



Speaker and Facilitator Biographies

Jerry R. Alliston, L.M.S.W., C.C.M., is the community education director at the Institute for Disability Studies. In addition, he serves as coordinator for the TRIAD (Training, Resource, and Information for the Advancement of Degrees) project and as the First Steps Service Coordinator for the Pediatric Developmental Services Team. Mr. Alliston has several years of experience in medical social work, military disability case management, disaster case management, early intervention services, training consultation, and providing technical assistance. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration, and received his bachelor's degree in Psychology and his master's degree in Social Work from the University of Southern Mississippi. Mr. Alliston is a Licensed Master's Level Social Worker and a Certified Case Manager.

Emily Bresler is one of four Youth Ambassadors employed by the Center for Emerging Leadership (CEL). In addition to her job with CEL, Emily volunteers at the American Cancer Society's Discovery Retail Shop in Rancho Bernardo, California. Emily enjoys meeting new people and sharing her enthusiasm for life and her self-advocacy and self-determination experiences.

Carl T. Cameron, Ph.D., is president of Inclusion Research Institute in Washington DC, and the founder of the Center for Disability and Special Needs Preparedness. He is a nationally known research and training professional in the area of employment and community integration of people with disabilities. He has been recognized as a program developer, researcher, teacher, author, and presenter throughout the United States. Dr. Cameron is a media and training expert and an experienced producer of satellite video teleconferences, videotape training, and interactive video productions. Since September 11, 2001, much of his work has been focused on developing training and technical assistance programs and materials for planners, first responders, and persons with disabilities and other special needs to improve their overall preparedness for terrorist attacks and other disasters.

Under Dr. Cameron's leadership, the Center has been designated as a national training partner for the Department of Homeland Security, a multiple grantee under the Urban Area Security Initiative, and a recipient of the *People Who Are Making a Difference* award from the Environmental Protection Agency. Dr. Cameron earned his doctorate in special education, statistics, and communications from the University of Florida, and has been a faculty member at the University of Missouri, George Washington University,

the University of Maryland, and most recently at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. He has designed education programs for the Department of Defense Education Agency and has provided expertise to a wide variety of research organizations.

Megan Chytraus is a member of the BLT (Becoming Leaders for Tomorrow) Project's Advisory Committee and winner of the 2008 Administration on Developmental Disabilities, Youth Information, Training and Resource Centers (YITRC) Technical Assistance (TA) Institute Logo Contest. Five years ago, Megan was diagnosed with a very rare autoimmune disease that affects the bones. Due to the rareness of this disease, there are currently no treatments available to help cure it. She is still working with doctors to find a treatment plan that can help her. Megan had a scholarship to attend Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah. Because of her illness, this opportunity was put on hold and she is currently taking classes part time at a community college as her health permits. Megan's original goal was to become an elementary school teacher; however, she is now interested in doing something in child life or social work, with the hopes of being able to work with children that have health conditions. Along with school, Megan started as an independent consultant with Mary Kay about one year ago, originally to provide her with a job that could be flexible and to earn extra money. She absolutely loves her job and loves meeting new people and making new friends. In her free time, she enjoys scrapbooking, doing anything "artsy," and writing. The inspirations behind her logo for the YITRC TA Institute are the struggles that she herself has been working on overcoming while dealing with a physical disability. The design is meant to show young adults reaching out to and bringing into their lives all of their goals. The steps we take today create our reality for tomorrow. Sometimes we are faced with challenges that we were not planning on, but if we take it one day at a time and keep focused on the things that are important to us, we all can work to reach the goals we want in our life.

