

A LOOK AHEAD

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2022

The **A Look Ahead** conference series brings together expert speakers for training that focuses on improving the quality of life for individuals living with disability and the people that support them.

A Look Ahead partners include:
The Arc of DFW Area, FEAT-North Texas, The Self-Determination Group
and First United Methodist Church of Arlington

Website: <https://thearcofdw.org/a-look-ahead-series/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/alookaheadseries/>

#alaseries



Welcome to the A Look Ahead Quarterly Mini Conference Series!

A Look Ahead is brought to you by four partnering agencies: The Arc of DFW Area, FEAT-NT, The Self-Determination Group and FUMC-Arlington. We have gathered today to offer a half day conference for individuals with disabilities, their families and friends and the professionals who work with them. We offer you a day filled with important information, resources and strategies to help you look ahead and create a plan with hopes and dreams for the future.

“There is only ONE success... to be able to spend your life in your own way.”

Christopher Morely, Journalist, Novelist, Essayist & Poet (1890-1957)

Our knowledgeable and engaging lineup of speakers, panelists and topics is sure to help fill your toolbox of strategies and ideas. Take advantage of these sessions and learn all you can and leave here with a renewed determination to create a good life for your child, friend, family member, student or yourself.

We have a great group of exhibitors today. Please visit their tables. You will find valuable information and can connect with resources in our community.

While passing in the hall or visiting the exhibitor tables, be sure to meet other conference attendees. This conference offers some great networking opportunities.

Thank you to our volunteers that make today possible. It takes a lot of hard work and commitment to pull off an event of this size and frequency.

If you would like to receive information about further A Look Ahead events, be sure to sign up with the conference planning partner organizations so that you will be added to the email distribution lists.

Enjoy the conference - you're in for a real treat!

A Look Ahead Conference Partners

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Registration	8:30 am – 9:00 am
Welcome	9:00 am – 9:20 am
Break – Please stop by and visit our exhibitors	9:20 am – 9:30 am

1st Set of Breakout Sessions 9:30 am – 11:30 am

- Disability Planning: Key Steps to Achieving Financial Success – Allison Schaberg
- Equal Power: Because It’s the Right Thing to Do – Ty Day & Aimee Ortiz-Day
- Life After Graduation: Options, Actions & Adventures – Cheyenne Jock & Frances Sheinberg
- Creating a Community Like Adults Independent and Motivated – Ashley Sanchez
- SSI and SSDI Basics – Cynda Green

Lunch (on site) 11:30 am – 12:20 pm

2nd Set of Breakout Sessions 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm

- Empowering Self-Determination for Your Disabled Child – Harper McKenzie
- Legislative Issues & Advocacy Tools – Ellen Bauman
- Preparing Students with Disabilities for College Success – Elizabeth L. Hamblet
- We Are All Social Beings! – Carrie Windmeyer & Panelists

Please stop by and visit
our exhibitors!

They welcome your conversation and questions.



Scan the QR code
to download all
handouts
made available.

CEU's AVAILABLE FOR TEXAS EDUCATORS, TEXAS SOCIAL WORKERS

Please SIGN-IN when you arrive. You must fill out and turn in an evaluation form to obtain your CEU's.

You will also be asked to sign-in to each session.

Certificates will be emailed after the event.

Texas Educator & Social Workers CEU's provided by The Arc of DFW Area

Creating a Community Like Adults Independent and Motivated (9:30 am – 10:30 am)

Presenter: Ashley Sanchez, Adults Independent and Motivated

Room: 154

Adults Independent and Motivated (AIM) is a community of adults who have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities such as Autism and Down Syndrome and live independently, with appropriate support, in their own apartments. AIM is located in Austin, Texas, and there is only one other community of its kind in the U.S. During this session, Ashley will provide an overview of what makes AIM different and successful and share ideas for how families can start a similar program in their city.

