

2019 Let's Talk LD College Planning and Transition Conference
for Neurodiverse Learners

SPEAKERS' LIST and BIOS

1. Hasan Ali, B.A. (3F)
2. Janet Barakat, M. Ed., M. Ed. (2D, SS5)
3. Keri Borzello, M.P.A. (3E)
4. Juliana Calhoun, Ed.D., MMFT, PPS (2B)
5. Logan Clark, A.A., B.A. (Candidate) (Special Session A)
6. Araceli Conejo (SS1, SS2, SS9)
7. Gilda Evans (1D, SS3)
8. Daniel Franklin, Ph.D., BCET (Special Session B, 3A)
9. Carol Gignoux, M.Ed. (SS7)
10. Daniel Gillman, B.S. (Candidate, 2022) (Special Session A)
11. Daniel R. Greenwood, Ed.D., M.Ed. (2E)
12. Loren Grossman, M.S., Ed.D., J.D. (2D)
13. Sandra Hall, M.S. (1E)
14. Elizabeth C. Hamblet, M.S. (Special Session B, 1A, 2D, 3B)
15. Aidan Harris, B.S. (Candidate, 2020) (Special Session A)
16. Erin Harris, B.A., M.A. (Candidate, 2019) (Special Session A)
17. KD Harris, M.A. (Special Session B)
18. LeDerick Horne, B.A. (Keynote Address, Special Session A)
19. Marc Lazar, M.S. (3B)
20. Crystal Lee, Psy.D. (3C)
21. Karen Lerner, M.A. (1D, 2D)
22. Marci Lerner Miller, J.D. (2D, 3D)
23. Vanessa Montgomery, M.Ed. (Special Session A, SS6)
24. Sanaz Nabati (SS8)
25. Rashelle Wong Nagata, OTD, OTR/L (2B)
26. Dennis Nelson, B.A. (SS6, Resource)
27. Nicole Ofiesh, Ph.D. (Special Session B, 2F, 3B)
28. Kelly Privitt (SS1, SS2, SS9)
29. Robert Salinas, B.S. (1A, 2A)
30. Stacey Shinnick, M.A., Ed.D. (1E)
31. Ann Simun, Psy.D. (1C)
32. James Spellman, M.A. (3E)
33. Ellie Tabibian, M.A. (SS8)
34. Melanie Tasoff, (2D, SS4)
35. Tom Thompson, M.A. (3B)
36. Kevin J. Tyrrell, M.S.Arch./U.D., LEED AP (1D, 3B)
37. Kirsten Ullman (2D)
38. Marvin Williams, M.S. (1A, 2A, 3B)
39. Karen Wilson, Ph.D. (2C)

SS=Student Session

Hasan Ali, B.A., Founding Partner | Air Tutors

The previous mentors in my life instilled within me the ability to see past societal limitations and the belief that my thought processes alter the world. I established Air Tutors so that I can be that same medium through which students can accomplish more while learning from each other's myriad of backgrounds. Beyond tutoring, I'm a Northern Californian guy that's all about NorCal sports. I used to play football, too, but I ran into a tree and got three stitches on my eyelid; so, that stopped that endeavor. My future goals are to travel abroad once a year and transform the educational experience.

Inspired by the incredible transformation of a student with learning differences, I ended up dropping out of medical school, giving my mom a heart attack, and receiving angel investment to create an experience using that student's feedback to help all students of all skillsets everywhere. After collaborating with various educational therapists, families, and students, I have a unique perspective on how to leverage different teaching modalities to help all learners succeed. Student achievement results have allowed me to form partnerships with various school districts and counties of education. Our neurodiverse students performed just as well as traditional learners on state standardized tests proving that all students can succeed if taught through engaging academic experiences.

Janet Barakat, M. Ed., M. Ed. Secondary Transition Program Specialist | West San Gabriel Valley SELPA

Janet Barakat is a Program Specialist for the West San Gabriel Valley Special Education Local Plan Area. Janet received her second master's degree in Education from the University of Kansas, in Secondary Transition. She has developed and implemented a Secondary Transition program for students with learning differences for grades 6-12. She has collaborated with the Department of Rehabilitation and Americas Job Center to assist students in finding meaningful job experiences while in high school. She is also a Certified Transition Trainer of Trainers for the California Transition Alliance.

