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ASPEN'S 40TH CONFERENCE CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ASD COMMUNITY



Keynote Presenters

Caren Zucker and John Donovan

Emmy Award Winning ABC News Journalists & NY Times Best Selling Authors

The Story of Autism:

What a Small Town in Mississippi Teaches Us All About Acceptance

Morning Plenary

Liane Holliday Willey, Ed.D.

What Worked and What Didn't: My Personal Employment Journey

Afternoon Keynote

Valerie L. Gaus, Ph.D.

*Living Well on the Spectrum: Incorporating a Positive Problem-Solving Approach
to Meeting Your Goals in Adulthood*

Plus 5 Afternoon Workshops to Choose From!

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017

World Autism Awareness Day

8:00AM-4:30PM

APA HOTEL WOODBRIDGE

(Formerly Hotel Woodbridge at Metropark)

120 Wood Avenue South, Iselin, NJ 08830

***ASPEN'S 40TH CONFERENCE:
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE
TO THE ASD COMMUNITY***

ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

CAREN ZUCKER and JOHN DONVAN

***The Story of Autism: What a Small Town in Mississippi
Teaches Us All About Acceptance***

Emmy Award winning network journalists Caren Zucker and John Donvan, who both have family members with autism, share insights from their 7-year-long exploration of autism's turbulent history. Their work, culminating in the 2016 *New York Times* Best Seller – *In A Different Key: The Story of Autism* – contains many stories, but the most inspirational of them is how the small community of Forest, Mississippi embraced and celebrated a child in its midst named Donald Triplett. Donald, whom they befriended, is history's first officially diagnosed autistic person, born in 1933, and still alive today at 83 ... happy, healthy and autistic.

MORNING PLENARY

LIANE HOLLIDAY WILLEY, Ed.D.

What Worked and What Didn't: My Personal Employment Journey

It is typically quite difficult for people who live with an autism spectrum diagnosis to find their perfect job. In her presentation, Professor Liane Holliday Willey will explore her personal journey in the workforce from her perspective as a woman with Asperger Syndrome. Liane will share her struggles, dashed dreams, and difficult climb that eventually brought her to a career that ultimately works with her strengths and eases her ASD-related challenges.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

VALERIE L. GAUS, Ph.D.

***Living Well on the Spectrum: Incorporating a Positive Problem-Solving
Approach to Meeting Your Goals in Adulthood***

Adults on the spectrum, young and old, find some situations difficult while navigating a world designed by neurotypical people. Understanding one's own strengths and capitalizing on them, while also being aware of challenges and compensating for them, are fundamental concepts that can be found in positive psychology. During this presentation, participants will be introduced to the ideas behind positive psychology. Examples of the ways it can be applied by adults on the spectrum while setting goals for a meaningful and satisfying life will be provided.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

A) Adulthood, It's Not Easy: Strategies for College and Career Readiness

presented by Chelsea Bourn, MA

Adjusting to expectations of college and the workplace is a difficult transition for young people. Though navigating high school has unique complications, success in college and careers requires a different skill set that many young people do not have the opportunity to practice before implementing. Research shows that people on the spectrum are less likely to complete college and retain gainful employment than their neurotypical counterparts. Determining mechanisms to increase success in higher education and vocational endeavors is necessary, though is often a superficial last minute discussion.

This presentation will outline strategies to support the success of young people on the spectrum in higher education and careers. Topics discussed will include effective scaffolding during high school to develop necessary skills earlier, opportunities for experiential learning, vocational and college readiness assessments, career exploration through job shadowing and coaching, tactics for navigating college effectively, development of self-advocacy and awareness of personal abilities and areas for growth.

B) Stress Management for Aspies and Their Families

presented by Valerie Gaus, Ph.D.

Elaborating on the ideas introduced in the afternoon keynote, more details will be provided to help adults and their families manage stress. A definition of human stress will be reviewed first, then the particular ways in which people on the spectrum can be vulnerable to stress. Strategies for managing in the various domains of life will be described.

C) Communication, Dating and Relationships

presented by Rebecca Schulman, Psy.D. and J.J. Ferrito, Psy.D.

