Keynote Speaker: Stephen Shore, Ph.D.
Life On and Slightly to the Right of The Autism Spectrum

26 Breakout Sessions:
- RuthAnn Lobo: A Matter of the Heart
- Multiple Intelligences
- Learning Differences . . . and more

Conference on Serving Youth and Adults with Learning Disabilities

17th Annual

April 30, 2009  •  Marriott Hotel  •  Farmington, CT

Co-Sponsors:  CREC  Capitol Region Education Council

Participating Sponsors:  State of Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Connecticut Department of Labor
Connect-Able (Connecticut Department of Social Services)
Connecticut Recovery Employment Consultation Services (C-RECS)
State of Connecticut Board of Education and Services for the Blind

Promoter:  Learning Disabilities Association
Stephen Shore, Ed.D., was nonverbal until age four and had been recommended for institutionalization. With a supportive family, early interventions and his own perseverance, he completed his doctoral work on matching best practice to needs of people on the autism spectrum. Dr. Shore is now on the faculty at Adelphi University teaching courses in special education and autism. He is an internationally renowned consultant, speaker, and author on lifespan issues pertinent to education, relationships, employment, advocacy and disclosure as discussed in his numerous publications.

Dr. Shore also serves on the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee for the Board of Directors for Asperger’s Association of New England, the Autism Society of America and several other autism related organizations. He and his wife work out of their home in the Boston area to teach music to individuals on the spectrum.

Conference Goals
Share current knowledge and strategies in reading and writing, transitional and personal areas with teachers, counselors, and parents of ESL and basic skills learners, or individuals who have:

☐ ADHD  ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorders
☐ Dyslexia  ☐ Learning Disabilities

Who Should Attend
Those in New England interested in aligning education with the workforce skills needed now and in the future:

☐ Special educational professionals (K-12)
☐ Adult education teachers  ☐ Workforce practitioners
☐ Employers
☐ Counselors: K-12, College, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Board of Education and Services for the Blind, Departments of Corrections, Labor, Social Services
☐ Parents, relatives, friends of individuals with disabilities

Exhibitors
☐ Connecticut Association of Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (CACLD)
☐ Educational Activities Software  ☐ Longman ESL
☐ Silver Lining Technologies  ☐ Department of Labor
☐ C-RECS

Keynote Speaker: Stephen Shore, Ed.D.
Life On and Slightly to the Right Of The Autism Spectrum
1A MUSIC THERAPY AND FUNCTIONAL ADAPTATION
This session focuses on generally describing functional adaptation – how the brain and body decide to resolve a problem disturbing its appropriate function – and the work of music therapy treatments to foster positive changes in any diagnosis, including autism, Down Syndrome, learning disabilities, pain, stress, anxiety, etc. Participants will attain a basic understanding of general physiologic function in diagnosed populations, the elements of music, and some music therapy techniques. Attendees will participate in experiential activities. Case study videos may be presented (time permitting).

*Donna Swanson,* MSN, CS, APRN

_Dorita Berger_ is a concert pianist, board certified music therapist and licensed creative arts therapist. Ms. Berger is an international lecturer/consultant on music in human adaptation and runs The Music Therapy Clinic in Norwalk. Her published books include *Music Therapy, Sensory Integration, and the Autistic Child*.

**1B SPEECH/LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD): AN OVERVIEW AND NEW FINDINGS**

In this session, participants will be introduced to basic issues in speech/language development in children with ASD. An overview of the current research on speech and language in children affected with ASD, as well as new evidence in this area and implications for practice, will be presented.

*Julia Irwin, Ph.D.*, received her Ph.D. in Child and Developmental Psychology from the University of Connecticut and completed her postdoctoral work at the Yale Child Study Center in New Haven. Dr. Irwin is currently a senior research scientist at Haskins Laboratories in New Haven and serves on the faculty at Southern Connecticut State University.

