



College Autism Network News and Notes

September 2026

The Summit is in Sight. Look Up!



We like to think of these last two months of planning the Summit as our quality time at Base Camp. We're sleeping in our tents, making meals over an unreliable gas stove, filtering our water from a nearby glacial stream. And every morning, we step out of our sleeping bags and gaze longingly at...The Summit! Ropes at the ready, crampons strapped to our boots (which is tough on our floor), ice axes positioned to arrest the occasional slip and fall, we begin our ascent.



We hope you're with us! Here are a few reasons to gather your gear and come to Baltimore November 8-11. **Early Bird rates end September 7.**

[Preconference sessions](#)

- Building Blocks for New and Emerging Programs. If you're starting a program, sign up for this incredibly valuable afternoon of planning and guidance.
- Program Leaders' Collaborative. The topic is program evaluation and improvement, the format is highly interactive

Newsletter Highlights

The Summit is in Sight.
Look Up! Rate Changes
September 7th

The Next CANVAS
Presentation: Integrating
Chatbots to Support
Autistic Students

SkillFlix: Great Training
Videos Now Available --
Free for CAN Members

Where's Brad? Announcing
our Founders Corner

CAN Opens a Swag Shop!



and a great opportunity to make new connections and strengthen the old ones.

- Summit Student Experience. An afternoon of content and networking to begin a student's Summit journey. We offer a 50% discount on registration to full-time students--graduate and undergraduate--to attend the Summit because we want to start your career as an autism support professional off well. This precon helps that happen.

[One Terrific Postcon Session on Employment](#)

- If you're seeking to improve your employment know-how and serve students looking for work, you'll want to stick around after lunch on Wednesday for the Employer Connection Series (free for Summit attendees)

[Keynote speakers](#)

- We'll open on Monday with an entertaining and informative conversation with three important voices in our field: Drs. Jane Thierfeld Brown, Perry LaRoque and Brad Cox. Stories will be told. Secrets will be revealed.
- We'll close on Wednesday with the author of the new book "The Autistic Adult's Toolbox," Natalie Diggins.

[Plenary sessions](#)

- Mentoring and Supporting the Profession's Next Generation of Leaders: Graduate Students. A panel discussion with mentors and mentees.
- Tech-n-Tools Deep Dive Demo: A chance to hear about some of the new technology and other tools making a difference for autistic students.
- Not Your Average Career Path: Empowering Autistic Students to Redefine Professional Success. Hear from those who do the work of transitioning students into the workforce.
- Finding Connection and Comfort: Belonging and Sensory Wellbeing on Campus. This interactive panel explores how colleges and universities can foster genuine belonging and sensory comfort for autistic students.

[Poster Session and Reception](#), because learning takes place more effectively with hors d'oeuvres in hand.



Concurrent sessions

And in between all of that, 60...we said 60! concurrent sessions to choose from. Here are a few session titles:

- Agency vs. Autonomy: Autistic Students' Experiences with the Myth of Independence
- Applied Inclusion: Real Scenarios, Real Solutions for Supporting Autism at Work
- Be Ready, Be Well: Transition Strategies for Families of Autistic Students
- Unseen and Unheard: Lived Experiences of Autistic Black Male Students
- "They Said I'd Always Struggle:" Singing My Way to a Degree and How Music is Advantageous to the Autistic Brain

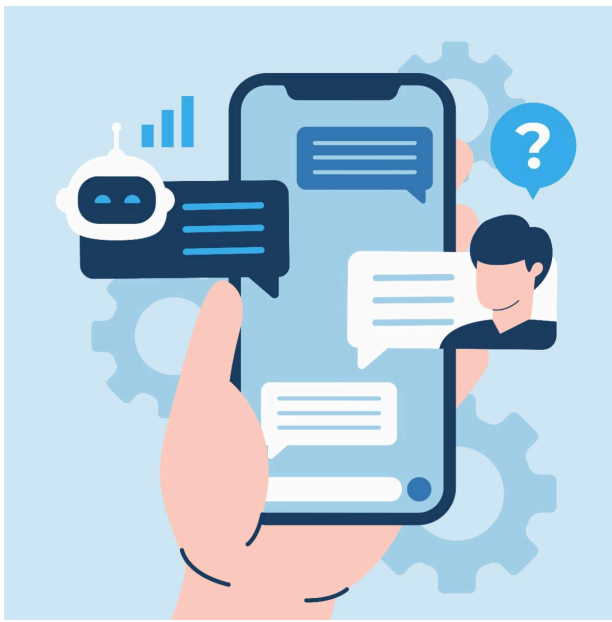
But wait, there's more! A fab low-sensory room, therapy dogs, our annual awards, dinners out with old and new friends, exhibitor tables with cool swag, and three tasty lunches. All of this in the vibrant city of Baltimore, nicknamed "Charm City," birthplace of the National Anthem and ouija boards, home to the Ravens, Orioles and America's first umbrella factory.



