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MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Hello and welcome to the 2022 emerging leaders end of your webinar. My name is Maureen Johnson and I'm the program specialist for the emerging leaders community. We are so happy for you to join us as a celebration for the end of your training program.

Before I begin I want everyone to know that we do have CART captioning available if you click the cc button at the bottom of your webinar console you should see the feature to turn on your captions. And see some subtitles or the full transcript.

And again, this is a webinar that is being recorded and will be archived and sent to everyone within the next week. I want to again thank you all for joining us and please remain on mute until we get to any question and answer portions. Feel free to put any questions in the chat box or if you are unable to you can click the raise hand feature on your resume webinar console and we can select you to unmute. And say your question.

With that I will turn it over to one of our emerging leaders interns and one of the main speakers for today, Ellie Potts. Ellie, I believe you are still muted.

ELLIE POTTS:

Can everyone hear me now?

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Yes, we can hear you.

ELLIE POTTS:

OK. Thank you, Maureen. I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ellie Potts. As Maureen said. I am a current trainee at the University of Georgia and I am a former Georgia land -- Georgia LEND trainee where I identified as a self advocate and a fellow there.

I would also just like to congratulate everyone for finishing their academic year. That is a big accomplishment. I think that we need to take time to celebrate that. And then, I will read some questions on the zoom pole. Can everyone see it on the screen right now? It says what kind of training are you? Trainee are you? LEND, UCEDD and select all that apply to you. Then we will read the results.

As it says right now, most of you are coming to us are LEND trainees. There are some, one DBP trainee and several LEND and UCEDD trainees. I believe it is 11% LEND and UCEDD trainees. And 70% primary LEND trainees. There are 5% DBP trainees.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Thank you Ellie, I wanted to point out the second question which was select the statement that best applies to you and the majority of those that attended said they would continue their training or fellowship at the same center so that is great. There is also a chunk of you, 30% that

you finished your training within the last month and 15% finished more than a year ago so welcome to those alumni trainees for joining us.

ELLIE POTTS:

Thank you, I could not see that, that did not come up on my screen. Thank you. We are going to go over the agenda for today. I think it's going to be pretty fun. First we are going to have an introduction and a welcome message from John Tschida and then a panel of former trainees and then tips and tricks for outgoing and continuing trainees and then opportunities that are available for former trainees. And then an opportunity for questions.

The learning objectives for today are, or what we hope you learn after this training is that you will be able to describe the benefits of the training experience, identify opportunities to engage with AUCD, and understand the importance of staying connected to the network. In your training program. -- And your training program.

Maureen and I have already introduced ourselves. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague and friend Tatiana to introduce herself.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Hi, thank you Ellie. As Ellie said, we are colleagues in the fact that we are both AUCD emerging leaders interns so I have been doing that with her and I have also been in the Utah regional LEND program and graduated that and my discipline was social work. I also want to introduce Don -- John Tschida who is the executive director of AUCD and he will share a message with everybody.

JOHN TSCHIDA:

Thank you Tatiana. I want to start by saying thank you to both of our hard-working, well organized, creative and energetic AUCD emerging leaders interns, Allie and Tatiana as well as Maureen Johnson on our staff for putting together this educational and celebratory event. And I want to thank all of you trainees for choosing to enroll in your programs. No matter where your career takes you, the world needs more leaders who understand the disability experience.

A soon-to-be published study of LEND graduates by AUCD network members at the University of Wisconsin, Ohio State and Pittsburgh found LEND trainees are more likely than their peers who did not receive training to work with people with intellectual and develop mental disabilities, other disciplines and underserved and/or vulnerable populations. It also found trainees more likely to become leaders. They begin their careers engaged in more leadership activities when compared to their peers who did not receive LEND training and the rate of growth of their participation in leadership activities was greater over time.

Even though the study did not look at UCEDD or DBP trainees I suspect it is a matter of time before we have scientific proof that the same applies in those programs as well. So while I hope that you will choose a career path that remains within the world of disability, I know that you have a leg up on your peers, on your leadership development journey because of your training experience.

I also want to congratulate all of you. Especially those of you who have graduated from your training programs but those of you who are also long-term trainees who will continue.