This workshop is designed to assist individuals in learning to appropriately and effectively communicate with others in the context of different types of relationships. Participants will learn to differentiate between various types of relationships (e.g., acquaintances, friends, boyfriend/girlfriend). Through various role-plays, videos, and activities, attendees will explore how to move from one stage of a relationship to another. Participants will also gain knowledge about which traits they should possess in order to know that they are ready to date, as well as how to recognize non-verbal signs to know when someone is interested. Lastly, this workshop will teach individuals how to prepare for a date and ask someone out on a date, as well as appropriate behaviors to engage in while on a date. Participants will have the opportunity to practice communication skills and appropriate dating etiquette throughout the workshop.

D) DDD: The Who, What, When, Where, Why & How of Obtaining Services

presented by **S. Paul Prior, Esq.**

This workshop will discuss government programs and services that are vital when an individual with ASD turns 18 and 21. The presenter will discuss how to become eligible for the various services provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. In addition, this workshop will discuss SSI, SSDI and Medicaid, plus Day, Vocational, and Residential Services. Specific assessment and service planning tools will be reviewed as well as New Jersey's changing system of adult services and the growing role of Medicaid.

E) Girl Talk: Thoughts on Life with ASD

presented by **Liane Holliday Willey, Ed.D.**

Women with an autism spectrum challenge present far differently than do their male counterparts. They are often diagnosed less often, diagnosed inaccurately, and too often left out of much-needed support systems. In this session, Liane will provide personal insight, research reviews and practical suggestions for females who have Asperger Syndrome.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe that ASPEN is celebrating its 20 Year Anniversary! We have accomplished much in our first twenty years, and as we enter our third decade, we see that much still needs to be done. ASPEN is dedicated to fulfilling its mission of providing support, information and advocacy to individuals and families whose lives are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder and Nonverbal Learning Disability. In honor of our 20th Anniversary we are publishing an Ad Journal that will be distributed at our Spring Conference on April 2, 2017 (World Autism Awareness Day) and will also be available at all our meetings and events throughout the year.

As we plan this 40th conference focusing on the needs of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, we invite you to show your support of the autism spectrum community and ASPEN by placing an advertisement or message in our 20th Anniversary Ad Journal.

In addition, we are offering several Conference Sponsorship opportunities. All Conference Sponsorships will include signage the day of the conference, a full-page in the Ad Journal and two conference registrations.

Please visit our website www.aspennj.org for information about our Ad Journal and Conference Sponsorships.

TO BECOME AN EXHIBITOR OR SPONSOR

Conference exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities are available on a first come-first served basis. For more information or to request a vendor contract, please contact our office:

(732) 321-0880 or aspenorg@aol.com

ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS

John Donovan is a correspondent for ABC News, and host/moderator of the Intelligence Squared U.S. Debates. **Caren Zucker** is a twenty-five-year veteran of ABC News, and producer and co-writer of the PBS series *Autism Now*. John and Caren most recently won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Feature Story in a Regularly Scheduled Newscast for the autism-focused story “A Different Kind of Boyhood,” which aired on *Nightline*. They are co-authors of the *New York Times* bestselling book *In a Different Key: The Story of Autism*.

Liane Holliday Willey, Ed.D is a psycholinguist who works as an educational consultant, author, and equestrian team therapist in a variety of settings from the classroom to the barn. She is also a woman who was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome when she was in her mid-30’s. The author of many informative books including *Pretending to Be Normal; Asperger Syndrome in the Family: Redefining Normal;* and *Safety Skills for Asperger Women*, she speaks nationally and internationally. During her presentations to the autism community, Liane pulls from her personal, academic and professional experience to keep her talks timely, thought provoking, motivational and fun.

Valerie L. Gaus, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist with over 20 years of experience providing mental health services to people with disabilities. With a cognitive-behavioral approach, she offers psychotherapy to adults with Asperger Syndrome, higher functioning autism, depression, anxiety, trauma and stress-related problems. She has a private practice with offices in Huntington and in Manhattan. She has authored numerous chapters, articles and books on the subject, including *Living Well on the Spectrum: How to Use Your Strengths to Meet the Challenges of Asperger Syndrome/High-Functioning Autism* published in 2011 by Guilford Press.

Chelsea Bourn, MA is the Transition Program Director at The Glenholme School in Washington, CT and an Adjunct Professor at Tunxis Community College in the Social Science department. Chelsea’s primary focus for transition age students is the development of life skills through experiential learning opportunities that are cultivated individually to increase student competence and confidence. Her research interests include professional development for educators, awareness of the impact of language on perception of disability, and social skill acquisition for students with autism spectrum disorders. Additional areas of interest include program/intervention development, therapeutic equestrian activities, and parent education.

