

PROGRAM GUIDE



OCEANS OF OPPORTUNITY

ANCOR CONNECT '25

APRIL 7-9 • SAN DIEGO, CA



GET CONNECTED

Navigating **Oceans of Opportunity** together requires us to get connected! Here's everything you need to know to get online, get mobile, and get social.

GET ONLINE

WiFi is free for participants at ANCOR Connect '25. Simply connect to the network below and enter the password to get online.

Network ID:
Bonvoy Conference

Wifi Password:
oceans25

GET MOBILE

Our Mobile App lets you craft your own agenda, connect with other attendees, network with exhibitors, learn about our speakers and so much more.

To get started, scan the QR code at right. Log in using the same email address you used to register for the conference and the password **oceans25**. If you get stuck, stop by the Conference Concierge and a member of our team will help troubleshoot.



The ANCOR Connect Mobile App is generously sponsored by



GET SOCIAL

Snap a selfie, share your lightbulb moments, recommend your favorite spots in San Diego, and more! Use **#ANCORConnect25** on all of your conference-related posts on Bluesky, LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and wherever else you connect with your networks. We also invite you to follow and tag **@TheRealANCOR** on LinkedIn, Bluesky, Twitter and Facebook.





WELCOME TO SAN DIEGO!

Dear members, partners, friends and guests,

Do you ever just stare out over the ocean in awe of its vastness?

Oceans truly are amazing. They contain endless beauty. They're home to the most diverse ecosystems on our planet. They bring the world closer together by facilitating trade and transit.

Now that you're with us here on Harbor Island, you'll quickly come to see why the ocean was our inspiration for this year's conference theme. But it's not just the proximity of San Diego to the numerous bodies of water that surround us.

Like the ocean, community providers inspire us—with your deep passion, your unbridled tenacity, and the vast world of opportunity you create for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Even when it feels like you're steering against the current—and it might feel like that a lot these days—your work charts a course toward truly inclusive communities

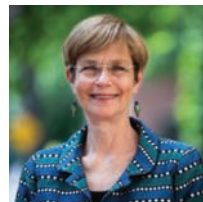
If the members, partners and friends of ANCOR are voyagers exploring oceans of opportunity, then we hope for ANCOR Connect '25 to be your harbor—the place where we can all feel at home when we gather together.

Onward—and thank you for being here!

Sincerely,



Lori Kress
President
ANCOR Board of Directors



Barbara Merrill
Chief Executive Officer
ANCOR



THANK YOU, SPONSORS & PARTNERS!

ANCOR Connect '25 simply would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our incredible sponsors. Their contributions to this experience enhance our collective power alongside the contributions of our National Partners, who support not only ANCOR Connect, but an array of ANCOR's other initiatives throughout the year. Thank you, sponsors and partners!

CONFERENCE SPONSORS



DIAMOND PARTNERS



PLATINUM PARTNERS



GOLD PARTNERS



BRONZE PARTNERS



THANK YOU, SESSION REVIEWERS!

ANCOR extends its gratitude to the volunteer session reviewers who spent their valuable time helping us develop the program for this year's ANCOR Connect—our most robust program yet!

Connect '25 Session Proposal Reviewers

Liz Armentrout
Systems Unlimited, Inc.
Iowa City, IA

Maghan Bowman
Exceptional Persons, Inc.
Waterloo, IA

Lindsey Brown
Johnson County
Developmental Supports
Olathe, KS

Jenna Childs
Midwest Special Services,
Inc.
St. Paul, MN

Amber Corrieri
Mainstream Living, Inc.
Ames, IA

Brandi Foreman
INARF
Indianapolis, IN

Rachel Fuller
Skills, Inc.
St. Albans, ME

Todd Goodwin
John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.
Auburn, ME

Norma Israel
Sunrise Community, Inc.
Miami, FL

Tara Kiene
Community Connections,
Inc.
Durango, CO

Lori Kress
Dungarvin
Mendota Heights, MN

Christina Kurschner
STAR Services, Inc.
St. Paul, MN

Heidi Mansir
Uplift, Inc.
Gardiner, ME

Tiffany Marlette
Imagine the Possibilities
Maquoketa, IA

Caroline Meehan
Community Provider Assn.
of Louisiana
New Orleans, LA

Lynne Megan
TSE, Inc.
Roseville, MN

Rachel Neumann
COF Training Services, Inc.
Ottawa, KS

Debra Niland
Erie Homes for Children
and Adults
Erie, PA

Penny Pagliaro
CP State of NYS
Brewster, NY

Juliette Prioleau Michael
RCM of Washington
Washington, DC

Jechane Reyes
Community Integrated
Support Svcs.
Antioch, CA

LeAnn Rimmer
Hope Haven, Inc.
Rock Valley, IA

Sue Shaw
St. Louis Arc
Creve Coeur, MO

Erin Shea
Berkshire Family and
Individual Resources, Inc.
North Adams, MA

Jennifer Skelly
Penn-Mar Human Services
Freeland, MD

Erica Thomas
RCM of Washington
Washington, DC

Jennifer Tissot
Sunrise Community, Inc.
Charleston, SC

THANK YOU, ANCOR LEADERS!

As with any community as strong as ours, ANCOR and the ANCOR Foundation would not be able to do what we do without the support of our dedicated volunteer leaders.

2025 ANCOR Board of Directors

Maghan Bowman
Exceptional Persons, Inc.
Waterloo, IA

Robert Budd
FREE, Inc.
Old Bethpage, NY

Kathy Carmody
Institute on Public Policy for People
with Disabilities
Chicago, IL

Yadira Holmes
Sevita
Edina, MN

Kelly Jepson
BrightSpring Health Services
Louisville, KY

Lori Kress, *President*
Dungarvin
Mendota Heights, MN

Heidi Mansir, *Past President*
Uplift, Inc.
Gardiner, ME

Josh Rael
Alliance
Denver, CO

Darlene Scott
The Phoenix Residence
St. Paul, MN

Barry Simon
Oak Hill
Hartford, CT

Erica Smith Buchanan
CADENCE of Acadiana
Lafayette, LA

Chuck Sweeder
Keystone Human Services
Harrisburg, PA

Linda Timmons
Mosaic
Omaha, NE

Chad VonAhnen, *Vice President*
Johnson County Dev. Supports
Lenexa, KS

Rita Wiersma
Accord
St. Paul, MN

Zach Wray, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Sunrise Community
Miami, FL

2025 ANCOR Foundation Board of Directors

Marian Baldini, *Vice President*
KenCrest
Blue Bell, PA

Gene Boes
Northwest Center
Renton, WA

Amy Brooks
RCM of Washington
Washington, DC

Robert Budd
FREE, Inc.
Old Bethpage, NY

Ravi Dahiya
YAI
New York, NY

Genevieve Fitzgibbon
Keystone Human Services
International
Harrisburg, PA

Doug Golub, *Treasurer*
Data Potato
Rochester, NY

Anne-Marie Mayberry
Group Main Stream
Westbrook, ME

Precious Myers-Brown
Vista Supports
Washington, DC

Cheryl Plank, *Secretary*
Imagine the Possibilities
Rock Valley, IA

Stacey Risotti
Sevita
Edina, MN

Maria Samot
Relias
Morrisville, NC

Erica Smith Buchanan
CADENCE of Acadiana
Lafayette, LA

Amy Staed
Kentucky Association of Private
Providers
Danville, KY

Mary Valachovic
The Arc of Plymouth & Upper Cape
Cod
Plymouth, MA

Rita Wiersma, *President*
Accord
St. Paul, MN

ANCOR FOUNDATION 25TH ANNIVERSARY

MONDAY, APRIL 7 | 6:30-8:30 PM | BALLAST POINT, LITTLE ITALY

Get Your
Ticket!



Join us for an unforgettable evening

celebrating the ANCOR Foundation's 25th Anniversary! Enjoy exclusive craft brews, games, a silent auction and more. This is the primary fundraiser supporting the ANCOR Foundation's essential programs that lay the groundwork for a more inclusive future.

CONGRATULATIONS, ANCOR FOUNDATION HONOREES

2025 Legacy Leaders Inductees

The ANCOR Foundation's Legacy Leaders Hall of Fame recognizes long-time ANCOR members who have made significant contributions to the association and its mission of providing high-quality supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Congratulations to this year's three outstanding inductees!

The Legacy Leader Awards are generously sponsored by



Marian Baldini
KenCrest
Blue Bell, PA



John Fisher
Sevita
Wesley Chapel, FL



Heidi Mansir
Uplift, Inc.
Gardiner, ME

2025 Community Builder Award

The ANCOR Foundation's Community Builder Award was created in 2004 to recognize exemplary initiatives that are contributing to the inclusion of people supported by ANCOR members. Congratulations to this year's honoree!



**New York State Industries
for the Disabled (NYSID)**
Albany, NY

The Community Builder Award is generously sponsored by



2025 Rising Star Mid-Career Impact Award

Established in 2024, the Rising Star Mid-Career Impact Award recognizes mid-career professionals who are serving ANCOR's mission through their dedication to making change at the organizational and/or federal level. Congratulations to this year's four exceptional honorees!

The Rising Star Mid-Career Impact Awards are generously sponsored by



Brandi Foreman '26
INARF
Indianapolis, IN



Jennifer Hodges '24
Trinity Services
New Lenox, IL



Rachit Pandey
Bayberry
Uttar Pradesh, India



Erica Thomas '25
RCM of Washington
Washington, DC



EXPLORE SESSION TRACKS

Most ANCOR Connect '25 sessions cover topics related to one or more of the following six tracks. Explore all the sessions in your favorite track, or mix and match to your heart's content!



ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT

These sessions explore approaches to more inclusive supports through self-advocacy and empowerment.



LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

These sessions build the skills you need to take the lead and run the most effective organization possible.



QUALITY SERVICES

These sessions equip you to embrace and implement new solutions in pursuit of the highest quality services for the people you support.



STRATEGIC GROWTH & TRANSFORMATION

These sessions offer insights into adapting your organization's operations, culture and processes to meet new goals and deliver even better supports.

The Strategic Growth & Transformation track is generously sponsored by



TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

These sessions empower you to embrace and implement new solutions, no matter what challenges you face.

The Technology & Innovation track is generously sponsored by



WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

These sessions identify promising practices that meet the challenges of today's direct support workforce crisis.

BREAKOUT SESSION TRACKS BY TIME BLOCK

	 ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT	 LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	 QUALITY SERVICES
BREAKOUT SESSIONS A Tuesday, 9:45-10:45 am	Innovative Self-Advocacy Training: Empowerment through Theater Arts (Shorebreak)	Cultivating Leadership from the Ground Up (Coral 5)	Advancing Global Health Equity for People with I/DD (Pacific Jewel Ballroom) The Role of Customized Employment in Transition Programming (Sandpiper AB)
BREAKOUT SESSIONS B Tuesday, 1-2 pm	Elevate Your Advocacy: The Roles of a Disability Services Advocate (Sandpiper CD) Lights, Camera, Friendship on the Spectrum (Pacific Jewel Ballroom)	Cross-Cultural Learning in Rwanda (Shorebreak) Transforming Organizations: Risk Analysis and Change through Person-Centered Practices (Coral 3/4)	A Decade+ of Employment First in Ohio (Coral 5) Bridging Self-Directed and Traditional Services (Sandpiper AB)
BREAKOUT SESSIONS C Tuesday, 2:30-3:30 pm	Developing Effective Self-Advocacy Skills (Shorebreak)	Leading the Way: Fostering Collaboration & Innovation in Nonprofits (Sandpiper AB)	Reimagining Leadership Development (Sandpiper CD)
BREAKOUT SESSIONS D Wednesday, 9:45-10:45 am		The Empowering Impact of Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) (Sandpiper CD)	Navigating Compliance: A Transformative Journey with CMS (Coral 5) Treatment Journey and Outcomes: Managing Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (Sandpiper AB)
BREAKOUT SESSIONS E Wednesday, 11 am-12 pm	My Life, Your Job: Empowering Voices in Decision-Making (Sandpiper AB)	New Currents: Lessons from Emerging Leaders in the I/DD Field (Coral 1/2)	A Culture of Care in ICF/IID Programs (Pacific Jewel Ballroom) An Innovative Path to Creating a Home (Coral 3/4)

 <p>STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION</p>	 <p>TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION</p>	 <p>WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS</p>
<p>Navigating Financial Decisions: Building Sustainable Retirement Plans (Sandpiper CD)</p>	<p>Achieving Outcomes through Enabling Technology (Coral 1/2)</p>	<p>Don't You Forget About Me: Training Frontline Supervisors for Success (Coral 3/4)</p>
	<p>Support Me, But Don't Touch: Innovations in Non-Contact Remote Supports (Coral 1/2)</p>	
<p>Honoring Neurodiversity in the Workplace: A Practical Guide for Organizations (Pacific Jewel Ballroom)</p>	<p>Leveraging AI & Data Visualizations to Improve Supports (Coral 1/2)</p>	<p>Employer Resource Networks: Prioritizing Well-Being in Challenging Times (Coral 5)</p> <p>Creating Employment Pathways for Newly Arrived Immigrants (Coral 3/4)</p>
<p>Community Supported Care Model: A New Approach to Service Delivery (Shorebreak)</p> <p>Rompiendo Barreras: California's Efforts to Address Service Access Disparities (Pacific Jewel Ballroom)</p>	<p>Building Bridges: Fostering Effective Relationships Between IT and Program Teams (Coral 1/2)</p>	<p>A Seat at the Table: Creating Partnerships with DSPs (Coral 3/4)</p>
<p>Can You Have Too Much Innovation? (Sandpiper CD)</p> <p>Leveraging Community Life Engagement to Achieve Better Outcomes (Shorebreak)</p>		<p>Moving Mountains: Best Practices in Workforce Development (Coral 5)</p>



AT-A-GLANCE AGENDA

MONDAY, APRIL 7

Leadership Meetings
8 am-2:15 pm

Registration & Conference Concierge Open
7:30 am-3 pm

Pre-Conference Workshops A
9:30-11:30 am

Exhibit Hall Open
10:15 am-3 pm

Headshot Hub Open
10 am-3 pm

Pre-Conference Workshops B
12:30-2:30 pm

New Attendee Meet & Greet
2:30-3 pm

Opening Plenary
3-4:30 pm

Welcome Reception with Exhibitors
4:30-5:30 pm

ANCOR Foundation Fundraiser
6:30-8:30 pm

TUESDAY, APRIL 8

Breakfast in the Exhibit Hall
7:30-8:30 am

Exhibit Hall Open
7:30 am-4 pm

Registration & Conference Concierge Open
7:30 am-4 pm

Headshot Hub Open
8 am-1 pm

Morning Keynote
8:30-9:15 am

Networking Break
9:15-9:45 am

Breakout Sessions A
9:45-10:45 am

Midday Plenary
10:45-11:45 am

Hosted Lunch
11:45 am-12:30 pm

Networking Break
12:30-1 pm

Breakout Sessions B
1-2 pm

Networking Break
2-2:30 pm

Breakout Sessions C
2:30-3:30 pm

Networking Break
3:30-4 pm

Afternoon Plenary
4-5 pm

ANCOR Foundation Honors
5:15-6:15 pm

ANCOR DC PAC Reception
6:30-8:30 pm

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Registration & Conference Concierge Open
7:30 am-12:15 pm

DSP of the Year Awards Breakfast
7:30-9:30 am

Breakout Sessions D
9:45-10:45 am

Breakout Sessions E
11 am-12 pm

Hosted Lunch
12:15-1:30 pm

Closing Plenary
1:30-3 pm

CONFERENCE AGENDA

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

ANCOR Foundation Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, 8 am-1 pm | Shorebreak

ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy Class of 2027 Orientation

Sunday, 2-5 pm | Shorebreak

MONDAY, APRIL 7

Registration & Conference Concierge Open

Monday, 7:30 am-3 pm | Silver Pearl Foyer

Government Relations Committee Meeting

Monday, 8-9:45 am | Sandpiper AB

Speed Consulting Sessions with Consulting for Human Services

Monday, 8 am-3 pm | Pelican

Demo of Kibu's Exercise Platform for People with I/DD

Monday, 9 am & 2 pm | Outside of Shorebreak

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS A

Taming the Management Monster: A Leadership Roadmap

The Renee L. Pietrangelo Leadership Forum

Monday, 9:30-11:30 am | Coral 1 (Lower Level) | **LEADERSHIP**

Advanced
registration
required

This Pre-Conference Workshop is generously sponsored by **CENTENE**
Corporation

Managers are pivotal in shaping workplace culture and fostering employee retention. They serve as gatekeepers of organizational values, capable of nurturing a positive environment or inadvertently undermining it. In this interactive session, we will explore how effective management is essential for establishing strong workplace cultures that enhance retention, engagement, and service quality. Drawing on stories from the I/DD field and various industries, we will identify common challenges managers encounter and discuss strategies to "tame the management monster." Through interactive discussions and real-world examples, participants will gain practical tools to support their workforce and drive meaningful change. You'll learn techniques for engaging both motivated and disengaged employees, transforming challenges into opportunities for growth, and fostering a culture rooted in trust and accountability.

Whether you're a manager, director, or executive, you will leave this session inspired and equipped with actionable strategies to cultivate a thriving work environment where everyone feels valued and empowered.

Presenter:

- Pete Moore, Ohio Provider Resource Association

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS A *continued*

Innovative Solutions for Workforce and Housing: A Path to Stability

Monday, 9:30-11:30 am | Coral 3 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE**

Advanced
registration
required

The workforce crisis, combined with soaring housing costs, presents challenges that impact stability and service continuity. In this session, you will learn how a small nonprofit successfully established over fifty housing units for individuals accepting services and direct care workers within the last two years, significantly improving recruitment, retention, community engagement, and morale. We'll outline actionable steps to assess and map your agency's unique housing needs, emphasizing the importance of board engagement and buy-in. This interactive session will provide valuable lessons on the complexities of combining employment with property management, addressing the details of creating a fair and equitable process for individuals accepting services and staff to access available housing. We'll also explore the power of technology and collaborative partnerships, and how both can combine to enhance supports for people with disabilities.

Presenters:

- Brad Hagan '26, Easterseals Arkansas
- Jennifer Putnam, Waypoint Maine

Grassroots Committee Meeting

Monday, 10-11:30 am | Sandpiper AB

Exhibit Hall Open

Monday, 10:15 am-3 pm | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer & Coral Foyer

Headshot Hub Open

Monday, 10 am-3 pm | Next to Nonstop in Seascape Foyer

The Headshot Hub is brought to you by



ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy Network & Nosh

Monday, 11:30 am-12:30 pm | Shorebreak

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS B

Beyond GPT: Using AI for Good in Disability ServicesMonday, 12:30-2:30 pm | Coral 1 (Lower Level) | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION**Advanced
registration
required

Artificial intelligence or AI-powered solutions are transforming how we deliver supports. This hands-on, interactive session will showcase how AI-enhanced software can address critical challenges such as workforce retention, service personalization, quality improvement, and operational efficiency. Participants will explore real-world use cases, including predictive analytics for resource planning, intelligent scheduling systems, and back-office AI tools that streamline tasks like managing RFPs, ensuring compliance, and improving staff training. Attendees will see how AI can alleviate administrative burdens, allowing agencies to focus more on their core mission: enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities. Drawing on industry insights, this session will equip attendees with actionable strategies and practical tools to implement AI ethically, empowering staff and enriching the services you provide.

