

The Autism Connection

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AUTISM SOCIETY
Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism
Greater Wisconsin

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Message from the President

January is a time for new beginnings and new resolutions. Although resolutions to diet more, work less, and drop our bad habits are pretty standard, I think all of us in the autism community can make some resolutions that are a little more special.

Consider this year resolving to use your talents, whatever they are, to help the autism community, however you would like. Now, I hope some of you immediately thought of great ways you can use your special skills, whether they involve the Autism Society or not. For you, I would just remind you that it doesn't have to be huge, or take money or time you don't have, the important thing is just to start. For the rest of us who don't see how we can help right away, I would remind you of all the people who helped you before. Did someone at your school, hospital, parent group, or an Autism Society event make a difference for you? Perhaps you can be that person for someone else.

There is more information on page 9 about opportunities to get involved with the Autism Society. And as always, don't be afraid to start your own new beginning, as long as it helps someone in the community it is worth starting.

Best wishes to all of you and best of luck on all your new beginnings in this new year.

Robert Peyton
President
Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin



Personal Perspective

On the Spectrum

BY HALEY MOSS

Haley Moss was diagnosed with autism at age 3 and is an associate attorney at Zumpano Patricios in Coral Gables, Florida. Prior to going viral for becoming the first openly autistic attorney admitted to The Florida Bar, she received her Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law in 2018, and graduated from the University of Florida in 2015 with Bachelors degrees in Psychology and Criminology.



Inclusion is not just a concept, but an action. We have the opportunity to practice inclusion regularly – and make our events, schools, workplaces, and communities accessible. Yet inclusion is lacking greatly at work and employment, as autism in the workplace is a growing trend and topic.

I've learned a lot about autism in the workplace over the past year. I officially became a lawyer last January, and made headlines as Florida's first openly autistic attorney. While many thought it was the first time they encountered an attorney on the spectrum, I knew it wasn't true at all.

Time and time again, I met others like me, but the keyword was "open." I would hear from autistic law students and attorneys around the country, often afraid to disclose or be discriminated against in the job hunt, or who have been masking or hiding their autism diagnoses and traits at work to avoid being treated differently. After the past year interacting with a lot of lawyers, and even getting to attend

Autism at Work alongside many international corporations participating in neurodiverse hiring efforts, I learned businesses in particular have a lot of learning to do to become more inclusive – for potential and existing employees.

In hiring, we are all often held to the same, arbitrary standards that measure traits that might not be necessary to a job, such as eye contact – which recruiters and interviewers judge to measure trustworthiness. We are expected to change ourselves and accommodate, rather than have a culture in interviews to allow us to showcase our talents, passion, or enthusiasm for potential jobs. Overcoming biases based on social skills or perceived deficits will allow us to get in the door and feel welcomed to begin with. Jobs are a two way street: the same jobs we want, must also want us. It is not as simple as people with disabilities will take the first job offered because it's there – we want to be valued, and we want to value the work we do too.

Further, there is no one line of work that is valuable just for autistic people. We are not one type of employee, or capable of only a small selection of jobs. When I first began as a lawyer, it was assumed I was a technology genius. I would get assigned to certain technical tasks; while I was good at them, I was also skilled in research and writing about nuanced legal issues, or spotting small factual details in cases my supervisors might not have immediately picked up on. But people on the spectrum are not just whip-smart engineers, accountants, or software testers – we can work in marketing, law, the arts, retail, or pretty much anything. Nor are we people deserving of pity.

Businesses should be creating a culture where it is safe and productive for employees to share their autism, ask for accommodations, and thrive...

Sometimes, in addition to getting people in the door, businesses miss out on what the lawyers have shown me is more common: autistic people exist in business and are already working for you. Businesses should be creating a culture where it is safe and productive for employees to share their autism, ask for accommodations, and thrive – rather than feel trapped in a job, or afraid to leave out of fear that no other employer will want to hire us.



Meeting autistic colleagues all over the country gave me a sense of community and belonging in a profession where I felt alone because I didn't work alongside people like me daily. I have more experienced lawyers as mentors, and I am also a mentor to some of them when it comes to being your most authentic, open self and disclosure. Ultimately, empowerment and solidarity at work has been a game-changer in a profession that has much to do in the field of inclusion. Inclusion is giving autistic employees the opportunities to advance in leadership, connect with one another, and create an environment where others with disabilities, or who are otherwise marginalized, can find solidarity and support while knowing disclosure and asking for accommodations or help will not hurt careers or be seen as a perceived weakness – rather, our strength and humanity.

