Putting Together the Autism Puzzle: Meeting the Needs of Students On the Autism Spectrum In Higher Education

September 26, 2014, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM
Student Center, Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana
Program Schedule

8:30-8:55  Registration and Refreshments

8:55-9:00  Conference Opening: Welcome and Introduction of Keynote Speaker David McIntosh, 301-2

9:00-9:50  Keynote Address: “Best Practices in Meeting the Educational Needs of College Students with ASD,” David McIntosh, 301-2

10:00-10:50  “Mental Health Concerns for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders,” Jill Fodstad and Noha Minshawi, 301-2

“The Eye, Hand, Brain and Heart Connection in My Freshman Studio Art Class: How Emphasizing the ‘Un teachable’ Skills Leads to Developing Confidence and Growth in Students with Autism,” Christine L. Satory, 306

10:50-11:05  Break with refreshments, 305


“Student Voices,” Michael Organ, Keri Rodgers, and Lauren Slaven, 306

11:55-1:00  Lunch on own
Abstracts

Jennifer Akers, Family Voices Indiana

“Transition Supports for Individuals with Autism”
Preparation for post-secondary education for individuals with autism must begin early. Learn how to help individuals to develop self-advocacy and independent living skills to be successful in college life. Also, learn about government programs that might provide additional supports for a post-secondary education.

Jennifer Akers, Family Voices Indiana; Jane Grimes, Autism Companion, and Mary Kamack Kothman; Ball State University

“Family Perspectives”
Three panelists with family experience of the Autism Spectrum will offer their insights on family and student challenges and successes.

Michele Attersson, Butler University; Larry Markle, Ball State University; Amy Miller, Autism Family Resource Center; Lois Weiss, Ivy Tech Community College

“College Support Services for Students on the Spectrum”
What types of accommodations and services are typically provided for students on the Spectrum at the college level? This panel discussion will feature disability services professionals from three colleges and a specialist in Autism support who works primarily with college students. The panelists will describe the specific services offered at their universities and describe other resources that have been helpful for college students on the spectrum.

Shannon Titus Dieringer, Jennifer Cullen, Evette Simmons-Reed, and Kimberly Zoder-Martell, Ball State University

“Reimagining the College Experience: Transitioning to Independence”
Four panelists will present strategies to transition students with autism spectrum disorders to college. Proactive strategies to implement during high school and throughout college will be discussed, including issues related to
areas of self-determination, self-advocacy, goal-setting, problem-solving, and choice-making. Wellness issues will be discussed by addressing tools to develop a physical activity plan and promote emotional well-being. Finally, technologies to support independence on a college campus will be discussed.

Jill Fodstad and Noha Minshawi, Indiana University School of Medicine and the Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center at Riley Hospital for Children, Indiana University Health

“Mental Health Concerns for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders”

Young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are susceptible to a range of mental health problems as they transition into adulthood and beyond. The most common diagnoses will be discussed, along with signs and symptoms that should prompt educators and caregivers to seek mental health treatment. A brief overview of available treatments will also be presented.

David McIntosh, Ball State University

“Best Practices in Meeting the Educational Needs of College Students with ASD”

Current trends in meeting the educational, behavioral, and emotional needs of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in higher education will be discussed. Recommendations for effectively implementing best practices when teaching and advising college students with ASD also will be reviewed.

Michael Organ, Keri Rodgers, and Lauren Slaven, Ball State University

“Student Voices”

In this panel, two undergraduate students and one graduate student at Ball State University will discuss their experiences in higher education as students on the Autism Spectrum, providing helpful insights for professors, parents, and support personnel.

Adam Pachtan, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

“Composing Autism, Constructing Ability: Re-visioning Accommodation for Students on the Autism Spectrum”

In this session, I present “complex accommodation”—a reframing of accommodation as a transformative and emergent dialectic rather than a static administrative process. I invite the audience to workshop ways to implement complex accommodation in higher education and beyond to more profitably and ethically accommodate individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

Keri Rodgers, Ball State University

“Experiencing the Spectrum as a Student and Educator”

Experience the Spectrum through the eyes of a student. See, hear, understand, and appreciate the challenges students on the Spectrum deal with on a daily basis. Participants will experience the classroom from the student perspective. Using the collaborative workshop model, participants will develop and share strategies to improve learning outcomes for all students.

Christine Satory, Ball State University

“The Eye, Hand, Brain and Heart Connection in My Freshman Studio Art Class: How Emphasizing the ‘Unteachable’ Skills Leads to Developing Confidence and Growth in Students with Autism.”

Students with Autism respond to my pedagogy and I believe the key ingredient is my honesty about my hidden disability including discussions about my mistakes and failures. Once students know this, a new dynamic develops and they strive to hold themselves accountable for both their strengths and challenges.