Congratulations on a successful completion of your academic year regardless of your next step, whether you are a self advocate or parent, someone looking for your first job, starting your first job, continuing with your training or still on the same job.

You now have the tools, training and disability competency to be leaders and educators regardless of your chosen profession. We can all lead from where we are. Whether we are in informal positions of authority or not. You are now part of a much larger community committed to the same values and opportunities for people with disabilities that you discussed during your training. Later in this program you will hear from our presenters on how to stay connected to your centers and AUCD and please stay engaged with the AUCD network.

It is a powerful, generous and diverse network in every state and territory made up of people with disabilities, family members, educators, researchers, trainers, clinicians, other health professionals, and do reach out to them. Connect with them. Learn from them. Use their connections to help to advance your career interests and use us and our resources at the AUCD office in Washington.

You can participate in one of our five councils. You can join one of our 18 special interest groups in many different topical areas. You can present at our national conference in November. Proposals for that are due June 20 for both poster presentations and concurrent sessions. So talk to your mentors and colleagues about submitting. There are more details on the AUCD website if you would like to pursue that.

Know that we at AUCD remain committed as a network to training tomorrow's leaders. We have a history of mentorship and sharing expert knowledge especially for emerging leaders. We are committed to supporting you and your network in any way that we can. I promised I would be brief so I will close by again saying congratulations to all of you at the end of the academic year and thank you again for becoming trainees.

Yes, this has been a leadership training program but it is done in a disability context. It is done in an interdisciplinary context. Your training recognizes that there are so many factors that need to be considered to achieve positive outcomes for people with disabilities and that knowledge can be applied in just about any profession. So I look forward to hearing next from our panel of former trainees, thanks and for one last time, congratulations.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thanks, John. I appreciate the message and congratulations. We are going to move on to our panel and we have three former trainees with us. We have Paavlena Madhivanan from the Arizona LEND, Minerva Ortiz from the Rhode Island LEND and Jeanette Cordova from JFK partners Colorado LEND.

I want to start off and go in order so the same way it is on the screen I will come to each of you. I will start with you, Paavlena, can you introduce himself -- yourself, say the program that you came from and how does that connect with where you are now?

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

Hi everyone, my name is Paavlena Mattaponi -- Paavlena Madhivanan and I had two mentors,

one from Arizona and one from Michigan. I want to connect more with my center. I want to still learn about LEND. The way that it connected because I am part of Arizona, I am a person with different abilities (indiscernible) my skills and my strengths.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. Minerva, can you go next? Same question, a bit of an introduction of yourself and how it connects with where you are now.

MINERVA ORTIZ:

Hi everyone, my name is Minerva Ortiz, I go by many, I am the parent consultant at the children's neurodevelopment center and I am also the bilingual family support specialist at the autism project in Rhode Island. Through my work at the autism project I heard about the LEND program and I want to participate because I'm a parent of five adult divergent children were adult children. Three of them are on the autism spectrum.

For me it is really important to pave the way and change the world for them. And with them. That is how I got to LEND. What happened and how I stay connected to my center is they hired me (Laughs) Through the LEND program I obtained this other job at the children's neurodevelopment center which allows me to be in the forefront and there were families when their children receive an autism diagnosis.

I get to do for them what other people have done for me which is provide support, information, training and resources. Like I said I am all about ripples. One little change changes many lives. Thank you everybody for everything that you are doing. I think the work that we do will make the word better for everybody. Thank you.

TATIANA PERILLA:

That was a great answer. Relating with the staying connected to your program by working at the center, I am at the same out now. Someone else about to come in might relate to that too. Jeanette, do you mind sharing an introduction and how your program connected you with where you are now?

JEANETTE CORDOVA:

Hi, I am Jeanette Cordova, I am currently the bilingual program manager for AUCD and I work on the (unknown term) in LEND and I also work on the UCEDD side. I am a parent of a 20-year-old who was born chromosome only enhanced with down syndrome. That was how I found JFK partners and Colorado LEND.

If I had not gone to LEND and if I had not met (unknown name) I would not have known about this job. So very interconnected.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. Something I'm curious to hear about from you all, I will start with you again Paavlena, if that is OK, what would you say was either your favorite are the most important experience that you had when you were in your LEND program? It could be a specific training, a project, anything that sticks out.

