

Disability and the Law:

*A Focus on Autism,
Developmental Disabilities,
and the Multi-Disciplinary Nature
of Disability*

**The 2016 Disability Law Society Symposium
is brought to you by, and in collaboration with:**

The David J. Epstein Public Interest Law and Policy Program

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UCLA School of Law

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Autism Speaks U UCLA

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Disability Law Society Symposium*
UCLA School of Law

April 23, 2016

**An application requesting MCLE Credit for this event is pending approval by the State Bar of California*

Order of Events:

- 12pm – 12:15pm** Lunch and Meet-and-Greet
- 12:15pm – 12:30pm** Welcome and Introduction
Ariana Cernius, Dyne Suh, and Vivian Wong,
Second-year law students, UCLA Law,
David J. Epstein Program in Public Interest Law & Policy
- 12:30pm – 1:45pm** PANEL ONE: Introduction to Autism and the Needs of the Developmentally Disabled
Shafali Jeste, M.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry & Neurology, UCLA
“Autism Myth Busters: Clinical and Research Updates from the UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment (CART)”
Amanda Gulsrud, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, UCLA Department of Psychiatry
“Latest Advances in Behavioral Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder”
Linda L. Demer, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Medicine, Physiology and Bioengineering; Director, UCLA Specialty Training & Advanced Research Program; Vice Chair, Department of Medicine, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine
“Current Perspectives on the Autism Spectrum and Neurodiversity”
- 1:45pm – 3:00pm** PANEL TWO: Legal Needs in the Transition to Adulthood
Lorri Shealy Unumb, Esq., Vice President, State Government Affairs, Autism Speaks
“Autism, Law and Politics”
Bertha Sanchez Hayden, Esq., Family Matters Program Manager, Bet Tzedek Legal Services
“Legal Tools for Adults with Special Needs and their Families”
- 3:00pm – 4:15pm** PANEL THREE: Social & Recreational Activities for People with Autism & Developmental Disabilities, and Practical Skills for the Future
Constantine Psimopoulos, Ph.D., President of Massachusetts Association for Health, Physical Education & Recreation; Faculty & Research Associate, Prevention Research Center for Physical Activity, Harvard School of Public Health; Visiting Instructor, Princeton University
“Adapted Recreation and Physical Education for Individuals with Diff-abilities: The Special Olympics Case”
Julie Berry, Mother, Author
“Expanding Our Vision of Achievement and Independence for People with ASD and Other Disabilities: A Family’s Perspective or, in other words, How Families Fall Victim to Funding Buckets”
Richard Spurling, Founder & CEO of ACEing Autism
“ACEing Autism – The Importance of Making Tennis Accessible to Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder”
- 4:15pm – 4:45pm** KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Gary Blasi, Professor of Law emeritus, UCLA School of Law, Special Counsel to Public Counsel Law Center, and Of Counsel to the Western Center on Law and Poverty
“Human rights, Disability rights, and the Right to Survive”

