

# **2021 Philadelphia Autism Project Conference: Rethinking Reimagining Resilience**

**November 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday-Friday)**

**All sessions can be accessed via Zoom at this link:**

[https://drexel.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_gs4\\_oZJUTtic\\_kMUK17GW4g](https://drexel.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gs4_oZJUTtic_kMUK17GW4g)

**Call in:** (267) 831-0333 Meeting ID: 818 5151 2484 #

**In Partnership with:** Philadelphia City Councilman At Large  
Derek S. Green, The School District of Philadelphia,  
Community Behavioral Health (CBH), and Department of  
Behavioral Health and Intellectual disABILITY Services  
(DBHIDS)

**Co-sponsored by:** Drexel University College of Medicine

## **Conference Vision**

The Philadelphia Autism Project Conference is a three-day event bringing together members of the Philadelphia

community to share and highlight information and resources, learn about community initiatives, and discuss experiences in supporting Autistic individuals. Our Keynote Speakers will open each conference day by challenging people to reframe how they view autism. Below is additional information:

- Sessions are 1.5 hours long and will be held virtually over three days.
- Tracks include Justice, Behavioral Health, and Systems Updates
- Topics are relevant throughout the lifespan and cover intersectional identities, family systems, IBHS updates, co-occurring conditions, waiver changes, justice updates, and more
- Translation and interpretation services are available upon request. Please indicate in the online registration form if you need these services or call 215-571-3209 or 215-571-3152.

## **Target Audience**

Autistic individuals, family members, community members, providers, educators, clinicians, social workers, transition coordinators, employment-focused providers, researchers, community organizations, policy specialists, and anyone who wants to learn more about supporting Autistic individuals.

## **Educational Objectives**

- Utilize concepts, tools, and resources to support Autistic individuals, their family members, and the larger community.
- Summarize the latest research and/or best practices in supporting Autistic individuals across the life span.
- Recommend additional content areas to explore for session speakers and conference planners.

## **Continuing Education Credits**

**LSW/LCSW/LPC/LMFT (PA SBSWE Licensed Social Workers in Pennsylvania):**

**Drexel University College of Medicine** is a preapproved provider of continuing education for Social Workers and

Clinical Social Workers. This program is being offered for up to 13.5 hours of continuing education.

**PA Educators Act 48:** Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education is recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to offer continuing education credits under Act 48 guidelines. Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education adheres to Act 48 Continuing Education Guidelines. PA educators will receive a maximum of 13.5 hours of credit for attending this program.

**Note: On the validation form please note that the Professional ID# is required.**

## **ZOOM ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS**

We hope the below will support you in accessing conference sessions throughout the week.

### **Weblink**

[http://bit.ly/PhillyAP2021\\_Register](http://bit.ly/PhillyAP2021_Register)

By clicking the above link, you will be able to join any of our conference sessions. The first time you access any of the conference sessions, you will be asked to complete a brief registration form. You can then use this same link for all sessions you are interested in attending.

## **Call-in Information**

**Call In:** (261) 831-0333

**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

You can also join conference sessions by calling in. **Please dial: (267) 831-0333**, when prompted to enter a meeting ID, please enter: **818 5151 2484 #**

## **For optimal experience for the conference:**

Please join on a computer. If that is not an option, the Zoom app may be downloaded onto a smartphone.

To optimize bandwidth and reduce distractions, we will be muting and turning off video for all participants. You will be able to ask questions through the Q&A function.

You can access additional resources on [how to join and participate in a webinar here.](#)

## **Presentations**

All session handouts that have been provided by presenters can be viewed and printed on our [conference webpage.](#)

## **Closed Captioning, American Sign Language**

## **Interpreting, and Spanish Interpreting**

These services will be provided at the conference, but attendees will need access to Zoom via a computer or through the Zoom app on their phone to ensure they can most effectively use these services.