Keri Borzello, M.P.A., Head of Schools, Summit View Schools (Valley Glen and Culver City)

Keri Borzello has worked at a variety of independent schools throughout California, including Pinewood School, Campbell Hall, and the Westmark School. Borzello is currently the Head of School at Summit View in Los Angeles, which serves students with learning differences and/or ADHD. In her two decades in education, she has held a wide variety of positions - classroom teacher, coach, student advisor, elementary principal, Admissions Director, Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of Auxiliary programs, and Assistant Director of Development. In 2011, she was a graduate of the prestigious National Association of Independent School Fellowship Program for Aspiring School Heads, in 2012 received a certificate in fundraising from UCLA, in 2018 received a certificate in leadership from Harvard, and has presented globally.

Juliana Calhoun, Ed.D., MMFT, PPS, Assistant Director/Learning Specialist | USC Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity

Juliana is the Assistant Director/Learning Specialist at the Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity (KCLC). In the KCLC, she helps support students that learn differently by working on their study skills and habits to help them succeed to the best of their ability. She also leads the training curriculum in the office for the graduate student trainees. Juliana graduated from the Rossier Ed.D. program in Educational Psychology with a dissertation on developing a Marriage Family Therapy Trainee curriculum for students with fieldwork placements at the KCLC. She received her Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy and PPS credential from the USC Rossier School of Education and a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania.

Shahnee Chen-Zion, Independent College Consultant and Founder | Many Roads College Consulting

Shahnee Chen-Zion is an Independent College Consultant, founder of Many Roads College Consulting. She is committed to helping students of all abilities, and their families, prepare for the college search, application and admissions process. She is a graduate (with distinction) of the UCLA College Counseling Certificate Program and a volunteer college coach at outreach and access programs for first-generation, low income, minority students. She is a member of the Western Association for College Admission Counseling (WACAC), an associate member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) and is committed to ethical and student-focused practices. Shahnee is also a proud mom of 4 sons who have recently graduated or are currently in college and is dedicated to empowering students and demystifying the often confusing and stressful college admissions process.

Logan Clark, A.A., B.A. (Candidate)

Logan Clark, Scholar, A.A. (2019, Pasadena City College), B.A. (Candidate, 2022, University of California at Los Angeles)

Logan Clark completed his studies at Pasadena City College and began his studies at UCLA as a transfer student this Fall. Logan is a youth leader and athlete. Logan chose to study Sociology because he has always had a deep and abiding desire to help other people. He is also studying Child Development because he loves working with children.

Araceli Conejo, Educational Navigator | AbilityFirst

Gilda Evans, Podcast Host and Author | GildaEvans.com and [Patreon](#) Podcast for the Special Needs Community

Gilda Evans has spent over 20 years relentlessly researching mountains of rules, regulations, paperwork, and websites looking for answers on how to get her son with special needs the things he required for his education, health, and life in general. She became her son's self-taught advocate and is the creator of a series of podcasts designed for the special needs community that deal with all sorts of topics and issues; from education to government benefits to housing and almost everything in-between. One of the biggest problems we face as a group is not only a lack of certain resources but also the lack of a knowledge base on how to access and use the resources that are out there. Her podcast project seeks to offer one solution to that dilemma. Gilda's podcast for the special needs community can be found at <https://www.patreon.com/GEspecialneeds>.

Daniel Franklin, Ph.D., BCET, Founder and President | Franklin Educational Services

Daniel Franklin, Ph.D., BCET, is the author of *Helping Your Child with Language-Based Learning Disabilities*. He holds a master's degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a Ph.D. from UCLA in Education. Daniel has over 30 years of experience in education as a teacher, administrator, and educational consultant. He is the founder and president of Los Angeles-based Franklin Educational Services, Inc.

