



*Reflecting Upon the Past,  
Planning for the Future*

*20<sup>th</sup> Annual Weingarten Center Disability Symposium Schedule  
Spring 2022*

**February 24, 2022**

**Being a Catalyst for Change: Strategies for Developing an Inclusive Campus Culture**

**Presenters:** John Woodruff, MS, Health Education, Rowan University; Dr. S.Jay Kuder, Professor, Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education, Rowan University; Dr. Amy Accardo, Associate Professor, Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education, Rowan University

Creating a campus culture that values and celebrates diversity, access and inclusion doesn't happen overnight. It requires forging relationships with departments overtime and creating a network of diversity, access and inclusion allies on your campus. As Disability Advocates we are in an ideal position to collaborate with allies to develop programs, trainings and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. For example, topics ranging from the ADA, Accommodations and Universal Design to Best Practices in Understanding and Supporting Neurodivergent Students in College. In this presentation: Attendees will be provided an understanding of the importance of collaborating with key allies/stakeholders. Attendees will learn about the importance of collaborating with students in the development and delivery of inclusive programming. Attendees will gain an understanding of the evolving role of faculty and staff in meeting the needs of diverse student populations, including those with hidden disabilities (autism spectrum, depression, and learning disabilities). Attendees will learn about strategies to support a more diverse campus and the intersecting identities including, first generation, LGBTQA+, veteran students. Attendees will be provided a practical 'tool kit' to be a catalyst in a culture shift on their campus Attendees will learn about inclusive programming and development at Rowan University and ways to replicate on your campus. Sample Programming Toolkit for a Diverse and Inclusive Campus • Conduct a campus climate survey – (Neurodiversity Campus Climate Survey) • Host a Listening Tour and Focus Groups • Inclusive Pedagogy & Practices Certificate – (developed by DEI, Accessibility Services, Faculty and Staff) • Co-host a book club – Neuro Tribes. Our presentation will demonstrate the opportunities and benefits in collaborating with key departments and student populations/ organizations to create a more inclusive campus.

**March 3, 2022**

## **Leadership in Academic Resource and Accessibility Spaces: Navigating Turnover, Burnout, and the Hybrid Work Model**

**Presenters:** Kimberly Doan, MA, Associate Director, Accessibility Services, Tufts University; Katie Swimm, PhD, Associate Director, Academic Support, Tufts University

Throughout the past two years, the Student Accessibility and Academic Resource (StAAR) Center has developed two integral teams within academic resources and accessibility; a new academic resource team and a new accessibility and administrative team. Presenters will discuss their experiences in navigating high turnover rates while growing existing teams, strengthening morale amongst team members during a challenging time and meeting administrative and staffing needs in a hybrid environment. Discussion topics will include goal-setting and performance review process, staff retreats, strategic planning, and reevaluating training/onboarding processes.

This presentation highlights the critical partnership between academic support and accessibility services to support student success. Utilizing lessons learned while navigating a remote/hybrid environment, presenters will highlight how a team-focused approach, creative resource sharing, and re-envisioning student support fueled their center through during an unprecedented time and will continue to inform long-term strategic planning.

**March 10, 2022**

## **The Future of Leadership in Disability Services**

**Presenters:** Aaron Spector, MS Ed, Director, Disability Services, University of Pennsylvania; Danielle Frank, MS, Academic Adviser and Student Disabilities Coordinator, Peirce College; Maxine Lomax, MSW, Access Coordinator, University of Colorado; Ethan Wasserman, MS, Moorhead Academic Coach, Vassar College; Schyler Ellerbee, Accommodations Specialist, University of Pennsylvania

As students with disabilities look ahead to their careers, disability services professionals have a unique opportunity to mentor the next generation of professionals. This panel of newer disability services professionals represent that generation, as each panelist recently made the transition from being a student receiving disability services to becoming a professional providing disability services. What does the field of disability services have to learn from the voices and experiences of disabled disability services professionals? What future directions do these new leaders envision for the profession?

This panel focuses on the future of the disability services profession and imagines a field led by disabled individuals. As we look toward the future, we must consider the lived experiences of diverse individuals with disabilities as important sites of critical knowledge upon which we build the future of the profession. This panel will explore topics such as trends in language and terminology, documentation practices, concepts of self-advocacy and independence, incorporating insights from new professionals who experienced earlier paradigms of disability service provision as students. Attendees looking to plan for the future will learn from panelists who embody the experiences of students with disabilities as well as disabled post-secondary educational professionals.