Presenters:

- Heather Janci, SETWorks
- David Lindell, SETWorks
- Erik Nelson, SETWorks

Laying the Foundation: The DBT Model for Supportive LivingMonday, 12:30-2:30 pm | Coral 3 (Lower Level) | **QUALITY SERVICES**Advanced
registration
required

When working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, it can be difficult to understand the reactivity that can be caused by a traumatic past. This interactive workshop will equip you with a structured framework on how to stabilize and provide ongoing support to people with complex needs in community settings. The Dialectical Behavior Therapeutic (DBT) Model for Living creates supportive environments for both individuals and caregivers. In this workshop, participants will learn to apply the Risk Screening for Best Practices Tool to identify individualized needs and implement strategies that foster wellness and recovery. By teaching essential skills, we can help reduce the frequency and intensity of challenging situations. And, if effective supports are identified and put into place, risks to overall wellness can be minimized, and people's lives can be enhanced. Come prepared to share insights and explore innovative strategies that can transform how we support the people we serve in our communities.

Presenters:

- Robin VanEerden, Merakey
- Kimberly Katruska, Merakey

Board of Representatives Meeting

Monday, 12:30-2 pm | Sandpiper AB

State Association Executives Forum Meeting

Monday, 12:45-2:15 pm | Sandpiper CD

The SAE Forum is generously sponsored by

**New Attendee Meet & Greet**

Monday, 2:30-3 pm | Shorebreak

The New Attendee Meet & Greet is generously sponsored by



Conference Welcome & 2025 President's Address

Monday, 3-3:30 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Currents of change seem to be swirling all around us. But even through choppy waters, our community has remained steadfast in our mission to insist on inclusion for people with I/DD across the country. In this opening plenary session, we will chart the course for an engaging and impactful three days together, celebrating the power of connection, innovation, and inclusion in the field of disability services. We'll first be welcomed to "America's Finest City" by our "local hosts" who lead the state provider associations here in California. Then, we'll hear from Lori Kress, President of the ANCOR Board of Directors, who will use her first President's Address to speak to the currents of change shaping our work—while empowering us all to dive into new ideas, strengthen partnerships, and explore the vast possibilities that lie ahead.

Presenters:

- Tony Anderson, Association of Regional Center Agencies
- Barry Jardini, California Disability Services Association
- Lori Kress, Dungarvin
- Barbara Merrill, ANCOR

Charting Oceans of Opportunity: Café Joyeux's Vision for Inclusion

Monday, 3:30-4:30 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Café Joyeux is an innovative social enterprise on a mission to empower people with cognitive and developmental disabilities. Founded in France in 2017, Café Joyeux creates job opportunities for disabled workers by providing training and long-term employment in a welcoming environment. This innovative social enterprise is now expanding well beyond France, including opening its first location in New York City in 2024.

Along the way, Café Joyeux's visionary founder, Yann Bucaille, is proving that it's possible to create an inclusive workplace while also achieving meaningful social and economic impact. In this session, you'll hear from Bucaille and Café Joyeux's International Director, Lorraine Chastenet, as they highlight the brand's mission to inspire inclusion on a global scale while showcasing the talents of Café Joyeux's diverse workforce.

Presenters:

- Yann Bucaille, Café Joyeux
- Lorraine Chastenet, Café Joyeux

The Opening Keynote is generously sponsored by 

Welcome Reception with Exhibitors

Monday 4:30-5:30 pm | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer & Coral Foyer

The Welcome Reception is generously sponsored by 

ANCOR Foundation 25th Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser

Monday 6:30-8:30 pm | Visit the ANCOR Foundation in Silver Pearl Foyer for More Information

Separate ticket required

The ANCOR Foundation 25th Anniversary Celebration is generously sponsored by 

TUESDAY, APRIL 8

Breakfast with Exhibitors

Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 am | Silver Pearl Ballroom

Exhibit Hall Open

Tuesday, 7:30 am-4 pm | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer, & Coral Foyer

Registration & Conference Concierge Open

Tuesday, 7:30 am-4 pm | Silver Pearl Foyer

Headshot Hub Open

Tuesday, 8 am-1 pm | Next to Nonstop in Seascape Foyer

The Headshot Hub is brought to you by 


Morning Keynote: Navigating Oceans of Opportunity with Transformative Leadership

Tuesday, 8:30-9:15 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

We know that with transformation comes both challenges and opportunities, which will require strong, flexible and transformative leadership in response. But transformative leadership feels like a big task, especially in the face of uncertainty. That's why we're bringing an expert in the field to the main stage, who will inspire and encourage us toward positive, viable changes that can add up to something truly transformational. This keynote is perfect for executives, managers, and professionals in the I/DD field, and will highlight how transformative leadership goes beyond traditional approaches to empower individuals and organizations to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

Speaker:

- Dr. Hassan Abdulhaqq, AABR, Inc.

Tuesday's Morning Keynote is generously sponsored by 

Networking Break with Exhibitors

Tuesday, 9:15-9:45 am | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer, & Coral Foyer

BREAKOUT SESSIONS A

Advancing Global Health Equity for People with I/DD

Tuesday, 9:45 - 10:45 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Universal

With 200 million people living with intellectual disabilities and 75 million with autism worldwide, striving for health equity for these populations using a global lens is imperative. The Woods System of Care in Pennsylvania has established the Mollie Woods Hare Global Center of Excellence in Intellectual Disability, Autism, and Mental Health in partnership with Towards Unity for Health (TUFH), leveraging global connections to improve health care access and quality. This session will discuss the Center's initiatives, including research, consulting, and evaluation efforts aimed at improving services for individuals with I/DD. We will explore collaborations designed to train a competent global healthcare workforce, government partnerships for disseminating best practices, and the development of a global community of practice.

Presenters:

- Erin Drummond, Woods System of Care
- Anupriya Mishra, Mollie Woods Hare Global Center of Excellence
- Nick Torres, Towards Unity for Health

Cultivating Leadership from the Ground Up: Talent Development in I/DD Organizations

Tuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 5 (Lower Level) | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

Leadership is essential to fostering inclusive and empowering environments in I/DD organizations. This session will explore the unique journey that Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) take to the C-Suite and how Relias can help organizations tap into this valuable talent pipeline. We will focus on practical applications of leadership development strategies that are designed to nurture and grow internal leaders, starting with DSPs. Through a combination of leadership value frameworks, comprehensive competency models, and operational systems, this session will provide tangible tools for guiding leadership behaviors, developing clear career progression paths, and reinforcing these actions at every organizational level. Attendees will learn how to build strong leadership pipelines that not only drive retention but also position DSPs for growth into leadership roles, ensuring long-term success and sustainability for the organization.

Presenters:

- Arlene Bridges, Relias
- Candace Wallace, Relias

Don't You Forget About Me: Training Frontline Supervisors for Success

Tuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 3/4 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS** | Intermediate

Amid high turnover rates and inadequate succession planning, the Community Provider Network of Rhode Island (CPNRI) collaborated with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota to create a comprehensive training program for current and aspiring supervisors in long-term services and supports. This competency-based, blended learning model emphasizes collaborative training, allowing supervisors to learn from both facilitators and their peers. After three successful cohorts, participants consistently report increased confidence and growth in key competency areas, feeling better prepared for promotions and additional responsibilities. Employers have observed enhanced stability and leadership skills among trained supervisors, many of whom have achieved promotions during the program. Join this session to learn how you can implement similar strategies to develop and empower supervisors within your own organization.

Presenters:

- Megan Sanders, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota
- Tina Spears, Community Provider Network of Rhode Island

Advancing Opportunities: The Role of Customized Employment in Transition Programming

Tuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Sandpiper AB | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Universal

This session delves into the pivotal role Customized Employment (CE) plays in enhancing transition programming for individuals with disabilities, offering them meaningful pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). Through the lens of an ongoing successful transition program, attendees will learn how CE strategies address individual strengths, preferences, and goals, fostering greater inclusion and independence. Additionally, the session will showcase the NEON initiative's transformative efforts to advance CE and CIE on a broader scale, highlighting its progress in driving systemic change and fostering inclusive employment opportunities.

Presenters:

- Jeff Carpenter, Economic Systems Inc.
- Jeannine Pavlak, New England Business Associates

Innovative Self-Advocacy Training: Empowerment through Theater ArtsTuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Shorebreak | **ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT** | Universal

This engaging session centers on Cedars' exciting Self-Advocacy Training Program, which creatively employs theater arts to bring advocacy concepts to life. This innovative approach has not only exceeded expectations but has also ignited a deeper understanding of self-advocacy among our clients, who share inspiring stories of newfound confidence and empowerment. In this session led by two self-advocates and a Cedars' staff, you'll discover one organization's approach to unique theater-based self-advocacy training model and learn the steps, tools, and materials necessary to implement the program in your own settings. Join us to see how this dynamic approach is changing lives and fostering self-advocacy!