Local Affiliate UPCOMING EVENTS

-
- January 25**
2–4 pm **Teen Hang Out Group | Autism Society of Greater WI–Chippewa Valley**
Eau Claire Games and Arcade, 2928 London Road, Eau Claire
Teens with autism are welcome to join the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin – Chippewa Valley for our first Teen Hang Out group! We'll provide pizza and space to hang out and play games.
-
- January 26**
12:00–8:00 pm **SPLASH For Autism | Autism Society of Central Wisconsin**
Grand Lodge Hotel & Waterpark, 805 Creske Ave., Rothschild.
ASCW will cover the cost of admission for families in the central Wisconsin community who are affected by autism! Registration will be in the main lobby from 12:00–3:00 ONLY. A meeting room will be available for sensory considerations. No need to pre-register, just show up the day of the event!
For questions email Erin at erin5181@yahoo.com.
-
- February 2**
1:00–2:30 pm **Parent Support Group | Autism Society of the Lakeshore**
702 State Street, Manitowoc, 2nd Floor Meeting Rm.
This support group offers families an opportunity to share their experiences, support and resources. Child care is provided. In addition, the Adult Friendship Group meets at the same date & time but on the 3rd floor Dome Room.
-
- February 9**
1–3 pm **Family Bowling at Classic Lanes, Neenah | Autism Society of the Fox Valley**
Join us for unlimited bowling at Classic Lanes, 934 Byrd Ave., Neenah. ASFV will pay for bowling and shoe rental. Please RSVP at <http://bit.ly/3ausPOR> so we know how many lanes to reserve.
-
- February 11**
6–8 pm **CESA 6 Presentation College and Career IEP's | Autism Society of the Fox Valley**
Tim Borud, the WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator for the CESA 6 region, will present information about seclusion and restraint, transportation, education supports, and can answer questions about your child's IEP and more.
Registration link: bit.ly/2G6VECP
-
- February 18**
6:00–7:30 pm **Adults with Autism Support Group Meeting | Autism Society of Central Wisconsin**
Ascension at Home Ministry Home Care conference room , 2600 Stewart Ave Suite 160, Wausau. This is a new support group meeting for adults with ASD. This is a safe place for people to come together share their struggles and successes as they navigate life. Coffee and donuts provided.
-
- February 18**
6–8 pm **Evening Parent Support Group | Autism Society of Northeast Wisconsin**
The Attic Corner, 730 Bodart St, Green Bay
Join other parents to share your joys and concerns of raising a child with an autism spectrum disorder.
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Valentines FOR Autism



We all have someone that has impacted our life in such a way that it's hard to find words to express our gratitude. This Valentine's Day send your appreciation to someone special in your life by participating in our Valentines for Autism campaign!

For a minimum donation of \$10.00, the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin will send a valentine to any recipient of your choice, wishing them a Happy Valentine's Day and letting them know a donation has been made in their honor.

Parents, sons, daughters, siblings, grandparents, teachers, therapists—who wouldn't love a Valentine's Day message?

To make a donation and send a Valentine, visit the link below and enter the recipient's name and complete address. We'll take care of the rest by sending a valentine in the mail on or before Valentine's Day (February 14th). The last day to send a valentine is February 9th.

bit.ly/ASGWValentines

Honor someone you care about while supporting the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin!

OUTSIDE OF CARD



INSIDE OF CARD

It's Valentine's Day! A great day to tell you how much you are appreciated!

A donation to the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin has been made in your honor.

Wishing you everything that makes you happiest, today and always.

 Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin

Valentine Sent By:



WISCONSIN *Autism* CONFERENCE

The Annual Wisconsin Autism Conference is a three day event where professionals, parents, individuals on the spectrum, family members and advocates gather to learn, share and discuss various topics in the field of autism. Attendees will leave the conference with an understanding of strategies, resources and services that serve to improve the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum. With over 30 breakout sessions, 4 pre-conference sessions, 2 keynote addresses, and plenty of networking opportunities, this is a conference you don't want to miss!



Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells



April 30 - May 2, 2020



Registration ends April 8th

Thursday, April 30th | Pre-Conference Workshops

1

Interoception, The Eighth Sense: Practical Solutions for Promoting Self-Regulation, Positive Behavior, Language Development and Social Participation

FULL DAY WORKSHOP | Presented by Kelly Mahler

2A

Regulation and Disability Related-Needs: Developing College and Career Ready IEPs

HALF DAY WORKSHOP | Presented by DPI and Discretionary Grant Staff

2B

Comprehensive Evaluation for Special Education Eligibility

HALF DAY WORKSHOP | Presented by DPI and Discretionary Grant Staff

3A

Using Video Modeling and High Tech Supports

HALF DAY WORKSHOP | Presented by Sharon Hammer and Lisa Ladson

3B

Navigating the IEP Process

HALF DAY WORKSHOP | Presented by WSPEI's Caroline Rossing

Breakout Session Highlights

Breakout sessions will take place on Friday and Saturday after the keynote addresses. Below are a few highlights from our program. Please visit our website to view the program in its entirety.

