

[9:00AM - 9:30AM]

Dr. Susan Assouline (2e Hall of Fame and Signature Scholar)

The Paradox of Twice-Exceptionality: Unlocking the Door to Talent Development

The evolutionary path of the Belin-Blank Center's twice-exceptional research agenda has brought us to an exciting stage of interdisciplinary research. After addressing the psychoeducational implications from the Belin-Blank Center's clinically-based research with twice-exceptional individuals with autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disabilities, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, we will discuss interdisciplinary research aims. Collaborative efforts with neuroscientists, educators, computational geneticists, and clinicians holds great promise for unlocking the door to talent development for twice-exceptional individuals, their families, and educators.

[10:00AM - 10:30AM]

Sally Reis, Ph.D. (2e Hall of Fame and Signature Scholar)

In this session, Sally will reflect on past, present, and future research about 2E students, discussing the highlights of several research studies she has conducted with colleagues. Major findings will be summarized and current and future research about twice exceptionality will be shared. The focus will be on social and emotional findings and what has been learned about strength-based pedagogy for this very special population.

[10:40AM-11:30AM]

Dr. Joseph S. Renzulli (Signature Scholar)

A Curriculum Enrichment Infusion Process For Jazzing Up The Standards Driven Curriculum Research

One of the biggest challenges facing gifted education is balancing the need for enrichment opportunities within the context of an overly prescribed curriculum in general education courses. Even adjustments made for twice-exceptional students cannot avoid what policy makers and curriculum developers deem to be necessary content for students in order to matriculate to higher education.

[10:40- 11:00] **Part A: Overview of Curricular Enrichment Infusion**

Within the reality of today's standards and test-driven approaches to school improvement, we have developed a process that allows teachers to examine required curricular topics and to use teaching strategies and resources that can make the prescribed curriculum more interesting, engaging, and enjoyable. The curriculum enrichment infusion process guides teachers through the steps necessary to select, inject, and extend higher-level thinking skills, creativity training activities, and applications of knowledge skills into any and all regular curricular content.

[11:10- 11:30] Part B: Teacher Examples and Infusion Training Activity

Examples of teachers who have used this process will be provided and the role that technology plays in finding resources and guiding teachers through the process of infusing highly engaging material into the standards-based curriculum are discussed. In this session teachers will use a standard brainstorming activity and creative idea generator in a training activity to learn how the process works.

[11:40AM-12:00PM] Janet Saenz, Ph.D. (Signature Scholar)

The Challenges of Identifying Gifted, 2e and Multi-exceptional Persons in Rural / Indigenous Communities in Mexico

This session will provide a 30+ year perspective on the qualitative identification methods being used in many parts of Mexico, including several case studies along with discussion of a unique science enrichment program.

[12:10PM -12:30PM] Rick Olenchak (Signature Scholar)

**Twice-Exceptional Persons, the 21st Century, and Lifespan Development as Viewed through an Affective Lens
Research**

Using research on the Bull's Eye Model for Affective Development as a framework, this interactive session will examine recent results of interventions with Twice-Exceptional youth (2-e: young people with disabilities and concomitant talents) that have concentrated on affective development as the foundation for life development, including academic contexts. Thus far, studies with elementary and middle school 2-e students have revealed that strengthening social/emotional development is a prerequisite for all other development. Ultimately, wedding affective with cognitive strengths to find a position of personal fulfillment yields individuals who flourish, but to accomplish this positive state, schools and homes must engage in substantial training to grasp the complex nature of the intersection of talents with a wide array of learning and behavioral disabilities. Participants will learn about a variety of field-tested interventions that scaffold such improvements for 2-e youth, and ample opportunities for discussion will be afforded.

[12:40PM -1:00PM] Ann Smith (Signature Scholar)

**How an interdisciplinary curriculum can help 2e learners be recognized for their gifts
Initiative**

Contemporary research in the field of gifted education recognizes the need for non-traditional means of identification as a complement to more standardized measures. Under this paradigm, curriculum becomes both the catalyst for meeting the needs of already identified gifted learners and the vehicle for identifying potentially gifted learners through work samples and portfolios. This session has two major objectives: (a) to define the non-negotiable elements of an interdisciplinary curriculum, (b) to demonstrate how an interdisciplinary curriculum can be used to provide an opportunity for students to generate and sustain interests, talents, and abilities. Participants will be provided with an interdisciplinary curriculum titled "Leave Your Sleep" that they will be able to take home and implement within their own classroom. This is a session for teachers of all grade levels with the expectation that participants will leave with an understanding of how to implement the Leave Your Sleep curriculum.