Larissa R. Crossen, M.Ed., serves as a Program Specialist at the Administration with Developmental Disabilities (ADD) working on the Projects of National Significance (PNS) team. These projects focus on the most pressing issues affecting people with developmental disabilities and their families. The purpose of PNS is to promote and increase the independence, productivity, inclusion, and integration into the community of persons with developmental disabilities and to support the development of national and state policy. As a Program Specialist, she assists with monitoring and providing technical assistance to Youth Training and Resource Center Grantees. Prior to joining ADD, she served for seven years as an intense case manager for persons with developmental disabilities. Her focus was to provide high quality services that would enable persons with developmental disabilities to lead meaningful and productive lives as vital members of their families, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Sharon Delaney began her career with the Administration with Developmental Disabilities (ADD) in 1990 as a Grants Management Specialist. Ms. Delaney started with the pilot program working in a blended position with program and grants management work. Ms. Delaney currently works with the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) along with ADD's Projects of National Significance. She is responsible for ten grantees within the UCEDD networks and also serves as the GATES (Grants Administration, Tracking, and Evaluation System) Administrator.

Jeanette Doty is the Program Coordinator for two of the National Center for Disability Education and Training's (NCDET) youth programs—Play Matters and OKAY (Oklahoma Alliance for Youth). She works with adults and youth in building leadership skills, and with youth in helping to prepare them for transition from high school to college or employment. She has a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Oklahoma University and has worked at NCDET for more than 15 years.

George Garcia is the youth coordinator for the Set Yourself Free grant based in Phoenix, Arizona. Hired by the Southwest Institute for Families and Children with Special Needs, George's duties include recruiting and organizing youth for the grant's youth council known as Youth Action Council of Arizona. Through the council, youth around the state will provide as well as receive developmentally appropriate information on health, education, employment, and social services. Prior to working for the Southwest Institute, George was the chairman of the Integrated Services Grant–Youth Transitioning Committee. The committee was charged with creating a report suggesting how to streamline medical transition for children with special health care needs receiving state services.

Janice Goforth, M.S., is the Project Coordinator for the Center for Emerging Leadership. Janice is a distance instructor, teaching Disability and Society at Grossmont Community College in El Cajon, California. She has an Associate of Science degree in Disability Services Management, a bachelor's degree in Vocational Education, and a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Ms. Goforth is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and holds a certificate in Rehabilitation Technology.

Glenda Harden is a Special Assistant to Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) Commissioner, Patricia Morrissey. Ms. Harden was the lead contact for the 2006 Working Conference on Emergency Management for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly. Ms. Harden ensures that information regarding best practices is posted to the ADD-IDEA Web site as a resource for those who are affected by the wildfires in California, flooding in Iowa, and tornadoes, windstorms, and other disasters throughout the country. Prior to working with ADD, Ms. Harden served as the Administrative Officer for the Office of Family Assistance for seven years and as a Personal Management Specialist for 20 years.

Rebecca Hare is the Project Coordinator for the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, DC. An ardent advocate for youth-led models of leadership development, Ms. Hare has worked with a number of groups such as the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN) and the National Council on Disability, where she served as the Vice-Chair of the Youth Advisory Committee for three years. She has consulted or given expert testimony to the National Council on Independent Living, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the World Bank, the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Advisory panel, the President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disability, and the committee for the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization. Her publications include *Youth Development and Youth Leadership: A Background Paper* from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, articles on civic engagement for the newsletter Impact, *The 411 on Disability Disclosure*, *Paving the Way to Work: A Guide to Career-Focused Mentoring*, and various policy agendas for NYLN. She received her bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 2001, and is expecting to continue her education in the near future.

Laura Hoffman is a development specialist for the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN). Laura has a degree in Government with honors from the University of Notre Dame. She also has a law degree from Ave Maria School of Law. In college, Ms. Hoffman was active helping people with disabilities. She was given an award by her college in 2003 for this work. As a law student, she worked to improve laws for people with autism. She was given an award for helping people living in poverty by her law school at her graduation in 2007. She was licensed to practice law in the State of Ohio in May 2008. In addition to her work with NYLN, Laura works as a law clerk for the Office of the Law Director for the City of Parma, Ohio. Laura has been a volunteer at the Ohio Youth Leadership Forum, an organization that helps youth with disabilities in Ohio.

