

Transition Symposium 2018 – Session Descriptions

Morning Plenary Sessions

“Person Centered Descriptions: A Powerful Advocacy Tool”

Target Audience: General and Educator

Person centered descriptions are a powerful advocacy tool. Learn how this tool can be used to advocate for people of every age and with every issue. Person centered descriptions begin with a positive introduction – what we like, admire, and appreciate about a person – and then describe what is important to that person and how to best support them. Participants will be introduced to the process of developing these descriptions by creating a first draft of their own.

Michael Smull, BA, Senior Partner, Support Development Associates, LLC, and Founder/Board Chair, The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices, Inc.

“Preparing for Work: What Self-Advocates Need to Know”

Target Audience: Youth

Transition-age youth dream of someday being able to get and keep a job. Explore the social communication and self-advocacy skills that can be developed now to prepare for future employment experiences. Examine how state support systems work and how the adult service system is different than the special education system in schools. Learn about customized employment and how to build off of your strengths. Participants will come away from this workshop empowered to begin their employment journey.

Zosia Zaks, M Ed, CRC, Manager of Programs and Education, Towson University's Hussman Center for Adults with Autism

Target Audience: General

1a. Maryland ABLE: A Better Life. Achieved.

Maryland ABLE is a means of disruptive innovation, changing expectations about saving and asset building for people with disabilities. Explore a new way to build wealth and pay for qualified disability expenses without jeopardizing eligibility for federal and state means-tested benefits.

Lori Markland, MFA, Communications Relations Administrator, Maryland ABLE Program

1b. CCBC CASE Single Step and ACCESS: College Made for You

Learn about programming designed specifically for individuals with disabilities and provided by the Community College of Baltimore County. This includes career training certificate programs as well as individual courses for skills development and personal enrichment.

Melanie Hood-Wilson, MS, Director of Special Populations, Community College of Baltimore County Center for Alternative and Supported Education (CASE)

1c. NAMI Smarts for Advocacy

Never thought of yourself as an advocate? Want to make a positive change in mental health services? You don't have to know about policies or politics. Learn to use your voice to influence others and make a difference. Participants often share that they've never been able to condense their story or make a clear "ask." NAMI Smarts provides the tools to do just that. Come away from this course confident and able to share your story in a way that moves policymakers.

Laurie Liskin, MA, Sc M, NAMI-certified Trainer, Senior Advisor for Communication, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

1d. Preparing for Transition with DORS

Gain an overall understanding of vocational rehabilitation and transition programs available through the Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). These include the recently added Pre-Employment Transition Services. Explore how these services can benefit high school students with disabilities.

Sharon Plump, MS, Regional Program Manager, and Seth Masley, MA, Office Supervisor, Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services

1e. Transition Planning 101 for Parents of Younger Students

Explore the transition plan requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including a discussion of your child's rights as he or she leaves school and enters the adult system. Learn how to advocate for your young adult, and strengthen transition planning in the IEP process!

Robert Berlow, Senior Attorney, Disability Rights Maryland

2a. How to Get Benefits from Social Security, Go to Work...and Live to Tell About It – Part 1 of 3

You've heard about SSI and SSDI...and probably heard some misinformation. Learn what these benefits are, who is eligible, how to apply (and appeal denials), and which medical benefits you'll receive. Just as importantly, discover how people can work for pay and continue to receive essential cash and medical benefits. This is a 3-part session. Part 1 covers most information about Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all 3 sessions.

Michael Dalto, BA, CPWIC, Certified Benefits Trainer and Consultant

2b. So, You Want to be a TERP!? Helping to Ease Your Transition to College by Accessing Services and Resources at the University of Maryland

The University of Maryland's Hearing and Speech Sciences' Clinic and the University of Maryland Autism Research Consortium support transitioning teens and young adults as they navigate the steps toward college life. Two programs have been developed to help students with this process: The Social Interaction Group Network for UMD Students with Autism (SIGNA) and the UMD Teen Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®). Learn how each program can help students navigate social interactions and executive functioning skills to prepare for college life.

Kathryn Dow-Burger, MA, CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist, Associate Clinical Professor, University of Maryland College Park

2c. Raising the Bar

As your child's first and forever advocate, you set the stage for how they will perceive themselves and how others will perceive them. This session will share the importance of setting expectations that are critical in determining your child's academic and social outcomes.

