

Dear professional, family member, friend or individual on the autism spectrum:

This annual conference increases understanding and acceptance of individuals on the autism spectrum. Our keynotes, workshops and panels offer insights and strategies for awareness, self-advocacy, transition planning, employment and independence. The Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association (AHA) is a not-for-profit organization serving individuals on the autism spectrum, their families and the professionals who work with them, providing crucial resources and support as they face challenges, build on their strengths and fulfill their potential. Founded in 1988, with offices on Long Island and in New York City, AHA is directed by a dedicated and experienced volunteer executive board and expert professional advisory board. AHA's services reach nearly 10,000 people annually through one-to-one phone and e-support, more than a dozen monthly support meetings, an informative weekly AHA eNewsletter and biannual *On the Spectrum* print publication, family recreation events, biannual education conferences and signature fundraisers such as its annual ROCK 'N' BOWL for Autism. By maintaining efficient administrative practices, 90 percent of every dollar donated to AHA goes directly to providing and expanding its services to our members and community. Thank you for participating.

Pat Schissel, LMSW
Executive Director
Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association (AHA)
Conference Coordinator

THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

AHA

Ellen Forrest, J.D.
Joan Hourihane
Carole Kalvar
Rebecca Lory
Bernice Polinsky
Jeannie Wright

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY

Judith H. Cohen, J.D., Ph.D.
Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

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Kate Palmer, M.A., CCP

ASPIRE CENTER FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Shana Nichols, Ph.D.
Alyson Sheehan, Ph.D.

Conference registration includes a handbook containing materials from the keynotes and workshops. A continental breakfast and boxed lunch are also included. Agency, postsecondary school, camp, recreation and other service provider representatives will be available at our Resource Walkway with information. Books will be available for purchase at the conference bookstore. Presenting authors will be available to sign their books. **Registrations postmarked by April 4 will receive a free MP3 audio CD of all conference presentations (a \$50 value), which will be mailed four to six weeks post-conference.**

Should you require an accommodation based on a disability, or need to request an ASL interpreter, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services by phone at 516.877.3145 or email at DSS@adelphi.edu. Please allow for a reasonable time frame prior to the event; we suggest a minimum of five business days.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Registration, bookstore, resources, continental breakfast 8:30 a.m.–9:15 a.m.

Greetings from Adelphi and AHA 9:15 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

MORNING KEYNOTE

9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

“OBSERVATIONS OF AN ASPERGIAN”

John Elder Robison

John Elder Robison, an Aspergian, grew up in a time when the Asperger’s syndrome diagnosis did not exist. Having no idea of his diagnosis, his stress at trying to fit in was only heightened. He was finally diagnosed at age 40, his son 10 years later. Now an author, public speaker and educator, Robison has written the best-selling memoirs *Look Me in the Eye: My Life With Asperger’s*, *Be Different: My Adventures with Asperger’s and My Advice for Fellow Aspergians, Misfits, Families, and Teachers*, and *Raising Cubby*. He recounts his incredible life with a storytelling ability that offers perspective, inspiration, intelligence and humor, indicating successful lives can be led based on their gifts, and not hampered by limitations.

Resource Walkway and book signing 10:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Workshop Period A

11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

A1. “GETTING PAST THE GUESSWORK: WHAT MEN AND WOMEN WANT TO KNOW ABOUT DATING AND RELATIONSHIPS”

Moderator: Peter F. Gerhardt, Ed.D.

Presenters: Shana Nichols, Ph.D., John Elder Robison, Matthew E. Roth, M.A., Leslie Sickels, LCSW

The world of romance can be difficult to navigate for individuals with autism spectrum disorder—from understanding your feelings to finding the right partner. Difficult, however, does not mean impossible. Members of this panel include educators, psychologists, social workers and spectrumites. They will address factors that can facilitate or impede success and strategies that will lead to positive outcomes. An important part of the session will revolve around Q-and-A.

A2. “VOICES FROM THE SPECTRUM: LEARNING FROM MEMOIRS”

Moderator and presenter: Susan Longtin, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Presenters: Amy Gravino, M.A., Becca Lory, Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

This workshop grew out of Dr. Longtin’s research on the autobiographies written by adults with autism spectrum disorder. The strength-based perspective and other themes of these memoirs have been a source of insight and inspiration for those diagnosed and the general public. Our panel includes several AHA members who have written their life stories and will elaborate on their insider’s view.

