



AHEAD

Annual Conference

July 20-24, 2026
Providence, Rhode Island



Overall Schedule

All events held at **Rhode Island Convention Center** unless otherwise indicated.

Monday, July 20

7:30 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
9 am-5:30 pm	Preconference Sessions
10:30-11 am	Beverage Break
12:30-2 pm	Lunch (on your own)
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break

Tuesday, July 21

8 am-5:30 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
9 am-5:30 pm	Preconference Sessions
10:30-11 am	Beverage Break
12:30-2 pm	Lunch (on your own)
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break

Wednesday, July 22

7 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
7:15-8:45 am	First-Time Attendee Breakfast (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall C)
9-10:30 am	Opening Plenary (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall A)
10:30-11 am	Beverage Break
11 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 1: Featured Sessions
12:30-2:30 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-2:15 pm	KPC Meetings; Meetups; Affiliates (p. 44)
2:30-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 2
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break
4-5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 3
5:30-7 pm	Exhibit Hall Opening & President's Reception (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
7-9 pm	Drag Bingo & Trivia (5th Floor, Ballroom A) <i>(Co-hosted by DISC & LGBTQA KPCs)</i>

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)

Thursday, July 23

8 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
8:30 am-4:30 pm	Exhibit Hall Open (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
8:30-10 am	Poster Session 1 & Continental Breakfast (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
10-11:15 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 4
11:30 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 5
12:30-2:30 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-2:15 pm	KPC Meetings; Meetups; CAN Session (p. 75)
2:30-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 6
3:30-4:30 pm	Extended Beverage Break in Exhibit Hall (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
4:30-5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 7
5:30-7 pm	Celebration Reception (5th Floor, Open Space)

Friday, July 24

8 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
9-11 am	Exhibit Hall Open (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
8:30-9:30 am	Concurrent Sessions Block 8
9:30-11 am	Poster Session 2 with Beverage Break (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
11 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 9: Featured Sessions
12:30-2 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1-1:45 pm	KPC Meetings (p. 98)
2-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 10
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break
4-5 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 11



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#AHEAD2026

AHEAD

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And Disability®

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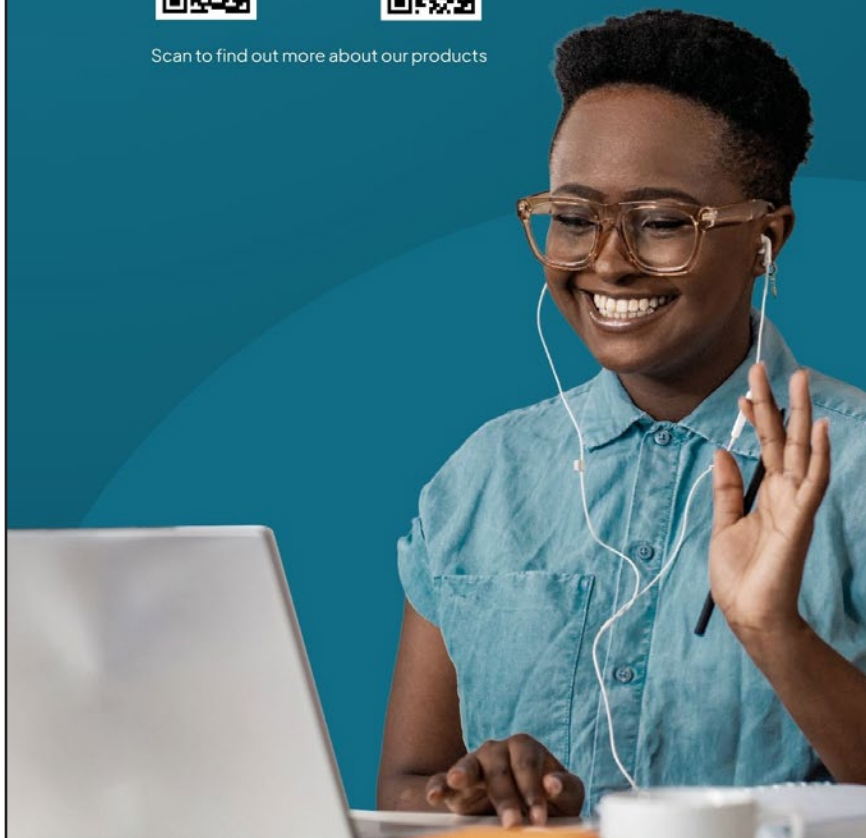


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Welcome from AHEAD President



Katy Washington

AHEAD President
Virginia Commonwealth
University

On behalf of the AHEAD Board of Directors and staff, it is a pleasure to welcome you to Providence for the 2026 AHEAD 49th Annual Conference!

Each year, this gathering offers us a rare moment to pause, take stock of where our field is headed, and learn from one another in ways that strengthen our collective impact. Providence—rich in history, creativity, and community—provides a fitting setting for conversations about the future of disability inclusion in higher education.

This year's conference reflects the breadth and depth of our profession. You will find sessions that challenge long-held assumptions, workshops that sharpen day-to-day practice, and opportunities to explore emerging issues shaping accessibility work on our campuses. Just as important, you will find space to connect with colleagues who understand the complexity, urgency, and purpose of this work.

For those joining us for the first time, we are glad you are here. I hope you feel welcomed into a community that values curiosity, collaboration, and shared learning. For returning attendees, I hope this week offers a chance to reconnect, to mentor, and to rediscover the sense of mission that brought you to this profession.

Thank you for your continued support of AHEAD and for the dedication you bring to your campuses every day. Your commitment strengthens our profession and fuels our collective mission to advance equity and access in higher education. We are honored to learn and celebrate with you, and we look forward to a meaningful and energizing week with you in Providence.

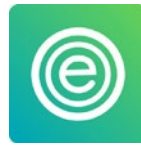


Download the 2026 AHEAD Conference App!

Download in the iPhone App Store for iPhone and iPad and in Google Play for Android devices. Search for and download the Engagefully app and then search for AHEAD in the app's events section. Quick access to the 2026 Conference schedule, updates, and more!



Apple



Android



Throughout the conference space and hotels, we are offering free Aira Access for attendees who are blind or have low vision.

What is Aira?

Aira is an assistive technology tool that can be used on your smartphone and/or desktop to provide you with live, on-demand access to visual information and assist in completing everyday tasks such as reading, giving descriptions, online assistance and navigation.

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5. Allow permissions prompts: Terms of Service, Camera, Mic & Location
6. Navigate and tap the "Call an Aira Agent" button to make your first call.

If you have any questions or need further assistance we would love to spend some time with you to help set you up for success with using Aira services. Please call Aira Customer Care at 1-800-835-1934.

Welcome from Local Chairs



Welcome to Providence!

On behalf of our conference community, it's a pleasure to welcome you to Providence, Rhode Island, a city known for its rich history and vibrant arts scene. We're honored to gather here with leaders, scholars, and advocates who are advancing access and opportunity in higher education.

Providence offers a unique blend of historic charm and forward-thinking energy. From its walkable downtown and celebrated restaurants to its renowned colleges and cultural institutions, the city reflects the spirit of innovation and collaboration that drives our work. We hope you'll take time to explore our waterfront, creative spaces, and welcoming neighborhoods.

As we come together to share ideas and build a more accessible future, we're proud to host this important conversation in a city that values diversity, learning, and community. We're glad you're here!

Restaurant Recommendations

Downtown Providence

110 Grill
Murphy's Pub
Caffe Nero
Trinity Brewhouse
Track 15
Ellie's

Around Providence

Union Station Brewery
Fleming's Steakhouse
The George
Yellow Door Taqueria
Xaco Taco
Bitty and Beau's

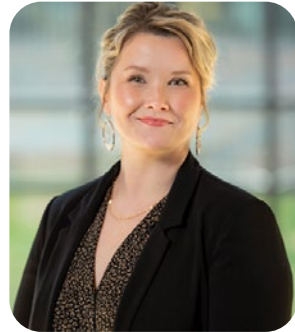
Wheelchair Accessible Activities

- Providence River Pedestrian Bridge
- Providence Children's Museum
- African American Museum of Rhode Island
- RISD Museum
- Providence Place Mall (connected to the Omni Hotel)
- Roger Williams Park Zoo
- Federal Hill Providence



Nicol Hernandez

AHEAD 2026 Local Chair
Accommodation Specialist
Student Accessibility Services
Brown University



Desirae Mix

AHEAD 2026 Local Chair
Associate Director
Student Accessibility Services
Brown University

AHEAD Gives Back

#TAG: Providence, You're It! Make A Difference in Providence and Enter to Win a Free Trip to AHEAD 2027!



At the 2023 Conference in Portland, AHEAD initiated The AHEAD Giveback (TAG) in an effort to contribute, in some small part, to support local organizations actively working to address pervasive societal problems in our host community. AHEAD members responded with tremendous generosity--with their money and heartfelt encouragement--in ways we could not have predicted. With that encouragement, we approach Conference '26 with even greater enthusiasm for what TAG can do in Providence!

Once again, Chris Stone and Michael Southern have TAG-teamed to identify a worthy non-profit organization to which AHEAD encourages your contributions: Amos House. We urge you to visit their website for info and to submit your tax-deductible donations today! A donation of any size makes you eligible for the drawing.

It is estimated that 11.2% of Rhode Islanders live in poverty. With food, housing, and utility costs rising, more and more households need support to make it through the month. Amos House provides this and other kinds of support, including hygiene products and emergency clothing, a mailing address for unhoused individuals, offer rental assistance, assist with birth certificates and state identification that will allow a child to start school or an unemployed adult to apply for a job, and, on some occasions, help a grieving relative bury a family member. They also offer employment skills through Culinary, Property Maintenance and Landscaping, Commercial Driver's License, and Customer Service training programs.

Amos House

<https://tinyurl.com/ForAmosHouse>

The mission of Amos House is to help people help themselves out of oppression, homelessness, and poverty through vital services and results-oriented programs. It began in 1976 as a small soup kitchen and today is a leading agency in the Rhode Island nonprofit community, serving the homeless, unemployed, and those living in poverty. They offer food, social services, job training, employment, and health services, including mental health and addiction treatment.



Give and You Could Win!

On Thursday evening of the Conference, we will share information about your donations, and one TAG participant* will win a 2027 Conference package including:

- Free registration for the 2027 AHEAD Main Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Preconferences not included)
- Transportation to/from Milwaukee for dates of Conference
- Four nights Conference hotel accommodations
- Per diem for four days (covers meals and other daily expenses)

* TAG organizers, AHEAD Board Members, and corporate sponsors & vendors are not eligible to win.

To be eligible, complete three easy steps:

1. Make a monetary donation to Amos House
2. Complete the online form below.
3. Wait for your name to be called! One winner will be drawn during Thursday evening's Celebration Reception (*you do not need not be present to win*).

Entry Form to Participate in #TAG Drawing

Complete this form to let us know you supported #TAG
<https://tinyurl.com/DonateAmos>



General Announcements

Conference App!



Download the Engagefully app for iPhone and iPad in the Apple App Store and use Google Play for Android. Search for AHEAD in the app's events section.

Wi-Fi Access

Wi-Fi Network: #RICCFree
No password; follow prompts.

All-Gender Restroom

Located in the two facilities outside of 554B on the 5th floor (One has stalls only, one has stalls and urinals), the gender neutral restroom provides facilities that are safe and accessible to all conference participants, including all gender identities and expressions and those who use attendants of a different gender.

Nursing/Pumping Room

Located just past Exhibition Hall A (3rd Floor).

Quiet Room

Providence Room (4th Floor), sponsored by the Autism KPC: Available during all Conference event hours, the Quiet Room is a low-stimulation place to take a break from the conference that includes low lighting, reduced noise, fidget/stim toys, and quiet activities like coloring books. Conversations in this room are absolutely not permitted.

Exhibit Hall

Visit exhibitors Wednesday-Friday in Exhibition Hall B (3rd Floor). Find hours, schedule, and directory on p. 112.

Poster Sessions

Poster presentations give you the opportunity to speak directly with presenters about their research, programs, and practices. This year's posters will be presented Thursday and Friday morning in the exhibit hall. We hope you'll stop by for a beverage and to join colleagues in conversation, in addition to viewing the posters.

AHEADgehog Giveaway!

Thank you to Brink and Beth Harrison (University of Dayton), who have generously knitted and shared AHEADgehogs for the Conference for over a decade! Attendees can enter a drawing at the Affiliates Booth to win one of their famous AHEADgehogs! Visit during Exhibit Hall hours and deposit your name and number in the drawing! We will draw names Friday before Exhibit Hall closes, and text all winners.





Individual Session Evaluation Form

Please complete this form
for each session you attend.
tiny.cc/8zu1101



Overall Conference Evaluation Form

Please complete this form once,
at the end of the conference.
tinyurl.com/52ttwz7z

2026 Session and Overall Conference Evaluations

Both AHEAD and the presenters rely on your feedback! Evaluation forms are also available on the conference website, app, and at the very end of this book for your ease in locating them after each session.

Intended Audience Labels for Sessions

We will be identifying the intended audience levels in the program book, app, and website, so you can find the sessions that are right for you: Entry-level (for those relatively new to higher ed disability work), Mid-level (solid foundational background required), Advanced (aimed at seasoned professionals or researchers), and All (appropriate for all levels).

Safety & Comfort for All

Indoor events associated with AHEAD 2026 are non-smoking or -vaping. In consideration of those who have severe allergies or environmental sensitivity, please refrain from the use of scented personal care products. You may want to bring a cover up for meeting rooms; it can get chilly. If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, please consider other attendees' health and safety: test yourself for COVID, mask to avoid spreading germs, and avoid attending events in person until at least 24 hours after your fever subsides. Free masks are available at the AHEAD registration desk.

Concurrent Presentation Slides & Handouts

Materials for all Concurrent and Poster sessions are available on the AHEAD website and through the conference app. The materials will remain available following the conference for reference and download.

AHEAD Thanks

Thank you to the 2026 Program/Local Committee Chairs, Conference Exhibitors and Sponsors, Conference Session Moderators, All Conference Presenters, All Conference Volunteers, the Staff of the Rhode Island Convention Center, our Host Hotels, **and most of all – YOU! Without our nearly 1600 attendees, this event wouldn't be possible.**

Interpreter Services

Anthony Verdeja, *Florida*
Tracy Villinski, *Minnesota*

Accessibility Review of Session Slides and Handouts

Melanie Thornton, *University of Arkansas Partners for Inclusive Communities*

CART Services

HRI Cart

Conference Proposal Reviewers

AHEAD thanks the many members who reviewed the many proposals submitted for the conference. The conference is rich in professional development content and diversity because of their input.

Margaret Adams
Ernest Adom
Manon Allard-Kropp
Neeyati Anand
Karen Andrews
Amy Apicerno
David Sunday Araoti
Brenda Avilés
Amber Bagwell
Jossette Bailey
Alizabeth Ballard
Sarah Benedix
Annastashia Blesi
Jamie Bojarski
Allison Bouchier
Jesika Brooks
Kayla Canis
Alexandra Chapman
Jessica Chittams
Karyel Collin
Allison Cruz Trinta
Tongriang Daspan
Ruth Davison
Antonia DeMichiel
Marcie Dimac
Emily (Em) Doffing
Jodi Duke
Susie Dunn
Carey Eigen
Hannah Enenbach
Christina Fabrey

Ruth Fries
Cynthia Frye
Shauna Goodell
Pujitha Gourabathini
Jessica Green
Mandie Greiwe
Andrea Haas
Allison Hampton
Lori Henehan
Jennifer Hennessey-Booth
Jean Hess
Jen Holldorf
Jenifer Jennings Shaud
Heather Jones
Dana Kasowski
Lisa Keathly
Harry Knabe
Amanda Koester
Katherine Krieger
Margaret Lehman
Nicole Letoile
Hanna Lewis
Julianne Lucas
Emily Lucio
Sylvia Mac
Jessica Machado
Emily Mattison
Stephanie McGhee-Chludenski
Jonathan McGough

Belete Mebrat Bogale
Gabriel Merrell
Sara Miller
Rochelle Mills-Garcia
Vanessa Molina
Jennifer Murchison
Cristina Muyschondt
Sarah Myers
Kat Nic
Jamie Opdyke
Beth Parrott
Chris Parthemos
Jaron Paschke
Bruce Pomeroy
Cindy Poore-Pariseau
Hannah Premo
Jordana Qi
Christina Reyes
Nathan Rider
Elizabeth Robinson
Amanda Rodino
Beth Roland
Corwyn Ross
Natasha Russi
Wesley Satterwhite
Maria Schiano
Sav Schlauderaff
Elizabeth Schuster
Amy Seering
Andrea Sharpe-Robinson

Rajendran Shobha Ajin
Emily Shryock
Leslie Smith
Aaron Spector
Izabela Stachura
Pamela Starr
Jessica Stone
Chris Stone

Robyn Suchy
Elisabeth Sullivan
David Thomas
Joanna Timmerman
Karen Toole
Elizabeth Villalta
Tina Vires
Katie Vise

Jessiemarie Voigt
Jiayu Wan
Samra Ward Smith
Leslie Watts
Jess White
Sarah Young
Carol Young Walker

Land and Labor Acknowledgement



This year, the AHEAD conference is convening in Providence, RI, which we'd like to acknowledge as being on the traditional territory of the Narragansett Indian Tribe, which continues as a sovereign nation today. With deep respect and appreciation, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples whose ties to

this land endure. We recognize that our presence here is shaped by histories of displacement and sacrifice imposed upon them. In holding these truths, we commit to honoring their enduring nation: their lives, their ancestors, and their descendants.

AHEAD also acknowledges that Providence's history is inextricably linked to the labor, past and present, required to build a space where we can gather in this way. We honor the communities of color whose stolen labor was—and is—a vehicle for the United States to become an economic force in the world.

However, these labor and land acknowledgements are empty without action behind it. This includes, but is not restricted to, revitalization of Indigenous knowledges, giving to organizations led by Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, building meaningful relationships with the people and their history, and more. We must make space and redistribute power.

