

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK PRESENTS
DD NETWORK NEWS

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SPRING 2023 ISSUE



June 6-7
Hilton Jackson
Jackson, MS
msmegaconference.org

Keynote Speakers



Maggie Wade Dixon



Jonathan Martinis Esq.



Kristin Smedley

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Kristin Smedley

SEE: Set Extraordinary Expectations How to Reframe Challenges and Setbacks and Adopt a Thriving Mindset

Kristin teaches conference attendees that their perception of their challenge is driving their experiences, good or bad. It is how we SEE the problem or crisis that directly impacts whether we stay stuck in a setback or launch a great comeback. As Kristin demonstrates through stories from her own journey, a proper perception enables us to Set Extraordinary Expectations, and ultimately, cause positive outcomes. Kristin guides attendees to think outside of what is typically expected, to move from ordinary expectations to extraordinary, and thrive no matter the challenges that come along.

Jonathan Martinis, Esq.

Supported Decision-Making: From Justice for Jenny to Justice for All!

Study after study has shown that when people with disabilities have more control over their life and make more decisions for themselves - when they have more self-determination - they have better lives: they are more likely to live independently, work, be active in their communities, and avoid abuse. However, research also shows that when people are ordered into guardianships that are unnecessary or remove more rights than are necessary, they may suffer significant negative impacts to their physical and mental health. This session will introduce the audience to Supported Decision-Making (SDM) and how to work with others to understand choices and make individual decisions without the need for a guardian. Using the "Justice for Jenny" trial as a case study, this presentation will discuss how people with disabilities can use SDM to be more self-determined, have better life outcomes, and avoid unnecessary guardianship.

Maggie Wade Dixon

Caregiving and Call to Action!

The main focus of this presentation is the role of the caregiver and self-care. Maggie will share her family's experiences with her father who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. She will present some of the legal and medical issues which many families face. She will focus on the availability of resources and advocating for services to help families, while maintaining a career, family, and other relationships.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Kristin Smedley — The Greatest Equalizer: Uncovering the True Competitive Edge in Business and Life

Kristin will take you through the journey of a person that is thriving with blindness, highlighting how they developed and honed critical skills of a highly valued employee, long before and at a higher success rate than their sighted counterparts. Kristin uses stories of her own successful sons who are blind and fellow mentors in Thriving Blind Academy to demonstrate her unique point of view. Not only will Kristin open your mind to the fact that people that are blind have an edge over their peers and colleagues in several areas, but she'll also convince you that companies with blind and disabled employees have an edge over their competition.

Jonathan Martinis, Esq. — Education, Employment, & Independent Living: Building Self-Determination through Special Education Planning

Studies show that when students are empowered to have more self-determination - when schools provide supports designed to help them make their own decisions and direct the lives - they are more likely to be successful in school and as adults. For example, students with more self-determination are more likely to be employed, live independently, and access higher education as adults. This session will provide information and practical strategies to help students and families identify and receive supports that will help meet educational goals and be more self-determined throughout their lives.

Anita Ballard — Adult Protective Services and Mandatory Reporting

This session will provide an overview of what Adult Protective Services (APS) is in Mississippi. The presenter will explain the structure of the APS program. She will discuss the meaning of vulnerable adults and explain some signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults. She will discuss mandatory reporting requirements for Mississippi.

Dr. Joy Hogge — Mental Health and Dual Diagnosis Support for People with Disabilities

Having any kind of disability can present barriers to access and individual challenges. Barriers and challenges can become even more pronounced when a person has both a mental health challenge and a developmental or intellectual disability. The promise and hope of an inclusive system in keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not change when barriers and challenges increase. In fact, the ADA only becomes more important and relevant. This session will focus on practical ways to address systemic barriers and find individualized support when people have both mental health challenges and developmental or intellectual disabilities.

Janice Buckley, Mary Anne Gee, and Kimberly Thomas — Social Security Disability Benefits and Work Incentives

A panel of Social Security specialists will explain SSA's two disability programs. They will cover a few of the work incentives for both programs, so attendees will know what happens if they chose to go to work. They will also provide updates for 2023.

Kimberly Sartin Holloway and Paulette Johnson — Medicaid Waiver Services: What You Need to Know

This presentation will provide a general overview of the Medicaid program and detailed information on the Medicaid Waivers. The following information will be discussed for each waiver: eligibility criteria, application process, services provided, and contacts to receive additional information.

Richard Courtney — Mississippi ABLE and Special Needs Planning

This presentation will address asset ownership and protection, personal decision-making, and healthcare financing, including Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The focus will be on preserving the independence, protecting the assets, and maintaining the security of people with disabilities through the use of trusts and ABLE accounts.

Leslie Junkin — From First Steps to Next Steps: Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Special Education and Community Supports

What is early childhood transition? What are the next steps? Families are often overwhelmed with all the changes that take place when their child turns three years of age. This session will provide an overview of the process, resources and information on how to prepare for the future.

Tammy Crane and Cassie Tolliver — The Do's and Do Not's of IEPs

This presentation will educate individuals on commonly occurring issues within Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and potential solutions. This presentation, followed by Q&A, will provide the required knowledge to be less intimidated in the IEP meeting and spot issues to address concerns before they manifest in negative outcomes for IDEA-identified children. The presenters have years of experience serving children of varying ability levels, both as a service provider and a special education teacher. The two advocates will provide attendees with their tips to addressing issues in what can be a very hard setting to navigate.



Disability Support in Higher Education

SUMMER 2023
GULFPORT
JACKSON
STARKVILLE

FREE!
Open for all education professionals!
Lunch will be provided.

Gulfport: July 11, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Knight Nonprofit Center, 11975 Seaway Rd.

Starkville: July 18, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
The Mill, 100 Mercantile Lane

Jackson: July 19, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Embassy Suites, 200 Township Ave, Ridgeland

Email jwalton@drms.ms to reserve your spot!!

If you have information you would like to have included in the next issue, please contact Jane Walton at jwalton@drms.ms.