Hacking Your Executive Function

Presented by Olivia James

Behind the Mask: Aiding and Understanding Girls and Women with ASD

Presented by Emily Lindberg & Stacy Stefaniak-Luther

Tales from the Toybox: Learning through Evidenced-Based Play

Presented by Laura Nagel & Liz Hedrich

The Importance of Mental Health Support for Individuals with ASD

Presented by Vanessa Knippel

Strategies for Preventing Explosive "Behaviors"

Presented by Mandy Reinke

Friday, May 1 | Keynote



JUDY ENDOW

Autistically Thriving

Judy's newest work, *Autistically Thriving: Reading Comprehension, Conversational Engagement and Living a Self-Determined Life Based on Autistic Neurology*, represents a shift in how autistic support is thought about and implemented. Judy's keynote includes who autistic people are and how they comfortably function, going over key elements of taking in, processing, storing and retrieving information along with autistic thinking style. Numerous examples are included so autistic individuals, parents, educators and therapy providers will come to understand that when autistics are honored for who they are and supported for who they want to be in this world they can truly thrive!

Saturday, May 2 | Keynote



HALEY MOSS

Assembly Required

Autism does not come with an instruction manual, but it does come with lots of magical parts and important tools to utilize to build the best life possible. *Assembly Required* is the story of Haley Moss: an autistic attorney who has gone from a nonverbal child diagnosed with autism at age 3, to an author, artist, attorney, and autism advocate. This keynote explores Haley's journey, the assembly of her village, finding her written and spoken voice, looking to the future full of hope, inspiration, and excitement as she writes the next, ongoing chapter in her life as a practicing lawyer. This keynote also explores neurodiversity, acceptance, and perspectives of how society views autism and related disabilities.

Family Reception | Friday, May 1

Conference attendees and their families are welcome to join us for a reception on Friday evening of the conference. The reception will include a complimentary pizza buffet, essay contest awards ceremony, talent show, and dance.



Exhibit Hall

Conference attendees have unlimited access to the conference exhibit hall, filled with over 50 community agencies, providers, and other wonderful resources to help you connect locally.



Register

General registration rates are available to those who register by April 8th, 2020. Register at <http://bit.ly/ASGW2020>

Don't forget to book your room at the Kalahari at the discounted room rate by March 30th.

Want to get your business involved? There are NEW opportunities to support the annual conference. Visit our conference webpage to view opportunities for sponsorship, exhibition and advertisement at the conference.

Questions? Contact Amber at agollata@autismgreaterwi.org

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

April 8, 2020

Onsite registration is available for an additional cost and conference materials are not guaranteed.

More Ways to Get Involved



Change for Autism is a campaign through the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin designed to encourage stakeholders to create meaningful change for people with autism in our schools and communities. The campaign is both an autism awareness building campaign and a coin drive fundraiser for the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin. We encourage schools to customize the campaign to fit their unique needs. Learn more or sign up on our website at: www.autismgreaterwi.org/change-for-autism

Volunteer! Have a vision for your local community? Contact us about getting involved with a local affiliate! Our local affiliates are looking for dedicated and passionate board/advisory members to help plan events and facilitate programs. Contact kcooper@autismgreaterwi.org for more information.

VOLUNTEER



Write an article or blog post for the Autism Society. Sharing stories is a time honored tradition that brings people together and helps us feel like we're not alone. Telling your story and hearing others' stories can be incredibly empowering. With April a couple months away, our goal is to share as many stories from the spectrum as we can. We are especially looking for articles about first hand experiences from people with autism. Contact us at info@autismgreaterwi.org to learn more.

Participate in the 15th Annual Essay Contest! In collaboration with schools across Wisconsin, the Autism Society Affiliates in Wisconsin are hosting the 15th Annual Autism Essay Contest, a program designed to assist all students in gaining a deeper understanding of autism and how their peers with autism experience the world. Please encourage participation in this project by sharing this information with classroom teachers or students who may be interested in participating. Essay contest details can be found here: www.autismgreaterwi.org/essay-contest

2020

AUTISM
ESSAY
CONTEST

Wisconsin Autism Society Affiliates

Ask the Experts



Looking ahead to my child's 18th birthday, we are looking at our options of using a Managed Care Organization through Family Care or using IRIS, as a self directed service, to help manage her adult services. What do we need to know as we consider our options?