MS Art Room

[9:30AM-9:50AM]

Session 1A: Matthew Fugate

**Lifting the Cloak of Invisibility: A Collective Case Study of Gifted Girls with ADHD
Research**

The manifestation of ADHD characteristics in girls can result in emotional and behavioral issues, placing stress on peer and family relationships. As they enter their middle-school years, these characteristics can place additional strains on both academic and personal performance. Girls who are gifted and ADHD display characteristics of both, resulting in unique benefits and challenges. It is important that educators develop an understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and needs of this population. This collective case study examined the lived experiences of girls with characteristics of both giftedness and ADHD in order to gain understanding of the array of coping mechanisms used by this population as they navigate the academic and social pressures of their secondary school years. It is my hope that this research will serve as a base line for future study of these ADHD (Attention Divergent Hyperactive Gifted) girls.

[10:40AM-11:00AM]

Session 1B: Heather Lai & Ley-Anne Folks

**Teaching Executive Function Skills: Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice with 2e
Learners**

Research

This presentation focuses on the results of a three-year action research project based on supporting executive function skill development in a congregated gifted setting. This research is particularly important given the asynchronous nature of development in gifted and twice exceptional learners. The areas of executive functioning on which we will focus are organization, working memory, behavior management, planning, prioritization, task initiation, sustained attention, metacognition, and corresponding supportive academic strategies.

[11:10AM-11:30AM]

Session 1C: Dr. Nicole A. Tetreault

**The Neuroscience of Guiding Twice Exceptional Students to Thrive
Research**

Dr. Nicole Tetreault addresses the dangers of over identifying with diagnoses, and calls out

Neurodiversity as the “new normal.” Twice exceptionality (2e) goes beyond learning in the classroom it is a way of experiencing and navigating in the world. 2e children express extraordinary gifts and challenges, where their efforts do not match their imagination and original ideas. Often these children appear as asynchronous and test all over the map leaving them deflated, anxious, drained, and demotivated. Understanding brain processing and nontraditional learning styles of 2e students provides opportunity for creative teaching strategies and solutions. With the advancements in neuroscience, physiology, and psychology research, we can design education specific to the individual while meeting the needs of the whole person. Join this session to understand ways to activate and encourage positive neural pathways and mindful techniques to nurture a divergent thinker and mind. Guide your 2e student to thrive.

[11:40AM-12:00PM]

Session 1D: Sara Renzulli, Ph.D. & Nick Gelbar, Ph.D.

2E Goes to College: Supporting 2E Students as They Prepare to Graduate High School Research

This presentation will provide an overview of the best practices for supporting 2E students during the college admissions and matriculation process. The scientific literature concerning adolescents who are 2E and the special education secondary transition literature will be synthesized to provide suggestions for how to best support these students. This presentation will also provide an overview of the legal differences between the secondary and college systems for supporting individuals with disabilities and use this difference as a lens for framing how to best support this population. Specific considerations for high school curricula, choosing potential colleges, and disclosing to colleges will be addressed. The importance of a strength-based approach in concert with developing self-determination and self-advocacy skills will be highlighted.

[12:10PM-12:30PM]

Session 1E: Dr. Dan Greenwood

Using Data to Identify Appropriate Careers for 2e Students and Young Adults Project

Data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Department of Labor can be used to identify careers that leverage a 2e student’s strengths and minimizes their deficits. By manipulating 136 variables in categories like cognitive, physical, and psychomotor abilities, as well as social skills, learning differences, knowledge areas, work style preferences, and much more, one is able to isolate the best matching careers for students with exceptional strengths and deficits. See how this ocean of data can be mined to find the best careers for our students.

