



Mailman Advisory Council (MAC) Members

Stephanie Preshong Brown, MAC Co-Chair

Stephanie Preshong Brown, MBA, is a parent-advocate on the MAC. Her primary focus is facilitating systemic change to ensure opportunities for all individuals with disabilities. Ms. Preshong Brown service includes numerous boards and committees, including the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities, Disability Rights Florida Board, Martin County School District's Least Restrictive Environment Committee, the Exceptional Student Education Parent Advisory Council, the Elementary Student Advisory Council, and the Treasure Coast Children's Museum. She is frequently a guest speaker at educational and disability forums, including the Assistive Technology Industry Association utilizing technology to optimize learning and communication for persons with disabilities. Several organizations have recognized Ms. Preshong Brown for her contributions to the disability community, including the Florida Department of Education, Florida Inclusion Network, Florida Department of Education, and the Exceptional Students' first Family Inclusion Leadership Meeting, and the American Academy of Pediatrics has invited Ms. Preshong Brown to participate in Florida's Pediatric Medical Home Demonstration Project. Ms. Preshong Brown is also a Junior Achievement volunteer and PTA board member. In addition to her Master's in Business Administration, Ms. Preshong Brown is a graduate of the State of Florida Developmental Disabilities Partners in Policymaking Program.

Roselyne Antao, MAC Lead

Roselyne is the mom of two premature infants, one weighed just over two pounds, so she is well acquainted with the challenges faced by families of children with special needs.

Roselyne holds a BA in psychology from Queens College, and a Local Area Network (LAN) Certificate from New York University. She worked at the United Nations for 13 years in the fields of Information Technology and Human Resources. Ever since she came to work at the Mailman Center some 12 years ago, she has been providing advocacy, support and trainings to special needs children and their families. She also worked on the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant, a study designed to prevent childhood obesity; and on the Early Reading First grant which evaluated professional development of pre-k teachers and its impact on the enhanced literacy capacity of bi-lingual four year olds. Lastly, she managed the Oral Health grant which provided dental hygiene trainings throughout Florida to professionals. Currently, as the Family and Community Education Sr. Coordinator, she manages professional trainings and conferences, the ArtAbilities program, develops online modules and assist with the maintenance of MCCD's website. She also continues to provide assistance to families of children with special needs through the Family Navigator program.

Jairo Arana

Jairo Arana began his journey as an advocate when, after being diagnosed later in life with ASD, he joined the SALT (Self-Advocate Leadership Training) Program. After graduating the SALT Program, he became a trainer for SALT and a consultant for the University of Miami Mailman Center for Child Development. He was also the UM Mailman Center for Child Development's first LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities) Self-advocate trainee. He has worked with UM Mailman Center as a consultant, written for the UM Mailman Center's Newsletter, has traveled to Washington DC for the AUCD Conference and AUCD Disability Policy Seminar, where he has met with policymakers to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. He graduated from UM Mailman Center's ETLP (Emerging Transformational Leadership Program, under LEND) in June 2018, and has been accepted into the Florida DD Network Collaborative Leadership Program for 2018-19. He holds a

Bachelor's degrees in Motion Pictures and Creative Writing from University of Miami. He is the UM Mailman Center's Clinical Programs Coordinator.

Rochelle (Shelly) Baer

Shelly Baer, LCSW is director of Leadership Training Initiatives at the Mailman Center for Child Development. She completed her graduate training at Yeshiva University, Wurzweiler School of Social Work in 1991. Ms. Baer is a licensed social worker in Florida, and joined the staff of the Mailman Center in 2011. During her time with the UCEDD and LEND program she served as Associate Training Director. She now coordinates the Emerging Transformational Leadership Program (ETLP), assists in managing key components of the LEND curriculum and coordinates Project Self-Advocate Leadership Training (SALT). She coordinates Student Emerging Leaders Program (SELP) leadership program for high school students with and without disabilities. In 2015, Ms. Baer accepted the role as Co-leader of the Lifespan IPC at Mailman Center. Ms. Baer is an accomplished community leader in the disability community. She participated in the Miami Fellows Initiative, a prestigious leadership program funded by the Knight Foundation. Through this program she created ACCESS Miami, a resource for the disability community. It is now housed under Mailman Center and is on the MCCD website. She is part of the consumer advisory council for the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities and attended the UCEDD National Leadership Institute. She is part of the AUCD persons with disabilities as LEND trainees workgroup. Ms. Baer was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at age three, but it has never slowed her down. She pushes boundaries and doesn't let her disability hold her back. In 2006, through her involvement in Center for Independent Living, Ms. Baer co-founded **Uncensored Life: Raw Beauty**, a photography exhibit that showcases the beauty, sensuality and empowerment of disabled women. Now known as **Bold Beauty Project**, Ms. Baer serves as the Director; it is based in Miami.

