



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities September 2026

President's Message



Dear CLD Colleagues,

Welcome to another year as a member of the Council for Learning Disabilities! I am honored and proud to serve as the president of the organization this year. We are welcoming many new co-chairs of our committees on the Board of Trustees (BOT). We

look forward to their new perspectives and are grateful for their willingness to lead. I am eager to work alongside all of you to strengthen and grow our organization.

I want to start by thanking Dr. Apryl L. Poch for her thoughtful leadership this past year. Apryl's focus on translational research, collaborative partnerships, and pathways to leadership has strengthened our organization. I look forward to building on the strong foundation she established.

As we work together this year, I want to focus on a few key priorities for 2026–2027. Now more than ever, our field needs a strong, trusted voice, and I hope to strengthen CLD's relevance and visibility within the field. I also want to grow and broaden our membership community, deepen our connections with members, and build partnerships with organizations that share our mission. Most importantly, I hope we keep learning from one another as experts across the broader field of learning disabilities. I am excited to share more about these priorities with you throughout the year, and I welcome your ideas and involvement as we work toward them together.

This fall, we look forward to seeing you at our 48th International Conference on Learning Disabilities on October 22–23 at the Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas. This year, our conference will offer a series of spotlight sessions on policy and advocacy for students with learning disabilities led by the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD). The conference also promises to offer engaging sessions around artificial intelligence (AI), from panels on teacher preparation to sessions exploring its role in academic learning and IEP development. The program will also include sessions on literacy, math, writing, executive functioning, teacher preparation, and diversity and inclusion for individuals with learning disabilities. Registration is open now, and early registration ends September 23, 2026. Be sure to register soon and confirm your membership is current to take advantage of the member rate. A discounted

hotel room block is available through September 30, 2026.

We are also proud to welcome Dr. Michael Kennedy of the University of Virginia as this year's J. Lee Wiederholt-Donald D. Hammill Distinguished Lecturer. His keynote promises to be a timely and thought-provoking session at our conference that you will not want to miss. Many thanks to Program Chair Nathan Stevenson and Conference Co-Chairs Randa Keeley and Cynthia Massey for their tireless work putting together this year's program, and to our Executive Director, Julie Cordell, for her ongoing support of our conference and organization.

If you are interested in volunteering at the conference, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Rebecca Shankland (shanklandrk@appstate.edu). Volunteers may register at a discounted rate, but please refrain from registering until you receive a Volunteer Code. We are also grateful to the organizations who support CLD through conference sponsorship, and we look forward to showcasing our sponsors at the conference.

The strength of CLD comes from its members. I encourage you to get involved this year by joining a committee, submitting a manuscript to *LD Forum* or one of our flagship journals (*Learning Disability Quarterly* or *Intervention in School and Clinic*), attending the conference in Fort Worth, or simply reaching out to share your ideas. I look forward to seeing many of you this October and to a year of continued growth and connection for our CLD community.

Sincerely,

Alyson A. Collins
2026–2027 CLD President

In This Issue . . .

President's Message	1
CLD 2026 Conference	2
Call for Nominations and Elections	3
CLD Mission & Vision	3
Diversity Statement.	3
Welcome to our New BOT Members	4
2026–2027 CLD Board of Trustees	5

REGISTRATION
IS OPEN:

COUNCIL-FOR-LEARNING-
DISABILITIES.ORG



JOIN US!

CLD 2026

Conference

SHERATON FORT WORTH DOWNTOWN HOTEL
FORT WORTH, TX

OCTOBER 22 & 23

Questions about the conference?

Please contact us at cld.intl.conference@gmail.com

Program Chair & President-Elect Nathan Stevenson

Conference Co-Chairs Randa Keeley & Cynthia Massey

CLD Executive Director Julie Cordell

J. LEE WIEDERHOLT-
DONALD D. HAMMILL
DISTINGUISHED
LECTURER

DR. MICHAEL KENNEDY

University of
Virginia (UVA)



Call for Nominations and Elections

The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) is seeking nominations for the roles of Vice President and Secretary of the Executive Committee. The Vice President serves a one-year term and succeeds to the positions of President-Elect, President, and Past President over the next three years. The Vice President will serve as the program chair for the 2028 Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities, which includes soliciting and reviewing proposals, collaborating with the Conference Planning Committee to develop the conference schedule, and coordinating logistics with key stakeholders. Further, the Vice President assists in the planning and preparing of the plan of operation, charges to committees, and annual CLD budget, and serves in the President's place and with his/her authority in case of absence or disability of the President and President-Elect.