Carol Gignoux, M.Ed., ADHD Coach and Author | Live ADHD Free with Carol Gignoux

Carol Gignoux is a pioneer and expert in the field of ADHD. For 40 years, she has coached and counseled thousands of people. She has helped a diverse group of people from different backgrounds, cultures, and generations. Each individual was unique but all needed to learn key strategies and tools to live a better life. Through her education, research, coaching, and experience, Carol has discovered that ADHD is really the "Innovator Brain Type."

Daniel Gillman, B.S. *Applied and Computational Mathematics* (Candidate, 2022, University of Southern California Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences)

Daniel is a Bachelor of Science Candidate in Applied and Computational Mathematics within USC's Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences (class of 2022). He graduated from Tarbut V' Torah High School in Irvine, California last spring. His course of study includes the traditional calculus courses, linear algebra, probability, statistics, and mathematical modeling. His passions include college football and watching The Amazing Race.

Daniel R. Greenwood, Ed.D., M.Ed., Independent Educational Consultant | Greenwood Associates West, Inc.

Dr. Daniel Greenwood is a career counselor with over 30 years of experience as a teacher, head of school, and an educational association executive. Dr. Greenwood developed the Greenwood System 120 to assess the four domains of a person's interests, values, personalities, and abilities to make career matches. Using big data, the Greenwood System is able to leverage the strengths and minimize the deficits for individuals with exceptionalities. As CEO of Greenwood Associates, Inc., Dr. Greenwood also trains counselors and programs around the world to use the Greenwood System.

Loren Grossman, M.S., Ed.D., J.D., Educational Advocate/Independent College Counselor | The Educational Advocacy Office of Loren R. Grossman

Dr. Loren R. Grossman has been in private practice as a lay educational advocate representing pre-K-12 children with special needs, including the gifted, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional, since 1999. In 2010, she earned her college counseling certificate from UCLA Extension in order to expand her practice to include students transitioning out of high school, as well as college transfers. She earned her AB in Sociology from UC Berkeley, her M.S. in Health Science (Health Statistics and Research) from CSU Northridge, her J.D. from the University of Memphis (TN), and her Ed.D. from USC.

Sandra Hall, M.S., Transition Teacher | District Office of Transition Services, LAUSD

Sandra Hall, Transition Teacher/Career Coach Chatsworth Charter High School District Office of Transition Services, Los Angeles Unified School District. Sandra is a Transition Teacher starting her 31st year with Los Angeles Unified School District. Prior to working as a transition teacher, Sandra oversaw LAUSD's Student Energy Auditor Training program. She began her educational career as a secondary mathematics teacher. Sandra has a Master of Science in Educational Administration, and credential in Special Education. Sandra firmly believes, given the right tools and support, all students can learn.

Elizabeth C. Hamblet, M.S., Learning Consultant | LD Advisory and Columbia University

Elizabeth C. Hamblet, a learning consultant at Columbia University's Disability Services office, has worked at the college level for 20 years after starting her career in the field as a high school special education teacher and case manager. In addition to working as a college consultant, she is a nationally requested speaker who gives presentations to professionals and parents about how to prepare students with disabilities for success at college. Hamblet is the author of *From High School to College: Steps to Success for Students with Disabilities*, and her work has appeared in national journals and online platforms, including Understood.org. She offers advice and information on her website at www.LDadvisory.com. Connect with her at [Facebook.com/LDadvisory](https://www.facebook.com/LDadvisory) and on Twitter @echamblet.

Aidan Harris, B.S., *Arts, Technology and the Business of Innovation* (Candidate, 2020, University of Southern California Iovine and Young Academy), Co-Founder | Let's Talk LD

I am a designer, with an interest in exploring how Interaction Design and User Interface Design can shape and improve the ways that we live our daily lives. Inventiveness and innovation have always been a driving force for me. Ever since I was a young child, making and designing have been important parts of my life. When other kids were drawing monsters and cartoons, I was conceiving, drawing and constructing mechanical apparatuses, world-building, and giving life to inventions derived from my wildest imaginings. As a Twice-Exceptional scholar, I long ago realized that I am driven to create, because it allows me to summon the very best parts of who I am, to solve a problem or to understand how someone may experience the world. I am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Arts, Technology and the Business of Innovation at the University of Southern California's Iovine and Young Academy. I am also a Co-Founder of Let's Talk LD and serve as a consultant on all aspects of their digital media strategy.

