

REGISTRATION BROCHURE



CP State



7th Annual Conference on **Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Care for Patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disorders (I/DD)**



Thurs., May 8 – Fri., May 9, 2025

Embassy Suites

86 Congress St., Saratoga Springs

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

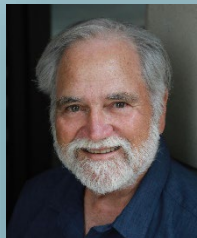
This 2-day, in-person program has been designed to meet the interest of physicians, clinicians, dentists, therapists, nurses, and administrators that provide services to people with I/DD or are interested in doing so. Session topics incorporate medical, mental, behavioral, and oral healthcare.



DAY 1 KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Willow Baer

Acting Commissioner, OPWDD



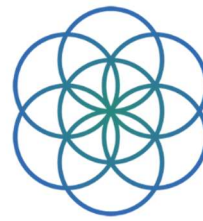
DAY 2 KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

**Rick Rader, MD, FAAIDD, FAADM,
DHL (hon)**

Director of the Habilitation Center
Orange Grove Center, TN

**REGISTER EARLY
and watch our website
www.cpstate.org
for more program details.**

WELCOME



CP State

Welcome to the 7th Annual Conference on Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Care for Patients with I/DD!

Come join us for a 2-day, in-person conference filled with insightful multi-disciplinary sessions and discussions focused on providing the highest quality of care for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). Our lineup of speakers includes experts from various disciplines, sharing their knowledge and experiences in interprofessional clinical care. Session topics will incorporate medical, mental/behavioral, and oral healthcare.

Whether you're a physician, clinician, dentist, therapist, nurse, student, or administrator, this conference is the perfect opportunity to learn, network, and collaborate with like-minded individuals. Don't miss out on this valuable event!

Sincerely,
Your Co-Chairs,
Dr. Maria Kansas, MD
Dr. Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA

ACCREDITATION

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and Policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint providership of Albany Medical College and Cerebral Palsy Assns. Of NYS. Albany Medical College is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The Albany Medical College designates this Live activity for a maximum of 8.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

This program is eligible for CEUs provided by the Hudson Valley Community College as an approved provider for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, American Occupational Therapy Association, NYS Education Department's State Board for Social Work and the NYS Education Department's State Board for Nurses, Physical Therapists and Physical Therapy Assistants. Please Note - all sessions may not be eligible for all CEUs.

New York State Dental Foundation is an ADA CERP Recognized Provider.

ADA CERP is a service of the American Dental Association to assist dental professionals in identifying quality providers of continuing dental education. ADA CERP does not approve or endorse individual courses or instructors, nor does it imply acceptance of credit hours by boards of dentistry.

Concerns or complaints about a CE Provider may be directed to the provider or to the ADA CERP at www.ada.org/cerp
NYS Dental Foundation designates this activity for 8.25 continuing education credits.

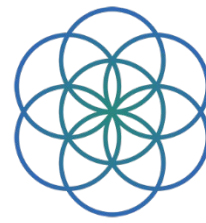


Conference Planning Committee

Mike Alvaro, CP State
Cheryl Bradway, CP State
Laura DeCarlo, ADAPT Community Network
Martha Farewell, Aspire of WNY
Tim Ferguson, CP State
Michele Griguts, NYS Department of Health
Maria Kansas, MD, Center for Disability Services
Joanne Lupo, Jawonio

Kelsey Massyk, CP State
Ellen Naidus, CP Nassau
Kathryn Neubauer, MD, Albany Medical Center
Therese Olivencia, ADAPT Community Network
Vincent Siasoco, MD, ADAPT Community Network
Mitch Spiegel, Jawonio
Susan Waters, Center for Disability Services
Deb Williams, CP State

General Information



CP State

Register early!

WHEN: Thursday, May 8 – Friday, May 9, 2025

WHERE: The Embassy Suites by Hilton Saratoga Springs
86 Congress Street, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

	Early Bird Pricing <small>(Promo ends 4/18/25)</small>	Full Ticket Price <small>(After 4/18/25)</small>
Physicians, Dentists, Clinicians, Others	\$175.00	\$200.00
Medical/Dental Students & Students	\$130.00	\$155.00
Nurses, Hygienists, DSP, PTA, OTA	\$130.00	\$155.00

REGISTER: Click [HERE](#) to Register

DEADLINE: The registration deadline is April 28.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

After April 28, no refunds will be made. However, registrants may send someone else in their place.

