Endless Possibilities 2022 - Effective Family Engagement: Honoring Diversity for Successful Partnerships

CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

Stephanie Adrihan is an Early Childhood Special Educator and Parent Leader dedicated to building collaborative partnerships between educators and families of children with disabilities. She spent over 15 years as a teacher and service coordinator for a Wisconsin Birth to Three program educating children in natural environments using a family coaching model. After her child was identified as a student in need of an IEP, Stephanie shifted her focus from early intervention to school based special education and found opportunities where schools could grow in the area of family engagement. Now, as the CESA 1 WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator, Stephanie brings her experiences as a family member and educator of students and families to support districts as they enhance their family engagement efforts. Her work includes coaching schools in the implementation of Parent Teacher Home Visits and providing learning opportunities for families on all aspects of the IEP process and their role in it.

Shanice Baquet is a mother of three children, a Community Health Worker, a Special Education Liaison for Families (SELF) in Milwaukee Public Schools, and the founder of Mommy’s Beautiful Sunrise, Inc. and Nia Purpose Community Garden.

Nissan Bar-Lev is the Director of Special Education for CESA 7. Nissan represents the School Partner perspective on the WI Special Education Mediation System. Nissan co-chairs the Special Projects Committee for WCASS. He serves on the Governor’s Autism Council, Children’s Long Term Support Council & chairs the State Superintendent’s Blind & Visual Impairment Education Council. He serves on the SAA Assessment Team, the WI RtI/PBIS Advisory Council, & National IDEA Partnership “Creating Agreement” team. He is a co-author of Special Education in Plain Language.

Dr. Jennifer Betters-Bubon is an Associate Professor and Program Coordinator in Counselor Education at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater where she also serves as program coordinator. She received a Ph.D from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a M.Ed from Boston University and a B.S. from the University of Wisconsin. Her work includes teaching clinical and school counseling courses and focuses on the barriers that impact K-12 student success. As the Richard and Veronica Telfer Endowed Faculty Fellow of Education, she has a particular interest in trauma and extending trauma informed approaches into teacher training programs. In addition, she is passionate about examining the role school counselors have within multi-tier models of support (e.g., RTI, PBIS) and working with public schools to help student services teams align their work within a trauma informed MTSS framework. Prior to her role in academia, Dr. Betters-Bubon spent 11 years working as a school counselor and one year as a special education teacher. She is co-editor of The School Counselor’s Guide to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (Routledge, 2019) and Making MTSS Work (ASCA, 2020) and has published in numerous peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Betters-Bubon is a licensed school counselor and professional counselor in Wisconsin.

Sydney Bueno is a professor in the UW-Stevens Point School of Education. Sydney has taught K-12 special education. She has experience teaching virtually at the high school and college level.

Lola Dada-Olley is a mom, wife, attorney, TEDx speaker, writer, advocate and podcast host.

In 2020, Lola launched her podcast, titled “Not Your Mama’s Autism”, chronicling her family’s multi-generational autism journey from inception, her brother’s autism diagnosis in 1989, to the present-day
health care and education related needs of both her children. In 2021, Lola started her column, titled “The Caregiver’s Chronicles”, where she writes about her journey as a lifelong caregiver and the considerations parents like her must make while striving to achieve her own goals and dreams in the process. In 2021, Lola also gave a TEDx speech, titled, “Your Path Is Your Purpose”, where she talked about how a series of seemingly disjointed events led her to where her present-day purpose lies today.

**Lisa Elliott** has been an educator for 31 years, and currently serves as the Superintendent of Schools in the School District of Greenfield. Her positive experiences at Milwaukee Tech High School are what kindled the flame to be an educator in diverse settings and being a parent to two children is what fuels her desire to meaningfully partner with families to help their children learn, grow, and succeed. She has spent 29 of the 31 years in education in the Greenfield School District as a high school chemistry teacher and coach, a high school assistant principal, and an elementary principal. Additionally, she spent two years as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in the Nicolet School District. Lisa also teaches adjunct in Educational Leadership Programs at universities in the Milwaukee area.

**Dr. Tanya Fredrich** is an Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Wisconsin. She is a graduate of UW Madison School of Education and holds a Masters’s degree in Special Education and Administrative Leadership and a Ph.D. in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning and Service. Dr. Fredrich has worked as a special educator with expertise in Emotional/Behavioral Disorders and Educational Autism as well as a building principal prior to her current director role. She is the creator of iSummitWisco, an annual conference of over 600 educators, that features national experts in inclusive practices to create systems change in communities across the nation. She is an adjunct professor at Carroll University, Cardinal Stritch University, and the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire to promote the next generation of leaders in education. Dr. Fredrich lives in Oconomowoc, WI with her family.