Presenters:

- Mariana Abballo, The Cedars of Marin
- K.C. Coco, The Cedars of Marin
- Bridget Jackson, The Cedars of Marin

Navigating Financial Decisions: Building Sustainable Retirement PlansTuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Sandpiper CD | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION** | Universal

In today's challenging financial markets, providing a robust retirement plan is essential for employees at all stages of their careers. This session will emphasize the importance of offering comprehensive retirement benefits and provide hands-on guidance to demystify the complexities of retirement savings. Participants will learn about practical strategies for creating and maintaining effective retirement plans that support employees' long-term financial well-being. We will present a viable roadmap to navigate the retirement planning process, ensuring that employees are equipped with the knowledge and resources necessary for a sustainable and dignified retirement.

Presenter:

- Steven Ortiz, Mutual of America Financial Group

Achieving Outcomes through Enabling TechnologyTuesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 1/2 (Lower Level) | **TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** | Universal

Discover how one agency has harnessed enabling technology to create life-changing outcomes for individuals. What began as a pioneering initiative in Pennsylvania in 2018 has evolved into a culture of creativity and curiosity, breaking traditional service delivery molds and fostering true independence. You'll hear personal success stories of individuals using enabling technology as a natural support system. Together, we'll explore how Person-Centered Planning has been pivotal in driving these successes and examine the impact of enabling technology adoption on trend analytics. This session promises to provide valuable insights into integrating enabling technology within service frameworks to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Presenter:

- Nathan Gerhard '27, Keystone Human Services

Midday Plenary: A “Dockside” Chat on Global Connections & Inclusive Futures

Tuesday, 10:45-11:30 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Even if you only deliver services here in the United States, looking beyond our borders can help you glean insightful lessons that inform the delivery of high-quality services, better understand the USA’s impact on and role in the global disability movement, and how you can engage. In this intimate chat, panelists will discuss how their organizations are advancing the goals of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities through showcasing innovative inclusive practices, advocating for progressive public policy, and providing invaluable peer-to-peer networking opportunities.

Presenters:

- Thomas Bignal, European Association for Services for People with Disabilities
- Thomas Butcher, Zero Project
- Kirsi Konola, Tukena Foundation
- Sue Swenson, Inclusion International
- Barbara Merrill, ANCOR (moderator)

Innovations in Workforce Development Solutions: Presenting the 2025 Moving Mountains Award

Tuesday, 11:30-11:45 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Each year, ANCOR partners with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota and the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals to present the Moving Mountains Award, an honor bestowed upon leading-edge providers that are implementing proven solutions that develop the direct support workforce. We’re thrilled that the 2025 Moving Mountains honoree, Life Unlimited, in North Kansas City, Missouri, will be celebrated on ANCOR’s mainstage in a session that is sure to leave you feeling appreciative of this year’s innovators and inspired to unleash creative solutions of your own!

Presenters:

- Vincent Bustamante, Life Unlimited
- Julie Edlund, Life Unlimited
- Dan Hermreck, National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals
- Amy Hewitt, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota
- Barbara Merrill, ANCOR

Hosted Lunch

Tuesday, 11:45 am-12:30 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Leadership Development Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 11:45 am-12:30 pm | By invitation only

Networking Break with Exhibitors

Tuesday, 12:30-1 pm | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer, & Coral Foyer

BREAKOUT SESSIONS B

Cross-Cultural Learning in Rwanda: Powerful Lessons in Personal Growth and Professional Practices

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Shorebreak | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

What if a study tour could transform how you think about your work, community, and yourself? In this session, you will learn how visiting Rwanda, the Land of a Thousand Hills, inspired fresh ideas while strengthening connections among multiple provider agencies and a growing, vital East-Central African immigrant presence within the disability services community. Maine colleagues from the ANCOR Global Council will share the emotional and practical lessons they gained, how this journey challenged and enriched their perspectives,

and how it inspired meaningful changes in their agencies and beyond. Whether considering a study tour or seeking new ways to enrich your practice, this session will provide actionable ideas and inspiration.

Presenters:

- Bonnie-Jean Brooks, OHI
- Amanda Karomba, Happy Haven
- Heidi Mansir, Uplift, Inc.
- Ann-Marie Mayberry, Group Main Stream
- Catherine Thibedeau, Independence Advocates of Maine

Transforming Organizations: Risk Analysis and Change through Person-Centered Practices

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Coral 3/4 (Lower Level) | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Intermediate

Enhancing the lives of those seeking support is the core mission of any human services organization. For sustainable, effective service delivery, person-centered philosophy and practices must be integrated at all organizational levels. These approaches not only benefit individuals but also inform decisions, analyze organizational risks, and evaluate trends in staff retention and effectiveness. In this session, we will introduce three key person-centered tools: Risk Assessment, Decision-Making, and SODAS. Participants will learn how to apply these tools to guide organizational change, improve training, and foster lasting, positive transformations. By implementing these practices, organizations can effectively navigate risks and adapt to the evolving needs of those they support, personnel, and the organization as a whole.

Presenters:

- Jennifer Billington, STAR Services
- Sarah Stein, STAR Services

Elevate Your Advocacy: The Roles of a Disability Services Advocate

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Sandpiper CD | **ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT** | Universal

Back by popular demand! Join us for an engaging and dynamic workshop dedicated to empowering advocates for disability services like you. Discover ways to become a more effective advocate and harness the strengths of your fellow advocates. In the realm of disability service advocacy, understanding your role in the broader social movement is crucial. At this workshop, we'll delve into the various roles that disability service advocates need to embrace to drive impactful change, from securing funding to shaping policy and sharing innovative solutions that enhance community providers' support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Presenter:

- Noah Block, ANCOR

A Decade+ of Employment First in Ohio

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Coral 5 (Lower Level) | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Universal

In 2012, Ohio became an Employment First state, establishing a statewide initiative to promote competitive, integrated employment for individuals with developmental disabilities. Over the past decade, Ohio has emerged as a national leader in this movement, navigating a complex policy and service landscape. In this session, attendees will explore Ohio's journey, highlighting successes, setbacks, and key strategies that have shaped its approach. We will share practical insights and lessons learned from over ten years of developing, implementing, and sustaining this transformative effort. Participants will gain valuable knowledge to inform their own initiatives and contribute to advancing Employment First principles in their communities.

Presenter:

- Scott Marks, Ohio Provider Resource Association

Bridging Self-Directed and Traditional Services

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Sandpiper AB | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Intermediate

In this session, we will explore how Alliance New York has managed to support Self-Directed (SD) and Traditional Services models through data-driven insights and effective collaboration. Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of Self-Directed services, including its core principles and how they operate within New York State. We'll discuss the role of person-centered thinking and planning in building customized budgets and supports, while also highlighting opportunities for collaboration with legacy services and relationship building. Using data trends from New York State, we will dive into key demographic insights and budget considerations that help to make informed decisions. By the end of the session, you will have actionable strategies for collaborating across service models and fostering relationships that ensure individuals receive the best of both worlds in support options.

Presenters:

- Katie Page, New York Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation
- Michael Seereiter, New York Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation

Lights, Camera, Friendship on the Spectrum: An Inspiring Docuseries from Joey Travolta

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom | **ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT** | Universal

Join Director Joey Travolta, host Susan Clausen and participants of the docuseries to learn more about Lights, Camera, Friendship on the Spectrum and how you can share its message with your community. The docuseries invites the viewer to examine friendship and connection through the perspective of 40 young adults on the autism spectrum as they get to know each other and explore their community.

Presenters:

- Susan Clausen, Inclusion Films
- Karlee Lowe, Inclusion Films
- Rob Repass, Inclusion Films
- Joey Travolta, Inclusion Films

Support Me, But Don't Touch: Innovations in Non-Contact Remote Supports

Tuesday, 1 – 2 pm | Coral 1/2 (Lower Level) | **TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** | Universal

This session explores the cutting-edge world of non-contact remote support technologies, focusing on touchless solutions like the Xandar Kardian radar system. As remote support becomes more vital in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), these technologies offer enhanced safety, independence, and convenience. Attendees will learn how touchless systems can monitor health and safety without compromising privacy or requiring physical contact. We'll also explore additional technologies transforming the I/DD landscape, allowing for more personalized, hands-off support. The session will provide real-world use cases, including implementation, and discuss the broader applications of these tools in creating safer, smarter homes for individuals with I/DD.

Presenter:

- Precious Myers-Brown, Vista Supports/Health & Joy Services

Networking Break with Exhibitors

Tuesday, 2-2:30 pm | Silver Pearl Ballroom, Pacific Jewel Foyer, Seascape Foyer & Coral Foyer

BREAKOUT SESSIONS C

Honoring Neurodiversity in the Workplace: A Practical Guide for OrganizationsTuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION** | Universal

Understanding and embracing neurodiversity is essential for fostering inclusivity and driving innovation in today's workplace. This session will highlight practical strategies to support neurodivergent employees, featuring insights from Aaron Likens, an autistic individual with diverse employment experiences, including his role as Chief Starter of the NTT IndyCar Series. Drawing from his new book, *Playing in Traffic*, Aaron will share how his unique perspective has influenced his leadership style and team dynamics. Attendees will learn how to create an environment that values diverse thinking, learning, and information processing, ultimately enhancing employee engagement and team performance.

Presenters:

- Alyssa Kavner, Easterseals Southern California
- Paula Pompa-Craven, Easterseals Southern California
- Aaron Likens, IndyCar

Leading the Way: Fostering Collaboration & Innovation in NonprofitsTuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Sandpiper AB | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

In today's complex landscape, effective nonprofit leadership requires more than passion; it demands skills to cultivate a culture of innovation and collaboration within your organization. Join this interactive session featuring two experienced leaders who will share their insights on building a culture that fuels creativity and teamwork. Participants will learn practical strategies to bridge the gap between goal-setting and achieving measurable results through visionary planning—all while enhancing collective impact for your organization, staff, and community through strategic partnerships.

