



Organized in 2007, (as The Arts in Special Education Consortium), Arts for All Abilities Consortium provides means by which professionals and key stakeholders involved in arts education for students on the special education spectrum in New York can share perspectives, determine needs, develop ways to meet them, and deepen practice and understanding. Our purpose is to bring together constituencies, and engage them in meaningful conversation and exploration in order to ascertain barriers to and opportunities for providing quality arts education to special education students.

www.ArtsSpecialEd.org

The Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis, collaborates on events, makes decisions on focus, goals and mission, and carries out the necessary tasks to succeed in reaching our goals.

Steering Committee

Stephen Yaffe, Chair

Lisa Dennett

Tobie Franklin

Elise May

Maryann Polesinelli

Pamela Pritzker-Ridley

Kat Stock

Ronnie Shuster

The Support Committee consists of individuals with a high interest in the goals of the Consortium, but without the time needed for participation on the Steering Committee. Support Committee members may take on individual tasks as needed for specific functions of the Consortium.

Support Committee

Hanaah Bates

Adam Goldberg

Jordana Mendelson

Erica Rooney

Constance Stienon

Meryl Wittenberg

If you are interested in joining the Steering or Support Committee please send an email to info@ArtsSpecialEd.org



We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the following organizations and individuals for their support and help

Museum of Jewish Heritage

New York City Department of Education, District 75, Citywide Special Education

New York City Department of Education, Office of Arts and Special Projects

JCC Manhattan

Allison Kleinman

Erica Rooney

Barbara Vaccaro

Emily Davis, Wema Harris

Amanda McFee

New York State Council on the Arts

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Arts for All Abilities Consortium is a sponsored project of Fractured Atlas, a non-profit arts service organization.



Those of you on Twitter are encouraged to tweet about the conference using #artsped



EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS – Who, Why, How DAY AT A GLANCE

- 8:45 **Coffee and Registration** – Lobby, 1st floor
- 9:45 **Welcome/Overview** – Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
- 10:00 **Morning Plenary: *A Bigger Family***
 All IN(clusive) All-City Theatre Ensemble
 And
 The New Victory Theater/Lexington School for the Deaf collaboration
 Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
- 11:45 **Lunch** – Events Hall, 2nd floor (11:45-12:30)
- 12:40
(12:40-1:50) **Afternoon Sessions****
- Flamenco Pa' Todos: – Inclusive Classroom Strategies for Students with Disabilities – Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium (1st floor)
 - GIVE: Growing Inclusivity for Vibrant Engagement. Defining a Partnership – Classroom A/B (1st floor)
 - The Speech and Language Arts Initiative – Weaving It Together – Events Hall (2nd floor)
 - A Tale of Two Schools...and One Theater Company: Creating Inclusive Theater Experiences – Classroom C/D (1st floor)
- ** Please attend the sessions that you registered for.
 This will ensure adequate attendance and ample space.
- 2:00
(2:00-3:10) **Afternoon Sessions****
- Flamenco Pa' Todos: – Inclusive Classroom Strategies for Students with Disabilities – Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium (1st floor)
 - GIVE: Growing Inclusivity for Vibrant Engagement. Defining a Partnership – Classroom A/B (1st floor)
 - The Speech and Language Arts Initiative – Weaving It Together – Events Hall (2nd floor)
 - A Tale of Two Schools...and One Theater Company: Creating Inclusive Theater Experiences – Classroom C/D (1st floor)
- 3:25 **Final Convening: *Out of the Shadows***
 Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor

PLEASE NOTE that photographs & video will be taken throughout this conference. Your likeness may be used for documentation purposes, reporting, or appear on our website. Only presenters or panelists will be identified. No compensation will be received, given or expected by any party. If you have objections to having your photo/video taken, please make that known to the conference chair or a Steering Cmt'ee member.



EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS – Who, Why, How

Morning Plenary
10:00 am

A Bigger Family

Student performances from two exemplary partnerships

All IN(clusive) All-City Theatre Ensemble
And
The New Victory Theater and Lexington School for the Deaf collaboration

Followed by a panel of student and adult partners.