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

To have two great mentors, to know your strengths and weakness, my most important part of the strengths and weakness, to help me to grow as a person with different abilities, not as a disability. Because I think we all matter in the world and how we navigate the world, because sometimes people don't want to be labeled to be disabled. And we are important because we have our own voice.

But to have our own voice, how do we spread our voice to other people? If you don't know what you're going to talk about? It is connected to down syndrome also. I want to put that piece out there as well.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you, that was a really great answer, something I hope that everyone can get out of there LEND, it is important to know what message you want to share and learn how to share it. What about you, Many?

MINERVA ORTIZ:

Thank you. To me, one of the best experiences of LEND was finding my footing. I think for the longest time I had been in more of a caretaker role and I had been a stay-at-home mom for a long time just taking care of my kids and once they grew up and did not need me and I started my job at the autism project it kind of opened other doors.

But then LEND solidified that and to have a voice at the table I thought was very important. My greatest accomplishment I think was my LEND project which was starting a Spanish-speaking support group for families who have children with any kind of developmental difference. We have been having it for a long time, it is a very successful group and we do it now on Zoom because of COVID but I am very proud of that.

There are certain things you always do in your native language which is count, dream and I think cry, it always feels better in your native language. So we opened the door for that for families to express themselves and know they are not alone and continue the journey and helping others helps yourself so the new parents get help from parents who have been there longer. I am very happy about that. Touch (unknown term) thank you. --

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. Did Paavlena have your hand up for a minute? OK. If there is something important you want to say, don't feel like you have to wait for a question, you can share it with us. Jeanette, what was your most important experience from your program?

JEANETTE CORDOVA:

For me, I was attending college at the time so for me the most important thing was the interaction with the professionals. And the impact that we had on each other. Then learning from me as a parent, as a Latin parent and my perspective as well as me learning about the health system and how it works and learning about the limitations, how to work around the limitations etc.

My project was actually to do a presentation on how to outreach and support Hispanic Latinx families in the community. I presented but I had actual parents there who would also respond to the questions. I had like 40 people at that.

The culmination of the whole LEND program to and with that and to have buy-in from other professionals in the Children's Hospital arena and University of Colorado was really great.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. Since we are all here right now, we are all gathered I would like to think this means we have managed to stay connected either with our center, our program or with AUCD.

Can you share, I will start with you again Paavlena, how do you stay connected with your program or with AUCD?

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

I am trying to find a way to be connected because it has been a whole month that I have been finished with the LEND community and it was sometimes hard to stay connected. But if I do have some questions it is a good thing that I have friends of LEND and I will check if I have their numbers and if I don't I may need help. I am a different able person and I am proud of that because I need a way to find my footing in this place of the world. This place that we live in. To stay connected, how to be connected first. How do we begin to connect, to people who already know you?

TATIANA PERILLA:

That's true, I do think it is hard to connect with people, maybe you have never met someone before and you want to reach out to them, I think LEND is great because it does connect you with a group of people that have some similar interests.

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

, I meant to say, the people who already know you, how do you stay connected to them? They already know you but how do you stay connected, it is a long time, I don't know their numbers, I don't know their emails, and I ask all the time how many people, I did not even go to their ceremony, I think. So it is hard to stay connected, how do you know you are connected in a way.

TATIANA PERILLA:

I think, definitely, keeping those relationships is important. I think email is really important. Our training director got everyone's email so I have been able to reach out to past ones kind of like I reached out to you Paavlena and I'm really glad you responded to my email. And were willing to join us today.

It does not hurt to just email someone and hope for that response because what are you losing by asking them?

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

What are you losing is a piece of your memory from a long time ago and thenâ€¦! What are we talking about? Remember these kinds of things. That is what we call a core memory.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Yeah, and we jog their memory when we reach back out, sometimes that works. Paavlena Mac
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PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

I want to ask Minerva and Jeanette, how they can come in with what we have talked about.

MINERVA ORTIZ:

How I stay connected because I now work at the children's neurodevelopment center and the land director is my boss I try to stay connected as much as possible. I do work and support the differently abled young lady at the children's neurodevelopment center and she is always looking for resources for families.