Geri Strecker, Ball State University

Asperger Syndrome in the Composition Classroom

First defined in the 1940s, Asperger Syndrome (AS) is still a poorly understood neurological condition. Today, children with AS are receiving better care during their early education, and increasing numbers are pursuing college degrees. This poses challenges for university faculty who
often have little or no training in such special needs. Many individuals with AS have deep, intense interest in specialized topics and some are highly intelligent. However, they often have traits that complicate their progress in writing, affecting comprehension, focus, context, organization, development, and peer interaction. Dr. Strecker will discuss these issues and offer strategies for mitigating obstacles in how teachers present, discuss, and evaluate writing assignments.

Symposium Presenters

Jennifer Akers is the Project Coordinator for the family to family health information center at Family Voices Indiana. She lives in Westfield with her husband, Joe, and daughter, Grace. She has volunteered for numerous groups, including Family Voices. She was most recently a Family Advocate for The Arc of Indiana. Her passion for assisting other families comes from her personal experiences with her own child.

Michele Atterson, founding director of Student Disability Services at Butler University, began her career at Butler in 1997 as a staff of one providing support to 26 students with disabilities. Currently, over 280 students are registered for services. Michele now supervises a staff of five professionals who provide disability related support services and accommodations to Butler students with disabilities. She is licensed as a school psychologist, and prior to coming to Butler, worked in private practice with a specialization in neuropsychological, learning, and behavioral assessment.

Jennifer Cullen is an Assistant Professor in Applied Behavior Analysis in the Department of Special Education at Ball State University. Her research focuses on utilizing technology in promoting successful employment and independence in the community for individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities.

Shannon Titus Dieringer, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at Ball State University in Applied Behavior Analysis. She has extensive experience working with children and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in physical activity settings. Her current research surrounds issues around stamina and physical activity for young adults transitioning successfully into the workforce.

Jill Fodstad, Ph.D., HSPP, BCBA-D is a licensed psychologist and Assistant Professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry and the Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center at Riley Hospital for Children at Indiana University Health. She is also a board certified behavior analyst. Her research interests are focused on early self-injurious behavior, behavioral assessment and treatment of psychiatric
disorders and severe behavior in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, and caregiver fidelity of behavioral interventions.

**Jane Grimes** is the Owner and CEO of Autism Companion. She graduated from The Ohio State University in 1988, majoring in education and psychology. Jane has worked in the autism field for more than eight years. She says, "Ever since my daughter was diagnosed with autism, and remembering that moment and not knowing what to do, I wanted to make sure anyone who needed support could receive it." "My hope is that anyone who picks up Autism Companion, will laugh, perhaps shed a tear, and most importantly learn more about those affected by autism, as well as those who have autism."

**Mary Kamack Kothman** is concertmaster of the Muncie Symphony and teaches violin at Ball State University and Taylor University. She also performs regularly with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. She and her husband, Keith, live in Muncie and have three wonderful children.

**Larry Markle** is the director of Disability Services at Ball State University where he oversees the university’s efforts to serve over 650 students with disabilities. Larry is a past president of the Indiana Association on Higher Education and Disability and serves on the review board for the Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability. He was also the project director for “Ensuring a Quality Education for Indiana’s Students with Disabilities,” a grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education.

**David E. McIntosh**, Ph.D., HSPP, ABPP is the David and Joanna Meeks Distinguished Professor of Special Education at Ball State University. He currently serves as the Director of the Programs in Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism. He is the Editor-in-Chief of *Psychology in the Schools*, an interdisciplinary journal that publishes manuscripts focusing on issues confronting schools and children. Dr. McIntosh is Board Certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology, a Fellow of the American Psychological Association—Division 16, and a Fellow of the American Academy of School Psychology. He has served as President for the American Academy of School Psychology and as President of the American Board of School Psychology. He publishes extensively in the area of psychological and educational assessment of children and adolescents with learning, emotional, and/or disruptive behavior disorders. He also publishes in the area of identification and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

**Amy Miller** is the Autism Resource Specialist in the Autism Family Resource Center. She coordinates Camp R.O.C.K.S.I for 10 to 18 year olds with Autism Spectrum Disorders and works with five colleges to provide the Peer Xchange mentoring program for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Amy has over ten years of experience working with children with special needs and two years of experience in ABA direct care therapy. She has an MA in special education with certifications in autism and ABA from Ball State and is working toward her Board Certified Behavior Analyst designation.

