



Building Inclusion in our
Faith Communities

FAITH INCLUSION NETWORK OF DALLAS

Creating a Culture of Belonging

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

9:00AM – 9:30AM | Registration & Refreshments

9:40AM -10:30AM | Morning Keynote Speaker

Bill Gaventa, M.Div., Founder of the Collaborative on Faith and Disability & The Institute on Theology and Disability

10:45AM -11:45AM | Breakout Session #1

Parent Panel - Rhoni Golden, MPT, John French, Beth Susens, Nagla Moussa, Sherry Pearson

*Educator Panel - Whitley Coulier, M.S., CCC-SLP, Eileen Kriesler, M. Ed, Cheryl Vandiver, RN, MSN,
Deacon Charlie Stump, Witek Nowosiad, M.Div.*

Faith Leader Panel - Rabbi Amy Ross, M.Ed., R.J.E., Tom Hudspeth, , Rev. Justin Hancock

12:00PM -1:00PM | Lunch and Learn with Afternoon Keynote Speakers

Reverend Ramsey Patton, Associate Minister, Care and Engagement Ministries, Highland Park United Methodist Church

Melanie Lucido, Belong disABILITY Volunteer Coordinator

Kosher dairy lunch is provided.

1:15PM – 2:15PM | Breakout Session #2

Parent Panel - Mike and Allison Schuback, Barry Rosenberg, Dina Alsaid

Educator Panel - Amy Kelton, Hilary Stern, M.Ed., Nagla Moussa, Sherry Pearson

Faith Leader Panel - Imam Nadim Bashir, Ken Kellam, Shannon Pugh, Brian Spann, Melissa Walden, M.S.

2:30PM -3:30PM | Table Talks led by FIND Advisory Council Members

3:30PM-4:00PM | Closing Remarks

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10:45AM-11:45AM | Room 130

Morning Parent Panel

Being your Child's Strongest Advocate, in Faith Communities and Life

This panel will talk about what a meaningful expression of faith looks like to them, how they advocate for their child at their place of worship, and what things they do to stay positive and keep their faith alive.

RHONI GOLDEN, MPT

Rhoni has worked as a physical therapist treating the brain and spinal cord injury population for over 21 years. She is also a special needs mom who has spent the last 13 years navigating the complex web of care for her own son. Rhoni serves as a parent advocate with Therapeutic Movements in East Dallas. She is on the Board of Trustees and chairs the Youth Inclusion Initiative at Temple Emanu-El.

JOHN FRENCH

Parent of an adult child with special needs, Lovers Lane United Methodist, Dallas, Texas.

BETH SUSENS

Parent advocate for persons with disabilities, primarily autism. Community Volunteer and Board Member of Autism Treatment Centers of Texas.

NAGLA MOUSSA

Parent of adult with special needs, President of National Autism Association of North Texas.

SHERRY PEARSON

Member of Plano ISD Special Education Advisory Board, directed a Special Needs Academy, created and ran inclusion trainings for staff at Chase Oaks and is the parent of an adult with autism.

1:15PM – 2:15PM | Room 130

Afternoon Parent Panel

Breaking Boundaries and Barriers to Create Belonging

This panel will discuss support offered to parents, how the faith community can involve their child in meaningful ways, as well as resources to for parents of children with special needs.

ALLISON SCHUBACK

Allison Schuback is an speaker and advocate for people with special needs and challenges. In 2008, Allison won Entrepreneur of the Year for Inc. Magazine for Invisi-bib - the first invisible adult bib, sold at Bed, Bath, and Beyond. She also won an Every Day Edison's contest on public television in 2008.

MIKE SCHUBACK

Father of daughter with special needs. National and state awards for coaching in Special Olympics for 25 years.

BARRY ROSENBERG

Barry Rosenberg is the co-founder of R2 Partners, a family development office. He is the parent of a son with Down Syndrome, and an active board member of Rise School of Dallas, on the Advisory Board for DISD Sped and works on several vocational training initiatives for kids with special needs. He is married to Shelly and they have three children, Brinson, Campbell, and Ronen.

DINA ALSAID

Dina Alsaïd is a six-title holder including Mrs. Texas Plus America, Miss Arab-U.S. and Mrs. Richardson, who uses her platform to advocate on behalf of children with autism.

10:45AM-11:45AM

Morning Educator Panel

Creating Religious Education Programs: Strategies, Ideas and Tools to Reach and Teach All Students

This panel will address ways to discern the needs of families with disabilities within their congregation and ways to begin meeting those needs. They will also explore ways to train and educate staff using best practices so that an inclusive and supportive environment is fostered.

WHITLEY COULIER, M.S., CCC-SLP

Whitley is a speech pathologist and treated in all areas of the field (school, school for special needs, hearing clinic, feeding/swallowing, dementia unit, OT clinic), in addition to being a behavior technician. Whitley currently works at an autism treatment clinic combining applied behavior analysis and speech pathology, as well as serving as the Lomdim ("Learners") Coordinator at Temple Emanu-El.

CHERYL VANDIVER, RN, MSN.