Last year we co-presented, it was mostly her work in my support, we did a poster for the AUCD conference last November. We were very proud of that. It was virtual, it would've been nice if we could have been in person but it was a nice project and it was all about how different applications for your phone can support individuals in their independence. So many good apps there for them to share.

I am also a part of Jeanette's group, I recognized the name, the Hispanic Caucus, I was like yes I am part of that too. So I am trying to create more ripples and trying to support. And my daughter who is autistic, she is an young woman of all is 29 years -- almost 29 years is a trainee in this year's LEND. So bring every thing to the table, they saw my side and now they are seeing my daughters side and she has also gotten a lot of feedback from that.

Because I do work at the diagnostic center I have a lot of relationships with professionals in that role and we are redoing, and they included me as part of the team, how do we change how we process referrals, how do we get families evaluated sooner, how do we get resources in the hands of families faster? So the family voice is definitely important. I think that is a really good way of staying connected.

And always saying yes to everything (Laughs) Until we can't. That is what I've been doing.

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

I have a question, I'm sorry to interrupt, for Miss Minerva. How does a family have their voice or how will we involve family to help us, to guide you or how do we get family involved because sometimes they are a big part of your life, trying to help you and to motivate you but they also want to know, do you have any support plans or do you have any support?

Sometimes it's, you go to someplace together on your own. But where can you find more parents like my family? That kind of system?

MINERVA ORTIZ:

That is what we do, we try to connect family so that families do not feel isolated. I think for the parent piece, it is a lot of work but then just like every other parent at some point you have to turn it over to your child. So helping families realize that independence is really the goal and what independence looks like, it will be different for every family.

And giving them those tools so that they can support their children and encourage independence.

PAAVLENA MADHIVANAN:

How about of people already know they have independence and people say grow up or be more independent, what advice would you give?

MINERVA ORTIZ:

That's a tough one.

TATIANA PERILLA:

I want to add real fast that we are hoping to have a little bit up -- of time at the end where we can ask questions and reflection questions, the things that we are wondering as we go along, some of these questions might be good for discussion that we can ask.

I want to make sure I hear from Jeanette because I've attended these webinars before and I remember Jeanette sharing good tips on how to stay connected that I remember to this day. If you want to share a little but I think that would be great.

JEANETTE CORDOVA:

It was funny, I was the only family and diversity discipline training, I did not really stay in touch with any others like me, however, I did stay in touch with the other trainees who were clinical. Because of my role, when I started working for an organization called (unknown term) in Colorado. So that created a kind of bridge for JFK partners and so I supported some of their research.

I actually published with them now on one particular research that was about how to outreach to families with kids with autism. An early diagnosis etc. So I was kind of purposeful in putting it out there, that want to work, want to help, so my first was actually working for JFK on the spark for autism national research project.

When that project funding left, that is when I started working at unknown iMac -- (unknown term) so the relationship continued. And it continues now that I'm back in Colorado after a three-year stint in Florida and I work with (unknown name) and Colorado LEND now.

It has been an awesome ride, so I would not be where I am at if it was not for the Colorado LEND but you have to be very purposeful in making those connections and staying on those connections.

I do a lot of reaching out and it is hard work to stay connected but sometimes you have to do the work. It really is great in the end to do it.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. I will turn back to Ellie because I think she is going to share with us and I think this might help us to think of more questions. We will have the last minutes to ask more questions or share comments so I want to give her a chance to go before we keep the discussion going which I hope we end up doing more later.

ELLIE POTTS:

Yes, thank you Tatiana. And thank you to all of our panelists. I'm going to talk about the importance of building and maintaining a resume. I know that this was something that was

important to me and I was not sure how to do it before I entered my LEND program.

My program actually had a whole class on how to create a LinkedIn profile. Our training director took us and showed us how to build a LinkedIn and I would encourage each of you if you have not done so already, as you finish up your training stay connected to the emergence -- emerging leaders LinkedIn group because you are all emerging leaders.