**Please join us for a reception following the event.
Coffee and dessert will be served in the Shapiro Courtyard.**



Gary Blasi is Professor of Law Emeritus at UCLA School of Law, where he co-founded the Program in Public Law and Policy and worked with law students in on issues of importance to a wide range of disadvantaged communities, including: children consigned to substandard schools, homeless individuals with mental and developmental disabilities effectively denied access to basic survival benefits, including income, food, medical and mental health services, and victims of discrimination in employment and access to public benefits. Blasi's research draws on cognitive science and social psychology to better understand how lawyers acquire expertise, how people understand the causes of problems like homelessness or poverty, how advocates can best deal with the consequences of racial and other stereotypes, and how large bureaucracies can better respond to the needs of poor people and people living with disabilities. Blasi also maintains an active pro bono practice. He is Special Counsel at the Public Counsel Law Center, working with the Opportunity Under Law Initiative. He is also of counsel to the Western Center on Law and Poverty. He was lead and successful trial counsel in *Rensch v. Board of Supervisors*, which found in 1986 that the application process for General Relief in Los Angeles discriminated against persons with mental disabilities and that LA County was required to adopt procedures to reasonably accommodate such persons. He worked with others to bring to the U.S. District Court in 2015 many similar claims on the same legal basis against the General Relief program in *Housing Works, et al. vs. Count of Los Angeles, et al.* In *Valentini v. McDonald*, together with the ACLU, Munger, Tolles and Olson, Arnold and Porter, and Harvard law professor Larry Tribe, he represented the plaintiff class of homeless veterans with severe and chronic mental disabilities who were, by virtue of their homelessness, unable to access services to which they were entitled from the Veteran's Administration. Plaintiffs argued that permanent supportive housing was, for many veterans, a necessary reasonable accommodation for them to be able to obtain the treatment and services from the VA. On Jan. 28, 2015, the *Valentini* plaintiffs settled the litigation with recently appointed Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert McDonald and are now working in partnership with the Secretary, through a nonprofit (Vets Advocacy, Inc.) established, to end veteran homelessness in LA, prioritizing veterans with severe and chronic mental disabilities. Blasi is on the board of directors of Vets Advocacy. He previously served as president of the boards of directors of the National Coalition for the Homeless, LA Homeless Health Care & the LA Coalition to End Homelessness. He has been recognized with numerous awards for his work on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised, including the Loren Miller Award (2013), given to one California lawyer each year in recognition of commitment to serving the legal needs of the poor, and the California Lawyer of the Year award (2015) for his work with other counsel in a class action on behalf of welfare recipients denied due process.



Dr. Shafali Jeste is a behavioral child neurologist specializing in autism and related neurodevelopmental disorders. She is an Assistant Professor in Psychiatry and Neurology at UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, and a lead investigator within UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment (CART). After earning a BA in philosophy from Yale University in 1997 and her MD from Harvard Medical School in 2002, Dr. Jeste completed a residency in child neurology and a fellowship in behavioral child neurology at Children's Hospital, Boston. She then pursued post-doctoral training in developmental cognitive neuroscience with Dr. Charles Nelson at Harvard Medical School, where she gained expertise in the use of high-density electroencephalography (EEG) to characterize functional brain development in infancy and early childhood, particularly as it informs atypical development. She was recruited to UCLA CART in 2010 as the director of its electrophysiology core. CART has played a leading role nationally and internationally in developing an improved understanding of the biological and psychosocial basis of autism & is the only center to be awarded an NIH Autism Centers of Excellence (ACE) grant twice, first in 2007 and then 2012. Dr. Jeste's research is focused on the use of novel electrophysiological biomarkers to better define early predictors of autism and to define more homogeneous, brain-based subgroups within the autism spectrum in order to inform treatment targets. Within this framework, she has been investigating and treating infants and children with neurogenetic syndromes associated with autism. As the lead investigator on a large study of development in infants with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC), Dr. Jeste has designed innovative studies in early predictors of autism to focus on the integration of biomarkers with behavior to define atypical development prior to the onset of clinical symptoms of autism. In the last 2 years she has begun to study and treat children with Dup15q syndrome, and last year she established a Dup15q clinic at UCLA, through which she has already evaluated and/or treated more than 20 children. This research in Dup15q syndrome will now be supported by a new Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center (IDDRC) grant, led by Dr. Susan Bookheimer. Dr. Jeste has been the recipient of the Child Neurology Foundation's Researcher-in-Training Award and the American Academy of Neurology's (AAN) Clinical Researcher-in-Training Award. She also was selected in 2014 as a member of the AAN Emerging Leaders Forum. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Child Neurology Foundation & the AAN Science Committee.



