

**2024  
I/DD YOUTH  
TRANSITION CONFERENCE**

**Live Virtual Sessions**

**Agenda**

**October 1 and 3  
Virtual Via Zoom**



# Day 1: October 1st, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Keynote  
Speaker

## What's So Special About "Special?"

Presented by Cortez Range, Self-Advocate

Cortez challenges traditional support structures for non-typical students by questioning the focus on reinforcing "specialness" and emphasizing the need to treat these students as young adults. He draws from his personal experience to explore issues like "us vs. them" mentality and misconceptions about "high" and "low" functioning students.

10:00 am - 11:00 am

Panel  
Presentation

## Project SEARCH Program - Preparing Young people with Disabilities for Success in Competitive Integrated Employment

Presented by Solo Okonkwo, Renee Caratozzolo, Peggy Chapman, Darlene Anderson, Erin Ross Burgess and Graduate Interns

The goal for each program participant is competitive employment. To reach that goal, the program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent-living skills to help young people with significant disabilities make successful transitions to productive adult life.

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

## What Happens after the Last Exam? The Journey from School to Adult Life

Presented by Stefani Rinaldi, The Center School

After graduation, the differences between the education system and the adult world can leave former students feeling lost and unfulfilled with their daily lives. This presentation discusses the services available as both a student and as an adult. We will also discuss the steps that will allow a person to receive DDD and/or DVRS support.

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

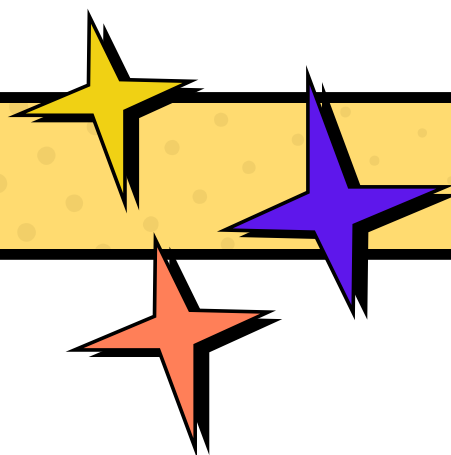
Panel  
Presentation

## Lunch and Learn: CMO Panel

Panel Led by April DiPietro, Camden County Partnership for Children

**Panelists:** Katie Meyers, Camden County Partnership for Children; Samantha Getsinger, Camden County Family Support Organization; and Self-Advocates

Join us for this Q&A session where we will explore the nuances within the NJ Children's System of Care, the Family Support Organization (FSO), and how service delivery directly impacts youth/young adults navigating their hero's journey. Hear from young adults directly – as they answer common questions and share their lived experience.



1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

## Housing 101

Presented by Jerisa Maseko, The Arc of New Jersey

People with I/DD can live in a variety of places in the community. It's important to determine the level of support needed when exploring housing options in your community. It's never too early to learn what living arrangements available. This workshop will give an overview of your options and what to keep in mind when picking the best fit for you.

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

## DVRS: Transition From School to Work

Presented by Toni Scott, NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Exiting school and unsure of what comes next? Discover how the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) can help with career exploration and job readiness. DVRS provides critical transition services to help students with disabilities achieve their employment goals after high school. DVRS is all about obtaining and maintaining employment!

# Day 2: October 3, 9:00am - 3:00pm



9:00 am - 10:00 am

## Matching Students to Employment Sites to Improve Work Based Learning Experiences for Students with Disabilities

Presented by Bill Freeman, NJ Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education

This presentation will provide a brief overview of the career development process and provide a practical strategy that when used, greatly improves the chance for success when preparing for students with disabilities to participate in work-based learning opportunities in the community.

10:00 am - 11:00 am

## Empowering Youth: Advocacy and Inclusion Strategies

Presented by Rachel Shandler, SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

The presentation will cover topics including tools to empower young adults, transition planning, the importance of family support, and strategies for building inclusion in our communities. We will discuss SPAN's Advocacy mission and showcase their amazing program offerings. Presenters will also address the power of self-advocacy and introduce tools to empower young adults with disabilities in supported decision-making.

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

## The Ombudsman's Office: A Bridge Through the Transition Process!

Presented by Paul Aronsohn, Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

New Jersey's own Ombudsman will talk about the work he and his team do in our community. Mr. Aronson will discuss their office's role with respect to both children and adults – having a foot in both worlds – and the work they do with them and their Hero families before, during and after transition.

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Panel  
Presentation

## Lunch and Learn: SCA Panel

Panel Led by Josh Godown, Bridges Supports Coordination, LLC

**Panelists:** Sarah Eichner, Bridges Supports Coordination; Christine Clause, Neighbours Inc; Valeree Henderson, KISS; Chelsea Martin, Navigation Support Coordination; Ciara McClinton, Values Into Action

Join us for this Q&A session where we will explore the nuances of Support Coordination and learn from various Supports Coordination Agencies. What keeps you up at night when you think about you or your loved one transitioning into the adult world of I/DD services and supports? Join us to learn answers about the most pressing questions people ask about transitioning.

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

## New Life in College: You CAN Do it!

Presented by Pat Gerke, The Center for Adults in Transition, Rowan College

The Center for Adults in Transition supports high school graduates with I/DD to experience college in a meaningful way. Participants meet with mentors weekly to explore areas and work on goals that matter to them. From social skills to self-advocacy to financial literacy skills, our team is ready to explore your goals with you! James and Aminah want to share their story with you in more detail!

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

## NJ ABLE Savings Plan

Presented by Christine Chickadel, New Jersey Division of Disability Services

An NJ ABLE account promotes financial independence without jeopardizing eligibility for many means tested benefits. Learn how to save money while maintaining important federal benefits, such as Medicaid and SSI! Learn all the basics of the how, what and why's of ABLE savings, in a brief, informative clearly explained presentation. Great for ALL AGES of people with disabilities.

Learn about Resources & Services from  
Heroes in Our Community  
on October 4th, 2024 from 10 AM - 12 PM

THE I/DD YOUTH TRANSITION CONFERENCE PRESENTS...

# RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

Register [HERE](#) or  
on our website!

These quarterly Zoom meetings provide a chance for community members to meet and learn about the providers that support YTC and the amazing services they offer.

Come learn about the heroes supporting our work and community!



October 4th, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm



LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP AT  
[www.NJYouthTransition.Life](http://www.NJYouthTransition.Life)

The 2024 I/DD Youth Transition Conference is brought to you by Values Into Action NJ in collaboration with our valued partners:



YOUR LIFE  
YOUR CARE  
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**Values**  
into action



Many thanks to our  
Hero sponsor for  
2024!



Want more YTC?

Check out our pre-recorded presentations on YouTube!

More information and resources available at [www.NJYouthTransition.Life](http://www.NJYouthTransition.Life)