

CT AHEAD March 11, 2022

Topic: Transitioning out

Panelist Speaker Bios:

Preston Burger is the Recruiter and Candidate Success Specialist at Integrate. Preston brings over 10 years of experience in the field of college and career readiness for individuals with disabilities. Prior to joining Integrate, Preston worked at Bronx Community College as an Advisor for CUNY LEADS (Linking Employment, Academics, and Disability Services). An active member of the autism community himself, Preston serves on the Disability Advisory Council for BEAT Global; is a regular performer with EPIC Players Neurodiverse Theater Company, where he also serves on the Advisory Board; and facilitates a monthly Advocacy Group with JCC Manhattan's Adaptations Program. Preston holds a Bachelor's in Psychology and a Certificate in Theater and Dance from Princeton University; a Master's of Science in Education from Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus; and an Advanced Certificate in Project Management from the CUNY School of Professional Studies.

Bethany LaLonde is a Job Developer for CUNY LEADS (Linking Employment, Academics, and Disability Services) at the College of Staten Island and an adjunct professor for CUNY's School of Professional Studies in the Disability Studies program.

Before CUNY, Bethany advocated for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families as a Staff Advocate at Disability Rights New Jersey and later as a Client Assistance Program (CAP) Advocate at Disability Rights New York.

While at DRNJ, Bethany participated on the Olmstead litigation initiative to close several state-run developmental centers in New Jersey. As a CAP Advocate, Bethany assisted individuals with their vocational rehabilitation services and supports through NY's ACCES-VR and the New York State Commission for the Blind. Bethany also conducted audits of Social Security Rep Payee agencies and sheltered workshops throughout New York City and Long Island.

Bethany has a Bachelor of Science in Human Services with a Minor in Sociology from Cazenovia College (NY) and a Masters in Social Work from Rutgers University (NJ).

Christine Wenzel is an Associate Director at the Center for Students with Disabilities at the University of Connecticut. She has worked in this position since September 2003. Christine received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Connecticut in Audiology and her Master's Degree, also from the University of Connecticut, in Higher Education: Student Affairs. Christine has a particular interest in working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in a higher education environment and coordinates and oversees the Beyond Access program at UConn—a fee for service program designed to help students work smarter, not harder. Christine also serves as the Center's liaison for career and post graduation initiatives and works alongside her colleagues in the Center for Career Development to provide resources, services, internships and career opportunities for students with disabilities.

Christine has co-authored the following publications: *"Teaching Social Skills and Academic Strategies to College Students With Asperger's Syndrome,"* Council for Exceptional Children. May/June 2010 Vol. 42 No.5, *"A First Year Experience,"* Association on Higher Education and Disability ALERT Newsletter. July 2010, *"Collaboration Strategies to Facilitate Successful Transition of Students with Disabilities in a Changing Higher Education Environment,"* New Directions in Higher Education. Number 154. Summer 2011, *"Beyond Academic Intelligence: Increasing College Success for Students on the Autism Spectrum ,"* in Yale's Handbook on Autism, 4th Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. In press, *"Evidence based and Promising Practices in Post-Secondary Education,"* in Temple

University Press' Handbook for Educators and Parents, Temple University Press, 2021. She has presented at several professional conferences across the country and was featured on *Good Morning America* in 2008.