Presenters/Panelists

All IN

Peter Avery, All IN artistic producer, is the Director of Theater for the New York City Department of Education, focused on the 360 of invested student engagement and sustainable school supports. Avery continues to launch and produce innovative programs addressing access, equity, inclusion and artistry for NYC students, including NYC's first ever All IN(clusive) All-City Theatre Ensemble, the Shubert High School Theatre Festival, the Broadway League Theater Management Diversity Intensive and the Digital Theater Project. Avery also produces professional development for NYCDOE teachers and school leaders. A leading voice in the field of Theater education, he presents nationally and internationally and received a 2017 Likhashev Foundation Fellowship working with Theater artists and educators in St. Petersburg, Russia. Avery previously worked as a Teaching Artist and then Director of Education for a number of professional theaters in Washington, DC and NYC.

Aaron Feinstein, All IN co-artistic director, is a Film/Theater director and Arts educator based in NY and is the Executive Director and Founder of Actionplay. He is also the creator of the AIMS inclusive improvisational musical comedy workshop program, and the Actionplay Chorus that was featured on HBO and Comedy Central Broadcast of *Night of Too Many Stars*. With Elaine Hall, he co-directed the widely celebrated pilot program The Miracle Project, which was the subject of the 2-time Emmy Award Winning HBO Documentary *Autism: The Musical*. Aaron has presented nationally at the United Nations, NYC Department of Education, Wonderplay, Arts in Education Roundtable, The Voice Foundation, Museum Access Consortium, and ICDL. He has authored several books, articles and journals focused on changing the stigmas surrounding disability.



Brisa Areli Muñoz, All IN co-artistic director, is a chicana Theatre director, cultural worker and educator based out of Brooklyn, New York. She serves as the Artistic Director of Applied Theatre Collective, and Manager of Community Partnerships for Public Works of The Public Theater. Brisa received her Master's Degree in Applied Theatre from the City University of New York and is an adjunct professor for Brooklyn College's MFA program in Performing Arts Management. She is passionate about using Art as a tool to motivate, activate & transform, and is committed to exploring the ways Arts-based strategies can provoke social consciousness, community development and civic engagement.

Christine Newberry is a 15-year-old girl who has an avid love for Art. Christine lives in Staten Island with her family and attends the Theater Program at Susan E. Wagner High School. She is in her junior year. Christine first performed a solo during 7th grade, surprising her parents and the audience with her natural skills. Christine has been part of several musicals: *Annie*, *High School Musical*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *The Little Mermaid* organized by the Staten Island Children's Theater Association. In H.S. Christine has been in *Spooktacular* and *Hairspray*. She proudly was part of the first All IN All-inclusive NYC Ensemble original play, *Next Stop*. She spent this past summer in the Summer Arts Institute at Frank Sinatra Performing Arts School. She has taken voice lessons for 3 years at the S.I. Conservatory of Music, and Dance lessons at Rosemary's Dance Studio. Additionally, Christine served as the Manager of the Girls' Soccer Team during her freshman and sophomore year. Christine is a hard-working student, who maintains her honor roll status year round. Christine's ultimate dream and career goal is to become a performer on Broadway.

New Vic/Lexington School for the Deaf

Arielle Lever is a New York City based Theater Artist and Teaching Artist, who focuses a great deal of her energy and work around accessibility. She is a co-founder and Teaching Artist at CO/LAB Theater Group, a non-profit dedicated to providing individuals with developmental disabilities Theater Arts opportunities. Arielle is also a Teaching Artist at The New Victory Theater where she interfaces with a variety of students all over the five boroughs. This past year at New Vic she had the pleasure of working closely with Lexington School for the Deaf on a residency and will continue to do so this season. Additionally, she is on the committee for the GIVE inclusive classroom resource guide. Arielle teaches a college course at CUNY for neurodiverse students. When she is not teaching, she can be found performing on stage and on screen. She was recently seen at St. Anne's Warehouse, The Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival, and Lincoln Center Education. She works closely with Trusty Sidekick Theater Company to develop immersive theater pieces for young people with autism and other developmental disabilities. Past productions include: *Campfire* and *Up and Away*.

Erica Reinsch Tusciuk is the Associate Director of Education/School Engagement at The New Victory Theater, where she manages the New Victory Classroom Workshop and Residency programs. Erica is in charge of creating all curriculum and content for the New Victory's school programs, in collaboration with the New Victory Teaching Artist Ensemble. Additionally, Erica is a Teaching Artist at CO/LAB Theatre Group, an organization that provides Arts opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities. Erica is a singer, actor and dancer and holds a Bachelor of Music in Musical Theatre from The Catholic University of America and a Master of Arts in Educational Theatre from New York University.



