

# *Many Voices - One Community*

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## A Story Told in E-Mail About the Conference Called “Autism Spectrum Disorder: Beyond the Diagnosis”

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# A Story Told in E-Mail About the Conference Called “Autism Spectrum Disorder: Beyond the Diagnosis”

Linda Jameson

## **Abstract**

Through e-mail conversations, Linda Jameson recalls the lead up to the Autism Spectrum Disorder Conference held by the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

**KEYWORDS:** autism, conference



# A STORY TOLD IN E-MAIL ABOUT THE CONFERENCE CALLED "AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER: BEYOND THE DIAGNOSIS"

by Linda Jameson

Sent: January 23, 2008  
To: InfoList  
Subject: A message from Dr. Calaway

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Carmaletta Williams on her appointment as Executive Assistant to the President, Diversity Initiatives. Dr. Williams ... I know we all can look forward to a new emphasis on diversity at JCCC.

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Sent: January 23  
From: Linda Jameson  
To: Carmaletta Williams

... I'm writing to you in your role as Executive Assistant. I hope the diversity initiatives that you work on will include help for those of us with social disorders. I have Asperger's Syndrome which is on the high functioning end of the autism spectrum ...



\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: March 07  
From: Carmaletta Williams  
To: Linda Jameson; Mark Foster - Sociology; Mark Foster  
Cc: Kami Day; Shaun Harris; Samira Hussein

Dear Linda,  
It was simply fortuitous that we were able to talk today. I have had a short conversation with Mark Foster about this same issue. I suggested to Mark that we think about having a workshop/conference in the fall. I have talked with Dr. Calaway who likes the idea and ... he certainly supports our work, so let's work on this in earnest ... Chris Worthington in the bookstore has agreed to order any books that we might need ...

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: March 25  
From: Carmaletta Williams  
Hello Linda and Mark,

... I would really like for this to be an informative session. I want people to learn, to ask questions, and for those affected to share their stories ... You might even think of including Mark Browning ...



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Sent: March 25  
From: Linda Jameson  
To: Carmaletta Williams; Mark Foster  
Carmaletta,

Thanks for getting the discussion started.

Besides Mark Browning, we should also have Mary Jean Billingsley and Coach Buese ... . Pete Peterson might also ... . One thing we need to do is to decide what part of the autism spectrum we are going to emphasize. There is a big difference between the two ends of the spectrum ... .

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Sent: April 9  
From: Carmaletta Williams

Fortunately we now have an administrative assistant, Susan McGarvey, who will be starting pretty soon who can take care of the scheduling, etc., for us.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: April 22  
From: Carmaletta Williams  
To: Susan Mcgarvey

I want to have a sit down meeting with Mark Foster, Linda Jameson, Kami, Shaun and Samira and you – of course – to discuss the conference for this fall. There have been many e-mail exchanges about things to do at the conference and people to include and we need to somehow formalize the process. Thanks. Also, you should include Gloria Russo ... .

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: May 15  
From: Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

Good to get your e-mail. Presenting the evening prior to the conference itself actually fits into my schedule very well as I have another workshop in Michigan on the AM of the 16th and/or the 17th. However, this should all work out very well.



Sent: May 21, 2008  
From: Sean M. Daley

Carmaletta ... A friend of mine, Dr. Kathy Ellerbeck, MD, is one of the leading experts on autism in the Midwest; she works out of KU MED. ...

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: June 02  
From: Carmaletta Williams

Hi Sean ... This conference is really growing, which we're really happy about ... let me know so we can put them on a very quickly filling program. I am astonished at the interest we have gotten in this program. It should be exciting.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: June 03  
From: Gloria Rosso

I know that the concept of "Refrigerator Mothers" is part of the history of autism, and that this was seen as the true origins of autism for a long time. I also know that today this has been discredited (although who knows, there may be some people who still believe it's the mother's fault ...). I gotta say, though ... I would not be able to watch this documentary [*Refrigerator Mothers*].

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: June 04  
From: Linda Jameson  
Cc: Kate Duffy

... I've included Kate Duffy as recipient because I think she needs to be involved in our discussions. Kate Duffy is the instructor at Penn Valley who has two sons on the spectrum.

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Sent: June 09  
From: Carmaletta Williams

I just finished talking with Ari Ne'eman via telephone. He is excited about participating in our conference. He said he talks primarily about the cultural and political developments of self-advocacy groups and civil and disability rights.

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Sent : June 17  
From: Carmaletta Williams

... *Autism Spectrum Disorder: Beyond the Diagnosis* will be the name of our conference. Thank you, Kirsten, for the suggestion.

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Sent: June 26  
From: Carmaletta Williams

The Bookstore has sent me the 2008 spring catalog from Autism Asperger Publishing Company. They want to know which books they should order to sell at our conference ... .

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Sent: July 02  
From: Carmaletta Williams

We are working with our Web site people to get the conference listed there and we will also be working with our graphics folk ... .

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: July 08  
From: Carmaletta Williams

We are preparing mailing lists for our conference. If any of you have lists that you can share with us, we very much appreciate it.

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Sent: August 22  
From: Carmaletta Williams

Danny Alexander, our new interim multicultural center program director, and I met with Rich Fisher in our television studio to block times for taping ... .

The purpose of having the video made is to give our audience a real life connection to Autism Spectrum Disorder and the people who live that life ... .

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: August 28  
From: Carmaletta Williams

I would really like for them [organizations] to send us brochures to put in our participant bags. The idea of having tables set up is a bit bothersome because of space limitations ... . HOWEVER I do think that there will be people there who will want to know where they can go for assistance, so let's not throw the table idea completely away yet ...

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Sent: September 02  
From: Andrea Kempf

Attached is the latest reincarnation of the autism bibliography ... .



\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: Tuesday, September 02  
From: Chris Worthington

Tina and Heather will need to come over to see the space and talk about the traffic flow, etc. ... whom should they coordinate that with?

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Sent: September 08  
From: Andrea Kempf

Barry Bailey, our new digital librarian, took my original bibliography and made a "libguide" page ... .  
<http://jccc.libguides.com/autism>

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Sent: October 18  
From: Mary Jean Billingsley

Congratulations on the first very successful conference on Autism! ... Thank you , Carmaletta and Danny, for your leadership during this process. Susan and Kay were wonderful to work with ... .

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Sent: October 20  
From: Carmaletta Williams

*The Autism Spectrum Disorder: Beyond the Diagnosis* conference was absolutely incredible. I was amazed at how many people came up to me to say that we were doing such a wonderful service for the community. I came to understand on a small scale the depth and breadth of the spectrum. We got small glimpses into the lives of those on the spectrum, their families, health care professionals and educators. I learned new terms like "neurelism," (which was coined by our own Mark Foster), and gained insight into neurodiversity ... . We have also started to look forward to planning next year's conference ... .

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent: October 25  
From: Kirsten Sneid

I've heard great feedback from the conference- You all must feel so good (and tired) ... .