Dr. Amanda Gulsrud is an Assistant Professor in the UCLA Department of Psychiatry and a licensed clinical psychologist. She is a member of the executive committee of the Center for Autism Research and Treatment and the Clinical Director of the UCLA Child and Adult Neurodevelopmental (CAN) clinic. The CAN clinic is a multidisciplinary clinic focused on the evaluation and treatment of individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders across the lifespan. She received a B.A. in Psychology and History at UCLA and her Ph.D. in Psychological Studies in Education division of the Department of Education at UCLA. She completed a postdoctoral internship at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior and received her clinical license in 2011. She joined the faculty in the Department of Psychiatry in 2013. Her primary research and clinical efforts focus on the early identification and treatment of infants and toddlers with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and related neurodevelopmental disorders. She is a co-investigator in the NIH-sponsored Autism Center of Excellence examining developmental trajectories and early treatment response of children ages 12- 21 months at risk for ASD and co-leads an Autism Speaks Early Access to Care grant developing and delivering treatments in the low resourced community of South Los Angeles. She was also recently awarded a CART pilot grant to explore the use of targeted social-communication interventions for children with Tubular Sclerosis Complex. She also is a member of the multidisciplinary team at the CAN clinic where she sees patients and provides supervision and training to students.



Dr. Linda Demer is Professor of Medicine/Cardiology, Physiology and Bioengineering at UCLA. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Autism Society of Los Angeles, on the Scientific Review Council for Cure Autism Now, as a speaker for the California Consortium on Post-Secondary Education for the Intellectually Disabled, on the Advisory Board for the Office of Students with Disabilities of Santa Monica Community College, on the Board of Directors for the Westside Regional Center, on the Human Rights Committee of TASH, and on the North Los Angeles Autism Regional Task Force of the California Senate Select Committee on Autism and Related Disorders. She has personal experience with adult family members on the autism spectrum, and she has been teaching undergraduate courses on the autism spectrum and neurodiversity for the Disability Studies and Psychology programs at UCLA since 2014.



Lorri Shealy Unumb is a lawyer, professor, and the mother of three children – Ryan (14), who has autism; Christopher (11); and Jonathan (8). In 2005, she wrote ground-breaking autism insurance legislation for South Carolina (“Ryan’s Law”) that passed in 2007 and served as the catalyst for the national movement toward autism insurance reform. Lorri began her work in autism advocacy as a volunteer. In 2008, she was recruited by **Autism Speaks**, where she now advocates full-time on behalf of individuals with autism. As head of state government affairs, she has testified more than 100 times on health insurance issues in legislatures around the country. For her advocacy efforts, Lorri has been recognized with:

- the Jefferson Award for Public Service;
- the Autism Society of America 2008 “Parents of the Year” award (along with her husband Dan);
- the Behavior Analyst Certification Board’s Michael Hemingway Award;
- the California Association of Behavior Analysts 2012 “Leadership in Law” Award;
- the Miss South Carolina Pageant 2012 “Woman of Achievement” Award;
- the Association of Professional Behavior Analysts 2013 “Jerry Shook” Award;

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Lorri Shealy Unumb, continued:

- the NASCAR Foundation's Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award; and
- the Professional Women in Advocacy "Excellence in a State Campaign" 2014 Award.

Lorri's work has been profiled on CNN, on NPR's "Morning Edition," and in *Town&Country* magazine, from whom she received one of three 2009 "Women Who Make a Difference" awards. She is profiled in the American Academy of Pediatrics 2013 book "Autism Spectrum Disorders: What Every Parent Needs to Know." Following law school, Lorri spent two years clerking for a United State District Judge and then enjoyed a fulfilling career as an appellate litigator with the United States Department of Justice, Civil Division. She left DOJ to become a law professor at George Washington University Law School and later served as an inaugural faculty member at the Charleston School of Law. While in Charleston, she hosted a weekly TV show called "The Law with Professor Lorri." In 2008, Lorri served as Assistant Director in the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Legal Education, running training programs at the National Advocacy Center. A frequent keynote speaker, Lorri still teaches a health law course at George Washington University Law School called "Autism and the Law." She and her husband Dan wrote the first-ever comprehensive textbook on legal issues related to autism, also called "Autism and the Law." Lorri and Dan recently founded the Autism Academy of South Carolina, a non-profit center serving the year-round therapeutic needs of children on the spectrum.