**1C THE SPECTRUM UNPLUGGED**

A panel of experts who are on the autistic spectrum will open their hearts about their journey. Bright and left of center, they speak of how their experiences have impacted their lives at home, in school and in their communities. Hear firsthand about their experiences, how they have suffered, but have learned to “embrace” their peculiarities and to channel them. Learn the importance of relationships, crisis interventions and strategies with this unique population.

*Donna Swanson, MSN, CS, APRN* has been involved with children and adolescents since 1978. At the Institute of Living, she helped start the Children’s Day Treatment Center and is the founder of the FOCUS Alternative Learning Center in Canton.

**1D YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES: WHAT THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) CAN TELL YOU**

Youth with disabilities are accessing CT Works Career Centers and Workforce Development Training with more frequency. Some who had received special education services in high school may be accessing these services as dropouts; others may be seeking supplemental services as part of their transition planning. This session will help employment and training personnel better understand:

- the transition planning process in CT high schools
- what type of information can be found in students’ IEPs and in summary of performance documents to help the planning process
- how to access information necessary to assist youth with disabilities develop a successful career path.

*Patricia Anderson, Ph.D.*, educational psychology/special education, associate educational consultant/transition coordinator, State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.

Dr. Anderson has over 30 years experience with adolescents and adults with learning disabilities and has served on the advisory board for the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center in Washington, D.C.

**1E CHAPTER 31: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROCESS/OVERVIEW OF OFFICE FOR VETERANS WORKFORCE/INCARCERATED VETERANS’ TRANSITION**

This three-person panel will first provide with an understanding of the clientele that the Department of Veterans Affairs (Newington) serves. The panel will also provide information in the following areas:

- five tracks to employment
- orientation
- testing
- eligibility
- entitlement
- counseling services
- training services
- financial services
- medical services
- employment services
- other VA services
- learning disabilities.

*Alan Despins* has worked for 18 years with the State of Connecticut Department of Labor and is currently the disabled veterans outreach program specialist at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Despins served as a combat medic in Vietnam and has worked for 11 years as a research assistant at UCONN Medical Center.

_Terrance Brennan* has been with the Connecticut Department of Labor for 20 years and served as a veteran of the U.S. Naval Submarine Service during the Vietnam Era. Mr. Brennan is director of the CT DOL Office for Veterans Workforce Development and supervises the veterans’ workforce program.

_Andy James* has worked with the U.S. Air Force for six years and for the Department of Labor for 19 years. Mr. James currently works as a career development specialist and has worked with at risk youth through the Job Corps. His wife served in the U.S. Army as a combat medic in Iraq during the Gulf War.
1F MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES: HOW THE BRAIN LEARNS: ‘LOOKING THROUGH THE EYES OF THE LEARNER’

In this session, participants will learn about the most recent brain research and its practical application to teaching and learning with youth and adults with learning disabilities. The focus will be on recent research concerning the development of the brain, primacy recency effect, chunking and memory, and the power of feedback. Developing a brain compatible classroom or learning environment will be addressed.

Suzi D’Annolfo, Ph.D., has served for 38 years in public schools in West Hartford, Farmington, Litchfield, CREC, and Newington in a variety of teaching and administrative roles. Her many accomplishments include serving as principal for the CREC Metropolitan Learning Center Interdistrict Magnet School for Global and International Studies at which time the school received many prestigious awards. Dr. D’Annolfo is now a full time faculty member in the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Hartford.

1G WELCOME TO THE U.S.A. AND HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

Learn about a broad range of free resources available at Connecticut public libraries designed to help your immigrant students and clients access immigration information, improve their English, achieve U.S. citizenship, and become civically engaged. The presentation will include an overview of the USCIS web site, highlights of library programs across the state, and insights to innovative partnerships between adult education providers and libraries.

Homa Naficy is a native of Iran and earned her MLS from Rutgers University. She was hired by Hartford Public Library to design and direct a program for Hartford’s immigrants and refugees called The American Place, which has developed into a full complement of services for Hartford’s new arrivals and has received national recognition. Ms. Naficy has been the recipient of the Connecticut Immigrant of the Year Award and was interviewed on the popular WNPR show “Where We Live.”