**Please feel free to reach us with any questions at [phillyap@drexel.edu](mailto:phillyap@drexel.edu) or by phone (215) 571-3209 or (215) 571-3152.**

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## **Philadelphia Autism Project**

**Join our community!**

Facebook: /PhillyAutism

Twitter: /PhillyAutism

Instagram: /Philly\_Autism

**Contact us:**

Phone: (215) 571.3209 or (215) 671.3152

Email: [phillyap@drexel.edu](mailto:phillyap@drexel.edu)

Website: [www.phillyautismproject.org](http://www.phillyautismproject.org)

## **WELCOME**

Thank you for joining us at the 6th Annual Philadelphia Autism Project Conference: Rethinking, Reimagining, Resilience. While the Annual Philadelphia Autism Project Conference has always been an exciting space and time for

all of us to convene, discuss, and share challenges and ideas, we have certainly taken a pause this year to reflect. Our communities have been impacted by COVID-19 and have experienced local and international social issues including systemic injustice and racial violence. When we speak of resilience, we are not only talking about the strength, faith, flexibility, urgency, and vulnerability that you have shown through these uncertain times. We are also talking about systemic and environmental changes that need to happen to further strengthen and support positive outcomes. We hope that the conference will provide a forum to connect with one another and discuss our experiences during these challenging times. In planning this conference, we have kept in mind the varied needs reported by community members and have strived to include relevant topics throughout each session. We hope that you will leave this conference with helpful information and resources to support yourself and others and connect with the broader Philadelphia Autism community.

## **OVERVIEW**



**The Philadelphia Autism Project** is a citywide initiative supported through the Office of Councilmember-At-Large Derek S. Green and established by the Office of Former Councilmember-At-Large Dennis M. O'Brien. The Philadelphia Autism Project is conducted in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) and Community Behavioral Health (CBH). The Philadelphia Autism Project is based at the Policy and Analytics Center, at the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute at Drexel University.

The goal of the Philadelphia Autism Project is to examine the services and supports for individuals on the Spectrum and their families in Philadelphia. This effort represents the first of its kind at the municipal level and is working in conjunction with the ASERT Collaborative.

**The Philadelphia Autism Project supports the community through:**

## **EDUCATION**

Training and eLearning courses

## **CONNECTIONS**

People connecting to people, centralized resource hub, calendar of events, and collaborations

## **INNOVATION**

Seed funding to develop new projects, annual conference

Please visit our website

[WWW.PHILLYAUTISMPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.PHILLYAUTISMPROJECT.ORG) to learn more.

## **#PhillyAP**

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you to our wonderful conference planning committee members for making this event possible.

Despite competing priorities, you have made the time to provide guidance, and it has been instrumental in the development of this conference.

**Office of Councilmember-At-Large Derek Green**

**Rachel Guttentag**

**Katy Kaplan, PhD**

Community Behavioral Health

**Mary Beth Morgan**

Liberty Resources

**Michelle Nutini, EdD**

School District of Philadelphia

**Dennis M. O' Brien**

Community Behavioral Health

**Valarie Oulds, JD**

Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual

disAbility Services

**Amber Dorko Stopper**

**Adaminah Tankersly**

Philadelphia Family Voices

**Cecelia Thompson**

Arc of Philadelphia

**Luke Tomczuk**

Temple University and Community Integrated Services

**Matthew Walsh**

Mental Health Partnerships

**Jessica Woods, PhD, BCBA-D**

Community Behavioral Health

## **AGENDA AT A GLANCE**

**ALL SESSIONS CAN BE ACCESSED VIA ZOOM AT THIS**

**LINK:**

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**Call In:** +1 267 831 0333

**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>—JUSTICE**

**9 – 10:30 AM**

**REMARKS:** Councilmember-At-Large Derek Green

**KEYNOTE:** More than Seeds: Digging Deep to Find Our Resilience, Our Beauty, and Our Value

Morénike Giwa, PhG(c), MA

**11:30 AM – 1 PM**

**Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Justice System:** Safety and Strategies for Individuals and Families