Erin Harris, B.A., *Environmental Analysis (Sustainability and the Built Environment)*, M.A., *Community-Engaged Education and Social Change* (Candidate, 2019, Claremont Graduate University, School of Educational Studies), Co-Founder | Let's Talk LD, Educational Coach | AbilityFirst

My collective experiences have instilled in me a world view, consciousness and commitment to advance social justice, intercultural understanding, and environmental responsibility. I recently (2018) completed my Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Analysis, with an emphasis in Sustainability and the Built Environment at Pitzer College. I am currently in the second year of my graduate degree studies at Claremont Graduate University, as a candidate in the School of Education's Community-Engaged Social Change track of the Master of Arts program because I feel that the interdisciplinary potential in this track is exponential. I believe that both my undergraduate and my graduate degree work will provide an excellent foundation for me to pursue my interest in being a social impact entrepreneur.

As a twice-exceptional scholar, I believe that I bring unique insights and experiences to my work as an advocate within, and Co-Founder of, the Let's Talk LD organization. I serve in all aspects of Let's Talk LD's business operations and assist in the management of the social media operation.

KD Harris, M.A., Co-Founder and Executive Director | Let's Talk LD

KD Harris, M.A. is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the social impact 501(c)(3) non-profit, Let's Talk LD. We address critically important social justice and equity of educational opportunity issues faced by those in the neurodiverse community. It is our mission to meet learners with special needs where they are, at critical periods in their development and learning, in an effort to implement innovative programs that can support these learners in living productive and fulfilling academic, social, and professional lives defined by self-sufficiency, self-determination, and purpose. Over the past 30 years, KD has leveraged her expertise in educational leadership and reform, curriculum design, and organizational change to build a successful career advancing best practices and innovations in educational program design. Our organization serves students, families, educational and community-based professionals and organizations.

LeDerick Horne, B.A., Speaker, Author, Special Education Consultant, Owner | LeDerick Horne Speaks, LLC

Diagnosed with a learning disability in the third grade, LeDerick Horne defies any and all labels. He's a dynamic spoken-word poet. A tireless advocate for all people with disabilities. An inspiring motivational speaker. A bridge-builder between learners and leaders across the U.S. and around the world. An African American husband and father who serves as a role model for all races, genders, and generations.

The grandson of one of New Jersey's most prominent civil rights leaders, LeDerick uses his gift for spoken-word poetry as the gateway to larger discussions on equal opportunity, pride, self-determination and hope for people with disabilities. His workshops, keynote speeches, and performances reach thousands of students, teachers, legislators, policymakers, business leaders, and service providers each year. He regularly addresses an array of academic, government, social, and business groups, including appearances at the White House, the United Nations, Harvard University, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, the Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Nevada, and Alabama State Departments of Education. His work addresses the challenges of all disabilities, uniting the efforts of diverse groups in order to achieve substantive, systemic change.

From 2003 to 2012, LeDerick served as the Founding Board Chair of Eye to Eye (eyetoeyenational.org), the only national nonprofit mentoring program for students labeled with LD / ADHD and continues to serve on the board today. He is on the advisory board for The National Resources for Access, Independence, Self-determination, and Employment (RAISE) Technical Assistance Center (www.raisecenter.org), and he is a Senior Consultant for The Center for School Climate and Learning.

In 2016, he and co-author Margo Vreeburg Izzo, Ph.D., The Ohio State University, released the book *Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success* — the definitive compendium on transition support for students with LD / ADHD and other hidden disabilities — published by Brookes Publishing Co.

He has released two spoken-word poetry albums (*Rhyme Reason and Song* in 2005 and *Black and Blue* in 2011) and co-created *New Street Poets*, a spoken-word play about the effect of gentrification on urban culture. The play received considerable acclaim including accolades at the New York City International Fringe Festival and toured extensively throughout the U.S.