**Dr. Ted Gennerman** is the Director of Student Services for the Oak Creek-Franklin School District. He obtained his undergraduate and specialist degrees from UW Whitewater and began his career as a School Psychologist for the Milwaukee Public Schools. Dr. Gennerman went on to earn his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at Marquette University. After working for MPS, Ted returned to his hometown of Oconomowoc, WI, initially serving as a School Psychologist for the Oconomowoc Area School district and eventually transitioning to a district-wide special education program support role. Ted later accepted a position with the Muskego-Norway School District where he initially specialized as a program support for students with significant behavioral challenges prior to accepting his first administrative role as the Director of Assessment and Student Services. In the Assessment and Student Services role, Dr. Gennerman led the development and implementation of district RtI efforts as well as the development of a district processes for data-based school improvement planning and implementation. For the last 5 years, Ted has served as the Director of Student Services for the Oak Creek-Franklin School District. Ted currently lives in Waukesha with his wife Jenn and their three dogs.

**Sarah Goldman** MSW, APSW, CRS is a Program Administrator leading the Southeast Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. Sarah’s passion is leading teams that empower families with families.

**Shelby Gotangco** is a speech/language pathologist who has served the Waukesha community for the past 4 years. She has a passion for facilitating partnerships between families and educational teams. Shelby has served as a building lead for the piloting of the Parent Teacher Home Visit Program since 2021. With a focus on sustainability and growth, she is excited to share about her experience with this impactful practice.
**Nisha Gupta** has been the Family Co-Liaison for SEEN (Special Education Engagement Network) for the Elmbrook School District since 2018. She has 2 sons in the district. One will be a Junior at Brookfield East this fall and one an incoming Freshman at East with an IEP. Nisha has been on the Special Ed journey with her son since he was 18 months old and enjoys helping families with new diagnoses and families preparing for young adulthood navigate the best possibilities for their child. Professionally, Nisha is an Executive Coach, Team Development trainer, and owner at Ngenuity, LLC.

**Patty Hovel** is the Director of Special Education for the School District of Waukesha. Patty has 34 years of experience in special education and is a licensed Director, Assistive Technology Specialist, and Speech-Language Pathologist. Engaging students and their families in developing communication skills was an early goal and continues as a foundation of Patty's work.

**Eva Kubinski** is a school administration consultant on the Special Education Team at WI DPI. One of her areas of responsibility is supporting American Indian students with IEPs.

**Monica Lopez** is from Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. She graduated from the University of Guadalajara in June 1986. She has resided in Milwaukee since 1987. She is a proud parent of five children, two of them with cerebral palsy (the older one deceased). Her other children are successful professionals. She served as a parent mentor at Penfield Children's Center from 1996 until 2000 and at Children's Hospital from 2000 until 2003. She has worked for Milwaukee Public Schools in the parent center since 2003. She is the founder and president of Alianza Latina Aplicando Soluciones since June 1997. She has 20 plus years of experience working and supporting families with children with special needs.

**Jesse Mossholder** is a professor in the UW-Stevens Point School of Education. Jesse has taught 8th grade ELA and History and has had to navigate the challenges that came with the start of COVID-19.

**David J. O'Connor** is originally from and is a member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) in northern Wisconsin. In January 2012, he became the American Indian Studies Consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). In David's role at DPI, he supports school districts' efforts to provide instruction on the history, culture and tribal sovereignty of Wisconsin's American Indian nations and tribal communities, often referenced as Wisconsin Act 31 and the education of Native American students.

**Courtney Salzer** is the Executive Director of WI FACETS. She serves as the Parent Partner on the Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System. Courtney has spent most of her career working on systems change efforts related to children with disabilities, including serving as the former Director of WI FACETS’ State Professional Development Grant and WI FACETS’ Youth Mentoring Programs. She received her Bachelor’s Degree and Law Degree from Marquette University and possesses a Professional Certificate in Non Profit Management from UW-Milwaukee. Prior to her work at WI FACETS, Courtney was an attorney in private practice, where she did a variety of civil litigation. Courtney is the mother of two school-aged and is the sister of a young adult with a disability.