PRESENTATION/HANDOUTS:

Presentations/Handouts will be posted prior to the conference on the **CP State website**.

QUESTIONS?

Call CP State at (518) 436-0178.

HOTEL INFORMATION



EMBASSY SUITES®

Saratoga Springs

86 Congress Street, Saratoga Springs, NY 12966

Room Rate:

\$119 (plus applicable taxes)

(Don't forget a tax-exempt form if applicable.)

Cut Off Date:

Reservations must be made on or before
APRIL 18.

*After that time reservations will be accepted
subject to availability at the prevailing rate.*

**CLICK HERE to reserve a room at our special
rate.**



**Unfortunately, the Embassy Suites is booked to capacity.
Please see below for overflow hotel information.**

Holiday Inn Saratoga Springs

232 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Room Rate:

\$164.00 (plus applicable taxes)

(Don't forget a tax-exempt form if applicable.)

CLICK HERE to reserve a room at our group rate.



1:00-1:15pm **WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

Mike Alvaro, *President & CEO, CP State*

Maria Kansas, MD, *Chief Medical Officer, Center for Disability Services*

Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA, *Medical Director, ADAPT Community Network*

Welcome to the 7th Annual Conference on Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Care for Patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

1:20-2:05pm **SESSION #1 - KEYNOTE SESSION**

Willow Baer, *Commissioner, OPWDD*

Acting Commissioner Baer will discuss the current and future state of services for people with developmental disabilities in NYS along with the healthcare challenges faced by this special population.

CMEs and CEUs are not available for this session.

2:10-3:40pm **SESSION #2 – Discussions on Dementia and Alzheimer's**

Seth Keller, MD, Co-President, NTG

Maria Kataki, MD, Professor of Neurology, Medical Director, The Alzheimer's Center of Excellence, Albany Medical Center

The Intersectionality of IDD Dementia Care; Connecting Research to Direct Patient Care in the Community – Seth Keller, MD

There are great advances in biomarker and Alzheimer's disease therapeutics. The care and supports of those with Down Syndrome and other types of intellectual disabilities who age with concerns of dementia lags behind their normotypical counterparts. This presentation will review perspectives and goals of care with solutions on how to connect with ongoing research and care practices with an eye to families, caregivers and to those with IDD.

Alzheimer's Disease Revised Diagnostic and Staging Criteria and Updates in Management – Maria Kataki, MD, PhD, FAAN

During this talk the audience will be informed of the Revised Diagnostic and Staging Criteria for Alzheimer's Disease, including for first time patients with Down Syndrome. The audience will learn the latest of the new era using biomarkers for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease and disease modifying treatments that alter the biology of Alzheimer's Disease. The new criteria include the use of biomarker testing for Alzheimer's disease, including Amyloid brain PET imaging, blood-based biomarkers in addition to CSF Biomarkers and structural Imaging. The audience will learn the use of integrating biomarkers in clinical practice for purposes of diagnosing Alzheimer's disease in addition to the comprehensive neurological evaluation. Dr. Kataki will discuss the pathophysiology of Alzheimer's Disease, the current updates in management and use of anti-amyloid monoclonal antibodies, and updates in clinical research including patients with Down Syndrome.

3:40-4:00pm **BREAK**

4:00-4:45pm **SESSION #3 – Nothing About Us, Without Us – A First Line Perspective**

BJ Stasio, Self-Advocate

Leslie Porterfield-Spence, Parent

Hear directly from an individual/self-advocate with I/DD and a parent of a child with I/DD on their first line perspective of healthcare for people with I/DD.

4:50-5:50pm **SESSION #4 – Considerations for Supporting Quality Sleep and Effective Airway Clearance in Children and Young Adults with I/DD**

Kate Powers, MD, Pediatric Pulmonologist, Albany Medical Center

During this session, Dr. Powers will share information about sleep-disordered breathing (hypoventilation, sleep apnea) and how limited mobility, decreased central tone, and other comorbidities such as ineffective airway clearance can contribute to worsened breathing with sleep in children and young adults with I/DD.