Kathy Balaban

Kathy Balaban earned her Master of Education degree, with an emphasis on Inclusion, from McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. For the last twenty-one years, she has worked for Comprehensive Rehabilitation Consultants helping parents of children with disabilities plan for their children's present and future needs. She has credited her nephew, Robert for her passion for inclusive schools and communities. Robert was born with developmental delays. As an active member of the Mailman Advisory Council for many years, she has brought her perspective to the Council, both as a family member of an individual with a disability, as well as a professional, working with children, their parents, doctors, therapists and teachers on a daily basis.

Carol Brady-Simmons

Director of Client and Vision Enhancement Services, Carol Brady-Simmons has held a management position at Miami Lighthouse for over 21 years. In 2002, she started the Blind Babies Program. In the summer of 2007 she assumed responsibility for overseeing the successful acquisition of the Heiken Children's Vision Program by Miami Lighthouse. She provides management and oversight for children's, teens and adult programs. She provides leadership as Chief Program Officer at Miami Lighthouse. Ms. Brady-Simmons has an AA in Elementary Education, a BA in Visual Disabilities, as well as a BA in Leisure Services and Studies with a minor in gerontology. She is a certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist and is also certified in INSITE and VIISA training for birth to five, and possesses master level credits in early intervention and Early Childhood Development for Blind and Visually Impaired.

Adua E. Casado

Adua Casado, MBA, CSSGB, is manager of the Mailman Center Programs, responsible for assisting with grant preparation, coordination and operational implementation. She joined the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine in 2012, and through her tenure, she has successfully performed various healthcare

administration duties. Her areas of expertise include Marketing, Finance and Budgeting, Process Improvement, Strategic Planning and Operations. Adua is a highly organized and effective problem solver individual, with outstanding abilities to manage cross functional teams of professionals to ensure productivity, quality and teamwork. In 2013, she earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration-Health Sector Management and Policy from the University of Miami. She is also Six Sigma Green Belt Certified.

Debra Chin

Deborah Chin, MA, ACC, is manager of The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation Transition and Adult Programs at UM-NSU CARD. Over the past 11 years she has worked with teens, adults, and their families to provide information, resources, and guidance as they plan for life after high school. In recent years her efforts have prioritized capacity building with local professionals, organizations, and businesses to ensure adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have the opportunity to be fully included in employment and all others aspects of community life. She enjoys training and consulting with local organizations because it allows her to optimize the impact of her work to improve employment, life skills, medical, social and educational opportunities for people with ASD. She has a B.A. in Psychology from The Florida State University and an M.A. in Liberal Studies from University of Miami. Ms. Chin is also an ICF certified professional coach who is passionate about personal development and empowering ourselves to create positive change.

Enrique Escallón

Enrique Escallón lives in Miami with his wife Maria Esther. He has four children: Leyvani, Dannel, Daviel, and Dariviel. Dariviel was diagnosed with total liver failure at birth, and received a liver transplant at 13 days old. Through his son's experiences, Enrique has become a devoted advocate for children with disabilities and provides a much needed father's perspective. He currently serves on the Miami-Dade Schools Superintendent Advisory Panel for ESE (Exceptional Student Education); FFAST (Florida Alliance for

Assistive Services and Technology) Board; State Advisory Board for the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services; National PTA and VSA Arts of Florida. He has also chaired the FDDC (Florida Developmental Disabilities Council) and the Hurricane District for Boy Scouts of America. Enrique works as Assistant Vice-President for SunTrust Banks.

