

PROGRAM BOOK

UCLA TARJAN CENTER FORUM IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Friday, October 23, 2026 | 9:30 AM – 4:45 PM (PDT)

FREE ONLINE CONFERENCE

The 2026 UCLA Tarjan Center Forum aims to build discussions among people with neurodevelopmental disabilities, families, and professionals. Presentations from UCLA faculty, state leaders, community partners, and self-advocates will cover important topics and new research available.

Live interpretation will be available in ASL, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tagalog. Zoom's auto-captioning will be available in 35 languages.

Visit the UCLA Tarjan Center website for more information at:

teams.semel.ucla.edu/tarjan



REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

Scan the QR Code or type in this url to your browser: bit.ly/4fsSJ7O

You can also email us at TarjanCenter@mednet.ucla.edu



Semel Institute
Tarjan Center



Department of
Developmental
Services

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2026 UCLA TARJAN CENTER FORUM PARTNERS



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SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

9:30 – 9:45 AM	WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS
9:45 – 10:45 AM	MORNING KEYNOTE <i>From Advocacy to Action: Building Better Disability Services</i>
10:45 – 11:00 AM	Morning Break
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	PANEL PRESENTATION <i>Who Do You Trust? Navigating Myths and Misinformation in Disability Spaces</i>
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break
1:00 – 2:00 PM	AFTERNOON KEYNOTE <i>Mental Health and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities</i>
2:00 – 2:15 PM	Afternoon Break
2:15 – 3:15 PM	PANEL PRESENTATION <i>Mental Health and Lived Experiences</i>
3:15 – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Break
3:30 – 4:30 PM	AFTERNOON SESSION <i>Considerations of Neurodiversity Affirming Education: K-12 and Beyond</i>
4:30 – 4:45 PM	CLOSING REMARKS

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MORNING PROGRAM

9:30 – 9:45 AM	WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS • Speaker: Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, Director, & Dr. Yasamin Bolourian, Director of Outreach and Dissemination, UCLA Tarjan Center
9:45 – 10:45 AM	MORNING KEYNOTE <i>From Advocacy to Action: Building Better Disability Services</i> • Speaker: Pete Cervinka, Director, California Department of Developmental Services • Moderator: Dr. Jasper Estabillo, Director of Training, UCLA Tarjan Center
10:45 – 11:00 AM	Morning Break
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	PANEL PRESENTATION <i>Who Do You Trust? Navigating Myths and Misinformation in Disability Spaces</i> • Panelists: Areva Martin, Founder and President, Special Needs Network Dr. Rujuta Wilson, Director of Research, UCLA Tarjan Center Andrew Imperato, Chief Executive Officer, Disability Rights California Wesley Witherspoon, Self-Advocate Representative, USC UCEDD Kathleen Barajas, Founder & President, Project AIR • Moderator: Dr. Yasamin Bolourian, Director of Outreach and Dissemination, UCLA Tarjan Center
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break

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AFTERNOON PROGRAM

1:00 – 2:00 PM	AFTERNOON KEYNOTE <i>Mental Health and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities</i> • Speaker: Dr. Tony Attwood, Clinical Psychologist & Professor, Griffith University • Moderator: Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, Director, UCLA Tarjan Center
2:00 – 2:15 PM	Afternoon Break
2:15 – 3:15 PM	PANEL PRESENTATION <i>Mental Health and Lived Experiences</i> • Panelists: - Dr. Kashia Rosenau, Assistant Professor, UCLA Department of Medicine - Russell Lehmann, Disability Rights Advocate, UCLA Tarjan Center - Dr. Laurie Stephens, Senior Director of Autism Programs, The Help Group - Olivia Raskin, Clinic Coordinator, UCLA PEERS® Clinic - Sarah Fetter, Director of Advocacy Services, EG SPEAKS • Moderator: Dr. Brandon Ito, Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, UCLA Tarjan Center
3:15 – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Break
3:30 – 4:30 PM	AFTERNOON SESSION <i>Considerations of Neurodiversity Affirming Education: K-12 and Beyond</i> • Speaker: Dr. Jan Blacher, Distinguished Research Professor, UC Riverside School of Education & UCLA Department of Psychology • Community Discussant: Crystal Lam, Community Healthcare Worker, Bay Area Community Health's Harm Reduction Program • Moderator: Dr. Christine Moody, Postsecondary & Employment Specialist, UCLA Tarjan Center
4:30 – 4:45 PM	CLOSING REMARKS • Speaker: Dr. Yasamin Bolourian, Director of Outreach and Dissemination, UCLA Tarjan Center

