



Arizona's 2023 IDEA Conference

Creating Connections and Strengthening Systems



Join us from August 21–23, 2023 at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge in Phoenix. Check out this highlight of national speakers and exciting topics for this year's conference.

Keynote Speakers:

Haben Girma

The first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, Haben Girma is a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. President Obama named her a White House Champion of Change. She received the Helen Keller Achievement Award, a spot on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list, and TIME100 Talks. President Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Chancellor Angela Merkel have all honored Haben. Haben believes that disability is an opportunity for innovation, and she teaches organizations the importance of choosing inclusion. The New York Times, Oprah Magazine, and TODAY Show featured her memoir, *Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*.



Art Cernosia

Art Cernosia is an attorney and an education consultant from Williston, Vermont. Art previously worked as a teacher, an Assistant Attorney General assigned to the Vermont Department of Education, a practicing attorney, and a consultant with a national special education technical assistance center.

He was associated with the University of Vermont's Education Law Institute for over 30 years, where he taught and provided legal workshops. He also volunteered as a surrogate parent for students with disabilities who were placed in juvenile detention facilities.

He provides training, consultation, and other technical assistance services pertaining to special education legal issues to state and local education agencies and advocacy organizations throughout the nation.



Mickey Rowe

As an autistic and legally blind person, it was always made clear to Mickey the many things he was incapable of doing. But Mickey did them all anyway—and he succeeded because of, not despite, his autism.

He became the first autistic actor to play the lead role in the play *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, landed the title role in the play *Amadeus*, co-created the theatre/philanthropy company Arts on the Waterfront, and founded the National Disability Theatre.

Mickey faced untold obstacles along the way, but his story ends in triumph.

Mickey inspires all people—autistic and non-autistic alike—that the things that make us different are often our biggest strengths.

Mickey has been featured in the New York Times, New York Times Magazine, the TODAY show, PBS, Vogue, Playbill, NPR, CNN, Wall Street Journal, HuffPost, Forbes, and on Smarter in Seconds. He has been a keynote speaker at organizations including the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, The Kennedy Center, Yale University, Columbia University, CUNY, Disability Rights Washington, The Gershwin Theatre on Broadway, and the DAC of the South Korean government, and more.

Mickey was the founding Artistic Director of the National Disability Theatre, working in partnership with Tony Award-winning companies such as La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago.



Exciting Topics:

This year's conference will feature numerous professional learning opportunities, including IDEA legal issues, instructional practices, national trends and hot topics, special education compliance, preschool and secondary transition, and content for related service providers.

Learn with experts from around Arizona:

- Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services units
- Other Arizona Department of Education teams
- Agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Raising Special Kids, Diverse Ability Incorporated, Sonoran UCEDD, Arizona school districts, and more
- Session tracks for youths/young adults with disabilities and family members/caregivers
- Community partners and vendors/exhibitors tables

 **A full conference agenda will be posted online during the summer.**

Stay up-to-date on the [IDEA Conference website](#) for announcements about additional national speakers and exciting events. Please [send questions to the IDEA Conference inbox](#).