



# 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 premier speakers and exciting spotlights.

### Premier Speakers:

#### Carol Kosnitsky

Carol Kosnitsky is the nationally recognized and popular author of *IEP Goals That Make a Difference: An Administrator's Guide to Improving the Process* (2018, LRP Publications). This book is used widely by teachers as well as administrators. As a distinguished special education consultant with more than 35 years in the field, Carol provides consultation and professional development services across the country, traveling from her home base in New England.



Her work focuses on improving outcomes for students with disabilities through increased access to the general education curriculum.

She is particularly sought after for her expertise regarding the development of relevant and measurable IEPs, the aligning of IEPs with the Common Core, and the collaboration between general and special education to improve education for all students. Ms. Kosnitsky was a special education director for 20 years in New Hampshire, served as President of the New Hampshire Association for Special Education Administrators, and developed the New Hampshire Academy for Special Education Directors.

#### Mike Marotta

Mike is a RESNA Certified Assistive Technology Professional and the 2017 ISTE Inclusive Learning Network Outstanding Educator. Mike is a nationally and internationally recognized presenter providing practical training to professionals interested in assistive and inclusive technology. In addition, Mike is an adjunct professor at Ramapo College of New Jersey (NJ) teaching Master's-level educators in Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Learning.



Mike is the Director of the Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center and serves on both the CAST Accessible Educational Materials and Center on Inclusive Technology and Education Systems (CITES) Advisory Boards. Mike is also the founder of EdcampAccess NJ and co-moderator of the weekly #ATchat Twitter chat. Mike is one of the co-authors of the ISTE book *Inclusive Learning 365: Edtech Strategies for Every Day of the Year*. For details, [visit the Inclusion 365 website](#).

#### Dr. Joan Kester

Dr. Joan Kester, is an Assistant Professor of Special Education and Disability Studies at the George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development. She is the Program Director of the Interdisciplinary Secondary Transition Program, where scholars from across the country learn evidence-based secondary transition practices and become leaders in the field. Her primary research has been through action research, where youth, families, and stakeholders are engaged in action planning to improve transition practices. As a result of this research, her team is now implementing the [Transition Discoveries](#) framework and action planning process across Pennsylvania. She is the PI of the Transition Quality Empowerment Project, funded by the PA Development Disabilities Council. The purpose of this project is to collaborate with schools and communities in a rural, urban, and suburban area to evaluate and improve transition practices. Through this work, innovative practices to provide the tools and resources for youth, families, and transition stakeholders to engage in communities to identify and expand opportunities for youth and families to learn and grow. Joan receives national recognition for her work in the successful transition of youth with disabilities.



#### Michael Stoehr

Michael Stoehr, M.S., is a Knowledge Development and Technical Assistance Specialist with the [National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: the Collaborative \(NTACT:C\)](#), the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He has worked in the special education field for the past 38 years and has extensive experience in the areas of secondary transition, assessment, job analysis, supported and customized employment, transition communities of practice, effective transition planning, interagency collaboration, transition practices for students with complex support needs, family engagement, and youth leadership and self-advocacy.



[Stay up-to-date on the IDEA Conference website](#) for announcements.

Please [send questions to the IDEA Conference inbox](#).

# Premier Speakers (continued):



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### Erin Black

Erin Black, a current team member of [Transition Discoveries](#), is a young and vibrant disability advocate that feels passionate on the importance of youth empowerment as a young woman living with a disability herself. Erin is a recent graduate from the University of Toledo with a degree in Disability Studies and Public Relations. Born with a rare neuromuscular condition, Erin made it her life mission to travel the world telling her story with the hopes that other youth living with disabilities will understand the importance of their voice in rooms where decisions are being made. Erin has found a passion for public speaking and visual creation relating to marketing/social media that has led to her involvement in Transition Discoveries. You can [connect with Erin and read more on her story at Erin's website](#).



### Ron Roybal

Ron is currently working as a Training Consultant in the [PELE Center](#) at the University of Denver for the Morgridge College of Education. His responsibilities have included the LEAP USA and LEAP Outreach projects, the Professional Development in Autism project, the Colorado Autism Project, Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI), and the Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). He presents at national challenging behavior conferences and professional development/staff development days around the country. Prior to being a training consultant, Ron was a teacher in an early childhood inclusive classroom for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and typically developing students. His extensive experience in inclusive classroom settings as a teacher and coach for children with special needs and children at risk or with challenging behaviors brings a unique perspective as a trainer and coach.



### Nancy Burdic

Nancy Burdic joined the [PELE Center](#) as a Senior Research Associate after a 37-year career serving students in public school settings. As a Speech/Language Pathologist, her 21 years in Early Childhood Education were the most rewarding of her professional life. She characterizes her extensive training in preschool inclusionary practices as transformative, which significantly informed her instructional and teaming methods as an Early Childhood Education (ECE) classroom provider, ECE instructional coach, and ECE department director. Given the substantial research evidence supporting inclusionary practices and her own personal experiences, she is committed to assisting others in the field of education to develop high-quality inclusive programs so that families and children experience authentic community belonging, find true friendships, and clearly show how everyone benefits when all are welcomed.



## Exciting Spotlights:

### Secondary Transition Services Awards

Join ADE/ESS in recognizing a youth/young adult, a community member, and educators for their secondary transition contributions and successes.

★ **Awards will be presented on the morning of Tuesday, August 22.**

### Student and Young Adult Art Exhibit

ADE/ESS is proud to display unique works of art created by talented Arizonan students (pre-school through high school) and young adults (up to 26 years of age) during the 2023 IDEA Conference.



Featured art created by Ulrik W. from Center for Academic Success, Sierra Vista



### Individualized Session Tracks

This year, we are excited to offer conference attendees three session tracks. If you are not sure which session to attend, our key can assist you!

- Sessions marked with a blue circle are recommended for youth/young adults.
- Sessions marked with a copper square are recommended for parents and family members.
- ▲ Sessions marked with a red triangle are recommended for Early Childhood Special Education professionals.

📅 **A full conference agenda will be posted on the [Conference Agenda page](#).**

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