



New York State Association  
of Day Service Providers

[www.nysadsp.org](http://www.nysadsp.org)



# 2025 Symposium Program

September 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> 2025

The Saratoga Hilton  
Saratoga Springs, New York



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## NYSADSP Board of Directors

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By Laws

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Karen Gandolfo,  
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Southeast

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Long Island

Mandy Boyd,  
Central West

Mike Zazzara,  
Western

New  
region

# 04

## Symposium Essentials



### About this event

Join us for the NYSADSP 2025 Symposium, a three-day in-person event that will take place from September 17th to September 19th at The Saratoga Hilton in Saratoga Springs, NY, USA. This symposium is a unique opportunity to connect with industry professionals, learn about the latest trends in the field, and share your insights and experiences. Don't miss out on this exciting event where you can expand your knowledge, network with like-minded individuals, and enjoy the beautiful surroundings of Saratoga Springs. Mark your calendars and get ready for an unforgettable experience at the NYSADSP 2025 Symposium!



### Symposium Registration

A 2025 Symposium Registration Form has been included in the email with this brochure. To register please email your completed registration form to Wendy Schoenfeld at [wschoenfeld@lifespire.org](mailto:wschoenfeld@lifespire.org) by **August 27, 2025**.

Checks payable to:  
New York State Association of Day Service Providers

Mail payment to:  
NYSADSP  
1820 Lemoyne Ave.  
Syracuse, NY 13208



### Online registration:

[CLICK HERE](#)



### Hotel Registration

To reserve a room at The Saratoga Hilton for the 2025 Symposium please click the link or scan the QR code below. For additional reservation questions please get in touch with the hotel directly by phone. The group rate expires August 27, 2025 and a limited number of rooms are available under the group rate, so don't delay.



Saratoga Hilton  
534 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

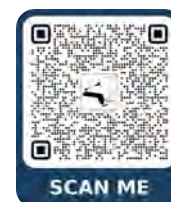


518.584.4000



Register Online:

[CLICK HERE](#)



# 05

## 2025 NYSADSP Symposium

### FLOOR MAPS

LOWER LEVEL PLAN



### KEY

- Full Service Restaurant
- Hotel Meeting/Conference Rooms
- Saratoga Springs City Center Rooms

2025 NYSADSP Symposium Sessions in these rooms.

**!** Please note, sessions will be held in Saratoga Ballroom Rooms 2 & 3 only on Friday, 9/19.

Lunch on Thursday, 9/18 in Saratoga Ballroom.

# 06

## Agenda of the Symposium

Wednesday  
September 17th | 2025

**JOIN US**

Enjoy a complimentary beverage (soda, beer, or wine) on behalf of NYSADSP in the 534 Bistro.

One drink token per person provided at registration.

**Attend & Win!**

Join us for each session on Wednesday, 9/17 and Thursday, 9/18 to earn one raffle ticket per session attended.

All tickets will be entered into an exclusive drawing at our Thursday evening reception for a chance to win a brand new Fitbit!

Don't miss out—every session boosts your chances to win!

11:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Conference Check-In/ Registration

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Session I

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

Session II

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Session III

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Please join fellow attendees in the 534 Bistro to connect and discuss the day's sessions. One complimentary beverage on behalf of NYSADSP.

Cash bar available as well.

Thursday  
September 18th | 2025

08:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast available in the Saratoga Foyer/vendor area.

09:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Welcome and Awards Presentation

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM

Fish Philosophy Presents Keynote, Paula Skoviera

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Lunch in the Saratoga Ballroom

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Session I

**ATTEND  
AND  
ENTER  
TO WIN** →



# 07

## Agenda of the Symposium

Thursday

September 18th | 2025

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM  
Session II

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

All Symposium attendees are invited to join us for the Trade Show Reception and Raffles in the Saratoga Foyer/Vendor area. Light hors d'oeuvres are available. Use the complimentary beverage tickets provided at check-in/registration.



**Attend & Win!**  
Join us for each session on Wednesday, 9/17 and Thursday, 9/18 to earn one raffle ticket per session attended.  
All tickets will be entered into an exclusive drawing at our Thursday evening reception for a chance to win a brand new Fitbit!  
Don't miss out—every session boosts your chances to win!