Jean Johnson, Dr.P.H., is the Associate Director of the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawai`i at Manoa. She holds a bachelor's degree in Special Education, a master's degree in Audiology, and master's and doctoral degrees in Public Health. Her leadership has helped guide the center in addressing important issues related to early intervention services, newborn hearing screening, youth at-risk, and health disparities. She is actively involved in multiple research, service, and community endeavors such as Easter Seals of Hawai`i, the Learning Disabilities Association of Hawai`i, Good Beginnings Alliance, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Special Education Advisory Council, and the Hawai`i Early Intervention Coordinating Council.

Julie Kenney is the Program Director for IPSII Inc.'s Pathways: Minnesota's Youth Information, Training, Resource & Referral Center, and the founder and Executive Director of IPSII, a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization formed in 2002. Materials developed by Julie for Pathways Center include: *How to Seek and Maintain Employment Workbook*, *A Roadmap to Supportive Employment Workbook*, *How to Access the General Education Curriculum and Graduate with a Standard Diploma Three Ring Binder*, and *The Art of Positive Behavioral Interventions* (in development).

Julie is a 1997 graduate from Minnesota's Partners in Policymaking program and was a 2001 Bush Leadership Fellow. Julie also studied leadership and disability law at Harvard Kennedy School, John F. Kennedy School of Government, and Harvard Law School, earning a master's degree in Public Administration. During her Fellowship, she presented at the 2002 Diversity Conference at the Graduate School of Education Harvard University. Her Harvard Law School paper, *Our Forgotten Children*, was a finalist for the Colorline Conference, Harvard Civil Rights Project, August 30, 2003. Julie has worked with parents of children with developmental disabilities for the past 25 years. She lives in Richfield, Minnesota with her husband of 35 years, Michael Kenney, and their son Joseph, an emerging leader with developmental disabilities.

Faith McCormick has worked with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for most of her public service career, during which she has worked in the Office of the Inspector General, Office of the Secretary, and the Social Security Administration. She has also worked for the U.S. House of Representatives on Capitol Hill assisting in legislative affairs.

Faith started her tenure at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) as the Executive Assistant to the Commissioner in October 2001, and currently serves as the Acting Director, Division of Program Operations, overseeing formula grants and staff involved with the Developmental Disabilities Councils and Protection and Advocacy agencies. Prior to joining ADD, Faith worked closely with State legislators as the Department's liaison to the National Conference of State Legislators.

She has had an enthusiasm for individuals with developmental disabilities since she had the privilege of being a respite provider for 4 years for a young lady with an intellectual disability. Faith holds a Masters of Arts in Public Administration and believes that the best aspects of working with ADD are having conversations with self-advocates, the Councils, and the P&As.

Ophelia McLain, M.S., serves as a Program Specialist at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD). ADD's mission is to improve and increase services to and assure that individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities to make their own choices, contribute to society, have supports to live independently, and are free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, and violations of their legal and human rights. As the Project of National Significance (PNS) Team Lead, she provides guidance to the PNS team, ensuring that the Data Collection Cooperative Agreements, Family Support 360 Centers, and the Youth Information, Training and Resource Centers function as expected. She is the Project Officer of the two PNS logistics and technical assistance contracts that provide technical assistance to the Family Support 360 and Youth grantees. Ms. McLain also participates in collaborative efforts with other Federal partners such as the Department of Education, Department of Labor, and Social Security Administration, along with external partners. Prior to joining ADD, among other duties, she developed policies and procedures for a health system. Her focus was to improve processes to better serve internal and external customers.

Stacey Milbern, president of the National Youth Leadership Network, is from North Carolina. Her disability is a weak muscle tone. She is studying Political Science at Methodist University. Stacey worked with youth to host the first Youth Leadership Forum in her state. She also serves on the State Independent Living Council. She has filled this role for the last 4 years. Her favorite areas are disability culture, media, and activism.

Patricia Morrissey, Ph.D., is Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD). ADD is part of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to being appointed by President George W. Bush in August 2001, Pat was a senior associate at Booz Allen Hamilton where she provided consulting services to Federal agencies. Her focus was strategic plans that would facilitate agencies' compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. That provision of law requires Federal agencies to purchase electronic and information technology that is accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities.