Disability Planning-Key Steps to Achieving Financial Success

Presenter: Allison Schaberg, Consolidated Planning Group

Room: 151

As a parent of a child with a disability, you know there are many decisions to be made as it relates to the future of your family. Considerations such as transitioning, future care options, and preservation of benefit eligibility are a few items that require intentional evaluation. These are especially important if you have a child who may need care for the rest of their life. During this session Allison will explain how to successfully plan for your financial future.

Equal Power Because It's the Right Thing to Do

Presenter: Aimee Ortiz-Day and Ty Day

Room: 155-156

Have you ever felt hurt or powerless at school? Join Ty, and his mother Aimee, as they share how they used trauma informed care and person-centered thinking to help Ty grow into a young man who has power and control over his life as a Junior in high school.

Life After Graduation: Options, Actions & Adventures

Presenter: Cheyenne Jock, Best Buddies & Frances Sheinberg, Best Buddies Participant

Room: 152

What do you want to be when you grow up? Most people are asked this question before they hit kindergarten, but persons with IDD aren't typically asked until they are in high school after their peers have already started working. Could this be the reason only about 19% of individuals with IDD are employed. Join this dynamic duo to learn what options exist when it comes to employment, support, and resources, what actions you need to take to access these resources and prepare for work, and hear about others who have successfully maintained employment, gained independence and achieved their goals.

SSI and SSDI Basics (10:30 am – 11:30 am)

Presenter: Cynda Green, Texas Parent to Parent

Room 154

As you consider the transition to adulthood, there are many decisions to be made. This is especially true when trying to navigate through SSI & SSDI. During this session, Cynda will provide an overview of each benefits program. Eligibility requirements, the applications process, specific benefits and more. Have questions? This session is for you!

Empowering Self-Determination for Your Disabled Child

Presenter: Harper McKenzie, Novelist, Creator & Freelance Researcher

Room: 154

Having self-determination as a disabled person isn't about doing things alone or without support. It's about doing things with your team behind you as they empower you to lead the charge of your life. So, how do you be on that team for your disabled loved one? How do you make sure you stay on that team and keep centering their agency as they grow up and times change? In this session, disabled self-advocate, community activist, and writer Harper McKenzie will share her experience advocating for her agency, building her team, and working together to balance independence and interdependence over her formative years.

Legislative Issues & Advocacy Tools

Presenter: Ellen Bauman, The Arc of DFW Area

Room Number: 152

Legislative Advocacy is important. Advocacy changes "what is", into "what should be". And we all know that there is room for improvement in Texas. During this session Ellen will review issues important to disabled Texans and their families and provide tools to add to your advocacy tool kit.

Preparing Students with Disabilities for College Success

Presenter: Elizabeth L. Hamblet, LD Advisory

Room Number: 151

The transition from high school is challenging for any high school student. For students with disabilities, it also presents a disability services system that is very different from the one they knew in high school, but with the proper preparation, students can enjoy success! Author and university learning disabilities consultant Elizabeth C. Hamblet explains how the system for accommodations works at college, what is commonly available, and some tips for how to help students find the right level of support.

We Are All Social Beings!

Presenter: Carrie Boggess Windmeyer, Certified Recreation Therapist and Panelists from: Adventures Unbound, Community Connections, NT-SNAP, Special Olympics Unified Sports & Unified Champion Schools

Room 155-156

Recreation and leisure activities and community connections are an important part of life. They are a vehicle through which people have fun, meet new friends and experience personal growth. Yet traditionally, for people with disabilities, these areas are given low priority as an area in which support and assistance are provided. It doesn't have to be this way. Join Carrie and panelists for a lively discussion. Carrie will explore the importance and benefits of recreation/leisure activities, possible accommodations, and more so disabled people can participate in a range of school and community activities based on their personal interests. Panelists will share information about their programs and personal stories.



**"A Gentle
Reminder"**

Please turn in your conference and session evaluation forms. Your compliments and suggestions are important to us. Each form is reviewed and considered in future planning.

A Look Ahead Conference Presenters Are The Best!

Our presenters are amazing! Please let them know how much they are appreciated! They are here to share their knowledge and experiences with conference participants; to offer hope and to empower and encourage you as you look ahead.

