



*Reflecting Upon the Past,  
Planning for the Future*

*20<sup>th</sup> Annual Disability Symposium  
Presenter Biographies  
Spring 2022*

**Accardo, Dr. Amy** is director of the Center for Neurodiversity in the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and an associate professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education at Rowan University. Amy's scholarly activities focus on promoting equitable education opportunities for autistic young adults and working with neurodiverse students, faculty, and staff to implement inclusive pedagogy and practices on campus. She has published numerous articles and presented research nationally on autism and topics including college access, literacy, teacher preparation, and mental health. Most recently she co-authored the book *College Success for Students on the Autism Spectrum: A Neurodiversity Perspective*. Amy holds a master's degree from Drexel University and a doctoral degree in special education from Arcadia University.

**Cokley, Rebecca** joined the Ford Foundation in January of 2021 as the first U.S. Program Officer to oversee a Disability Rights Portfolio. Prior to joining Ford, she served as the co-founder and Director of the Disability Justice Initiative at the Center for American Progress. A three-time Presidential Appointee for President Barack Obama, Rebecca served at the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and at the White House where she oversaw diversity and inclusion efforts in the first term. In 2020 she was awarded the Richman Distinguished Fellow in Public Life for Brandeis University. Rebecca has spoken at Netroots Nation, New York City Comic-Con, Yale University, the Women's March National Conference and given a TEDx talk and been a guest on MSNBC and Last Week Tonight with John Oliver. She was a Karl Pister Scholar at the University of California, Santa Cruz where she graduated with a B.A. in Politics. She is the proud spouse of Patrick and mother of 3 and is currently working on her first book.

**Crawford, Charlie** is a student at Haverford College and prospective Computer Science major with a passion for accessible design and disability justice. He is a co-founder and leader of the student group DASH, Disability Advocacy for Students at Haverford, and a student liaison at Haverford's office of Access and Disability Services. He hopes to pursue a career incorporating accessible design into the fields of computer science and technology.

**Desai, Kruti** is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences majoring in Biochemistry and on the pre-medical track. She founded Disability Advocacy @Penn, DAP, in the Spring of 2020 along with three other undergraduate students. The organization is meant to serve as a community for anyone in the Penn community that identifies as having a disability. DAP also has an advocacy component that is completely voluntary where students can advocate for issues on campus they wish to resolve. Recently, DAP has been

put on the University Council which is made up of 15 other minority constituency undergraduate groups. DAP continues to be a place for any one in the disabled community to seek solace and empathy.

**Doan, Kimberly (she/her/hers)** is the Senior Associate Director of Accessibility Services at Tufts University's Student Accessibility and Academic Resource Center. With over a decade's worth of experience in higher education, she has also supported students at the Harvard Extension School and served as an Adjunct Instructor at Dean College. She holds an M.A. in Child Study and Human Development (focusing in Developmental Health and Psychology) from Tufts University and a B.A. in Psychology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences from the University at Buffalo. In her current role, she aims to foster an equitable experience for all students while providing education and consultation to the campus community on accessibility-related topics.

**Ellerbee, Schyler** works at University of Pennsylvania as an Accommodations Specialist in Disability Services. Schyler handles implementation of accommodations for exams and notes. Schyler graduated with a Bachelors degree in Psychology from Holy Family University.

**Fialkowski, Kate** (she/her/hers) MTS. Ms. Fialkowski is a lifelong disability advocate. As the Associate Director of Academic Programs at the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University College of Education and Human development, she directs the university-based education programs, including the Interdisciplinary Faculty Council on Disability, the annual Disability and Change Symposium, and the Disability Studies Certificate program in which she is also an Adjunct Professor. Formerly Kate was a Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Public Policy Fellow at the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and the Executive Director of The Arc Maryland. The Fialkowski family were involved in several landmark cases including *Halderman v. Pennhurst State School and Hospital*, *PARC v. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, and *Fialkowski v. Greenwich Home for Children*. Kate is pursuing an EdD from Temple University, with a research interest in Disability Narratives.

**Frank, Danielle** currently serves as the Facilitator, Perkins Grant/Student Disability Services Coordinator at Peirce College. In this role, she advises students on their undergraduate academic journey, implements disability programming, and ensures students have equitable access to higher education. Danielle earned a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from Holy Family University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Arcadia University. She has been an active volunteer with the national non-profit organization Little People of America for the past ten years.

**Garfield, Tamara** is an autistic doctoral student studying public health. She does research about autistic adults and the inclusion of autistic perspectives in autism research. Tamara's background is in psychology and counseling. She has worked in a variety of support programs for autistic people of all ages and, for several years, worked with autistic young adults transitioning to college or employment. Tamara is committed to advocating for more inclusive and accessible academic spaces.