[12:40PM-1:00PM]

Session 1F: Niki Saccareccia, ERYT

A Protocol for Creating Sustained Wellness in High-Performing Communities Research

Stress is becoming an increasingly cited factor in all areas of human performance, spanning the scope of interpersonal relationships to self-regulation and self-care. Despite more prevalent access to mental health professionals and a high-volume of empirical research supporting meditation as a valuable resource in combating chronic stress and fatigue, individuals continue to remain thwarted by their own best intentions. As teachers, caregivers and adults, we understand the benefits of relaxation and sleep, but fail to construct a lifestyle and mindset that prioritizes it. Like our high-performing students, we fail to follow through on our own self-care ambitions and suffer the consequences of poor diet, sleeplessness, chronic stress and physical inflexibility. This ultimately affects the education and administration of our professional responsibility, while maintaining an obsolete model for coping with a high volume of demands or how to balance work and personal life.

Relaxation Residency is an evidence-backed curriculum that provides a protocol to establish long-term, sustained habits that promote overall well-being, increased mental focus, and physical relaxation while fostering social-emotional learning.

This presentation will offer a brief review of the most current research to support mindfulness, meditation and yoga in the academic and corporate environment. It will also review the data from a pilot study conducted at Van Nuys Medical Magnet High School as an in-vivo case study on Relaxation Residency, in the field. It will conclude with an overview of the curriculum and handbook, and a short experiential component of some content provided during the course, itself.

[9:30AM-9:50AM]

Session 2A: Marisa Chrysochoou

Beyond Accommodation: Leveraging Neurodiversity for Engineering Innovation Project

The Civil and Environmental Engineering Department at the University of Connecticut has received a 5-year, \$2M award from the National Science Foundation Revolutionizing Engineering Departments program. We envision a radically inclusive Civil and Environmental Engineering Department that cultivates the potential of neurodivergent individuals to contribute to engineering breakthroughs and uses a strengths-based approach toward cognitive diversity to advance personalized learning and improve learning outcomes for all students. To realize the potential contributions of neurodivergent individuals to engineering fields, we must first create an inclusive learning environment in which all students can thrive. The department transformation will include academic practices at all stages, including recruitment, advising, instruction, and career preparation. We will also leverage organizational change at multiple levels within the university, engaging multiple stakeholders within the university to foster inclusive academic practices and establish an educational ecosystem that supports the diverse learning styles present in our student population.

[10:40AM-11:00AM]

Session 2B: Dr. Ana Miró

Serving 2e students, families and professionals through an interdisciplinary and ecological model

Project

The presentation will describe the services offered in Puerto Rico for 2e students. Project Twice Exceptional: Supporting Families, Students, Schools and Community through Interdisciplinary Teamwork aims to promote the educational, personal, and social potential of 2e students. The services are grouped in five main areas: students, families, professionals, internships and research. Students develop the social-emotional competences through interdisciplinary interventions, encouraging strengths and compensating weaknesses. The Family Support Empowerment Group offers personalized assistance and support with monthly group meetings and continuous individual follow up. Professional development activities are provided to professionals and to community organizations. A qualitative research approach is implemented collecting data to provide evidence of the results. Case studies are conducted based on the Systematic Analysis and Interactive Evaluation (SAIE) Model which has been used in educational legal court cases. We are a field and laboratory center for undergraduate and graduate students and interns from different fields of study.

[11:10AM-11:30AM]

Session 2C: Marcy Dann, MA, BCET

Educational Therapists and the 2e Learner

This presentation is led by Marcy Dann, M.A., BCET, a board certified educational therapist, who consults at Bridges Academy for 15+ years and who is in clinical practice 35+ years. Practical suggestions for executive functioning skills at school and at home will be discussed as they are integral in knowing 'how' and 'when' to perceive cues and to initiate and sustain attention on tasks. Dann will share a short video and lead a discussion on the benefits of Educational Therapy for 2e students who have asynchronous learning profiles. Educational therapists (ETs) are trained to provide ongoing, individualized, intensive instruction and support for students K - 12 and adults in skill areas relevant to the client's 2e learning profile. ETs provide strength-based, interactive, engaging learning tasks and provide effective strategies for learning how to learn with empathic understanding of the cognitive, social and emotional challenges that impact a client's learning. ETs are trained to be aware of issues involving self-esteem, motivation and school anxiety. The goal of educational therapy is for clients to become autonomous learners.

[11:40AM-12:00PM]

Session 2D: Dr. Susan Ng

Serendipity and the Conceptualization of 2E Learner Difference Research

This doctoral study investigated facilitators and barriers faced by 2E students in respect to achieving academic success and socio-emotional well-being during their schooling years. The research employed constructivist grounded theory methodology combined with the theoretical framework of the capability approach to generate explanatory theory.