Thank you to Brown University, Portland State University's Pacific Islander, Asian & Asian American Student Center and the Student Success and Retention Conference, (Portland OR 2023) from which we have sourced much of the language used in these acknowledgements.

Photo credit: National Park Service (<https://www.nps.gov/blrv/learn/historyculture/immigration.htm>)

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CEU & Attendance Certificate Info

PLEASE PICK UP CEU FORMS AT THE MODERATOR/CEU DESK

To support your professional development goals, Continuing Education Units (CEUs) from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) have been pre-approved for preconference, plenary, featured presentations, poster sessions, and concurrent sessions. CRCC instructional hours are not available for receptions, product demonstrations, Knowledge & Practice Community meetings, or other group meetings.

Continuing education pre-approval has not been secured from any other certifying organizations. However, AHEAD can verify your attendance at sessions and provide a Conference Attendance Sheet that may be accepted by other professional organizations. See the AHEAD conference website for full CEU/Certificate of Attendance information and instructions.

Instructions:

1. Pick up a Conference Attendance Sheet and/or CRCC/RID form from the Registration desk at the beginning of the Conference.
2. Keep the Conference Attendance Sheet with you throughout the conference and record the sessions you attend. Collect verification signatures from the moderator, presenter, or AHEAD staff after each session attended.
3. For CRCC CEUs: After you've attended all applicable sessions, come back to the CEU desk to get a signed CRCC Verification of Completion form to take home and fill out the Attendance Tally sheet.
4. For RID and other CEUs: follow the instructions from your organization to submit your hours after leaving the conference.

For a general Certificate of Attendance for other organizations:

Your Conference Attendance Sheet should be accepted by your employer or licensing agency, but if you would like a traditional certificate of attendance, scan and email your sheet to AHEAD Professional Development (profdev@ahead.org).

Special Events

Opening Plenary

Sustaining the Disability Rights Movement: How We Made it This Far and What We Must Do to Keep it Strong

Wednesday, July 22, 9 – 10:30 am
Exhibition Hall A (3rd Floor)



AHEAD is thrilled to invite one of our staunchest allies, teachers, and advocates, AHEAD Executive Counsel Paul Grossman, to take the podium as this year's keynote speaker.

As Paul nears retirement, this time, maybe, for real, he has a “love letter” to deliver to the membership of AHEAD, laying out for us the critical role we all play, every day, in the development and preservation of Civil Rights in America. This address will include the intersectional, social, and legal true story of how we as a movement got here, including his first-person account of the famous 504 sit-in and his last conversation with the “mother of the disability rights movement,” Judy Heumann. Over the past 75 years, only during the Vietnam War was America as divided and

prone to violence as it is now, but Paul will explain how the disability rights movement evolved from that division, and the lessons that holds for us today.

With respect for the full spectrum of political belief, Paul will address why, at this very moment, we must all be civil rights advocates. Relying on the courts to advance our interests may have worked in the past, but this approach is not as likely to succeed in the future. Going forward, a social justice and action approach, requiring personal courage, will be necessary.

First-Time Attendee Breakfast

Wednesday, July 22, 7:15 – 8:45 am
Exhibition Hall C (3rd Floor)

First-time attendees are encouraged to begin the conference week over breakfast with AHEAD leaders and other first-time conference attendees. Join us to kick off your first AHEAD conference experience!

Exhibit Hall Opening & President's Reception

Wednesday, July 22, 5:30 – 7 pm

Exhibition Hall B (3rd Floor)

The President's Reception will include a selection of hot and cold appetizers, hosted soft drinks, a cash bar, and live instrumental music, all held in conjunction with the opening of the Exhibit Hall. Learn from innovative vendors and sponsors, and mingle with colleagues!

Drag Bingo & Trivia Night

Wednesday, July 22, 7 – 9 pm

Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Co-hosted by the Disability Identity, Studies & Culture (DISC) and the LGBTQA Knowledge and Practice Communities (KPCs). Join us to wind down from a long day of conference sessions at an exciting night of Drag Bingo and Trivia! To celebrate Disability Pride Month (July), dress to impress in the vibrant colors of the Disability Pride flag—red, gold, white, blue, green, and black, or however you choose to express your Disability Pride! Entry and bingo play are free! Your generous tips and donations will benefit local non-profit, Amos House, through the "The AHEAD Giveback" (TAG) campaign (p. 10). Light refreshments and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided at no charge, and ASL interpretation and CART captioning will be available.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Knowledge & Practice Community (KPC) Breakfast, in Partnership with the National Deaf Center (NDC)

Thursday, July 23, 8:30 – 10 am

Omni Hotel, Washington/Newport Room

This event offers a chance to network, collaborate, and connect with colleagues who support deaf and hard of hearing students. A buffet breakfast will be provided, and interpreters and CART will be available to ensure full accessibility.

Celebration Reception

Thursday, July 23, 5:30 – 7 pm

Ballroom Foyer (5th Floor)

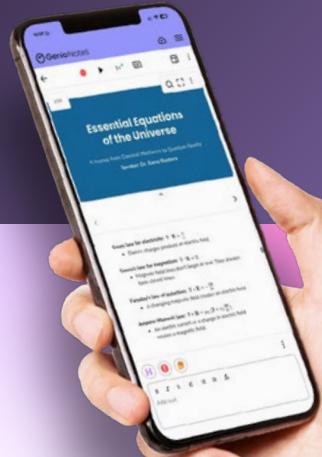
Co-hosted by the Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Disability (REDD) and LGBTQA Knowledge and Practice Communities. This reception is the perfect way to celebrate the week with new and old friends with an evening of music, eating, socializing, and community building.



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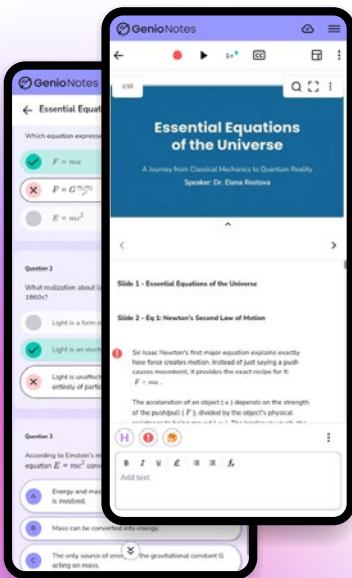
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Monday, July 20

7:30 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
9 am-5:30 pm	Preconference Sessions <i>(Please note: All preconference sessions are located on 5th Floor of the Convention Center)</i>
	PC01 The NEAT Model (Room 557)
	PC02 Intro to Disability Law (Ballroom A)
	PC03 AHEAD Start (Ballroom B)
	PC04 Health Science, 1 (Ballroom D)
	PC05 Interactive Assessment (Room 554B)
	PC06 "I'm in Charge" (Room 550 AB)
	PC07 Advancing IPSE Culture (Room 555A)
9 am-12:30 pm	PC08 ADA Coordinators, 1 (Room 552 AB)
	PC10 Neurodiv. Inclusivity, 1 (Room 556 AB)
	PC12 Addressing Burnout, 1 (Ballroom C)
	PC14 Effective Metacognition (Room 555B)
2 pm-5:30 pm	PC09 ADA Coordinators, 2 (Room 552 AB)
	PC11 Neurodiv. Inclusivity, 2 (Room 556 AB)
	PC13 Addressing Burnout, 2 (Ballroom C)
	PC15 Sense of Assessment (Room 555B)
10:30-11 am	Beverage Break
12:30-2 pm	Lunch (on your own)
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)



Scan for
full session
descriptions

Monday, July 20

Two-Day Preconference Sessions, 9 am – 5:30 pm

PC 01

Neurodiversity, Education, and Assistive Technology: The NEAT Model for Support and Inclusion

Jordan Colbert, Yale University

Allison Reisz, University of Southern California

Geoffrey Canales, Yale University

Tony Ferrari, University of California, Los Angeles

Location: Room 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Neurodiversity is more than just a buzzword on social media. Especially on college campuses these days, accessibility professionals are frequently expected to be the experts on the topic. But are you ready to move from awareness to action? If so, join this two-day, interactive workshop to explore the NEAT Model: Neurodiversity, Education, and Assistive Technology, as a roadmap for real campus transformation.

PC 02

Introduction to Disability Law for Disability Office Directors and Staff and ADA/504 Coordinators

*Paul Grossman, Executive Counsel of AHEAD, and OCR and
University of California, Law, retired*

Jamie Axelrod, Northern Arizona University

Mary Lee Vance, California State University, Sacramento

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Back by popular demand, this updated session will give disability resource, ADA, disability law, and compliance professionals a comprehensive introduction to postsecondary student disability law, including the requirements of the Americans Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Fair Housing Act.

PC 03

AHEAD Start: An Introduction to Access for Newer Disability Resource Professionals

Jennifer Murchison, The University of Oklahoma

Edward Beason, Tennessee Tech University

Katy Washington, Virginia Commonwealth University

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Are you new to disability services as a profession or been in the field 3 years or fewer? Do you need to build your skills to be a professional in this field? Build a network? Build your confidence? This two-day pre-conference workshop will help you with all those questions and more.

One-Day Preconference Sessions, 9 am – 5:30 pm

PC 04

Health Science Session 1: An Introduction and Legal Overview

Jon McGough, University of California, San Francisco

Charles Weiner, Law Office of Charles Weiner

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

This introduction to disability accommodations in health science education is intended for clinical program administrators and disability resource professionals at community college, four-year, and graduate institutions, to provide an overview of how to address complex accommodation requests in classroom, lab, and clinical environments.

PC 05

Interactive Assessment for the Interactive Process: A Deep Dive on Data

Chris Parthemos, The University of Virginia

Location: Room 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

How do we integrate the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data into our practice as disability services professionals? This presentation will break down best-practices for each of these critical components of assessment, allowing attendees to build proficiency and comfort with this important part of work in disability services.

Monday, July 20

PC 06

“I’m in Charge... Now What?” Tools and Frameworks for New Disability Services Leaders

Lauren Collier, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Rachel Adams, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Hira Byrne Paulin, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Alex Deschamps, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Location: Room 550 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This full-day pre-conference session is designed for professionals who have recently stepped into a leadership role, along with aspiring leaders who are seeking practical tools, peer insights, foundational knowledge, and strategic frameworks to guide their work.

PC 07

Advancing Postsecondary Culture from Access to Inclusion for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Craig Levins, Broward College

*Mindy Lingo, Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion,
University of Massachusetts, Boston*

Michelle Mitchell, Lehigh Carbon Community College

Paul Nolting, State College of Florida & University of South Florida-Emeritus

*Chelsea Stinnett, Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion,
University of Massachusetts, Boston*

Aimee Stubbs, Private Consultant

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Learn how to support students with intellectual disabilities across all postsecondary settings, whether they are enrolled in Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) programs, Comprehensive Transition Postsecondary (CTP) programs, or part of the general student population.

PC 08

ADA Coordinators Session 1: Formal and Informal Grievance and Complaint Investigations: What's the Process and Where Do I Start?

Emily Singer Lucio, University of Maryland

Steve Johnston, University of California, Berkeley

Location: Room 552 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session, led by two experienced investigators, will offer a step by step guide to setting up an investigation process that is equally effective for dealing with both formal and informal complaints.

PC 10

Neurodiversity Inclusivity, Session 1: Understanding Autistic/Neurodivergent Students, Faculty and Staff: Science, Foundations & Best Practices

Amy Rutherford-Moody, College Autism Spectrum

Jane Thierfeld Brown, College Autism Spectrum

Lorre Wolf, College Autism Spectrum and Landmark College

Location: Room 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This session builds foundational understanding by examining current and projected statistics, exploring the science of autism, including brain and cognitive models, and linking that knowledge to programming, intervention, and accommodations.

PC 12

Addressing Systemic Causes of Burnout, Session 1: Assessment and Building a Personal Toolkit

Lisa Noshay Petro, U.C. College of the Law, San Francisco

Antonia DeMichiel, Stanford University

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this highly interactive, two-part pre-conference workshop, facilitators seek to dismantle common narratives that “self-care” is the answer to our most pressing concerns and that issues of trauma and burnout are to be addressed on an individual level.

Monday, July 20

PC 14

Effective Metacognition Unlocked! (The secret sauce of professional, academic, and personal success)

Emily Helft, Landmark College

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will go beyond the foundations of metacognition and take it a step further with a focus on *effective* metacognition—taking these thoughts and using actionable strategies to effectively act in intentional ways.

Half-Day Preconference Sessions PM, 2 – 5:30 pm

PC 09

ADA Coordinators Session 2: A Disability Policy Development Workshop

Emily Lucio, University of Maryland

Steve Johnston, University of California, Berkeley

Location: 552 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This half-day working session is designed as a venue for ADA Coordinators or others involved in campus disability policy work to exchange ideas and perspectives and work together towards developing policy for their campuses.

PC 11

Neurodiversity Inclusivity, Session 2: Innovating and Sustaining Neurodiversity Programs Models, Resources and Career Readiness

Amy Rutherford-Moody, College Autism Spectrum

Jane Thierfeld Brown, College Autism Spectrum

Lorre Wolf, College Autism Spectrum and Landmark College

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Advanced, Mid-level

Building upon foundational understanding, this session explores innovative models for developing, expanding, and sustaining neurodiversity programs and for developing effective services for institutions without specialized programs.

PC 13

Addressing Systemic Causes of Burnout, Session 2: Building a Strategic Advocacy Toolkit

*Lisa Noshay Petro, U.C. College of the Law, San Francisco
Antonia DeMichiel, Stanford University*

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In Session Two, participants will learn and practice specific negotiation skills to address the systemic barriers they identified in Session One.

PC 15

Making Sense of Assessment Information in Accommodation Determinations

Lori Muskat, Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Location: 555 B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session will address the basics of assessment, provide a helpful framework, and give you tools for understanding and organizing the information that you review in making accommodation decisions.



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Tuesday, July 21

- 8 am-5:30 pm Registration Open (**5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer**)
- 9 am-5:30 pm **Preconference Sessions** (*Located on 5th Floor*)
- PC01** The NEAT Model (**Room 557**)
 - PC02** Intro to Disability Law (**Ballroom A**)
 - PC03** AHEAD Start (**Ballroom B**)
 - PC16** Lost in Translation (**Room 554B**)
 - PC17** Fostering Exec. Function (**Ballroom E**)
 - PC18** Art of Listening (**Room 551B**)
- 9 am-12:30 pm **PC19** Health Science (2) (**Ballroom D**)
- PC21** ADA Coordinators (3) (**Room 556 AB**)
 - PC23** Leadership by Design (**Room 550 AB**)
 - PC24** CoachGPT (**Room 555B**)
 - PC25** Burgundy Zone (**Room 553B**)
 - PC26** Impact Thru Leadership (**Ballroom C**)
 - PC27** Building Collab. Pathways (**Room 555A**)
- 2 pm-5:30 pm **PC20** Health Science (3) (**Room 555A**)
- PC22** ADA Coordinators (4) (**Room 556 AB**)
 - PC28** Transition to Thriving (**Room 550 AB**)
 - PC29** Creative Capital Toolkit (**Room 555B**)
 - PC30** Burnout / Badge of Honor (**Ballroom C**)
 - PC31** Pushback to Partnership (**Ballroom D**)
 - PC32** Celebrating Disab. Culture (**Room 553B**)
- 10:30-11 am Beverage Break
- 12:30-2 pm Lunch (on your own)
- 3:30-4 pm Beverage Break
- 6 pm DISC KPC Dinner Outing
(Meet at Convention Center Front Doors)
Spirited Conversations about Autism
(w/ Autism KPC; Reiners Bar @ Graduate Hotel)

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)



Scan for
full session
descriptions

Tuesday, July 21

Two-Day Preconference Sessions, 9 am – 5:30 pm

PC 01

Neurodiversity, Education, and Assistive Technology: The NEAT Model for Support and Inclusion

Jordan Colbert, Yale University

Allison Reisz, University of Southern California

Geoffrey Canales, Yale University

Tony Ferrari, University of California, Los Angeles

Location: Room 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(Session Continued from Monday)

PC 02

Introduction to Disability Law for Disability Office Directors and Staff and ADA/504 Coordinators

*Paul Grossman, Executive Counsel of AHEAD, and OCR and
University of California, Law, retired*

Jamie Axelrod, Northern Arizona University

Mary Lee Vance, California State University, Sacramento

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(Session Continued from Monday)

PC 03

AHEAD Start: An Introduction to Access for Newer Disability Resource Professionals

Jennifer Murchison, The University of Oklahoma

Edward Beason, Tennessee Tech University

Katy Washington, Virginia Commonwealth University

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

(Session Continued from Monday)

One-Day Preconference Sessions, 9 am – 5:30 pm

PC 16

Lost in Translation: Reimagining Access and Accommodation in Language Courses and Programs

Wesley Wood, Georgetown University

Location: Room 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This full-day workshop addresses a significant gap in professional practice: the need for disability professionals to better understand the structure, expectations, and pedagogy of world language education.

PC 17

Fostering Executive Function to Enhance Student Learning, Autonomy, and Success

Rick Bryck, Landmark College

Marie Saddle mire, Landmark College

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Executive Function (EF) is the driver of many behaviors related to academic and social success. This session will focus on creating a set of tools that can be used to foster EF.

PC 18

The Art of Listening: Building Connection, Equity, and Understanding in Higher Education

Christina Fabrey, Virginia Tech

Tiffany Halsell, The Ohio State University

Location: Room 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This workshop invites participants to reclaim listening as a transformative practice that strengthens relationships, advances equity, and enhances campus culture.

Tuesday, July 21

Half-Day Preconference Sessions AM, 9 am – 12:30 pm

PC 19

Health Science Session 2: Special Topics In Health Science Education and Accommodations

Carolyn Corbran, Loyola University Chicago
JT Sangsland, University of Michigan Medical School

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

Presenters will start with a deep dive into a few of the more complex issues that arise around accommodations in clinical programs. The second half of the session will consist of workshopping case studies in small groups and open Q & A to discuss complex accommodation scenarios in health science programs.