A3. “LEGAL FORMS: COMMON MISTAKES AND MISCONCEPTIONS”

Sharon Gruer, Esq.

This presentation will review the basic legal forms necessary for an estate plan (wills, trusts, durable powers of attorney, healthcare proxies, HIPAA authorizations and living wills), as well as how to protect public benefits with supplemental needs trusts. We will also review common mistakes and misconceptions regarding estate plans, such as failure to properly update beneficiary designation forms, failure to coordinate probate and non-probate assets and other mistakes and misconceptions, so that attendees will have the knowledge to bulletproof their estate plan.

A4. “AN INNOVATIVE TREATMENT FOR VOICE AND PROSODY DEFICITS IN ADOLESCENTS WITH ASD”

Michelle Dunn, Ph.D., and Larry Harris

Impaired prosody (melody, volume, timbre, rhythm of speech) and expressive formulation are among the most significant obstacles to “social integration and vocational acceptance” for high functioning individuals with autism spectrum disorder, along with impaired social skills. Historically, prosody has been unresponsive to typical interventions, and we will present an innovative approach.

A5. “GETTING AND KEEPING A JOB: EMPLOYMENT MANAGEMENT”

Kate Palmer, M.A., CCP, CAS

Individuals with autism spectrum disorder can be productive contributors to the workforce, but the vast majority are unemployed or underemployed. Résumé building, networking and interviewing skills are particular challenges to getting a job. Keeping a job can be even more difficult. In this presentation, Kate Palmer, GRASP president/CEO, will discuss disclosure, partial disclosure and self-advocacy, as well as provide in-depth examples of co-worker and supervisor interactions and how to navigate them.

Lunch, Resource Walkway and book signing

12:15 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

1:15 p.m.–2:15 p.m.

“QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ADULTS WITH ASD: TURNING THEORY INTO PRACTICE AND LONG-TERM BENEFIT”

Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D.

Although the concept of “quality of life” has been used in the field of intellectual disabilities for more than 50 years, the factors contributing to the quality of life for adults with autism spectrum disorder have received relatively little attention in literature and practice. With increasing numbers of individuals entering the world of adult choices, challenges, risks and benefits, the concept of quality of life needs to move from well-intended theory to a practical, lifelong set of practices and supports.

Resource Walkway and book signing

2:15 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

Workshop Period B

2:45 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

B6. “FAMILY MATTERS: ENHANCING PARENT AND SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS FROM ADOLESCENCE THROUGH ADULTHOOD”

Moderators: John Elder Robison and Alyson Sheehan, Ph.D.

Panelists: Cynthia Drew, Stacey Roth, M.S., CCC-SLP, Allyson Schwartzman, Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

The nature of relationships in families impacted by autism spectrum disorder is unique and complex. This panel presentation will be structured as an interactive forum with the aim of exploring the interpersonal growth processes among individuals on the spectrum, their parents and siblings. A diverse group of panelists will share their thoughts, reflections and wisdom.

B7. “HOW TO SELECT THE BEST NEUROTYPICAL (NT) FOR YOUR ASD WORLD”

Moderator: Valerie Gaus, Ph.D.

Panelists: Rachael Israel, M.F.A., Jim Karpe, M.B.A., Becca Lory, Karl Wittig, PE

Figuring out who to trust and who to look to for advice can be challenging for individuals on the spectrum. This neurodiverse panel will offer the opportunity to hear from individuals on the spectrum who have successfully, and unsuccessfully, navigated that complicated social terrain, as well as neurotypicals who share their lives with spectrumites. The clinical perspective will be provided by our moderator.

B8. “STRESS: UNDERSTANDING MULTIPLE CAUSES AND DEVELOPING SUPPORTIVE SOLUTIONS”

Presenter: Lynda Geller, Ph.D.

Individuals on the autism spectrum may experience stressors from sources that others may not recognize, including sensory differences, slow processing rates, executive function challenges, accurate social understanding and a history of traumatic experiences. When internal resources are strained to deal with these issues, mental exhaustion can be constant. Understanding this phenomenon and knowing how to handle such stress is critical to healthy life function.