My name is *May Thadan Tun* and I'm a senior this year. I'm from Myanmar (Burma). I studied in Singapore for 4 years before I moved here four and a half years ago. I started to learn ASL in 2015 and picked it up quickly in a few months. I was very shy, timid and quiet, but I'm now brave and motivated. I love sports and I play volleyball, basketball, softball, track and field. I have participated in a lot of activities – Drama Club, Mock Trial, Student Council, Jr. NAD, Volleyball Club and Blue Brights, which involves leading and welcoming new freshmen.

Liz Wolter has over thirty years of experience as a high school English teacher at the Lexington School for the Deaf. In addition to studies in Theater, Educational Theater, Deaf Education and Spanish, she is a nationally dual-certified sign language interpreter. Liz's past work with students is documented in the novel *Train Go Sorry: Inside a Deaf World*, the resource book *Signing the Body Poetic: Essays on American Sign Language Literature*, and in the documentary film *Deaf Jam*. She was bitten by the Theater bug at a young age and has been infected ever since. Liz fell in love with the New Victory Theater years ago and each season inspires her through the residency program with a rotating group of students and Teaching Artists.

My name is *Eric Xu* and I am a student of Lexington School for the Deaf. I was born here in New York City and my family comes from China. I grew up at Lexington since I was 4 years old. I received recognition as the middle school valedictorian. I'm an introvert and smart. This year I am a senior student. I participated in Mock Trial club last spring and recently joined Academic Bowl club this year.

Pamela Pritzker-Ridley is a curriculum coordinator and teacher supervisor at Learning Together in Montgomery, NY. A nationally certified American Sign Language interpreter, licensed and former special education teacher and a certified Visual Arts teacher, she is passionate about equity and access, especially in the field of Arts education. Pam develops and delivers professional developments to teachers and administrators on best practices for inclusive education. She was formerly the project manager and contributing writer for the *Arts and Students with Disabilities Online Resource Compendium*, (NYC DOE, Office of Arts and Special Projects). She is a Steering Committee member of the Arts for All Abilities Consortium and the recipient of the 2019 VSA NYC Arts Advocate Award.

American Sign Language Interpreters: *Shelby Edwards* and *Jana Owen*

Organization Bios:

Lexington School for the Deaf, a private, non-profit school, was founded in 1864 by Isaac and Hannah Rosenfeld on behalf of their deaf daughter, Carrie. The school occupied a series of rented houses in Manhattan until 1882, when the board raised funds for a school building at 904 Lexington Avenue between 67th and 68th Streets. By the 1960s, increasing enrollment necessitated the purchase of a six-acre site in Queens. In January 1968, the school relocated to



East Elmhurst. Today, Lexington is the largest school for the deaf in New York State with an enrollment of 274 students. The school serves profoundly deaf students from throughout the five boroughs of New York City as well as Long Island. The educational program includes pre-school, elementary, middle and high school. Additional services include Ready to Learn for parents of deaf infants and toddlers, foreign language transition classes, special needs classes and a dormitory for students requiring additional academic support. The school also offers speech, occupational, and physical therapy, as well as mental health counseling. Lexington is a charter member of the 4201 Schools Association of New York and receives financial support for operations from the New York State Department of Education.

The New Victory opens new worlds to kids and families through extraordinary performances, education and engagement programs. Since 1995, this nonprofit theater has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States. Featuring artistic traditions from a multitude of cultures, New Victory presents theatrical experiences that spark the imagination and broaden our understanding of the world and our place in it.

As the largest provider of live performing Arts and Arts education to NYC schools, New Victory Education makes it possible for 40,000 students each year to see New Victory shows for little to no cost. In schools across the city, New Victory pairs these visits with free, Arts-based classroom workshops and offers artistic professional development for educators to incorporate the Arts into their curriculum.

New Victory is committed to Arts access for all communities of New York to engage with the international shows on its stages. New Victory is celebrated for programs including Victory Dance, which provides free Dance performances and education to NYC summer schools; SPARK, which infuses Arts-deprived school communities with live performing Arts and Arts education; and GIVE, designed to address equitable student engagement in inclusion classrooms.