Patricia Giner

Patricia Giner earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Special Education and is an Advocate and Educational Consultant. Ms. Giner has been guiding students with special needs and families through the process of transition from high school to post-secondary placement. She has over 25 years of professional and personal experience helping students with learning disabilities, psychological diagnoses, and neurological disorders advocate and practice self-determination in their academic and community environments. Ms. Giner has presented nationally on the transition from high school to post-secondary schooling. In 2006, she became the National Director of Admissions for a post-secondary transitional program for young adults with special needs. Formerly with the College Living Experience, Ms. Giner will soon be starting a private program for transition.

Helene Good

In 1982, Helene answered a one-line want ad, and became the director of what was then known as the Community Committee for Developmental Handicaps and Retardation (CCDHR). The only staff member, she worked from a borrowed desk in a conference room of a state office building. She has never turned back. With a concentration in public policy, administration, and social work education, Helene earned her Master's Degree in Social Work from Florida State University. She has enjoyed teaching opportunities at Miami Dade College's Department of Social Sciences, and served as a field instructor for Florida State University, Florida International University, Barry University, and the University of Miami. Helene is the recipient of the 2009 David Lawrence Jr. Champion for Children Award from The Children's Trust honoring a lifetime of achievement and dedication to children.

Ernie Martinez

Gayle Miller

Gayle Miller is an attorney with Holland and Knight. She has been an attorney in Florida since 1982 and resides in Broward County. From 2005 – 2011, Gayle was an attorney with Disability Rights Florida, formerly known as the Advocacy Center for Persons Disabilities, Inc., Florida's federally funded protection and advocacy agency. Gayle has served as Chairman of the Board of the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology for two terms. In addition, she was a Resource Member of the Community Living/Service Coordination Task Force of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

Elizabeth Perkins

Jason Rose

Jason Rose is a Self-Advocate for those with disabilities. He is a survivor of Diamond Blackfan Anemia, a rare bone marrow failure syndrome discovered by Dr. Louis K Diamond and Dr Kenneth Blackfan. Jason was born and raised in Miami Dade, earned his B.A. Degree in Political Science from Florida International University, and is also a graduate of Miami Dade College. Jason currently works as a Senior Patient Access Representative at the University Of Miami School Of Medicine Transforming patients, families, and stake holder's lives by providing them access to specialists and quality health care at the Mailman Center for Child Development, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of Miami Hospital & Clinics, University of Miami Hospital and other UHealth specialties. Jason is a graduate of the Self-Advocacy Leadership program sponsored by the University of Miami Mailman Center as well as a Trainer empowering those with disabilities self-advocacy and leadership skills to make effective change in their lives and community. Prior to joining the University of Miami, Jason worked for Community Blood Centers of South Florida (now One Blood), as a Telephone Branch Representative contacting prospective blood donors to donate blood to save lives. Jason has been recognized as a public speaker who has spoken to healthcare professionals in New York as well at the

University of Miami School of Medicine about his story of survival with Diamond Blackfan Anemia. In 2003, Jason earned a US Presidential Appointment by President George Bush as a Local Board Member with United States Selective Service System for the State of Florida. In 2009, Jason earned another US Presidential Appointment by President Barack Obama to serve as a District Appeal Board Member for the United States Selective Service System for the State of Florida. Jason also spends his time as Volunteer with the US Department of Interior, National Park Service at Everglades National Park as a Guide aboard the Free Trolley to the Everglades. Jason is also an avid photographer.

Bethany Sands

Kent Schomber

Kent Schomber is a long time faithful employee of both the University of Miami's Department of Psychology and the UM/NSU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD). He was diagnosed with autism at an early age. He is a self-advocate representing persons with disabilities and is an important role model and asset to the disability community in general. He is helpful and responsible in carrying out his many duties, making sure tasks are done correctly and assisting his co-workers whenever he can. In his advocacy for inclusion, he works with others to make Florida's autism insurance bill a reality in other states so that persons with autism are able to get the services they need. He is also an environmental advocate, encouraging people to "go green" in order to assure that the forests are available to all birds and animals.