1H HELP! WHAT DOES ONE DO?

The emotion of anger is present within us when we are born. What we do with anger affects us throughout our lifespan. How we experience it inwardly and how we express it outwardly impact inner contentment. Back by popular demand, Dr. Pat Barry’s workshop teaches you new perspectives to understand and deal with this powerful emotion.

Pat Barry, Ph.D., is a Yale-trained psychotherapist and author of Mental Health and Mental Illness and Psychosocial Aspects of Physical Illness.

2A A MATTER OF THE HEART

Teaching requires respect for others and ourselves. It blossoms with recognition of students and teachers alike. It thrives with renewal of self. Hear one seasoned educator’s perspective on respect, self-reflection and renewal.

RuthAnn Lobo has worked in the Granby Public Schools as a teacher and school counselor for over 30 years. She is a former Connecticut Teacher of the Year finalist, breast cancer survivor, author, and speaker. Ms. Lobo has been featured in numerous magazines including “O” the OPRAH magazine and in the New York Times, appeared on television and has been recognized for her work as an advocate for equity in education.

2B HIP HOP AND THERAPY: A JOURNEY INTO POSSIBILITY

During this workshop Harvey Gardner Moore will articulate his hip hop curriculum’s (HHC) past successes – after school programs, day school lunch period alternatives, classical, clinical support groups, populations with both behavioral and learning disabilities, and his current work with hip hop and autism. In addition, he will share his vision of how the therapist and educator in the near future will become a singular entity as we move towards a technological “singularity” (as articulated by Ray Kurzweil author of The Singularity is Near).

Harvey Gardner Moore is a 2000 graduate of the Yale School of Drama and has become actively involved in hip hop, creating his hip hop curriculum (HCC). His is also currently involved with work on autism and behavioral issues such as ADD/ADHD.

2C PLEASE, COME CHAT WITH US – DISCOVER OUR CORE!

Four young adults on the autism spectrum from the Focus Alternative Learning Center will each have a small group of participants with whom they will discuss their challenges and insights. They are truly a joy – bring on your questions.

Donna Swanson, MSN, CS, APRN has been involved with children and adolescents since 1978. At the Institute of Living, she helped start the Children’s Day Treatment Center and is the founder of the FOCUS Alternative Learning Center in Canton.
2D READING COMPREHENSION AT THE SENTENCE LEVEL

While attempting to analyze the reading comprehension problems of our students, we rarely consider that they may not be understanding text at the sentence level. This workshop will explore various sentence structures and the words that are used in and between sentences that cause confusion. Lessons and activities to help students with sentence level comprehension will be presented.

Wendy North has worked in public and private schools teaching language arts for 26 years. Ms. North has a master’s degree in special education and is currently a literacy specialist working at Haskins Laboratories, an independent research facility affiliated with Yale University.

2E DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING DIFFERENCES ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN

This session will benefit educators of students of first and second language acquisition. It will focus on neurobiological changes in learning from childhood through the phases of adulthood. Participants will discuss brain development, critical periods for language learning, neuro-maturation, executive function and variability in learning.

Nicholas Montano, M.A., assistant principal, New Haven Adult and Continuing Education. Mr. Montano has done over 30 years of research in the study of written expression disorders, including development and breakdown of writing. He has also presented locally and nationally in medicine, psychology, counseling, education and forensics.

2F CONNECTABILITY: ATTITUDE . . . IT’S EVERYTHING . . . PICK A GOOD ONE!

This session will focus on success stories of individuals with various disabilities who are achieving their career potential. A panel of four or five individuals will share their employment experiences and how they were able to overcome their barriers in reaching their goals. An overview on the Connect-Abilities initiative will be included.