Amber Pomponio Davidson, MPH

Morénike Giwa, PhD(c), MA

Kate Hooven, MS

Roz Talley, MA

Rachel Guttentag

**2 – 3:30 PM**

**Innovative Strides in the Justice System:** An International, State, and City Perspective

Dylan Cooper, MS

Nina Wall, MSS, LSW

Erin O'Donnell, MSW

Corporal John Burke

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> — BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH**

**9 – 10:30AM**

**REMARKS: Val Oulds, JD,** Department of Behavioral Health  
and Intellectual disAbility Services

**KEYNOTE: The Caregiver Perspective:** Sharing  
Experiences throughout the Lifespan

Renee Henderson

Andrea Powell

Melodie Jackson

Ellen Inkeles

Eric Williams

**11:30 AM – 1 PM**

**Intensive Behavioral Health Services:** Overview of  
Updates and Implementation

Amy Kabiru, MSW, LSW, BCBA

Courtney Malecki Jessica Woods, PhD, BCBA-D

Annemarie Clarke, PhD

Kelly Marascio, MA, BCBA

**2 – 3:30 PM**

**Supporting Autistic People Living with Co-occurring  
Mental Health Disorders**

Aliki Koumenis

Lisa Morgan, M.Ed., CAS

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> — SYSTEMS UPDATE**

**9 – 10:30 AM**

**REMARKS: Jill Bowen, PhD, Commissioner** Department of  
Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services

**KEYNOTE: Reimagining Autism**

State Representative Jessica Benham

**11 AM – 1 PM**

**Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Programs  
in Pennsylvania**

David Gates, Esq.

Jamie Ray-Leonetti, JD

Jordan Hollander, M.Ed., BCBA

**2 – 3:30 PM**

**Rapid Resource Highlights**

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Philadelphia Family Voices

Policy and Analytics Center, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute

Pennsylvania Family Network Parent Education & Advocacy

Leadership (PEAL) Center

Philadelphia HUNE, Inc.

The Arc of Philadelphia Self-Advocates United as 1

ASCEND

School District Office of Specialized Services

**WEDNESDAY – JUSTICE**



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**9 – 10:30 AM**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Councilmember-At-Large Derek Green

## **KEYNOTE**

**More than Seeds: Digging Deep to Find Our Resilience, Our Beauty, and Our Value**

Morénike Giwa, PhD(c), MA

“They tried to bury us. They didn’t know we were seeds.”

Widely known as the battle cry of indigenous Mexican activists, queer Greek poet Dinos Christianopoulos’ defiant words are frequently quoted in social justice circles. But is it

true for the Autistic community? Utilizing one of Morénike's passions/"special interests" as context, this presentation will critique how this prolific quote fails to effectively embody the Autistic community.

## **Educational Objectives**

- Discuss characteristics of the Autistic community using the analogies of seed development and germination.
- Examine individual characteristics of autism from a strengths-based perspective.
- Describe how various Autistic attributes contribute to a collective sense of resilience, beauty, and worth.

## **Speaker Bio**

Morénike Giwa Onaiwu (she/they) is an educator, writer, public speaker, parent, and global advocate. A proactive, resourceful professional and disabled woman of color in a multicultural, neurodiverse, serodifferent family, Morénike, who is American-born to immigrant parents, possesses undergraduate and graduate degrees in International Relations and Education. She is passionate about human

rights, justice, and inclusion. She is involved in various social justice advocacy endeavors including HIV awareness, learning via technology, research, gender, disability, and racial equity and other issues. Morénike has written for and/or been featured in numerous blogs, abstracts, magazines, books, and other platforms, often drawing from her personal experiences as a late-diagnosed Autistic adult woman, a person of color, an Autistic parent of Autistic and non-Autistic children, and a survivor of intimate partner violence.