In New Zealand schools a current focus on learning difficulties, complicated by a lack of policy specifically aimed at addressing 2E students complex learning needs, means such students are typically under-recognised and under-resourced. Neglecting domains of high ability leaves 2E students and their families feeling frustrated by the process of schooling. This affects the development of personal well-being and sense of belonging in the school system.

The research concluded by proposing a new model to assist with reconceptualizing 2E individuals. Alongside this model a new term, diff-capable, is offered to help transcend issues created by current (unhelpful) polar constructions of ability and (dis)ability as separate entities.

[\[12:10PM-12:30PM\]](#) **Session 2E & 2F: Terry Friedrichs, Ph.D., Ed.D., Amogh Kulkarni, & Collin McEllistrem**

Opportunities to Serve 2e Student Strengths under IDEA Research

Various opportunities exist within the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA, 2004) to serve strengths, not just weaknesses, of gifted students with disabilities (Friedrichs & Kulkarni, 2019). In this two-part session, the senior presenter first describes three ways in which strengths can be addressed during each of five chronological stages of the special-education service process: 1) Child Find, 2) Assessment, 3) Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), 4) Instruction, and 5) Transition. He adds how these varied opportunities to serve student strengths are encouraged both by the explicit language of IDEA and by 2e advocates' willingness to explore promising IDEA language. In the second segment, student advocates provide new data on why utilizing IDEA openings to serve strengths seem especially promising. Selected districts, it appears, have traditions of serving these students' strengths, and some recent case law seems to support serving these strengths.

[9:30AM-9:50AM]

Session 3A: Barbara Shufro, Esq. & Debbie Carroll

2E Students and Special Education Law

Initiative

Summarize how 2E students' educational needs are or are not addressed by federal law and federal courts, including - the IDEA, Section 504 and ADA Title II - the importance and variability of state laws, which define "adversely affect" on "educational performance" state by state - the importance and limits of U.S. Supreme Court case Endrew F. - pathways to eligibility for 2E students in public schools - mental health, social skills, executive function and behavioral services that have been found to be "FAPE" for 2E students - reading, writing or other academic deficits found to require services for 2E students; - possible ways to assert a right to gifted programming - barriers to eligibility and gifted programming for economically disadvantaged and minority students - opportunities for new strategies to work together with the academic community using and creating empirical research to support evidence-based strategies for 2E students.

[10:40AM-11:00AM]

Session 3B: Allison L. Hertog

Getting 2e Students Accommodations on High Stakes Exams – A Legal Perspective

Initiative

Testing boards often look askance at very bright students who've been able to compensate for their disabilities through informal accommodations and enormously hard work, and the College Admissions scandal has made this problem worse. This presentation by an attorney and former special education teacher who is 2e, herself, will explain what's needed (i.e., in terms of assessments and background information) to successfully advocate for 2e students on standardized tests, such as the SAT, ACT, LSAT, MCAT, etc.

[11:10AM-11:30AM]

Session 3C: Maratea Cantarella & Melissa Sornik, LCSW

TECA and 2e parent community support

Initiative

In this presentation, TECA president Melissa Sornik and TECA executive director Maratea Cantarella will discuss the need for a 2e parent community of support and how TECA meets those needs by maintaining its focus on family functioning and well-being by providing a strong, vibrant, accepting on-line community for the families of 2e children.

An unintended finding of a 2015 research study on the advocacy experiences of parents of elementary age 2e children, was "the impact of sharing one's experiences with others in similar situations," and that "participants informed each other of successful advocacy strategies,

special/gifted education terminology and community resources.”

The experiences parents described in the study backs TECA’s founding principles that parent support is critical for the success of 2e children. We will describe our initiatives that offer information, resources and supports that are thoughtfully and purposefully created to address the specific needs of parents of 2e kids.

[11:40AM-12:00PM]

Session 3D: Max Melby & Jamie Teigen

Adventures (and Misadventures) in Implementing Enrichment Clusters

At Arete Academy, we just started our sixth year in operation and we've never felt better about the enrichment we're offering! ... but our first five years weren't always pretty. In this session, we'll share our numerous missteps in enrichment, how we responded to those missteps, and a "nuts and bolts" approach to how we've made enrichment clusters work in our school more recently.