Afternoon Sessions

12:40pm and 2:00pm

<p>Flamenco Pa' Todos: Inclusive Classroom Strategies for Students With Disabilities</p>

Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana and P.S. 396K present an interactive workshop on effective classroom strategies and tools for teaching students with disabilities through the art of Flamenco. The success of this unique partnership between a District 75 school and a culturally-specific Dance company transcends genre to inform all types of Arts Education programming. Participants will learn how a Teaching Artist, classroom teacher, speech pathologist and physical therapist collaborate to support students' IEP goals, while using Flamenco as a vehicle to increase confidence, communication and engagement.



Presenters

Juana Calá is a Master Teaching Artist for Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana and continues to expand upon the curriculum she created to integrate Flamenco into special programs for students of varying abilities. Juana's experience began at Family Residences and Essential Enterprises where she received extensive training and certifications in strategies for working with children with autism and other populations. Juana works with NYC District 75 public schools including The Hecksher Foundation, JM Rapport High School, P.S. 721X, P.S. 17X, and P.S. 396X. She is an active member of The Values Group of the Arts for All Abilities Consortium.

Ethan Lombardi (MS, CCC-SLP, TSSLD) is a nationally certified speech language pathologist and teacher of students with speech and language disabilities. He works with children in grades K-8 who are either multiply handicapped or diagnosed on the autism spectrum. Ethan believes in the power of music and movement, and strongly supports trans-disciplinary collaboration.

Rachel McCaulsky, (BFA, MST) is the Arts Coordinator and Social Studies Through Dance Teacher at P396K, teaching students with severe to profound disabilities. She incorporates movement into the school's curriculum, creating units of study that fuse social studies with Dance. Her units of study have been published in the NYC Department of Education Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance through the Office of Arts and Special Projects. Throughout her career she has had the opportunity to perform with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Ballet Hispánico, Ailey II and Dallas Black Dance Theatre, as well as being featured in Dance Magazine.

Greg Melnick, (Guitarist) has worked closely with Juana Calá and Rachel McCaulsky at P.S. 396K, creating music that supports students' development and learning in these residency sessions.

Karen Mulligan (PT, ATP) has been a physical therapist in a wide variety of settings for over 20 years. She currently works with elementary and middle school-aged children as a PT and as an Assistive Technology Professional. She has experience in adapting common objects and activities to allow children with physical and cognitive challenges to participate in school activities with their peers, and she introduces children and teachers to specialized equipment to enhance educational and recreational skills.

Karen has enjoyed working with Flamenco Vivo at P.S. 396 for 2 years, providing her expertise in addressing the sensory and motor challenges of the students so that they can succeed and enjoy their experiences with Flamenco Vivo.



**GIVE:
Growing Inclusivity for Vibrant Engagement. Defining a Partnership**

To support Teaching Artists across the Arts Education field to meet the needs of students with disabilities in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms, The New Victory Theater, ArtsConnection and Community-Word Project are collaborating to create a flexible resource that will help TA's of all Arts disciplines effectively plan, implement and reflect on Arts learning in ICT classes. This session will explore the purpose, process and history of this unique partnership and its expected outcomes.

Presenters

Courtney J. Boddie, Director of Education/School Engagement, New Victory Theater, oversees all programs related to school communities including the New Victory Education Partnership program, teacher professional development training in the performing arts and 55+ New Victory Teaching Artists. Ms. Boddie has expanded the theater's scope of work in such programs as Victory Dance, which provides free dance and dance education to NYC summer schools; Create, a theater-based teacher professional development track for the city's Pre-K expansion, the largest in the nation; and GIVE, a brand new initiative to address equitable student engagement in inclusion classrooms.

For her leadership in New Victory SPARK (Schools with the Performing Arts Reach Kids), a robust multi-year arts program that has transformed New York City schools previously underserved in the Arts, she was honored by TYA/USA with a 2019 TYA Community Impact Award.

Ms. Boddie is the Creator and Host of [Teaching Artistry with Courtney J. Boddie](#), a monthly podcast featuring engaging interviews, roundtable conversations and panels with artists and Arts Education leaders. Ms. Boddie serves on the Teaching Artist Committee of the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable and is an adjunct professor at New York University.

Steven Tennen, Executive Director, ArtsConnection, has served as Executive Director of ArtsConnection, one of the nation's leading Arts Education organizations, since 1985. He previously taught in the New York City public schools; was Program Director at Henry Street Settlement's Arts for Living Center where he conceptualized and directed their Arts-in-Education, family theater and ethnic heritage theatre programs and was Co-Producer of the New Federal Theatre; and served as Executive Director of the Jamaica Arts Center. Mr. Tennen holds an M.A. in Theater from Brooklyn College. He has participated in many local, national and international forums on Arts Education, served on innumerable evaluative panels and juries, and currently serves on the Arts Education Advisory Committee to the NYC Panel for Educational Policy. He was co-recipient of the first Arts and Business Council Encore Award for Outstanding Management of an Arts Organization.