The Secretary serves a three-year term and is responsible for keeping records of the annual business, Board of Trustees, and Executive Committee meetings, including all reports filed; sending copies of all records to members of the Board of Trustees no later than 15 working days after each meeting; and maintaining a permanent file of the records of all meetings to be passed on to the next person elected to the position of Secretary.

In accordance with the Bylaws, nominees must have experience serving on a standing committee, the Board of Trustees at the national level, or the Executive Committee of an affiliated chapter. Both positions begin July 1, 2027.

To run for either position, nominees must consent to the nomination to stand for election, submit at least five signatures from current members of CLD on the official nomination form, and share a brief biographical sketch that includes qualifications to serve. Nomination forms will be submitted to the Nominations and Elections Committee for verification prior to the business meeting held at the annual CLD conference. At that meeting, the slate of candidates will introduce themselves and discuss their goals for service on the Executive Committee. Elections will occur in early 2027.

If interested in running for office, and to obtain a copy of the nomination form, please contact Dr. Apryl Poch, CLD Past President and Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee at apoch@unomaha.edu. Nominations for offices will be accepted until the Annual Business Meeting (held at the CLD conference), at which time the nomination period will close.

CLD Mission & Vision

Mission Statement: The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD), an international organization composed of professionals who represent diverse disciplines, is committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities across the life span. CLD accomplishes this by promoting and disseminating evidence-based research and practices related to the education of individuals with learn-

ing disabilities. In addition, CLD fosters (a) collaboration among professionals; (b) development of leaders in the field; and (c) advocacy for policies that support individuals with learning disabilities at local, state, and national levels.

Vision Statement: All individuals with learning disabilities are empowered to achieve their potential.

Diversity Statement

The Council for Learning Disabilities is committed to celebrating and enriching the field of special education through its diversity. As a group, we pursue the best practices, research, and policies that exemplify enhancing the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a diverse group of professionals in the field of special education, we believe that this work cannot be completed in a silo, but rather, it must be embedded within every part of what we do. As an organization, we are committed to welcoming, understanding, learning about, and honoring individual diversity.

Welcome to Our New Board of Trustees Members

LD Forum would like to introduce you to some new BOT members... please say hello during our conference!



Dr. David Miranda

Dr. David Miranda, Membership Committee co-chair for CLD. I am an assistant professor in special education at the University of West Georgia. I'm excited to find creative ways to increase CLD's membership and the value that CLD members can receive from being a part of CLD! I thank Dr. Catharine Lory for her guidance and service on the Membership Committee.



Dr. Benikia Kressler

Hello, I am Dr. Benikia Kressler, the new co-chair of the Diversity Committee. I am an associate professor of special education at California State University, Fullerton. As a new co-chair with Dr. Yan Wei, I am excited to welcome returning and new members, continue and start scholarship, and engage in service centered on issues of diversity, anti-racism, and disability critical race theory (DisCrit) practices.



Dr. Yan Wei

I am a professor of inclusive education and behavior science at Southern Connecticut State University. Currently, I serve as co-chair of the CLD Diversity Committee. I have been a member of CLD since 2012 and an active member in the Diversity Committee since 2018. What I value most about the CLD is its organizational structure and continuous support for its members. CLD has been playing a pivotal role throughout my professional journey, from my graduate studies to early career mentorship and mid-career collabora-

tions. Through CLD conferences and activities, I've had the privilege of connecting with many outstanding researchers and collaborators. I am very honored to serve as a new BOT member and look forward to serving.