LeDerick has earned a B.A. in Mathematics with a Fine Arts minor from New Jersey City University and also studied Mathematics at Middlesex County College. His poetry is available on iTunes and YouTube.

Marc Lazar, M.S., Disabilities Specialties | Center for Accessible Education, the University of California at Los Angeles

Marc Lazar is a Disabilities Specialist with the UCLA Center for Accessible Education, where he enjoys collaborating with the school's disability and neurodiversity communities, including the PEERS program.

Prior to UCLA, Marc was an autism specialist at Aspiritech, a Chicago-based IT social enterprise that trains and employs individuals on the autism spectrum in the field of software testing. Marc developed their innovative job coaching program and has trained more than 50 individuals, several who have gone on to full-time tech jobs with employers like Apple.

He has also worked with students with disabilities at Chicago Public Schools and as a career coach for individuals on the spectrum seeking employment. He frequently presents workshops for parents, individuals, and professionals on the topic of autism employment and the transition to college/adulthood.

Crystal Lee, Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist and Owner | L.A. Concierge Psychologist (SSESSION)

Dr. Crystal I. Lee is a Los Angeles clinical psychologist that provides college transition support and gap year development for neurodivergent individuals, specializing in adult Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD. Through her private practice, LA Concierge Psychologist, Dr. Lee provides in-home/on-site support on the Westside, in-office support in Culver City, and teletherapy support throughout California and Nevada. Prior to starting her private practice, Dr. Lee ran a life-skills coaching program and residential facility that assisted emerging adults in successfully transitioning to college and adulthood. Dr. Lee earned her doctorate in clinical psychology at Baylor University and her bachelor's degrees from UCLA.

Karen Lerner, M.A., Independent Educational Therapist | The College Blueprint

Karen works as an educational therapist at The College Blueprint, supporting students who have issues that can make schoolwork a challenge. Along with her College Blueprint Team, she works on methods to be more productive, less anxious, and more pro-active with studying, test-taking, getting work completed, and staying accountable.

Karen holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a master's degree from New York University – both in dance. Teaching in dance departments at University of California, Irvine and Chapman University for a dozen years, Karen received a teaching credential and an education administration credential from UCI and a special education credential from Chapman University in preparation for a 21-year career as a teacher and school principal at The Prentice School. After obtaining an educational therapy certification from University of California, Riverside, she now works at both the UCI Child Development School and The College Blueprint in educational therapy.

Karen is a board member of the tri-county branch of the International Dyslexia Association and a national board member of the Association of Educational Therapists. She frequently lectures on special needs considerations for college planning, and executive functioning skill support.

Marci Lerner Miller, J.D., Founder and Independent Educational Consultant | Miller Advocacy Group

Marci Lerner Miller combined her background as a special education attorney and independent educational consultant to create a program specifically designed to prepare students with disabilities and learning differences for the successful transition to post-secondary life. Miller Advocacy Group's practice areas include special education law and advocacy, post-secondary transition counseling, and college consulting. Marci is hearing-impaired and is a member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bar Association. As a disabled attorney, Marci is dedicated to advancing the rights and opportunities for students with disabilities in education, employment and standardized testing.

Marci is a member of the State Bar of California and is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). She is also a Professional Member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) with a Learning Disabilities (LD) designation. Marci lives in Newport Beach, California with her husband Shawn, one son and three rescue dogs. She has a son and a daughter in college and a son who recently graduated from college.

Vanessa Montgomery, M.Ed., Diplomat | Eye to Eye

Vanessa Montgomery was an Eye to Eye Chapter Leader at UC Santa Cruz and has been an Eye to Eye Diplomat since 2011. Vanessa graduated from UC Santa Cruz in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in History. In 2016 Vanessa completed the master's Credential Cohort Program in Special Education at the University of San Diego. Since graduating, Vanessa has worked at San Diego High where she created a transition class that became a club called the Caver Coffee Crew. The students serve coffee to teachers on campus which helps students with social skills, resume building, and preparing them to join the workforce. Vanessa recently received the Teacher of the Year award from San Diego High.