Presenter:

- Eric Curtis, Curtis Strategies
- Jean Phelps, Incompass Human Services

Employer Resource Networks: Prioritizing Well-Being in Challenging TimesTuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Coral 5 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS** | Intermediate

Our staff often face personal crises beyond our control at work. This session centers on how tailored staff support can significantly improve retention rates in a field that's already emotionally demanding. We'll discuss practical approaches for creating a supportive work environment, leveraging community resources, and fostering resilience among staff—specifically by exploring the innovative development of a collaborative network in Cleveland, OH, involving 16 diverse providers focused on enhancing staff retention. This session will highlight the retention strategies employed by Success Coaches to support staff during crises, such as homelessness, domestic violence, and other traumatic experiences. Attendees will gain valuable insights into building effective Employer Resource Networks that prioritize employee well-being, ultimately leading to a more stable and engaged workforce.

Presenter:

- Tony Thomas, Welcome House

Developing Effective Self-Advocacy Skills

Tuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Shorebreak | **ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT** | Universal

Participants will learn from an autistic scholar and educator, the importance of gaining self-awareness, communication skills, and procedures to effectively obtain accommodations and greater mutual understanding. Doing so empowers autistic, neurodivergent and other individuals with disabilities to maximize our potential for leading fulfilling and productive lives. Too often, people with disabilities are considered using a medical model of deficit and disorder. This presentation focuses on shifting this paradigm instead to a social model—asking what needs to change in the environment so we can focus on what the person with a disability can do. By focusing on self-advocacy skills, we can make full and included lives for people with disabilities the rule rather than the exception.

Presenter:

- Stephen Shore, Adelphi University

Reimagining Leadership Development: Insights from the ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy Class of 2025

Tuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Sandpiper CD | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

This session will feature two emerging leaders and 2025 graduates of the ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy as they present their capstone projects on the future of leadership development in disability service organizations. These visionary professionals will share innovative strategies and actionable solutions centered around their capstone projects in organizational leadership development. Join us to engage in dynamic discussions and discover how these emerging leaders are shaping a more inclusive future for all.

Presenters:

- Amber Corrieri, Mainstream Living
- Jen Skelly, Penn-Mar Human Services

Creating Employment Pathways for Newly Arrived Immigrants

Tuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Coral 3/4 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS** | Advanced

Discover how one provider successfully developed an employment and training initiative tailored for newly arrived immigrants. This innovative program combines language access and education with on-site training to address the workforce crisis effectively. In this session, you will learn about the program's multifaceted approach, which focuses on bridging language barriers while equipping immigrants with essential skills for the job market. Together, we'll explore best practices for supporting newly arrived immigrants in their journey to meaningful employment, enhancing community integration, and contributing to a diverse workforce.

Presenter:

- Kristin Shaver, Shore Educational Collaborative

Leveraging AI & Data Visualizations to Improve Supports

Tuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 pm | Coral 1/2 (Lower Level) | **TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** | Advanced

Emerging best practices with artificial intelligence (AI) and data visualizations can transform the way we deliver person-centered supports. By leveraging AI's ability to analyze vast amounts of data and identify patterns, combined with the power of data visualization to simplify complex information, attendees can gain actionable insights that enhance service delivery and empower individuals. We will also discuss

practical applications, ethical considerations, and strategies for overcoming challenges, ensuring that AI-driven solutions are person-centered, equitable, and secure. Whether you're a provider, administrator, or self-advocate, this session will offer valuable insights into how to use these tools to produce text, graphics, charts, and more with the goal of enhancing communications, impact, and person-centered outcomes.

Presenter:

- Doug Golub, Data Potato

Inclusive Leadership for Stronger Communities: Presenting the 2025 Community Builder Award

Tuesday, 4-4:15 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

The ANCOR Foundation Community Builder Award honors individuals, communities or organizations that work tirelessly so that people with disabilities may participate as contributing, valued members of our communities. We'll open our Afternoon Plenary by recognizing the 2025 honoree of the ANCOR Foundation Community Builder Award.

The Community Builder Award is generously sponsored by 

Afternoon Plenary: Charting the Course for Our Collective Advocacy

Tuesday, 4:15-5 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

During this dynamic plenary session, members of ANCOR's Government Relations team will facilitate a timely conversation with experts about the victories we've secured since the beginning of this challenging political year, as well as the fights on the horizon and how members of the ANCOR community can lend their voice to our collective advocacy effort.

Presenters:

- Elise Aguilar, ANCOR
- Noah Block, ANCOR
- Lydia Dawson, ANCOR
- Tom Rice, ANCOR

Leadership Academy Graduation & Mid-Career Impact Award Presentation

Tuesday, 5:15-6:15 pm | Marisol (Top Floor of Marina Tower)

The ANCOR Foundation believes that the mid-career professionals in our field represent the present and future of our field and our association. Join us in honoring the 2025 graduates of the ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy, and this year's honorees of the Rising Star Mid-Career Impact Award.

The Rising Star Mid-Career Impact Award is generously sponsored by 

ANCOR Disability Champions PAC Event

Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm

By invitation only; email Elise Aguilar at eaguilar@ancor.org to learn more.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Registration & Conference Concierge Open

Wednesday, 7:30 am-12:15 pm | Silver Pearl Foyer

DSP of the Year Awards Breakfast

Wednesday, 7:30-9:30 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

We'll kick off the final day of the conference by honoring nearly five dozen recipients of the 2025 Direct Support Professional of the Year Awards. Selected by an array of ANCOR members and other leaders in our field from a record-breaking pool of 500 nominees, the stories of this year's honorees will reinforce the community-changing work DSPs do in all corners of the country, and why we keep fighting on behalf of our incredible workforce and the people they support.

Presenters:

- Barbara Merrill, ANCOR
- Maria Samot, Relias
- Matt Sturiale, Birch Family Services
- Erica Thomas '25, RCM of Washington

The DSP of the Year Awards Breakfast is generously sponsored by 

BREAKOUT SESSIONS D

Managing Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome in Individuals with I/DD: Treatment Journey and Outcomes

Wednesday, 9:45 - 10:45 am | Sandpiper AB | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Intermediate

This session will explore the journey of diagnosing and treating Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS) in a person with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), covering the period from early 2021 to late 2024. We will highlight the challenges in identifying this rare, complex syndrome and address common misconceptions about treatments, including the role of cannabinoids and FDA-approved medications. Through the use of clinical tools and careful evaluation, we'll walk through the process of refining the treatment plan, including adjusting or eliminating other seizure medications, and share the successful outcomes of this personalized therapy approach. This session will provide valuable insights for clinicians looking to improve care for individuals with LGS and I/DD.

Presenter:

- Nanette Wrobel, Tarrytown Expocare Pharmacy

The Empowering Impact of Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)

Wednesday, 9:45 - 10:45 am | Sandpiper CD | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

You are the expert of your own life. That's the underlying principle of the evidence-based Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) program in supporting individuals with I/DD. We will present data showcasing how WRAP enhances employee retention and reduces challenging behaviors among those we serve. Through real-life examples, participants will see how implementing WRAP can transform organizational culture and foster resilience and self-advocacy. This workshop will equip you with practical steps to integrate WRAP into your programs, promoting self-advocacy and improving support for individuals.

Presenters:

- Lesley Corey, Step by Step, Inc.
- Jamie Fiel, Step by Step, Inc.
- Lee Horton, Step by Step, Inc.

A Seat at the Table: Creating Partnerships with DSPs

Wednesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 3/4 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS** | Universal

Nothing about us without us. This has been the mantra of disability advocates for decades. And yet many disability organizations and systems don't think about offering direct support professionals the same opportunity. DSPs often find themselves—in situations similar to people with disabilities—in that policy decisions or systemic change discussions often occur without DSPs sitting at the table. (Or DSP input is solicited without enough support or inclusion for genuine participation.) This session will share the story of the Alaska Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (AADSP) and how they have evolved into an influential group of DSP leaders who are recognized and respected as subject matter experts on Alaska's DSP workforce challenges and needs.

Presenters:

- Kim Champney, Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities
- Brian Ormond, Alaska Alliance of Direct Support Professionals
- Kyle Shassetz, Frontier Community Services

Navigating Compliance: A Transformative Journey with CMS

Wednesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 5 (Lower Level) | **QUALITY SERVICES**

In this session, we'll explore one organization's empowering journey through a recent audit by the Centers for Medicaid Services (CMS). Embracing John Dewey's insight that "we learn from reflecting on experience," ADAPT recognized this audit as an opportunity to showcase its commitment to compliance and service excellence. By leveraging a unique model, ADAPT successfully completed the audit with zero findings. In this session, ADAPT will share the effective systems and strategies that contributed to their success. Participants will gain practical insights and adaptable practices that can be integrated into their organizations, empowering them to navigate compliance challenges and enhance service quality. Together, we can turn compliance into a catalyst for positive change.