Friday

September 19th | 2025

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast available in the Saratoga Foyer/Vendor area.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Session I

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Closing Speaker & Raffles in Saratoga Ballroom 2 & 3



**Stick Around for a Chance to Win!**  
Stay after Friday morning's sessions for your opportunity to win one of these great prizes:

- An iPad Mini
- Or one of two chances to win a free night at The Saratoga Hilton!

**Don't miss out—winners announced immediately after the sessions!**





# 2025 Awards Presentation

Thursday, September 18th

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

## Leadership Award

The Leadership Award is for those who provide direct supervision of Direct Support Professionals. It is awarded to leaders who have provided strong and consistent leadership for direct support staff and exemplifies these qualities consistently.

## Direct Support Professional of the Year

The Direct Support Professional of the Year Award is for those staff who provide direct support services for individuals in some capacity. It is awarded to DSPs who have demonstrated exemplary performance over the course of his/her employment, and who have been dedicated to assuring quality and promoting independence.

## Innovation Grants

Every year NYSADSP awards grants to provider members who submit proposals that will be used to develop new creative programming ideas that exemplify quality programming and identify best practices. Innovation Grant winners are asked to present or host a vendor table at the Annual Symposium to share these unique ideas with other providers who can also utilize these ideas in their own programs.



## 2025 Award Recipients

### Leadership Awards

Cheryl Bogdanowicz  
Abilities First



Cara Hale  
Mozaic



Leslie Medina  
Arc of Herkimer



Tara Packer  
ACHEIVE



Charmin Patterson  
Arc of Westchester



Caroline Ryan  
SCO Family Services



# 10

## 2025 Award Recipients

### Direct Support Professional Awards

Kristina Clark  
Mountain Lake Services



Mandisha Green  
SUS Inc.



Lisa Marie Johnson  
Exceptional Family Resources



Matthew Knott  
People Inc.



Tanya Lee  
AHRC



Mark Stevens  
JM Murray



# 11

## 2025 Award Recipients

### Innovation Awards

Heartshare



Feed the Soul: Fostering  
Community Relationships  
and Partnerships

Lifespire



Expanding the All  
Draw

NYSARC of Suffolk



Arc Sprout -Greens  
that Give Back

SCO Family Services



Get Up and Go

The Arc Erie County



Get Outdoors and  
Get Together

# 12

## Wednesday, September 17th

### 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM



Community  
Options, Inc.

*Supporting People with Disabilities since 1989*

Ashley  
Gamba

Executive Director

[ashley.gamba@comop.org](mailto:ashley.gamba@comop.org)

Maggie  
McNamara

NYS  
Director of Employment

[Maggie.mcnamara@compo.org](mailto:Maggie.mcnamara@compo.org)

#### 1. Igniting Futures: The Power of Youth Services and Pre-Employment Transition

Preparing young people for successful careers starts long before their first job. The session will explore how Youth Services, specifically Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), support students with disabilities in building the essential skills and experiences needed for life after high school. Participants will learn how Pre-ETS connects students to real world opportunities through career exploration, work-based learning, post-secondary counseling, workplace readiness training and self-advocacy instruction. Practical examples, success stories and strategies for effective collaboration with schools, families and community partners will be shared. Join us to discover how these services empower youth to move confidently toward employment and independence.



KNOWLEDGE

Consuelo  
Senior

Director of YAI Knowledge-Training

[connie.senior@yai.org](mailto:connie.senior@yai.org)

#### 2. Zapp! The Lightning of Empowerment: How to Improve Quality, Productivity, and Employee Satisfaction

Based off principles and concepts in the book of the same name by William C Byham. Employee motivation can often be challenging to truly grasp, yet alone to influence and leverage. In this training managers will find specific strategies designed to help you encourage responsibility, acknowledgment, and creativity so that employees feel they "own" their jobs . Attendees will learn how to take employees from "Sapped" to "Zapped"

# 13

## Wednesday, September 17th

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**YAI** Seeing beyond disability.