Amy Porter is the project director of Connect-Ability, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Social Services, which focuses on systems change activities to better support employment and independent living needs of individuals with disabilities. Ms. Porter has worked in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program for over 15 years and has served on national committees addressing employment barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Kerri Fradette is a public relations consultant involved in marketing the Connect-Ability initiative. Ms. Fradette facilitates the web site Workgroup offering information and education to people with disabilities, the public and employers of the possibilities for full participation of people with disabilities in the workforce. She has held various state positions for the past 15 years.

2G USING NUTRITION AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS TO TREAT DEVELOPMENTAL AND LEARNING DELAYS

This session will explain and explore how nutritional deficits, whether through poor intake or poor digestion can impair behavior and learning, and how optimizing nutrition can improve the symptoms of autism, ADD/ADHD and learning delays. Participants will learn common causes, signs and symptoms of undernutrition and how to utilize diet and nutritional supplementation to repair and restore gut and brain health. Techniques for choosing the right diet and supplements will be discussed.

Vicki Koblinger, M.S., is a registered dietitian who specializes in using integrative therapies to treat chronic conditions such as ADHD, autism, and developmental delays, as well as many medical conditions. She has been in practice for 14 years and is an expert in the use of special diets such as gluten and casein free, specific carbohydrate diet and low oxalate diet to improve health and cognitive function.

2H THE NEUROBIOLOGY OF READING

In this session participants will be introduced to the current research on underlying neurobiological differences between good and poor readers. An overview of the basic issues of brain-based research and reading in children will be presented along with an overview of recent and notable findings.

Julia Irwin, Ph.D., received her Ph.D. in Child and Developmental Psychology from the University of Connecticut and completed her postdoctoral work at the Yale Child Study Center in New Haven. Dr. Irwin is currently a senior research scientist at Haskins Laboratories in New Haven and serves on the faculty at Southern Connecticut State University.

2I OUT OF PRISON…AND HOW DOES THAT JOB HAPPEN?

This session will provide participants with an overview of the issues facing individuals with criminal conviction histories as they seek employment. Participants will obtain an understanding of the legal and illegal barriers job seekers face. Learn strategies for engaging and motivating resistant job seekers, particularly those with no job history. Hear techniques for resumes and interviewing that explain those employment gaps.

Dan Salemson works for Workforce Professionals Training Institute in New York and has a strong interest in issues surrounding criminal justice and welfare reform. Prior to this, Mr. Salemson worked for a joint venture of the New York State Unified Court System and the non-profit Center for Court Innovation, where he oversaw job training and placement for ex-offenders and recovering substance abusers. He has also performed data analysis around welfare reform issues.
3A CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES THROUGH FILM AND LITERATURE
This session will focus on the use of three books and their beautiful accompanying films in the adult ESL classroom. The teaching of *The Miracle Worker*, *The Namesake* and *The Freedom Writers* facilitates ESL students’ acquisition of language as well as appreciation of cultural, ethnic and learning differences. Practical exercises and games for teaching vocabulary from these works will be demonstrated as well as other creative activities. Short excerpts from these films will be shown along with a viewing guide to stimulate discussion.

Gina Milano has been teaching for 25 years at several universities including Hunter College. Ms. Milano has directed an ESL camp program in Switzerland and has produced the video “I Feel” to address learning differences. Gina has a son on the autism spectrum.

3B PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH AUTISM AND OTHER DISABILITIES IN EDUCATION
This presentation examines the development and use of educational accommodations as extensions of good teaching practice. For example, a student with special needs in a regular education choral class who is unable to stand still and sing can be afforded another way of meaningfully participating in the choir performance. Attendees will come away with easy to implement, practical solutions for including children with autism and other special needs into the regular education experience.

Stephen Shore, Ph.D. (see page 2 for information on Dr. Shore)

3C DIFFERENTIATION: A VERTICAL TEAM MATH APPROACH
This workshop is designed to provide innovative “hands-on” strategies for all teachers to foster success in the math class. The session seeks to ensure that teachers not only meet the needs of their students but provide the strategies that will maximize student potential. The use of math graphic organizers will provide the teacher with instructional strategies along with pre and post assessment alternatives. Participants will review a geometry activity using the vertical team model.

