

## Webinar Attendee Handout

# Leveling the Playing Field: Supporting disabled students and early-career professionals through mentorship

A webinar presented by the APHA Disability Section Mentoring Program

*June 3, 2021*

Link to webinar recording, PowerPoint slides, & transcripts:

**Overview:** People with disabilities make up 25% of the US population and experience serious health disparities, however there are few training opportunities for those interested in disability-focused research and practice. Moreover, students and professionals with disabilities remain underrepresented in public health, rarely seeing themselves reflected in curricula or among faculty and supervisors. This webinar will explain why skilled mentorship is important for students and early career professionals (ECPs) with disabilities. It also provides recommendations to support the development of these mentor/mentee relationships by describing core disability inclusion concepts and strategies and demonstrating how these strategies can benefit those on both sides of the mentoring dynamic.

### Outline:

- **Introduction**—Bridgette Schram
- **Making the Case**— Meredith Williams & Hana Meshesha
- **Overview of the APHA Disability Section Mentoring Program**— Meredith Williams & Hana Meshesha
- **Core Topics**—Mentor/mentee duos
  - Identity & Intersectionality
    - Mentees: Cindy Petros & Syreeta Nolan
  - Disclosure of Disability Status/Discrimination
    - Mentee: Chloe Simpson
    - Mentor: Mike McKee
  - Accommodations/Asking for Help
    - Mentee: Chloe Simpson
    - Mentor: Courtney Fecske
  - Self-Determination/Alternative Paths and Timelines
    - Mentee: Meredith
    - Mentor: Dot Nary
  - Allyship/Co-instigator
    - Students: Syreeta\*
    - Mentor: Meg Traci
  - Resources
- **Q&A**
- **Wrap-Up/Thank You**—Bridgette Schram

## Key Take-A-Ways

### **Making the Case**

- Disabled people are a large and underrepresented population
- We bring diverse skills, strengths, and lived experience to research and practice

### **Identity & Intersectionality**

- Identity is individual & personal
- Disabled people are diverse on all dimensions
- Be ready and willing to learn from outside resources, along with your mentee

### **Disclosure of Disability Status & Discrimination**

- Disclosure is difficult and is an ongoing process unique to each individual
- Listen, validate, & support

### **Accommodations/Asking for Help**

- Formal accommodation processes are complex, time-consuming, and changing
- Providing accommodations for individuals can increase inclusivity for everyone

### **Self-Determination/Alternative Paths & Timelines**

- Disabled mentees are experts on what works best for them
- Learn to redefine successful paths, processes, & outcomes based on mentee values
- Join your mentee in flexible thinking, persistence, and creative problem solving

### **Allyship/Co-Conspirator**

- Actions speak louder than words
- Listen, build trust, lift, & connect

## Resources

### **Identity & Intersectionality**

- National Museum of African History & Culture
  - <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/social-identities-and-systems-oppression>
- Universal of British Columbia: Social Identity Worksheet
  - <http://timeandplace.ubc.ca/files/2014/06/Appendix-2.pdf>
- Forbes: How to Find Your Disability Community

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulrang/2021/05/31/how-to-find-your-disability-community/?sh=324fb3f910fe>
- Autistic Hoya: Ableist Words and Phrases to avoid
  - <https://www.autistichoya.com/p/ableist-words-and-terms-to-avoid.html?m=1>
- Sociologist for Women in Society: Factsheets Oppression without Bigots
  - [https://socwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/fact\\_3-2010-oppression.pdf](https://socwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/fact_3-2010-oppression.pdf)
- Intersectionality Wheel:
  - <https://medium.com/the-red-elephant-foundation/understanding-intersectionality-a1da46e2e0b2>

### Disclosure

- Pearson & Boskovich. (2019) Problematizing Disability Disclosure in Higher Education: Shifting Towards a Liberating Humanizing Intersectional Framework
  - <https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/6001/5187>
- Valle, Solis, Volpitta, & Connor. (2004) The Disability Closet: Teachers with Learning Disabilities Evaluate the Risks and Benefits of “Coming Out”
- Jackson, et al., 2003. "Having the right chemistry": a qualitative study of mentoring in academic medicine
  - [https://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2003/03000/Ageism\\_in\\_Medical\\_Students\\_Treatment.20.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Fulltext/2003/03000/Ageism_in_Medical_Students_Treatment.20.aspx)

### Accommodations

- A new decade for assessment: Embedding equity into assessment praxis. Montenegro, E., & Jankowski, N. A., January 2020.
  - <https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-COVID-Survey.pdf>
- Building More Inclusive Communities with Grading for Equity. Joe Feldman.
  - <https://www.nais.org/magazine/independent-school/summer-2019/grading-for-equity/>
- Grading for Equity: What it is, Why it matters, and How It Transforms Classrooms. Mark Boswell and Joe Feldman.
  - <https://youtu.be/bE4RmeuPT-w>