Sanaz Nabati, M.A., Career Counselor | University of California at Los Angeles Career Center

Rashelle Wong Nagata, OTD, OTR/L, Learning Specialist/Occupational Therapist | USC Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity

Rashelle works as a learning specialist at the University of Southern California Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity in Los Angeles. She completed her occupational therapy doctoral residency at the USC Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice, which is a private outpatient mental health clinic. Rashelle attained advanced clinical expertise in Lifestyle Redesign®, an occupational therapy intervention that facilitates the health-promoting behavioral change of clients with diagnoses such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, depression, and anxiety.

Rashelle currently specializes in the holistic treatment of college students to promote academic engagement, optimal health and wellness and the attainment of a student's fullest potential. Additionally, she serves as the supervisor for occupational therapy fieldwork students that function as academic coaches.

Dennis Nelson, B.A., Partnerships Manager | Eye to Eye National

Dennis Nelson, originally from Paulsboro, NJ, is considered an advocate for social change; Dennis has worked to serve people through civic engagement in the political process as well as career advancement and social impact through strategic partnerships. Dennis relocated to Washington D.C. in 2007 after graduating from Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. Finishing with a degree in Policy Administration & Religion, he took a job as the Public Policy and Outreach Coordinator at People for the American Way Foundation. Dennis serves as Eye to Eye National's Partnerships Manager

Nicole Ofiesh, Ph.D., Director, Schwab Learning Center, Founder/Director UDL Innovation Studio and Sr. Research Scientist | Stanford University and CAST

Nicole Ofiesh, Ph.D. studies the intersection of learner variance and performance at school and work. With expertise in learning disorders and attentional issues, she employs this knowledge to implement innovative approaches with students and professionals from high school through adulthood.

Dr. Ofiesh believes in practices grounded in a strengths-based model of learning. This includes Universal Design for Learning (UDL), technology, and research-based learning strategies that stem from neuroscience, self-awareness, choice, and engagement. As Founder and Director of the UDL Innovation Studio at Stanford, she encourages leaders to bridge the gap between learner variability and performance in college, work and life. Under the SLC, the Studio serves as a hub where researchers, faculty, clinicians, students, and technology developers work together to develop new tools, models and practices for educating all students as they prepare for the lifespan. She often teaches courses for faculty and educators in Special Education instruction and assessment (elementary and secondary teacher education), as well as the neuroscience of learning.

Dr. Ofiesh is an expert in test accommodations and universally designed assessments. She has held faculty and research positions at Stanford University, Penn State University, Providence College, University of Arizona and Notre Dame de Namur University, where she was Program Director of Special Education and Department Chair of Teacher Education.

Kelly Privitt, B.S., Senior Director of Quality and Data Management and Program Director of College to Career | AbilityFirst

At AbilityFirst, Kelly Privitt holds the dual roles of Senior Director of Quality and Data Management and Director of the College to Career Program. Since she joined the agency in 1994, Kelly has performed a variety of leadership roles, including serving as Senior Director of Programs (overseeing after school and adult programs and group homes), Program Supervisor at the Claremont Center, and Director of Camp Joan Mier. Prior to joining AbilityFirst, she worked for the Spanish Trails Girl Scout Council. Her first experience with AbilityFirst was as a Girl Scout troop co-leader at the Claremont Center.

Kelly graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in Behavioral Science. She the Chair of the American Camping Association's National Ethics Commission and the Chair of the American Camping Association National Ethics Task Group. Kelly has a Certificate in Non-Profit Management, and extensive training in person-centered thinking and planning and program planning and evaluation.

Kelly is a parent of a young adult on the Autism Spectrum and uses a person-centered planning approach to support her daughter and identify what is important to her and for her. She has personal experience navigating the maze of special education and systems and services. Kelly understands from personal experience the challenges confronting youth and their parents as they journey from childhood to adulthood and from dependence to autonomy and address complex medical and educational needs.