▶ IHOPE ▶ Manhattan Star Academy ▶ Premier HealthCare ▶ National Institute for People with Disabilities of New Jersey

### 3. Creating Possibilities with AI: Crafting Inclusive Business Plans Together

**Ken**

**Reedy**

Trainer & Program Support

[Kenneth.Reedy@YAI.ORG](mailto:Kenneth.Reedy@YAI.ORG)

**Laurie**

**Silver**

DSP-2

[laurie.silver@YAI.ORG](mailto:laurie.silver@YAI.ORG)

This training will introduce the use of AI tools like ChatGPT to support individuals with disabilities in developing personalized business plans. The session focuses on making entrepreneurship accessible by using technology to simplify planning, spark creativity, and build real-world current job skills. Staff will learn how to craft inclusive prompts, adapt content for various ability levels, and guide individuals in turning their ideas into practical business models. The training emphasizes empowerment, person-centered support, and innovation. Staff will leave with hands-on experience and ready-to-use tools to support people with disabilities who desire self-employment.



A chapter of **The Arc**  
New York

**Katie**

**LaFountain**

Assistant Director of  
Community Services

[klaefountain@mountainlakeservices.org](mailto:klaefountain@mountainlakeservices.org)

**Pamela  
McDonald**

Speech Language Pathologist

[Pmcdonald@mountainlakeservices.org](mailto:Pmcdonald@mountainlakeservices.org)

### 4. Skill Building Using Work Task Boxes

This presentation is an exciting introduction and demonstration of "task boxes" to build cognitive abilities through designed tasks. Task boxes are simple boxes filled with self-contained activities the person can do independently. All objects or items needed for the task are included inside the task box. Task boxes help individuals practice memory skills, problem-solving, role-playing tasks, sequencing, organization and planning and boost motivation. The boxes can be customized to help build skills targeted in therapy, daily skills and home setting. Come learn about the many benefits and exciting ways to integrate task boxes into your activity planning.

# 14

## Wednesday, September 17th 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM



### 5. Discover Liberty Arc's Innovative Approach to Community Based Pre-Vocational Services: Careers For Me

#### Colleen Verhayden

Assistant Director  
colleenv@libertyarc.org

#### MaryAnn Brown

Employment Specialist  
maryannb@libertyarc.org

Careers For Me is a dynamic 12- to 18-month experiential learning and preparatory program designed for individuals eager to explore vocational interests and prepare for employment. This intensive program focuses on fostering independence, enhancing self-care and wellness, and developing essential soft skills—all while applying these skills through meaningful community engagement. Each month, participants explore a different industry through job tours, hands-on experiences, and skill-building activities tailored to their interests and abilities. A key component of the program is transportation training, where participants take practice permit tests, meet with public transportation officials, and complete travel training to expand their mobility options. Soft skills development—such as relationship-building, self-advocacy, and effective communication—is embedded throughout the program. Participants engage in real-world experiences across diverse industries, including radio broadcasting, public and emergency services, hospitality, healthcare, and retail. By the program's conclusion, participants will have built a resume, identified personal vocational interests, honed interview skills, and completed essential workplace training in areas such as harassment prevention, workplace safety, and first aid/CPR—empowering them to take the next step toward meaningful employment.



### 6. Trauma Sensitive Leadership: Seeing the Whole Person

#### Sonja Williams

Lead Trainer  
Sonja.williams@yai.org

This session will focus on the importance of providing trauma-sensitive leadership. Trauma-Sensitive leadership involves recognizing and understanding that everyone has an emotional landscape shaped by their experiences.

By taking time to see the whole person, leaders can foster a psychologically safe and supportive work environment where employees feel valued, heard, and empowered to perform their best and provide quality support.

# 15

## Wednesday, September 17th

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM



Family Residences and  
Essential Enterprises, Inc.  
Reach High | Achieve More

### Marissa Landri

Senior Community  
H habilitation Supervisor  
[mlandri@familyres.org](mailto:mlandri@familyres.org)

### Jacquelynn Cooper-Mills

Director of Compliance  
[jcooper@familyres.org](mailto:jcooper@familyres.org)

### 7. Community Habilitation from a Compliance Standpoint

This presentation will provide a comprehensive look at the critical components of Community Habilitation Services, with a focus on compliance and the integration of Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) technology. The session will be led by Marissa Landri and Jacquelyn Cooper-Mills, who bring extensive experience in direct service provision and regulatory oversight.