6:00pm+

Dinner on Your Own

A list of local restaurants is included in your packet

7:00-8:30am

BREAKFAST *is available in the main dining room for all conference participants*

8:30-9:30am

SESSION #5 – KEYNOTE SESSION, DAY 2 **TILTING AT WINDMILLS: The Role and Tribulations of the Clinician Advocate in the I/DD Arena**

Rick Rader, MD, *Director, Habilitation Center, Orange Grove Center*

One of the distinguishing features of the clinician working in the I/DD arena is the obvious need, opportunity and challenge of being an advocate. Because of the complexities of the medical delivery system, multiple and often conflicting criteria for services, quick changing landscapes and exclusions it behooves the clinician to clear the way to allow and encourage comprehensive and collaborative healthcare for people with I/DD. The skills of patient advocacy are not part of medical education. Like all skills there is an "art and science" to its acquisition and utilization. This session will provide an introduction to how "advocacy" is viewed, practiced, provided and performed. Examples of both successful and unsuccessful advocacy campaigns will be shared.

9:35-10:50am

SESSION #6 – Fear Me Not: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Successful Medical and Dental Services for Patients with I/DD

Anna Viron, DDS, *Chief of Dentistry, Premier Health/YAI, ADAPT Community Network*

Elizabeth Diviney, Ph.D., LBA, *Coordinator, YAI*

Allison Valeriano, MS, OTR/L, *OT Supervisor, Premier Health/YAI*

This session will explore a transdisciplinary person-centered approach to supporting patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Attendees will learn strategies to manage fear, anxiety, sensory, cognitive, and behavioral challenges that impact patients' abilities to successfully complete medical and dental appointments.

10:50-11:10am **BREAK**

11:10am –
12:25pm

SESSION #7 – Diabetes: Risk Factors And Prevention Through Education, Diet and Activity

Maria Kansas, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Center for Disability Services

Taylor Mead, Senior Director of Program, Health Programming, Special Olympics NY

Bethany Mello, MS OTR/L, Occupational Therapist, Center for Disability Services

Matthew Graham, Athlete Leader, Center for Disability Services

This panel discussion will include a medical overview of diabetes risk factors including those unique to individuals with disabilities, with emphasis on prevention. The Special Olympics Senior Director will review its pilot program with the community whose goal is to educate athletes regarding diabetes risk and prevention, lifestyle modification and how to advocate for themselves with medical providers. An Athlete Leader will discuss his experience with the Special Olympics program and its personal impact. Special challenges in sensory sensitive individuals with emphasis on promoting a low glycemic diet and intervention strategies for avoidant eating habits will be discussed. Attendees will learn how to create positive change in an individual's diet, leading to improved overall health.

12:25-1:30pm **LUNCH (provided)**

1:30-3:00pm

SESSION #8 – We Cannot Give What We Do Not Have – Mental Healthcare and Wellness in I/DD: A Talk in Two Parts

Benjamin Margolis, M.D., Psychiatrist, Bronx Psychiatric Center & Senior Psychiatrist and Staff Neurologist, Access: Supports for Living

PART ONE: "Taking your own pulse." First, Dr. Margolis will speak about self-care and burnout among caregivers in the I/DD space. Self-care and wellness initiatives are becoming ubiquitous among healthcare organizations, and those of us who work within the I/DD space are entitled to the same considerations. We will discuss some of the strategies to identify and address burnout amongst ourselves.

PART TWO: "It seems like nothing is helping!" – Refractory Compulsions and Autism-related OCD. Second, I will discuss some of the behavioral challenges that can drive burnout among direct care staff and providers. We will discuss nonpharmacologic, and both on and off-label treatments for managing refractory compulsions in I/DD.

3:00-3:15pm **WRAP-UP & EVALUATIONS**

SPEAKERS



CP State

Day 1 Keynote Speaker

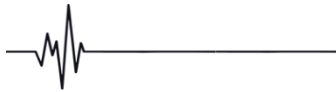


Hon. Willow Baer, Acting Commissioner, NYS OPWDD

Willow Baer is honored to serve as Acting Commissioner at OPWDD. Prior to stepping up as Acting Commissioner, Willow served as OPWDD's Executive Deputy Commissioner and oversaw the agency's operational management, including planning, fiscal planning and oversight, and policy development. She was also responsible for oversight of agency staff in a broad range of capacities, including direct care support, clinical and medical staff in residential and non-residential settings, maintenance and operations.