Rebecca Schulman, Psy.D., BCBA-D is a postdoctoral fellow and Board Certified Behavior Analyst - Doctoral at Behavior Therapy Associates. She has extensive experience providing individual, family, and group therapy to children, adolescents and adults. She specializes in cognitive behavioral therapy and applied behavior analysis for children through adults presenting with developmental disabilities, disruptive behaviors, social skills deficits, anxiety disorders and sexual problem behaviors. She also has expertise in using evidence-based treatments to work collaboratively with parents to teach them behavior management strategies and with schools to address challenging behaviors. She has presented at many conferences on the topics of techniques to address challenging behaviors and on-task behavior.

Joseph J. Ferrito, Psy.D. is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Behavior Therapy Associates and a Certified School Psychologist in New Jersey. He has expertise in the assessment and treatment of children, adolescents, and adults through his work across a variety of levels of care including schools, outpatient mental health clinics, residential treatment facilities, and inpatient hospitals. Dr. Ferrito has experience working with individuals from ethnically and economically diverse backgrounds with a broad array of mental health difficulties including anxiety, emotional and behavioral difficulties, social-emotional skills deficits and individuals with developmental delays. Dr. Ferrito provides individual, group and family therapy. He has conducted research and developed programming in the areas of Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development (SECD) and school climate and culture, and co-authored *The Other Side of the Report Card: Assessing Student Social, Emotional, and Character Development* with Maurice Elias, Ph.D.

S. Paul Prior, Esq. has spent his entire legal career representing people with disabilities. As the younger brother of a man with autism, he has a life-long commitment to disability law. His legal work has focused on special education, guardianship, financial entitlements and access to appropriate services. A substantial part of his practice is devoted to assisting families in estate and trust matters. He has successfully argued leading cases before the New Jersey Supreme Court, Third Circuit Court of Appeals, as well as other state and federal courts. He served as a federal monitor overseeing conditions at state-operated institutions, and holds a JD from Seton Hall University School of Law. He is a member of the Elder Law Section of the New Jersey Bar Association. He writes and lectures frequently on topics concerning the law and disability as well as issues affecting siblings.



ASPEN's Annual Fall Conference

Target Audience: All ages

Sunday, October 29, 2017



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Michelle Garcia Winner,
 Founder of *Social Thinking*
 Author of:

- *Thinking About YOU Thinking About ME: Teaching Perspective Taking and Social Thinking*
- *Strategies for Organization: Preparing for Homework and the Real World*
- *Inside Out: What Makes a Person with Social Cognitive Deficits Tick*
- *You are a Social Detective: Explaining Social Thinking to Kids*
- *Good Intentions Are Not Good Enough*

- *Think Social! A Social Thinking Curriculum for School-Age Children*
- *Preparing for the Transition to Adulthood*
- *Learning to Take Control of Emotional Reactions as Part of Problem Solving*
- *Adults and Being Social: We're All a Work in Progress*
- *Ellipses to Better Define Social Relationships*

- *Adults with Social Challenges at Work*
- *Adults: Becoming Directors of Their Own Treatment Teams and Treatment Plans*
- *Adapting to Cultures: Our Communities' Culture and the Culture of ASD*
- *Social Behavior Mapping: Connecting Behavior, Emotions and Consequences Across the Day*

PLUS AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS TO CHOOSE FROM!

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Parents, grandparents, other family members and caregivers; individuals (age 14 and older) with Autism Spectrum Disorder; educational professionals; medical and health professionals; legal professionals.

Educators attending this full day conference will earn 6 Professional Development Hours.

- All registration fees are per person. Cash, check, money order, purchase order, or online via PayPal.
- Registration must be postmarked by 3/24/17. Early registration is suggested due to limited seating.
- Additional copies of this form may be downloaded from our website at www.aspennj.org.
- If the number of registrants reaches capacity, registration will close earlier than the deadline.

• Confirmations are sent ONLY to those who include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

- Cancellations and Changes - No refunds for cancellations received after 3/2/17. Sorry, no exceptions. Kindly notify us in advance if substituting for original registrant.
- If, due to unforeseen circumstances, it becomes necessary to substitute speakers without advance notice, fees are non-refundable.

Directions to the APA Hotel Woodbridge

Visit their website at
<http://www.apahotelwoodbridge.com>

Hotel Accommodations

For special ASPEN Conference rates at the APA Hotel Woodbridge, call 1-732-494-6200 as soon as possible.

CUT AND RETURN THIS PORTION.