Marrianne Cavanaugh is currently Mathematics Department head for grades 7-12 in the East Hartford Public School System. Her numerous awards and activities include: Connecticut Teacher of the Year, Glastonbury Teacher of the Year, and the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Ms. Cavanaugh has presented over 65 workshops at the national, regional and state levels on topics ranging from spatial visualization to interdisciplinary activities.

3D SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED READING RESEARCH AND STRATEGIES
Returned by popular demand. Many myths exist on how we learn to read. Findings from scientifically-based reading research (SBRR) will be discussed. SBRR has identified components that are critical and essential for effective reading programs. A brief description of each component, in addition to references for increasing teacher knowledge on how each component develops will be included. Strategies and/or techniques for each component will also be discussed. Teachers can learn best practices based on the research.

Wendy North has worked in public and private schools teaching language arts for 26 years. Ms. North has a master’s degree in special education and is currently a literacy specialist working at Haskins Laboratories, an independent research facility affiliated with Yale University.

3E BEHIND THE SCENES OF “DISLECKSIA: THE MOVIE”: MY STORY
Another requested return, this session will focus on why I, Harvey Hubbell V, had to make “Dislecksia: The Movie” and what I hope the film will do for the dyslexic world. The session will explore my experiences with the top minds in the dyslexic field, my school experience and other stories I learned from fellow dyslexics. During the session parts of “Dislecksia: The Movie: will be screened.

Harvey Hubbel, V is an itinerant filmmaker who has shot from the high-rise roofs of Warsaw to the banana boats of Peru. Mr. Hubbel’s documentaries have won more than 50 awards, including four Emmys. He has worked on feature films, including “Mr. Deeds,” and was recently appointed chairman of the film committee for the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

3F THE JOURNEY FROM INCARCERATION TO EMPLOYMENT
This session will explore the issues facing ex-offenders as they attempt to re-enter the workforce. You will hear the compelling story of a person who has successfully transitioned from incarceration to employment. You will also hear the perspective of corrections officials on this issue as well as CtWorks professionals who assist ex-offenders in preparing them to return to work. A high profile employer with a unique track record of hiring ex-offenders will share their experiences. This session is appropriate for anyone who works with ex-offenders including adult education providers and other educators.

A diverse panel of experts representing the correctional system, the workforce development community, the employer community-and an ex-offender with an inspiring success story round out this discussion about an ex-offender’s journey from incarceration to employment.
3G ART THERAPY TECHNIQUES WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

This session will focus on the use of art materials and art directives to promote positive self-esteem and independence for people with learning disabilities. Participants will be introduced to developmental milestones achieved in art and how developmental delays can be assessed through artwork. They will also be introduced to techniques to overcome resistance to art production, enhance communication using graphic imagery, and help client actively contribute to treatment goals. Participants will be provided with a PowerPoint presentation with examples of clients’ artwork and case studies.

Margaret McGovern is a registered board certified art therapist and licensed professional counselor with a practice in Hamden. Ms. McGovern uses art therapy to empower her clients and encourage self-awareness and personal growth. She also works at the Village for Children and Families in South Hartford with children and adolescents. Previously, she worked for the psychiatric department at Bridgeport Hospital with older adults, adolescents and adults with mental illness.

3H IT CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE! DISABILITY DISCLOSURE IN EMPLOYMENT: APPLICATION, INTERVIEW AND AT WORK

This workshop will assist in making more informed decisions regarding disability disclosure in employment situations. This is a very personal decision based on the individual situation and/or the employment setting and the need for accommodations. Session will include:

- The need to disclose and when
- What information you need to provide
- How disclosing your disability could improve your employment outcome
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Connecticut State Fair Employment Practices Act
- Case studies
- Case law

Suzanne Liquerman serves as the project director and is lead disability program navigator for the Disability Program Navigator Initiative. Previously, she served as the disability employment program manager and ADA coordinator at the Department of Administrative Services for 10 years. Ms. Liquerman also served as the state director for the Connecticut High School/High Tech Program for youth and young adults with disabilities.