Michele Kotler, Executive Director, Community-Word Project, founded the Community-Word Project in 1997. She is a graduate of the NYC public school system. She received her BA from Sarah Lawrence College and her MFA from the University of Michigan, where she also taught creative writing. She is a member of the Writers In the Schools Alliance (WITSA) and has served on the New York City Arts In Education Roundtable, Association of Teaching Artists and the Catalog for Giving board. Her poetry has appeared in *Days I Moved Through Ordinary Sounds*, *The Teachers of WritersCorps in Poetry and Prose*, *Washington Square Review*, and *Painted Bride Quarterly*.

Leigh Wells, Deputy Director of Programs and Operations, Community-Word Project, is an Arts Education and non-profit administrator. For the last ten years her work has been centered here in NYC, including work with the Queens Museum, Museum of Arts & Design, PROOF: Media for Social Justice, and the Museum of the Moving Image. She is currently a Trustee-at-Large on the New York City Museum Educators Roundtable (NYCMER) Board.

Anne Pasquale, GIVE Program Manager Sub, ArtsConnection, has been with ArtsConnection as a theatrical Teaching Artist for over twenty years. As a Special Needs sibling and advocate, Anne welcomes this as another gratifying opportunity to partner with ArtsConnection, and Arts for All Abilities Consortium. Over the years she has had the pleasure of developing and sharing her practice with both organizations – as an Everyday Arts in Special Education (EASE) Instructor, as well as being supported in spreading the word about her solo show, BOB whose tagline reads: *When one person has mental illness the whole family has special needs*. Today, she is eager to share what GIVE has to offer.

Katie Fanning, Education Project Coordinator, New Victory Theater, coordinates between the New Victory Theater, Community-Word Project, and ArtsConnection on the GIVE Project. She is also Project Manager for the Supporting Transitions project with the Museum, Arts, and Culture Access Consortium, working to increase employment and recreational opportunities for teenagers and adults with autism and developmental disabilities at cultural organizations in New York. She previously worked at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in the Guest Services and Accessibility department. She piloted and developed the Access Ambassador initiative, a job training program for high school students with autism and developmental disabilities, and worked on a variety of programs, including Lincoln Center Moments, a performance series for individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

Laura Borgwardt, Teaching Artist, ArtsConnection, is an actor and Teaching Artist based in Brooklyn (but has a valid passport, just in case). She is a co-founder and TA at CO/LAB Theater Group, a nonprofit for actors with developmental disabilities, and teaches workshops and residencies throughout New York City with ArtsConnection and The Stuttering Association for the Young. Lauraborgwardt.com

Tricia Patrick, Teaching Artist, New Victory Theater, is a performer and recent graduate of the New School's Masters of Arts in Arts Management and Entrepreneurship program. She recently developed a one-woman show called "Move Towards the Light," featuring the lives of Ida B.



Wells-Barnett and Bessie Coleman. Tricia teaches Theater to students ages 3 – 18 years old. She creates unique curriculum which invites kids into the world of plays and stories where they can build memorable characters and experiences.

Adriana Guzmán, Teaching Artist, Community-Word Project. As a first-generation American and Queens native, Adriana was born into a diverse world; for her, a walk around the neighborhood was equivalent to a trip around the globe. This foundation of multiculturalism instilled a spirit of global citizenship at a very young age, which has carried through in her work as an Artist and Educator. Adriana received her BFA in Graphic Design and Art Education from Pratt Institute, and an MFA in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management from The School of International Training. She has honed her artistic and training skills in a variety of roles: A Teaching Artist and Arts Coordinator in N.Y.C. focusing on multicultural learning with POC, a social justice Visual Artist in indigenous communities of Guatemala, a Creative Arts and Mural Instructor with youth in The Dominican Republic, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco with women artisans, a facilitator of movement workshops addressing conflict transformation with children in N.Y.C., and a Creative Training Consultant with local environmental conservationists in Belize. She also co-developed training on Arts-based healing for social action practitioners and is an advocate for the Arts as therapy.