Melissa Sell, CSW, Winnebago County ADRC

There are two long-term care programs in Winnebago County: Family Care and IRIS (Include Respect | Self-Direct). A consumer can self-direct in either program. In a self-directed support model, consumers are able to hire, oversee, and dismiss the workers they hire.

The Family Care program operates very similarly to the Family Support Program (if the consumer happened to have been enrolled in that program before). In Family Care, there is a case worker and nurse assigned to the consumer who will work closely with them and help identify needs that the consumer has and facilitate how to meet those needs. Some consumers

and families find it overwhelming to do this and like the idea of having a case manager to help them coordinate their services.

The IRIS program is a more self-directed program. The IRIS program allows the consumer to have authority to make decisions for their services and supports using an IRIS budget. It is not a managed care model like Family Care. The size of the budget is determined by the amount of needs the consumer has. This is based off the Long-Term Care Functional Screen (the tool that the Aging and Disability Resource Center uses). Using the budget, the consumer decides how they want to purchase their supports

(as long as it is allowable by Medicaid guidelines).

A consumer using the IRIS model would need to be a strong advocate for themselves – or have a person in their life (ie: guardian/supported decision maker/Power of Attorney) who can help advocate for them. The consumer/guardian would also be responsible for finding their services and coordinate the paperwork needed and develop a back-up plan. The consumer/guardian will choose an IRIS Consulting Agency (ICA) that will have a consultant available to help guide the consumer through the process.

Helpful Resources:

Aging and Disability Resource Centers:

ADRCs are designed to be a single entry point where older people and people with disabilities and their families can get information and advice about a wide range of resources available to them in their local communities. ADRCs help people understand all of the long-term care options available to them, including publicly funded programs like Family Care, IRIS, and PACE, as well as private service providers. Information about ADRCs available in your area is available at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Long-Term Care and Support:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/long-term-care-support.htm>

DHS Family Care Page:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycare/index.htm>

DHS IRIS Page:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/iris/index.htm>

Matthew and Mitchell LaBerge, Consumers, Motivational Speakers on Autism Spectrum Disorders

After graduating from high school, we were connected with the IRIS Connections program through Lutheran Social Services. We are now 23 years-old and recently completed our college education at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC). We both have earned Associate Degrees in Marketing with a Digital Marketing Emphasis. We also have multiple Technical Diplomas and Technical Certificates in the areas of Promotions and Event Management, Hotel Management, and Web Design. We currently serve on the Connections Advisory Board and are committed to helping others live their best, most independent, lives through sharing our experiences and our story.

The IRIS program has been very helpful for us. Through this program, we have learned how to cook, do laundry and many other household tasks with the support of people who we trust to be sure that we were learning correctly. We then practice the skills until we master them. This training has allowed us to successfully move into an apartment on the NWTC campus for a semester where we learned how to transfer the skills into another environment. Through the IRIS program, we have also learned how to manage money and plan for our future.

The IRIS program has been extremely important to us. The staff are very kind and helpful and focused on helping us to achieve our goals. We have always said that good people make the greatest difference! We have experienced that through the IRIS Connections program and we are thankful for the assistance that we have been able to receive.

You can learn more about our journey toward independence and the IRIS program at our Speaking About Autism, LLC website: <http://www.speakingaboutautism.com/>

Janine and James Barkow, Consumer

When we were making the transition to the adult services world it was important for our family that we have lots of support, similar to the program our son, James, was previously enrolled in. We needed someone to help guide us, provide knowledge about various programs and supports and help find resources for our son. We still make decisions for ourselves but it's nice to have options.

We were fortunate enough to participate in the Youth in Partnership with Parents program (YiPPE) where we learned about adult

services, and James learned with other teens about preparing for adulthood. I would recommend this program to other families 110%!

After learning about all of the options, we decided to use an MCO through the Family Care program. Our family is happy with the level of support we receive.

James is a 21 year old currently enrolled at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and is working toward an Associate Degree as a Civil Engineering Technician/Land

Surveyor. He graduated from the Wisconsin Virtual Academy (WIVA) and was on the honor roll and a National Honor Society Member.

James has a newsletter called Autism Decoded. The purpose of the newsletter is to bring people together from all backgrounds that have autism. The newsletter contains puzzles, contests, event listings and more. He would like to include any literature, art, or mail, etc. to share in his newsletter. If you are interested, please send an email to jlbarrow.98@gmail.com.

Ask the Experts is a recurring column in the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin newsletter. Questions can be submitted to info@autismgreaterwi.org with "Ask the Experts" in the subject line.

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_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$ Other

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We also accept donations online. Click the Donate Now button on our homepage:
<https://76148.blackbaudhosting.com/76148/General-Donation>

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ASGW Board Meeting

April 30, 2020