▶ iHOPE ▶ Manhattan Star Academy ▶ Premier HealthCare ▶ National Institute for People with Disabilities of New Jersey

### Laurie Silver - Lewis

DSP-2  
[laurie.silverlewis@yai.org](mailto:laurie.silverlewis@yai.org)

### Madelyn Toledo

DSP-2  
[madelyn.toledo@yai.org](mailto:madelyn.toledo@yai.org)

### Reymi Gilamonte

DSP-2  
[reymi.gilamonte@yai.org](mailto:reymi.gilamonte@yai.org)

### 8. Creativity College-Empowering Expression-Creative Arts Projects for People of all Abilities

Art is meant to inspire, build confidence and encourage self-expression. This presentation offers a hands-on creative art workshop for anyone who wants to enhance the lives of the people we support. We will offer three unique activities that will allow every audience member to participate in and take home a sample of the work they create. It will explore inclusive and engaging creative arts projects designed to support self-expression, skill building and confidence among the individuals we serve. We will also showcase practical project ideas, materials and teaching strategies that foster creativity and self-awareness. Ideal for anyone who supports people with special abilities.

# 16

## Wednesday, September 17th

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM



**Melissa  
Garner**

Director of Community  
Supports

[melissa.garner@thearcas.org](mailto:melissa.garner@thearcas.org)

**Beckie  
Austin**

Associate Executive Director  
of Community Services

[Beckie.austin@thearcas.org](mailto:Beckie.austin@thearcas.org)

### 9. RCS' (Regular Communication Session) and Productivity

This presentation will include discussion on a communication technique between supervisors and associates. Presenters will share how to capture information, address issues/concerns and/or praise, ensuring follow up is completed, how to track, and more. Discussion on productivity expectations with associates to maximize billing, how to get there, meshing associates across the department and in various programs, etc.



**Mike  
Hollis**

Vice President of Community  
Food Security

[mhollis@sus.org](mailto:mhollis@sus.org)

### 10. Empowering Entrepreneurs with I/DD: Pathways to Inclusive Innovation

We will explore how to support entrepreneurship for people with I/DD. Participants will gain insight into inclusive strategies, practical tools, and real-world examples from Services for the UnderServed that foster participation in entrepreneurial activities. We'll highlight the role of community networks and supports in creating sustainable pathways to personal empowerment and greater economic independence.

# 17

## Wednesday, September 17th 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

**YAI** Seeing beyond disability.

▶ iHOPE ▶ Manhattan Star Academy ▶ Premier HealthCare ▶ National Institute for People with Disabilities of New Jersey

### Ken Reedy

Trainer & Program Support  
[Kenneth.reedy@yai.org](mailto:Kenneth.reedy@yai.org)

### Stephanie Rozanski

Director of Training  
[stephanie.rozanski@yai.org](mailto:stephanie.rozanski@yai.org)

### 11. Unreasonable Hospitality: Redefining Excellence in Service for People with Disabilities

This session will explore innovative approaches to teaching adults with intellectual disabilities, inspired by the principles in Unreasonable Hospitality by Will Guidara. It emphasizes going beyond what has always been done to create meaningful, personalized learning experiences rooted in respect, empathy, and human connection. Staff will be challenged to see their roles not just as facilitators, but as hosts-offering dignity, purpose, and joy in every interaction. The training encourages creativity, flexibility, and a renewed commitment to excellence. Staff will be encouraged to embrace meaningful change and HAVE FUN! Trainees will leave with practical tools to elevate daily teaching moments into impactful, empowering new experiences.

**YAI** Seeing beyond disability.

▶ iHOPE ▶ Manhattan Star Academy ▶ Premier HealthCare ▶ National Institute for People with Disabilities of New Jersey

### Consuelo Senior

Director of YAI Knowledge-  
Training  
[connie.senior@yai.org](mailto:connie.senior@yai.org)

### 12. Progressive Teaching

This training will focus on learning the key components to the formula for success when teaching any task or social skill. Attendees will learn skills staff need to effectively teach the people they support- at all cognitive levels- how to not only learn, but to master a task or social skill. This is true progress. This will reduce/replace dependence on staff and direct the course of their own lives. This training is essential for supporting staff in the Core Competencies Performance Appraisal. The course is also valuable for Frontline Line Supervisors and managers involved in the evaluation process.

# 18

## Key Note Speaker

Thursday, September 18th

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM



**Paula Skoviera** is a seasoned expert with over 20 years of experience in the fields of teaching, training, marketing, and branding. With an impressive background working with companies spanning from Fortune 500 corporations to national franchises, as well as Solopreneurs, Paula has garnered a wealth of knowledge in diverse industries.