Retired Director of Special Needs Ministry at Highland Park United Methodist Church (now Belong disAbility Ministry) where she was employed for 18 years. Previously, she served as Pediatric Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist at Children's Medical Center, and as faculty at Baylor University School of Nursing.

EILEEN KRIESLER, M. ED.

Founder of the Lomdim Program at Temple Emanu-El and taught Special Education 30+ years, educational diagnostician, One of the founders of the Inclusion Experience at JFS Dallas.

WITEK NOWOSIAD, M.DIV.

Director of Pastoral care at Children's Medical Center Plano Hospital. Clinical Pastoral Educator (CPE) Faculty. Founder and Chief Instructor at Beyond Karate - Martial Arts School open to individuals of ALL abilities.

1:15PM – 2:15PM

Afternoon Educator Panel

Design, Support and Modifications in Religious Education Programs

This panel will talk about simple accommodations and modifications that can be made, behavior management, and how to reach and teach differently abled learners.

AMY KELTON, M.ED., L.D.T.

Amy is the Head of Upper Elementary at Shelton School. She has been at Shelton for the past 25 years and has great depth of experience working with bright minds who learn differently. Amy teaches so that all children will have a space and a place in her classroom, in their school and in their world.

SHERRY PEARSON

Member of Plano ISD Special Education Advisory Board, directed a Special Needs Academy, created and ran inclusion trainings for staff at Chase Oaks and is the parent of an adult with autism.

NAGLA MOUSSA

Parent of adult with special needs, President of National Autism Association of North Texas.

HILARY STERN, M.ED.

As an educator for the past 20 years in public, private, secular, and religious schools, Hilary's new role as an ADHD Life Coach and Consultant allows her to guide clients to reach their full potential.

1:15PM – 2:15PM

Morning Faith Leader Panel

Creating a Supportive Environment/Special Needs Ministry

This panel will explore how different faith traditions view people with disabilities, what true belonging looks like and first steps to developing a ministry or initiative for creating an inclusive supportive environment for all.

RABBI AMY ROSS, M.ED., R.J.E.

Rabbi and Director of Learning and Innovation at Temple Emanu-El. Oversees Lomdim (Learners) Program, which serves families with children who have special needs, and officiates at Shabbat B'Yachad, Temple's Shabbat service for individuals with special needs and their advocates, caretakers, and friends.

TOM HUDSPETH

Pastor of the Deaf, Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, President of the United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministries, father of a Deaf teen.

REV. JUSTIN HANCOCK

Cofounder and lead instigator of the Julian Way, author, and disability advocate

DEACON CHARLIE STUMP

Deacon Charles Stump is the Director of Pastoral Services for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas overseeing the Hospital Chaplains, Prison Chaplains, Disabilities Ministry, Deaf Ministry, Grief Ministry, and a representative of the Diocese to the Physician's Guild.

1:15PM – 2:15PM

Afternoon Faith Leader Panel

Beyond Inclusion: Steps to Truly Create Communities of Belonging

This panel will discuss what inclusion looks like in their faith communities, changes that are needed, and barriers they must overcome to affect real change.

KEN KELLAM

Ken, an adult with autism, has been the Worship Leader at a Church of Christ in the Dallas-area for over 30 years. He has worked at the Autism Treatment Center since 2003, and volunteers with the National Autism Association of North Texas as facilitator for a self-advocates group.

SHANNON PUGH

Director of Arise Special Needs Ministry at Irving Bible Church. Prior to working at the church Shannon taught special education for 9 years.. She has been volunteering and working with individuals of all ages with special needs for over 20 years.

IMAM NADIM BASHIR

Imam East Plano Islamic Center

BRIAN SPANN

Brian is a graduate of Dallas Baptist University and is currently pursuing the Master of Theology degree at Dallas Theological Seminary while working as the Epiphany Special Needs coordinator at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church. Brian has served as the intern at Joni and Friends Texas and at Cornerstone Ranch, where he found both a passion and desire to serve those living with special needs.

MELISSA WALDEN, M.S.

Melissa Waldon is the Associate Director of Ministry to Persons with Disabilities, Caregivers and the Deaf for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas where she helps parishes to welcome all people into the full life of the church. She sits on the Council for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD) and helps to foster a sense of belonging for persons with disabilities through her work.



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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

9:40AM - 10:30AM

Morning Keynote

From Inclusion to Belonging: Strategies and Stories

Being welcomed and included in faith communities is important for many people with disabilities and their families. Feeling like they truly belong is more complex, but it is also a very powerful way that faith communities can practice what we preach about all being part of God's people. In exploring what it means to belong, we also discover what it means for all of us.



Bill Gaventa

M.Div., Founder of the Collaborative on Faith and Disability
and The Institute on Theology and Disability

12:00PM - 1:00PM

Afternoon Keynote

Creating a True Community of Belonging: HPUMC's Belong disABILITY Ministry



Reverend Ramsy Patton
Associate Pastor at Highland Park
United Methodist Church



Melanie Lucido
Volunteer Coordinator for Belong
disABILITY Ministry at Highland Park
United Methodist Church

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.FIND2020.ORG