## **WEDNESDAY – JUSTICE**

**ALL SESSIONS CAN BE ACCESSED VIA ZOOM AT THIS**

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**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

## **11:30 AM – 1 PM: Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Justice System: Safety and Strategies for Individuals and Families**

**Speakers:** Amber Pomponio Davidson, MPH, Morénike Giwa, PhD(c), MA, Kate Hooven, MS, Roz Talley, MA, Rachel Guttentag

This panel will focus on discussing common questions and concerns Autistic individuals and their caregivers/families may have regarding the justice system. Panelists will speak about their personal and professional experiences as well as provide information, strategies and resources for individuals and families.

### **Educational Objectives**

- Discuss common questions and concerns Autistic individuals may have about justice system interactions.
- Identify and describe strategies to use during an interaction with law enforcement.
- Identify justice system resources for autistic individuals.

## **Speaker Bios**

**Amber Pomponio Davidson, MPH**, Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Temple University

**Amber Davidson, MPH** is a Research Coordinator for Dr. Beth Pfeiffer at Temple University's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences REACH (Research, Engagement and Advocacy for Community Participation and Health) Lab. Amber earned her BS in Chemistry with a BioSci option at the University of Pittsburgh, and her MPH at University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). Amber is a second year PhD student at Temple University's School of Public Health in the Social and Behavioral Sciences program. Amber's research focuses on individual's community participation. She is currently the research coordinator on a peer mediated transportation training intervention to increase community participation for transitional aged youth and young adults.

**Morénike Giwa, PhD(c), MA** • Morénike Giwa Onaiwu (she/ they) is an educator, writer, public speaker, parent, and global advocate. A proactive, resourceful professional

and disabled woman of color in a multicultural, neurodiverse, serodifferent family, Morénike, who is American-born to immigrant parents, possesses undergraduate and graduate degrees in International Relations and Education. She is passionate about human rights, justice, and inclusion. She is involved in various social justice advocacy endeavors including HIV awareness, learning via technology, research, gender, disability, and racial equity and other issues. Morénike has written for and/or been featured in numerous blogs, abstracts, magazines, books, and other platforms, often drawing from her personal experiences as a late-diagnosed Autistic adult woman, a person of color, an Autistic parent of Autistic and non-Autistic children, and a survivor of intimate partner violence.

**Kate Hooven, MS** • Kate Hooven is the Justice System Project Coordinator for ASERT (Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training) where she is using her former background in PA's Juvenile Justice System, and her passion for advocating for children and adults living with autism, by

training probation officers, police officers, attorneys, judges, correctional officers and others employed in the justice system to raise awareness of the impact an autism diagnosis has on those individuals involved in our juvenile and criminal justice systems. Prior to Mrs. Hooven's decision to stay home with her three children, one of whom has an Autism Spectrum Disorder, she was a Juvenile Court Consultant for the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges Commission, a Home and School Visitor for Central Dauphin School District and a Juvenile Probation Officer for Dauphin County Juvenile Probation. Mrs. Hooven's passion is in educating and raising awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders as well as advocating for families loving a child with an ASD.

**Roz Talley, MA** • Roz Talley is a 14-year-veteran with the Philadelphia Police Department, a motivational speaker, published author, radio personality, owner of Real Change Radio, and an instructor at the Philadelphia Police Training Facility. Although she wears many hats, her first love is the hat she wears as a mother of three children and includes

advocating for her 24-year-old daughter with multiple disabilities. She enjoys working with Drexel University's ASERT program, as well as educating her peers and recruits on safe interaction with those having autism. Her passion is to provide a safe world for those having special needs, namely autism, within the criminal justice system.

**Rachel Guttentag** • Rachel Guttentag graduated from Temple University with a Bachelor's in Psychology in early 2019, participating in the first ever CAPS training cohort later that year. Currently she works with the Philadelphia Autism Project on their advisory board and other projects, hoping to lend her voice and perspective as a self-advocate. She hopes to complete a Psy.D. program in the future, and use her personal experience and academic training combined to help bridge the gap between providers and the autism community.