Presenters:

- Jeisson Cardona, ADAPT Community Network
- Matthew Parascando, ADAPT Community Network
- Kelly Spina, ADAPT Community Network

Rompiendo Barreras: California's Efforts to Address Service Access Disparities

Wednesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Pacific Jewel Ballroom | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION** | Intermediate

In this session, discover the Service Access & Equity Grant, an equity initiative led by California's Department of Developmental Services (DDS), aiming to implement strategies that reduce disparities and promote equity in service delivery. We will explore Options For All's collaboration with DDS to improve service accessibility for Latinx communities. The discussion will cover both the pilot program and its full implementation, highlighting their efforts to hire Latinx Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), enhance onboarding processes, and improve client retention, all while transforming into a bilingual organization. Through insightful analysis and practical examples, we'll explore how the implementation of a community organizing framework in combination with a Promotora model was key to identifying Latino job applicants fluent in Spanish and unserved client referrals from underserved communities.

Presenters:

- Emmalynn Chaubard, California Disability Services Association
- Miriam Padilla-Burke, Options For All
- Oscar Zavala, Options For All

Community Supported Care Model: A New Approach to Service DeliveryWednesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Shorebreak | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION** | Advanced

After years of strategic planning led by their state association, several I/DD organizations in Illinois have launched Community Supported Care Partners—a unique LLC partnership among provider investors and Deon Health, a specialized health plan tailored for individuals with I/DD. This innovative partnership aims to create an integrated care approach that improves participant outcomes, optimizes the utilization of state resources across Medicaid and Medicaid Waiver programs, and establishes a replicable model for broader implementation. This session will explore the development process, current activities, and key priorities of the Community Supported Care model. Participants will gain insights into how to replicate this model in other state systems, fostering effective partnerships and enhancing service delivery for individuals with I/DD.

Presenters:

- Kathy Carmody, Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities
- Mark McHugh, Envision Unlimited
- Shane Spotts, Deon Health

Building Bridges: Fostering Effective Relationships Between IT and Program TeamsWednesday, 9:45 – 10:45 am | Coral 1/2 (Lower Level) | **TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** | Universal

In this session, one provider will share its organizational journey in building a collaborative relationship between IT and Program teams, resulting in the formation of a cross-functional team with members from various programs. By fostering trust, aligning goals, and leveraging technology and data, Emmaus has created a framework that drives innovation and maximizes impact. This approach has enabled the organization to break down silos, streamline processes, and make data-driven decisions that enhance both team performance and program outcomes. Join us to gain insights into building a high-impact, collaborative partnership that effectively harnesses the power of technology and data.

Presenters:

- Tanna Clark, Emmaus Homes
- Tim Curran, Emmaus Homes
- Erika Rodriguez, Emmaus Homes

BREAKOUT SESSIONS E**A Culture of Care: Creating Safe Environments and Achieving Outcomes in ICF/IID Programs**Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Intermediate

Utilizing the ICF/IID Client Protections Condition of Participation (CoP) as a basis, this session provides strategies for developing a comprehensive abuse and neglect prevention and response program while focusing on an environment that promotes a culture of care. While gaining a comprehensive understanding of the client protection condition of participation and its application in ICF/IID programs, we'll also explore methods to conduct thorough investigations and response to incidents. Attendees will take away strategies for incorporating a culture of care into organizational practices, using tools and frameworks for effective policy development and staff training.

Presenters:

- Tom Rice, ANCOR
- Catherine Thibedeau, Independence Advocates of Maine

An Innovative Path to Creating a Home

Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Coral 3/4 (Lower Level) | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Intermediate

The dream of having your own place resonates with everyone, but individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) often face unique obstacles in accessing housing. This session will provide valuable insights into two grant-funded initiatives in New York that are helping individuals achieve their housing goals. First, we'll explore the Statewide & Regional Housing Collaboratives project, which established Regional Housing Collaboratives facilitated by Master Housing Navigators. These Collaboratives bring together key stakeholders, including developers, nonprofits, provider agencies, individuals with I/DD, and their families, implementing innovative leadership strategies to enhance housing opportunities. Next, we will discuss the Housing Resources for Independent Living (HRIL) project, which features the New York Housing Resource Center—an accessible online platform that provides essential information for parents, caregivers, individuals with disabilities, and professionals, guiding them through their housing journeys.

Presenters:

- Seth Greenman, New York Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation
- Carol Napierski, New York Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation

Moving Mountains: Best Practices in Workforce Development

Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Coral 5 (Lower Level) | **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS** | Universal

Join the 2025 Moving Mountains Award honorees as they offer a closer look at their winning innovations. Chosen for their leading practices to develop the direct support workforce, this year's winners will share the DSP recruitment and retention challenges they were facing, the innovative initiative they designed to overcome these challenges, data and insights about how their workforce has been transformed as a result, and what's next as they continue to iterate. Participants can expect to leave this session with an array of ideas for how they might replicate the Moving Mountains Awardees' successes.

Presenters:

- Vincent Bustamante, Life Unlimited
- Cassie Harrity, Life Unlimited
- Michelle Smith, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota
- Jolene Thibedeau Boyd, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

New Currents: Opportunities & Lessons from Emerging Leaders in the I/DD Field

Wednesday, 11 am - 12 pm | Coral 1/2 (Lower Level) | **LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** | Universal

Today's emerging leaders in the I/DD field have a unique perspective to offer amidst the various ongoing challenges facing our field. Join us as we continue to learn from the capstone presentations of dynamic, forward-thinking leaders from the ANCOR Foundation Leadership Academy Class of 2025! This session will explore the unique perspectives, innovative strategies, and transformative practices that these emerging leaders bring to the table as they shape the future of I/DD services and supports. Through interactive dialogue and discussion, attendees will learn about innovative approaches to service delivery, organizational development, and advocacy—and glean ideas for how they can implement similar innovations back home.

My Life, Your Job: Empowering Voices in Decision-Making

Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Sandpiper AB | **ADVOCACY & EMPOWERMENT** | Universal

In this impactful session, a recipient of home and community-based services will share her powerful story of moving from exclusion to empowerment. She will discuss the deep frustration and insecurity that stemmed from being left out of decisions affecting her life and how participatory leadership transformed her experience. Alongside the Executive Director of the agency providing her services, they will explore the evolution from siloed decision-making to a model that values and includes the voices of those receiving services. Attendees will walk away with practical strategies for fostering inclusion— from board leadership practices to training Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and enhancing interview processes. Discover how empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities in decision-making leads to greater confidence, purpose, and true inclusion within organizations.

Presenters:

- Michelle Davidson, Frontier Community Services
- Amanda Faulkner, Frontier Community Services

Can You Have Too Much Innovation?

Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Sandpiper CD | **STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION** | Universal

The pressure to grow, expand, and evolve while maintaining compliance, quality, and person-centeredness can be overwhelming for an organization. How do we find the right balance? Is it ever OK to pause? How big is big enough, and how good is good enough? These are the questions that keep organizational executives up at night. This session will explore lessons learned (including some learned the hard way) from one provider in Ohio on their exponential growth and transformation journey over the past decade. Participants will gain practical tools and frameworks to aid decision-making, helping them navigate the complexities of organizational growth. Together, we'll explore how to effectively balance innovation with quality and compliance, ensuring that your organization evolves without compromising its core values.

Presenters:

- Stephanie Nagisetty, I Am Boundless
- Jennifer Riha, I Am Boundless
- Chris Wolf, I Am Boundless

Leveraging Community Life Engagement to Achieve Better Outcomes

Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm | Shorebreak | **QUALITY SERVICES** | Universal

The goal of “Community Life Engagement in Action” is to transform and improve services in order to increase community life engagement (CLE) for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Attendees will learn how this work is being accomplished through a partnership between ANCOR, the Institute on Disability at UNH (IOD), and the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston (ICI), and guided by an advisory group that includes providers, people with I/DD, and other CLE experts. Attendees will also learn about the ECHO learning model, wherein participants engage with CLE content, case studies, and strategies for enhancing outcomes using an “everyone teaches, everyone learns” educational approach.

Presenter:

- Jennifer Sulewski, University of New Hampshire’s Institute on Disability

Hosted Lunch

Wednesday, 12:15-1:30 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Lasting Legacies: Honoring the 2025 Inductees of the Legacy Leader Hall of Fame

Wednesday, 1:30-1:45 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

Although much of ANCOR Connect '25 has been focused on the future, the waters we've navigated to get to this point would have been impassable without the unrelenting dedication of longtime leaders in our community. We'll kick off our Grand Finale Closing Plenary by honoring the 2025 inductees of the Legacy Leaders Hall of Fame.

The Legacy Leaders Hall of Fame is generously sponsored by

**Closing Plenary: Steady Hands, Strong Winds: Full Speed Ahead!**

Wednesday, 1:45-3 pm | Pacific Jewel Ballroom

We may only be three months into the year, but 2025 has already been a doozy. At times, you may have felt like threats to our services are looming around every corner, and it's not clear that feeling will disappear anytime soon. Despite it all, we're still here. Still supporting people. Still raising our voices. Still insisting that our communities be fully inclusive of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. And that is something to celebrate.

As we call it a wrap on another inspiring conference, we'll spend some time in this closing session reflecting on the road that led us to this point and, more importantly, the road that lies ahead. Through timely stories of our community's resilience, we'll leave San Diego with a renewed sense of purpose and the resolve to keep driving forward—and, of course, our ever-popular annual raffle!

Presenters:

- Barbara Merrill, ANCOR
- Gabrielle Sedor, ANCOR

The Closing Plenary is generously sponsored by



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

YANN BUCAILLE

Yann Bucaille is the founder of Café Joyeux. A passionate sailor who never strays too far from the sea, Yann met Théo in 2014, a young autistic man who asked him for a job in 2014. Faced with the reality of the 750,000 people with disabilities who are denied access to employment.