Willow has served twice as Assistant Counsel to Governor Kathy Hochul, overseeing legal priorities and legislation across the fields of Human Services and Mental Hygiene. Additionally, Willow previously served as General Counsel to OPWDD, General Counsel and Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Children & Family Services, and as Counsel to the NYS Justice Center.

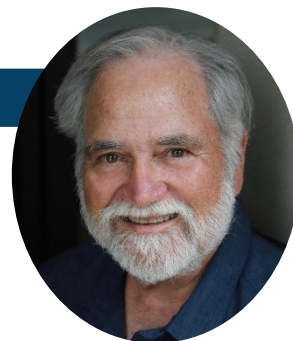
Willow has spent her entire career working to protect and advocate for underrepresented populations. She will continue the agency's work to ensure that New York is a state that is inclusive, supportive, and one that those with developmental disabilities live with meaningful choice and are proud to call home.





Day 2 Keynote Speaker

Rick Rader, MD, FAAIDD, FAADM, DHL (hon)



Dr. Rick Rader is cross trained in internal medicine and medical anthropology and is board certified in developmental medicine. For the past 30 years he has been the Director of the Morton J. Kent Habilitation Center at the Orange Grove Center (Chattanooga) where he is responsible for the creation, implementation and evaluation of novel and innovative health delivery systems for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He started the first program using individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as "standardized patients" in medical education. He is director of university affiliated research, teaching and advocacy programs in collaboration with leading medical, dental and allied health programs. He is a Fellow of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD).

He has received two Presidential appointments at the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PCPID) and the National Council on Disability (NCD). He was the co-author of the Health Equity Framework at the NCD.

He is a co-founder and past president of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD) and was elected President of the American Association on Health and Disability. (AAHD). He was elected to the board at the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices (NTG).

He serves on the Board of the Alliance for Disability in Health Care Education and is an Emeritus Advisor to the Healthcare Innovations Exchange at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. He has been an advisor to four former U.S. Surgeon Generals in the area of health and disability.

He was the first physician invited to address the need for world-wide disability competency training reform for medical students at the United Nations. He was the Editor in chief of Exceptional Parent Magazine and currently is the Editor in chief of HELEN, the Journal of Human Exceptionality and has published over 300 articles on health and disability. He has received several national awards for healthcare journalism. He has served as a member of the Global Medical Advisory Committee at Special Olympics International. He co-founded the American Association on Multi-Sensory Environments and has been a researcher in sensory processing disorders.



SPEAKERS



CP State



Mike Alvaro, President & CEO, CP State

Mike Alvaro is the President and CEO of the Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State (CP State). CP State, founded almost 80 years ago, today fulfills its mission of advocacy and education for almost 30 independent Affiliates providing supports and services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across NY. Mr. Alvaro was appointed to his current leadership position in 2021 and has been with CP State since 2003, overseeing the Associations' regulatory and policy issue advocacy and education activities. In his role at CP State, he works with Affiliate leaders and Board members to identify priority issues for advocacy and education. Under his leadership, CP State has implemented a six-year, \$16M statewide telehealth project supporting almost 9,000 people with disabilities and changing the way residential support is delivered. He has worked to increase health equity and access through various Cabrini Health Foundation awards, CP's advocacy to bridge mental health and disability services, and he helped create the Whole Person Coalition to transform the State's approach to disability services, among other initiatives. Mr. Alvaro is also the current President of New York Disability Advocates (NYDA), a statewide disability advocacy organization formed to unify the advocacy efforts of over 300 disability provider agencies in New York.

Mr. Alvaro has spent over 30 years in the disability and health advocacy field. Prior to joining CP State, he worked in various roles at the Hospital Association of New York State (HANYS), the Hospital Trustees of New York State, and the upstate hospitals' Iroquois Healthcare Alliance. While at Iroquois, he initiated cooperative efforts among hospitals and helped establish one of the State's first health information exchanges (HIXNY). He has obtained and overseen more than \$20M in grants to support advancements in the field, most notable among those initiatives is the successful implementation of a 6-year transformative telehealth triage program supporting almost 9,000 people with disabilities which has not only reduced stress on direct support staff but also improved the quality of life for people with I/DD, all while generating significant savings for New York State. He has an undergraduate degree from Hamilton College and an MPA in health policy management from SUNY's Rockefeller College.