PRESENTERS:

Ellen Bauman — The Arc of DFW Area

As the primary support for her granddaughter Cayla, Ellen became frustrated and determined to advocate for her and for others to improve their quality of life. When frustration became more than she could take, she said “Enough, I’m going to Austin” and she hasn’t looked back. Thus, Ellen serves on various local and statewide councils and committees, while also advocating for systems wide change. Ellen currently serves as the President of The Arc of DFW Area Board of Directors, Chair of Texas Parent to Parent Board of Directors, and Co-Chair of a multi-agency DME Back-Up Power Taskforce. She is the vice Chair serving her third term on the Texas Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities. Ellen also serves as a member on the HHSC’s Texas Council on Consumer Direction and HHSC’s Direct Service Worker Taskforce. These experiences have helped her to amplify the voice of people with disabilities and their families. When not advocating Ellen can be found spending time with her family.

Sarah Bridges — Adventures Unbound Traveler

Sarah is 37 years old and was born with Cerebral Palsy and works full-time for the Waxahachie ISD. She grew up in Waxahachie and loves trying new things. Sarah has been traveling with Adventures Unbound since 2018. Sarah says she looks forward to Adventures Unbound trips because she can see and try new things and meet friends independently of her family needing to accompany her.

Aimee Ortiz-Day

Aimee is the mother of two boys who are adventurous, funny, kind and have a disability. As a certified Person-Centered Thinking trainer, she strives to incorporate Person-Centered Practices in all aspects of her professional and personal life. Aimee has spoken in multiple conferences and has provided training for educators, law enforcement officers, individuals with disabilities, families, and professionals.

Ty Day

Ty is a junior at Bryan High School. He is a member of the Junior Varsity Tennis Team and Bryan High Viking Theater. He likes to do the best he can and help others learn how to listen to their kids when they need help. It makes him happy to be seen as an equal and as cool person on the inside. He enjoys drawing and spending time with people who care about him.

Cynda Green — Texas Parent to Parent

Cynda is the Program Director, she oversees all plans and program activities, and oversees and finalizes the grant reporting on these activities. She also coordinates the Pathways to Adulthood Program. Cynda travels throughout Texas to conduct trainings and provides volunteer and parent support. She is a Texas Partners in Policy making graduate, class of 2021. Cynda has two children. One whom has a disability



Wi-Fi connections are available in all rooms.
The Wi-Fi password is JohnWelsey

PRESENTERS CONTINUED:

Elizabeth L. Hamblet – LD Advisory

Elizabeth has worked as a learning disabilities specialist in college disability services offices for two decades. In addition to working at a university, she is a nationally requested speaker on preparing students with disabilities for successful college transition. Hamblet is the author of a book and a laminated guide on this subject, and her work has appeared in numerous journals and online platforms. Explore her site, www.LDadvisory.com, and connect with her on social media.

Cheyenne Jock – Best Buddies, Texas

Cheyenne has been working with individuals with IDD for the last 12 years in education, residential, medical, and now employment settings. She is passionate about advocating for underserved populations and says her proudest moment of her career was lobbying at the Texas capital for equal play for persons with disabilities. Cheyenne serves on the Best Buddies Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and is a graduate from Texas A&M University Commerce. She spends her free time reading feminist-based books with her eight-year-old daughter, cuddling with her cocker spaniel, and annoying her husband.

Everett King – Special Olympics Texas

Everett has been involved with Special Olympics Texas for the past 8 years. While working within a local ISD he began coaching students in several sports. He also coached a private school team in track and football programs. Everett now works for Special Olympics Greater Ft. Worth Area and serves to assist schools in training on the Inclusion and Unified aspects of the Special Olympics program.

Erica Luke — Community Connections

Erica was a special education teacher for 7 years. After bringing in students from the general population into her self-contained classroom, she realized how important socialization amongst same age peers truly is. She has witnessed her students and student helpers' lives transform and friendships forged. Erica has also facilitated talent shows within her district and church to highlight the importance of diversity. Erica now serves as the Executive Director for Community Connections, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing free extracurricular programs for the disabled. The job might be different, but the heart behind socialization and forming friendships within the community is the same.