PC 21

ADA Coordinators Session 3: Embracing Coordination: Leading University work as an ADA Coordinator

Bree Callahan, University of Washington
Gabriel Merrell, Oregon State University

Location: Room 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Facilitators will draw on their own and participants' experiences to explore the expanding role of ADA Coordinators within higher education and highlight best practices. Interactive scenarios will highlight principles in action and illustrate best practices.

PC 23

Leadership by Design: Building Accessible Campuses through Culture, Structure, and Policy

Heidi Pettyjohn, University of Cincinnati
Tom Webb, Wright State University

Location: Room 550 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session addresses a critical need in higher education, to empower accessibility leaders to lead transformational change in increasingly complex environments.

PC 24

CoachGPT: Self-Motivating Students to Appropriately Use Generative AI

*Christopher Parthemos, The University of Virginia
Emily Helft, Landmark College*

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, we will provide a framework for embedding AI tools into existing, validated coaching frameworks to support students in leveraging the capacity of AI while avoiding its riskier elements by deepening knowledge of effective prompt engineering.

PC 25

Burgundy Zone Workshop: Becoming a Disability Ally in Higher Education

*Tina Vires, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
Judy Bagley, Furman University*

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will guide participants through the often-overlooked history of disability in the United States, with a focus on how systemic barriers and exclusionary laws shaped the experiences of disabled individuals in education and society.

PC 26

Making an Impact Through Leadership (From Any Position on Campus)

Adam Meyer, University of Central Florida

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session is not just for those with a leadership title. Anyone in an office, no matter how high up the position, can serve as a leader in moving the office forward, improving processes, and serving students and the campus community.

Tuesday, July 21

PC 27

Building Collaborative Pathways Between K–12 and Higher Education

Nicole Mucica Ed.D, SUNY Brockport

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This highly-interactive workshop will guide participants through designing sustainable partnerships between colleges and school districts to better support students and families. The session will include small-group discussions, guided reflection, and practical application.

Half-Day Preconference Sessions PM, 2 – 5:30 pm

PC 20

Health Science Session 3: USMLE Step Exam Accommodation Request From Start to Finish: A Hands-on Workshop

Alizabeth Ballard, University of Kansas Medical Center

Millicent Odhiambo, University of Kansas Medical Center

Todd Rudat, University of Kansas Medical Center

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This interactive workshop provides a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to the United States Medical Licensure Examination (USMLE) Step accommodation request process—a complex and often misunderstood area of disability support in medical education.

PC 22

ADA Coordinators Session 4: From Informal Partnerships to Formal Planning: Building a Collaborative Roadmap for Campus Accessibility

Kathleen Camire, Butler University

Kate Upatham, Harvard University

Cathie Axe, Johns Hopkins University

John Lacheta, Johns Hopkins University

Location: Room 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

We will explore common hurdles like budget and code compliance versus usability, and present actionable steps, including building trust, establishing baseline agreements, securing supervisory buy-in,

and implementing simple efficiencies to foster a more effective and equitable campus environment.

PC 28

From Transition to Thriving: Mental Health and College Readiness for Autistic + ADHD (“Au/ND”) Students and Families

Emily Raclaw, Marquette University, On Your Marq

Amy Rutherford-Moody, College Autism Spectrum

Karen Krainz Edison, The Ohio State University, Nisonger Center

Location: Room 550 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This session will unpack the realities and challenges neurodivergent students face, through a lens of readiness (pre-arrival & orientation), adjustment (first semester transitions), and growth (ongoing support and self-development).

PC 29

The Creative Capital Toolkit: Innovative Strategies for Community College Disability Services

Michelle Mitchell, Lehigh Carbon Community College

Maura Roberts, Lehigh Carbon Community College

Everett Deibler, Lehigh Carbon Community College, J.Badger Consulting

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This workshop provides scalable tools and essential strategies for navigating the most common and complex challenges in the community college setting. The presenters are uniquely qualified, having direct experience leading DRP offices in community college systems, pioneering ID programs, and presenting on the dual enrollment legal and logistical challenges.

Tuesday, July 21

PC30

Burnout Is Not a Badge of Honor: Sustaining Career Longevity for Leaders in Disability Services

Crystal Hill, Stanford University

Karen Andrews, University of Arizona

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: Advanced

This session is designed for experienced professionals in disability services and higher education who want to reflect on their leadership journey and develop strategies for sustaining their work and careers over the long term.

PC31

From Pushback to Partnership: Transforming Faculty and Institutional Stakeholder Resistance into Collaboration

Charnessa Warren, University of Chicago

Diamond Cole, University of Chicago

Amber DiCosola, University of Chicago

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Disability access professionals routinely navigate skepticism, frustration, and resistance from faculty, administrators, and campus partners. This dynamic session explores how to transform pushback into productive partnership without compromising disability rights—or academic autonomy.

PC32

Celebrating Disability Culture and Disability Cultural Centers: Why They Matter and How To Establish Them On Your Campus!

liz thomson, University of Minnesota

Hannah Premo, University at Buffalo

Sue Dolce, Retired

Beth Roland, Santa Fe College

Sav Schlauderaff, University of Arizona

Emily (Em) Doffing, DREAM, CSU Long Beach, Linfield University

Rose Kreston, Colorado State University

Location: Room 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Join us to learn, explore, and discuss disability culture and disability cultural centers (DCC) in higher education and how to begin engaging in and supporting disability culture on your campus through activities, awareness, and celebration.

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Wednesday, July 22

7 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
7:15-8:45 am	First-Time Attendee Breakfast (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall C)
9-10:30 am	Opening Plenary, (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall A)
10:30-11 am	Beverage Break
11 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 1: Featured Sessions
12:30-2:30 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-2:15 pm	KPC Meetings; Meetups; Affiliates (p. 44)
2:30-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 2
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break
4-5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 3
5:30-7 pm	Exhibit Hall Grand Opening & President's Reception (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
6 pm	New England AHEAD Meetup (Marcelino's Bar @ Omni Hotel)
7-9 pm	Drag Bingo & Trivia co-hosted by the DISC and LGBTQA KPCs (5th Floor, Ballroom A)

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)



Indicates sessions that will also be included in the Virtual Conference

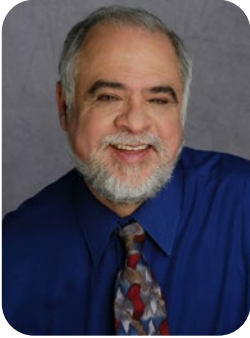


Scan for full session descriptions

Wednesday, July 22

Opening Plenary, 9 – 10:30 am

Exhibition Hall A (3rd Floor)



Sustaining the Disability Rights Movement: How We Made it This Far and What We Must Do to Keep it Strong

Paul Grossman

Executive Counsel of AHEAD, and OCR and University of California, Law, retired

AHEAD is thrilled to invite one of our staunchest allies, teachers, and advocates, AHEAD Executive Counsel Paul Grossman, to take the podium as this year’s keynote speaker.

As Paul nears retirement, this time, maybe, for real, he has a “love letter” to deliver to the membership of AHEAD, laying out for us the critical role we all play, every day, in the development and preservation of Civil Rights in America. This address will include the intersectional, social, and legal true story of how we as a movement got here, including his first-person account of the famous 504 sit-in and his last conversation with the “mother of the disability rights movement,” Judy Heumann. Over the past 75 years, only during the Vietnam War was America as divided and prone to violence as it is now, but Paul will explain how the disability rights movement evolved from that division, and the lessons that holds for us today.

With respect for the full spectrum of political belief, Paul will address why, at this very moment, we must all be civil rights advocates. Relying on the courts to advance our interests may have worked in the past, but this approach is not as likely to succeed in the future. Going forward, a social justice and action approach, requiring personal courage, will be necessary.

Concurrent Sessions Block 1, 11 am – 12:30 pm

1.01

OCR Year in Review

Mary Lou Mobley, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
Amy Williams, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
Jamie Sparano, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

Location: Exhibition Hall A (3rd Floor)

Audience: All

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights assists individuals with disabilities who face discrimination and guides institutions in developing solutions to civil rights problems by investigating complaints, initiating compliance reviews, and providing technical assistance. AHEAD's legal experts will review recent, illustrative OCR decisions.

1.02

I'm OK, & Neither Are You: Balancing the Needs of Self & Others with Our Institutional Obligations

Chris Stone, Washington University in St. Louis
Kate MacDonald, AHEAD
Michael Southern, University of Cincinnati
Allen H. Sheffield, Northwestern University

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Arguably, modern higher education has never seen an era of such dramatic adjustment and upheaval. Ultimately, whether one perceives this as positive or positively damaging, these changes have caused almost unimaginable turbulence within our profession—for leaders, for teams, and for organizations. Join this session as presenters deeply dive into their approaches in navigating these situations over the last year and discuss how attendees, no matter their role in their office, can prepare themselves for the days ahead.

Wednesday, July 22

Lunchtime Activities (Optional), 1:30 – 2:15 pm

Knowledge and Practice Community (KPC) Meetings

KPCs bring together AHEAD members who share a common interest in a specific subject area. They support AHEAD by connecting members, sharing information, and developing resources. CART will be provided. Interpreters available on request.

Autism KPC	Room 551A (5th Floor)
Coaching KPC	Room 555B (5th Floor)
Health Science KPC	Room 555A (5th Floor)

Minority Serving Institution Meet-Ups

Once again, AHEAD is offering space for attendees to connect with one another without any agenda or presentation. Feel free to take your lunch to any of these rooms to meet others from similar institutions just to get to know fellow AHEAD members and make connections. There is no presentation. The room is yours simply to chat and get to know your colleagues at other schools! CART will be provided. Interpreters available on request.

Asian American/Alaskan/Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANH/AANAPISI) Meet-up	Room 553B (5th Floor)
Tribal/Native American Serving Institutions Meet-Up	Room 551B (5th Floor)
Law Schools Meet-up	Room 556AB (5th Floor)

Affiliate Meetings

State and regional AHEAD Affiliates provide disability service professionals with a network of local colleagues and accessible consultation and professional development opportunities. If you live in any of the following states, join your local colleagues to make local connections! CART will be provided. Interpreters available on request.

AL-AHEAD (Alabama Affiliate)	552A (5th Floor)
MD-AHEAD (Maryland Affiliate)	550A (5th Floor)
MO-AHEAD (Missouri Affiliate)	552B (5th Floor)

Concurrent Sessions Block 2, 2:30 – 3:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

2.01

Beyond the Drill: Building Campuswide Collaboration for Disability-Inclusive Emergency Planning

Angela Woods, California State University, Fullerton
Chelsea Morin, California State University, Fullerton

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this dynamic session, discover how one campus is turning a housing-based evacuation concern into a powerful, campus-wide collaboration to build inclusive emergency procedures.

2.02

What the WATF? Using a Web Accessibility Task Force to Build a Collaborative Accessibility Framework

Aaron Spector, West Chester University
David Thomas, West Chester University
Amber Alvord, West Chester University

Location: Room 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

The presenters, all members of the WATF formed at West Chester University, will share how they assessed the campus's needs, developed a plan for their work, and publicly launched their initiative, highlighting successes and challenges that they experienced along the way.

2.03

Speed Networking: Rapid Connections, Lasting Impressions

Jen Herr, Harvard University

Location: Room 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Looking to make real connections beyond the usual conference hustle? Join us for a fast-paced, fun networking experience designed to help you meet new faces and expand your circle.

Wednesday, July 22

2.04

Accessible Futures: Immersive Assessment of Barriers for Nursing Students with Physical Disabilities

Kayla Sullivan, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Angela Silvestri-Elmore, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Wendy Huynh, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Matthew Nishimoto, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Location: Room 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Join this interactive session to explore how immersive assessment can uncover hidden barriers for nursing students with physical disabilities in clinical education.

2.05

Let This Matrix Be Your Guide: A Compass for Accommodation Decision Making

Emily Helft, Landmark College

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

Accommodation decision-making sits at the heart of DRO work, yet it's rarely black and white. With this in mind, this interactive session will introduce a practical framework to support both simple and complex accommodation decisions

2.06

Enhancing Success and Inclusion for Neurodivergent Learners in Studio-Based and Creative Programs

Carolina Watts, Woodbury University, University of Redlands

Location: Room 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session introduces an embedded academic-support model that brings executive-function coaching, embedded tutoring, and peer mentorship directly into studio-based learning environments and similar programs to help students plan, organize, and thrive in feedback-rich spaces.

2.07

Does Your Office Advance Counter-Narratives of Intersectional Equity? A Tool to Assess Your Office

Jewls Griesmeyer-Krentz, Willamette University

Location: Room 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

The Intersectional Identity Force and Dynamic Salience tool offers a means to assess how well your office policies, practices, and communications reinforce counter-narratives rather than pull toward deficit narratives. It also connects identity forces to patterns in the relative salience of disability identity and self-disclosure.

2.08

Entrenched Together: A Conversation for Disability Leaders on Sustaining Ourselves and Our Teams

Jodi Rachins, University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Location: Room 556AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Advanced

Leadership in disability and accessibility services can be both rewarding and isolating. This roundtable invites directors and other senior leaders to connect, share experiences, and discuss the unique challenges of managing in today's complex higher education environment.

2.09

Reimagining Resilience: From Furthering Oppression to Generating Well-Being, Belonging, and Access

Sam Shelton, Iowa State University

Location: Room 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Using a combination of lecture, scenario-based learning, and facilitated discussion, this session explores how reimagining resilience can transform it into a tool for generating well-being, belonging, and access through a critical intersectional social justice framework.

Wednesday, July 22

2.10

The Reflective Practitioner: Coaching Mindset for the Disability Resource Professional

Christina Fabrey, Virginia Tech

Tiffany Halsell, The Ohio State University

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

What if every student conversation left you more confident in your impact—and in your own skills? This interactive session helps disability support professionals embrace a coaching mindset and build a reflective practice.

2.11

Building Belonging Together: Advancing Disability Inclusion Across Campus

Ruth Fries, University of Northwestern - St. Paul

Carey Eigen, University of Northwestern - St. Paul

Location: Room 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Fostering a culture of belonging for students with disabilities and neurodivergent learners requires a shift from compliance to collaboration. This session presents a campus-wide model for cultivating buy-in through intentional education, shared ownership, and inclusive design.

2.12

Unpacking "Barriers to Access" When Determining Appropriate Accommodations

Adam Meyer, University of Central Florida

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This session takes a deeper dive into one of the most critical (and often overlooked) components of the accommodation determination process: barrier identification. We will unpack what constitutes a barrier, and just as importantly, what does not.

2.13

Empowering Peer Connections: A Student-Led Mentorship Model for Disability Services

Amanda Koester, Florida Southern College

Marina Zingale, Student, Florida Southern College

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Step into a session that celebrates student leadership and inclusive innovation! This engaging presentation highlights a peer mentorship model designed to foster meaningful relationships, encourage self-advocacy, and promote academic, professional, and personal growth.

2.14

Community College Students With Disabilities: Factors Contributing to Drop-Out Versus Persistence

Leslie Shaw, Cornell University

Katherine Brendli Brown, Cornell University

Location: Room 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

The Inclusive Career Advancement Program (ICAP) sought to increase community college attendance among people with disabilities, as a path to higher career attainment, by providing students with support from both Vocational Rehabilitation and Community College Career Coaches, who worked in collaboration with the student to ensure success.

2.15

Faculty as Partners in Access: Building Collaboration Beyond Compliance

Mandie Greiwe, Purdue University

Tessa Cahill, University of Maryland

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session features two institutions that have developed ongoing faculty partnerships through advisory committees, shared planning, and open communication. Learn what has helped build trust, where challenges still show up, and practical strategies you can adapt to your own campus culture.

Wednesday, July 22

2.16

From Chaos to Coordination: Surviving & Eventually Thriving Through Testing Center Growth

Tamika Williams, Morgan State University

Tanisha Waid, Morgan State University

Breana Dorsett, Morgan State University

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

At our HBCU, we support students who've often felt overlooked and let down by educational systems. For us, creating a calming, smaller environment for test taking has been vital. In this session, we'll share the lessons, laughs, and solutions that helped us keep access at the center of it all.

2.17

Disability Studies in Practice: Engaging Faculty to Support Student Career Success

Allison Frees-Williams, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana

Location: Room 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Drawing on disability studies and the presenter's own research on invisible disabilities, this session reframes career barriers as systemic rather than individual. It examines the impact of faculty engagement on students' self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and employability.

2.18

Maximizing Impact: Creating a Data-Informed Culture of Disability Support

Janet Sun, Symplicity

Paula Possenti-Perez, Syracuse University

Location: Room 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) Unlock the power of data to prove your impact. Learn how to transform disability services from a cost center into a strategic asset by leveraging institutional data to demonstrate measurable student success. Discover practical strategies to secure funding, expand space, justify resources, and position accessibility as essential to your institution's mission and bottom line.

Concurrent Sessions Block 3, 4 – 5:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

3.01

Advancing Access: Building a Campuswide Culture of Inclusion

Melanie Thornton, University of Arkansas

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Creating a more accessible campus can be one of the most rewarding aspects of a disability professional's work. This session offers a practical blueprint for advancing campus access for ADA Coordinators, disability resource staff, and others.

3.02

Title II Digital Accessibility: Practical Strategies for Compliance and Inclusion

Judith Risch, Judith Risch Advisory Services LLC

Bree Callahan, University of Washington

Location: Room 556AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

With the new ADA Title II web and mobile application regulations in effect for most public colleges and universities, there are new challenges arising. This session offers a risk management approach to compliance — helping institutions identify, prioritize, and address accessibility barriers within realistic resource constraints.

3.03

Skills You Didn't Know You Already Had: A Candid Conversation for Emerging Disability Professionals

Ashley Moermond, The University of Cincinnati

Bianca Barden, The University of Cincinnati

Location: Room 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Primarily designed for new disability service professionals, although all are welcome, this interactive session builds a strong foundation for success in the field through engaging discussion, self-reflection, and think-pair-share activities.