Organization Bios:

For 40+ years *ArtsConnection* (AC) has provided comprehensive Arts-in-Education for NYC public school students. AC reaches 45,000 public school students (preK-12) annually through programming in 180+ schools, as well as through out-of-school-time programs engaging teens in NYC's vast array of cultural opportunities. Programs draw upon 125 culturally diverse Teaching Artists' expertise. Our 13 federal U.S. Education grants have allowed for in-depth research and evaluation, supporting AC's program design and dissemination to the field at large. AC works with special education classes in many of our partner schools; 22% of the nearly 1,000 classrooms served over the past year were designated as serving students with disabilities (SWD). AC designs programs across the Arts for SWDs, while also developing specific program models and site-wide professional development for educators. For example, services to D75 include Spectrum Musical Theater, a sequential program for students on the autism spectrum. A study by a consortium of university researchers found participants in this program improved their ability to read social cues, develop perspective and imitate skills critical to the development of social competency. AC received one of the 22 inaugural grants awarded citywide through the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs' Create NYC Disability Forward Fund.

Community-Word Project (CWP) is a New York City based Arts-in-Education organization that inspires young people to become active citizens through collaborative Arts residencies and teacher training programs. Community-Word Project believes creative learning through the Arts gives children the opportunity to practice critical thinking skills and express themselves confidently while respecting other points of view. Teaching students to solve problems creatively, to communicate clearly, and to collaborate with others gives them skills necessary to reach their learning potential. Since 1997, CWP has educated more than 25,000 students and trained over 800 Teaching Artists. Through a co-teaching and multidisciplinary model, students in CWP Collaborative Arts Residency Programs hone the academic, interpersonal, and creative skills they



need to succeed in school and beyond. CWP's Teaching Artist Project's (TAP) comprehensive, skills-training seminars and on-the-job internships provide students with the qualified artists they need to meet their individual needs and exceed city- and state-mandated learning standards. Additionally, the Teaching Artist Project leads the TAP Cohort, a group of 17 Arts-in-Education organizations providing meaningful Arts engagement for young people, adults, and seniors.

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The Speech and Language Arts Initiative – Weaving It Together

The Speech and Language Arts Initiative is a multi-school, multi-borough partnership between District 75's Office of the Arts, Citywide Speech Services and Office of Autism. This session – part hands-on, part panel – will focus on the exemplary Initiative work of one of those sites, P721K. Learn what Speech/Language Pathologists (SLPs) do. See how the Drama teacher and SLPs work together, how the principal supports and sustains that Theater/SLP work – and the entire school's collaboration between Arts specialists and Related service providers.

Presenters

Jenna Cassano has been a speech therapist at P721K for the last 4+ years. She provides speech and language therapy for students with significant to profound global disabilities. She also services students outside in the community at multiple worksites, including Coney Island Hospital. During her time at P721K, she has been a part of many projects, including the D75 Debate Team, Project Love and multiple Theatre productions, including, but not limited to, *Press Play*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *The Nutcracker*, all working alongside Mr. Michael Pantone. She received both



her B.A. and her M.A. in Speech Language Pathology from St. John's University and is now an adjunct professor on the Staten Island campus, teaching undergraduate courses in Speech Language Pathology. She loves bringing her speech and language sessions outside of the traditional therapy setting (therapy room/classroom). She strongly feels that providing students with both creative and organic opportunities for interaction, is not only best, but crucial for their successes in communication. During her free time she is an artist.

A speech and language pathologist (SLP) for the past 20 years, and PROMPT certified, *Mark Corallo* has treated individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cognitive Impairments, Language Learning Disabilities, Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Apraxia of Speech.

As a SLP and consultant, Mark has specialized in the development of social skills for K-12 special education students. His work bridges the gap between speech, language and social skill development in order to support academic functioning in the classroom. Mark has designed Social Skills Theater Arts Performance Programs – in school settings and privately – to further those efforts.

He assists teachers and related service providers in understanding how to support social skill interventions and communication through a variety of teaching strategies. These include Direct Teaching, Facilitating and coaching students, Implementation of UDL strategies, Humor and improvisation to sustain student engagement, Dynamic Assessment, Modification of curriculum, Data Collection.

Mark possesses a license in school leadership and administration from New York State. He serves as Director of the Office of Autism for District 75 NYC DOE.

