelot Therapeutic Day School Celebrate the Children

Center School

Chamberlain International School Chancellor Academy

Chapel Hill Academy

Children's Center of Monmouth County

Children's Guild

Coastal Learning Center - Monmouth

Collier Youth Services

Community School & Community H.S.

Connecticut Association of Private Special Education

Facilities - CAPSEF Connections Academy East Connections Day School **Cottonwood Day School**

Council of Affiliated State Associations CPC - Behavioral Healthcare - High Point Schools

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Educational Equity For All

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First Children School Foundation Schools

Garfield Park Academy Grafton Integrated Health Network

Gramon Family of Schools Green Brook Academy Hampton Academy Harbour School **Hawkswood School**

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Lakemary Center Lakeview Learning Center **Lakeview School**

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Learning Clinic

Learning Independence for Tomorrow, Inc. (LiFT) Legacy Treatment Sevices - Mary A. Dobbins School

LeRoy Haynes Education Center **Lexington Life Academy** Lifescape Specialty Schools

M.O.T. Academy Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special

Education Facilities - MANSEF Massachusetts Association of Approved Private

Schools (MAAPS)

Matheny School at the Matheny Medical and **Educational Center**

Midland School

Monarch School at The Monarch Institute

Montgomery Academy Mount Carmel Guild Academy

Mountain Valley Child and Family Services, Inc.

NCIA/Youth in Transition **New Connections Academy** New Interdisciplinary School New Road Schools of NJ

Newgrange School Newmark School NJEDDA

North Hudson Academy

Northwest Essex Community Healthcare Network

- Therapeutic School and Preschool

Oak Grove Center Oakwood School Olive Crest Academy P.G. Chambers School PHILLIPS Programs

PHILLIPS Programs - Fairfax PHILLIPS Programs - Laurel

Phoenix Center Pillar High School Pineland Learning Center
Plumfield Academy **Point Dume School** Point Quest Group

Princeton Child Development Institute Raymond Hill School at Klingberg Family Centers

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Shepard Preparatory High School, Inc.

Shepard School, Inc.

Sheppard Pratt School and Residential Treatment Center

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Sheppard Pratt School in Millersville Elementary

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Sheppard Pratt School in Severna Park High School

Skyward Academy South Campus Special Education Services

Spectrum360 | Academy 360 Springtime School

Spurwink Services St. Ann's Home, Inc St. Elizabeth School

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The Kohler Academy

The Laurel School of Princeton

The Monroe School

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The New York Institute for Special Education

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The Pennsylvania School for the Deaf The Richardson School
The School at McGuire Memorial

The Spurwink School The Timothy School

The Watson Institute Timber Ridge School Titusville Academy Trousdale School

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Virtual Connections Academy

Vista Life Innovations **Warren Glen Academy Webb Schools** Westbridge Academy

Westchester Exceptional Children's School **Westchester School for Special Children** Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf

Willowglen Academy Windsor Bergen Academy Windsor Learning Center Windsor Prep, Inc. Y.A.L.E. School You & Me School Youth Consultation Services

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