Pat came to Washington, DC in 1976. Her career includes stints in both the public and private sector. Prior to joining Booz Allen, Pat worked for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions for five years. She oversaw or played a central role in the drafting of major disability legislation, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, the Developmental Disabilities Act Amendments of 1996 and 2000, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, the Education of the Deaf Act Amendments of 1998, and the Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act of 1999.

She also worked for the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor, also drafting disability legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA). She has written four books, and assisted in the production of six training videos on the ADA. After leaving the House committee staff before joining the Senate committee staff, she served as a consultant to Fortune 200 companies on ADA compliance.

From 2004 to 2006, she was a member of the U.S. Delegation to a United Nations Committee working on a disability rights treaty. She was a keynote speaker at an international conference in Beijing, China in June 2004.

Since Hurricane Katrina, she has worked to promote greater attention to the value of and need for input from and partnership with individuals with disability-related expertise and experience in emergency planning, response, and recovery activities.

She views herself as a problem solver and persuader. She believes the “American Dream” belongs to everyone, and her main job is to help make it happen for individuals with disabilities.

Ari Ne’eman is a sophomore at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County and the Founding President of The Autistic Self Advocacy Network. He is the Policy Workgroup Leader for the Youth Advisory Council to the National Council on Disability. Ari is also the first Patricia Morrissey Disability Policy Fellow at the Institute for Educational Leadership.

Sara Newell is a graduate of the University at Albany, New York. As a child growing up in Rome, New York, Sara would often visit the Rome Developmental Center, where her father worked as a direct care provider. From an early age, Sara was able to see the impact institutionalization has on the lives of people with disabilities and she vowed to be a voice for change. Upon graduating college, Sara worked for the Arc for three years coordinating adult day services. Sara moved to Washington, DC, to serve as a lay advocate for people with developmental disabilities, assisting them in getting necessary supports and services. She has worked for the Administration on Developmental Disabilities for the past two years as a Program Specialist. Sara currently works with Regions IV, V and VIII.

Iris Pettigrew, R.N., M.S., Sc.D., C.P.H.Q., is a registered nurse with a Doctor of Science in Public Health and a Masters and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Prior to entering the doctoral program at the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health and Hygiene, Iris was a Robert Wood Johnson nurse faculty fellow.

She is also a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality. She has held several administrative positions and as an independent consultant has interacted on a regular basis with management and all staff levels within an organization.

Her experiences include review, analysis/research/evaluation and provision of recommendations concerning organizational management, governance, education,

performance improvement, and project outcomes. Iris has performed tasks that involved analytical writing, research, and oral and written communication of results to varied audiences. She has experience in both the government and private arenas on projects that have broadened her knowledge base and ability to assist others in applying and understanding research and evaluation methods to improve their program.

Iris's 16-year-plus experience in government contracting has afforded her opportunity to participate in various types of program evaluation and population-based research activities in health and social services areas on a small and large scale. The methods she uses for program evaluation have included epidemiologic, survey, quasi-experimental, the logic model, and quality improvement models.

Shadetra S. Robinson, M.Ed., is a Program Specialist with the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) and has been in this position for two years. Ms. Robinson works with the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education Research, & Service (UCEDD) along with the Projects of National Significance (PNS) Data Collection projects. She is responsible for 12 grantees within the UCEDD networks and monitors four contracts for the PNS program under ADD. She also is the ADD Resource Center lead, where she is responsible for providing oversight of the UCEDD Resource Center.

Ms. Robinson has been in the disability and mental health field for ten years specializing in youth services. She worked for the District of Columbia for three years in the Department of Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Administration where she was an Intake Case Manager. She also taught Special Education in the Maryland school system where she found wide-ranging needs for better service for students with developmental disabilities. Ms. Robinson received her Masters in Educational Psychology from Howard University.

Alfred N. Romeo, R.N., Ph.D., is the Project Coordinator for the BLT (Becoming Leaders for Tomorrow) Project—Utah's Youth Information, Training and Resource Center. Al served in the Army before completing degrees in Literature, Nursing, and Health Education. He worked as a nurse in newborn intensive care before teaching university health education courses. He is currently employed by the Utah Department of Health and works on the BLT Project, Medical Home Project, and MedHome Portal Project to help providers improve their services in partnership with youth, young adults, and families.