Harper McKenzie — Writer, Storyteller & Disability Justice Advocate

Harper is a disabled writer, storyteller, and recovering disability justice advocate from Dallas, Texas. She holds a BA in Creative Writing and Disability Studies from Emerson College, where she co-founded Access: Student Disability Union. Harper has over ten years of experience in writing, speaking, and sharing her disabled experiences as a neurodivergent woman with chronic pain. She is also the co-creator and co-host of The Disabled Standard, a podcast about what it's really like to be disabled and reject the abled standard. Harper seeks to create accurate, impactful, and intersectional representation that empowers people to live authentically and joyfully.

Ashley Sanchez — Mom & Disability Rights Activist

Ashley helped start Adults Independent and Motivated (AIM) in 2013 and has served as the board president since its inception. Ashley's oldest daughter has Down Syndrome and has lived with a roommate as an AIM participant since January 2015.

Inclusion vs. Exclusion Society is at a Turning Point

by Jack Pearpoint

Our society has reached a turning point where we must make decisions about values, direction and budgets. We no longer have the luxury of *buying* a piece of all the solutions – and thus never having to answer hard questions. The hard questions are about values – what do we believe in? What kind of future do we want for our children? How do we get there?

My analysis identifies two opposing trends, two waging factions' inclusion versus exclusion. This dilemma is broader than "schooling" and education. Most post- industrialized societies have begun to come to terms with the fact of limited resources. The debate is between people who believe in exclusivity and those who believe in inclusion (egalitarian opportunity as the predominant value).

I believe that *inclusive* options (all welcome) will utilize the talents of people who would be discarded and written off in the exclusive model. The *outsiders* will bring new perspectives and new talents to *policy conundrums* where we are in a rut and need *fresh ideas*.

The meaning of a policy of exclusion is revealed by a *reliable* senior government official's retort when asked "What should we do about those who aren't in the *mainstream*?" He responded partly in jest, partly in frustration: "We train the best, and shoot the rest." The comment was off hand but identifies the dilemma. The unstated underlying assumptions of exclusion are, among others, that:

We are not all equal in capacity or value.
It is not feasible to give equal opportunity.
We must choose and thus train an elite who will take care of the rest.
They will benefit through the trickle-down theory.
Inclusion is the opposite and works from opposite assumptions:
We are unique in value; however, each has unique capacity.
All people can learn.
All people have contributions to make.
We have a responsibility and an opportunity to give every person the chance to make a contribution.
The criterion for inclusion is breathing, not IQ, income, colour, race, sex or language. Critics of inclusion say:
It's too expensive.
They can't learn.
They don't know what's best for them.
It can't be done.
As a critic of exclusion, I say:

It's too expensive.

They can learn.

They – people – know a tremendous amount if asked.

It can be done.

It is unethical, politically unacceptable and repugnant to write off marginalized people in our society. The cost of welfare maintenance is unbearable, either socially or economically. In short, exclusion does not work.

The critics are right if our thinking and answers are limited to the solutions we already have in place. I want to think about a new system, one that replaces the old, not just reforms it. My vision of the new system is based on the value that *everyone belongs* – all welcome.

We all have the power to listen to voices that are seldom heard. If we choose to make the time, to learn to listen, and to struggle with the pain and frustration that disempowered people feel, we will see new visions, feel new energy, and find hope in our future. There is power in the powerless. We can be catalysts, or encrusted residue. The choice is ours.

**We have a wonderful group of exhibitors today!
Please stop by and visit them – they welcome your questions.**

Acumen Fiscal Agent

Adventures Unbound

Best Buddies, Texas

Community Connections

Green Oaks Education and Support, Inc.

North Texas – Special Needs Assistance Partners

Special Olympics, Texas

Texas Parent to Parent

The Arc of DFW Area

The Self-Determination Group

We look forward to seeing you in 2023!



February 11th

Registration is open, click the QR code to register.

May 13th

August 12th

November 11

**"It's sobering to realize how much the course of a
life can be altered by a single decision."**

- Norman Kunc
