

# AFRICAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON DISABILITIES

February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Desert Willow Conference Center, Phoenix, AZ

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# AFRICAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON DISABILITIES

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# Conference Recap and Highlights

# **AFRICAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON DISABILITIES**

## **Conference Synopsis**

The 2020 African American Conference on Disabilities is a unique comprehensive all-day conference and is the only one of its kind in the United States that addresses the intersection between race and disabilities. The conference examines avenues for self-advocacy to ensure the effective provision of services, resources and enforcement of civil rights in the African American and Disability communities. This year's conference attendees came from all across Arizona, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Washington, DC, Alaska, California, Indiana and Oregon to learn and give their expertise in a wide range of disabilities issues.

The vision of the conference is to form a society where individuals with disabilities enjoy full acceptance without barriers.

We hope this synopsis on the 2020 conference will give you a better understanding of the work that we are doing, the daily challenges that individuals with disabilities face and how we can educate ourselves, our family, friends, colleagues, and co-workers to make a positive difference.

# AFRICAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON DISABILITIES

The 2020 conference featured speakers, disability subject matter experts, advocates, academics, and professionals throughout the state of Arizona and across the country. The conference featured over 30 exhibitors and held 24 unique workshops all with an emphasis on disabilities including one on immunizations and vaccines.

**Welcoming Remarks:** J.J. Rico, Esq, Chief Executive Officer, Arizona Center for Disability Law

**Opening Remarks:** Connie Robinson, Chair, AZCAAR; Barry Wong, Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity; James H. Williams, Ph.D., Services and Director of the School of Social Work, Arizona State University; and Shawnique Cotton, Ms. Wheelchair Arizona

**Key Note Speakers:** Michael Kelly, Encore Fellow for Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego; Robbin Coulin, Esq.; Karen Callahan, Exec Dir, Genesis City; Gail Night, Balsz School District; Rose Daley-Rooney, Litigation Director, Arizona Center for Disability Law; Governing Board Member; Kim Covington, Arizona Community Foundation Black Philanthropy Initiative

**Guest Speaker:** Thomas Hicks, Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Washington, D.C.

**Closing Speaker:** Adiba Nelson, Author, Screenwriter, Performer and subject of Emmy winning documentary: The Full Nelson



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Master of Ceremony Michael Kelly, and distinguished guest panelists: Robbin Coulon, Karen Callahan, Rose Daley-Rooney, and Gail Knight discuss how the life of Civil Rights Activist, Ms. Jean Fairfax, impacted their lives and careers in social work.

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**Master of Ceremony:** Michael Kelly, encore fellow for Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, Talks about the life, legacy and impact of Civil Pioneer Ms. Jean Fairfax.



**Guest Speaker:** Thomas Hicks, Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, appointed by President Obama, flew in from Washington, D.C. to discuss election integrity, your rights as a voter and the need to exercise your right to vote.

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**Opening Speaker:** Dr. James H. Williams, Ph.D., Arizona Centennial Professor of Social Welfare Services and Director of the School of Social Work, AZ State University, gives his take on strategies for positive African American youth development in an urban environment.



**Guest Speaker:** Shawnique Cotton, Ms. Wheelchair Arizona, tells her story on becoming Ms. Wheelchair Arizona and to never give up to overcome any challenges in life.



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Emily Ricketts, Ph.D., UCLA Semel Institute of Neuroscience and Human Behavior, discusses the impact, cultural implications and the best practices for meeting the needs of persons with Tourette and other TIC Disorders.



Tenneh Turner-Warren, Program Manager, Arizona Partnership for Immunization, lectures on the importance of a immunizations and vaccinations for a healthy Arizona.

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Dr. Carlian Dawson, representing AZCAAR, shares ideas on collaborative approaches to find solutions to drastically improve the lives of African American children in Arizona.



Ivan Rivera, Program Manager, Benefits 2 Work, Ability 360, tells about the untapped resources available to individuals with disabilities returning to the workforce.

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Sey In, Esq., AZ Disability Law and Lynda C. Shely, Esq., The Shely Firm, PC, provide an roundtable on ethics for attorneys representing individuals with disabilities (a CLE available workshop).