Paula is the driving force behind Princess Paula Consulting – speaker, trainer, emcee and business development strategist. Her expertise in crafting effective strategies and implementing cutting-edge solutions has earned her a reputation as a leading authority in her field.

She will leverage networking, Google, marketing, and social media to engage with customers effectively, catering to businesses of all sizes, from independent owners to large corporations. Her strengths shine in the business development space, allowing her to craft tailored strategies for your unique needs, regardless of your business's size.

Skilled in training and speaking, Paula specializes in conducting workshops for diverse organizations, including chambers, nonprofits, and businesses. Her focus areas include networking, Google Business profile optimization, and AI/ChatGPT applications. Contact her for dynamic and insightful training tailored to your team's needs.

Many passionate businesses excel in their products or services but struggle to establish connections with their customers. Enter Princess Paula Consulting! As an experienced networker and master connector, Princess Paula is passionate about the potential of networking to propel your business forward, helping you bridge the gap between your passion and your customers' needs. Let's work together to achieve your business goals and unlock new opportunities for success.

Reach out to Princess Paula for:

- A 2-hour business strategy meeting to uncover your natural market and marketing opportunities.
- Schedule training or a workshop on AI/ChatGPT for your team, organization, or networking group. A
- customized workshop or presentation on Networking, AI or a variety of Business Development topics
- Training your team on optimizing your Google Business Profile. One on One training for social media
- or optimizing your Google Business Profile.

**Contact:** [paula@princesspaulaconsulting.com](mailto:paula@princesspaulaconsulting.com)

**Phone:** 952-412-2342

**Web:** [princesspaulaconsulting.com](http://princesspaulaconsulting.com)



\*check out my website for a menu of options and pricing

# 19

## Thursday, September 18th

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM



**Paula Skoviera**

National Master Trainer

[paula@princesspaulaconsulting.com](mailto:paula@princesspaulaconsulting.com)



### 13. FISH! - Bringing Joy Back to the Workplace!

FISH! provides a reset. We help organizations reconnect with what makes work meaningful—through practices rooted in presence, positivity, and human connection. Our philosophy is simple but powerful: Be There. Make Their Day. Choose Your Attitude. Play. These four practices, made famous by the bestselling FISH! book and film, are now used worldwide to create healthier, happier, high-performing workplaces.

During this breakout session, FISH! Master Trainer Paula Skoviera will lead a live workshop on specific challenges unique to you.

This session will include group interaction, exercises, reflection, and storytelling. In addition, you will leave the session with practical ideas your team can implement immediately to create higher engagement, better performance



**Tara Paquette**

ETP Manager

[tpaquette@arcmonroe.org](mailto:tpaquette@arcmonroe.org)

**Charis Happ**

Director of Transition Services

[chapp@arcmonroe.org](mailto:chapp@arcmonroe.org)

### 14. The Customized Continuum to Employment

Customized Employment is a concept that will support the NYS Employment First Initiative. We use this concept to support moving people through the continuum of disability services to reach employment goals. This presentation introduces the concept of Customized Employment and how it changes our mindset as service providers. It will also provide a model of how it is used to move people supported through the continuum of services, including Day Habilitation, Community Habilitation, Prevocational Programs, and other services. The presentation will briefly cover the use of this methodology in OPWDD Employment Training Program and why it is such a good fit. Success stories will be shared to exemplify the ways in which Customized Employment benefits people supported.

# 20

## Thursday, September 18th

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM



### 15. Kibu and Floreo

**Bradley  
Miranda**

Assistant Director of Day Hab  
Services

[bmiranda@cpofnys.org](mailto:bmiranda@cpofnys.org)

**Jerrelle  
Whitney**

ILST

[jwhitley@cpofnys.org](mailto:jwhitley@cpofnys.org)

This presentation will illustrate how to enhance the life of the DD/ID population who are experiencing difficulties with their day to day life activities. Presenters will take the audience through how to teach the person supported to create a resume, how to prepare a meal, how to draw diagrams etc.

The Floreo portion of this presentation is based on how to use virtual reality as a tool to teach the DD/ID population to acquire skills to enhance their skill sets and how Floreo can be used for job readiness and skill training.