Trish Gunshore, MS, Special Education Parent Liaison, Howard County Public School System

2d. What's NEW at DDA? An Eligibility & Services Overview

Everyone has the right to live, love, work, play, and pursue their aspirations in their community. Since 2015, the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has been transforming programs, policies and funding processes to put people with developmental disabilities at the center of their efforts. Explore the services available under DDA's two new support waivers. Learn about eligibility criteria, the application process, appeals, and the waiting list.

Rashawn Moore, MPA, M Ed, Director of Eligibility for Central Maryland Regional Office, Developmental Disabilities Administration

2e. Preparing for Work: What Parents and Families Need to Know

Many parents hope that their child with a disability will someday be able to get and keep a job or otherwise meaningfully contribute to society. Explore the steps families can take now to prepare their child for future employment, including the social communication skills needed for workplace success at any job or volunteer opportunity. Examine how state support systems work and how the adult service system is different than the special education system for children. Learn about customized employment and how to build off of your child's interests and strengths. Participants will come away from this workshop empowered to facilitate and support their child's first steps into the adult system and the world of work.

Zosia Zaks, M Ed, CRC, Manager of Programs and Education, Towson University's Hussman Center for Adults with Autism

3a. How to Get Benefits from Social Security, Go to Work...and Live to Tell About It – Part 2 of 3

This is a 3-part session. Part 2 covers more information about SSI and information about Social Security Disability (SSDI) benefits. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all 3 sessions.

Michael Dalto, BA, CPWIC, Certified Benefits Trainer and Consultant

3b. College is an Option: Programs and Services at Howard Community College for Students with Disabilities

Examine the differences between high school and college for students with disabilities. Learn about federal legislation that governs these programs. Gain information about the following programs at Howard Community College: Disability Support Services, Project Access, CORE, REACH, and other continuing education offerings.

Kathy McSweeney, MA, Director of Disability Support Services, and Dianne Nagle, MS, Associate Director of Project Access, Howard Community College

3c. Moving to the Back Seat...Breathe, It Will Be OK! Part 1 of 2

Our kids grow up so fast! Now they are 14 and we as parents are being asked to "step aside" or "take a back seat." Yikes! Talk about scary! This session will support families and caregivers to begin helping their youth develop self-determination skills and soft skills. Learn how all this ties to the IEP. This is a 2-part session. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend both sessions.

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, MA, Executive Director, The Parent's Place of Maryland

3d. Mental Health Services 101

Explore specialized programs and services within Maryland's Public Behavioral Health System. These programs and services are targeted to young adults who have significant mental health and emotional disabilities, and are designed to help prepare youth for the transition to adulthood. Learn how to navigate services and supports, including eligibility, the application process, and local initiatives. Hear about the journey into young adulthood from a parent who has navigated this path, and still is, with her child who has a mental health disability.

Juli Murray, MS, Outreach and Education Specialist, Humanim, and Rita Daugherty, MS, NAMI-trained Group Facilitator

3e. Public Transportation in Howard County

Learning how to ride the bus can help a young person transitioning from high school become more independent. Explore public transportation options available in Howard County including the fixed-route bus system, travel training, and how paratransit services can supplement fixed-route for young people who qualify. Learn how to access information on bus routes, schedules, and trip planning resources. Examine the application and eligibility process for both travel training and paratransit services.

Christine Fogle, BA, Travel Trainer for the Center for Mobility Equity, and Victor Jimenez, RTA Mobility Manager, Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland

4a. How to Get Benefits from Social Security, Go to Work...and Live to Tell About It - Part 3 of 3

This is a 3-part session. Part 3 is a questions and answer session. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all 3 sessions.

Michael Dalto, BA, CPWIC, Certified Benefits Trainer and Consultant

4b. Special Needs Planning: Caring for All of Your Family Members

Gain an overall understanding of the financial and special needs planning process, when your family includes a member with a disability. Learn the process for developing your personal roadmap to meet both parent retirement objectives and special needs trust funding, and for establishing a plan of care for when parents cannot be the central caregiver.

Monty Knittle, MBA, CFA, Vice President, and James W. Curran III, CFP, Managing Director, Harbor Investment Advisory, LLC

4c. Moving to the Back Seat...Breathe, It Will Be OK! Part 2 of 2

Our kids grow up so fast! Now they are 14 and we as parents are being asked to "step aside" or "take a back seat." Yikes! Talk about scary! This session will support families and caregivers to begin helping their youth develop self-determination skills and soft skills. Learn how all this ties to the IEP. This is a 2-part session. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend both sessions.