John Gutierrez and Linda Fischer with Arizona Center for Disability Law, provide information on Arizona Vocational Rehabilitation Program and the rights of applicants and clients.



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Traci Williams, Ph.D., NCSP, addresses mental health, trauma, and their impact on children and adults, along with the resources that are available for individuals who have these issues.



Heidi Lerviik, Assistive Technology Specialist, AZ Technology Access Program, discusses loan programs and resources for assistive technology equipment.



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**Closing Speaker:** Adiba Nelson, discusses how raising a daughter with disabilities led her to writing a children's book about her, [Meet Clarabelle Blue](#), available on Amazon.



Renaldo Fowler, Conference Co-founder, Sr. Staff Advocate, AZ Center for Disability Law, ends the conference with raffle prizes.

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# AFRICAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON DISABILITIES

## 2020 Conference Workshops Morning Session

- Assistive Technology Resources You Need to Know
- AZ Employment First: A Review of Policy Change, Solutions and the Resources to Assist Youth and Adults Who Have Disabilities to Achieve Successful Employment Outcomes
- Breaking the Barriers to Employment
- Child Welfare in Arizona Part I and Part II (AZCAAR)
- Community Discussion: Finding Value in Our Differences; Cancer Education in Underserved Communities
- Identifying and Negotiating Reasonable Accommodations for People with IDD and Psychiatric Disabilities in the Workplace (CLEs available)
- Important Ethics Topics for Attorneys Representing Individuals with Disabilities (CLEs available)
- Mind Over Matter Addressing Mental Health and Trauma
- Phoenix Police Department: Engagement and Outreach
- Shutting of the Pipeline: Keeping Children with Disabilities in School and Out of Jail
- Your Rights as an Applicant or Client of Vocational Rehabilitation



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## 2020 Conference Workshops Afternoon Session

- AZ Able Account: Groundbreaking Accounts the Protect Benefits and Build Financial Security for Individuals with Disabilities
- Blindness Doesn't Mean Broken
- Child Welfare in Arizona Part III and Part IV (AZCAAR)
- Determine to Lead
- Disputes with Schools: Tips for Filing Successful Complaints
- Everything You Need to Know About the Fair Housing Act's Reasonable Accommodation and Reasonable Modification Requirements (CLEs available)
- Immunizations and Vaccines: Preventable Diseases
- Making Life Better for All People Affected by Tourette Syndrome and TIC Disorders
- Navigating the (SMI) Eligibility Process and Appealing Adverse Decisions (CLEs available)
- Preventing Expulsion and Supporting Inclusion in Child Care Setting in Arizona
- Representing a Client or Representing Yourself in an Appeal of an Adverse Determination from the DDD/AHCCS (CLEs available)



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## 2020 Conference Workshop Organizations

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- [Ability360](#)
- [Arizona Center for African American Resources \(AZCAAR\)](#)
- [Arizona Center for Disability Law](#)
- [Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council](#)
- [Arizona Technology Access Program \(AZTAP\)](#)
- [AZ Able: Department of Economic Security](#)
- [Bill Ward](#)
- [Coconino County Legal Defender's Office](#)
- [Ghazi Muhammad](#)
- [Kirtley Wells Law Office](#)
- [NAU Institute for Human Development](#)
- [Phoenix Police Department](#)
- [SAAVI Services for the Blind](#)
- [Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities \(UCEDD\), University of Arizona](#)
- [Sonoran UCEDD, University of Arizona College of Medicine](#)
- [Southwest Human Development](#)
- [The Shely Firm, PC](#)
- [UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience & Human Behavior](#)

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- [City of Tempe](#)
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- Community Health Mentor Program
- Community Legal Service
- [Crisis Response Network, Inc.](#)
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### Presentation Sponsors

- [Adiba Nelson: Clara Belle Blue](#)
- [Banner University Health Plans](#)
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- [Mark's The Spot Salon](#)





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Thank you to all of our partners, sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and attendees for making 2020's conference a resounding success.

We hope to see you at our 10<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Conference on Disabilities: A Decade of Finding Solutions, Building a Stronger Community  
***Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021.***

For more information about the African American Conference on Disabilities or how to become a 2021 sponsor please contact:

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