As part of her ongoing professional and personal education, Kelly has been trained in and practices the principles of cognitive behavioral communication skills and dialectical behavior therapy.

Robert Salinas, B.S., Assistive Technology Coordinator | Services for Students with Disabilities | California State University - Fresno

Robert Salinas is the Assistive Technology Coordinator at CSU, Fresno's Services for Students with Disabilities. He has seven years of experience working with Assistive Technology and Alternate Media in higher education and creating Accessible Instructional Materials. Robert has an undergraduate degree in Information Systems from CSU, Fresno and currently pursuing his graduate degree in Assistive Technology Studies and Human Services from CSU, Northridge.

Stacey Shinnick, Ed.D., Transition Teacher/Career Coach | Chatsworth Charter High School & Miller Career and Transition Center District Office of Transition Services (DOTS), Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)

Stacey is a Transition Teacher who is leading the implementation of the California Career Innovations Work-Based Learning Initiative (CCI) within the Los Angeles Unified School District. Prior to working in Transition Services, she taught in Resource Specialist, Special Day, and Autism Programs. Stacey has a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy and master's in special education. She is passionate about helping students gain skills that will lead them to success in academics and life.

Ann Simun, Psy.D., Clinical Neuropsychologist and Principal | Simun Psychological Assessment Group, PC

Dr. Ann Simun is a clinical neuropsychologist who has been working professionally with children since 1989. She currently runs a private clinical practice specializing in children (preschool through school age), teens, and young adults with learning, developmental, behavioral/emotional, and neurological challenges. She frequently speaks and trains at regional and national conferences; she previously taught at the graduate and undergraduate level at various universities in Southern California and her clinics are formal training sites for clinical neuropsychologists from a variety of universities (Pepperdine, USC, Alliant, TCS, etc.) including postdoctoral internship. The goal of her practice is to provide detailed, comprehensive and individualized reports on children/teens to help the intervention team (including parents, schools, medical and allied professionals) create integrated programs which maximize each client's potential.

James Spellman, M.A., Principal | St. Monica Catholic High School (Santa Monica)

James Spellman is the Principal at Saint Monica's Catholic High School in Santa Monica and is formerly the Assistant Principal of Immaculate Heart High School & Middle School in Los Angeles, California. He is known for leading the professional development of all teachers and the improvement of academic and behavioral performance and enrichment education of all students, realizing systemic practices and the attainment of diverse student and faculty performance goals. Throughout his long career at several schools, he has instituted restorative justice practices to address student discipline, increased academic rigor by doubling the availability of AP courses, increased student enrichment programs and increased faculty involvement and collaboration, and reduced staff turnover, instituted safety and disaster programs, and actively collaborated on educational committees with students, parents and/or staff to continuously improve learning experiences and enhance home/school communications.

Ellie Tabibian, M.A., Career Consultant | Pars Equality Center and Soar

I am a career coach certified in CliftonStrengths, MBTI, and Strong Interest Inventory to unify teams and individuals in pursuit of engagement, innovation, and fulfillment. Concerned about students' disengagement in K-12, I left my former career as a school psychologist to connect, inspire, and grow students and professionals. I am currently coaching professionals and students seeking to advance their career with transformative results. I also train managers to keep their star employees and improve their staff engagement and morale.

My goal is to help organizations and individuals maximize the best of who they already are and deliver their unique contributions for integrated and impactful results. I believe innovation is most valuable when the outcomes deliver a positive impact for humanity, not just individuals. To achieve this, I help individuals develop their raw talents to a mature level of performance that's beneficial to all.

I have been honored the 2016-2017 Woman of the Year Award with NAPW because of my commitment and leadership to my profession.

Melanie Tasoff, B.A., Founder | A College Journey

Melanie's journey to college counseling developed from experiences in several areas. Originally from Tucson, AZ, she migrated to Los Angeles and graduated from UCLA with her bachelor's degree. Later, she returned to UCLA and completed her Certificate in College Counseling, with Honors. Melanie is an Associate Member of IECA (Independent Educational Consultants Association), a member of WACAC (Western Association for College Admission Counseling) and IDA (International Dyslexia Association). She created A College Journey and began her quest to help students with their own college journey.

