

Elizabeth Benevides

Hussman Institute for Autism

DIRECTOR, OUTREACH | 2015—PRESENT

Hussman Foundation

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, AUTISM PROGRAMS | 2012—PRESENT

Directs the outreach efforts of the Hussman Institute for Autism, oversees autism-related initiatives and grants for the Hussman Foundation, serves as policy and educational advocate for individuals and families affected by autism and related developmental disabilities, and presents numerous autism and disability-related trainings for educators, clinicians, law enforcement, first responders, parents, school systems, businesses, and community partners.

The vision of the Hussman Institute for Autism is to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families by advancing the understanding of the causes and neurological basis of autism; identifying potential long-term interventions; and creating a continuum of supports and resources to address immediate needs for research-based teaching methods, communication, inclusion, and independence.

CURRENT APPOINTMENTS

Autism Society of America

BOARD OF DIRECTORS | 2021-PRESENT

Maryland Department of Disabilities

APPOINTED MEMBER | ETHAN SAYLOR ALLIANCE FOR SELF-ADVOCATES AS EDUCATORS STEERING COMMITTEE | 2015—PRESENT

- Develop recommendations for law enforcement training on intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Ensure academy-level and in-service trainings meet the mandated training objectives of the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission
- Chair of the Curriculum Committee; recently revised Maryland's Model Policy for police training on intellectual and developmental disabilities

Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities

CHAIRPERSON | COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL | 2013—PRESENT

- Advise and support the center in meeting its responsibilities to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities across the lifespan

Kennedy Krieger Institute

**COMMITTEE MEMBER | TRAINING ADVISORY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
LEADERSHIP EDUCATION IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL AND RELATED DISABILITIES
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU | 2014—PRESENT**

- Advance the knowledge and skills of child health professionals to improve health care delivery systems for children with developmental disabilities

Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities

APPOINTED CHAIRPERSON | HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT | MARYLAND | 2013—2021

- Advise local government agencies in facilitating a seamless and effective transition for all Howard County students with disabilities from high school to adult life

Howard County Autism Society

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVOCATE | FORMER BOARD MEMBER AND PRESIDENT | 2008—PRESENT

- Provide one-to-one parent support, advocacy, and guidance on special education issues
- Previously served as longtime member of the Board of Directors and Board President
- Expanded services, partnership, and advocacy efforts to support more than 1,000 families with autism in the local community

Maryland Home and Community Based Services Waiver for Children with Autism Maryland State Department of Education

MEMBER | ADVISORY COUNCIL | 2016 - PRESENT

- Advocate on behalf of Maryland families receiving or awaiting Autism Waiver services
- Provide input on necessary improvements to the program
- Developed parent training on the program

Maryland Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities

MEMBER

- Advocate on behalf of Maryland students receiving special education services
- Protect the rights of students with disabilities; bring special education issues before the assistant state superintendent for special education

Superintendent's Advisory Council for Special Education Howard County Public School System

MEMBER

- Provide input on necessary system-wide improvements to the county school system's special education process
- Chair, Inclusive Schools Workgroup focused on advancing meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities

PRESENTATIONS AND TRAININGS | 2018-2021

- Understanding Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Law Enforcement Response. Crisis Intervention Team. Maryland Police & Corrections Training Commission; Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- Autism Training for Law Enforcement. Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and Law Enforcement. Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- Accommodating Co-Workers on the Autism Spectrum (co-presented with Zosia Zaks, M.Ed., Hussman Center for Adults with Autism). National Security Agency.
- Including Patrons with Autism: Considerations for Librarians. Howard County Public Library. Somerset County Library.
- Autism Awareness in the Community. Columbia Association, Howard County, Maryland.
- Autism Awareness and Understanding at the Y. Y of Central Maryland.
- Effective Camp Inclusion for Children with Autism: Companion Training. Department of Recreation and Parks, Howard County, Maryland.
- Autism and Special Education. Towson University.
- Special Education Tips for Working with “Passionate” Parents. Towson University.
- Autism Waiver Tips for Newly Enrolled Families. Maryland State Department of Education.
- Real Experts Talk about Autism: What People with Autism and Families Want Others to Know. Psychology Department. University of Maryland Baltimore County.
- Autism and Court Considerations. District Court. Howard County, Maryland.
- Perspectives on Autism: What Families Want Others to Know. Graduate School of Social Work. University of Maryland at Baltimore.
- Strengthening Parent and School Collaboration in IEP Development: Ensuring the Presumption of Competence. Embracing Autism Lecture Series. Hussman Institute for Autism.
- Diversity: It’s about Respecting All Students. Montessori School. Baltimore City.
- Special Education: Strengthening Parent-School Collaboration and Positive Advocacy. Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Perspectives on Autism: What Families Want Clinicians to Know. Kennedy Krieger Institute.
- Supporting People with Autism in Home and Community. Arc of Howard County, Maryland.
- Supporting Teen Residents with Autism. RICA (Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents), Baltimore, Maryland.
- Special Education: Extended School Year Services—Planning Ahead. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Effective Advocacy. Partners in Policymaking. Arc of Maryland.
- Ins and Outs of High School for Special Education Students. Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Building the Capacity of Paraprofessionals. Maryland State Department of Education
- Parental Consent and the IEP Process. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Supporting Patients with Autism. University of Maryland School of Dentistry.
- Supporting Patients with Autism. Anne Arundel Medical Center, Pediatric Emergency Room.
- Disability and Faith Communities. Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities.

- Special Education during the COVID19 Pandemic. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Homeschooling v. Crisis Schooling. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Supporting College Students with Autism. Western Connecticut State University.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Bachelor of Arts, English, University of Maryland Baltimore County
- Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Certified Special Education Advocate