**WEDNESDAY – JUSTICE**

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**2:00 – 3:30 PM: Innovative Strides in the Justice**

**System:** An International, State, and City Perspective

**Speakers:** Dylan Cooper, MS, Nina Wall, MSS, LSW, Erin O'Donnell, MSW, Corporal John Burke

This panel consists of representatives at the city and state level who will speak about the intersection of autism spectrum disorder and the justice system. Panelists will share information about the initiatives they are working on including an international survey, policy changes, education efforts, and community programming.

### **Educational Objectives**

- Discuss the unique experiences of Autistic individuals in the justice system.

- Describe current initiatives related to the intersection between the justice system and ASD.
- Identify ways to get involved in current efforts.

## **Speaker Bios**

**Dylan Cooper, MS** • Dylan Cooper is a graduate of the Education Policy M.S.Ed. program at the Penn GSE and currently serves as a research associate with the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute's Policy and Analytics Center. Before attending Penn, Dylan worked as a high school tutor and mentor in Northeast Philadelphia. He is committed to conducting research that promotes equitable opportunities for underserved youth in communities, with a particular focus on combatting racial disparities in health and education.

**Nina Wall, MSS, LSW** • Nina Wall, MSS, LSW serves as the Director of the Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations (BSASP) in the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS). She was a founding member and past

president of the Pennsylvania Action Coalition for Autism Services (PACAS), a statewide board of autism advocacy chairs and directors whose mission was to advocate for services for Pennsylvanians diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, she served as a board member of Pennsylvania Protection and Advocacy (PP&A), as Information and Referral Director for the Autism Society of Greater Philadelphia, and as one of three Managing Co-Chairs of the Pennsylvania Autism Task Force. She completed her graduate studies at the Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research and her clinical pursuits have focused on assisting families, individuals with ASD, and youth with learning and behavioral health challenges.

**Erin O'Donnell, MSW** • Erin O'Donnell has been in her current position as the Crisis Intervention Team Coordinator for two and a half years. During that time she has trained hundreds of police officers in Crisis Intervention along with 90 percent of the civilian call takers and dispatchers for the Philadelphia Police Department. In Crisis Intervention

Training, Erin trains on topics such as mental illness, trauma and de-escalation. Erin holds a Master's of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania with specialization in Child Welfare and Well Being along with a Bachelor's of Science from Pennsylvania State University in Human Development and Family Studies with a Minor in Sociology.

**Corporal John Burke** • Corporal John Burke is an instructor at the Philadelphia Police Department Training and Education Services Bureau. John has served with the Philadelphia Police Department for over 20 years. He is also the father of a son on the autism spectrum.

## **THURSDAY – BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

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**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

**9 – 10:30 AM**

**OPENING REMARKS**

**Valarie Oulds, JD**

Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility  
Services

**KEYNOTE**

The Caregiver Perspective: Sharing Experiences throughout  
the Lifespan

Speakers: Renee Henderson, Ellen Inkeles, Melodie Jackson,  
Andrea Powell, Eric Williams

Every caregiver has unique experiences as the person they are supporting may face a diverse range of challenges and have varied needs. However, there are common threads and experiences woven throughout all of their stories. In this session, caregivers with different roles will share their experiences in supporting their family member on the autism spectrum and with other disabilities.

**Educational Objectives**

- Examine challenges and barriers caregivers may face when providing care to their family member throughout the lifespan.
- Discuss coping mechanisms and self-care strategies.
- Identify local resources to leverage as a caregiver.

## **Speaker Bio**

**Renee Henderson** • Renee Henderson is a parent of a young woman on the autism spectrum. She is also the founder of Autism Sharing and Parenting, a support group for parents and caregivers of individuals on the autism spectrum.

**Ellen Inkeles** • Ellen Inkeles is the parent/guardian of an adult on the autism spectrum. She is also the co-founder of advocacy, education, and support group for parents/guardians of children with disabilities in the township's public school system.