### 16. Vocational Services: Rethinking, Restructuring, Reorganizing

**John  
Gallagher**

Director of Vocational Services

[jgallagher@familyres.org](mailto:jgallagher@familyres.org)

Recently at FREE, our vocational team has undergone what feels like countless changes, including implementation of new services, contract extensions, creation new positions, growth in census size, and even the move to a new office space to work out of. All of these sound like good problems to have, but regardless, change can be scary, and even good change needs to be navigated with planning and organization. That is why FREE has completely reworked our hierarchy and structure of vocational services to better branch out and increase our outreach to the people that we serve. This presentation will cover all of the challenges that we faced in growing during a full restructure, what worked, what would have worked better, and most importantly, why our staff and clients are better off today with the provision or succinct, efficient, and innovative services.

# 21

## Thursday, September 18th

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM



### 17. GameU Hybrid+ for Day Programming Centers

Creative Tech Education that builds skills, confidence, and connection. GameU Hybrid+ brings engaging, tech-based learning into Day Programming Centers through a unique combination of live instruction, self-paced learning, and staff enablement. Designed specifically for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), Hybrid+ helps participants explore new skills, express creativity, and grow socially - all while supporting the group-based service model standing in Day Programming environments.

**Mark  
Timcenko**

**Susan  
Kittle**



✨ Strike a pose and capture the fun at our photo booth Thursday evening!



# 22

## Thursday, September 18th

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

Office for  
People With  
Developmental  
Disabilities



**Eleversity**  
NEXT-LEVEL WORKFORCE EDUCATION

### 18. OPWDD'S Day Habilitation Training Initiative: Skill Development for Community Engagement and Career Exploration

The Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) developed a new training for day habilitation staff and managers available through Eleversity, OPWDD's training partner. This training includes new instructional modules and an assessment tool to enhance skill development, community engagement and career exploration. The training also provides instructional strategies to help people be successful in their endeavors, increase independence and maximize potential. In this presentation, representatives from OPWDD and Eleversity will discuss the intention behind the new training and other new initiatives.

**Julia  
Kelly**

Director, Employment &  
Meaningful Community Activities

**James  
McNaughton**

Statewide Coordinator Day and Community  
Services/Employment and Meaningful Community  
Activities Unit/Service Access, Program  
Implementation and Stakeholder Support

**Amy  
Scott**

Associate Director Innovations in  
Employment Services Eleversity,

**Jason  
Zauner**

Training and Organizational Development  
Specialist II Eleversity



# 23

## Thursday, September 18th

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM



### 19. Changing the Conversation on Retention: The Mountain Lake Services Buddy Program

A chapter of **The Arc**  
New York

**Harold  
Sammis**

Quality Improvement and  
Training Manager/Buddy  
Program Manager

hsammis@mountainlakeservices.org

In our presentation we will be describing the process of creating our Buddy Program at Mountain Lake Services, and its implementation, and how it is affecting one of the most difficult problems in our field, employee retention. We will be discussing our processes, assessments, and data analysis as well as the impact the program is having on veteran and new Direct Support Professionals. We plan on having three individuals on our presentation panel, one Training Specialist who trains Buddies and supports them, a Quality and Training Manager who oversees data and the hiring committee, and also a veteran DSP who has been a Buddy since the beginning of the program. We believe this topic could be of value to anyone seeking a way to improve their retention of new employees, and also to build strong lines of succession with people who are committed to the field and their work. Participants will learn about the process for building a program, as well as how we have analyzed data we have gathered to help improve it going forward. We will also be discussing the challenges we encountered as well as the successes we have enjoyed. We will also be discussing how the program has directly affected those enrolled in the program, and their experiences. This year we will also be adding a small workshop portion on how to set up a similar program, and how to improve data and insights through inner-departmental cooperation.



### 20. GameU Hybrid+ for Day Programming Centers

**Mark  
Timcenko**

**Susan  
Kittle**

Creative Tech Education that builds skills, confidence, and connection. GameU Hybrid+ brings engaging, tech-based learning into Day Programming Centers through a unique combination of live instruction, self-paced learning, and staff enablement. Designed specifically for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), Hybrid+ helps participants explore new skills, express creativity, and grow socially - all while supporting the group-based service model standing in Day Programming environments.