Dr. Danielle Frith

I am excited to begin my new role as co-chair of the Leadership Development Committee for the Council for Learning Disabilities alongside my co-chair, Dr. Rajiv Satsangi. In this role, I help identify and support emerging leaders through the Leadership Institute and Leadership Academy while advancing initiatives that strengthen leadership development across CLD. I am an assistant professor of special education at Monmouth University and a state and nationally recognized educational diagnostician. In addition to my service with CLD, I serve on the boards of the New Jersey branch of the International Dyslexia Association (NJIDA) and the National Certification for Educational Diagnosticians (NCED). My research focuses on educational assessment, literacy and dyslexia, learning disabilities, special education technology, and teacher preparation. Through my scholarship, teaching, and professional service, I am committed to advancing evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for students with disabilities.



Rajiv Satsangi

I am associate professor of special education at George Mason University. I currently serve as co-chair of the Leadership Development Committee with Dr. Danielle Frith. Together, we oversee the annual CLD Leadership Institute and Leadership Academy.

2026–2027 CLD Board of Trustees

Executive Committee

President

Alyson Collins, PhD
Texas State University
alysonacollins@txstate.edu

President-Elect

Nathan Stevenson, PhD
Kent State University
nsteve15@kent.edu

Vice President

Nancy Nelson
Boston University
njnelson@bu.edu

Past President

Apryl L. Poch, PhD
University of Nebraska-Omaha
apoch@unomaha.edu

Treasurer

Rebecca Shankland, PhD
Appalachian State University
shanklandrk@appstate.edu

Interim Secretary

Alex Smith, PhD
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
alex.smith@unlv.edu

Executive Director

Julie Cordell
jcordellcld@gmail.com

Standing Committee Chairs

Affiliated Partners

Kat Pfannenstiel, PhD
American Institutes for Research
kat.hughes79@gmail.com

Research

Anna Gibbs, PhD
Tennessee Reading Research Center
agibbs14@utk.edu

Soyoung Park, PhD

University of Central Florida
soyoung.park@ucf.edu

Leadership Development

Rajiv Satsangi, PhD
George Mason University
rsatsang@gmu.edu

Danielle Frith, PhD

Monmouth University
frith.daniellem@gmail.com

Liaison

Roberta Strosnider, EdD
Towson University
rstrosnider@towson.edu

Debi Gartland, PhD

Towson University
dgartland@towson.edu

Membership/Recruitment

Kimberly McFadden

Iowa Reading Research Center,
University of Iowa
kimberly-mcfadden@uiowa.edu

David Miranda, PhD

University of West Georgia
dmiranda@westga.edu

Conference

Randa Keeley, PhD
Texas Woman's University
rkeeley@twu.edu

Cynthia Massey, PhD

Georgia Southern University
cynthiamassey@georgiasouthern.edu

Finance

Rebecca Shankland, PhD
Appalachian State University
shanklandrk@appstate.edu

Diversity

Benikia Kressler, PhD
Cal State Fullerton University
bkressler@fullerton.edu

Yan Wei, PhD

Monmouth University
weiy2@southernct.edu

Information and Communication Technology Committee

Mikyung Shin

Illinois State University
mshin2@ilstu.edu

Publication Editors

LDQ Editor

Diane P. Bryant, PhD
Retired
pedrotty1@gmail.com

LDQ Associate Editor

Sam Choo, PhD
University of Minnesota
schoo@umn.edu

LD Forum Editor

Alex Smith, PhD
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
alex.smith@unlv.edu

LD Forum Assistant Editor

Amy Kunkel
University of Minnesota
hear0045@umn.edu

ISC Co-Editors

Robbie J. Marsh, PhD
Mercer University
marsh_rj@mercer.edu

Shobana Musti, PhD

Pace University
smusti@pace.edu

Other Positions

Archivist

Meijia Liu
meijia.liu@utexas.edu

Social Media Editor

Latesha Watson
latesha.watson@temple.edu

— CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA —

We're building something special—and it begins with you!

Connect with us on social media. Follow, Like, Repost, Comment, Tag, and Subscribe @CLDintl on Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter) and Bluesky.

