

Subject: College Autism Network - June 2022 Updates
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COLLEGE AUTISM NETWORK
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College Autism Network Newsletter June 2022

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Call for CAN Award Nominations-Deadline July 15

In order to recognize the outstanding work being done by our colleagues, the College Autism Network seeks nominations for our annual **College Autism Network Excellence in Autism Practice and Research Awards**. **Nominations may be submitted** by colleagues, though self-nominations will also be accepted. Recipients will be recognized at the 2022 **College Autism Summit**. *Deadline for nominations is **July 15**.*





★ Outstanding Autism Support Program ★

This award is given to a campus-based support program or initiative that has demonstrated excellence in implementation of evidence-guided practices. These may include some or all of the following:

- Individual practices, clusters or combination of activities
- Programs or initiatives that focus on autistic students directly, neurotypical students/peers or faculty/staff in relation to autistic students, or relevant to/about other key stakeholders
- Program may be longstanding or newly-created
- Program may be implemented by campus-based units, departments, or other programs, or may be initiated by independent entities that focus on college students and the higher education setting

★ Outstanding Neurodiversity Workplace Initiative ★

This award is given to an employer who has established a workplace initiative that recruits and supports autistic and other neurodivergent employees and encourages professional growth and advancement. These may include some or all of the following:

- Support of, and connection to, campus resources and initiatives
- Effective recruiting of neurodivergent applicants
- Outreach and education to all employees about neurodiversity
- Initiatives, policies and processes that demonstrate ongoing support of, and attention to, neurodivergent employees in their professional growth and advancement

★ Outstanding Research on Autism in Higher Education ★

This award is given to an individual (or research team) who has, in the previous year (2021-22), produced original scholarship advancing research, policy, and/or practice in ways that facilitate college success for autistic students. Such scholarship may include any/all of the following:

- Journal articles
- Project reports
- Books
- Research briefs

★ CAN Contributor of the Year ★

This award is given to an individual whose contributions to the College Autism

Network, its members, and its mission, have been outstanding during the previous year. Contributions may include:

- Presentations at College Autism Summit or other event
- Consultations with other campuses
- Contributions to CAN's mission to support autistic college students and the professionals who work with them
- Engagement and/or service in CAN programming, including CANVAS, Program Director Calls, Summit planning

[Submit Nomination](#)

Summit Call for Proposals Deadline June 5; Pre-Conference Workshop and Sponsor Info Available



If you're thinking about submitting a proposal for the **2022 College Autism Summit**, to be held October 12-14 at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, the clock is ticking! You have till midnight, June 5 to submit a proposal. Details can be found at the Summit [website](#).

[Submit a Program Proposal](#)

[Register Today](#)

Planning to attend the Summit? Registration is open, including our preconference workshop, "Building, Expanding or Improving a College Program for Students with Autism" with facilitator Laurie Ackles of RIT. There are only 50 spaces available for this workshop, so please **register early**.

Does your organization or institution want to help make the Summit happen by

sponsoring a speaker, a session, a meal or a scholarship fund for attendees? Sponsors get attention and a lot of love from attendees and access to those attendees to share information and services. We have three sponsorship levels: Gold (\$5000), Silver (\$2500) and Bronze (\$1000). Learn more about being a Summit sponsor [here](#) (look under “Sponsors and Exhibitors”).

CANVAS Call Schedule for July

We’re taking the month of June off from our pursuit of research interest and excellence and will be back in July. Mark your calendars for this international take on the autistic student experience.

Presentation Date: Thurs, July 21 at 12pm ET

Meeting Link: [https://ncsu.zoom.us/j/94161179279?](https://ncsu.zoom.us/j/94161179279?pwd=MXZGVFROWmNsbkRscWVtYStXSFludz09)

[pwd=MXZGVFROWmNsbkRscWVtYStXSFludz09](#)

Meeting Agenda: [Please sign up to attend here](#)

Presenter: Dr. Theo C. Bakker (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Presentation Title: Study Progression and Success of Autistic Students in Higher Education, A Longitudinal, Propensity Score-Weighted Population Study



Presentation Description: In this PhD thesis, I aimed to improve understanding of the study progression and success of autistic students in higher education by comparing them to students with other disabilities and students without disabilities. I studied their background and enrollment characteristics, whether barriers in progression existed, how and when possible barriers manifested themselves in their student journey, and how institutions should address these issues. I found autistic students to be different from their peers but not worse as expected based on existing findings. I expect I counterbalanced differences because I studied a large data set spanning seven cohorts and performed propensity score weighting.

[Sign Up to Attend](#)

Autistic Graduates in the News

Recent graduate Elizabeth Bonker, a nonspeaking autistic student, received much attention and well-deserved accolades for being the commencement speaker at Rollins College (FL). Elizabeth's achievement of being named the valedictorian of her class makes clear the potential for autistic students



who are fortunate enough to find themselves at institutions where they are encouraged and supported. The press coverage of Elizabeth is heartening, but she is one of *many* outstanding students graduating this spring who have overcome similar challenges. For example, Bristol Community College shared this about its own salutatorian, Kevin England, of Wareham, MA in its coverage of commencement hoopla:



“Kevin attributes his success to the support of his family, friends and Bristol faculty who have helped him to persevere past his challenges and become a voice for others with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In high school, Kevin was a member of the National Honor Society, received the Principal’s Award and earned all A grades as one of the top 10 in his class. While studying at Bristol, Kevin also excelled academically and was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges, for students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher. In addition, he serves his community as a volunteer in the CARE program at Wareham Middle School, regional food drives and raising money for UNICEF. To achieve his academic and career goals at Bristol, Kevin utilized the college’s Tutoring and Academic Support Center and worked closely with the college’s Office of Disability Services on individualized support services and accommodations that worked best for him. This fall, Kevin will continue his education in communications at Bridgewater State University, with the goal of pursuing a career in the social media or multimedia field.”

We extend warm congratulations to the thousands of autistic and neurodivergent

students who have graduated this spring. You have overcome a lot, including a pandemic, to achieve your goals. And to the many professionals and family members who have supported these students, we see you! We salute you, too!

*This newsletter is published monthly by the **College Autism Network**, an*