B9. “INTIMACY AND SEXUALITY”

Presenter: Leslie Sickels, LCSW

Navigating intimate relationships is a crucial part of the social world. This workshop will focus on capitalizing on the unique strengths of individuals with autism spectrum disorder so they can further develop the skills necessary for initiating, developing and maintaining healthy and successful relationships. It will also explore the ways in which gender and sexual orientation exploration, which often occur later in life for individuals on the autism spectrum, intersects with developing relationships.

B10. “NAVIGATING AND EXPEDITING ACCESS TO SOCIAL SECURITY FOR TRANSITION AND LATE-DIAGNOSED ADULTS”

Presenter: Dena Gassner, LMSW

Applying for Social Security benefits is fraught with difficulty. Challenges include “entitlement shaming,” guilt and the emotional pain built into the process. In this presentation, learn about the areas of limitation that Supplemental Security Income (SSI) uses to consider eligibility. Understand the “hidden curriculum” in the process that sabotages or delays outcomes. Learn how to use a structured system of information gathering to begin the process and avoid its pitfalls.

ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THE CONFERENCE BROCHURE CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT AHANY.ORG.

For further information: ahany.org • conference@ahany.org

Registration Information *(Please copy form and send in separate application for each registrant.)*

Name _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Register online at ahany.org. Mail-in registration must be postmarked by April 10.

- \$140 AHA member* \$140 Not-for-profit agency
 \$180 Non-AHA member (non-member registration includes one-year membership in AHA)
 \$60 Student \$60 Individual with autism spectrum disorder \$60 Adelphi faculty
 \$50 MP3 (price if registration postmarked after April 4)
 \$25 Conference handbook for those not attending conference; includes shipping and handling

Students and Adelphi faculty must include a copy of current ID with registration, or mail in if registering online.

*Includes free MP3 if registration is postmarked by **April 4**.*

**Membership in AHA is a family membership for those residing in the same household. Your membership must be current as of the date of this conference. If you are unsure, please contact our office. Your registration will not be processed with an incorrect fee.*

A \$25 processing fee will be applied to all refund requests. No refunds after April 13.

Online registrations automatically receive confirmation. If registering by mail or if further information is required, email conference@ahany.org.

WALK-INS

Walk-ins will be charged an additional \$25. (Lunch may not be available; Adelphi's UC Café is open in the Ruth S. Harley University Center.)

REGISTER EARLY—SEATING IS LIMITED.

Check the two workshops you plan to attend (one for each period—A and B):

Period A 1 2 3 4 5 | Period B 6 7 8 9 10

Workshops are assigned as applications are processed. Some rooms have limited capacity.

Payment method, select one:

Check no. _____

AMEX Visa MasterCard Discover

Card no. _____

Expiration date ____/____ Security code ____

Signature _____

Make checks payable to AHA Association:

AHA Association

P.O. Box 916

Bethpage, NY 11714-0916

SCHOLARSHIPS

Partial scholarships are available online at ahany.org or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the AHA Association's address, listed above, requesting the form. A registration form must accompany all scholarship requests.

HOTEL ROOMS

For information about local accommodations, visit adelphi.edu/visitors/stay.php.

DIRECTIONS

Participants can reach the conference via the Long Island Rail Road or car. For directions, visit adelphi.edu/visitors/directions.php.

ENCLOSED

Registration fee \$ _____

MP3/CD: \$50 (if ordered after **April 4**) \$ _____

Conference handbook: \$25 (for non-attendees) \$ _____

Tax-deductible contribution** \$ _____

Total included \$ _____

**Your tax-deductible contribution will be used to provide conference scholarships and/or to further the work of the Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association.



P.O. Box 916
Bethpage, NY 11714-0916



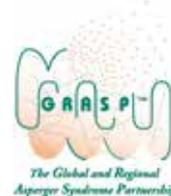
Issues in Independent Living for Adolescents and Adults on the Autism Spectrum

Saturday, April 25, 2015 • 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Ruth S. Harley University Center

presented by
Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association (AHA)
Adelphi University Ruth S. Ammon School of Education
ASPIRE Center for Learning and Development
Compass Project
Fay J. Lindner Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities
Global and Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership (GRASP)
Spectrum Services



The Standard of Excellence
in Teacher Preparation



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Ruth S. Harley University Center
1 South Avenue
Garden City, New York 11530-0701

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