Debra Ruh is the founder and president of TecAccess, a provider of accessibility and workforce solutions for the world's largest and fastest growing minority groups: people with disabilities, baby boomers, and veterans with disabilities. Debra created TecAccess in 2001. Since then it has become the most awarded provider of professional accessibility and usability testing and training, workforce solutions, targeted marketing solutions, focus groups, and usability studies in the world. Debra utilizes a one-of-a-kind telecommuting model that allows employees, many of whom have disabilities ranging from intellectual and mental health to physical disabilities, to work from their homes, rehabilitation facilities, and hospital rooms. Debra was appointed to the Olmstead Board and Veteran Employment Board by Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, and she serves proudly as a board member of the U.S. Business Leadership Network, Virginia Business Leadership Network, Virginia CEO Council, and the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center Advisory Panel.

Debra has been invited to speak on accessibility, transition, disabilities, and workforce initiatives all over the U.S. and world, including recent requests to present before the European Union, United Kingdom, Ireland, Russia, Asia, and Africa. She has authored many articles for national publications and she is a major supporter for the rights of people and veterans with disabilities. Debra's work experience includes Founder and President of TecAccess, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Strategic Performance Solutions, Vice President and Dean of Distance Learning with Market Street Mortgage, and Vice President of Training & Development and Quality Control for SunTrust Mortgage.

Sara Ruh has always had big dreams. At 20 years of age, she has effectively advocated for people with Down syndrome, as well as those with a wide array of physical and cognitive disabilities. Despite facing similar challenges and battling misperceptions of what people with disabilities can achieve, Sara has traveled the country in an effort to help her mother, Debra Ruh, grow TecAccess, while speaking to government leaders and corporations about the many benefits of hiring others with disabilities and taking accessibility seriously. Sara enjoys sharing the stage with her mother or speaking on her own, as she relays to audiences her inspiring dreams, her experiences transitioning from high school to employment as a person with a disability, as well as her many work and school accolades.

At a recent keynote address at the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, Sara discussed college and employment for people with disabilities. She has also been interviewed for NBC's People Making a Difference, and participated in feature interviews with SBTU, Wells Fargo, and was in an Easter Seals commercial with the Mayor of Jacksonville. In addition, Sara is actively pursuing her interests in dance and theatre, performing in a number of productions, and she is instrumental in Special

Olympics Cheerleading. When not speaking and inspiring people, she helps others, as a volunteer at Henrico Doctor's Hospital in Richmond, Virginia.

Nathan Say is the Program Coordinator for the "My Voice, My Choice Project" at the Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawai'i. Nathan is a vibrant, energetic, dynamic young man who has had multiple disabilities since birth. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in History from Brigham Young University-Hawai'i, Nathan began working at Hawai'i Centers for Independent Living as the Director of the Youth Program while taking graduate courses at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He is currently in the Disability & Diversity Studies certificate program. He is also Vice-Chair of Able Hawaii Artists, Hawaii's only celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act, dedicated to celebration of disability pride through the arts.

Amber Smock is the Youth Leadership Coordinator for Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago. She currently facilitates the "YIELDD the Power!" Youth Leadership Project, a training workshop for youth with developmental disabilities, in addition to co-facilitating Advance Youth Leadership Power, a hands-on advocacy group led by and for youth with disabilities. Ms. Smock is a graduate of the National Training and Information Center's Organizing Seminar. She has served as a peer mentor for the Empowered Fe Fes, which is Access Living's young women's group. She is also Co-Coordinator of Chicago ADAPT and a co-founder of FRIDA (Feminist Response in Disability Activism). Recently, Ms. Smock was awarded the Chicago Foundation for Women's 2008 Founder's Award for a young woman advocate under 40.