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JOIN US FOR THIS FIRESIDE CHAT FROM 9:45 – 10:45 AM (PDT)

From Advocacy to Action: Building Better Disability Services

A conversation about bringing different voices to the table and finding practical solutions to improve disability services

PRESENTER

Pete Cervinka

Director, California Department of
Developmental Services



MODERATOR

Dr. Jasper Estabillo

Director of Training, UCLA Tarjan Center
Program Director, UCLA-LACDMH
BASIC-T Program



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JOIN US FOR THIS PANEL SESSION FROM 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (PDT)

Who Do You Trust? Navigating Myths and Misinformation in Disability Spaces

A conversation about how to tell what information you can trust and how to find reliable sources in disability spaces

MODERATOR



Dr. Yasamin Bolourian

Director of Outreach and Dissemination, UCLA Tarjan Center

PANELIST



Areva Martin

Civil Rights Attorney;
Founder and CEO,
Special Needs Network, Inc.

PANELIST



Dr. Rujuta Wilson

Director of Research, UCLA Tarjan Center; Associate Professor-in-Residence, UCLA School of Medicine

PANELIST



Andrew J. Imparato

Chief Executive Officer,
Disability Rights California

PANELIST



Wesley Witherspoon

Self-Advocate Representative,
Self-Advocacy Statewide
Network, USC UCEDD

PANELIST



Kathleen Barajas

Founder and President,
Project AIR

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JOIN US FOR THIS KEYNOTE SESSION FROM 1:00 – 2:00 PM (PDT)

Mental Health and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities

*A presentation on mental health among people with
intellectual and developmental disabilities*

PRESENTER

Dr. Tony Attwood

Clinical Psychologist and Professor,
Griffith University



MODERATOR

Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson

Director, UCLA Tarjan Center
Director, UCLA PEERS® Clinic



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Mental Health and Lived Experiences

A conversation about mental health and well-being, featuring lived experiences and perspectives from people with IDD, families, and professionals

MODERATOR



Dr. Brandon Ito

Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, UCLA Tarjan Center; Assistant Clinical Professor, UCLA School of Medicine

PANELIST



Dr. Kashia Rosenau

Director of Behavioral Health and Training Director, UC-LEND; Assistant Professor, UCLA Department of Medicine

PANELIST



Russell Lehmann

International Disability Rights Advocate, UCLA Tarjan Center; Poet, Speaker, and Activist

PANELIST



Dr. Laurie Stephens

Senior Director of Autism Programs, The Help Group

PANELIST



Olivia Raskin

Clinic Coordinator, UCLA PEERS® Clinic

PANELIST



Sarah Fetter

Director of Advocacy Services, EG SPEAKS

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JOIN US FOR THIS AFTERNOON SESSION FROM 3:30 – 4:30 PM (PDT)

Considerations of Neurodiversity Affirming Education: K-12 and Beyond

*A presentation and discussion about how student-teacher relationships
can support neurodiversity-affirming practices*

PRESENTER



Dr. Jan Blacher

Distinguished Research
Professor, UC Riverside
School of Education and
UCLA Department of
Psychology

COMMUNITY DISCUSSANT



Crystal Lam

Community Health Worker,
Bay Area Community
Health's Harm Reduction
Program

MODERATOR



Dr. Christine Moody

Postsecondary and
Employment Specialist,
UCLA Tarjan Center;
Associate Director,
UCLA PEERS® Clinic

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