

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

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**COLLEGE AUTISM NETWORK**  
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## College Autism Network Newsletter

March 2022

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### Recognition for a Stellar Program



If you've wondered whether or not your campus colleagues notice the hard work you do every day supporting autistic and other neurodiverse students, here's some evidence that they do. NASPA, the major student affairs professional association, recognized an autism support program, Adelphi University's **Bridges to Adelphi**, as its "Grand Winner" for Outstanding Program. NASPA's Excellence Awards recognize the contributions of members who are transforming higher education through outstanding programs, innovative services, and effective

administration. There are eleven categories, with each having a gold, silver and bronze winner, and then “grand winners” from all categories. Bridges to Adelphi is this year’s top award winner across all categories. Congratulations to Diana Damilatis-Kull, Director of the Bridges Program, Stephanie Grindell, Senior Associate Director, and Alexa Rein, Associate Director. And kudos to NASPA for giving its top award to an autism support program!

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## Summit Planners Hard at Work

It is just eight short months till the next **College Autism Summit** is underway. Join us at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN for some learning, some networking, and some good music, October 12-14. Our Call for Programs will open in early April. Watch this space or check in at [CAN’s website](#) over the next few weeks as we roll out more details.



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## Upcoming National Conference Sessions

CAN has deep connections to the student affairs profession, and we’re proud to support the attendance of CAN members at the national conferences of both NASPA and ACPA when they present on autism and neurodiversity. While these conferences may not be the professional development of choice for some CAN members, it is likely that someone on your campus is planning on attending one conference or the other during March. This is a great opportunity to encourage your colleagues to learn about autism and neurodiversity from someone other than you (insert eyeroll). Encourage them to attend one of the following sessions, sponsored in part by CAN:

*ACPA (St. Louis):*

[NeurodiversityU: Creating Inclusion for Students with Autism Spectrum](#)

Disorder, a pre-conference workshop, **Allison Gatta**, St. Joseph's University (Sunday, March 6, 9am-12pm)

*NASPA (Baltimore):*

Disability, Difference or (Neuro)diversity: Supporting Students Across the Entire Spectrum, **Lee Burdette Williams and Brad Cox**, CAN (Monday, March 21, 8:30-9:20am)

Envisioning Neurodivergent Friendly Services Through the Lenses of Autism, Neurodivergent Identity, and Universal Design, **Tom Beeson and Taimi Olson**, Clemson University (Monday, March 21, 2:30-3:20pm)

We also spotted a program on the schedule from the folks at UT-Chattanooga, Cultivating Autism Allyship on College Campuses on Tuesday at 3 pm. **Jaime Butler, Nicolas Maynard and Amy Rutherford** will present. That same day, **Lynn Ortale and Stephen Sunder** from Chestnut Hill College will present Neurodiversity: Curriculum Design for Campus Training (also presenting at ACPA).

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## Landmark Offers Certificate in Autism on Campus



If you or someone you know is looking to expand their education and professional skills, an excellent option is Landmark College's **Certificate in Learning Differences and Neurodiversity**, particularly the specialization in Autism on Campus and Online. This 8-week course is a great way to discover and develop the skills and knowledge needed to lead your campus efforts to support autistic students. **The deadline to register is March 27.**

And more about Landmark: Congratulations to CAN friend **Adam Lalor** for his appointment as interim Vice President of Research and Innovation!

## Upcoming Call with CANVAS Community

Please join CANVAS (CAN Virtual Association of Scholars) for its March virtual gathering, Friday, March 18, at 12 noon ET, and hear from **Dr. Jill Underhill**, Associate Professor of Communication Studies and Director, Writing Across the Curriculum at Marshall University. Jill will be speaking about her research on an intriguing topic:



“Autistic Student Success in Public Speaking Courses.” If you’d like to receive the CANVAS invitations and links, please email **Brett Nachman**. Anyone who is interested in autism research in higher education is welcome to join CANVAS

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## A Summer Student Leadership Opportunity



The Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) hosts a weeklong summer leadership institute for neurodivergent students interested in developing advocacy skills and networking with other campus leaders, **Autism Campus Inclusion**. This is an excellent opportunity for student leaders! According to ASAN, “ACI helps autistic students learn to make their college campuses better for people with disabilities. ACI participants learn about making student groups, understanding disability policy, and talking to people in power. During ACI, all participants go to the U.S. Capitol to talk to their Senators and Representatives about policies important to the disability community. After the Academy, students get help from ASAN to meet their advocacy goals at their college.” ASAN covers the travel and accommodations costs for a week in Washington DC. Please encourage any emerging or current student leaders you work with to submit an application. **The deadline is Sunday, March 6.**

## ...And a Summer Employment Opportunity

From new CAN member Beyond Akeela: “Beyond Akeela is an overnight summer program for autistic/neurodivergent teens preparing for their college transition. We are seeking staff members to fill **several seasonal positions** (including leadership roles), in our camp community this summer. The positions require staff members to live and work on-site in Rindge, NH at Franklin Pierce University, and all meals & housing are provided by Beyond Akeela.”

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## Employment News, Notes and Opportunities

The **Neurodiversity@Work Roundtable** has launched a new tool, the **Career Connector**, a platform to assist ND candidates with a wide range of employers. It's pretty impressive.

On a related note, here's a **brief article** from Harvard Business Review that describes the benefits of neurodiversity as a hiring target.

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## Autism in the News:

We love **this story** about a collaboration between University College Cork and the Cork Opera House to bring an autistic artist to a residence program (sorry--programme). The Opera House CEO says, “We will use this opportunity to learn how to better facilitate neurodiversity within our industry and to celebrate how wonderfully diverse the artistic community is.” Sláinte!

We are always excited to see our CAN member institutions in the news getting the attention they deserve. Here's a **sweet story** about a student heading to Clemson where we know **Tom Beeson** and **Margaret Camp** will make sure he has an excellent experience.

