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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”

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 … .

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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 … .

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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 . . . .

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.

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.

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.
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 … .

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.

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 …

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?

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

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 … .

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 “neurelitism,” (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) … .

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