REGISTRATION FORM:

SPRING CONFERENCE

Sunday, April 2, 2017

Early Registration Discount Deadline 3/19/17

Please Print:

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____

Email _____

Check One:

Parent _____ Legal Professional _____
 Grandparent _____ Medical/Health Professional _____
 Family Member _____ Educational Professional _____
 Young Adult with ASD _____

PLEASE CHOOSE ONE WORKSHOP FOR EACH REGISTRANT (BY INDICATING THEIR INITIALS) FROM THE FOLLOWING FIVE AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS (3:00-4:30PM) (CHOOSE ONE):

- ___ A) Adulthood, It's Not Easy: Strategies for College and Career Readiness
- ___ B) Stress Management for Aspies and Their Families
- ___ C) Communication, Dating and Relationships
- ___ D) DDD: The Who, What, When, Where, Why & How of Obtaining Services
- ___ E) Girl Talk with Liane Holliday Willey: Thoughts on Life with ASD

ON-LINE REGISTRATION AVAILABLE AT: WWW.ASPENNJ.ORG

ASPEN Member? (as of date of conference)

Yes _____ Chapter _____

No _____ If you would like to join, please enclose a SEPARATE check for annual dues (Families: \$35; Professionals: \$55) payable to ASPEN, along with member conference registration fee.

Kindly mail your completed form with your check or money order made payable to ASPEN to:

ASPEN SPRING CONFERENCE 2017
9 Aspen Circle
Edison, NJ 08820

Please complete section below.

REGISTRATION FEES

(INCLUDES MATERIALS, BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND COFFEE & DESSERT BREAKS)

ALL FEES ARE PER PERSON • JOIN TODAY AND SAVE
New Early-Bird Discount Pricing!

_____ **MEMBER (PARENT or GRANDPARENT)**
\$115.00 (\$145.00 after 3/19/17)

_____ **MEMBER (PROFESSIONAL)**
\$185.00 (\$215.00 after 3/19/17)

_____ **MEMBER (YOUNG ADULT INDIVIDUAL WITH ASD)**
\$80.00 (\$100.00 after 3/19/17)

_____ **NON-MEMBER (PARENT or FAMILY MEMBER)**
\$150.00 (\$180.00 after 3/19/17)

_____ **NON-MEMBER (PROFESSIONAL)**
\$225.00 (\$255.00 after 3/19/17)

_____ **NON-MEMBER (YOUNG ADULT INDIVIDUAL WITH ASD)**
\$120.00 (\$135.00 after 3/19/17)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:00 AM REGISTRATION/BREAKFAST/
VISIT EXHIBITORS

9:00 AM LORI SHERY, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, ASPEN®— *Opening
Remarks*

9:15 AM CAREN ZUCKER & JOHN DONVAN
— *Keynote Presentation – The Story of
Autism: What a Small Town in Mississippi
Teaches Us All About Acceptance*

10:15 AM BREAK/VISIT EXHIBITORS

10:30 AM LIANE HOLLIDAY WILLEY —
*Morning Plenary – What Worked and
What Didn't: My Personal Employment Journey*

12:00 Noon BUFFET LUNCH/BOOK
SIGNING/VISIT EXHIBITORS

1:00 PM VALERIE GAUS — *Afternoon Keynote –
Living Well on the Spectrum: Incorporating
a Positive Problem-Solving Approach to
Meeting Your Goals in Adulthood*

2:30 PM DESSERT BREAK/BOOK
SIGNING/VISIT EXHIBITORS

3:00 PM AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Conference concludes 4:30 PM.

General Questions or to Become a Conference Exhibitor or Sponsor

Please contact us at (732) 321-0880 or aspenorg@aol.com for more information or if you have any questions.

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ABOUT ASPEN®

ASPEN provides information, support and advocacy to individuals and families whose lives are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder (Asperger Syndrome, PDD-NOS, High-Functioning Autism) and Nonverbal Learning Disabilities. Its numerous chapters meet monthly, alternating support meetings with scheduled speakers. Members receive an online newsletter; have access to a lending library of books, videos, and articles; receive a copy of the ASPEN Resource Directory, and are entitled to free attendance at all monthly chapter meetings in addition to substantial discounts on conferences. A NJ Department of Education Professional Development Provider (#1619), ASPEN sponsors workshops and conferences featuring many of the most prominent names in the autism field. ASPEN is a national 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

WWW.ASPENNJ.ORG