In 2017, the first Café Joyeux opened its doors in Rennes. In 2018, two new coffee shops opened in Paris. In 2019, a range of solidarity coffee in beans, ground coffee and capsules launched under the brand name “Joyeux, servi avec le cœur.”

Since then, seven other cafés have opened in Bordeaux, Paris, Lyon, Tours, Lisbon and Brussels. About 15 other Café Joyeux openings are planned in the next two years.



LORRAINE CHASTENET

Lorraine holds a master’s degree in international business from Paris Dauphine University. She began her career at Danone, gaining valuable experience in corporate management and global operations. Four years ago, she joined Café Joyeux, initially working in operations before transitioning to development within France. Now, she leads the international expansion of the brand.

As International Director, Lorraine played a pivotal role in the opening of Café Joyeux in New York in March 2024, marking a significant milestone in the company’s global growth. Her leadership ensures that Café Joyeux’s core values of inclusion and social impact remain central as the café expands to new markets.

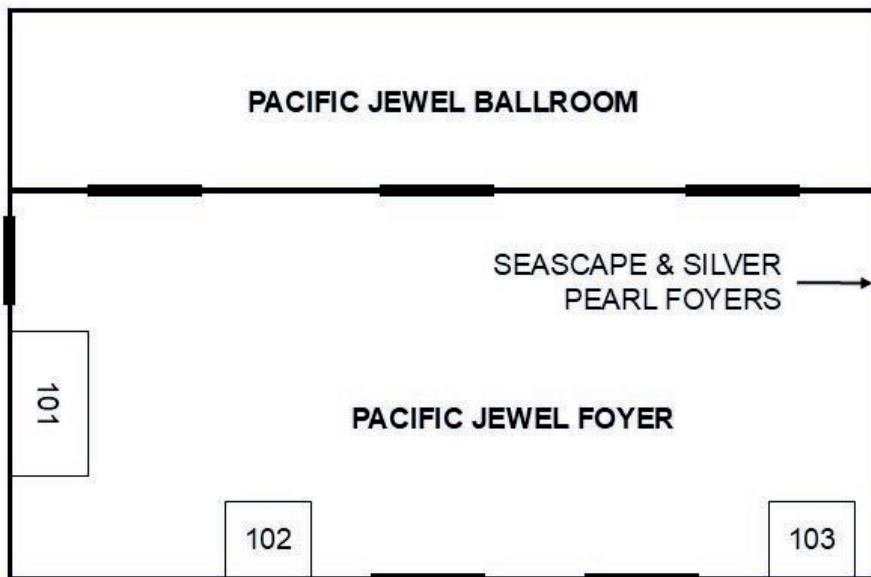
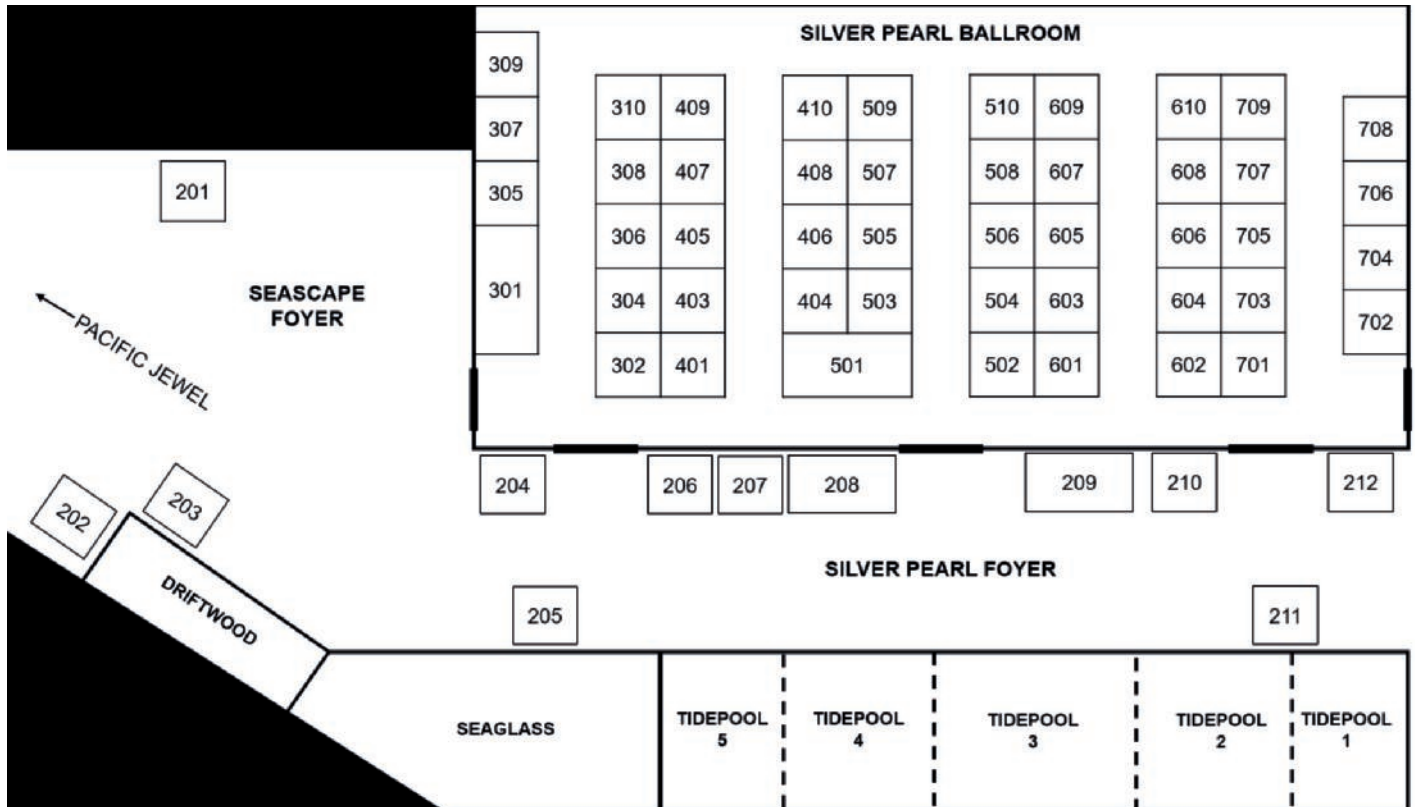
DR. HASSAN ABDULHAQQ

Dr. Hassan M. Abdulhaqq is a dynamic leader with 25 years of experience leading Human Resources initiatives for some of the largest global and domestic nonprofit and financial institutions. Dr. Abdulhaqq is a sought-after consultant on transforming workplace cultures. He’s also no stranger to I/DD services, and plays a key role in supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout the New York region. He currently serves as the Chief Human Resources Officer for AABR, Inc.