**Melodie Jackson** • Melodie Jackson has over ten years of professional and volunteer experience within Philadelphia's behavioral health sector, Melodie Jackson has integrated real-life experience into every aspect of her career.

Currently, Melodie is employed at the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, serving as their first Family Peer Specialist. She is the also the parent to a now 21-year old son with special needs.

**Andrea Powell** • Andrea Powell is the representative for the Pennsylvania Sibling Support Network, which provides support groups, trainings, resources, and advocacy support to individuals, siblings, parents, caregivers, and family members. Andrea is the sibling and caretaker to an adult brother with Down Syndrome, as well as a member of the first Siblings Ambassador Program. Andrea is passionate about building community among siblings and spreading awareness of their experiences.

**Eric Williams** • Eric Williams' son Elijah was diagnosed with autism in 2001, at the age of three. After Elijah's diagnosis, Eric and his family quickly became frustrated with the lack of available autism-specific resources in their community. Eric focused his attention on areas of development that affected Elijah the most and began doing research on autism-specific programs. In 2004, Eric founded Project Elijah

Empowering Autism (PEEA), which focuses on providing daily resources to children and families living with autism in low-income and lowresourced communities.

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**11:30 AM – 1 PM: Intensive Behavioral Health**

**Services:** Overview of Updates and Implementation

**Speakers:** Amy Kabiru, MSW, LSW, BCBA, Courtney Malecki, Jessica Woods, PhD, BCBA-D, Annemarie Clarke, PhD, Kelly Marascio, MA, BCBA

Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) are services which support children, youth, and young adults under the age of 21 with mental, emotional or behavioral health needs.



IBHS includes a range of services that meet the needs of these individuals in their homes, schools, and communities. This panel includes representatives from the Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services and Community Behavioral Health who will provide information about recent updates to IBHS. Representatives from local providers will also share additional information on the implementation of these updates.

### **Educational Objectives**

- Discuss updates to Intensive Behavioral Health Services in Pennsylvania (IBHS).
- Describe what services Autistic individuals can receive under IBHS.
- Identify resources for Autistic individuals and their families as related to IBHS services.

### **Speaker Bios**

**Amy Kabiru, MSW, LSW, BCBA**, Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Department of Human Services

**Amy Kabiru, MSW, LSW, BCBA** is a clinical consultant with the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services. She obtained her Masters of Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh and went on to pursue a graduate certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis from Pennsylvania State University. Amy has clinical and operational experience in a variety of settings including behavioral health, mental health and special education. Areas of focus in her work include Autism Spectrum Disorders, Applied Behavior Analysis, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health and Children's Mental Health Policy.

**Courtney Malecki**, Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Department of Human Services Courtney Malecki is Division Director for Children's Behavioral Health & Policy Regulations at Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services. Within this division, Courtney oversees and works with state agencies and family and youth advocacy organizations in the development of policy, integrated

planning, and review of service subscriptions for new programs. Over 2020, Courtney has been instrumental in establishing guidelines for Medicaid-covered teletherapy services.

**Jessica Woods, PhD, BCBA-D**, Community Behavioral Health Dr. Jessica Woods is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst and Licensed Psychologist with over 20 years of clinical experience serving children, youth, and adults with Autism Spectrum and other neurodevelopmental disorders. Dr. Woods received her master's degree in Child Clinical Psychology in 1997 from West Virginia University and her doctorate in Clinical Psychology in 2004 from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She completed her pre-doctoral and post-doctoral training at The May Institute in New England. Dr. Woods has presented numerous posters and workshops on her clinical experiences, particularly in partnering with families, implementing systems of care, and translating research into practice in applied settings. Dr. Woods has served as an adjunct faculty at two local universities, teaching multiple sections of BACB-approved

coursework in Applied Behavior Analysis. Dr. Woods is currently the Psychologist Coordinator of Neurodevelopmental Services at Community Behavioral Health (CBH) in Philadelphia.

