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**Speaker Bios**

**Massachusetts Act Early Spring 2016 State Team Summit Meeting**

***Building Capacity as an Early Identification Learning Community***

**April 29, 2016**

**Mary Andrianopoulos, PhD**

*University of Massachusetts Amherst, Department of Communication Disorders*

Dr. Andrianopoulos’ research is focused on better understanding the motor mechanisms of verbal communication that influence pitch, vocal quality and prosody in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). She has an active graduate training program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education; to investigate evidence based practice of various intervention models, including the efficacy of using a Telehealth service delivery platform, to improve outcomes in students with ASD. Dr. Andrianopoulos serves on the MA Act Early State Team Steering Committee.

**Kathleen Braden, MD**

*UMass Medical School-E.K. Shriver Center*

Dr. Kathleen (“Kass”) Braden is the past director of the Shriver Center LEND program and is currently retired and working at the Museum of Fine Arts as a docent to assist people with disabilities access the museum’s various artwork. Dr. Braden is one of the authors of the Considering Culture curriculum as well as a long-standing member of the Massachusetts Act Early Steering Committee. Her areas of expertise include working internationally on programs targeted to identifying and assisting children with or at risk for developmental disabilities.

**Oanh Thi Thu Bui, MHA, MPA**

*Federation for Children with Special Needs*

Oanh Bui is originally from Vietnam and the parent of a child with multi-disability. She is a Health Educator and Outreach Specialist at the Federation for Children with Special needs. Being a cultural broker herself, she greatly understands the obstacles families face and has a great interest in working with different stakeholders to improve service access for culturally linguistically diverse families. She is working on establishing a network of cultural brokers and qualified bilingual professionals to support families from culturally linguistically diverse communities. She is a Massachusetts Act Early Steering Committee member and was a 2009 Shriver Center LEND fellow.

**Roula Choueiri, MD**

*UMass Medical School, Department of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics*

Roula Choueiri, MD is a Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Pediatrician and Chief of the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at UMass Medical School in Worcester. An important priority in her clinical work is the early identification and care of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) both in academic and community settings with an increasingly focus on under-served and under-represented minorities. She is currently developing a new interactive Level 2 Autism screening test in toddlers, the Rapid Interactive Screening test in Toddlers (RITA-T). Dr. Choueiri serves on the MA Act Early State Team Steering Committee.

**Morgan Crossman, PhD, MA**

*Boston Children's Hospital, Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience*

Morgan Crossman, PhD is a Clinical Research Program Manager at the Boston Children's Hospital, Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience under the direction of Dr. Charles A. Nelson, Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School. She recently received her PhD in Social Policy from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. Dr. Crossman serves on the MA Act Early State Team Steering Committee and is a 2011 graduate of the ICI/UMass Boston/Children’s Hospital LEND program.

**Laura Edwards, PhD**

*Boston Children's Hospital, Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience*

Laura Edwards, PhD is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience, Boston Children's Hospital, under the direction of Dr. Charles A. Nelson, Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School. She recently graduated from Harvard University with a PhD in Human Development and Education.

**Ivys Fernandez-Pastrana, Esq.**

*Boston University/Boston Medical Center*

Ivys Fernández-Pastrana JD is originally a lawyer from Puerto Rico and primarily serves families from Hispanic backgrounds at Boston Medical Center where for the past 5 years as a family navigator, she has assisted families whose children have been diagnosed with autism receive needed health care, education and resources by helping them "navigate" these systems. She is currently working on "Project EARLY" at BMC with families whose children have been referred for a developmental assessment to evaluate developmental concerns. She is a Massachusetts Act Early Steering Committee member and was a 2013 Shriver Center LEND fellow.

**Elaine Gabovitch, MPA**

*UMass Medical School – E.K. Shriver Center*

Elaine Gabovitch is the Center for Disease Control & Prevention’s (CDC) Ambassador to Massachusetts for the national “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” program and the Massachusetts Act Early State Team Leader. She serves as Director of Family & Community Partnerships at the UMass Medical School-Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, as an Instructor in the UMMS Department of Family Medicine & Community Health, and as Family Faculty in the Shriver Center’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) programs. She is a 2006 graduate of the Shriver Center LEND program and the parent of a young adult son with ASD.

**Shirley Huang, MS, CCC-SLP**

*Architects for Learning*

Shirley Huang is a clinically certified pediatric speech-language pathologist who works at Architects for Learning, a private practice in Needham, Massachusetts. Her clinical experience spans across developmental, learning, articulation, language, reading and writing disorders. She is a native Cantonese speaker and has extensive experience conducting bilingual speech-language evaluations and therapy. She is also a 2015 graduate of the Shriver Center LEND program.

**Cora Mukerji (PhD candidate)**

*Boston Children's Hospital, Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience*

Cora Mukerji is a third-year doctoral candidate in the Clinical Science Program at Harvard University. She currently works in the Laboratories of Cognitive Neuroscience at Boston Children's Hospital under the direction of Dr. Charles A. Nelson, Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience at Harvard Medical School.

**Tere Ramos, Esq.**

*Massachusetts Law Reform Institute*

Tere Ramos is an attorney at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute where she provides legal representation and advocacy training to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients to address widespread denial of education and civil rights. Formerly, she was an attorney at the Disability Law Center focusing on special education issues related to the Hispanic community across Massachusetts and was the executive director of Special Education Advocates, a special education and disability advocacy focused on helping underserved LEP communities. She is currently the Chair of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education Advisory Council, a board member of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and was appointed by Gov. Deval Patrick to the Board of Registration of Social Workers. She is a 2011 graduate of the Shriver Center LEND program and the parent of a daughter with ASD.

**Jenna Sandler, MPH**

*Boston University/Boston Medical Center*

Jenna Sandler, MPH has a background in public health, with a particular interest in the mental health of caregivers of children with special health care needs. Over the past 6 years, she has worked on various research projects at Boston University Medical Center, including studies focused on the prevention of maternal depression, a collaborative care system for children with ADHD, and family navigation for children with ASD. She is currently managing “Project EARLY” at Boston University, and overseeing the implementation of the project at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and Yale University.

**Jacqueline Williams-Hines**

*No Small Victories*

Jacqueline Williams-Hines is the published author of the No Small Victories Autism Awareness Children's Book Series. She is the founder of No Small Victories an autism awareness initiative focusing on diagnostic disparities in the African American population. She is also the radio show host of NSV Online Radio on the W4WN network. She is the parent of a young adult son with ASD.