Wednesday, July 22

3.04

From Coursework to Dissertation: An Introduction to Navigating Graduate Accommodation Determinations

Josette Bailey, Purdue University

Susann Sears, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session will give an overview of program structures, terminology, timelines, and expectations, giving attendees confidence in navigating the complexities of master's and doctoral programs to determine appropriate accommodations.

3.05

The H.E.A.R.T. of Saying No: Compassion, Compliance, and Effective Alternatives

Stephen Loynaz, Florida International University

Joanna Lindsay, Florida International University

Stephanie Bello, Florida International University

Laura Rodriguez, Florida International University

Yesenis De La Paz, Florida International University

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Join the DRC from Florida International University as we explore a challenging aspect of our field: saying no to an accommodation request and exploring alternative solutions that help students achieve their career goals. The session features a presentation of the iterative process, but will focus on game-changing requests that cannot be advanced.

3.06

Autism Support Programs on Campus: Suggesting, Launching and Maintaining an Excellent Program

Lee Williams, College Autism Network

Sarah David, Reed Autism Services, Felician University

Ryan Palm, Mercyhurst University

Emily Raclaw, Marquette University

Gabriella Velazquez, Purchase College, State University of New York (SUNY)

Location: Room 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Autism support programs are becoming more common on campuses as autistic student numbers increase. Leaders of a variety of autism programs that support college students, some well-established, others fairly new, will share what they have learned and answer questions from the audience.

3.07

Participatory Design: A Roadmap for Embedding Student Voice in Disability Services Practice

Daphne Gilles, Teachers College, Columbia University

Location: Room 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores strategies for embedding student voice in the development and implementation of accessibility policy in a manner that extends beyond compliance.

3.08

From Sidekick to Superhero: How to Lead Without Wearing a Cape

Michael Southern, University of Cincinnati

Kate MacDonald, AHEAD

Christopher Stone, Washington University of St. Louis

Location: Room 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

Join us for this interactive conversation about how three directors (with a combined tenure of over 45 years in higher ed) navigated their first few years in the director's seat and not only survived, but thrived.

Wednesday, July 22

3.09

Fostering Community Through Disability Justice-Themed Support Groups on Campus

Emily Harris, Villanova University

Andrew Lucchesi, Western Washington University

Location: Room 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This interactive session will model how to build Disability identity support groups to bring together students, faculty, staff, and community members around Disability identity. Participants will explore the challenges and ethics of applying Disability Justice frameworks within higher-education contexts.

3.10

What the EF?! Why Executive Function Support Is the Key to UDL 3.0 (Plus Strategies Galore!)

Emily Helft, Landmark College

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this hands-on and extremely practical session, we'll discuss why the UDL 3.0 update is so impactful (read: awesome!), as well as focus on immediately implementable tools and tips for two of the three UDL pillars (Representation and Action/Expression).

3.11

Make Confident Decisions: A Practical Framework to Determine Necessary and Reasonable Accommodations

Paul Harwell, East Carolina University

Maddie Adams, East Carolina University

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

This presentation provides a practical, structured framework to help professionals make consistent and confident accommodation decisions. It offers a clear method for determining whether an accommodation is necessary and reasonable—concepts that are often misunderstood.

3.12

Access Beyond Academics: Athletics, Housing, Internships, and Campus Life for Deaf Students

Lore Kinast, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes
Kate Lewandowski, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes
Vanessa Molina, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes

Location: Room 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

For many deaf students, campus life opportunities remain out of reach due to unclear processes and fragmented responsibilities. This interactive session brings campus life into focus, offering practical strategies to make events—from athletics and theatre to housing socials, internships, and Greek life—fully accessible.

3.13

That Four-Letter Word: Ramifications of and Approaches to Late Exam Requests in Disability Services

Jade Salmon, University of Arizona
Christine Espericueta, Arizona State University

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Presenters will explore factors that contribute to recurring late exam requests, the balance between ensuring access and upholding institutional/department policy, and effective strategies to address this growing trend.

3.14

From Maps to Meaning: Global Lessons on Strengthening Disability Support Networks

Michael Faggella-Luby, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth
Melissa Mendoza, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth
Lyman Dukes, III, University of South Florida
Joseph Madaus, University of Connecticut
Nicholas Gelbar, University of Connecticut

Location: Room 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

What if you could see how students with disabilities experience your university? In this interactive session, participants will explore findings from an international study using journey mapping—a powerful visual assessment tool that captures the successes and challenges of disability service provision across 13 universities worldwide.

Wednesday, July 22

3.15

Strategies for Enhancing UDL and Digital Accessibility in the Classroom: Insights from Faculty Advocates

Gillian Paku, SUNY Geneseo

Melissa Glenn, SUNY Broome

Carrie Rood, SUNY Cortland

Jessica Sniatecki, SUNY Brockport

Rebecca Mushtare, SUNY Oswego

Location: Room 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores effective approaches for engaging faculty in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) initiatives and digital accessibility to meet Title II requirements.

3.16

Generative AI in Postsecondary Disability Services: Considerations and Applications

Katherine Aquino, Rutgers University

Adam Lalor, Landmark College

Cececilia Parnther, Le Moyne University

Neal Lipsitz, College of the Holy Cross, retired

Michael Berger, Simmons University, retired

Eileen Berger, Harvard University, retired

Chris Parthemos, Virginia Commonwealth University

Crisianee Berry, East Carolina University

Michelle Deal, Landmark College

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping higher education—and disability services are no exception. This session brings together scholars and practitioners exploring how AI is transforming accessibility, equity, and inclusion for disabled students.

3.17

Creating a Culture of Wellness: Models From Two Different Campuses

*Heather Oertel, University of Michigan
Elsbeth Pollack, Arizona State University*

Location: Room 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Presenters will share concrete tools to assess and improve wellbeing within office teams, including a customizable survey template and strategies for sustainable change.

3.18

Empower Your Accessible Campus With Jamworks' Personalized Learning Platform and JamA11y's Document Remediation

*Lewis Maskell, Jamworks
Kieran O'Reilly, JamA11y, Jamworks
Jenn Sponer, Jamworks*

Location: Room 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) Creating accessible documents shouldn't feel like a second job. JamA11y is a remediation tool provided by Jamworks that integrates seamlessly into your LMS, allowing you to build inclusive materials without leaving your workflow.

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening & President's Reception, 5:30 – 7 pm, [Exhibition Hall B \(3rd Floor\)](#)

The President's Reception will include a selection of hot and cold appetizers, hosted soft drinks, a cash bar, and live instrumental music, all held in conjunction with the opening of the Exhibit Hall.

Drag Bingo & Trivia Night, 7 – 9 pm [Ballroom A \(5th Floor\)](#)

Co-hosted by the Disability Identity, Studies & Culture (DISC) and the LGBTQA Knowledge and Practice Communities (KPCs). Entry and bingo play are free; find event details on p. 18.



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Headings



WCAG 2.2 AA



Reading Order



Chemistry



Charts



Alt Text



Contrast



Maths



Tables



PDF/UA



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Thursday, July 23

8 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
8:30 am-4:30 pm	Exhibit Hall Open, (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
8:30-9:30 am	DHH KPC Breakfast, in partnership with the National Deaf Center (NDC; Omni Hotel, Washington/Newport Room)
8:30-10 am	Poster Session 1 & Continental Breakfast (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
10-11:15 am	Concurrent Sessions Block 4
11:30 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 5
12:30-2:30 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-2:15 pm	KPC Meetings; Meetups; CAN Session (p. 75)
2:30-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 6
3:30-4:30 pm	Extended Beverage Break in Exhibit Hall (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
4:30-5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 7
5:30-7 pm	Celebration Reception (5th Floor, Open Space)
7 pm	Dinner OUT at AHEAD w/ LGBTQA KPC (Meet in Omni Hotel lobby)

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)



Indicates sessions that will also be included in the Virtual Conference



Scan for full session descriptions

Thursday, July 23

Poster Session 1, 8:30 – 10 am

Exhibition Hall B (3rd Floor)

Poster session descriptions are available on conference app and on the AHEAD conference website.

Partnering with STEM Faculty: Enhancing Student Engagement, Participation, and Access

*Theresa Johnson, DeafTEC at National Technical Institute of the Deaf/
Rochester Institute of the Deaf*

*Marcia Kolvitz, DeafTEC at National Technical Institute of the Deaf/
Rochester Institute of the Deaf*

Exploring the Imposter Phenomenon Among Neurodivergent Students

Tara McKee, Hamilton College

Adam Lalor, Landmark College

Faith, Flight, and Function: Disability, Identity, and Belonging at Specialized Institutions

Raymond Anderson, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Misuse and Diversion of Medication Among College Students with ADHD

Lucy Barnard-Brak, The University of Alabama

Cautionary Development: A Quantitative Analysis of Accommodation Lawsuits in Higher Education

Ryan Wiseman, Wayne State University, School of Medicine

Sadfah Shohatee, Wayne State University

Cherise Frost, Wayne State University

A Guide for Supporting Faculty and Instructors to Include Students with Intellectual Disability

*Mindy Lingo, Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion,
UMass Boston*

*Chelsea Stinnett, Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion,
UMass Boston*

Barriers to Breakthroughs: Assistive Technology Solutions for Under-Resourced Student Populations

Benjamin Dugas, Rhode Island College

The Shift to Electronic Delivery of Accommodation Letters: Implications for Faculty & Practitioners

Molly McKeon, Rhode Island College

Val Herbst, Rhode Island College

Kevin O'Connor, Providence College

Disability Identity and Grit: What Fuels Success for College Students with Disabilities?

Heather Kristoff, Texas State University

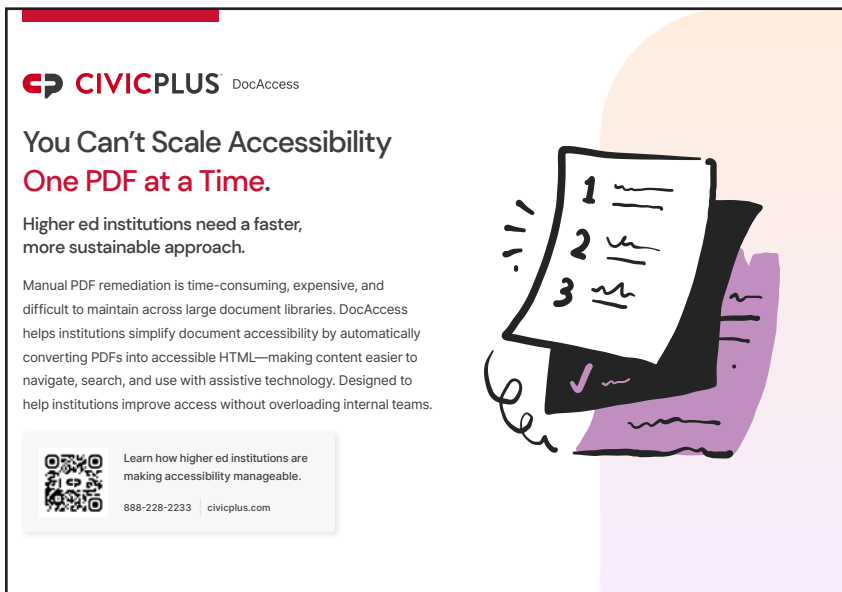
Drop On By: Conversations about AHEAD's Proposed New Documentation Guidance

Joanne Benica, Johns Hopkins University

Vivian Hardison-Harrell, University of California, Santa Barbara

Belonging, Wellness, and Culture: The Impact of Peer Mentoring on Medical Students with Disabilities

Sabrina Wilhelm, California University of Science and Medicine




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Thursday, July 23

Concurrent Sessions Block 4, 10 – 11:15 am

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

4.01

It's Not My Problem, Right? Liability and Risks Arising from Inaccessible Third-Parties

*Judith Risch J.D., Ph.D., Judith Risch Advisory Services LLC
M. Beth Valentine Ph.D., Virginia Tech*

Location: Room 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session examines institutional obligations and potential liability under the ADA and Section 504 when accessibility issues arise in third-party and non-campus environments.

4.02

What Exactly is the Meaning of "Reasonable" When it Comes To Accommodations?

Jamie Axelrod, Northern Arizona University

Location: Room 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

The ADA and Sec 504 don't give us a lot of specifics about what makes an accommodation reasonable. In this session, we will explore a process for analyzing when a request is either reasonable or unreasonable, based on facts and context.

4.03

Scaled Scores, T Scores, You Scores, Me Scores: Using Percentiles to Find Meaning in Report Scores

Emily Helft, Landmark College

Location: Room 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Have you ever wondered how evaluators make sense of scores in psycho-educational evaluations? Learn the basics behind scores by utilizing a simple conversion tool to turn all scores into a number that has immediate meaning: a percentile.

4.04

Lessons from The Pitt: Supporting Neurodivergent Students in Clinical Education

*John Caldora, Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth
Gavin Howington, University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy*

Location: Room 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session, led by an autistic medical school disability resource professional and a college of pharmacy professor/experiential preceptor, seeks to provide attendees with an overview of the considerations when accommodating students on clinical rotations.

4.05

Demystifying Disability, Mental Health and OCR Ruling Effects on Math Learning and Accommodations

*Paul Nolting, State College of Florida
Aimee Stubbs, Broward College*

Location: Room 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

This interactive session will provide explanations on the effects of disabilities, processing deficits, and mental health issues on math learning and research-based accommodations. OCR cases and briefs will also be presented to validate accommodations and course substitutions.

4.06

A Conversation about Employment Preparation for College Students with Disabilities

*David Beach, University of Kentucky
Kristie Orr, Texas A&M University
Jen Montag, National Center on College Students with Disabilities
Carlos Taylor, Gregory S. Fehribach Center at Eskenazi Health
David Parker, Gregory S. Fehribach Center at Eskenazi Health*

Location: Room 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This panel discussion will offer perspectives, examples, and recommendations for finding effective ways to partner with career colleagues to provide disability-informed careers services, accessible work experiences such as internships/co-ops, and other approaches that help prepare students to self-advocate in the workplace if needed.

Thursday, July 23

4.07

Fast Track and Partial Approvals: Streamlining the Interactive Process

Rachel Behrmann-Fowler, Marymount University
Sara Emerick, Georgetown University Law Center
Wesley Wood, Georgetown University

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

What if we had the option to streamline the interactive process and didn't have to meet with every student? In this session, come learn how one office addressed these concerns by introducing a "fast track" and "partial approval" option in their review process.

4.08

From Compliance to Belonging: An Infrastructure Playbook You Can Run Next Semester

Karin Boxer, Consultant

Location: Room 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session treats disability as campus culture. Working in pairs, you'll use an Infrastructure Parity Audit to spot one priority gap (e.g., missing disability visibility in diversity programming, no peer/affinity space, or no Pride Month presence) and work on solutions.

4.09

At the Crossroads: Supporting Experiences of Multiply-Marginalized Disabled Students

Ian Kaplan, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Rina Matayoshi Yogi, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Location: Room 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this interactive workshop, participants will explore interpersonal and institutional barriers experienced by multiply-marginalized college students, giving particular consideration to intersectional experience and systems of oppression.

4.10

Finding Your People: Building Community and Leadership in Disability Services

Jess White, Tufts University
Molly McKeon, Rhode Island College
Val Herbst, Rhode Island College
Gabrielle Clark, College of the Holy Cross
Taylor Rohena, Quinsigamond Community College
Terri Rodriguez, Amherst College

Location: Room 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session brings together past and present state and regional AHEAD affiliate board members from community colleges, private institutions, and public universities to explore connection, growth, and leadership within our field. Participants will learn how to find and engage with other DS professionals, get involved on the local level, and discover pathways to leadership—including how you can run for the board!

4.11

Advisors as Access Partners: Sharing Responsibility Across Student Support Roles

Mandie Greiwe, Purdue University
Patty Violi, University of California, Los Angeles

Location: Room 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will explore practical ways to frame access as a shared responsibility across advising and support contexts, from large universities with centralized systems to small colleges where advisors may also be faculty.

4.12

Meet the Woodcock-Johnson V [WJ V]: An Overview for Disability Services Professionals

Lori Muskat, Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Location: Room 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

The new Woodcock-Johnson V was published in 2025. This session will provide an overview of the new test as well as case examples in an interactive format, including experiential small group activity.

Thursday, July 23

4.13

From Silos to Synergy: Bridging the Gaps for Disabled Transfer Students

Spencer Scruggs, University of California, Los Angeles

Location: Room 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session provides practitioners with concrete strategies to dismantle the silos related to disabled transfer students, create comprehensive webs of support, and ensure their needs are met.

4.14

We're All in This Together: A Committee Approach to Housing Accommodation Requests

Grace Friedman, Harvard University

Glen Jobeless, Harvard University

Becky Melville, Harvard University

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Drowning in requests for single rooms? Concerned about consistent decision making across a diverse staff? This interactive session explores strategies and tools for consistent, equitable decision-making that are adaptable for a wide variety of campus residential models.

4.15

Faculty's Wish List for Disability Services Offices

Elizabeth Norell, University of Mississippi

Lillian Nave, Appalachian State University

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Too often, an adversarial relationship emerges between faculty and disability services professionals. In this session, attendees will hear from two disabled faculty developers who work to facilitate conversation between these two populations about what faculty members say they want to know from disability services offices.

4.16

Accommodated Testing 101: Building a Foundation for Accessible and Compliant Testing Practices

Kelsey Jordan, Purdue University

Alan Dixon-Hurd, Sacramento State University

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session introduces the essential components of an effective accommodated testing program in higher education. It explores the fundamentals of legal compliance, communication with faculty and students, and common testing accommodations.

4.17

Access (Not Excess) through One University's Redesign of an Attendance and Deadlines Accommodation

Justin Romack, Texas A&M University

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will examine one university's process for reviewing and reconceptualizing a flexible attendance and deadlines accommodation through data and discussion across three semesters.

4.18

The Practical Guide to WCAG compliance: How to Test Tools Like an Engineering Accessibility Lead

Dave Tucker-Diaz, Genio

Alice Smith, Genio

Location: Room 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) Uncover how Genio uses in-house and third-party testing to meet compliance standards, explore use cases for Genio Notes, and see how we build features founded on accessibility, learning science, and inclusive design.