**Kelly Marascio, MA, SPIN, Inc.**

**Kelly Marascio** is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and has a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology from LaSalle University and an ABA Certificate from Florida Institute of Technology's Applied Behavior Analysis program. Kelly has over 15 years experience working with children with Autism. Her professional interests are focused on providing high quality, evidenced based services to children with Autism and supervising the professionals providing those services. At SPIN, Kelly is currently the Assisting Director of IBHS-ABA, which involves overseeing the ABA Program in the Behavioral Health and Autism Services Department.

**Annemarie Clarke, PhD, SPIN, Inc.**

**Dr. Annemarie Clarke** is a Corporate Officer at SPIN Inc. Dr. Clarke provides corporate-level programmatic development

and management to an array of clinical programs for children and adults, with a specialization in autism and young children/ families.

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### **2 – 3:30 PM: Supporting Autistic People Living with Co-occurring Mental Health Disorders**

**Speakers:** Alik Koumenis, Lisa Morgan, M.Ed., CAS

In this session, panelists will discuss the intersection of mental health conditions and autism. Panelists will share their own lived experiences as well as information about supports, services and resources to support autistic

individuals who may face co-occurring mental health challenges.

## **Educational Objectives**

- Discuss autism as a culture and examine what cultural competence and communication looks like as it relates to supporting individuals with co-occurring mental health conditions.
- Apply lived experience examples in better understanding cultural competence, communication, and crisis support.
- List resources and strategies in creating a safe therapeutic relationship and supporting individuals in a crisis.

## **Speaker Bios**

**Aliki Koumenis** • Aliki Koumenis is an Autistic Self-Advocate, Pennsylvania Board-Certified Peer Specialist, and holds a B.S. in Behavioral Health Counseling. She currently works as the development assistant for the Community Autism Peer Specialist program at Mental Health

Partnerships, for which she also served on the steering committee at the city of Philadelphia to create this first-of-its-kind program in the United States. She utilizes her experiences working in direct service as a peer specialist for Autism and Mental Health, her personal recovery journey, and insights from her various roles within the system to consult on program development, training, and speaking to ensure that services for Autistic people are person-centered and create opportunities for acceptance and community inclusion.

**Lisa Morgan, M.Ed., CAS** • Lisa Morgan, M.Ed., CAS, is a trauma-informed board-certified autism specialist, subject matter expert in autism, communication, cultural competence, crisis supports, and suicide prevention/postvention for the autism community. Lisa provides trainings for first-responders, clinicians, crisis center workers, staff, and any professional working with autistic people in how best to communicate, support, and care for autistic people.

**FRIDAY – SYSTEMS UPDATES**

**ALL SESSIONS CAN BE ACCESSED VIA ZOOM AT THIS LINK:**

[https://drexel.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_gs4\\_oZJUTticKMUKI7GW4g](https://drexel.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_gs4_oZJUTticKMUKI7GW4g)

**Call In:** (267) 831-0333

**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

**9 – 10:30**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

**Jill Bowen, PhD, Commissioner**

Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services

## **KEYNOTE: Reimagining Autism**

State representative Jessica Benham

In this session, State Representative Jessica Benham will discuss her experiences as the first openly Autistic state legislator in Pennsylvania. Representative Benham will discuss how her lived experiences have impacted her approach to healthcare policy.



## **Educational Objectives**

- Examine the intersections of healthcare policy and disability.
- Discuss the importance of advocacy efforts in public policy.
- Identify ways to get involved in policy and advocacy efforts.