So, I'm just going to go over some tips and tricks of how to engage in the resume building and all of that. One of the most important tips, I would say, is to make sure that you spell out acronyms. For example, LEND is leadership, education on neurodevelopmental and other related disabilities. And AUCD is Association of University centers on disability.

Spelling out these acronyms is so important because People that have been around the AUC network or around LEND or anything like that will know about these acronyms but when you are trying to display -- explained it on a resume or something like that, you want to make sure that you spell out these acronyms so that you can help them to understand more clearly what your experience is like.

You also want to do something that I think is really important switches to prepare a leader speech. Which is a quick 62nd speech saying your name, the knowledge and concepts that you know about or that are important to you and skills that you have learned in your training program. And what you would like them to know about you and what you would like them to do. The reason it is called an elevator speech is because it is meant to be something that you can do while you are writing on an elevator with someone.

These are just some tips for continuing trainees or multiyear trainees. You might want to consider applying for leadership opportunities at your program and AUCD. Like this emerging leaders internship has given me a lot of experience that I would not have normally had. Had I not contacted my mentors around me to inquire about applying for it.

And then, for me one of the most important pieces I think would be consider the lessons that you have already learned and then how you can share them with current trainees, with incoming trainees. That may just be a little bit A little bit behind you. And how you can mentor them.

So then they can take that knowledge and continue to pay it forward to other trainees. The last one that I have on here is like I have continued to talk about, mentorship is so important. You want to increase your networking skills by reaching out to different people within your field. Or within your area of interest. For guidance and mentorship.

Usually when you reach out to someone, by email or just to say hey, I am really interested in what you are doing, would you be willing to grab a cup of coffee or sit down and talk with me or do a Zoom call with me? More often than not they are very happy to do that. So that is just something that I would want to let you know. I know it can be scary to do that but it's very important that you do that.

Now I'm going to go to some tips for outgoing or former trainees. I know that a lot of our LEND programs have just finished so I think these are important tips. You want to try to stay connected with the center that you did your LEND program with. I know that that can be hard to

do but it's also really important.

What I would suggest is to reach out to the trainees from your cohort. Just because you are done with LEND does not mean that you have to immediately stop being friends with them. I know I am still friends with many of my cohort members for my LEND year and I don't know what I would do without those friendships and relationships.

Social media is also really important. Many LEND and UCEDD centers have a social media account as well as AUCD has many social media accounts. So it is very easy to find those and connect to those. You can connect with other trainees with similar interest to you through those accounts. So you also want to subscribe to the AUCD training newsletter to stay informed of different events, different webinars, different forms of engagement like this one that we are doing right now. And things like that.

My last tip that I have for former trainees is to complete training surveys at two, five and 10 years to help to show impacts of your training experience. A lot of times, the training experience may have impacted you in a different way that is not always measurable. So to be able to say that on a survey is really important. So that they can have that and I will go into different ways that my training experiences have impacted me.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you, I want to pop in and reiterate the importance of completing the surveys. It really shows the impact of LEND programs in general. These surveys are going to ask what type of work you are doing, after you have completed the program, two or five or 10 years out, if you have continued working with people with disabilities are within your community and showing the impact of LEND helps again with it getting funded and continuing to recruit more awesome trainees to join the community. So want to make sure that we continue to fill out those surveys and make sure that you are staying connected just like Ellie has stayed connected.

She will even share what she has learned in her training experience and how you can talk about it.

ELLIE POTTS:

Thank you for helping me lead into the next slide perfectly. I appreciate that. I know that explain your training experience can be kind of difficult because we all might have different ways that we experiencedâ€¦ That we had our experiences.

Ways that I would recommend that you do it, what activities were most important to you? What projects did you create any kind of portfolio, were you involved in focus groups, were you involved in leadership projects? Research projects?

What requirements did you complete? Was there community outreach, different forms of family engagement, different forms of clinical observation hours, did a speaker come to speak to your cohort that was particularly meaningful to you? What did they say or what did they do or what did they speak about that was particularly impactful for you?

You want to mention the training programs goals and objectives. If you are in an LEND program he mightâ€¦ You will have different objectives, if you are DPP you will have different objectives,

if you are UCEDD you will have different objectives. I guess what I'm saying is make sure that you work with your director and training director to make sure that you understand the goals and objectives of that training program so that when you are asked about it, you can explain them clearly. And concisely. So that other people will not know -- other people will know what an impactful training experience you had and what skills you bring to the table because of the training experience.