Thursday, July 23

Concurrent Sessions Block 5, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

5.01

Hot Topics in Disability Law — Lessons to Be Learned from Unusual Times

Phil Catanzano, Education and Sports Law Group

Kate Upatham, Harvard University Disability Resources

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Join us for a review of hot topics (A.I., remote access requests, mental health) in student disability accommodations. For each topic, we'll focus on the role of accessibility services staff seeking to navigate an ever-changing compliance terrain.

5.02

Strength in Numbers: A Collaborative Approach to Digital Accessibility Across a University System

Jennifer Potter, University System of Maryland

Nancy O'Neill, University System of Maryland

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session showcases a collaborative, multi-perspective digital accessibility initiative implemented across 12 campuses within the University System of Maryland.

5.03

From Compliance to Culture: Shifting to a Student-Centered Professional Practice Rooted in Belonging

Raymond Anderson, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session invites participants to explore the “Compliance-to-Culture” framework, a practical roadmap for transforming transactional processes into student-centered, equity-driven practices.

5.04

Vitals Check: Strong Relationships for Stronger Student Success in Clinical Programs

Angela Branson, University of Missouri - Columbia (Mizzou)
Sabra Mitchell, University of Missouri - Columbia (Mizzou)

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Join us to hear the story of how we changed one nursing program's conflict and annoyance with disability services into cooperation. Learn practical strategies to make it happen on your campus.

5.05

Aspects of Involvement and Accessibility in Higher Education: Building Networks With Faculty Members

Magda Nikolarazi, University of Thessaly
Maria Papazafiri, University of Thessaly
Stergiani Bei, University of Thessaly

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this interactive session, we will describe the collaborative practices that the Accessibility Centre at the University of Thessaly in Greece uses to engage faculty staff in the access of students with disabilities and neurodiversities.

5.06

A Look at Current Research: Two Topics

Researchers will present their latest work, which you can apply to the work you do.

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

5.06A: Challenges Autistic Students Face While Transitioning into Higher Education Institutions

Jordan DiPentima, Florida Atlantic University

This review outlines challenges faced by ASD students transitioning into higher education and proposes support strategies to assist in retention and graduation.

Thursday, July 23

5.06B: Disability Life Stories: Insights From a 10-year Study with Disabled College Students

Annemarie Vaccaro, University of Rhode Island

Emily (Em) Doffing, Linfield University, California State University, Long Beach

Most higher education research captures participants' experiences at one moment in time. This session provides a uniquely holistic perspective on pivotal transitions and experiences in the lives of college students with disabilities.

5.07

Balancing Compassion and Compliance: Responding to Staff Needs While Sustaining Office Functionality

Mandie Greiwe, Purdue University

Sandra Cash, Purdue University

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session will explore the practical realities of balancing personal compassion with institutional and state-level policies, managing pushback, and fostering office-wide resilience.

5.08

From Awareness to Action: A Reflexivity Framework for System Design

Morgan Thompson, George Mason University

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Reflexivity—the practice of critically examining how our own perspectives, roles, and assumptions shape our work—is a powerful but often underused tool in Disability Resources. This interactive session translates reflexivity from a personal reflection exercise into an applied design framework.

5.09

Are We Disabled “Enough”? The Journey of Naming Intersecting Identities in Ourselves as Disability Professionals

Maria Schiano, Smith College

Vivian Hardison-Harrell, University of California, Santa Barbara

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

As professionals with non-apparent disabilities, it can occasionally feel taboo to disclose our disability in certain professional situations. In this session, two disability professionals with differing backgrounds will address the complexity of multiple identities, including disability, race, gender, and sexual orientation, and how those come up in our work.

5.10

Beyond “Inclusive Employer:” Creating a Shared Definition of Inclusive Employment

Judy Reilly, University of Connecticut: Wells Fargo Center for Neurodiversity and Inclusive Employment

Allison Nemeth, University of Connecticut: Wells Fargo Center for Neurodiversity and Inclusive Employment

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session premieres a new national video from the University of Connecticut’s Wells Fargo Center for Neurodiversity & Inclusive Employment and AHEAD’s Career Preparation KPC that brings together the voices of students, employers, disability services professionals, and career services leaders to explore this challenge.

5.11

Ableism on Campus—Find It, Fix It: Scripts, Scenarios, and a Conversation Guide

Karin Boxer, Consultant

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Ableism is the quiet operating system of many campuses—embedded in policy, pedagogy, budgets, tech, facilities, and everyday routines that students encounter daily. This session treats ableism as systemic and gives practitioners a structured way to find and fix exclusion signals without blame.

Thursday, July 23

5.12

Behind the Screen: Coordinating Effective Remote Services for Deaf Students

Kate Lewandowski, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes
Vanessa Molina, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes

Location: 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session introduces key strategies for ensuring effective, student-centered remote access for deaf students. Participants will learn how to identify appropriate technology setups, prepare faculty and service providers, and troubleshoot common challenges.

5.13

Room for Change: A Unique Approach to Housing Accommodations

Gina Gonzales, University of California, Santa Barbara

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, we'll explore how UC Santa Barbara's Housing Department manages accommodations from start to finish, through housing professionals with a background in disability services who manage housing accommodations directly.

5.14

Leveraging Autistic College Student Success on Campus: Findings from a 4-Year National Study

Brett Nachman, University of Pittsburgh, College Autism Network

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Drawing from the findings of the largest nationwide study exclusively on autistic college students, this presentation shares four years of findings from more than 1,000 students. We'll relay insights from students across surveys, interviews, and photovoice on how they view, what contributes to, and what could better support their success.

5.15

Beyond Adoption: Strategies to Scale EdTech Impact and Drive Campus-Wide Engagement

Rachel Kruzel, Everway

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Adopting a new educational or assistive technology tool is an exciting step forward for any college or university. This session is designed for higher ed professionals who are navigating the messy middle of implementation and want to make their edtech investments truly count.

5.16

Accommodated Testing 201: Operational Strategies for Sustainable and Scalable Testing Centers

Kelsey Jordan, Purdue University

Alan Dixon-Hurd, Sacramento State University

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This session builds upon the foundational principles introduced in Accommodated Testing 101 by focusing on the advanced operational and leadership considerations necessary to manage a high-volume or complex testing environment.

5.17

Promoting Disability Identity and Culture: Creating Programs That Engage and Educate

Annastashia Blesi, Miami University

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will share how intentional, layered programming, including monthly engagement opportunities, weekly events during Disability Identity & Culture Month, faculty listening and learning sessions, and responsive, data-informed initiatives can shift institutional culture.

Thursday, July 23

5.18

New Assistive Technologies Land in North America

Chris Hamblin, CareScribe

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) CareScribe's assistive technologies are expanding across North America. This presentation highlights how Caption.Ed and TalkType support accessibility in education and the workplace, enabling better note-taking, captioning, and speech-to-text.

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The advertisement features a dark green background with a white QR code on the left. To the right of the QR code is the text 'SCAN TO SCHEDULE A DEMO' in white. Below this text is a small illustration of a group of people, including one person in a wheelchair, walking on a path towards a large, classical-style building with a prominent arched entrance. The building is rendered in a light, textured style. The bottom of the advertisement has a white banner with the text 'Visit us at booth #224 | OrchestrateAMS.com'.

Lunchtime Activities (Optional), 1:30 – 2:15 pm

Knowledge and Practice Community (KPC) Meetings

KPCs bring together AHEAD members who share a common interest in a specific subject area. They support AHEAD by connecting members, sharing information, and developing resources. CART will be provided. Interpreters available on request.

ADA Coordinators KPC Room 552A (5th Floor)

Career Planning KPC Room 555A (5th Floor)

Community College KPC Room 552B (5th Floor)

Disability Identity Studies & Culture (DISC) KPC Room 551A (5th Floor)

LGBTQA KPC Room 555B (5th Floor)

Research KPC Room 554A (5th Floor)

Minority Serving Institution Meet-Ups

Once again, AHEAD is offering space for attendees to connect with one another without any agenda or presentation. Feel free to take your lunch to any of these rooms to meet others from similar institutions just to get to know fellow AHEAD members and make connections. There is no presentation. The room is yours simply to chat and get to know your colleagues at other schools! CART and interpreters available on request.

Hispanic Serving Institutions Meet-Up Room 553B (5th Floor)

Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) Meet-Up Room 551B (5th Floor)

College Autism Network (CAN)

Location: 556AB (5th Floor)

CAN invites you to bring your lunch and join us for a chance to meet our members and hear about the benefits of being part of our Network. CAN is the premier professional organization for those who work with autistic and other neurodivergent students. Our members include program directors, disability services specialists, advisors, faculty, researchers, employers and coaches. CAN provides “tools for your toolbox” through online events, publications, monthly research presentations and campus consulting.

Thursday, July 23

Concurrent Sessions Block 6, 2:30 – 3:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

6.01

From Friction to Function: Building a Collaborative Roadmap for Campus Accessibility

Kathleen Camire, Butler University
John Lacheta, Butler University

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

The partnership between University Facilities and Disability Services or ADA/504 Coordinators is crucial for advancing campus accessibility. This session offers practical strategies and real-world project examples for transforming this relationship from one of default antagonism to one of mutual support and proactive collaboration.

6.02

You Cannot Do It All, Find Resources to Help Students Meet the Gap in This Technological Era

Clara Fleites, Florida Atlantic University
Farah Robles, Florida Atlantic University

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Too often, financial barriers, limited resources, and complex needs prevent students from accessing essential assistive tools. This session explores how disability service professionals can bridge the gap between students with disabilities and the technology they need to succeed.

6.03

Higher Education in Prison Programs: How Do We Provide Equal Access?

Jenifer Montag, National Center for College Students with Disabilities
Adam Kasarda, Palomar Community College
Tamara Mariotti, SUNY System Administration

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Join three disability services professionals who have been working on increasing college disability services within HEPs; investigate solutions for common (and not so common) scenarios.

6.04

USMLE and COMLEX Accommodation Support: The Case for a “High Touch” Approach

Staci Ganje, Oregon Health and Science University

Ranna Nash, Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, Washington State University

Karyn LaTurner, Rocky Vista University

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session presents a university case study demonstrating how a “High Touch” model for supporting student applications for accommodations—emphasizing individualized guidance, consistent communication, and institutional investment—has led to increased engagement and approval outcomes.

6.05

Beyond Documentation: Shining a Light on Equity in Accommodation Decisions

Raymond Anderson, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University Prescott Campus

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session is designed for entry-level DRPs seeking to develop a framework for equitable, consistent, and person-centered decision-making. Moving beyond reliance on either the medical or social model of disability, the presentation introduces an integrative approach grounded in AHEAD best practices and professional standards.

6.06

Collaboration Across Campus: Living Learning Communities

Tara Frazier, University of North Florida

Amber Hood, University of North Florida

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This presentation session explores key considerations—roommates, room assignments, social engagement strategies, and the overall structure of the LLC—and offers practical solutions and insights to guide other institutions seeking to create inclusive housing programs for autistic students.

Thursday, July 23

6.07

Pregnancy: When is it Section 504 and When is it Title IX?

Judith Risch, Judith Risch Advisory Services LLC

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

It is well established that pregnancy itself is not a disability under the ADA or Section 504; however, Title IX has created its own set of accommodation-like requirements called “supportive measures.” The roles of Disability Services and the Title IX Coordinator will be discussed.

6.08

Silos Are for Farms, Not Campuses: Building Cross-Functional Partnerships for Inclusive Education

Rachel Kruzel, Everway

Location: 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This interactive session explores how intentional partnerships with instructional design, student success, IT, advancement offices and others on campus can strengthen accessibility, resource sharing, and campus-wide impact.

6.09

“Gaslight, Gatekeep, Disable-boss”? Considering our Role in Student Identity Formation

*Griffin Leister, Hampshire College, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Teal Van Dyck, Hampshire College*

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This workshop asks participants to reflect together on the impact of power relations and culture within the university. In this interactive session, we will critically examine these dynamics and applied ethics, building a toolset to support navigating the roles we hold in our institutions.

6.10

Embedding Wellness Coaching in the Disability Resource Center: A Partnership Model

Jenna Gonzalez, University of Florida

Katherine Morgan, University of Florida

Savannah Townsend, University of Florida

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will highlight an innovative partnership between a university Disability Resource Center and the campus Health Promotion Office that created a first-of-its-kind position: the Disability Health Promotion Specialist.

6.11

Centering Belonging for Disabled Students in the Current Climate

Tara Buchannan, University of Memphis

Amanda Rodino, University of Memphis

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores how disability professionals can navigate the chilling effects of the current climate while staying rooted in their mission. If you're feeling disillusioned, this session invites you to reimagine your role not just as a provider of services but as a steward of belonging in a time that deeply needs it.

6.12

From Raised Dots and Dynamic Data: The Braille Revolution in STEM

Cary Supalo, Independence Science

Morgan Blisard, Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This presentation takes you on a journey from the origins of braille to today's cutting-edge technologies – like refreshable tactile displays (RTD) and tactile graphics – that are opening new doors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Thursday, July 23

6.13

Collaborating for Access: Linking Faculty, Practicum Education, and Student Services Through UDL

Christine Corrado, Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare

Jeanette Lukas, Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare

Dina Pilgrim, Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare

Stephen Rabeno, Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session explores how the social model of disability, informed by disability justice principles, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can transform the implicit curriculum, the policies, culture, and relationships that shape student experiences in social work education beyond the classroom.

6.14

Team Effort: A Collaborative Game Plan for Supporting Student-Athletes with Disabilities

Patty Violi, University of California, Los Angeles

Tucker Grimshaw, University of California, Los Angeles

Danny Hernandez, Baylor University

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This presentation, led by disability professionals with extensive experience developing collaborative relationships at major conference universities, will provide attendees with the necessary tools to help athletic departments and disability offices work together effectively.

6.15

Empowering Campus & System-Wide Accessibility Leaders: A Faculty Fellowship Model You Can Replicate!

Rebecca Mushtare, SUNY Oswego

Lauren Rodriguez, SUNY System Administration

Christopher Hromalik, SUNY Oswego, SUNY System Administration

Kim Scalzo, SUNY System Administration

Jessica Sniatecki, SUNY Brockport

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, two innovative, high-impact faculty fellowship programs will serve as case studies demonstrating how to tackle the urgent need for inclusive learning for students with disabilities. You'll gain access

to the practical structure, budget insights, cross-campus coalition strategies, and lessons learned from implementing these programs.

6.16

Separate but Connected: Building Stronger Systems Through Decentralized Accommodated Testing

Mandie Greiwe, Purdue University

Kelsey Jordan, Purdue University

Dan Carpenter, Purdue University

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores the shift to a decentralized model where testing is managed by a separate unit while the disability office retains compliance oversight.

6.17

From Helicopters to Lawn Mowers: Exploring Parental Involvement in Disability Services

Jessica Machado, Tulane University

Naomi Martinez-Jones, George Mason University

Morgan Thompson, George Mason University

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores the evolving role of parents and guardians in the disability accommodation process and its implications for FERPA, equity, and workload.

6.18

Head Upstream: Navigating the Shift from Compliance to Proactive Inclusion

Colleen Sandquist, Readspeaker

Erin Martin, Readspeaker

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) Join us as we explore how to "head upstream," shifting our energy from breaking individual barriers to creating a naturally inclusive environment that ensures every student feels welcome and celebrated from their very first day.

Thursday, July 23

Concurrent Sessions Block 7, 4:30 – 5:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

7.01

ADA Transition Plans are Essential (even when optional): Elements of an Excellent One

Kate Upatham, Harvard University
Cathie Axe, Johns Hopkins University

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

This session will cover: why every school will benefit from a robust Transition Plan, how can you best identify access barriers across your program, and what are some of the best ways to address the barriers once you have identified them.

7.02

Building Consistency in Accommodation Decision-Making: Lessons from a Seven-Campus College System

Beverly Neu Menassa, Dallas College
Grenna Rollings, Dallas College
Keysha Hopkins, Dallas College
Briaina Webster, Dallas College

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Ensuring equitable and consistent accommodation decisions across a multi-campus college system can be complex. This session explores how a seven-campus system developed a shared framework to guide Decision-Making Teams (DMTs) in evaluating accommodation requests.

7.03

Understanding ETS Testing Accommodations: What You Need to Know

Lauren Pourian, Educational Testing Service (ETS)
Ronda Purdy, Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) is actively improving the accommodations process to make it easier and less burdensome for test takers!

This session will cover how ETS is streamlining accommodations for GRE, Praxis & TOEFL.

7.04

Intermediaries in Health Science and Medical Education

Carolyn Corbran, Loyola University Chicago
JT Sangsland, University of Michigan Medical School

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session will introduce the concept of what an intermediary is and how they can be utilized to be an integral component of enhancing a student's participation in a program when they experience unique physical barriers that accompany a physical disability.

7.05

The Long Game: Reenvisioning Accommodation Services Through Collaboration, Vision, and Action

Jason Steinas, Meharry Medical College
Maleek Mitchell, Meharry Medical College

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Based on established research and theory, this session offers a reflective case study of how a small, historically Black health sciences institution reenvisioned student accommodations and accessibility through purposeful communication, cross-campus partnerships, faculty relationships, national networking, and strategic planning grounded in organizational theory.

7.06

Resilience Beyond Borders: Practical Strategies to Support Neurodiverse Students Abroad

Stephanie Rock, IES Abroad

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Neurodiverse students face unique challenges when studying abroad, often in locations with varying recognition of neurodiversity. This interactive session invites disability resource professionals and study abroad staff to explore these real-world challenges through scenario-based activities, small-group discussions, and problem-solving exercises.

Thursday, July 23

7.07

Crafting Clear Accommodation Wording

Joe Tiner, Colorado State University

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

This interactive session will guide participants through how to write accommodation wording that is clear, descriptive, and will provide opportunities to practice crafting accommodation language that aligns with the needs of their students and institutions.

7.08

Managing or Leading: Finding the Balance in Disability Services

Pamela J. Starr, Riverside City College

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session will use scenarios and group discussion to explore the critical differences between managing and leading—and why both are essential for supporting diverse student needs.

