

**Subject:** CAN's June Newsletter: Eager for those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer?

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**From:** College Autism Network

**To:** brittany@collegeautismnetwork.org



# College Autism Network News and Notes

*June 2025*

## STANDING TOGETHER ON SHAKY GROUND



I recently listened to an inspiring talk given by our partner, Frist Center for Autism and Innovation founder Keivan Stassun, at the excellent Neurodiversity@Work Research Conference in Pittsburgh. He walked us through some of the challenges faced by those who seek to address the longstanding problem of un- and underemployment among autistic and other neurodivergent people and how those challenges have been amplified by the devastating cuts in program and research support by the federal government. And he's right. Even in the best of times, the work our CAN members do is hard, and progress can be slow. But when that fast-flowing stream of difficulty meets up with the river of shortsighted and ill-informed policy decisions

## Newsletter Highlights

Where Do We Stand?  
Together.

Parent Webinar Series  
Starts June 12

College Autism Summit  
Program Begins to Take  
Shape

CANVAS Hosts Summer  
Research Discussions on  
Attrition

PEACES Study Update and  
New Fast Facts Available

Landmark College's ND  
Certificate Starts Up in  
June

SENG (Supporting Emotional  
Needs of the Gifted) Hosts  
Summer Conference

New Membership Option for  
CAN Community

Interesting Stuff from

we're seeing, it becomes a raging torrent of improbability.

But then Keivan pivoted to answer the question, "So what do we do now?" And that was the inspiring part. He said we have to show up for one another. We have to support the work each other is doing. In that moment I felt keenly the responsibility of the College Autism Network: to keep our community together, to give us a way to show up for one another. I don't know what the next three and a half years, or beyond, hold for us, but we at CAN are determined to do all we can to keep our community of scholars, practitioners and self-advocates together. We're in the midst of winter, and as Camus said, we need to find within us that invincible summer. If we can stand together and show up for one another, then when the season changes (and here's hoping it will), we will not be staring at wreckage, having to start from scratch. We may be in rough shape by then, but the essential qualities of our work will be there. So for now, let's figure out how to keep this work going forward in whatever form our government, our institutions and our organizations allow, knowing we will get through this. Do what you need to do. Don't judge others whose strategies may differ. Share what resources you can. Say and do kind things whenever you have the chance. Let's just all do our best in these difficult times, guided by the knowledge that this work matters. We'll see you on the other side.

--Lee

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## PARENT WEBINAR SERIES STARTS JUNE 12-- REGISTER NOW!



The college search landscape can be confusing, especially

## Around the Internet



for a family whose student is autistic and may need extra support to succeed academically. What can be asked for? What's reasonable? How do you know if a student is ready for college? Our summer series, [Autistic Students: College Readiness and Reasonable Expectations](#), is designed to answer some of the most common questions families have--a win-win for families and for the campus and other support staff who work with autistic and other neurodivergent students who want the best transition to college possible.

This low-cost series tackles *four* areas of questions: housing, mental health, career support and transitional program options. Each webinar will feature four professionals with hands-on experience supporting autistic college students.

If you're a parent--[please sign up!](#)

If you're a program leader, please [share this resource](#) with families exploring your services.

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## COLLEGE AUTISM SUMMIT PROGRAM IN THE WORKS



With over 100 proposals for sessions and posters submitted, you can be pretty sure this year's [College Autism Summit](#) will offer a rich and diverse program. We'll be building that program over the next few weeks, but we can share a few things we already know about:

- Program Leaders' Collaborative preconference: a chance to network, learn from and encourage one another;
- Employers Connection Series: a collection of sessions, conversations and networking opportunities for those who have neuroinclusive employment initiatives and those who want to have them;
- Summit Student Experience: a learning and networking opportunity for autistic undergraduates who want to become leaders and scholars in this field;
- Research presentations and posters by some of the

best scholars in the field;

- Way too much more fun, learning and thought-provoking conversation to list here.

Join us in Pittsburgh, November 2-5, for an outstanding professional development opportunity. [Register now](#) to get our early rates and a reasonably-priced Heavenly Bed™ at the Westin.

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## SUMMER RESEARCH DISCUSSIONS ON ATTRITION AND DROPOUT



Join the CANVAS community for a collaborative two-part discussion on attrition and dropout in autism research.