Carla R. Thomas is a Management Analyst for the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, within the U.S. Department of Health of Human Services (DHHS). Her duties include analyzing reports, compiling information on recommendations, and following up on actions needed, problem resolution, and compliance issues. She has been a Federal government employee for 29 years working at several agencies, but most of her tenure has been with DHHS. From 2000 to 2006, Carla was a reading mentor for the *Everybody Wins Power Lunch Program* at Anthony Bowen Elementary School in Washington, DC. She was the executive director for the Glenarden Boys and Girls Club in Glenarden, Maryland, where she had oversight responsibilities for day-to-day operations, including monitoring the progress of major activities and projects; ensuring that task accomplishment dates were met and identified, and assigning tasks to appropriate operational entities. At her church Carla volunteers with the *Willing Workers*, a program that reaches out to various organizations, families, and individuals by providing clothing, food, toys, spiritual nourishment, and a helping hand to love ones in and out of the community. When she has time outside of her commitments, Carla enjoys traveling and bowling. An important aspect of her life is spending time with family and friends. She has a daughter, a son and three grandchildren.

Erin Thompson is a board member of the Arc of Northern Virginia and participates in the George Mason University Learning into Future Environment (LIFE) Program for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Erin has pushed the university to participate in regular college classes and she will be the first LIFE student to earn college credits for her coursework. This past winter, Erin was instrumental in getting the Virginia General Assembly to pass unanimously the “R” Word bill.

Betsy Valnes is the Executive Director for the National Youth Leadership Network. She has also worked with the National Council on Disability. She supported the Youth Advisory Council and the Cultural Diversity Advisory Council. She also worked with the State Independent Living Council, serving two terms in South Dakota. She works with the National Clearinghouse for Disability and Exchange. Betsy loves to travel around the world. She has participated in forums in different countries, including England, Scotland, Norway, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, and Barbados. In her free time, Betsy likes to write, draw, and paint. She also enjoys singing, dancing, and theatre. She does these things, however, in between reading, mowing, watching golf, and exploring new places!

Laura White is a professional with a disability who works with persons with disabilities to plan and coordinate services, engage in policymaking, advocate for rights, and achieve inclusion in the community. Employed by Inclusion Research Institute (IRI) since 2004, she manages the Youth Empowerment Research Project. Ms. White has 17 years of experience with service and program coordination for youth with developmental disabilities and their families. She has provided counseling and coordinated health care as part of an interdisciplinary team for persons with psychiatric disabilities. She has designed public relations materials for an advocacy organization and coordinated advocacy with public policy officials. She has recruited and retained persons with disabilities as AmeriCorps members as part of a state agency plan and has trained agency staff and grantees on the Americans with Disabilities Act and related disability issues. She has monitored AmeriCorps programs to ensure compliance with grant provisions. She has also counseled adults with developmental disabilities in community-based settings, and facilitated discussion groups on social skills. She has escorted and instructed adults with developmental disabilities on how to use the District of Columbia public transportation system. She has coordinated support services and facilitated community living for persons who were formerly institutionalized. Before joining IRI, Ms. White worked for the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, Independence Now, the Community for Creative Non-violence, Making Connections, and other agencies. She is a locally well-regarded outreach specialist and community organizer who resides in the District of Columbia.

Melvenia Wright is a Program Specialist in the Administration for Developmental Disabilities. In this position, Melvenia serves as the staff contact for the 55 states and territories that utilize funds through the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) program. She has worked in the special education/disability arena for more than 13 years and takes pride in working with programs that serve individuals with developmental delays and disabilities. Melvenia has a bachelor's degree in Psychology, a master's degree in Counseling Psychology, and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education with a field concentration of Program Administration.

Deborah Zuver directs Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility) at the University of North Carolina Center for Development and Learning. Project STIR develops self-advocacy initiatives and offers leadership training by and for people with developmental disabilities. Project STIR's current project, *Youths 4 Advocacy*, is funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities as a Project of National Significance to work with high school students with developmental disabilities transitioning into the community. Ms Zuver has worked extensively in the disability field for more than 20 years in educational and clinical settings and she has coordinated a range of community-based projects for children and adults. Ms. Zuver holds a master's degree in Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Drama Therapy from Antioch University West and she is licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Ms Zuver is registered as a Drama Therapist and board certified as a trainer through the National Association for Drama Therapy.