7.09

Unseen Challenges: How Invisible Disabilities Shape College Engagement Among Asian American Students

Soheli F. Jony, Indiana University Bloomington

Allison BrckaLorenz, Indiana University Bloomington

Mali Doles, Indiana University Bloomington

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will highlight how disaggregating student engagement data uncovers the often-overlooked experiences of Asian undergraduates with invisible disabilities. We'll provide actionable insights for using intersectional analysis of disability data to design and implement culturally responsive support systems and promote institutional practices that advance inclusion and equity in higher education.

7.10

Trauma-Informed Coaching: Practical Approaches for Supporting Disabled Students

Jennifer Murchison, The University of Oklahoma
Alejandro Salinas, The Light Institute

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will include some discussion about students who experienced forced migration, lived in foster care, serve(d) in the military, and those who were formerly incarcerated. Attendees will leave this session with action items and resources to take back to their home institutions.

7.11

Universal Design for Learning Through Student Services and Campus Experience Design

Mohab Saleh, Galala University, Egypt

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Creating an inclusive campus culture requires intentionally designing every student-facing interaction through the lens of UD and belonging. This session introduces a practical framework for transforming marketing, communications, student services, and campus experience workflows to better support disabled students.

7.12

“Empower Them to Teach Us:” College Persistence Among Black Deaf Students

Joy Banks, George Mason University
Jeffrey Palmer, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes
Nia Lazarus, Gallaudet University

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This presentation uses disability critical race theory and deaf critical theory to illustrate the ways Black deaf college students experience the intersection of racism and audism in university settings.

Thursday, July 23

7.13

Bridging the Gap: Contextualizing Accommodations from K-12 to the Higher Ed Perspective

Eileen White, Purdue University

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This presentation will provide additional context to consider when evaluating student requests in order to ensure that our work is for equal access, not excessive access.

7.14

From Feedback to Framework: Using Student Voice to Drive Institutional Change

Kelly Gerhardt, University of Illinois Chicago

Location: 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will demonstrate how systematically collecting and analyzing student feedback can inform office policies, enhance departmental collaboration, and advance equity in access.

7.15

Accommodate THAT! Part Two: Turning It Up with Creative Solutions, Jeopardy Style

Joanne Benica, Johns Hopkins University

Nadaya Cross, Texas Woman's University

Katherine (Katie) Krieger, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Back for round two, Accommodate THAT! builds on the engaging discussions and creative explorations in the first session. Using the same Jeopardy-style game show format, we'll invite you to tackle real-world accommodation challenges while sharpening your problem-solving skills in an interactive and collaborative way.

7.16

How It's Done, Done, Done: Lessons From K-Pop for Community- and Self-Care

*Julie Olson Rand, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
Kara Fifield, William & Mary*

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Using themes from the popular movie, K-Pop Demon Hunters, the presenters have created an engaging and fun approach to discussing tips and techniques in combatting overwhelm to takedown burnout. (Note: Familiarity with the movie is not necessary.)

7.17

From Books to Belonging: How Library and Disability Services Co-Creat Access

*Christie Zablocki, University of Michigan
Rachel Richards, University of Michigan*

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Discover how collaboration between a campus disability services office and library accessibility team is reshaping the meaning of access and belonging.

7.18

From Clues to Conclusions: Identifying Needs When the Report Falls Short

Donna Turner, Trula

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

(This session is presented by a Conference Sponsor and not eligible for CEUs) Developed by Trula to support higher education decision-making, the C.A.L.L. framework—Classify, Anchor, Limit, Link—provides a structured approach to translate diagnostic information into functional limitations and defensible, individualized academic supports when documentation is limited

Celebration Reception, 5:30 – 7 pm

Ballroom Foyer (5th Floor)

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Friday, July 24

8 am-5 pm	Registration Open (5th Floor, Ballroom Foyer)
9-11 am	Exhibit Hall Open (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
8:30-9:30 am	Concurrent Sessions Block 8
9:30-11 am	Poster Session 2 with Beverage Break (3rd Floor, Exhibition Hall B)
11 am-12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 9: Featured Sessions
12:30-2 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1-1:45 pm	KPC Meetings (p. 98)
2-3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 10
3:30-4 pm	Beverage Break
4-5 pm	Concurrent Sessions Block 11

(Meeting Space Maps located in back of book)



Indicates sessions that will also be included in the Virtual Conference



Scan for full session descriptions

Friday, July 24

Concurrent Session Block 8, 8:30 – 9:30 am

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

8.01

Policy to Practice: Accessible Events by Design

Rebecca Mushtare, SUNY Oswego
Jessica Sniatecki, SUNY Brockport

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

It is challenging to ensure that every higher ed event meets accessibility guidelines. This session focuses on the translation of policy into dependable, scalable systems that standardize accessible design and integrate it with other campus efforts like safety, risk-management, and sustainability.

8.02

The Shifting Ground: How Digital Accessibility Regulations Are Changing and How Those Changes Get Made

Judith Risch, Judith Risch Advisory Services LLC

Location: 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session takes stock of where digital accessibility regulation stands at the time of the conference. After this session, you should be able to read regulatory news more clearly and understand what questions to ask, which changes require immediate response, and how.

8.03

Improving Executive Function Skills: Practical Routines for Disability Services Teams

Brandon Slade, Untapped Learning

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

Executive function is a set of skills that can be taught and strengthened through repetition, routine, self advocacy, and active learning. In this hands-on session, we will model ready-to-use practices such as time blocking a week, building a simple one page study plan, and using clear office hour and email scripts.

8.04

Nursing Student Perspectives on Campus Accessibility: Identifying and Removing Barriers

Paul S. Smith, Linfield University, National League for Nursing (NLN)

Julie S. Fitzwater, Linfield University

Sari Ann Platt, Linfield University, ORAHEAD board member

Emily (Em) Doffing, Linfield University, California State University, Long Beach

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This presentation will discuss the initial findings, and future implementation plans of a research project that investigates the barriers disabled student nurses experience in school with an emphasis on simulation lab and clinical.

8.05

Best Practices for Notetaking Accommodations

Paul Harwell, East Carolina University

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Notetaking accommodations may seem routine, but they are anything but simple. This session offers a research-informed overview of best practices for implementing accommodations effectively.

8.06

Thriving at the Intersections: Supporting Black Men with Bipolar Disorder in Higher Education

Gerron Scott, Clemson University

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Black men with bipolar disorder represent an underserved and rarely examined population within higher education. Drawing from national qualitative research, this session examines how the intersection of race, gender, and disability influences retention and inclusion.

Friday, July 24

8.07

Marketing Your Disability Resource Center

Catherine Shepherd, Purdue University

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: All

We will review social media/marketing best practices, guidelines, and tools to assist disability resource professionals with creating engaging content to connect with students, parents, and campus partners.

8.08

Two Sides of Transformation: Lessons for Transitional Leaders and Their Teams

Chris Stone, Washington University in St. Louis
Crystal Hill, Stanford University

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

As a generation of our field seems to be retiring in mass, many from the next cohort are being lost to the great resignation. This has offered many a quick ascension to leadership positions. This presentation addresses both sides: exploring a potential new role calling for transformational leadership, as well as how staff may respond to new leadership (especially when significant change is deemed necessary).

8.09

Ordinary and Presumptive Trauma: Concepts to Inform the Interactive Process

Samuel Shelton, Iowa State

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will explore how the concepts of “ordinary trauma” and “presumptive trauma” can inform the interactive process to make it more equitable, trauma-informed, and healing-centered.

8.10

The Self-Determined Student: Coaching for Confidence

Jodi Sleeper-Triplett, JST Coaching & Training
Christina Fabrey, Virginia Tech

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Ready to boost student independence and self-advocacy? This workshop introduces the Self-Determination Action Model and equips you with coaching strategies that strengthen students' ability to Know and Value Themselves, Plan, Act, and Learn from Experience.

8.11

Strengthening Campus Collaborations: A Panel Discussion on a Liaison Outreach Model

Spencer Lambert, University of Arizona
Raquel Escobar, University of Arizona
Sophia Raffaelli, University of Arizona
Sav Schlauderaff, University of Arizona
Maria Barraza, University of Arizona

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Our team will share examples from our past 5 years of developing an internal "liaison model" of outreach work. This presentation highlights our office's work with cultural student spaces, our VETS center, student athletes, international students, immigrant students, our study abroad office, and support services for survivors.

8.12

Little Campus, Big Access: Scaling Solutions to Tiny Offices

Kasandra Reddington, Helena College, University of Montana

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores creative, practical strategies for building access and supporting students when resources are tight.

Friday, July 24

8.13

Making the Transition: Early College Orientation Program Development for Students on the Spectrum

Ana Ochoa, Chapman University

Quetzalli Lopez, Chapman University

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will feature how a university developed a unique orientation program designed to give students on the Autism Spectrum early exposure to campus life, access to tailored support services, and tools to thrive both academically and socially.

8.14

AHEAD's 2025 Testing Accommodations Survey Data Is In! What Does It Say, and How Can You Use It?

Erin Braselmann, Virginia Commonwealth University

Enjie Hall, Consultant

Maria Schiano, Smith College

Tammy Berberi, AHEAD

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, panelists from diverse campuses will discuss the findings from the AHEAD Testing Accommodations Survey (administered in spring 2025) to supply data to support your experiences and to help you advocate for additional resources.

8.15

Stuck in the Middle: Helping Disability Services Staff Navigate Faculty-Student Dynamics

Angela Branson, University of Missouri - Columbia

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session dives into practical ways supervisors can help staff thrive in the space between. We'll cover strategies for psychological safety, communication, and resilience, plus tips for recognition and growth.

8.16

Beyond the Burnout: Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to Find Meaning in Every Student Story

*Shelli Mahler, Brigham Young University
Nathan Walch, Brigham Young University*

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session isn't about bubble baths or self-care checklists. It's about rediscovering the why, the spark that drew us to this field in the first place. Come ready to rekindle your fire, reconnect with your impact, and remember the joy of watching students rise.

8.17 

Beyond Documentation: A Holistic Approach to Assessing / Supporting Students With Visual Impairment

*Farah Robles, Florida Atlantic University
Clara Fleites, Florida Atlantic University*

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Students who are blind or visually impaired represent a small percentage of those registered with disability services, yet their needs are highly individualized and often complex. This session explores how you can move beyond documentation to conduct holistic assessments that accurately identify the needs of this population.

Friday, July 24

Poster Session 2, 9:30 – 11 am

Exhibition Hall B (3rd Floor)

(Poster session descriptions available on conference app and on the AHEAD conference website)

Filling the Gaps: Building Proctoring Solutions Without a Centralized Testing Center

Jenna Rose, Rutgers University

Cindy Poore-Pariseau, Rutgers University

Disability Accommodation Implementation Among Occupational Therapy Faculty

Nicole Pawek, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Julie Olson Rand, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Hannah Oldenburg, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Becky Ozelie, Rush University

Assessing Universal Design for Learning Adoption: Tools for Institutional Change

Molly McKeon, Rhode Island College

Student Coworking Groups: Exploring Programming Beyond Accommodations

Betsy Milarcik, Georgetown University

Sara Emerick, Georgetown University Law Center

Transition Outcomes for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Lucy Barnard-Brak, The University of Alabama

Kagendo Mutua, The University of Alabama

Amy Williamson, The University of Alabama

Designing for the Nervous System: Creating Neuro-Inclusive Learning Environments in Higher Education

Rebecca Engle, Stitches and Stanzas

Navigators to Success: A Transition Program for Community College Students with ASD

Barbara Kennedy, Eastern Florida State College

Laura Sidoran, Eastern Florida State College

Actualizing Accessible Educational Service Communities of Practice: Reimagining ADA Policy Enactment

Mercedes Cannon, Indiana University Indianapolis

Elena Silverman, Indiana University Indianapolis

Nickie Coomer, Colorado College

Faculty and Student Perceptions of Disability Accommodations in Higher Education a Pilot Study

Jenifer Shaud, Michigan Technological University

Connecting Campus and Community for Inclusive Disability Employment

Megan Reynolds, Virginia Commonwealth University

What Neurodivergent Students Want: Engaging Faculty in Developing their Courses for Full Inclusion

Lori Henehan, Illinois State University

Concurrent Sessions Block 9, 11 am – 12:30 pm

9.01

Legal Year in Review

Paul Grossman, J.D., Executive Counsel of AHEAD, and OCR and U.C. Law, retired

Jo Anne Simon, Esq., New York State Assembly

Location: Exhibition Hall A (3rd Floor)

Audience: All

AHEAD's legal experts will analyze the legal events from the past year of great significance to AHEAD members.

9.02

A Media Year in Review: Deconstructing Dominant Disability Narratives in Higher Education

Charnessa Warren, University of Chicago

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session provides a structured “media year in review,” analyzing dominant narratives about disability access and accommodation practice. Participants will examine how rhetoric around fairness, rigor, and the “real world” often diverges from ADA requirements and empirical evidence. The session will also explore the institutional risks of reactive policy shifts and offer strategic communication tools for engaging faculty and leadership in evidence-based dialogue

Friday, July 24

Lunchtime Activities (Optional), 1 – 1:45 pm

Knowledge and Practice Community (KPC) Meetings

KPCs bring together AHEAD members who share a common interest in a specific subject area. They support AHEAD by connecting members, sharing information, and developing resources. CART will be provided. Interpreters available on request.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Disability (REDD KPC) **Room 552A (5th Floor)**

Concurrent Sessions Block 10, 2 – 3:30 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

10.01

When Academic Freedom Meets Accessibility: Textbook Selection by Faculty

L. Scott Lissner, The Ohio State University

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session will review the various legal doctrines that are pertinent to evaluating claims of academic freedom, and will present an approach that faculty and curriculum committees can use to evaluate and document those legal considerations for compliance reviews for textbooks under the ADA.

10.02

Digital Accessibility Certifications and ADA Title II Up-Skilling

Sam Evans, International Association of Accessibility Professionals
Rachel Paul, International Association of Accessibility Professionals

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

The Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC) has added educational courses and knowledge badge offerings for higher ed professionals. The CPACC provides tools to improve website accessibility, mobile apps, and digital course materials to comply with ADA Title II accessibility rules.

10.03

Ready, Set, Accommodate! Practicing the Interactive Process as a New Professional

Rachel Behrmann-Fowler, Marymount University

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

Sometimes it can be hard for new professionals to translate what we know from theory to practice, especially as the requests and cases become more challenging. This session will provide a review of the interactive process and important considerations for determining accommodations.

10.04

Relational Resilience: Sustaining Disability Community as Disabled Working Professionals

Samm Nelson, Mount Holyoke College

Corwyn Ross, Mount Holyoke College

Rachel Adams, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Griffin Leistinger, Hampshire College; University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This workshop goes beyond discussion on building formal spaces within the university and encourages us to explore what it means to build long lasting relationships of care, support, and mutual aid.

10.05

2026 Research Year in Review: An Overview of Recent Postsecondary Disability Research in 90 Minutes!

Adam Lalor, Landmark College

Katherine Aquino, Rutgers University

Chris Parthemos, Virginia Commonwealth University

Rick Bryck, Landmark College

Emily Tarconish, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This annual presentation will provide a review of the research on disability and postsecondary education from the last year in just 90 minutes! The Research KPC has curated an overview of research articles and will emphasize implications for practice.

Friday, July 24

10.06

Understanding Autistic and Neurodivergent Students, Faculty, and Staff: Science, Models & Programs

Amy Rutherford, College Autism Spectrum/ The Navigate-U Network
Jane Thierfeld Brown, College Autism Spectrum
Lorre Wolf, College Autism Spectrum

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

Starting with an overview of the science of autism (what is known and what is not), we will progress through introducing new and innovative program models and resources, research and interactive accommodations process and strategies.

10.07

From Chaos to Clarity: A Project Management Framework for Transforming Office Operations

Lauren Collier, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Hira Byrne Paulin, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

Learn about a project management framework for early-to-mid career office leaders to assess systems, set priorities, and plan for transformations that will lead their department towards operational excellence.

10.08

Mandates Don't Change Mindsets: Leveraging Existing Structures to Promote Systemic Change

Jessica Sniatecki, SUNY Brockport
Lauren Rodriguez, SUNY System Administration
Rebecca Mushtare, SUNY Oswego
Kim Scalzo, SUNY System Administration
Amy Fisk, SUNY Geneseo

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will focus on how disability service providers, faculty, staff, and administrators in higher education can leverage existing policies and systems to enact systemic change. Drawing from experiences across the system, our panel will examine the complex interplay between grassroots initiatives, administrative leadership, and system-wide advocacy needed to address institutional barriers.

10.09

Why Disability Cultural Centers Matter: Bringing DCC Practice into Related Fields in Turbulent Times

*Naty Rico, Former Disability Cultural Center Director
Dani Lucchese, University of Arizona*

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

During these turbulent times, DCCs are under threat due to anti-DEI policies at institutions across the country, and some have already been dissolved or restructured. However, the need for DCCs remains, and disability offices have a chance to step up and incorporate DCC practices in their institutions.

10.10

Data for Everyone: Creating and Using Data to Improve the Day-to-Day for Every Office Role

*Jenna Bradley, University of Delaware
Lynda Pagan, University of Delaware
Mie-Hawa Sumner, University of Delaware
Megan DiGiovanni, University of Delaware*

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Entry-level

In this session, we will demonstrate how to use tools like Accessible Information Management (AIM) or other data management software and Microsoft Excel to creatively generate and analyze data to improve day-to-day processes.

10.11

Seizure First Aid Certification Training and Resources for Disability Professionals

Thometta Cozart, Epilepsy Foundation of America

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This Seizure Recognition and First Aid Training provides skills to recognize seizures and safely provide aid. Participants who successfully complete this session (and complete the pre- and post-assessments) will receive a Certification, valid for 2 years. *(Requires pre-assessment)*

Friday, July 24

10.12

A Look at Current Research: Two Topics

Researchers will present their latest work, which you can apply to the work you do.