Elizabeth Diviney, Ph.D., Coordinator, YAI



Beth Diviney, Ph.D., BCBA, LBA is a behavior analyst who consults in healthcare clinics, homes and other community based settings throughout the NY tristate area. Beth received a bachelor's degree in Psychology from SUNY at Stony Brook where she discovered the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. She earned her M.A. in Experimental Psychology at C.W.Post/LIU, and Ph.D. in Applied Psychology at New York University. Beth is a peer-elected Past President of the NYS Association for Behavior Analysis, and Director of New Initiatives at ICare4Autism the International Center for Autism Research & Education. She is a behavior consultant at YAI/NIPD, a cofounder of the Premier HealthCare Training Institute, and presents at local, national and international professional conferences. Her research and practice focus is on the Health and Well-being of families, Autism, Challenging Behavior, and the applications of behavior analysis in our everyday lives.

SPEAKERS



Matthew Graham, Center for Disability Services

Matthew Graham is an Athlete Leader and Health Messenger for Special Olympics New York. Matt has been an athlete for over 10 years and has won more than 30 gold medals! Matt participates in Floor Hockey, Powerlifting, Basketball, and Softball. When he's not competing, Matt works at St. Margaret's Center, a nursing home division of the Center for Disability Services and is a Special Olympics NY intern for the Capital District and North Country Regions.



**Maria Kansas Devine, MD, FAAFP, CPE
Chief Medical Officer, Center for Disability Services**



Dr. Maria Kansas is the Chief Medical Officer for the Center for Disability Services in Albany. She is a board certified Family Physician since 1989 and specializes in care for individuals and families across the lifespan. She is passionate about caring for the whole person and helping individuals maximize their physical and mental health. Since 2014, Dr. Kansas has brought that passion to the Center for Disability Services, Center Health Care where she serves patients with and without disabilities. Dr. Kansas credits serving individuals with developmental disabilities with teaching her new skills in communication, observation and medical care. She is an Associate Clinical Professor at Albany Medical College and is a community partner for the NICHE grant from AADMD to develop a medical school program focused on developmental disabilities, access and care. Dr. Kansas grew up in the Capital Region graduating from Bethlehem Central High School, Union College in Schenectady and Albany Medical College.

SPEAKERS



Maria Kataki, MD, PhD, FAAN
Division Head for Cognitive Neurology, Albany Medical Center

Dr. Maria Kataki is the Division Head for Cognitive Neurology at Albany Med, Medical Director for the Center of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease, Associate Professor of Neurology. Dr Kataki joined the Albany Med, on 11/1/2023 after practicing at the OSU for 19.5 years. She is a Physician's educator, clinical neuroscience researcher and behavioral neurologist specializing in the diagnosis and management of cognitive issues for over 21 years.

Dr Kataki is a graduate of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece, Medical School. She completed her first residency in Neurology and received a doctoral degree in functional neuroimaging in Dementia at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. She then completed her second Neurology Residency at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston TX. She also completed her Fellowship in Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia at the same institution and a fellowship in Neurobehavioral Neurology at the Baylor College of Medicine and Houston VA Medical Center.

Dr Kataki is a member and elected Fellow of the American Academy of Neurology and a member of the International Alzheimer's Association. Dr Kataki is an active invited speaker and has authored or coauthored several articles, book chapters or other abstracts. She has conducted or participated in over 158 clinical research studies funded by NIH, foundations, and industry.

The data from her participation while at the OSU research subjects and now at Albany Med, have contributed to over 5000 research publications through the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative.

Dr Kataki is the Medical Director for The CEAD at Albany Med Neurology, which is part of a network of ten medical centers and teaching hospitals, recognized nationally and by New York State as experts in the diagnosis and care of individuals living with Alzheimer's Disease or other dementias. Dr Kataki has directed and coordinated a multidisciplinary team at Albany Med, offering revolutionized treatments for Alzheimer's Disease, including the first infusion of Lecanemab, an anti amyloid monoclonal antibody, disease modifying FDA approved treatment, for Mild Cognitive Impairment and Mild Dementia due to Alzheimer's Disease.



