

Subject: Summertime...and the livin' is easy (and the CAN newsletter is here)
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College Autism Network News and Notes

June 2024

COLLEGE AUTISM SUMMIT BRINGS LEADING VOICES IN NEURODIVERSITY



We're excited to announce our opening and closing speakers for the 2024 [College Autism Summit](#) to be held October 13-16 in Columbus, OH.

Our opening speaker (Monday, October 14 at 9 am) is **Bridgette Hamstead, MS**, a neurodiversity consultant, educator, and advocate who passionately champions the celebration, support, and inclusion of neurodivergent

Newsletter Highlights

Summit Major Speakers
Announced; Crowd
Goes Wild

Summit Preconference
Workshops Now Open for
Registration--Space is
Limited!

CAN Annual Awards:
Nominate a Best Program,
Researcher, Employer

News from Member and
Other Programs (Dublin
City University)

Good Reads (Interesting
Pieces on Autism and
Higher Ed from
Around the Internet)



individuals. With her own experiences as an AuDHD individual and a parent to neurodivergent children, Bridgette understands the challenges of navigating an often neurotypical-centric world, while also recognizing the resilience and strength within the neurodivergent community. As the driving force behind [Fish in a Tree](#), a non-profit neurodiversity community center in New Orleans, she orchestrates a hub of tailored programming and services, fostering belonging and community for neurodivergent individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Her commitment extends to consultation, fostering community partnerships, and equipping organizations, educators, healthcare providers, therapeutic and other service providers, and employers with neuro-inclusive tools. Named Activist of the Year 2023 and US Representative to the UN for World Autism Awareness Day 2024, Bridgette's vision of a neuro-inclusive society, where the unique perspectives and strengths of neurodivergent individuals are embraced, fuels her tireless work to create a more equitable and vibrant future.

Our opening session and speaker are sponsored by Summit Platinum Partner Wells Fargo.

The Wells Fargo logo is displayed in white, uppercase letters on a red rectangular background.

Our closing speaker (Wednesday, October 16 at 12:30 pm) will be advocate, author and entrepreneur [Dr. Maureen Dunne](#). Dr. Dunne's book, [The Neurodiversity Edge](#), was published this year and has quickly become a bestseller and important contribution to the neurodiversity literature. Recent reviewers have called it "compelling," "highly engaging" and "full of important truths about neurodiversity." Dr. Dunne is a globally recognized thought leader, the co-founder of the first neurodiversity social impact investment association and the CEO of Autism Community Ventures, a neurodiversity inclusion consultancy and social impact firm. She currently serves as Board Chair of College of DuPage and as Board Director of the Association of Community College Trustees, where she helps guide policy and advocacy efforts affecting more than 12 million community college students. She is a former National Science Foundation Fellow and a Rhodes Scholar--the first from a community college.

Our closing session and speaker are sponsored by Microsoft.



SUMMIT OFFERS VALUABLE PRECONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES



Sometimes the regular [Summit](#) offerings are just not enough! This year we are offering four very different preconference workshops, all scheduled for Sunday, October 13 from 1 pm until 4 pm. Which one is right for you?

Building Blocks for a New Autism Program: Led by Amy Rutherford of UT-Chattanooga and Matt Segall of Emory University, this workshop is ideal for any professional who is starting a new campus autism program, is thinking about starting a new program, or has a new program that is ready to move to the next level. Sponsored by the Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex at Western Kentucky University.



College to Career: The Next Frontier: Led by Kendra Evans of RIT, this program will offer participants valuable information about a career readiness curriculum, the Neurodiverse Hiring Initiative. This outstanding curriculum spans the college experience and prepares students for a variety of career options. Sponsored by Dell Technologies.



Program Leaders' Collaborative: If you are the leader of a campus autism or ND program, consider joining your peers for an afternoon of learning and networking. Presenters will address topics determined by surveying current program leaders seeking to sharpen their skills. Make new connections while you learn from experienced colleagues. Sponsored by CAI®.



Student Experience: We are excited to have 40 autistic undergraduates join us for the Summit. Their experience begins with this lunch and workshop led by John Caldora of the University of Kentucky and Jastyn Wallace of Ohio State University. This workshop is free, but registration is required, and there is a limit of 40 participants, so please sign up early. Sponsored by Mansfield Hall.