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

10.12A: How Strong Is the Evidence? Assessing Quality of Research on Supports for Students with Disabilities

Emily Unholz-Bowden, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Brian Abery, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

In this presentation, we will discuss results of a systematic review involving an analysis of the methodological rigor across studies evaluating academic, mental health, and social-emotional supports for college students with disabilities.

10.12B: Exploring the Experiences of Disabled College Students in a Northwest Rural State

Julia Gorman, Boise State University
Jeremy Ford, Boise State University
Peighton Pratt, University of Idaho
Erin Anderson, Boise State University

We will present findings from a qualitative study that explored the experiences of current disabled college students (DCS) in public postsecondary institutions in a northwest rural state in order to better inform policies and programming related to DCS.

10.13

Disability Dialogues: Confronting MARKED Ideologies in Higher Education

Charnessa Warren, University of Chicago
Lisa Yates, Moreno Valley College

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Dive into “Disability Dialogues: Confronting MARKED Ideologies in Higher Education” for an interactive journey into how Meritocracy, Ableism, Racism, Kyriarchy, Equality, and Disablism (MARKED) shape the everyday realities of disabled students, staff, and faculty.

10.14 

Accommodation Denials: Communication, Process, and Determining Fundamental Alteration

Christine Low, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Adam Kasarda, Palomar Community College

Jill Sieben-Schneider, Northwestern University

Jon McGough, University of California, San Francisco

Location: Ballroom A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This panel discussion will explore how disability offices across diverse institutional settings approach accommodation request denials.

Panelists will examine how decisions are made while evaluating the link between functional limitations and requested accommodations and considering potential fundamental alterations to programs.

10.15

Ask Us Anything!

Kate MacDonald, AHEAD

Jennifer Murchison, University of Oklahoma

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level, Mid-level

Participants new to the Disability Services field (and those who have been around a while) need spaces in which to gather advice, get their bearings, and verify understanding of best practices. In this session, presenters will facilitate discussions on current trends and issues audience members are working through in their offices and at their institutions.

10.16

ADHD in Focus: Living Authentically with Your Brain

Annastashia Blesi, Miami University

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This interactive session reframes ADHD through a neurodiversity-affirming and disability justice lens, highlighting the ways environments, not individuals, create barriers to success.

Friday, July 24

10.17

How to Bring a UDL Fellowship to Your Campus: From Soup to Nuts

Kirsten Behling, Tufts University

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session will provide you with the tangible tools that you need to create and run a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Faculty Fellowship model on your campus.

Concurrent Sessions Block 11, 4 – 5 pm

These are abbreviated session descriptions. Full descriptions are available in the conference app and website.

11.01

When ‘Reasonable’ Gets Complicated: The Realities of Graduate Program Accommodations

Desirae Mix, Brown University

Nicol Hernandez, Brown University

Location: Ballroom D (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, we’ll dig into what happens when “reasonable” gets complicated and explore how to balance access and academic integrity, collaborate effectively with faculty and program leadership, and design sustainable processes that work.

11.02

Improving Digital Accessibility by Applying the Business Disability Criteria to Higher Education

*Dan Goldstein, G3ict/IAAP Strategic Advisor; Retired Founding Partner,
Brown, Goldstein & Levy*

Pina D’Intino, G3ict/IAAP Strategic Account Advisor

Location: 551A (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

The Business Disability Criteria (BAC) Program aims to improve digital accessibility for campuses through a comprehensive list of 14 topic-area criteria linked to a higher-education campus-wide maturity model.

11.03

Regulatory Crystal Ball: Navigating Emerging Trends in Disability Law for Higher Education

Judith Risch, Judith Risch Advisory Services LLC

Location: Ballroom B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

The regulatory landscape for disability law is shifting rapidly. This session, led by a former OCR attorney, will explore recent and anticipated changes, offering insights into how these developments impact students, faculty, and staff with disabilities.

11.04

From Forms to Futures: Supporting Professional Identity Formation in Law Students with Disabilities

Kathryn Pelham, Stetson University College of Law

Location: 554B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

This session blends brief presentation, discussion, and collaborative learning for law school DRPs. After a concise overview of research on professional identity formation and disability in legal education, participants will analyze real-world scenarios and share effective strategies from their campuses.

11.05

Finding the Balance: Developing a Structured Process for Evaluating Accommodation Requests

*Ashley Ciccolini Erickson, Florida Atlantic University
Courtney McGonagle, Florida Atlantic University*

Location: 557 (5th Floor)

Audience: Entry-level

This session will outline a structured approach for analyzing accommodation requests through an Access vs. Success framework and discuss how to communicate denials effectively and compassionately.

Friday, July 24

11.06

Time Literacy: Reimagining "Time Management" to Support Inclusion and Thriving

Darrell Earnest, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Rick Bryck, Landmark College

Yuhwa Hong, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Location: Ballroom C (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Presenters will introduce the idea of time literacy, one's capacity to reason about academic progress over time. We frame time literacy as positioning academic success as one component of overall well-being that leads to balance in personal and academic needs and goals.

11.07

Onboarding New Staff in Disability Services: Building Competence, Confidence, and Community

Sandra Cash, Purdue University

Eileen White, Purdue University

Location: 555A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

In this session, Purdue University's DRC will share our holistic approach to training new Access Consultants, combining legal knowledge, practical skills, collaborative strategies, and wellness practices.

11.08

"We've Got a Group Chat for That:" Building Peer Networks Among Disability Service Providers

Shelbie D'Annibale, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

Theresa Hoover, Gettysburg College

Location: 550A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session explores the creation of a regional peer mentorship group made up of colleagues working in disability services offices in varying types of institutions.

11.09 

When School Hurts: Understanding the Overlap of Trauma and Disability in Higher Education

Sylvia Mac, University of San Diego

Location: 556 AB (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Through guided reflection and small group discussions, participants will learn to recognize trauma-disability overlap, identify how institutional processes can retraumatize, and implement equitable strategies that restore safety and predictability.

11.10 

Building Belonging: Equipping Residential Life Staff to Support Neurodiversity

Kathy Radziunas, Sacred Heart University, Southern Connecticut State University

Isabella DelVecchio, Sacred Heart University

Location: 553B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

By recognizing and addressing the unique communication styles and social perspectives of neurodiverse individuals, staff can foster a more genuinely inclusive living environment.

11.11

Is the Grass Greener? From Higher Ed to Accessibility Consulting and Back Again

Marra Piazza Brass, Bridgewater College

Location: 551B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Have you thought about leaving higher ed for something different? Join me on a journey from disability in higher education to accessibility consulting in the federal and private sector and then back again.

Friday, July 24

11.12

Ray Ban Meta AI Glasses: Wayfinding for Blind People on a College Campus

Nio Howa, University of California, Berkeley

Location: 554A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This presentation describes an innovative technological strategy for advancing UC Berkeley's Strategic plan to provide wayfinding support for Blind people, who, arriving at a new college, do not know the accessible paths of travel to buildings, benches where they can board transportation, or building entrances or classrooms.

11.13

Assessing and Reframing the Housing Accommodation Process

Sara Rotunno, Colorado College

Natalie Garro, Colorado College

Location: 555B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level

Join us to learn the steps we took to assess and revamp the housing accommodation process at Colorado College, a small private liberal arts college with a three-year live on requirement.

11.14

Making Invisible Work Visible: Data-Driven Advocacy for Communication Access

Audrey Silva, University of Connecticut

Location: 550B (5th Floor)

Audience: Mid-level, Advanced

Communication access programs often operate behind the scenes; essential to equity but rarely visible to leadership. This interactive session helps participants use service data and storytelling to transform invisible work into measurable institutional impact.

11.15

Building Regional Partnerships to Support the Transition from High School to College

Nicole Mucica, SUNY Brockport
Jordan Raine, Buffalo State

Location: 552A (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session highlights the work of the Western New York College Consortium of Disability Advocates (WNYCCDA)—a professional network of accessibility specialists from area colleges committed to improving the bridge between K–12 and higher education.

11.16

GenAI and Mental Health: How Students Are Using (and Misusing) Chatbots to Cope

Elizabeth McCarron, Excel With ADHD

Location: 552B (5th Floor)

Audience: All

This session helps disability services, counseling, and academic support professionals understand how students are using (and misusing) GenAI for mental health support.

11.17

The Power of Words: Semantics, Inclusion, and Disability in Higher Education

Pamela J. Starr, Riverside City College
Scott Brown, Riverside City College

Location: Ballroom E (5th Floor)

Audience: All

Language shapes access, identity, and inclusion—especially in disability services. This interactive session explores the power of semantics in higher education disability work, from legal language to student-centered communication.



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**National Center for College Students with Disabilities*

***Accessing Higher Ground*

The AHEAD staff is complemented by several talented part-time and contract professionals throughout the year.

Exhibit Hall Map

The 2026 Exhibit Hall is located in Exhibition Hall B (3rd Floor) in the Rhode Island Convention Center. This floor plan is subject to change as required by the Providence Fire Marshall on final inspection and/or by AHEAD conference management.

124	125	224	225	324	325	424	425
122	123	222	223	322	323	422	423
	121	220			321	420	421
							419
116							417
114							415
112							413
110							411
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	107	206			307	406	407
104	105	204	205	304	305	404	405
102	103	202	203	302	303	402	403
100	101	200	201	300	301	400	401

Exhibit Hall Schedule

Wednesday, July 22

5:30-7 pm Exhibit Hall Grand Opening & President's Reception

Thursday, July 23

8:30 am-4:30 pm Exhibit Hall Open

8:30-10 am Poster Session 1 & Continental Breakfast

3:30-4:30 pm Extended Beverage Break

Friday, July 24

9-11 am Exhibit Hall Open

9:30-11 am Poster Session 2 with Beverage Break

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Genio (Overall Conference and Lanyard Sponsor)

Booths #110-116

Genio creates beautifully simple learning tools that boost knowledge, skills, and confidence. Used by over 1,000 institutions globally, our WCAG 2.2 AA compliant products enhance learning for all abilities. Genio Notes, our flagship note-taking tool, includes STEM support and AI study features you can tailor to student needs. <https://genio.co>

Hardeman Realtime Inc. (HRI) (Captioning Sponsor)

Booth #421

Hardeman Realtime Inc. (HRI), founded in 1992, provides 100% human-generated communication access services, including CART Captioning, TypeWell, VRI, video captions, and transcription. Recognized by the Inc. 5000 as one of America's fastest-growing privately held companies (2023), HRI pairs over 300 qualified providers and dedicated account managers for each meeting, event, or class. www.hricart.com

Otter.ai (Water Bottle Sponsor)

Booth #206

Otter.ai has partnered with more than 2,000 universities, colleges, and community colleges to help students stay engaged, organized, and successful. Otter acts as a personal class assistant, to make in-person or online lectures and discussions more accessible by capturing them with live-transcription, automatic slide capture, and real-time notes. <https://otter.ai/education-agent>

CareScribe (Gold Sponsor)

Booth #406

CareScribe is a UK-based assistive technology company supporting disabled and neurodivergent people to work and study independently. Caption.Ed provides captioning, transcription, and note-taking for better comprehension. TalkType delivers fast, accurate dictation. Together, they help users with hearing loss, ADHD, dyslexia, and auditory processing differences succeed in education and the workplace. <https://carescribe.io>

Jamworks (Gold Sponsor)

Booths #321/420

Jamworks is a personalized learning platform that supports accessible note taking, comprehensively handles STEM equations and answers questions about students' classes. JamA11y is a comprehensive document remediation tool that integrates with your LMS for a smooth workflow. <https://www.jamworks.com>

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ReadSpeaker (Gold Sponsor/ Bag Sponsor)

Booth #107

Our text-to-speech solutions & voice-enhanced learning tools help make academic content accessible & engaging for a diverse population of learners. Integrated directly in learning platforms, or as an individual tool, ReadSpeaker provides easy-to-access & easy-to-use text to speech for any content, any device, including assessments, assignments & quizzes. <https://www.readspeaker.com/sectors/education>

Trula (Gold Sponsor)

Booth #307

Trula's rapid neuropsychological evaluation triage model eliminates waitlists and speeds up accommodation decisions. Through Broadband, Targeted Comprehensive, and Complex Comprehensive evaluations—designed for higher education and high-stakes testing—we quickly connect students to the right level of care, with affordable, clinically rigorous documentation institutions trust. <https://trula.com>

Symplicity (Gold Sponsor)

Booths #121/220

Symplicity Accommodate helps institutions streamline workflows to quickly deliver accommodations and ensure student success and compliance with university policies and governmental regulations. Our fully ADA-compliant & modern interface allows students to seamlessly submit requests, connect with note-takers/transcribers, check out assistive devices electronically, and more. <https://www.symplicity.com/higher-ed/solutions/accommodate>

Everway (Silver Sponsor)

Booths #413/415

At Everway, we create technology that empowers people to learn in ways that suit them best. From K-12 to universities, our solutions support diverse learning needs, enhance accessibility, and drive informed decisions. www.everway.com

Untapped Learning (Silver Sponsor)

Booth #205

Executive Function skills are among the strongest predictors of academic success, yet few colleges systematically support them. Untapped Learning partners with higher education disability and student success leaders through evidence-based EF student coaching and staff and faculty training that help students improve planning, follow-through, retention, and independence. www.untappedlearning.com

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CivicPlus (Silver Sponsor)

Booth #403

DocAccess powered by CivicPlus® helps civic and higher education leaders improve digital accessibility without adding operational strain. Designed to drive efficiency and inclusive user experiences, DocAccess modernizes document delivery through accessibility and PDF remediation solutions. www.getstreamline.com

Orchestrate AMS (Silver Sponsor)

Booth #224

The future of accessibility case management starts with smarter systems and stronger collaboration. Orchestrate AMS helps modernize accommodations, reduce administrative burden, and improve coordination across departments. With scalable workflows, actionable reporting, and responsive support, we empower teams to spend less time managing processes and more time creating impact <https://www.orchestrateams.com>

Accessible Information Management LLC (Charging Table Sponsor)

Booth #409

AIM is a company whose sole product and focus is providing effective Accommodations Management software with superb support. With optional modules, customers can choose the features they need without ones they don't. The new version 5 provides updated user interfaces, new module options and updated features. www.dsaim.com, <https://www.accessiblelearning.com>

Classroom Captioning (Charging Table Sponsor)

Booth #411

Classroom Captioning provides TypeWell, CART, and ASL services exclusively for schools across the U.S. Our focus on educational settings means tailored support, deep expertise, and budget-friendly rates designed specifically for the classroom. Our providers bring strong experience and specialized training to meet the unique needs of students and educators. www.ClassroomCaptioning.com

Exhibitors

a11 Accessibility

Booth #323

a11 helps teams tackle overwhelming accessibility workloads with speed and control. Our easy-to-use platform enables high-volume PDF remediation and bulk audio descriptions, captions, and transcripts. Built for scale, we combine automation with human review to deliver fast, reliable, and cost-effective results so institutions can keep up with growing demands. <https://demo.a11accessibility.com>

Aberdeen Broadcast Services

Booth #223

Aberdeen Broadcast Services supports higher education accessibility with both human and AI-powered captioning solutions tailored to your needs. Services include real-time CART captioning, transcription, and translation to support compliance and improve access across classrooms, events, and digital content. Use the right solution for each scenario—human, AI, or both. <https://aberdeen.io/abercap/live-captioning-for-universities>

Academic Success Press, Inc.

Booth #303

Academic Success Press, established 30 years ago, focuses on helping students with disabilities and math issues. ASP accomplishes this by providing workshops, Webinars, consulting, and texts to disability offices, faculty, administrators, and students. ASP has consulted with over 100 colleges on issues including accommodations, anxiety, courses substitution and OCR rulings/briefs. www.academicsuccess.com

Allergy Speaks

Booth #404

AllergySpeaks helps students and families with food allergies be understood — translating allergy types and severities into 20+ languages, scanning ingredients, and providing emergency communication tools. Built for college students studying abroad, navigating dining halls, and traveling far from home. Available on iOS and Android. Founded by an allergy parent. <https://allergyspeak.com>

Apex CoVantage, Inc.

Booth #101

Apex CoVantage helps universities and organizations streamline content workflows, enhance accuracy, and deliver accessible and inclusive experiences. Using Hybrid Intelligence (Human + AI), we provide

customized, cost-effective solutions that ensure productivity, meet accessibility compliance, and maintain exceptional quality, helping teams transform content and data for all audiences. <https://www.apexcovantage.com>

Clockwork (TechnoPro Computer Solutions Inc.) Booth #204

ClockWork is a leading digital platform designed for student service departments, including accessibility services, counseling, and advising. It streamlines operations with secure online forms, remote workflows, customizable tools, and robust reporting. Fully configurable and paperless, ClockWork helps institutions improve efficiency, enhance student support, and adapt quickly to evolving needs. <https://www.clock-works.us>

The College Autism Network Booth #123

The College Autism Network (CAN) is a nonprofit member organization supporting professionals, researchers, and self-advocates engaged in the work of creating inclusive climates and services for autistic and other neurodivergent college students. Visit our booth to learn how you and your campus can build capacity for serving this growing population. <https://www.collegeautismnetwork.org>

Continual Engine US LLC Booth #201

Continual Engine is an award-winning AI technology-enabled company, providing end-to-end digital accessibility services. We leverage our proprietary AI-powered solutions in collaboration with in-house human experts to deliver significant cost and time savings, improve quality and consistency, and ensure scalability, helping make digital accessibility achievable for everyone. www.continualengine.com

Delta Alpha Pi International Honor Society (DAPI) Booth #302

Delta Alpha Pi International Honor Society (DAPI) is the premier collegiate academic honorary that recognizes high-achieving students with disabilities and promotes disability identity. DAPI has over 250 chapters at colleges/universities in 39 states and DC. DAPI provides opportunities for leadership, advocacy and education regarding disability issues and one annual scholarship to an active undergraduate member. www.deltaalphapihonorsociety.org

Exhibitors

Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS)

Booth #402

DAIS provides online professional development courses, virtual presentations, program reviews, and more to institutions of higher education and professionals in the field of disability services. DAIS President Jane Jarrow welcomes the opportunity to provide technical assistance to the DSS community. Visit www.daisclasses.com

Dot Inc.