This is a simple resume example that I did. This is my actual resume example. What it basically is is I listed what the acronym of LEND means and I listed the center that I was a part of, the University I was a part of and the city and state that it was located in. Then I just listed several things that were important to me.

Keep in mind that this is an academic resume. Because I was a graduate student when I did this. But there are many different ways that you can have both academic and nonacademic examples. What I would say is that mine is an example that someone can use but it is certainly not the only example.

Depending on what you want to do within your community, it guides what you want to say about your leadership experience. I mean, your LEND experience. What I mean by that is that if you want to speak to someone, to a community group or something, you might want to say I have experience with public speaking, I have experience being part of a project team, I have experience building my leadership confidence by doing this, by going to speak to the legislators or something like that.

It is just important to know your audience and so while you are of course free to use my example, I want to encourage you to get creative and use your own experience and talk about your own experience.

We all have very unique voices and I want to make sure that those are brought to life. And then, this is where I get to get kinda personal because Doreen asked me to share a little bit of my experience. Doing LEND. And you said because I am a former trainee as well as a current UCEDD training.

Part of what I learned in LEND, which I'm not really able to put it on a resume, but I know that I would not be able to do the work that I do without it. I learned to look at myself differently. And except my disability. For a long time I did not like it. I did not want it. And I was somewhat ashamed of it. And I know that sounds really odd. But I was and now because of the LEND experience and the relationships that I have built and made with others, I realized that I could! I had a lot of experience that I can bring to the table. And I could use my disability as a platform to speak and it is something that I can be proud of and not ashamed of. So that is important.

This kind of leads into my second thing that I learned from LEND. Because I learned to accept myself and build relationships, more thoroughly with others, I did not feel alone anymore. And I was able to find people who had both different and common interests and that was a really big thing for me. And who accepted me for me. For me as Ellie and not just for who they thought I should be. Because of what they thought my disability was or the assumptions that they made about it.

This year, UCEDD is completely different from LEND in that they are more€! There is very little self advocate or family advocate interaction which I don't like. But it is more of a research based training. So I am working as a graduate research assistant at the Institute of human development and disability at the University of Georgia. I work on research projects like the children's freedom initiative.

This project works to help individuals with disability find community living support and it helps to get them out of situations where it is like institutionalization, like nursing homes or something like that. So we are working on that.

And then I have also learned through that project to do some film editing and video editing. That type of thing, some boys editing things. And all of that. I appreciate you letting me share some of my experiences. If you would like to interact with me more, or connect with me more I can put my email in the chat. And like I have talked about earlier, I learned confidence in myself, advocacy, for myself and others, disability identity development which is really important to me, research skills and scripted element and video editing. That is it.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. I'm going to talk about some opportunities, so we have been talking about ways to stay connected with the network and also next step so this speaks to that. I think in more than one way. I will not go into detail with all of them because I want to make sure that we have time for questions at the end. One of the first opportunities on here is emerging leaders map, we are working on putting it together for 2022 and if you click on the map you are able to see people that are trainees and graduates in all different states and you can see what their interests are.

People know usually when they apply to be on the map that people can reach out to them and follow-up and ask questions about what they are doing. There are scholarships that you can also apply for, leadership opportunities, this internship would be one example. There is also an AUCD leadership Academy, a trainee lay eyes on, we have worked with some of this before and that is great because training liaisons work together and learn from other liaisons what their centers are doing well and then they can bring it back to their centers and see if they can apply it to improve their programs. There are also councils you can join, you can be a counselor training representative, there are about five different ones. There is one further leadership advocacy, there is one focused on research and evaluation.

You can look at those and see which one you would be more interested in. All of these are linked so you are able to see the PowerPoint slides online where you registered and you can open up the PowerPoint's, download it and click on these links to visit each of these opportunities.

As for events there is webinars and workshops, webinars like this, maybe a little bit more professional development, they have webinars on all sorts of different topics. There is the AUCD conference which I'm going to touch on in a moment, disability policy seminar which is great if you are interested in policy. You think this is such a hard topic to learn about, attending this is great because you get to hear about people who are really passionate about the subject in specific areas and can explain it better.