To participate in any of these preconference workshops, you must register for the Summit. The cost for the first three is \$75 for CAN members and \$115 for non-members if you register by September 24 (there is no charge for the Student Experience workshop). Space is limited to 40 for each workshop.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR ANNUAL CAN AWARDS



In order to recognize the outstanding work being done by our colleagues, the College Autism Network presents 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. Deadline for nominations is July 1 with award winners notified by August 1. Recipients will be recognized at the [2024 College Autism Summit](#).

[Submit your nominations here.](#)

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 (2022-23), 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

Deadline for nominations: July 1
Recipients will be notified by August 1
[Submit your nominations here.](#)

NEWS FROM MEMBER PROGRAMS

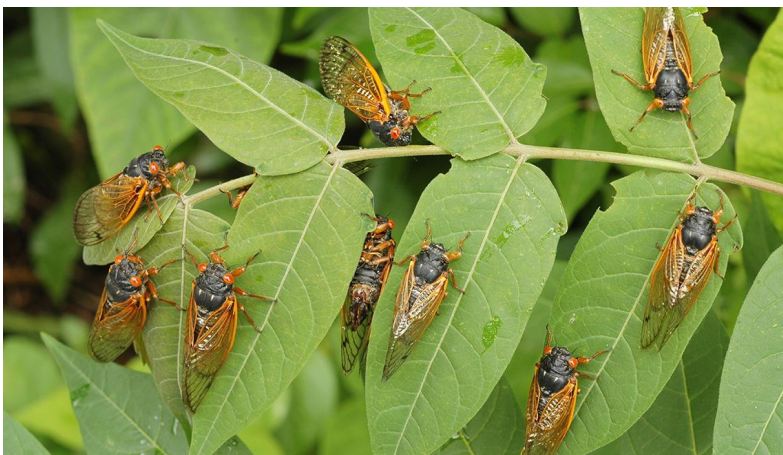
DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY TAKES ON EMPLOYMENT



Our friends at DCU have been ahead of the curve in Europe for a while, thanks to AsIAm, Ireland’s autism charity and its partnership with DCU, the world’s first autism-friendly university. They’ve been **expanding their efforts** into workforce transition, sponsoring a study of a program called “IMPACT” (Inspiring Meaningful and Progressive Autistic Career Transitions--winner of the CAN Acronym of the Month award). Not surprisingly, the study’s results recommend increasing the availability of work placements and practical experience or ‘taster’ (Irish for internship?) work experience, along with mentors and dedicated supports in the workplace.

GOOD READS

THE SENSORY CHALLENGES CICADAS PRESENT



Everyone’s talking (chirping?) about the [“double brood emergence”](#) of cicadas this year. It’s the first year since 1803 that two huge populations of these winged insects have teamed up to appear together. Imagine the Rolling Stones and U2 on the same stage: historic, sure, but

definitely loud. For those with sensory issues related to sound, 2024 could be a tough year, especially in the southern Midwest and the Southeast, according to two researchers writing in [Psychiatric News](#).

AUTISTIC TWINS HEAD IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS



Who doesn't love a good twin story? A staple of soap operas for generations, twins, especially identical ones, are always a source of interest. At least NPR thinks so. Give a listen to [this 10-minute story](#) about Sam and John Fettters, autistic identical twins with very lives.

This newsletter is published monthly by the [College Autism Network](#), an independent 501(c)3 organization supporting the success of autistic college students and the professionals who work with them. Want to share an article? Feature an upcoming event? Post a job opportunity in autism support services? Our monthly newsletter reaches over 2000 self-advocates and professionals. Send it [to Lee](#) and we'll share it.

Was someone nice enough to forward this newsletter to you? We're happy to add you to our mailing list to receive it directly. [Send us a note](#).

If you appreciate our work, please consider [joining CAN](#) to receive additional information and discounts on some of our resources and to support our work. Individual and organizational memberships are available.

The [College Autism Network](#) is supported in large part by the [Frist Center for Autism and Innovation](#) at Vanderbilt University.



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