**Cheryl Schiltz** - After being introduced to disability, Cheryl received her BS in Rehabilitation Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Cheryl went on to work in the disability field for many years specializing in vocational rehabilitation, youth transition, independent living, and disability advocacy and support. Now retired, Cheryl continues her support within the disability community. Cheryl assisted in the development and teaches the EmployAbility Project’s “Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP) where working with college students with Autism, helps build their employment seeking skills towards a successful transition to employment. By developing “Peer Power”,...
high school students with disabilities plan, organize, and support each other as they work towards their independence. Cheryl supported the development of Wisconsin Youth First dedicated to the encouragement, growth, support, and advocacy skills for youth with disabilities.

Cheryl is the best-selling author of Silencing the Noise of Disability, A Journey of Transformation where she shares her story of being introduced to disability and how she found the motivation and inspiration to rise above it. Her experiences have been featured in Dr. Norman Doidge’s New York Times best seller, “The Brain That Changes Itself” as well as its documentary. She has been featured in the New York Times, On Wisconsin, Wisconsin Public Television, Discover magazine, Washington Post, National Geographic, and other publications. Cheryl is also an award-winning photographer.

Cheri Sylla has worked as a WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator for 19 years. Through her work, she supports families and educators to build their skills, knowledge, connections, and confidence to partner together. She is also the parent of a young man with an intellectual disability.

Jessica Stein has been in education for 14 years. She began her career as an elementary classroom teacher and currently serves as the Family and Community Engagement Coordinator for The School District of Greenfield. She lives in Wisconsin with her husband and two young children. As a Family Engagement Coordinator, Jessica focuses on supporting strong home, school, and community partnerships for children of all ages. Her work focuses on strengthening family-school partnerships through building trusting relationships and supporting academic partnering conversations. Jessica also works closely with a family engagement team and local organizations to connect students and families with important and needed information and resources.

Dr. Ozalle Toms has worked in the field of education for over 20 years. She earned her doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Her areas of interest are teacher preparation, campus climate, and culturally responsive instruction. Her long-standing passion for education was ignited during her eight-year tenure as a high school special education teacher. At her current campus, she is actively involved in initiatives relating to supporting university students who have aged out of foster care, and those relating to student success and equity, access, and inclusion.

Dr. Toms joined the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2012 as a faculty member in the college of education and professional studies but has served as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student, Diversity, Engagement, and Success since June 2019. Dr. Toms conducts training at the campus, state, national and international levels on Microaggressions, Civil Discourse, White Privilege, and Reducing Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process. She also provides training to K-12 personnel and school districts on supporting at-risk youth and creating inclusive environments.

Ozalle is a proud Detroit native but currently resides in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Her biggest accomplishments are raising three biological sons, being a grandmother of two, and accepting the call to be a foster mom to six.

Harry Webne-Behrman has served as a facilitator, consultant, educator, and mediator for over 40 years. Along with his wife, Lisa Webne-Behrman, he served as Senior Partner of Collaborative Initiative, Inc., a private consulting and mediation firm based in Madison, Wisconsin from 1991-2017. Harry also worked in various capacities with the University of Wisconsin-Madison throughout his career, establishing successful programs and initiatives in student services and human resources. Currently, Harry serves as a Senior Restorative Practitioner for the Canadian Department of National Defense.
Harry has worked with hundreds of businesses, educational institutions, community groups and public agencies, helping address entrenched organizational and social issues. By consulting with leaders, facilitating large-scale deliberation and engagement processes, mediating interpersonal disputes, and offering educational programs that develop skills needed to address such challenges, Harry has earned a reputation as a valued resource and guide. He maintains tremendous enthusiasm about the importance of learning to work collaboratively to build positive work environments and offers courses and consultations that focus on dispute resolution, facilitation, collaborative problem solving, and related topics in that spirit. Harry is the recent author of What Matters in This Moment (2021) and What Matters At Work (2020), books that focus on providing leadership through these complex, uncertain times. Harry and Lisa now live and work in Ottawa, Ontario.

Jennifer Worley is a licensed professional counselor and licensed school counselor in Wisconsin. She received her Masters of Science and her BA from UW Madison. Jennifer’s work covers the majority of the lifespan, however, has consistently focused on youth and families. Jennifer worked in a school counselor position for 14 years where she worked collaboratively with parents to develop grassroots methods of communication still utilized today. She has worked in private practice for 3 years and is currently working in a medical setting as a behavioral health clinician with a specialty in pediatrics. Within that work, the areas of specialty include treatment of: Anxiety, Depression and ADHD in a brief model. Further, Jennifer is the owner of Cup of Counseling where she shares accessible emotional wellness content with school districts and businesses.