## **Speaker Bio**

### **State Representative Jessica Benham • State**

Representative Jessica Benham took office on a platform of fighting for the interests of residents in the 36th Legislative District and solving the critical problems that her constituents face. Prior to holding public office, Benham was Director of Development for the Pittsburgh Center for Autistic Advocacy (PCAA), a grassroots selfadvocacy project run by Autistic people for Autistic people. She co-founded PCAA after moving back to college, and it remains the only LGBTQ Autistic-led advocacy organization in the Greater Pittsburgh Area. Through her work with PCAA, Benham has

worked to ensure that individuals with disabilities are treated fairly in the legislative process. She has provided feedback and consultation for legislation including the Autism CARES Act on the federal level and health care efforts at the state level. She advocated strongly for Paul's Law, which states that an individual can't be deemed ineligible for an organ transplant simply because of a disability and was signed into law in Pennsylvania in 2018.

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**Call In:** (267) 831-0333

**Meeting ID:** 818 5151 2484 #

**11:30 AM – 1 PM: Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Programs in Pennsylvania**

**Educational Objectives**

- Describe the waivers available to Autistic individuals in PA.
- Describe what participant directed services are.
- Identify eligibility requirements and documentation needed across waivers

## **Speaker Bios**

**David Gates, Esq.**, PA Health Law Project

**David Gates, Esq.** was a member of the Dept. of Public Welfare's (now DHS) Autism Task Force, DPW's Bureau of Autism Services' Advisory Board, the Autism Waiver External Advisory Committee as well as the DPW's Children's Behavioral Health Task Force, DPW's Home and Community Based Services Stakeholder Planning Team, DPW's Advisory Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities and the Housing Alternatives Workgroup of the Intergovernmental Council on Long Term Care and the Autism Insurance Advisory Committee. He is currently a member of the "ISAC", ODP's advisory committee. He testified before the PA Senate and House on then-Speaker

O'Brien's legislation which became the Autism Insurance Law (Act 62). After the enactment of Act 62, he served as a consultant to DPW on the implementation of the Act as well as serving on the DPW External Workgroup. He was sole counsel for the plaintiff in *Burke v. IBC* which resulted in 2 decisions by the PA Supreme Court holding that Act 62 requires coverage of ABA in school. He has won several awards and has been honored by several organizations for his commitment and dedication to the field.

**Jamie Ray-Leonetti, JD**, The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

**Jamie-Ray Leonetti** is the Associate Director of Policy at Temple University's Institute on Disabilities. Jamie has an extensive professional career, with two decades of advocating for and on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Jamie has her Juris Doctorate from Temple University's School of Law.

**Jordan Hollander, M.Ed., BCBA**, Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations

**Jordan Hollander, M.Ed., BCBA** • Jordan Hollander is a board-certified behavioral analyst. Jordan serves as a senior behavioral specialist for the Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations at The Office of Developmental Programs under PA DHS. Jordan graduated from Kutztown University with a Master's in Education and post-graduate ABA certification from Penn State.

## **2 – 3:30 PM: Rapid Resource Highlights**

### **Educational Objectives**

- List available local autism resources.
- Describe challenges to accessing resources, especially during an ongoing pandemic and moving forward.
- Discuss strategies to access resources.

### **Organizations**

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Philadelphia Family Voices

Policy and Analytics Center, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute

Pennsylvania Family Network

Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership (PEAL) Center

Philadelphia HUNE, Inc.

The Arc of Philadelphia

Self-Advocates United as 1

ASCEND

School District Office of Specialized Services

## **Thank You**

Thank you for participating in this year's virtual 6th Annual Philadelphia Autism Project Conference. We hope that you will leave this conference with helpful information and resources to support yourself and others, and connect with the broader Philadelphia Autism community. Please reach out to the Philadelphia Autism Project via the contact information below for additional information and resources!

## **Philadelphia Autism Project**

**Join our community!**

Facebook: /PhillyAutism

Twitter: /PhillyAutism

Instagram: /Philly\_Autism

**Contact us:**

Phone: (215) 571.3209 or (215) 671.3152

Email: [phillyap@drexel.edu](mailto:phillyap@drexel.edu)

Website: [www.phillyautismproject.org](http://www.phillyautismproject.org)