

AHEAD in Virginia

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**Association on
Higher Education
And Disability
in Virginia**

Spring 2024 Virtual Conference March 21 & 22, 2024

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday, March 21

9:00 am	Welcome
9:15–11:15 am	Student Panel – “Working Towards DEI for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education”
	<i>Moderator:</i> Ellie Bavuso , Senior, Biology major Virginia Commonwealth University
	<i>Panelists:</i> Fiona Aquilo , Freshman, Visual Arts major Patrick & Henry Community College
	Hope Baker , B.A. Communications University of Arizona
	Alexander Campbell Virginia Commonwealth University
	Emily Conn , Junior, Psychology major UVA-Wise
	Nicholas Cuevas , Freshman, Business major George Mason University
	Kyndall Evans , Junior George Mason University
	Carolyn Hoffman , Ph.D. Candidate – Public Health George Mason University
	Cael Stump , Junior, English major Virginia Commonwealth University
	Rue Willis , Senior, International Studies major Old Dominion University
11:15–11:30 am	COMFORT BREAK

Thursday, March 21 (continued)

11:30 am–12:15 pm **Updates:**

- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)
- Senate Bill No. 21: *Institutions of higher education; policies; individuals with disabilities.*

Presenter: **Joan Ehrlich**, President
AHEAD in Virginia

12:15–1:30 pm *LUNCH BREAK*

1:30–3:30 pm **Assistive Technology Strategies:**

1:30 – 2:00 pm **“Tactiles for students who are blind or low vision”**

Danielle Smith, Assistive Technology Coordinator
University of Mary Washington

2:00 – 2:30 pm **“Hearing loops for students who are deaf or hard of hearing”**

Lori Kressin, Coordinator of Academic Accessibility
University of Virginia

2:30 – 3:30 pm **“Assistive technology landscape for high school students”**

Stacy McBain, Specialized Instructional Facilitator–A.T.
& **Christopher Bugaj**, Assistive Technology Specialist
Loudon County Public Schools

Jeff Sisk, Assistive Technology Services
& **Karen Hawley**, Assistive Technology Coach
Fairfax County Public Schools

3:30–4:00 pm **Wrap-Up: Assistive Technology Resources**

Presenters:
Joan Ehrlich, President,
AHEAD in Virginia

Maureen Madden, Instructional Designer/Accessibility Liaison
Northern Virginia Community College

Friday, March 22

8:30–9:30 am **AHEAD in Virginia Business Meeting & Year in Review**

9:30–10:45 am **Presentation – “Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Support of Student Success”**

Presenter: **Chris Parthemos** Assistant Director
Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity
Virginia Commonwealth University

Since the launch of ChatGPT last year, higher education is at the center of a vibrant and occasionally dramatic debate about AI. While those dealing with policy consider whether AI is or is not plagiarism, those of us who are student-focused must contend with the reality that our students use these tools, and, sometimes, these tools may be incredibly beneficial in the support of universal design or accessibility.

This presentation provides an overview of generative AI and AI broadly, as well as some of the biggest risks and benefits associated with these tools, exploring some of the ways students and educators are beginning to use AI. We will apply this knowledge in specific case studies, creating opportunities for guided discussion and exploration of upcoming questions and issues in this area: Could AI become an accommodation requested by our students? Are there ways the work of our offices can benefit from the integration of AI resources?

10:45–11:00 am **COMFORT BREAK**

11:00 am–12:15 pm **Presentation – “Practical Uses of AI to Support Digital Accessibility”**

Presenter: **Kristine Neuber**, IT Accessibility Coordinator
Assistive Technology Initiative
George Mason University

This session demonstrates the use of ChatGPT to support digital accessibility, as employed by the Assistive Technology Initiative at George Mason University. This demonstration highlights the practical uses and real-world examples of content remediated by Chat GPT, from crafting precise alt-text for images to generating detailed descriptions for infographics. Learn how Chat GPT can support accessibility awareness and training efforts, and gain insights into formulating effective prompts to guide Chat GPT in delivering the outcomes you desire.