EXHIBIT HALL MAP

Silver Pearl Ballroom, Seascape Foyer & Pacific Jewel Foyer



OUR EXHIBITORS

6 Levers#508

Shaun Lee
shaunlee34@gmail.com
6levers.co

ANCOR DC PAC.....#205

Elise Aguilar
eaguilar@ancor.org

ANCOR Foundation..... #211

Gabrielle Sedor
gsedor@ancor.org

ANCOR Global Council#103

Robyn Wolfe
rwolfe@ancor.org

Andrus.....#510

Lynette Garcia
lgarcia@jdam.org
andrus1928.org

★ Arlington Heritage Group#304

Kim Goodwin
kgoodwin@ahgtrusts.com
arlingtonheritagegroup.com

★ The BI Collaborative.....#306

Bob Hitson
bhitson@thebicollab.com
thebicollab.com

BoundaryCare..... #609

Paul Carpenter
paul@boundarycare.com
boundarycare.com

CapGrow Partners#507

Dené Sanchez
dsanchez@capgrowpartners.com
capgrowpartners.com

CaraSolva, Inc.....#707

Kevin Luff
kevin.luff@carasolva.com
carasolva.com

CaseWorthy..... #608

Linda Nakagawa
lnakagawa@caseworthy.com
caseworthy.com

Common Energy #601

Leo Pagarigan
leo@commonenergy.us
commonenergy.us

Community Services Insurance Program..... #Tidepool 5

Melissa Sonnenschein
melissa.sonnenschein@ballator.com
ballator.com

★ Core Solutions, Inc.#301

Jon Trigg
jtrigg@coresolutionsinc.com
coresolutionsinc.com

Corporation for Independent Living.....#709

Alyssa Lajoie
alajoie@cil.org
cil.org

CreateAbility Concepts #610

Kerri Pinger
kerri@createabilityinc.com
createabilityinc.com

Crisis Prevention Institute#204

Katie Schumacher
kschumacher@crisisprevention.com
crisisprevention.com

★ DIRECTV for Business#209

Dave Serafica
DSerafica@DIRECTV.com
directv.com

ECP eMAR & Care Plan Software#202

Olivia Cash
olivia@ecp123.com
ecp123.com

★ Indicates ANCOR National Partner

OUR EXHIBITORS CONTINUED

eVero Corporation.....#407

George Koutsopetras
george.koutsopetras@evero.com
evero.com

GameU.....#309

Brad Cohen
bcohen@gameucorp.com
game-u.com

★ giv..... # 101, Tidepool 2

Alec Fowler
alec.fowler@givhealthcare.com
giv.plus

Globe North, LLC.....#410

Gregory North
gregory.north@globenorth.com
globenorth.com

GoodLife University..... #Tidepool 3

Megan Todd
megantodd@mygoodlife.org
mygoodlife.org

GrandCare..... #Tidepool 4

Laura Mitchell
laura@grandcare.com
grandcare.com

★ Guardian Pharmacy Services.....#704

Kimberly Cleary
Kimberly.Cleary@guardianpharmacy.net
guardianpharmacy.com

★ HHAeXchange#703

Makaya Gittens
mgittens@sandata.com
sandata.com

Hello, It's Me® #Tidepool 1

Vik Aurora
vik.a@focusedusolutions.com
hello-itsme.com

iCareManager#509

Jennie Thollander
jennie@icaremanager.com
icaremanager.com

Impruvon Health#307

Justin Amoyal
justin@impruvonhealth.com
impruvonhealth.com

Institute on Community Integration#607

Kristine Foss
Foss0395@umn.edu
ici.umn.edu

★ IntellectAbility.....#506

Craig Escudé
Craig@ReplacingRisk.com
ReplacingRisk.com

★ Jazz Pharmaceuticals.....#302

Jean Gelpi
Jean.Gelpi@jazzpharma.com
jazzpharma.com

Kibu & Chimes#208

Daniel Caridi
daniel@kibuhq.com
kibuhq.com

LumiCare.....#605

Shaleea Shields
sshields@lumicaretech.com
lumicaretech.com

The Mahoney Group.....#409

Nathan Stayner
nstayner@mahoneygroup.com
mahoneygroup.com

★ MITC Staff & Client Solutions#503

Madison Jackson
madisonj@mitcsoftware.com
mitcsoftware.com

OUR EXHIBITORS CONTINUED

★ **Mutual of America Financial Group.....#602**

Steven Ortiz
 steven.ortiz@mutualofamerica.com
 mutualofamerica.com

National Datacare Corporation.....#708

Peter Papadopoulos
 pete@nationaldatacare.com
 nationaldatacare.com

★ **Netsmart.....#604**

Tricia Zerger
 TZerger@ntst.com
 ntst.com

Neurelis, Inc.#102

Ethan Prange
 eprange@neurelis.com
 neurelis.com

NextGenAT#706

Ken Smith
 ken@NextGenAT.com
 NextGenAT.com

★ **Night Owl Support Systems (NOSS)#406**

Duane Chad Tempel
 duane@nosslc.com
 nosslc.com

Nonstop Administration & Insurance Services, Inc.#201

Stephanie Kammetler
 skammetler@nonstophealth.com
 nonstophealth.com

Pharmacy Alternatives by PharMerica.....#408

Rachel Bailey
 Rachel.Bailey@pharmerica.com
 pharmerica.com

QuickSolvePlus (QSP)#212

Zeb Gill
 zgill@quicksolveplus.com
 quicksolveplus.com

★ **Relias#701**

Christine Hsu
 chsu@relias.com
 relias.com

Respitrack by Mission Resource Solutions, Inc..... #206

Jodi Guevara
 jguevara@ucpsacto.org
 respitrack.com

Rest Assured, LLC.....#308

Kimberly Hill
 khill@restassuredsystem.com
 restassured.com

RFP Properties, Inc.#606

Charles Shaver
 cwshaver@gmail.com
 rfpproperties.com

SafeDose, a Program of HomeFree Rx.....#210

Holly Gillespie
 hgillespie@homefreerx.com
 homefreerx.com

★ **Scioto Properties#404**

Anna Young
 ayoung@scioto.com
 scioto.com

★ **SETWorks.....#702**

Anna Spexarth
 aspexarth@SETWorks.com
 set-works.com

★ *Indicates ANCOR National Partner*

OUR EXHIBITORS CONTINUED

Sevita #405

Breana Sullivan
breana.sullivan@sevitahealth.com
sevitahealth.com

ShiftAbility #705

Brian Hart
brian@shiftabilityconsult.com
shiftabilityconsult.com

SimplyHome #310

Emily Danciu-Grosso
emily.danciu-grosso@simply-home.com
simply-home.com

Starting Point Nursing Services #207

Launa Kindrick
launa.kindrick@brightspringhealth.com
brightspringhealth.com

★ StationMD #504

Ariana Anderson
ariana.anderson@stationmd.com
stationmd.com

★ Stoneridge Partners #603

Luci Jameson
luci@stoneridgepartners.com
stoneridgepartners.com

★ Tarrytown Expocare

Pharmacy #401, 501

Marc Altholz
marc.altholz@tarrytownexpocare.com
tarrytownexpocare.com

★ TaskMaster Pro #403

Ryan Edlich
ryanedlich@taskmasterpro.com
taskmasterpro.com

TCare #505

Jodi Fenner
jodi.fenner@tcare.ai
tcare.ai

★ Therap Services #502

Michelle Saunders
michelle.saunders@therapservices.net
therapservices.net

Unspoken Symphony #203

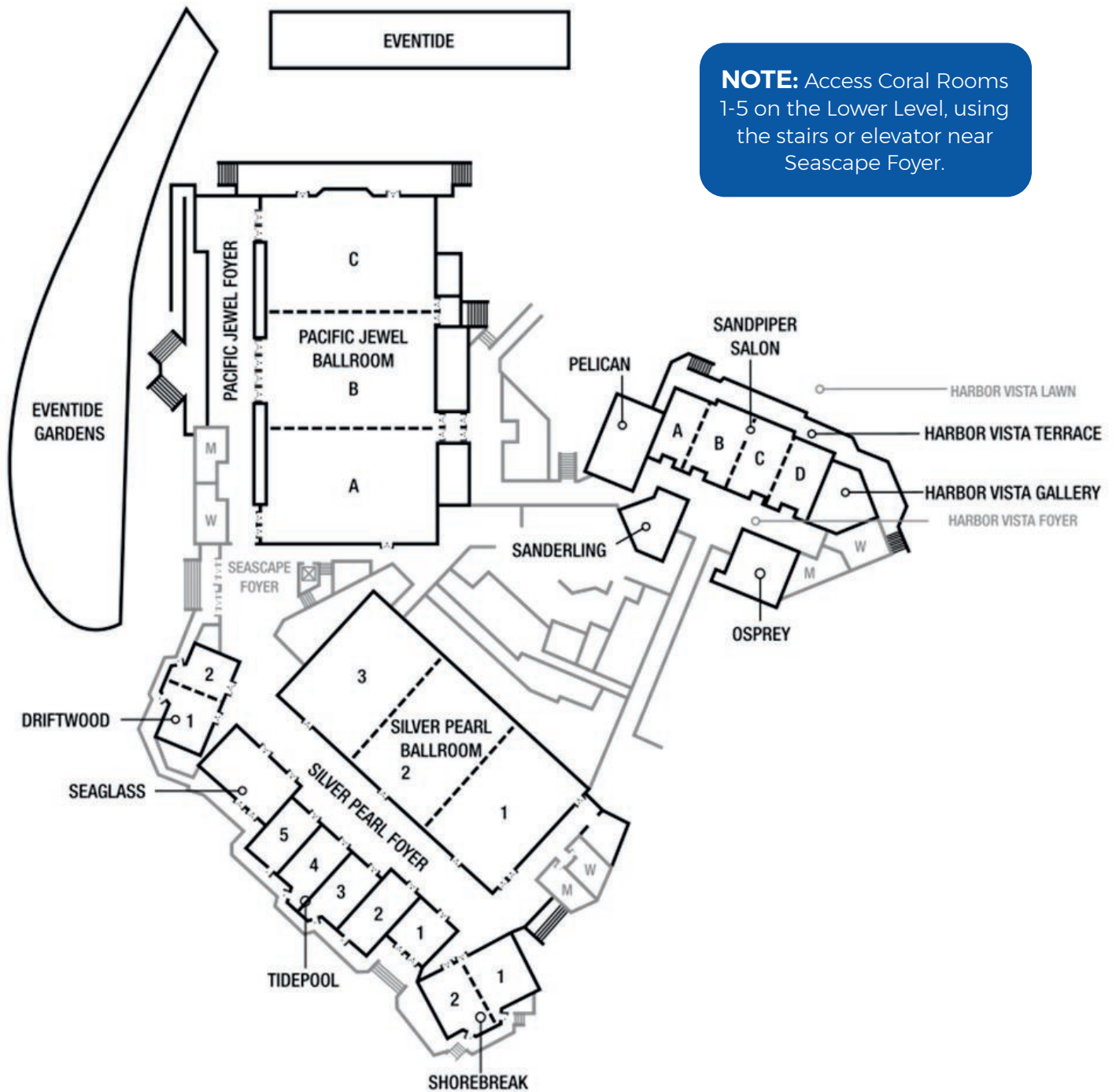
Jean Gelpi
Jean.Gelpi@jazzpharma.com
jazzpharma.com

Woods System of Care #305

Jared Levin
jared.levin@woods.org
woods.org

SHERATON SAN DIEGO RESORT

Marina Tower Lobby Level (All Rooms Except Coral and Marisol)



CONFERENCE SERVICES



STORY ROOM

Why is Medicaid funding critical for community inclusion? What do you wish more people understood about the services you deliver? What's your favorite thing about ANCOR Connect? Stop by the Story Room (located in Osprey) to share your thoughts about what makes our community of providers so powerful. Coming together and sharing our stories helps us better navigate the currents of change and the vast opportunities that lie before us.

CONFERENCE CONCIERGE SERVICES

Our Concierge Services desk is your one stop to access all the ways we're working to make a more inclusive experience. Stop by the Concierge Services desk near Registration to get access to the Parent's Room, Sensory Support Services such as a silent retreat space, noise-cancelling headsets, and more.



SEE YOU IN BOSTON!

save the date

ANCOR CONNECT '26

APRIL 21-23, 2026 | BOSTON, MA