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, MA, Executive Director, The Parent's Place of Maryland

4d. The Transition Journey

Hear from two individuals about the importance of setting high expectations. This presentation will help participants understand that disabilities do not have to impede productive, meaningful lives.

Ken Capone, Public Policy Director, and Tracy Wright, AA, Lead Trainer/Advocacy Specialist, People On the Go of Maryland

Targeted Audience: Educators

1f. Preparing for Work: What Educators Need to Know

Teachers hope that their students with disabilities will someday be able to get and keep jobs or contribute to their community in meaningful ways. Explore the steps educators can take now to prepare their students for future opportunities once school is done. Teachers will also learn about customized employment, using a student's traits as assets, and incorporating valuable lessons into mandated curricular components.

Zosia Zaks, M Ed, CRC, Manager of Programs and Education, Towson University's Hussman Center for Adults with Autism

2f. Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Educators

Gain an overall understanding of transition planning, including applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Discuss elements and goals of transition planning, including examples of quality and poor transition plans. Learn about transition planning resources, including state and nonprofit resources.

Maureen van Stone, Esq., MS, Associate Director, and Mallory Finn, Esq., JD, Staff Attorney for Project HEAL, Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities

3f. Disability Etiquette with Students: It Just Makes Sense!

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was conceived with the goal of integrating people with disabilities into all aspects of life. Sensitivity toward people with disabilities is not only in the spirit of the ADA, it makes sense. When teachers use disability etiquette, students with disabilities feel comfortable and learn better.

Katie Collins-Ihrke, MS, MBA, Executive Director, Accessible Resources for Independence Inc.

4f. You Get an App. And You Get an App. And You Get an App!

Learn about iPad apps and Google Chrome extensions that can assist students with disabilities in the classroom, at home, in college, or in the workplace. Categories include reading, writing, note-taking, studying, focus, organization, and reminders. Come discover your new favorite app for your students (and maybe even for yourself)!

Erin Swann, MSE, Assistive Technology Specialist, Maryland Technology Assistance Program

Target Audience: Youth

1g. Don't Worry, Work Happy: How to Keep Disability Benefits While You Work

Would you like to work for pay? Do you or your family worry about how work might affect your SSI or Medical Assistance? Safety nets called "work incentives" help protect cash and medical benefits you receive while you work. Learn how to use these work incentives to make sure you get ahead when you work.

Michael Dalto, BA, CPWIC, Certified Benefits Trainer and Consultant

2g. Wellness and Creative Practice

There are many benefits to spending time creatively. Practicing creativity can help reduce stress, increase brain function, and add to an individual's overall well-being. Explore your creative side and enjoy hands-on practice with a variety of art materials.

Karen Isailovic, Founder/CEO, Root Studio

2h. Let's Make a Date!

Dating...it's complicated. Sometimes it can be awkward to meet new people and keep relationships going strong. Learn some tools to keep your relationships healthy. Discuss topics such as different types of relationships, personal space, and open communication.

Amity Lachowicz, BA, CWIC, Independent Living Specialist, and Audrey Sellers, BA, CIRS A/D, Disability Specialist, Accessible Resources for Independence Inc.

3h. Health Matters!

Looking to get a jump start on a healthy lifestyle? Discuss the basics of health, exercise, and nutrition. Develop your own goals for a healthy lifestyle as you learn how your choices affect your health.

Amity Lachowicz, BA, CWIC, Independent Living Specialist, and Audrey Sellers, BA, CIRS A/D, Disability Specialist, Accessible Resources for Independence Inc.

4g. Meals in Minutes: Simple Meal Prep for All!

If you like food? So do we! Learn some basic kitchen skills and make two quick, delicious meals using everyday kitchen tools. Come enjoy the fruits of your labor! The basics of food safety and kitchen safety will also be discussed.

*Therapeutic Recreation Staff,
Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks.*

4h. Dream a Little Dream

Get your dreams on paper and create a vision for your life! Participants will leave this session with a vision board that defines future hopes, goals, and dreams.

Amity Lachowicz, BA, CWIC, Independent Living Specialist, and Audrey Sellers, CIRS A/D, Disability Specialist, Accessible Resources for Independence Inc.