Since December 2013, *Matt Kostel* has been the Supervisor of Speech Improvement for the following District 75 organizations, which are part of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE): P036K, P077K, P368K, P370K, P373K, P753K and P771K. As a Supervisor of Speech Improvement, he has the role of supporting Teachers of Speech Improvement in the assessment, creation and implementation of strategies to best meet the communication and academic needs of students on their caseloads. Prior to December 2013, Mr. Kostel was a Teacher of Speech Improvement for P075Q for 6 years. He worked with students (ages 5 – 14 years old) who had the following classifications: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Emotionally Challenged, Cognitively Impaired and Multiple Disabilities. Before joining the NYCDOE, he worked for Eden 2 Programs (The Genesis School in Dix Hills, Long Island). During the day, he worked as a full-time teacher assistant with students (13-21 years old) inside a classroom that followed an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) curriculum. On the weekends he worked as a staff member in a group home for those students.

Amanda McFee currently serves as the Coordinator of Arts Education for District 75. In this role she is responsible for providing professional development for the Arts disciplines & Arts integration, developing student programs, creating partnerships within the NYC Arts Community and supporting family engagement through Arts-based experiences. She specializes in accessible instruction for students with significant to profound global disabilities. She believes that the Arts give opportunity to students to expand communication and socialization, develop



motor skills, and increase problem solving abilities. Her passion for the Arts and how they impact persons with disabilities led – along with colleagues Mark Corallo and Matthew Kostel – to the further development of a Speech and Language Initiative, enhancing communication and instruction through Drama. Amanda spent her life surrounded by the Arts. She studied voice, and spent many years involved with jazz ensembles, professional choirs and Musical Theater, later discovering a love of set design and Visual Arts. She received a BFA in Graphic Design from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, with advanced studies in Web Design and Ceramics. She also holds an MS Ed in Special Education from PACE University.

Michael Pantone is the Theatre teacher at P721K, a District 75 (D75) alternate assessed school for students with disabilities. He splits his time working with high school students with Multiple Disabilities, and K-2 students with Autism. For the Office of Arts and Special Projects (OASP) Michael creates and facilitates workshops for teachers in D75, Inclusion settings, and General Education. For school year 2018/2019, he presented inclusive-practices workshops for The Citywide Theatre Professional Development series and for the new three-day Arts and Students with Disabilities Short Courses. Additionally, Michael served as a creative associate for the OASP's inaugural All-IN(clusive) All City Teen Theatre Ensemble program. He received his Theatre training from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, SUNY's Empire State College, CUNY's Applied Theatre Program, and City College's Educational Theatre Program. Michael received his M.S. Ed in Special Education from Pace University.

Justine Sheha has been a Speech Therapist at P721K since September 2012. While she has provided services to students with a significant to profound disabilities in multiple classroom educational settings, she mostly works with students with Autism. Justine received her bachelor's degree in Child Study, with a concentration in Speech-Language Pathology, from St. Joseph's College and her Master's Degree in Speech Language Pathology from Long Island University. She believes that providing therapy in a collaborative manner will provide all students with the potential for functional communication and life skills. New to the Theater world, she worked alongside Michael Pantone with two classes in the production of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Barbara Tremblay began her journey in the NYC DOE twenty-nine years ago as a paraprofessional. Since then she has held many roles in the Department of Education, including teacher, District Administrator, Assistant Principal and – for the last seven years – Principal of P721K in District 75. The Arts are a high priority area for her and play a vital role in supporting the school's mission – enabling young adults with developmental disabilities to utilize their talents, strengths and capabilities to live and work in the community. She seeks the very best teachers, curriculum, instructional methodologies and partnerships to meet the needs of all students and ensure they receive the highest quality instruction. P721K strives to create a culture where active participation and first-hand experiences are the means for students to reach new levels of learning. Ms. Tremblay accomplishes this through strategic planning, collaboration and open communication. She will always ask students and staff alike, "Where are you going?" as a catchphrase to provide an open dialogue about her student's future and ensuring they are set up for success.



Organization Bio:

The core belief at *P721K* is that all students can learn and succeed when provided a continuum of specially designed instruction, to enhance independence and transition towards fulfilling functional, post-secondary goals. Students learn best when provided with integrated functional literacy/math, social studies/current events, occupational and vocational training, technology, the Arts, and community-based instruction that emphasizes student choice and develops independence. Instruction addresses each student's individual needs to prepare them for their next transition to a new school, or to volunteer or work in their community during their high school and post-secondary careers.