SPEAKERS



CP State

**Seth M. Keller, MD, AADMD Past President 2010-2012;
Neurologist, Neurology Associates of South Jersey**



Seth M. Keller, MD, is a board-certified neurologist in private practice with Neurology Associates of South Jersey. He specializes in the evaluation and care of adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) with neurologic complications. He cares for individuals with IDD both in the community as well in New Jersey's ICF/DD centers. Dr Keller is on the Executive Board of the Arc of Burlington County as well as on the board for The Arc of New Jersey Mainstreaming Medical Care Board. Dr Keller is the Past President of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD). Dr Keller is the co-chair of the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices (NTG). Dr. Keller is also the chair of the Adult IDD Section with the American Academy of Neurology. He is actively involved in national and international I/DD health education as a speaker and webinar and workshop participant. He is a co-author on a number of articles and book chapters relating to aging and dementia in those with IDD. Raised in Philadelphia, PA, Keller received his bachelor's degree from Temple University, earned his medical degree from The George Washington University School of Medicine in 1989, and completed his neurology internship and residency at Bethesda Naval Hospital. He also served as a neurologist at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Okinawa, Japan.



**Benjamin Margolis, MD, Psychiatrist, Bronx Psychiatric Center
& Senior Psychiatrist and Staff Neurologist, Access:
Supports for Living**

Benjamin Margolis, M.D. is board-certified in neurology and psychiatry, trained under the combined residency program at Brown University. He specializes in neuropsychiatric care of adults with I/DD in the New York Hudson Valley and is an attending inpatient psychiatrist at the Bronx Psychiatric Center. He completed medical school at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine after the postbaccalaureate premedical program at Columbia University, and holds a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. He is the prior treasurer of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry, current co-chair of the AADMD Behavioral Health Task Group and is working to improve behavioral and mental health care of individuals with I/DD on local, state and national levels. As part of this mission, he serves on the Health Advisory Board for Special Olympics New York for the Strong Minds Program and on the Medical Advisory Task Force for the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee for New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities.

SPEAKERS

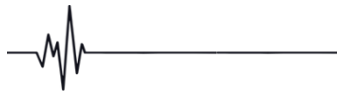


CP State

**Taylor Mead, Senior Director of Program,
Health Programming, Special Olympics NYS**



Taylor Mead is the Senior Director of Program, Health Programming for Special Olympics NY and oversees the organization's statewide Health initiatives, including the implementation of large-scale free health screenings and healthcare provider training opportunities. Taylor has a background in recreation, fitness and wellness and earned a BA in Communications from Marist College and an MEd in Athletic Administration from Endicott College.



**Bethany Mello, MS OTR/L
Occupational Therapist, Center for Disability Services**



Bethany Mello is an Occupational Therapist, specializing in pediatrics for over 5 years. Bethany received her education at Husson University in Bangor, Maine. Bethany currently works as an OT at the Center for Disability's Langan school, with past experience working in special education schools throughout the Capital Region. Prior to moving to New York, Bethany worked as an OT at a Pediatric Outpatient Rehab, with a treatment focus in feeding therapy. Bethany has experience working with individuals who have a variety of diagnoses including Autism, down syndrome, ADHD, sensory processing disorder, complex feeding histories, and avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder. In this presentation, Bethany will be sharing findings, tips and resources to navigate "picky eating" in correlation with Diabetes.

SPEAKERS



CP State

Leslie Porterfield-Spence, Parent



Leslie Spence has dedicated her career to supporting individuals with disabilities. She began her work in 1982 with United Cerebral Palsy in California, initially unaware that it would become her lifelong passion. She was part of one of the first group homes in the San Fernando Valley and later advanced to Program Manager, a role she held until 2000. After relocating to New York, she joined the Center for Disability Services, where she quickly moved into leadership and now serves as a Program Manager.

Leslie's advocacy is also personal. In 1990, her son, Matthew, was born. When he missed developmental milestones, she tirelessly pursued an accurate diagnosis, eventually confirming he was on the autism spectrum. She championed therapies over surgery and ensured he received the support he needed. After moving to New York, Matthew joined Special Olympics and later transitioned into a residential program at the Center for Disability Services, where he has thrived.

With decades of experience both professionally and personally, Leslie remains a dedicated advocate, committed to empowering individuals with disabilities.