# 24

## Thursday, September 18th

2:45PM - 3:45 PM



**Billy  
Jones**

Behavior Intervention Specialist

[billy.jones@ahrcnyc.org](mailto:billy.jones@ahrcnyc.org)

### 21. Building Routines, Boosting Lives: The Power of Structured Teaching in Adult Day Programs

Structured teaching, as developed through the TEACCH® (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children) framework, is a proven approach for promoting independence and reducing anxiety in individuals with developmental disabilities.

This presentation explores how we AHRCNYC use TEACCH-based strategies to support our individuals in their daily lives including the use of visual schedules, clearly defined work systems, and individualized task organization, can be effectively implemented in adult day programs. By embedding structure into daily routines, our programs can create predictable, supportive environments that foster meaningful engagement, skill development, and improved quality of life.

**Don't forget to  
check out our  
2025 vendors!**

**Earn additional raffle tickets  
for Thursday evening raffle  
prizes with your purchases.**

*See vendors or registration table for more information.*



# 25

## Friday, September 19th 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Office for  
People With  
Developmental  
Disabilities



### 22. OPWDD Updates

OPWDD Presenters will provide updates and discussion.

#### Julia Kelly

Director, Employment & Meaningful  
Community Activities  
julia.kelly@opwdd.ny.gov

#### James Macnaughton

Statewide Coordinator, Day and Community Services  
Employment and Meaningful Community Activities Unit  
Service Access, Program Implementation and  
Stakeholder Support  
james.macnaughton@opwdd.ny.gov

#### Lynn Thibdeau

OPWDD State of the State  
Project Manager  
lynn.thibdeau@opwdd.ny.gov



# 26

## Friday, September 19th

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

**YAI** Seeing beyond disability.  
▶iHOPE ▶Manhattan Star Academy ▶Premier HealthCare ▶National Institute for People with Disabilities of New Jersey

### 23. Closing Remarks with Speaker Ken Reedy



**Ken  
Reedy**

Supervisor of Curriculum &  
Workforce Development

[Kenneth.Reedy@YAI.org](mailto:Kenneth.Reedy@YAI.org)

Ken is quite honored to have the opportunity to give the closing remarks address at this forum. Being a longtime supporter and presenter at this symposium, this was a professional goal for quite some time. Ken has been working in the field for 30 years. Starting at UCP (now Cerebral Palsy of Westchester), Ken started as an assistant recreation therapist, moving onto DSP and then helping to run their camp program. In 1999 Ken moved on to YAI where he has been since. Over the years Ken has been a DSP, trainer and a developer of curriculums always embracing person centered thinking. At YAI Ken trains a variety of things including Preservice, CPR, SCIP, Ukeru and program specific topics.

Coming out of the pandemic Ken became focused borderline obsessed (his words) with redefining and reimagining how and what we do at Day Hab. Since then Ken has been instrumental in creating an entrepreneurial program, a photography club, a dance program, a reoccurring acting workshop, art and multi-media curriculums all while bringing in skilled volunteers from the community to share their expertise. In 2024 Ken secured a movie theater, limo and red-carpet to give the people we support a big screen Hollywood opening night for their media movie project. (chronicled in the upcoming documentary "How Do We Survive A Zombie Apocalypse"). This year Ken secured a venue in the community that featured a person supported doing a live puppet show, a lifelong dream of his,...giving him his first ever pay check. He is now a PROFESSIONAL performer. It has been an amazing few years and Ken would like to express the utmost gratitude to everyone who has supported this out of the box approach.

Ubuntu- When one of us rises, we all rise

# Thank You to Our 2025 Symposium Planning Committee Members

Christina  
Abbinanti  
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## Interested in Joining the 2026 Symposium Planning Committee?

The NYSADSP is currently seeking interested parties to participate in the  
2026 Symposium Planning Committee.

Planning begins in February of each year. Meetings are held virtually and occur monthly for the first 4-5  
months and gradually increase to bi-weekly, and then weekly as  
the symposium date draws closer.

Connect with one of NYSADSP's current planning committee members or a Board Member to find out  
how to get involved in next year's symposium!



**THANK  
YOU**

**On behalf of the NYSADSP Board of Directors and the  
2025 Symposium Planning Committee, we would like  
to thank you for attending this year's symposium.**



**New York Association of Day Service Providers**

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Syracuse, NY 13208

[www.nysadsp.org](http://www.nysadsp.org)