There are workshops -- workgroups that you can join, there is self advocates in LEND, the

LEND family support network, the Spanish line which caucus which is a great group, I have attended that one before and definitely learn from each other.

And there is some opportunities to be on AUCD as well. There is the ark, the American Association on intellectual and elemental disability's, there are some self advocacy organizations and technical resource centers, and there are family organizations such as family voices and sibling leadership network. That's a good one too.

You can also look into your own professional associations. When I say that the first one that comes to my mind is I am a social worker and that is what I graduated from so there is the national Association of social workers, NASW and they have their own webinars and there are usually local chapters so you can find the state chapter that relates to your discipline.

And also local and state advisory boards, I am part of a couple of advisory boards and that is great because you meet people that are passionate about subjects and bring your ideas together on a certain project and how to improve those efforts.

This is what I said I was going to talk about in a moment, AUCD conference, we want to do a shout out and encourage you to submit proposals going on November 13-16. This will be in person in Washington DC. Our theme is going to be health equity: serving the whole person.

This is a chance to highlight your work. Proposals are due June 20. Definitely do not sell yourself short and think I've never done this before, I cannot apply, I recommend doing it. You get to meet other people and you probably have a lot more to share than you realize.

There is a link right there to the conference website where you can see updates on training relating activities. -- Related activities. We have some reflection questions here.

Here is a couple of examples. I don't want to limit it to just this if there is something that comes to your mind that you want to ask, you might just have time to click one or two. Does someone have a burning question that you want to ask maybe someone on the panel or maybe something that you want to share, how you will apply the concepts and skills mentioned today in your own life?

I'm going to open up my chat because of someone does not want to speak up you can put it in the chat and share it that way also. I am saying that we have people here that are part of their own advisory board in their area. Thank you for sharing that. We have a question. I will open it may be to the panels -- panelists if they want to answer it. What initially drove you to pursue a journey in advocacy? Thank you.

MINERVA ORTIZ:

For me like I said I am all about the ripples and is apparent I know that one of the biggest questions that I had and that other parents that I worked with have had is what happens when I'm gone. That is such a hard thing to think about.

The solution that we all come to and it is not just me like I said a lot of parents that I work with, we all come up with the same conclusion is, I just won't die. As long as I am alive I know that my child will have everything that they need.

That is an impossibility. So what is the next best thing? How do we change the world? How do we change our community? How do we prepare the community to be supportive for the needs of our kids? Especially with autism, we are always thinking about what skills does my child need, social skills, we are always thinking about things to do with the child for them to learn to navigate the world.

I say it has to be twofold, how do we prepare the world to navigate our children's needs? So that is always in the forefront of everything that I do. I would not have come to this job had it not been for my kids. That is my driving force. Now it is not just my kids, it is all of the kids. All of the individuals. All the adults that need that extra support. Not as a handout, not as a nice thing to do, I think it is a better world when we all support each other so how do we do that? That is my goal. How do we create that web of support so that all of us can have what we need and so that we as parents can say you know what, I have done a good job, and I can tap out and let my child be independent in this world that will have their back if they need any additional support.

TATIANA PERILLA:

Thank you. That was a really good question. I wish we had more time, we could do a webinar just hearing people's different answers to that question. Unfortunately we do not have more time. It is 2 o'clock in my state, not in your guises but we are at the end so I want to thank everyone for joining us. We would like to hear some feedback from you and there is a link right there for a survey where you can do just that and also scan the QR code.

Which also if you need to come back to find the link you can do it by looking for the PowerPoint slides on the website. So it will be there even after this moment right now. Thank you for joining us. I appreciate it.

MINERVA ORTIZ:

Thank you for the opportunity.

TATIANA PERILLA:

You can also find the link in the chat were meant -- where more and read shared it.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Thank you everyone, thank you to our executive director, as well as our panelists and again our fabulous interns, Tatiana and Ellie, and I do want to give a brief shoutout to our other intern who does audiology work, Meredith Braza who recently got her doctorate so again thank you everyone and have a wonderful Wednesday.