[12:10PM-12:30PM]

Session 3E: Melissa Malen, Ph.D.

Academic Coaching for 2e Students

Initiative

Twice-exceptional students who are gifted and experience a challenge in learning demonstrate higher achievement when they receive academic coaching. Executive function challenges that many twice-exceptional students experience and how these challenges affect achievement in school will be discussed. Tactics for supporting students will be shared that include strategies to support organization, planning, time management, prioritizing, and persisting to complete work. In the areas of self-regulation and attention, exercise will be discussed relative to how exercise can be used as a tool to support students in regulating emotion and behavior, as well as being used as an accommodation to support students. Tactics for using assistive technology and self-advocacy will be shared. You will hear the narrative of a 2e student, who was told he would not graduate high school, identify accommodations that resulted in successful high school graduation, college admission, a scholarship and a 3.5 college GPA!

[12:40PM-1:00PM]

Session 3F: Melissa Malen, Ph.D.

Themes of Experience of Parent Advocates for Students with ADHD in School

Research

Gifted students who also have ADHD need an advocate while they are in school in order to

bridge the gap between their demonstration of high capacity for learning and creativity, and their impulsivity, inconsistent focus and often distractible behavior. Advocates are usually the student's parents who must become advocates in response to the child's need for support and a call for parental involvement from the school. Parent advocates are confronted with many challenges, the primary being the daunting, solitary task of advocating for a child who is often viewed by teachers and peers as very intelligent yet choosing to behave in an unruly, disrespectful and underachieving manner. Study findings include the following themes: 1) Identifying and Treating ADHD in the School Context, 2) ADHD Advocates Need more Support from Schools, 3) Advocate Experience with the School is a Swinging Pendulum and 4) Advocates Struggle to Pave a Path for Success.

[9:30AM-9:50AM]

Session 4A: Karen Wilson

ChildNEXUS: informing, educating and empowering those who experience the world differently

[10:40AM-11:00AM]

Session 4B: Debbie Steinberg Kuntz, LMFT

The Bright & Quirky Movement Initiative

For the past 2 years, Bright & Quirky has been sharing the wisdom of the top 2e experts through online summits and support groups and is helping thousands of parents raising 2e kids learn strategies and solutions to help their unconventional kids thrive.

[11:10AM-11:30AM]

Session 4C: Debbie Reber, M.A.

Inside TiLT Parenting Project

Debbie Reber will share an inside look at the how (and why) behind her global community for parents raising neurologically atypical kids, TiLT Parenting, the TiLT Parenting podcast, and her book "Differently Wired," including the movement and community she is fostering and plans for the future.

[11:40AM-12:00PM]

Session 4D: Randi Rasco

Building Community Support for 2e Learners Initiative

This presentation will be regarding 2e Alamo City (www.2ealamocity.org), a newly established non-profit organization of dedicated educational professionals and families, who are working to identify and meet the needs of 2e learners in San Antonio. Last spring, the group met at St. Mary's University to view the award-winning film by Thomas Ropelewski, 2e: twice exceptional, which is a documentary on Bridges Academy in Los Angeles. I led the post-viewing discussion, sharing my own experiences as a 2e learner, in light of my training at Bridges Academy. In the discussion, teachers, administrators, and family members articulated their experiences, insights, and passion to assist 2e students. This included several teachers stating enthusiastically that they would relish the opportunity to be part of an innovative 2e school. I

will share where our organization is heading in order to inspire others with a passion for 2e learners to found non-profit organizations in their cities.

[\[12:10PM-1:00PM\]](#) **Session 4E: Randi Rasco**

Developing and Founding a Public 2e School

Initiative

This presentation would be sharing my work towards founding a school to provide an educational experience that meets the needs of the estimated 2,200 Twice Exceptional (2e) students in San Antonio, including the obstacles I have encountered. Currently, no 2e educational options, private or public, are available in the Alamo City. In the state of Texas, there are no public 2e schools. Twice exceptional students deserve access to specific and targeted support and enrichment in order to excel. The San Antonio metro area has a large population, 96%, of economically disadvantaged students. I believe that public education is the only chance that many of our children will have to break the cycle of generational poverty. I would love to share my school model in order to inspire others with passion for 2e learners to found public 2e schools in their cities.