**Noha Minshawi**, Ph.D., HSPP is a licensed psychologist and Assistant Professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry. She is the clinical director of the Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center at Riley Hospital for Children at Indiana University Health. Her clinical practice is focused on Applied Behavior Analysis and behavioral interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. She provides parent training in individually-designed behavioral interventions, as well as training for students and professionals on the behavioral assessment and treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

**Michael Organ** is a junior telecommunications major with a focus in audio production. His hobbies include listening to music, mixing music, reading books and writing poems. After college he plans to work in the movie and music production industry. Michael is involved in many extracurricular activities, including two TV shows broadcast on WIPB, "Connections Live" and "Rip or Rave." He also serves as a voting representative in the Residence Hall Association and as a member of RHA’s Activities Committee.

**Adam Pacton** received his BA in Philosophy from Marquette University, MA in Literary Studies from East Tennessee State University, and is completing his PhD in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Adam’s research and writing focuses on the intersections of *disability studies and composition studies, experimental writing, writing assessment, and online education*. Adam can be reached at ampacton@uwm.edu.
Keri Rodgers is a Doctoral Teaching Fellow in the Department of Educational Studies, where she is pursuing a PhD in Educational Studies with an emphasis in Curriculum. She earned her BA in Spanish Literature and MA in Spanish Education from The City University of New York at Lehman College. She created innovative programs combining data and humanistic counseling to improve student achievement in the South Bronx, including a blended learning program recognized by New York City's Celebration of Inclusion. Her research interests include using humanistic education with technology in diverse classrooms, teacher preparation, 21st Century education, special education, and educational equity.

Christine Satory is an Associate Professor of Art at Ball State University. Her research focus is the integration of Bauhaus philosophy, Socratic methodology, and Social Constructivism with the goal of developing an effective 21st century fine art pedagogy.

Evette Simmons-Reed is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education in Applied Behavior Analysis, Ball State University. Previously, she was a Transition Manager in the Special Education and Transition Department, The Ohio State University. Her research interests involve teaching self-determination, use of evidence-based practices to improve employment and educational outcomes of transition-age youth with disabilities, and use of culturally responsive strategies to improve the educational outcomes of culturally and linguistically diverse students, specifically, African American males.

Lauren Slaven is a sophomore meteorology major who is involved with the Alliance for Disability Awareness. She is also a weather forecaster for Ball State’s WCRD. Lauren is an avid mystery reader who loves cats, sports and sculpting.

Geri Strecker, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at Ball State University in the Department of English. She teaches composition and directs the Writing in the Design Curriculum program through the College of Architecture and Planning, guiding students in written components of their studio design projects to prepare them for the communication demands of their profession. In 2012 she received a Summer Research Fellowship Award to explore strategies for guiding students with Asperger Syndrome through written assignments.

Kim Zoder-Martell, Ph.D., HSPP is a licensed psychologist and Assistant Professor at Ball State University. She has experience as a practicing school psychologist and has served as a committee member for developing transition plans for several secondary students. Dr. Zoder-Martell's research interests are related to behavioral consultation, applied treatment integrity, and improving outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

Lois Weiss, MA, LMHC, is an Assistant Director of Student Support and Development, Disability Support Services for Ivy Tech Community College, East Central Region. One of her primary tasks is to provide classroom accommodations for students with disabilities. Lois has 15 years of experience as a mental health counselor and holds a state license in mental health counseling. Prior to her work in mental health counseling, Lois spent 4 years working with developmentally disabled adults in Princeton, Indiana.

Symposium Organizers

Darolyn “Lyn” Jones, Ed.D. is an Assistant Professor, Department of English, Ball State University. Lyn has committed her 24 years of professional life to literacy and disability narrative. Her publications include Painless Reading Comprehension, Monday Coffee and Other Stories of Mothering Children with Special Needs, among others. She has also published research on caregivers of children with special needs and the pre- and post-transitions of wheelchair users in higher education. Lyn also serves as the Education Outreach Director of the Memoir Project at the Indiana Writers Center.

Larry Markle (see presenters above)

Elizabeth M. Riddle is a Professor in the Department of English, Ball State University, where she teaches linguistics, with a specialization in pragmatics. Having family members on the Autism Spectrum has led to an interest in how persons on and off the spectrum vary in interpreting literal vs. figurative language and direct vs. indirect communication patterns in social contexts.
Special thanks to:

Michael Maggiotto, Dean, College of Sciences and Humanities, for his encouragement,

and to the following:

Sharon Harper, Administrative Coordinator, Disability Services

Sharon Hillman, Administrative Coordinator, Department of English

Student volunteers Jacob T. Durnen, Madilyn Edwards, Hallie Heil, TK Kinsey, Melodie Jones, Ana Nusbaum, Andrew Rosser, and Makayla Smart

Dr. James A. Jones, Director, Research and Academic Effectiveness

Dr. James W. Jones, Department of Technology

Paul Neubauer, IT Services

Department of English

Disability Services