**March 17, 2022**

**Access vs Content: Contemporary Lens on Disability Equity Beyond the Litigious Accommodation**

**Presenter:** Kate Fialkowski, MTS, EdD candidate, Associate Director of Academic Programming

Historically individuals with disabilities were denied admissions to colleges and universities based on disability status. Section 504 and the ADA opened the doors and required instructors and institutions to make physical and process changes to campus, buildings, classrooms, and the accessibility of content. But what about the content itself? The lectures and resources we curate have remained untouched, unquestioned. In this era of representational justice, what expectations can and should students with disabilities have regarding cultural sensitivity of the content? What obligations do we, as instructors, have to rethink the content as well as modes of engagement? This presentation will use actual examples from the classroom.

Does it sometimes seem as if we are stuck in a place where the concept of disability is all about mitigating a functional limitation in order to provide equal access to classroom content? What's next and how does Higher Ed get there? Students with disabilities are changing the conversation. Students with disabilities are more open about disclosure. They are visibly and vocally self-identified in our classrooms. And they expect more than mere access to the same content. They are also looking for the content, itself to change. Higher Ed coursework often educates about serving people with disability as clients, patients, "them." But what does coursework look like when we acknowledge that students with disabilities are no longer relegated to the object of our (professional) action? People with disabilities are our colleagues and professionals in their own right. How does this move from "them" to "us" demand changes in the classroom beyond accommodations? How does it change our language? How does it change the materials? How does it change our perspective? How do we help pave the way for this culturally competent change?

**March 24, 2022**

**Born Since the ADA: Student Activism and Leadership Panel**

**Presenter:** Cypress Marrs, B.A., Candidate in the Masters of Science in Social Policy with a certificate in Data Analytics, School of Social Policy and Practice, University of Pennsylvania; Charlie Crawford, Haverford College; Kruti Desai, University of Pennsylvania; Tamara Garfield, Drexel University; Leah Samples, University of Pennsylvania

Most students currently studying at colleges and universities were born after the 1990 passage of the ADA; many students with disabilities view the safeguards put in place by the ADA as the floor for disability rights. Our panel will convene students organizing around disability at colleges and universities throughout the greater Philadelphia area to discuss their work and visions for more inclusive campuses.

"Nothing about us, without us" is a frequent rallying cry of the disability rights movement, yet the systems currently in place to ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities on college campuses function in a largely top-down manner. Our panel will provide an opportunity for exchange between students organizing around disability at colleges and universities throughout the greater Philadelphia area and provide an opportunity for

student support professionals to learn from the experiences of these students. We hope that this interchange of ideas will point towards new avenues by which campuses can become more inclusive for students with disabilities.

**April 1, 2022**

## **Plenary Speakers**

**9:30am**

### **Disability Culture and its Impact upon Higher Education**

**Presenter:** Rebecca Cokley

Disability Culture and its place in college. How have colleges and universities contributed to the history of the disability rights movements. How have colleges and universities held us back and what does all of this mean for our future as a movement, a culture, and a people? Join us and our speaker, Rebecca Cokley as we reflect on these questions and more.

**11:15am**

### **Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?**

**Presenter:** Naomi Jackson

In this unsparing talk that borrows its title from Jeanette Winterson's memoir, author and professor Naomi Jackson will discuss the bewildering experience of being diagnosed with a severe mental illness in her late 30s. The lecture and conversation will build upon her recent essay in Harper's magazine, "Her Kind: A Meditation on Losing and Finding My Mind." Jackson will discuss how this experience transformed her life, from relationships to family and friends, to her writing and teaching, and share some emergent thoughts on becoming a disabled person later in life.

**1:30pm**

### **Blueprints for the Future: Disability and Innovation**

**Presenter:** Rebekah Taussig

So much important disability justice work of the past has been a demand to participate in what was already built -- let us into your buildings, workplaces, and public transportation. It's a vital move for cracking open the door and getting into the room. But as I look ahead to the future, I see us as leaders in a giant overhaul/rebuilding project -- it's a shift from getting into the room to leading the room in a redesign of the building. The last two years of the pandemic, we've seen a lot of our structures start to crack and crumble, and we're asking big questions about everything from work and education to fashion and community/interdependence. I think disabled leaders carry the blueprints for a much needed rebuilding that not only creates more inclusion and sustainability for disabled folks (which, in itself would be enough), but for all of us. Disability invites creativity, imagination, and innovation. This is the future I see and hope for.