

Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice

Program Panelists

George Ashwell

George Ashwell is the Area Director for the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services Western Area and has been with the Department since 1971. Mr. Ashwell has been responsible for the restructuring of the Western Area and for implementing an Area based continuum of care and focuses on the transition and re-entry of juveniles back to the community. He has served on the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee since 1998.

Leonard Dixon

Leonard Dixon has served as Division Director for the Department of Community Justice, Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility in Detroit, Michigan since 1995. He is responsible for the operation of juvenile detention services for the Department of Community Justice for Wayne County and is a member of numerous national organizations and has presented at several national conventions on juvenile justice issues. Mr. Dixon's career in Juvenile Justice is recognized nationally. As superintendent of Better Outlook Center, he developed the first halfway house in the state to provide children with cross country training within their work area, and achieve national accreditation of 3 residential programs. Mr. Dixon was a member of the State of Florida's "Design Team for Development of Training" and manuals for residential and non-residential programs. Mr. Dixon has consulted for the National Juvenile Detention Association and the Department of Justice.

Dianne Gadow

Dianne Gadow has been Superintendent of Ferris School since 1992. This institution is a maximum secure care facility for adjudicated youth in Wilmington, Delaware. Based on a lawsuit and settlement agreement with the ACLU, she was recruited from Colorado to lead the organization through a transformation of the facility from a formerly institutional program to one designed to focus on treatment, learning, and accountability. In 1998 Ferris was cited by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice as a model juvenile justice system with a solid platform integrating rehabilitation, education and treatment. Ms. Gadow worked in the Colorado Youth Services system for 15 years - 5 years as Assistant Director of Lookout Mountain School in Golden, Colorado. Prior to her career in youth services, Ms. Gadow taught at Concordia College in Bronxville, New York and worked with 4-H camp programs in the state of Maryland – developing programs and organizing camps. Ms. Gadow holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Concordia College, River Forest, IL and a Masters Degree from the University of Oregon. In addition, she is a consultant in organizational structure, staff development, and facility design.

LILI FRANK GARFINKEL

Lili Frank Garfinkel serves as the Assistant Director of the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice as well as Coordinator Juvenile Justice Project, PACER Center. She received her B.A. from the University of Manitoba and has pursued post-graduate courses at the University of Manitoba and the University of Minnesota. Ms. Garfinkel has written extensively on services for youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system.

Peter Leone

Peter Leone, a Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Maryland, College Park, has been actively involved in research, teacher training, and advocacy in public school and juvenile justice settings for more than 20 years. A former teacher, his research interests include program development and evaluation, and design of academic programs in corrections. Dr. Leone completed undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Iowa and received his Ph.D. at the University of Washington. He has served as an expert for plaintiffs and defendants in class actions involving juvenile corrections in a number of states. He has served Courts as special master or monitor of correctional programs in Arizona, New York, Pennsylvania, California, and the District of Columbia. Dr. Leone directs EDJJ: The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice.

Sheri Meisel

Sheri Meisel, Associate Director of EDJJ: The National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, is actively involved in research, consultation and training activities related to the provision of educational services for youth with disabilities in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. She has served as a monitor and receiver in class-action litigation involving correctional educational services in a number of states. Dr. Meisel worked in public schools and residential treatment programs as a teacher of children and adolescents with learning, emotional and behavioral disorders, and as an administrator in special education, for 20 years. She received a M.Ed. in emotional disturbance from American University and a Ph.D. in special education from the University of Maryland.

Edna O'Connor

Dr. Edna R. O'Connor is the executive director of Oak Hill Academy in Laurel, Maryland, a District of Columbia Public School for middle and high school detained and committed adjudicated youth that is located in the Oak Hill Youth Center, a juvenile correctional facility. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Goucher College. Dr. O'Connor has worked in the field of education for more than 25 years. She is dedicated to bringing about excellence and equity in education for all children. Her fields of special interest and expertise are in multicultural education, curriculum development, behavior management and restructuring schools at-risk. Dr. O'Connor has served as coordinator of the Office of Multicultural Education for Baltimore County Public Schools, college professor, education consultant, school principal, teacher, and Headstart director for five counties. Dr. O'Connor is a graduate of Norfolk State University with a B.S. in Special Education. She holds a master's degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Illinois, Champaign Urbana, and earned her doctorate in Administration/Special Education/Behavior Disorders from the University of Maryland College Park

C. Michael Nelson

C. Michael Nelson began his special education career as a teacher of adolescents with learning and behavior disorders. After earning a master's degree in school psychology at Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas, he worked as a child psychologist at the University of Kansas Medical Center. He received his Ed.D. from the University of Kansas and took a position with the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling at the University of Kentucky, where he currently is a full professor and coordinates the graduate Personnel Preparation Program for Teachers of Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities. Dr. Nelson has authored or edited over 100 professional publications, including books, textbook chapters, articles in referred journals, and multimedia instructional packages. He has prepared teachers of children and youth with behavior disorders at the pre- and inservice levels and has served as principal investigator on a number of research and personnel preparation grants. He has served as president of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders. Currently, he is involved in two national centers that promote research and best practices for students with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders: the Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, and the Center for Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice. He also works with the Kentucky Center for School Safety. In addition, Dr. Nelson does research, writing, and consultation regarding youths with disabilities who are impacted by the criminal justice system.

