

**Subject:** College Autism Network - April 2022 Updates

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## COLLEGE AUTISM NETWORK

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### College Autism Network Newsletter

April 2022

#### In this Issue

- **Summit Call for Proposals Now Open**
- **April Awareness? Acceptance?**
- **Summit Collections Offer Easy and Inexpensive Professional Development**
- **Bridgewater College's New ASP**
- **Explaining "Neurodiversity" to Colleagues: Great Article**
- **New Book on College and Career Transition**
- **New Federal Effort to Remove Barriers to Employment**
- **Upcoming CANVAS and Program Directors' Calls**

#### Summit Call for Proposals and Registration Now Open!



[Submit a Program Proposal](#)

You might think that six months is a long time...until suddenly, it's upon you. The [6th College Autism Summit](#) is six months away, and will be here in a few moments.

So:

- Put the dates (October 12-14) on your calendar
- Consider submitting a program proposal (deadline is June 5)
- Invite friends and colleagues who don't know about the Summit

For those of you who are new to CAN, or have not yet attended a Summit, it is the premiere professional development experience for those who work with autistic college students as campus-based or independent program practitioners, as employment specialists and employers, as researchers, and as self-advocates with ideas about how best to do this work. After two virtual Summits, we're happy to be planning a return to Vanderbilt University in Nashville. In person! The Summit is a low-cost, high-value experience that is helping to build a network of talented professionals and self-advocates. If your work and professional interests include autism support, you won't want to miss the Summit.

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### Autism Awareness Month is...A Month

As April begins, we know there are countless autism awareness/autism acceptance events and initiatives happening across the country. Blue lights, infinity symbols, sensory awareness buttons, gift bags with information about autism tucked in among treats, speakers, workshops, posters. It's a wonderful testament to the commitment of self-advocates and the professional staff who work



alongside them to educate their friends and colleagues and in doing so, reshape the campus environment to be one in which neurodiversity is fully embraced. But it was actually several days in March that gave me cause for optimism that our campuses are changing. I attended the annual conference of NASPA, a large professional

organization that serves student affairs professionals. In the past, there might have been one, maybe two sessions out of hundreds that focused on autism and/or neurodiversity.

This year I attended several, and there were at least a few others I didn't get to. At each of these, an eager and attentive audience heard from practitioners and researchers what campuses need to do to change themselves--not their autistic students. UT-Chattanooga, Chestnut Hill College, Clemson, the University of Delaware and (of course) CAN all presented to student affairs professionals who seek to better understand and serve their neurodiverse students (and colleagues). There was a low-sensory room available once again, and, as we mentioned in last month's newsletter, recognition by NASPA for the Bridges to Adelphi program as its outstanding program of the year. All this to say--things are changing. Awareness is moving toward acceptance and acceptance to celebration of the many ways a truly neuro-inclusive environment benefits all of us. So while I wish you a happy Autism Awareness/Acceptance month this April, I also wish for continued inclusion, encouragement and recognition throughout the year.

- Lee

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## **Summit Collections Now Available for Professional Development**

We're excited to offer excellent professional development at a very low cost. We have put together recorded sessions from the 2021 Summit, grouping them by topic (4-6 per group), and you can purchase these for \$25 for a single Collection (CAN member rate) or all six Collections for \$100 (CAN member rate). If you attended the Summit last October, you already have free access to all of these. Just email Lee if you need a reminder of how to get to them. The Collection topics are:

- Program Development, Partnerships and Professional Skill-Building
- Career Planning and Employment Transition
- Autism Culture, Politics, Community and Self-Advocacy
- Mental Health, Anxiety and Autism
- Partnering with Business Experts.

To purchase one or more Collection, please visit the [CAN website](#).

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## Bridgewater College in Virginia to Open new Autism Support Program



[Read About Bridgewater College's New Program](#)

We're always happy to spread the news that another institution has made the commitment to support their autistic students in a thoughtful and thorough way.

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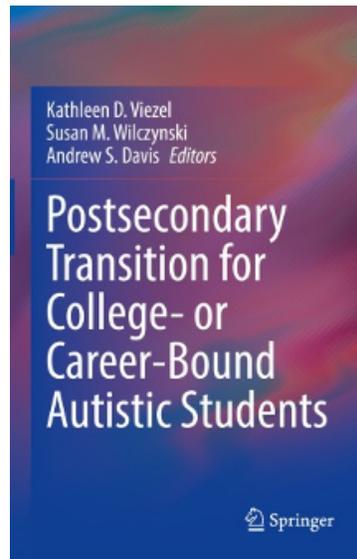
## Excellent Article to Share with Colleagues Seeking to Understand Neurodiversity

We're really pleased to share this excellent article, "**Neurodiversity is Diversity**" by CAN member Solvegi Schmulsky, Professor of Psychology at Landmark College. It was published in a recent AAC&U newsletter, and it's a great resource to bookmark and share when you are trying to introduce the concept of neurodiversity to colleagues--faculty, advisors, administrators. It's not too long, it's written in accessible language, and it says all the important stuff. Thanks, Solvi!



[Read the Article](#)

## New Book is a Valuable Resource



CAN member Kate Viesel is the lead author of a new and important book, **“Postsecondary Transition for College- or Career-Bound Autistic Students,”** published by Springer. A quick scan of the chapter titles may convince you to add this to your, or your program’s, resource library and/or use in training for autism support staff. Congratulations, Kate!

[Purchase the Book](#)

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## New ODEP project examines promising strategies for improving employment outcomes of young adults on the autism spectrum

The Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor has partnered with Mathematica to lead a project to examine barriers to, catalysts for, and promising strategies for improving employment outcomes of young adults on the autism spectrum. The [project](#), Research Support Services for Employment of Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum (REYAAS), kicked off in fall of 2021. A recent [fact sheet](#) explains the project goals and provides an overview of its timeline and planned activities, and a pair of literature reviews summarizes [promising programs and strategies](#) and evidence on their effectiveness. Currently, Mathematica is planning a series of public listening sessions to incorporate perspectives from youth on the autism spectrum and the broader

community on this topic.

If you would like to participate in a listening session, please send an email to [reyaas@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:reyaas@mathematica-mpr.com) to sign up for the REYAAS mailing list.

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## **CANVAS April Call**

**Friday, April 29 @ 2 p.m. ET**

**Brittany Jackson** (Online Learning Manager, Hiram College)

**Presentation Title:** Postsecondary Social Support Programs for Students with ASD as Described by Students, Directors, and Staff

**Description:** In this presentation, Dr. Jackson will present her recent study, which