Kate Powers, MD, Pediatric Pulmonologist Albany Medical Center

Dr. Powers is a pediatric pulmonologist, clinical researcher, and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Albany Medical College. She completed medical school at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, pediatric residency at Maine Medical Center, and pediatric pulmonology fellowship at Johns Hopkins University. She joined the faculty at Brown University in 2017 before transitioning to Albany Medical College in 2022. As the Director of the Pediatric Cystic Fibrosis (CF) Program and Co-Director of the CF Center, Dr. Powers is passionate about improving care for the CF community as well as other children and young adults with chronic lung disease. As a clinical researcher, Dr. Powers has presented at national conferences, collaborated as the lead author in creating a new chapter for Cecil's Essentials of Medicine, 10th edition on transitioning children and adolescents with pulmonary disease to adult and conducted many quality improvement and clinical research projects. She is thrilled to share information about optimizing sleep and airway clearance in children and young adults with special health care needs.

SPEAKERS



CP State

Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA, Medical Director ADAPT Community Network



Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA, is a Board-certified Family Medicine Physician. He is the Co-Chair of the Cerebral Palsy State Medical Director's Council and Co-Chair of their annual CP State Clinical Conference. He is the Medical Director at ADAPT Community Network (formally known as United Cerebral Palsy of New York City). He is an Assistant Professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Director of Primary Care at the Rose F. Kennedy Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Montefiore Medical Center. He is a member of the Board of Directors at the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry and at Mercy Home in Brooklyn, NY. He serves as Co-Chair of the NYS OPWDD (Office for People With Developmental Disabilities) Medical Advisory Taskforce. He is a Special Olympics Clinical Director, Chair of the Special Olympics New York Health Advisory Council, and member of the Special Olympics International Medical Advisory Committee.



BJ Stasio, Self-Advocate

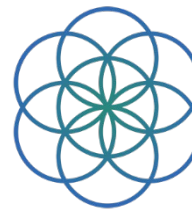


BJ Stasio is a passionate and dedicated advocate for the rights and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Based in Buffalo, New York, BJ has been actively involved in advocacy and leadership for over 20 years. He served as the President of the Board of Directors for the Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS), elected by his peers to represent self-advocates across the state. His work with SANYS includes amplifying the voices of self-advocates and promoting person-centered initiatives.

BJ has been employed by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), where he has focused on person-centered planning, voting rights, and self-determination training and education. He is deeply committed to empowering individuals with disabilities to live fulfilling and self-directed lives.

In recognition of his impactful work, BJ has been honored with the Susan Daniels Disability Mentoring Hall of Fame induction and the Community Advocacy Award from the New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation. His advocacy efforts extend to creating the "Art of Advocacy," a platform that emphasizes the importance of self-advocacy as a tool for empowerment. Through his leadership, advocacy, and dedication, BJ continues to inspire others and champion the rights of individuals with disabilities, striving for a more inclusive and equitable society.

SPEAKERS



CP State

Allison Valeriano, OTR/L, Occupational Therapy Supervisor, YAI



Allison Valeriano, OTR/L, is an Occupational Therapy Supervisor at YAI Network's Premier HealthCare clinics. She earned her Master's degree in Occupational Therapy from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. She has over 15 years of experience working with people across the lifespan with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in school, hospital, community, and clinic-based settings. Allison is part of Premier's desensitization program helping individuals with anxiety, fear, and/or sensory issues complete their medical and dental appointments. She has co-presented on this desensitization program at the American Occupational Therapy conference, European Autism Conference, and has co-authored a peer-reviewed paper on the subject in the Armenian Journal of Special Education. She has also spent time abroad as a clinical consultant for rehabilitation centers serving people with I/DD and as a professional volunteer providing intervention and training to caregivers of children with I/DD.



**Anna Viron, DDS, Chief of Dentistry,
Premier Health/YAI, ADAPT Community Network**

Dr. Anna Viron, DDS, has dedicated her career to providing dental care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/D) for over 20 years. She earned her Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from *SUNY Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine*.

Dr. Viron has spent two decades at ADAPT Community Network, specializing in treating patients with cerebral palsy, and 19 years at YAI's Premier HealthCare clinics, where she serves as Chief of Dentistry. She leads a high-volume dental team and contributes to Premier's desensitization program, helping individuals with autism and sensory sensitivities tolerate dental treatment.

In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Viron has dedicated her time to this field outside of work by volunteering for several key initiatives. She serves as Outreach Chair for the *New York County Dental Society*, Co-Chair of *Give Kids A Smile*, and Clinical Director for *Special Olympics Special Smiles*. Dr. Viron recently joined *Touro College of Dental Medicine* as an adjunct professor. Through her work and volunteer efforts, she advocates for accessible and inclusive dental care for individuals with ID/D.

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