Romey Peavler

Dr. Romey Peavler is the Coordinator for Project SHIELD, a *Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative*, in the Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, KY. She is also adjunct faculty in the Psychology Department of Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN. Dr. Peavler holds a M.Ed. in Counseling Psychology, a Ph.D. in Behavioral Psychology, and is a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC). She has previously worked in the areas of mental health and substance abuse and with the juvenile justice system. Dr. Peavler currently serves on the Kentucky's "Embedding Prevention into State Policy and Practice" core team, and is also working on implementation of other state prevention legislature. Her current research project, collaboration with University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work, is examining the effectiveness of methods used with substance abusers in a transitional high school (including students involved with juvenile justice).

Mary Magee Quinn

Mary Magee Quinn, Ph.D., is a Principal Research Scientist at the American Institutes for Research, and an Associate Director of the National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice. She is currently the Project Director for the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Drug Prevention and School Safety Program Coordinators, a contract with the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools at the U.S. Department of Education; the Project Director for the Alternative Schools Project, a grant from the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education; the Project Director for the Linking Assessment, Policy, and Practice in Children's Mental Health, a contract with the Child, Adolescent and Family Branch of the Center for Mental Health Services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at the

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services; and the Co-Director of the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice. Prior to coming to AIR, Dr. Quinn taught for more than 13 years. She has experience teaching in general education and special education classes from elementary through secondary schools for public schools throughout the country as well as for the Department of Defense Dependent Schools in the Republic of the Philippines and the Federal Republic of Germany. Dr. Quinn holds a B.S. in Mental Retardation, an M.Ed. in Learning Disabilities, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Antisocial Behavior.

Robert Rutherford

Robert Rutherford is Professor of Special Education and Associate Director of Research and Graduate Programs at Arizona State University. In addition, he is an Associate Director of the National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice (EDJJ) focused on transition and aftercare issues for youth with disabilities in the justice system and the Co-Principal Investigator for the Arizona Detention Transition Model Demonstration Project. Dr. Rutherford has published over 150 articles, chapters, and books focused on emotional and behavioral disorders of children and youth and youth with disabilities in the justice system. He recently co-authored *Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice: Recommended Practices*.

Gene Sharp

Gene Sharp is 23 years old and was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. Although Gene had never been in trouble before and had no prior contacts with the justice system, at the age of 16 he was arrested for an armed aggravated assault but despite the fact that he had never been in trouble before and no one was seriously injured he was charged automatically as an adult. Gene spent approximately one year awaiting trial in the Baltimore City Jail (one of the most violent adult jails in the country, which also houses juveniles charged as adults). Despite attempts to have Gene's case transferred to juvenile court, Gene was retained in the adult criminal justice system and, after pleading guilty to a reduced charge, served 13 months in the Eastern Correctional Institution (ECI) of Maryland, an adult prison on the Eastern Shore of Maryland which is more than a three hour drive from his home in Baltimore. While at ECI, he was housed in the general population and shared a cell with inmates twice his age, one of whom was serving a sentence for murder. In March 1999, Gene's attorney from the public defender's office petitioned the court to modify his sentence and he was granted an early release with the condition that he participate in a community-based treatment plan and adhere to strict conditions of probation. Following his release Gene completed a community-based apprenticeship program and secured a full-time job in Baltimore as a frame-maker. When the frame shop Gene was working in went out of business he enrolled in Job Corps, a vocational and educational program in September 1999. Gene successfully completed Job Corps, achieving the highest level ever for a student in their carpentry program and emerged as one of the student leaders on campus. Gene has remained trouble free in the community since his release from prison. At age 23, he is making continuing progress toward rebuilding his life and also has expressed an interest in sharing his experiences as a youth who was incarcerated in adult correctional facilities. In May 1998, Gene met with the lead researcher for Amnesty International's report, *Betraying the Young*, and provided a detailed account of his experiences while

incarcerated in the adult system. In addition, Gene traveled to Norway in March 1999, at the invitation of Amnesty International-Norway, to meet and share his experience with Norwegian activists, and has spoken at events in Kentucky, Michigan, Boston, Florida, Texas and Washington, DC.

Barbara Willard

Barbara Willard is the mother of two adult sons with disabilities. One of her sons had many experiences with the juvenile justice system and was subsequently incarcerated as a young adult. Barbara has been an advocate for children with disabilities since the late 1980s and currently serves as the coordinator for five counties in Virginia for the implementation of Part C of I.D.E.A., infants and toddlers with disabilities and serves as a parent representative on the EDJJ advisory council. Barbara has received train-the-trainer from numerous organizations including P.A.C.E.R.'s juvenile justice project; P.E.A.T.C. understanding special education workshop and has been a certified mediator for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She is widely recognized in her community as a reliable and dependable source of information on federal and state IDEA rules and regulations. In addition to her duties as Coordinator for Infant & Toddler Connection of Rappahannock Rapidan, she conducts parenting classes; trains foster parents, serves as a disabilities coordinator for a local Head Start program, serves as a parent representative on the EDJJ advisory council and participates as a member of a statewide review team for DMHMRSAS to ensure early intervention programs meet federal and state guidelines of IDEA, Part C. In the past she has also served as a member of the Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services Board, as a member of the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC), and led Child Nutrition Inc., a USDA program that trains in home child care providers, in an extensive reorganization that helped them to improve the quality of their program.