Melanie is the mom of 3 sons, all with different college needs. Melanie worked with Jewish Family Service's special needs programs, and then joined Online Jewish Academy OJA - a small start-up company that used progressive blended learning for high school students. OJA's programs were used with advance level students and as well as those with alternative learning needs.

Through working with her own sons and others, she became aware of the importance in recognizing the many gifts that people can have. Along with a focus on learning differences and specialized needs, Melanie guides students that are "twice exceptional" and other students who are looking for the right college fit.

Tom Thompson, M.A., Project Consultant | TMLS Consulting

Tom Thompson has an extensive background in higher education. Thompson has served as director of disability services offices at three universities - Harper College, Northern Illinois University, and California State University, Fullerton. Thompson has twice served on the Board of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), was a founding member of the Illinois-Iowa AHEAD chapter and has presented at numerous conferences. Additionally, Thompson has held leadership roles as the former Chair of the Disabilities Advisory Committee of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (2004-2012) and as national co-chair of the Disability Knowledge Community of NASPA (professional Student Affairs organization). He is currently serving as a Disability Resources departmental consultant evaluator for AHEAD and NASPA. Thompson provides consultation, program development, strategic planning and external evaluations to higher education institutions focused on a variety of topics.

Kevin J. Tyrrell, M.Arch., LEED AP, Co-Founder | Let's Talk LD

Kevin is a parent of two children with learning differences well into the college transition experience. As an architect, urban designer and owner/partner with QDG Architecture based in Los Angeles, he specializes in the design of environments that enhance learning in Pre-K through Higher Education settings throughout the State of California, including several buildings at LA Valley College. He credits his own experience with learning differences as giving him greater sensitivity to the need for flexible spaces that can support multiple learning modalities. His wife KD, an educator, also serves as an invaluable sounding board for design ideas before they are put to paper.

Kirsten Ullman, Admissions Counselor and Territory Manager (West Coast) | Landmark College

Kirsten Ullman has spent the majority of the last 20 years of her career, working in public education and not for profits, providing program planning, intervention, and educational supports for children and adults with Autism. Her passion for design and technology, led her to complete a degree in Visual Communications, at the Northern Alberta Institute for Technology, in Edmonton, Canada in 2015.

In her current role as an Admissions Counselor and Territory Manager for the West Coast, at Landmark College, Kirsten is inspired daily by the students and families that she works with through the admissions process. Neurodiversity is close to her heart as a mother of three neurodiverse children, one of whom is a current Landmark College student.

Marvin Williams, M.S., Director | Disability Resource Center | California State University at Stanislaus

Marvin Williams is the Director of Disability Resource Services at Stanislaus State. He has worked in higher education for 15 years and in the disability community for the last 21 years in California, Delaware, Florida, and Iowa. He has a Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering from Iowa State University and his Assistive Technology Practitioner and Rehabilitation Engineering Technologist certifications from RESNA, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America.

Karen Wilson, Ph.D., Clinical Neuropsychology and Founder | West L.A. Neuropsychology, PC and ChildNexus

Dr. Karen Wilson is a Clinical Neuropsychologist, owner of a private practice in Los Angeles, CA, and founder of ChildNEXUS.com. She is a Professor, Graduate Coordinator, and Chair of the Department of Psychology at California State University, Dominguez Hills. She is also a Voluntary Assistant Clinical Professor in the Medical Psychology Assessment Center at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Behavior at UCLA. Dr. Wilson specializes in the assessment of neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents, and she has extensive experience evaluating children and adults who present with neurological, medical and psychiatric disorders.

Dr. Wilson has given a number of presentations at national conferences, and she has published articles in national journals. She has received funding from the National Institutes of Health and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to conduct research, and she has received a number of awards for her work. Dr. Wilson has been recognized by the California Legislature Assembly for her dedication and commitment to students and the community.

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