Jean Sherman

Jean Sherman, Ed.D, RN is a Voluntary Associate Professor at the University of Miami Mailman Center UCEDD (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities). A registered nurse for all her professional career, Jean holds a doctorate in Adult Education. On the faculty of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine for more than twenty years, Dr. Sherman has been a member of the Mailman Advisory Council (MAC) for much of that time. She is a very active board member of the Florida Developmental Disabilities

Council, where she is the representative from the Mailman Center. She is a leader of the Broward Information Network on Disabilities (BIND) and the board president of the Florida Lifespan Respite Alliance (FLRA) – a statewide organization which educates and advocates for the increased availability of respite care services for family caregivers across the age and disability spectrums. As the mother of a man with a severe intellectual disability, Dr. Sherman has a long-standing interest in the concerns and well-being of family caregivers.

Ann Siegel

Ann Siegel has been an advocate for children in Broward County for over seventeen years. She received her Juris Doctor from Nova Southeastern University, Shepard Broad Law Center. During law school, Ann was a Disability Law Fellow at the Children First organization and volunteered as a Guardian Ad Litem. For fourteen years, she has served as a surrogate parent for children in the foster system within Broward County. She gained substantial legal experience working as a staff attorney in the Education Legal Rights Project of the Children's Advocacy Program at Legal Aid Service of Broward, Inc. from April 2001- January 2009. Her first job after law school was at the Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities and then in January 2009, she returned to Disability Rights Florida (formerly the Advocacy Center) to assume the position of Managing Attorney of the Education Team.

Ann is a member of the Florida Bar and is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Courts for the Southern, Middle and Northern Districts as well as in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeal.

Linda Starnes

Linda Hampton Starnes has spent her life actively involved in the disability community – as a special educator, parent, volunteer, and advocate. After teaching, Ms. Starnes worked in higher education, then at the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education. However, her most rewarding work has been as mother of two children with varying abilities and health challenges. Due to their significant health care needs, Linda managed 24-hour home nursing care, worked with physicians and therapists in fifteen medical specialties, and has overseen approximately 40 hospitalizations, surgeries, or

procedures under anesthesia for her children. She has since been an activist within the disability and health care community. She continuously advocated for appropriate inclusive education at seven public schools, and inclusion within multiple community, recreational, and religious settings on behalf of her children and all children with disabilities. Now both Starnes children are grown and fully engaged in their respective college and career lives.

Ms. Starnes has served on many local, regional, and national boards of disability and healthcare organizations, and educational institutions, including two terms on the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. She also helped start Access Ministries at two "mega-churches" – McLean Bible Church in the D.C.-metro, and Northland Church in the Orlando suburbs. As well, Ms. Starnes presents at conferences across the country on a wide range of disability and health care-related topics from an informed, lived experience perspective. At times it is a family affair with one or both of her children co-presenting with her. Linda Starnes enjoys life with her husband of 34 years, Tom, in Orlando, Florida.

Nancy Burling Torres

Nancy Torres Burling was born in Peru and moved at early age to Venezuela, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and her Master in Human Resources Management.

After 14 years working in Human Resource Area in both corporate and nonprofit organizations, Nancy moved to Miami, where their son Leonardo was born facing different developmental challenges.

Through this experience, Nancy has become an advocate for children with special needs and brings the family perspective into the several organizations she has joined as a Board Member: MDCPS Superintendent's District Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities; Parent to Parent of Miami (Secretary); Gordon School, Tikvah Center (Chair); University of Miami Mailman Advisory Council (MAC); Young Children with Special Needs and Disabilities Council, Florida Network on Disabilities, and Special Needs Advisory Board for the City of Doral.

Nancy completed the Emerging Transformational Leadership Program (ETLP) from the University of Miami, and works at the Mailman

Center for Child Development as the Family Navigator Program
Director.