

Individual and Family Autism Resources & Training Conference

For Individuals on the Spectrum ♦ages 17 & up♦ and Their Families

“Advocacy, Relationships & Building Community”

Presented by the BUREAU OF AUTISM SERVICES, ODP, PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES in collaboration with ASERT

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE: This is a FREE one-day conference designed for individuals with ASD (ages 17 and up) and their family members.

Attendees will participate in a series of four one-hour keynote sessions, and one breakout session. The keynote sessions are designed to provide information that is relevant to everyone who attends. There is also one breakout session designed specifically for individuals with ASD, and one breakout session designed specifically for family members.

There will be a Resource Fair open during the entire conference, with a dedicated hour at the end of the day to collect information and speak with the exhibitors.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Individuals with autism (ages 17 and up) and their family members, including parents, siblings, spouses, grandparents, and others.

Saturday, September 19, 2015
Lancaster Host Conference Center
2300 Lincoln Hwy E, Lancaster, PA 17602
9 am – 5:30 pm
Sign in from 8-9 am

Pre-registration is required!

To register for the conference, please complete the attached registration form and return it to:

- * By Mail: Michele Huntsman, Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11, 2527 US Hwy 522 South, McVeytown, PA 17051
- * By Email: bettertogether@tiu11.org
- * Or call **1-844-300-4250** to register by phone

If you need a copy of the registration form, please call 1-844-300-4250, or send an email to the above address.

This conference is free; there is no registration fee, but pre-registration is required.
Continental Breakfast and Lunch will be provided.

Registration Deadline: September 8, 2015

There are a limited number of scholarships available for an overnight stay at the hotel. See the registration form to apply. Priority will be given to those traveling 100 miles or more. Applications will be reviewed and you will be notified about scholarships during the month of August.

Deadline for Scholarship Applications: **August 12, 2015**

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY AUTISM CONFERENCE AGENDA:

8-9:00	On-site Check-in, Coffee & Continental Breakfast
9-9:30	Welcome Remarks, Nina Wall
9:30-10:30	Keynote Session 1: Scott Robertson
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-11:45	Keynote Session 2: Val Paradiz
11:45-1:00	LUNCH
1:00-2:00	Breakout Sessions
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	Keynote Session 3: Maleita Olsen
3:15-4:15	Keynote Session 4: Guy Caruso
4:15-4:30	Closing Remarks
4:30-5:30	Networking Event with Resource Fair

Keynote Session 1: Scott Robertson

SUPPORTING SELF-DETERMINED COMMUNITY LIVING: STRENGTHENING SELF-ADVOCACY AND BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Scott Michael Robertson, Ph.D. will share strategies for supporting self-determined living in the community. He will discuss how the development of self-advocacy skills, building of connections, and access to resources can promote self-determination. Dr. Robertson will also discuss how family members, professionals, and allies can help support life transitions in community living.

Scott Michael Robertson, Ph.D. is an autistic adult who completed his Ph.D. degree in information sciences and technology at Penn State University. In addition to his work with the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), Scott chaired the Developmental Disabilities Council's Achievement Committee for initiatives in education, health, employment, and aging and also served as the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation's Public Policy Fellow. He is currently a consultant for the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities in Washington, D.C. Scott will be sharing his personal and professional experiences with advocacy.



Keynote Session 2: Valerie Paradiz

CELEBRATING THE CULTURE OF AUTISM: ROLE MODELS AND REAL LIVES

Valerie Paradiz speaks about the many strengths that people with autism possess and about their significant cultural contribution to society. Referring first to historical role models, such as Howard Hughes and Vincent van Gogh, Dr. Paradiz shines light on the relevance of the phrase "Don't dis my abilities!" demonstrating that all people with autism can be contributors in their communities.

Valerie Paradiz, Ph.D. is the developer of Integrated Self Advocacy, a program series that supports people with autism in developing self-advocacy ability for work, home and in the community. Paradiz is also the Executive Director of the Autistic Global Initiative of the Autism Research Institute. AGI is staffed entirely by adults with autism who work professionally in the disability fields with a focus on building capacity nationally and abroad in adult services.



Breakout Session A: for Individuals with ASD

REPRESENT YOURSELF!: LEARN THE BASICS OF SENSORY AND SOCIAL SELF-ADVOCACY presented by Valerie Paradiz, Ph.D.

This interactive session leads participants through the basic steps of self-advocacy and opportunities to practice using the ISA Sensory and Social Scans®. The presentation includes tools for scanning environments and developing advocacy plans.

(see above for more about Valerie Paradiz)



Breakout Session B: for Family Members

ADVOCATING AND PLANNING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM ACROSS THE LIFESPAN presented by Hillary D. Freeman, Esq.

Hillary D. Freeman is an attorney who is deeply committed to her work representing people with disabilities and their families. As the sister of a man with autism, she is able to combine personal experience with her legal training to help families advocate for services and supports and plan for the future. During this session she will share information about guardianship and estate planning (Special Needs Trust), as well as developing a long-term plan that meets everyone's individual needs.



Keynote Session 3: Maleita Olson

SURROUNDED BY THE SPECTRUM: FAMILY DYNAMICS AND ASD

Recent research confirms that the traits of ASD can often be seen among siblings and parents of the individual with ASD. Since ASD affects how individuals perceive and react to the world, it creates a cross-cultural dynamic in the family. This dynamic becomes particularly intense at various stages of family development, especially the stage when children typically launch into adulthood. This presentation will explore the unique family dynamics that result and, most importantly, offers concrete strategies for decreasing stress and improving family relationships.

Maleita Olson, LCSW, BSL is the mother to a 14-year old son with ASD and sister to a 41 year old brother who was diagnosed with ASD later in life. In addition to living with family members with ASD and ASD "traits", she is a licensed Pennsylvania Behavior Specialist, Clinical Social Worker, and Adult Autism Waiver Provider. Maleita co-founded Spectra Support Services, LLC with her sister to fill service gaps and provide family-centered supports to individuals with ASD and other disabilities and their families. She is also the current president of ASCEND: The Asperger and Autism Alliance for Greater Philadelphia and has presented on local, regional, state and national levels.



Keynote Session 4: Guy Caruso

ACHIEVING QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH VALUED ROLES: AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION

All of us are interested in a better community where all people have an opportunity for accessible and affordable homes, jobs or meaningful daytime opportunities and lifestyles of their choice. Establishing valued social roles is one way to achieve an improved quality of life in core areas, such as work, relationships, and community participation. This presentation will show how the ten themes in Wolfensberger's Social Role Valorization concept can be useful as a strategy for helping people with disabilities and their families live a life designed with their own goals and priorities.

Guy Caruso, Ph.D. has worked in human services for 44 years in institutional and community settings (vocational, educational, residential & recreational) in a number of capacities—advocate, teacher, trainer, researcher, evaluator, and founder of values-based training groups. He received his Masters and Ph.D. from Syracuse University, studying and mentoring with Wolf Wolfensberger, Ph.D., where he became a teacher/trainer in Normalization and now Social Role Valorization, a theory/practice to help people with disabilities, often devalued by society, gain valued roles in life. He is currently the Western Coordinator for the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. In this role, he is responsible for coordinating Institute training and related activities in the western part of Pennsylvania.