[Session #1](#) (July 15 at noon ET) will provide a brief overview of the topic and related research followed by a discussion on barriers related to or experiences with dropout/attrition.

[Session #2](#) (July 29, noon ET) will focus on potential strategies to mitigate barriers and create more accessible research processes. Sam Brandsen and Brett Nachman, both autistic autism researchers, will facilitate these discussions.

No cost, but please register to get the links!

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## PEACES STUDY UPDATE AND NEW FAST FACTS AVAILABLE



We're always happy to share new results from CAN's PEACES team studying autistic college student success. You can join in the excitement these ways:

- Read [a new peer-reviewed journal article](#), published in *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, which focuses on how autistic community college students describe what defines, contributes to, and could further support their success. The article stems from Wave 1 of this nationwide study, illuminating the perspectives of 68 autistic community college students. For a copy of the piece, please reach out to Dr. Brett Ranon Nachman ([bnachman@pitt.edu](mailto:bnachman@pitt.edu))
- [Check out our Fast Facts](#) that distill PEACES data into easy-to-read, one-page infographics. Some of our newest Fast Facts focus on the roles of important figures in students' lives and tips for disability services offices!

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## LANDMARK COLLEGE'S ND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM STARTING UP IN JUNE



# LANDMARK

C O L L E G E

June 10 is the application deadline for summer courses in Landmark College's highly regarded, online certificate program in [Learning Differences and Neurodiversity](#).

Participants can take individual, 8-week courses or pursue a graduate-level certificate with a choice of specializations in Autism on Campus and Online, Executive Function, or Postsecondary Disability Services.

Summer is a great time to start because the overview course, “Understanding and Supporting Diverse Learners”, which is required in all three specializations, runs June 27 - August 24.

Note this deadline has been specially extended to June 10 for CAN newsletter readers.

For more courses and start dates, and full program information, see the certificate website or contact Carol Beninati, Certificate Program Coordinator, at [institute@landmark.edu](mailto:institute@landmark.edu) or (802) 387-1662.

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## SENG ANNUAL COMMUNITY CONFERENCE & RETREAT



With an inspiring theme--"Blueprints of Brilliance: Unlocking Potential in Mind, Body, and Spirit" --you may be inspired to join SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) at their [Annual Community Conference and Retreat](#), July 24-25 in Alexandria Virginia.

This intimate gathering brings together experts in the field, gifted adults, parents navigating their child's gifted journey (while likely being gifted themselves), educators, counselors, gifted children and more—all with a shared mission to support and uplift our gifted and 2e community. It's a place to learn from one another, share your unique voice, gather valuable resources and build lifelong connections within the SENG family. Don't miss this opportunity to deepen your understanding and create lasting relationships!

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## MEMBERSHIP OPTION FOR CAN COMMUNITY



## MEMBERS IN NEED



If you have lost your position or your program has lost its funding due to the current political climate, we've got you covered. **You can join or renew your CAN membership for just \$25 for the coming year.** We want to keep you connected to the CAN community! When you need to renew your membership, or join for the first time, choose "Transitional Membership" from among our membership options.

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## INTERESTING STUFF FROM AROUND THE INTERNET

### DEBUNKING COMMON MYTHS, MISCONCEPTIONS AND DISTORTIONS ABOUT AUTISM



[This is a nice piece](#), clearly written, that addresses common inaccurate beliefs about autism and their origins.

And this is an [equally accessible piece](#) about accurate and distorted views of autism, currently a popular news item. Send them to your campus media relations folks when you're promoting your own program if you think they need a bit of background.

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## INTERVIEW WITH ARI NE'EMAN, ASAN CO-FOUNDER AND HARVARD SCHOLAR



Ari Ne'eman is a well-regarded scholar (Assistant Professor at Harvard's School of Public Health) and activist (co-founder of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network) who happens to be autistic as well. Ari's take on HHS's and Kennedy's views on autism are well worth a read.

[This interview](#) was published by the Harvard School of Public Health. One observation that jumped out:

*"Neither the average autistic person nor the average family member wakes up wondering if scientists have found a better biomarker or built a better mouse model. They wake up wondering if they are going to get answers that will help empower someone to communicate or live independently or be included in the same classroom or workplace with their peers."*

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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 3000 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 by the [Frist Center for Autism and Innovation](#) at Vanderbilt University.

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