Booth #100

Dot Inc. features Dot Pad X, a refreshable tactile graphics and multiline Braille display enabling accessible visual information through dynamic touch output, and Nemonic Printer, a compact Braille printer designed for quick notes, labels, and organization. Together, these solutions enhance productivity, accessibility, and efficiency across workplaces, education, and everyday environment. www.dotincorp.com

EdPros

Booth #401

EdPros empowers colleges and universities with expert support that builds capacity and strengthens operations. Our Experts integrate seamlessly with your team to fill staffing gaps, increase capacity, and fill unmet needs. We provide simple, high-impact solutions delivering the expertise you need while expanding your team's capability and confidence. <https://www.edpros.co>

The Epilepsy Foundation

Booth #407

In partnership with the CDC, the Epilepsy Foundation has helped to improve access to care for people with epilepsy and trained more than 1,600,000 people in seizure recognition and first aid. The Epilepsy Foundation continues to focus on serving the epilepsy community through advocacy, education, direct services, and research for new therapies. Epilepsy.com

ETS

Booth #104

ETS is a global leader in education and talent solutions, promoting skill proficiency, empowering upward mobility, and unlocking opportunities to power progress for all. The Office of Disability Policy (ODP) at ETS is committed to providing reasonable testing accommodations for candidates with documented disabilities and/or health-related needs. <https://www.ets.org>

Habitat Learn

Booth #222

Habitat Learn offers innovative software and services to support students. Our flagship app, Messenger Pigeon, goes beyond note-taking and transcription, fostering inclusive learning by enabling students to capture, organize, and engage with content. With a user-friendly interface and multimedia support, Messenger Pigeon elevates the learning experience for all. www.habitatlearn.com

Hamilton CapTel

Booth #400

Since 2003, Hamilton® CapTel® has made more than 400 million Captioned Telephone conversations possible for individuals with hearing loss, providing the ability to listen and read captions of what's said over the phone. Whether you're looking for a traditional telephone experience, an option for at work or a mobile app for on-the-go – Hamilton CapTel solutions offer clarity, confidence, and independence. <https://hamiltoncaptel.com>

Hard Call

Booth #325

Hard Call is a structured communication service for people who need to say something difficult. We regulate how messages are delivered and how replies are handled — within defined limits, with human oversight at every step. <https://www.hardcall.com>

HumanWare

Booth #405

Since 1988, HumanWare has developed technologies such as video magnifiers, braille devices, audio assistants, and GPS systems, aiding students, seniors, and professionals with visual impairments in realizing their potential and achieving greater autonomy. We are also co-developers with APH of the Monarch braille tablet. <https://www.humanware.com/en-usa>

Exhibitors

The International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP)

Booth #102

The International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP), a division of G3ict, is a global membership organization advancing the accessibility profession through education, certification, and professional development. With more than 10,000 members in over 110 countries, IAAP connects accessibility professionals, organizations, and advocates to build inclusive digital and physical environments worldwide. <https://www.accessibilityassociation.org>

JST Coaching & Training

Booth #417

JST Coaching & Training is the leading authority on coaching for neurodivergent students. We provide research-based higher education coaching skills training for DR professionals. Learn core coaching skills and strategies to enhance your student interactions, helping them improve self-advocacy, critical thinking and self-determination for increased success and persistence to graduation. <https://www.jstcoachtraining.com>

Landmark College Institute for Research and Training (LCIRT)

Booth #300

LCIRT conducts research and disseminates innovative practices to improve teaching and learning for students with learning disabilities, ADHD, and autism. We offer professional development workshops, an on-campus conference, and an online Certificate in Learning Differences and Neurodiversity with specializations in Postsecondary Disability Services, Autism, and Executive Function. landmark.edu/research-and-training

Lotus

Booth #425

Lotus is a wearable ring that controls lights, fans— even the TV— with point-and-click. No wifi, no app, no setup. And it's completely portable; great for hotels, rentals, and dorm rooms! Our mission is to build technology that's usable by everybody, by optimizing for disability. getlotus.com

Lunabeam Labs, Inc.

Booth #322

Lunabeam helps neurodivergent students initiate, follow through, and transfer skills the moment they need to act. Designed to fade as students build mastery, it delivers in-the-moment support around the

clock without adding headcount, complementing existing disability services and student success programs. <https://www.lunabeamlabs.com>

Morf

Booth #225

Morf helps universities scale digital accessibility across documents, websites, STEM content, and multimedia. Using AI-powered automation, Morf transforms complex STEM content into accessible, interactive, and alternative formats while supporting ADA Title II and WCAG compliance efforts. Accessibility teams can reduce remediation time, expand capacity, and deliver more inclusive learning experiences.

<https://www.letsmorfit.com>

The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes (NDC)

Booth #200

The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes (NDC) is a technical assistance and dissemination center funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). NDC's mission is to share information, networks, and strategies to improve continuing education and training for deaf people. <https://nationaldeafcenter.org>

Normal Isn't Real

Booth #203

Normal Isn't Real: Succeeding with LD & ADHD is a film featuring young adults who have developed their talents, managed their challenges, and embraced who they are. A comprehensive Toolkit, created in collaboration with Landmark College, includes materials to reinforce the messages of the film through resources and classroom activities.

<http://www.normalisntreal.com>

Partners Interpreting

Booth #103

Partners Interpreting is a leading provider of ASL interpreting, CART captioning, and post-production accessibility services. Trusted by universities nationwide, we support Disability Services in ensuring equal access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. Our experienced team delivers responsive, reliable communication access tailored to the needs of higher education. www.PartnersInterpreting.com

Exhibitors

Pro-AT Group Booth #419

At Pro-AT Group, our mission is to create innovative Assistive Technology solutions that address the educational challenges faced by many. We're dedicated to supporting a diverse range of neurodivergent students through technology designed specifically for their needs. By listening closely to our users, we ensure that our Assistive Technology solutions are truly purpose-built and effective. <https://pro-atgroup.com>

sComm Booth #301

sComm is the manufacturer of the UbiDuo 3, the world's only standalone, two-way communication device. It enables hearing staff and deaf, hard of hearing, or non-verbal students and employees to communicate instantly face-to-face anywhere on campus, with zero barriers even when interpreters are not available. www.sComm.com

Sensus ApS Booth #202

SensusAccess[®] is a conversion service for accessible documents and alternate media. SensusAccess[®] automates conversion of documents into a wide range of alternative formats including Braille, MP3, Beeline, Language to language translation, DAISY, DAISY math and e-books in 35+ languages. SensusAccess[®] adds SensusAccessRemediator to bulk convert large volumes of PDFs into accessible format too. www.sensusaccess.com

SnapCap Booth #424

SnapCap is a marketplace that makes it fast, easy, and cost-effective to book professional live captioners for meetings and events. We provide trustworthy captioners, transparent pricing, and instant confirmation, with a user-friendly platform that puts everything in one place. www.snapcap.co

Think College Booth #422

Think College is a national technical assistance center dedicated to developing, expanding, and improving higher education options for students with intellectual disability. Think College supports evidence-based and student-centered research and practice by generating and sharing knowledge, guiding institutional change, informing public policy, and engaging with students, professionals, and families. www.thinkcollege.net

TMLS Consulting Inc.

Booth #304

TMLS Consulting Inc. is led by a retired Disability Resources Director, who has served twice on the AHEAD Board and been an Interim Director at 8 campuses, an External Evaluator at 35 campuses. He and hired subcontractors have provided new student interviews, mentoring, and the creation of DRS resources. (Call) 630-533-1709 (Email) tthomps51@gmail.com

Back by Popular Demand: Virtual AHEAD Start!



AHEAD will once again offer its always-popular online AHEAD Start program this fall! Professionals in their first couple of years of practice are invited to join us via Zoom for this comprehensive introduction to the field of higher education disability resources.

Schedule: Six Tuesdays and Thursdays, October Oct 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, & 22, for 2.5 hours each day (2-4:30p Eastern / 11a-2:30p Pacific / 8a-10:30a Hawaii). Early bird pricing: AHEAD members \$395; Non-members \$495.

New AHEAD Seminar! Sharpening Your Leadership Edge



No matter where you are on the career ladder, disability professionals lead every day through collaboration, confident decision making, and influence. AHEAD's first ever two-part Leadership Seminar is coming Fall 2026 and Spring 2027. Attendees may register for one or both semesters, each is 5 weeks long. Early bird pricing: AHEAD members \$349; Non-members \$449. More details coming early fall!

Notes

Accessing Higher Ground

Accessible Media, Web & Technology Conference

Save the Date:
November 16-20, 2026 in Denver, CO
accessinghigherground.org



Accessing Higher Ground
Accessible Media, Web & Technology Conference
Presented by AHEAD in Collaboration with ATHEN

AHEAD Association on
Higher Education
And Disability®

Local Information

Hospitals

Rhode Island Hospital
593 Eddy St, Providence, RI 02903
401-444-4000

The Miriam Hospital
164 Summit Ave, Providence, RI 02906
401-793-2500

Urgent Care

Brown University Urgent Care
66 Branch Ave, Providence, RI 02904
401-606-259

Pharmacy

CVS Pharmacy in Providence Place Mall
39 Providence Pl, Providence, RI 02903
401-270-4440

Veterinarian

Providence River Animal Hospital
131 Point Street, Providence, RI 02903
401-274-7724

Veterinary Emergency Group (VEG)
989 Centerville Rd in Warwick, RI (approx. 9.5 miles from
downtown Providence). Open 24/7
www.veg.com/locations/rhode-island/warwick
401-900-5428

Public Transportation

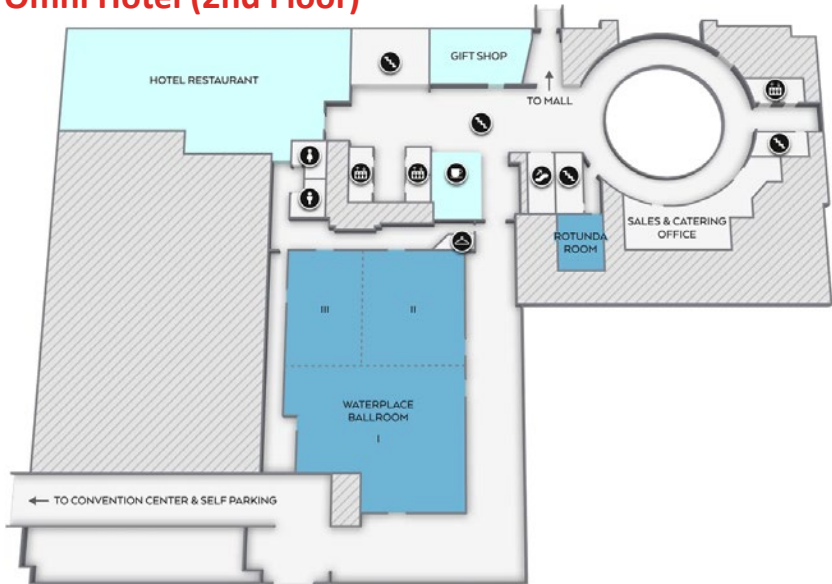
Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)
All buses equipped with ramps or lifts
<https://www.ripta.com/>

RIPTA Ride Paratransit: Door-to-door transportation, Advance
reservations required, ADA-compliant accessible vans
<https://www.ripta.com/RideParatransit>

Meeting Space Maps

Omni Hotel (1 West Exchange Street, Providence, RI 02903)

Omni Hotel (2nd Floor)



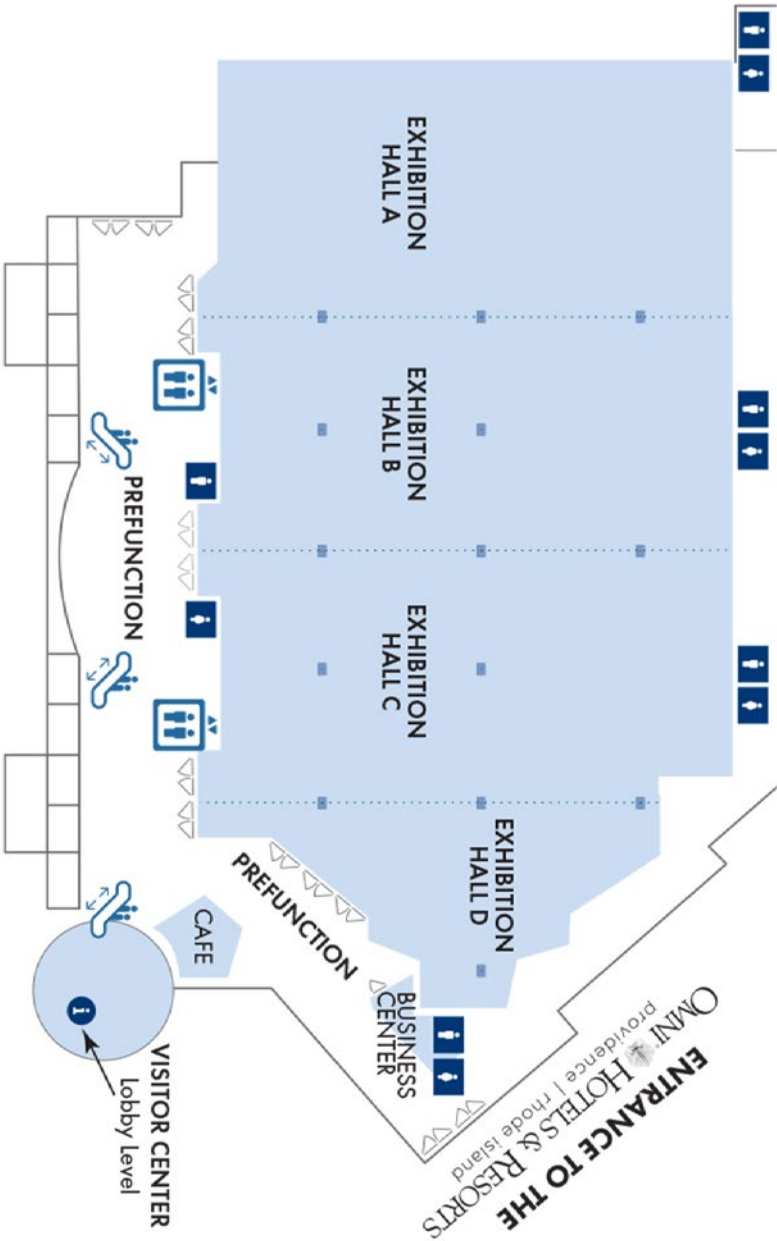
Omni Hotel (3rd Floor)



Meeting Space Maps

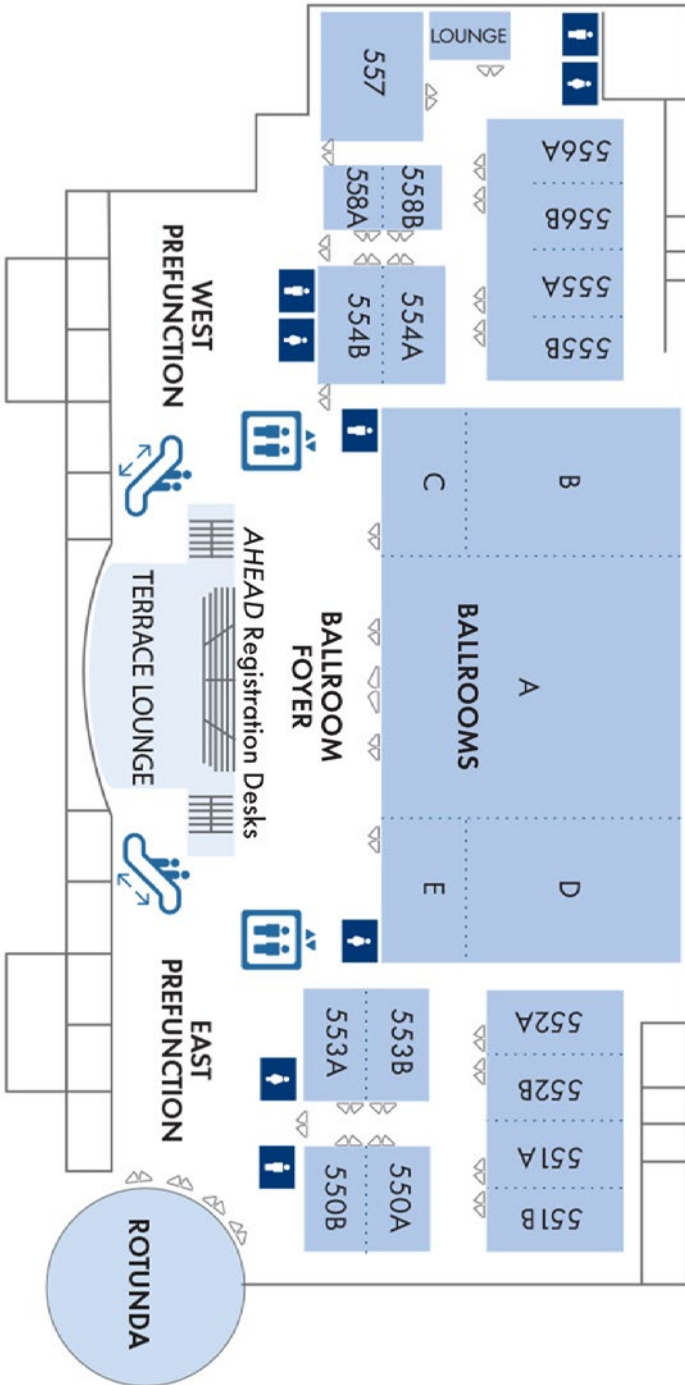
Rhode Island Convention Center (1 Sabin St, Providence, RI 02903)

Rhode Island Convention Center (3rd Floor)



Meeting Space Maps

Rhode Island Convention Center (5th Floor)





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Overall Conference Evaluation Form

Please complete this form once,
at the end of the conference.

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