A Tale of Two Schools...and One Theater Company: Creating Inclusive Theater Experiences

Two Drama classes from two schools came together to make Theater and build relationships. Middle school students from LearningSpring School, a school for students with autism, and Institute for Collaborative Education, a NYC public high school, engaged in a series of workshops to create theatrical work. Enter CO/LAB Theater Group, a Theater company for adults with developmental disabilities, who modeled what inclusive theater-making looks like and created a space for both schools to see Theater together and learn from the actors. This session will share the journey of this unique collaboration and strategies for creating inclusive, collaborative educational Theater experiences.

Presenters

Dewitt Burgess is a CO/LAB Theater Group Actor.

Danielle Ferrante is currently the Social Skills Director at LearningSpring. She has been working with children diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum for almost 16 years. Danielle holds a Master's Degree in Human Services, with a specialization in Mental Health Counseling. A certified trainer of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention through Cornell University, she has published an article in the Autism File about social skills and Drama as an intervention tool and co-authored an article about school programs for children diagnosed on the autism spectrum.

Aliza Greenberg is the Arts Enrichment Coordinator at LearningSpring School, a school for students on the autism spectrum. Aliza is also the Project Leader for Supporting Transitions with the Museum, Arts and Culture Access Consortium (MAC), a project to increase opportunities for adults with autism. Aliza is a Teaching Artist with CO/LAB Theater Group and has consulted with Atlantic Theater, Trusty Sidekick Theater, and other Arts organizations. Previously: Program Manager at the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Education Program Manager at Roundabout Theatre



Company. B.A., Bryn Mawr College (Psychology, Education); Ed.M., Harvard Graduate School of Education (Arts in Education).

Natalie Mack is a NYC-based artist and educator. She is a proud member of Trusty Sidekick Theater Company, The Society for Misfit Puppets, and Saint Fortune. Natalie teaches Drama and Humanities at The Institute for Collaborative Education (ICE) in The East Village. Her most recent projects include: Finegan Kruckemeyer's THE FALLS (Unconformity Festival, fall/2018), and Trusty Sidekick's THE MENDELSSOHN ELECTRIC (Park Avenue Armory, winter/2018). Upcoming: THE GOSPEL ELECTRIC (Park Avenue Armory, winter/2019). Check out more at Natmack.com.

Hayley Sherwood is an Arts administrator and producer, Teaching Artist and actor. As Program Manager at CO/LAB Theater Group, she creates and maintains partnerships with day hubs, schools, recreation centers and Arts organizations. Additionally, she produces COMMUNITY WORKS at Williamstown Theatre Festival, a year-round program that partners with 12 local organizations and casts 75+ local residents in a world premiere musical. She is a Teaching Artist and performer in NYC, working primarily with Opening Act and Story Pirates. She holds a BFA in Theatre Arts from Boston University and a MA in Educational Theatre from NYU. Hayley is from San Diego, CA.

ICE Students

Final Convening

3:25pm

<p>Out of the Shadows Films of and a Visit with Susan Abdulezer</p>

Susan Abdulezer is a digital spelunker. As a filmmaker, she takes a deep dive into classrooms, studios, theaters and homes to capture the messy, beautiful, often astounding stories of students, teachers and parents in District 75, the district for students with disabilities in New York City. The result is an open film vault introducing scores of surprising and inspired individuals whose stories would otherwise have been kept in the dark.

Presenter

Susan Abdulezer is a native New Yorker originally from the Lower East Side. She attended Brooklyn College, Columbia Teachers College, NYU and the University of Stockholm, Sweden.



Susan began working at the School for the Deaf on 23rd Street, NYC, teaching darkroom photography, desktop publishing and digital media. Then her career moved one block east to District 75 to take on production of professional development videos, documentaries and publications rich in stories and pictures of the students in Special Education.

Along the way Susan wrote feature articles for Converge Magazine, interviewing groundbreaking educators at the dawn of the digital classroom. But she's always learned the most from her students.

Susan's exploration of the cross section of educational and technology lead her to create, in collaboration with her students, interactive projects called "StreetSigns: A City Kid's Guide to American Sign Language" and "The Virtual Alphabet Book." These projects are in the permanent archives of the Smithsonian Museum and won the Computerworld/Smithsonian Award in 1996 and 1997 for Innovation in Technology in Academia.

Currently Susan is editing a film called *Next Stop*, about creating an original musical in four months with a newly formed group of high school performers, with and without disabilities.