
Speakers & Presenters

Rhonda Black

Self-Directed IEPs: Telling Your Story, Sharing Your Dreams

Dr. Black is a professor of Special Education at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. She believes in the importance of students sharing their stories and dreams at their own IEP meetings. There will be ideas for parents, professionals, and students to get started.

Melissa Castillo

My Story: The Struggle is Real

As the proud parent of two children one of whom has autism, Melissa Castillo knows the struggles of dealing with daily tasks. She will share her experiences and offer support.

Regina & Chase Corniel

Parent Partners in Advocacy

Chase and Regina are parents of Ezra who was born with bilateral microtia which caused hearing issues. They are Parents as Partners with LDAH. They will share their story of working together to advocate for their son and provide opportunities for him and others with disabilities.

Jeremy and Terra Daniel

Our Story: Triumphs and Tragedy

Jeremy and Terra are parents of four children and Pineapple, a service dog. They are active members in the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) community of support. They will share their story of triumphs and tragedy in finding appropriate services and supports in school and society.

Barbara Fischlowitz-Leong

Alternate Ways to Tell the Story

As the Executive Director for Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC), Barbara provides assistive technology services and programs throughout Hawaii. She is nationally and internationally known for her advocacy for persons with disabilities. She will share how assistive technology can open doors for people to share their stories.

Margaret Higa

Building Academics & Other Critical Skills for Lifelong Success

Margaret Higa is the Executive Director of Hawaii branch of International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). As a professional and a parent, she will present on teaching and preparing students with learning disabilities for a successful life.

Jordan Ilae and Ian Nieblas

Transition from High School to Adulthood

Jordan is a young woman with Down Syndrome. Several years ago she was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Ian is a young man with autism, intellectual disability and vision and hearing impairments. He has worked at Safeway for 10 years and lives independently from his parents. They will share their unique stories of adaptability and resiliency and what it took to get where they are today.

Renee Manfredi

This is Me

As a person with a disability, Renee experienced loneliness, bullying and feeling powerless and was not accepted for who she was. She believes everyone has a voice and hopes by sharing her story, others will be inspired to find their voice.