Bertha S. Hayden is an elder law attorney with Bet Tzedek Legal Services who exclusively works in matters involving intellectually disabled adults and their caregivers. In 2009, she launched an innovative pilot program, Family Matters, in Los Angeles County to educate and provide direct legal services to families with special education students on limited conservatorships (adult guardianship) and supported decision making options. Bertha has received the Award of Merit from Legal Aid Association of California and the Jack H. Skirball award for the Family Matters Project. Bertha received her B.A. from Santa Clara University, and earned her J.D. from Whittier Law School.



Dr. Constantine Psimopoulos was born in Thessaloniki in 1981. He is a dual citizen (Greek and US) as his parents are both Greek and US citizens too. As a teenager and young adult he was National Champion of Greece in Cycling and Mountain Biking; In 2003 and while being a competitive athlete training for the ATHENS 2004 Olympic Games, he managed to graduate with distinction from the Aristotelian (Aristotle) University of Thessaloniki, having both a coaching and a teaching job on the side at the same time. Upon entering a national exam, Constantine was able to earn the one and only scholarship from the Greek Scholarships Foundation (I.K.Y) in order to commence his graduate studies in the USA. Starting from Massachusetts and with a Master of Education in Sport Management from Springfield College, Constantine has pursued PhD studies and research in Kinesiology and Physical Education at OSU and Aristotle University respectively and he also holds a second Masters degree in Kinesiology from the former institution. Constantine is President of the Massachusetts Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD / ma-hperd.org), the preeminent authority on physical activity, sports and recreation within elementary, secondary, and higher education in the State of Massachusetts, with almost all schools (~1000) and about 25 universities represented, offering services to our 2500 members. President Psimopoulos has been the first ever Greek-American to ever hold this office in MA and to lead MAHPERD. Constantine or Professor Psi 'Ψ' as his students call him has taught Physical Education and Sport Science at Harvard, MIT, Lesley University, The Sage College of Albany and Troy, New York, Ohio State University and now Princeton University. At Harvard, Constantine also serves as a researcher on the Community advisory committee to Harvard's School of Public Health Prevention Research Center, overseeing nutrition and physical activity policy research projects funded by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States Federal Government).



Julie Berry is the mother of four sons, all of whom had or still have various special needs including autism. She has been a tireless advocate for her children's educational needs, working with her children's school districts to expand their offerings for autistic kids, and helping to start a private school for children with autism in suburban Boston, Crossroads Center for Children. Professionally, Julie is the author of nine internationally acclaimed and award-winning titles for children and young adults including *The Passion of Dolssa* (2016, Viking), *The Scandalous Sisterhood of Prickwillow Place* (2014, Roaring Brook), and *All the Truth That's in Me* (2013, Viking). She grew up in western New York and holds a BS from Rensselaer in communication and an MFA from Vermont College in writing for children and young adults. Before becoming an author, she worked in software sales and marketing. She now lives in southern California with her husband and four sons. Find her online at www.julieberrybooks.com, or on Twitter at @julieberrybooks."

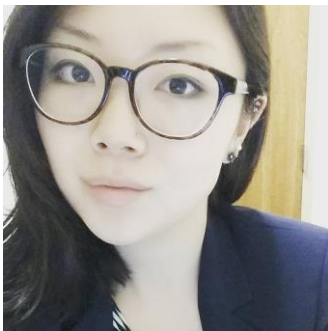


Richard Spurling was born in Sweden and grew up in England and Belgium. He attended Florida Atlantic University where he played Division I tennis and achieved his degree in International Business. Following university, Richard worked for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter as a financial advisor and also taught tennis. In 2001 Richard managed various high profile tennis programs in Florida, Boston and Cape Cod. Richard earned his MBA in 2008 from Babson College where he focused on entrepreneurship. With his wife he co-founded ACEing Autism, a nonprofit organization that makes tennis accessible to children with autism. Richard lives in Los Angeles with his wife Shafali Jeste and their two children Nischal and Kiran.

SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZERS



Ariana Cernius is 2015-16 Co-Chair of the UCLA Disability Law Society. She graduated from Harvard College in 2013, with a joint-degree in Philosophy, and History of Art and Architecture. Her pursuit of a career in public interest law is largely due to (and in honor of) her younger brother, Andrew, who has severe autism, and who inspires her to try and make a difference in the lives of those with developmental disabilities. At Harvard, Ariana co-founded and served as President of Harvard Undergraduates Raising Autism Awareness (HURAA), a student organization that raises on-campus awareness about autism and serves the Greater Boston autism community. After college and prior to law school, Ariana spent a postgraduate year as a public service fellow working to expand The Friday Night Club for Special Needs Teens and Young Adults, a new, recreation-based nonprofit organization from Southern California to the campuses of Harvard, MIT, and Boston University. Ariana is an Associate Editor of the UCLA Law Review, and enjoys writing about issues affecting people with special needs. Her publications include *Insanity and Crime: The Mystery and Complexity of Defending the Mentally Ill* (Washington Undergraduate Law Review, June, 2013), and “No Imbecile At All”: *How California Won the Autism Insurance Reform Battle, and Why Its Model Should Be Replicated in Other States* (forthcoming, Harvard Law and Policy Review, June, 2016).



Dyne Suh is 2015-16 Co-Chair of the UCLA Disability Law Society, UCLA Law Students in Balance, VAWA Immigration Clinic, and Criminal Justice Society. She is a first generation Korean American immigrant and law student. She has been an activist for racial, economic, gender, immigrant, queer, ability justice since age eleven. She graduated with honors from UC Santa Barbara in 2012 with a double major in History and Sociology. Her studies focused on the intersections of race, class, gender, immigration, colonialism, law and social policy in the U.S. After UCSB, Dyne interned for the ACLU and National Lawyers Guild, and remains a member of both today. Dyne is also part of Bonfire Collective, an anarchist worker cooperative dedicated to opening a bookstore-café that sells radical literature and provides an educational and organizing space in Santa Barbara, and Libro Libre, a group that sends books to prisoners. She works as a certified law clerk for public defender offices in Santa Barbara and Ventura. She is pursuing a lifelong career as a public defender to fight in solidarity with people who have been most marginalized. Most of her clients suffer from disabilities.



Vivian Wong is a 2L at UCLA School of Law in the David J. Epstein Public Interest Law and Policy Program with a Critical Race Studies specialization. As a woman with a disability, Vivian understands the challenges young people face in navigating labyrinthine systems on top of social stigmas and internal confusion. Prior to law school, she received a Stanford Public Interest Network Fellowship to help first-generation, low-income students to apply and prepare for college. She worked closely with students who grappled with abusive families, unstable homes, gang violence, and anxiety over poverty and legal status. Last summer, she clerked at the National Center for Youth Law where she worked on impact litigation addressing school force-out issues that disproportionately affect students of color and students with disabilities. At UCLA, she is involved with the Disability Law Society, Criminal Justice Society, National Lawyers Guild, as well as the UCLA Law Review. She earned a B.A. in International Relations and French from Stanford University. At Stanford, she founded Power To Act: Abilities Coming Together, a community organization and peer mentorship program for students with hidden and visible disabilities. Through a career in holistic advocacy, she hopes to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure all youth of color and with disabilities receive a quality education. She aims to amplify the voices of youth and equip them with the tools and strength to become leaders in the pursuit of justice.