Attorney Gary Phelan has represented employment in all aspects of employment law since 1989. He is the co-author of Disability Discrimination in the Workplace which is one of the leading treatises on disability law. Mr. Phelan has written and lectured on a wide range of employment-related topics. He also served as an adjunct professor for several years at the Quinnipiac University School of Law and has been selected by peer review for The Best Lawyers in America.

3I AN OVERVIEW OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

Participants will receive a brief history of supported employment and supported education. Hear an overview of early mental health supported employment and supported education principles and strategies. Participants will explore some techniques useful in individual one-to-one supportive services and receive some general information concerning accommodation strategies for some common Axis I mental health diagnoses. Individual case examples will be given.

Sharon Wall, MS, CRC, has more than 20 years of experience with adolescent and adult populations with mental illness, acquired brain injury/traumatic brain injury, behavioral issues, and/or physical disabilities. Ms. Wall now functions as the statewide services employment/education trainer providing a range of customized presentations and trainings for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.
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<td><strong>10:45 a.m. – Noon</strong></td>
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| **1A** Music Therapy and Functional Adaptation  
  Dorita Berger | **2A** A Matter of the Heart  
  RuthAnn Lobo | **3A** Celebrating Differences Through Film and Literature  
  Gina Milano |
| **1B** Speech/Language Development in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder  
  Julia Irwin, Ph.D. | **2B** Hip Hop and Therapy: A Journey Into Possibility  
  Evelyn Russo, Ph.D. | **3B** Promoting Social Inclusion of People With Autism and Other Disabilities in Education  
  Stephen Shore, Ph.D. |
| **1C** The Spectrum Unplugged  
  Donna Swanson | **2C** Please, Come Chat With Us. Discover Our Core!  
  Donna Swanson | **3C** Differentiation: A Vertical Team Math Approach  
  Marrianne Cavanaugh |
| **1D** Youth With Disabilities: What the Individual Education Program Can Tell You  
  Patricia Anderson, Ph.D. | **2D** Reading Comprehension at the Sentence Level  
  Wendy North | **3D** Scientifically-Based Reading Research and Strategies  
  Wendy North |
| **1E** Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Process Overview of Office for Veterans Workforce Incarcerated Veterans Transition  
  Alan Despins  
  Terrance Brennan  
  Andy James | **2E** Developmental Learning Differences Across The Life Span  
  Nicholas Montano | **3E** Behind the Scenes of “Dislecksia: The Movie”: My Story  
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| **1F** Multiple Intelligences: How The Brain Learns  
  Suzi D’Annolfo, Ph.D. | **2F** Connectability: Attitude, It’s Everything Pick A Good One!  
  Amy Porter  
  Kerri Fradette | **3F** The Journey From Incarceration to Employment Panel Presentation |
| **1G** Welcome To The U.S.A. and How May I Help You?  
  Homa Naficy | **2G** Using Nutrition and Dietary Supplements to Treat Developmental and Learning Delays  
  Vicki Kobliner | **3G** Art Therapy Techniques With People With Learning Disabilities  
  Margaret McGovern |
| **1H** Help! What Does One Do?  
  Pat Barry, Ph.D. | **2H** The Neurobiology of Reading  
  Julia Irwin | **3H** It Can Make All the Difference! Disability Disclosure In Employment: Application, Interview and at Work  
  Suzanne Liquerman  
  Attorney Gary Phelan |
| Noon – 1:00 p.m. Lunch, Networking and Exhibits | Noon – 1:00 p.m. Lunch, Networking and Exhibits | Noon – 1:00 p.m. Lunch, Networking and Exhibits |
| **3I** An Overview of Supported Employment and Supported Education for People with Psychiatric Disabilities  
  Sharon Wall | | |