### Self-Determination

- Getzel, E.E., & Thoma, C.A. (2008). Experiences of college students with disabilities and the importance of self-determination in higher education settings. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 31(2), 77-84.
  - [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237305663\\_Experiences\\_of\\_College\\_Students\\_With\\_Disabilities\\_and\\_the\\_Importance\\_of\\_Self-Determination\\_in\\_Higher\\_Education\\_Settings](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237305663_Experiences_of_College_Students_With_Disabilities_and_the_Importance_of_Self-Determination_in_Higher_Education_Settings)

### Allyship & Co-conspirator

### Other

- Grigely, J. (2017). The neglected demographic: Faculty members with disabilities. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

- <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-neglected-demographic-faculty-members-with-disabilities/>.
- Meeks, L. M., & Jain, N. R. (2018). *Accessibility, inclusion, and action in medical education: Lived experiences of learners and physicians with disabilities*. Washington, DC: Association of American Medical Colleges.

## Presenters

### Students/Mentees



**Meredith Williams, MPH** is a PhD student in public health with a passion for promoting disability inclusion and mobilizing public health knowledge, frameworks, and strategies to meet the needs of the disability community. She has a background in patient and disability advocacy, firmly grounded in her own lived experience, and experience consulting, speaking, teaching, developing trainings, conducting research, and providing technical assistance.



**Hana Meshesha, MEd, MA** is a doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at the Department of Counseling, Phyllis J. Washington College of Education of the University of Montana. She holds an MA from The University of Montana in Counselor Education; a M.Ed. from Addis Ababa University in Special Needs Education, Ethiopia; and a B.A. from University of Gondar, Ethiopia, in Psychology. Hana currently works with Um's the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities and involves in several projects.



**Cindy Veronica Petros** (she/her/ella) is a second year MS occupational therapy student at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a WI-LEND Trainee and co-leader of Disability Rights Education and Mentoring (DREAM) chapter at UW-Milwaukee. Cindy advocates for Black and Brown families with children with disabilities and the admission and retention of students of underrepresented groups in higher education.



**Syreeta Nolan** is a disability justice advocate at University of California San Diego. She serves as Underrepresented Student Officer for the University of California Student Association and is the founder of JADE (Justice, Advocacy and Disability Education) as a holistic disabled justice platform focused on empowering disabled students, faculty, staff and alumni through community and support.



**Chloe Simpson, MS** is a Ph.D. student at West Virginia University in the College of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences with an adapted physical activity focus. Her research interests involve investigating general physical educators' self-efficacy beliefs in behavior management, 3D printed assistive technology, and collegiate level adapted sport opportunities.



**Bridgette Schram, MS** is a doctoral student in Public Health at Georgia State University and a graduate research assistant at The Center for Leadership in Disability where her research explores health disparities faced by people with disabilities, particularly examining how society constructs disabling environments that may influence access and participation in the social determinants of health. Schram is also interested in the development and evaluation of community-based programs that support inclusive participation.

## Mentors



**Dr. Courtney Fecske, PhD, CTRS** is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health in the Department of Health & Wellness Design at Indiana University-Bloomington. Dr. Fecske's research aims to promote empowerment, voice, and advocacy with an emphasis on respecting the lived experience through exploration of sport environments for individuals with disabilities and enhancement of evidence based practices.



**Mike McKee, MD, PhD** is a family physician with clinical and research expertise in disability health. As a deaf physician, he is especially interested in advocating for the rights of Deaf and hard of hearing patients to obtain equitable health care including accessible communication. His research focus includes health disparities for individuals with various disabilities, health information accessibility, health literacy, and telemedicine applications. Dr. McKee is on board of the Association of Medical Professionals with Hearing Losses(link is external) (AMPHL). He is also currently an appointed member of the Roundtable on Health Literacy of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.



**Dot Nary, PhD** is an assistant research professor at the Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas. Her research interests focus on community participation, health promotion, and advocacy training for people with disabilities; and on creating accessible communities for all. She has been active in leadership of the Disability Section of the American Public Health Association; served as the founding staff advisor for AbleHawks and Allies, the student group dedicated to raising disability awareness and increasing access at KU; and currently serves on the KU Faculty and Staff Council on Disability Inclusion.



**Meg Ann Traci, PhD** serves as Past Chair of the APHA Disability Section and is a Research Associate Professor at the University of Montana. Dr. Traci had the opportunity to train as a developmental psychologist at the time when public health began to shift its frameworks to improve health and participation with people with disability. As a result of these opportunities, Dr. Traci has nearly thirty years of experience working with the disability community to support this paradigm shift within public health and to coproduce actionable solutions with the disability community to advance social justice and health equity.