**Jackson, Naomi** is the author of a novel, *The Star Side of Bird Hill*, which was nominated for an NAACP Image Award and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, and longlisted for the National Book Critics Circle's John Leonard Prize, the Center for Fiction's First Novel Prize, and the International Dublin Literary Award. The Black Caucus of the American Library Association named Jackson's novel an Honor Book for Fiction. Jackson studied fiction at the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She traveled to South Africa on a Fulbright scholarship, where she received an M.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Cape Town. A graduate of Williams College, Jackson's writings have appeared in *Harper's*, *The Washington Post*, *Virginia*

*Quarterly Review*, *Poets & Writers*, and *The Caribbean Writer*. She is the recipient of residencies and fellowships from Bread Loaf, MacDowell Colony, Hedgebrook, the University of Pennsylvania's Kelly Writers House, Camargo Foundation, New York Foundation for the Arts, and Bronx Council on the Arts. Jackson is Assistant Professor of English at Rutgers University-Newark. For more information: <https://www.naomi-jackson.com/>

**Kuder, Dr. S. Jay** is a professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education at Rowan University. Jay's current research is focused on enhancing the success of college-age students with autism. Kuder is author of several books including, *Teaching Students with Language and Communication Disabilities*, in its fifth edition, and *College Success for Students on the Autism Spectrum: A Neurodiversity Perspective*. Kuder holds a master's degree in special education from Temple University and a doctoral degree in applied psycholinguistics from Boston University. He is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Council for Exceptional Children and is a fellow of the American Association on Intellectual Disabilities.

**Lomax, Max:** A Master of Social Work who is dedicated to advocating for marginalized populations. An alumnus of Temple University, I have served as an academic coach to youth aging out of foster care, a counselor to bereaved children, and a mentor to disabled students. Currently, I am an Access Coordinator at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

**Marrs, Cypress** is a Research Associate at the Housing Initiative at Penn (HIP). She has studied social policy at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice and holds a BA from the Division of Languages and Literature at Bard College.

**Spector, Aaron** is the Jesselson Director of Disability Services in the Weingarten Center at the University of Pennsylvania. Before coming to Penn, he worked for educational equity and inclusion as a teacher and administrator at the New York City Department of Education, Indiana University, and at Temple University. Aaron holds a graduate certificate in Disability Studies from Temple University, an M.S.Ed. from the College of Staten Island, and a B.A. from Oberlin College.

**Swimm, Katherine** (she/her/hers) is the Associate Director of Academic Support at Tufts University's Student Accessibility and Academic Resource Center where she oversees the Academic Coaching and Subject Tutoring programs, alongside teaching courses in pedagogy and academic skills at the graduate and undergraduate level. Katherine has worked in academic support at Tufts since 2012, where she worked as a Graduate Writing Consultant and as Assistant Director, Peer Tutoring. Alongside her work in student support, she works as an independent consultant for accreditation processes at Harvard Medical School. She holds a PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies from Tufts University and an MA in Literature from Northwestern University."

**Taussig, Rebekah** is a Kansas City writer and educator with her doctorate in Creative Nonfiction and Disability Studies. She's spent most of her life immersed in the world of writing and reading – as a student, teacher, and author – because she believes the words we use and the stories we tell matter. She's held talks and workshops at the University of Michigan, Davidson College, and Yale University, and you can read her writing about the nuanced experience of disability in [TIME](#), on her Instagram, [@sitting\\_pretty](#), or in her

memoir in essays, [\*Sitting Pretty: The View from My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body\*](#). You can also follow her work and sign up for her newsletter at [www.rebekahtaussig.com](http://www.rebekahtaussig.com).

**Wasserman, Ethan** is currently a Moorhead Academic Coach at Vassar College in the Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity where he provides advising and coaching services for students who have academic accommodations. Ethan received a Masters in Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs at West Chester University and Bachelors Degree in Public Health at Temple University. While at Temple, he worked in Disability Resource and Services and co-founded a peer mentoring program for students with disabilities called SHOUT. As a former student receiving disability services, Ethan has a passion to work with and advocate for students today facing similar challenges.

**Woodruff, John** is director of the Accessibility Services Center at Rowan University. He coordinates campus services for students with disabilities and manages transitions for students entering college. John holds an MS in Health Education from St. Joseph's University and a BS in Business Administration from St. Francis University (Loretto, Pennsylvania). Woodruff is co-author of two books including *Creating Inclusive Library Environments*; and *College Success for Students on the Autism Spectrum: A Neurodiversity Perspective*. His most recent activities include development of year-round speaker programs and events to promote understanding on campus and leadership of faculty-led and community-led strategic partnerships for inclusion, training and mentoring. John's professional career reflects over 38 years of education, training and administration of programs for persons with disabilities.