Join our expedition to the Summit! And don't worry--the hotel elevators will help with the climbing. More details about everything can be found [on our website](#). We hope to see you in Baltimore! **Early Bird rates end September 7.**

Register Now!

CANVAS Presentation on Chatbots



Thursday, September 10 at 11 am ET

Join us for the next CANVAS presentation. Dr. Hun Baum Lee (Associate Professor of Research, University of Texas San Antonio) and Dr. Humberto Peña, Jr. (Assistant Professor, University of Texas San Antonio) will present on *Integrating Chatbots: Supporting the College Transition for Autistic Students in Texas*

The [meeting agenda](#) can be found here, and please sign up if you plan to attend. And here's the [meeting link](#). To be added to the CANVAS mailing list, please contact [Brett Nachman](#).

SkillFlix: Great Training Videos Now Available-- Free for CAN Members



The College Autism Network has partnered with SkillFlix to bring CAN members a curated resource library designed specifically for autistic young adults and the staff who

support them in higher education and autism-specific programs.

SkillFlix AYA is a video library of 150+ Microskills® videos supporting autistic young adults in developing communication and relationship-focused skills at their own pace. The "CAN Member AYA Playlist" includes 10 SkillFlix videos designed specifically to support autistic young adults to *build career readiness skills and feel more confident navigating relationships* - available exclusively to CAN members at no cost. These videos value a neurodiversity-affirming approach. There are several characters that show autistic young adults navigating conversations and common situations using specific skills and strategies.

We hope these videos offer neurodivergent people a menu of skills to pull from based on their individual needs and capacity to manage different types of social interactions. We include resources such as written information and useful links, to help you build knowledge and understanding to apply the skills steps across various situations.

We hope that these videos can help folks meet their goals and communicate with confidence. For more information and to access the videos, [visit our website](#).

Where's Brad? Announcing our Founder's Corner



The College Autism Network was founded in 2016 by Brad Cox, now an Associate Professor at Michigan State University.

We like to keep track of Brad--no easy feat!--so we've given him his own [spot on our website](#) and his own playlist on our YouTube channel. Not as much fun as "Where's Waldo," but close.

CAN Opens a Swag Shop!



If you'd like to help promote CAN by wearing some CAN-branded clothing, we've got you covered (literally).

[Visit our CAN Sideline Store](#) to order sweatshirts, t-shirts, fleeces, hats, tanks, hoodies--you name it. Three logo options available--our colorful network globe-wearing-mortarboard, a single-colored logo with our name, or, for a limited time only, the 2026 Summit logo.

A portion of the proceeds helps support CAN's work, so place your order! All the cool kids have CAN swag. And a special thanks to Alli MacNamara of St. Joseph's University's Kinney Center for setting this up for us.

CAN's newsletter is published monthly by the [College Autism Network](#), an independent 501(c)3 organization supporting the success of autistic college students and the professionals who work with them. Want to share an article? Feature an upcoming event? Post a job opportunity in autism support services? Our monthly newsletter reaches over 3000 self-advocates and professionals. Send it [to Lee](#) and we'll share it.

Was someone nice enough to forward this newsletter to you? We're happy to add you to our mailing list to receive it directly. [Send us a note.](#)

If you appreciate our work, please consider [joining CAN](#) to receive additional information and discounts on some of our resources and to support our work. Individual and organizational memberships are available.

The [College Autism Network](#) is supported by the [Frist Center for Autism and Innovation](#) at Vanderbilt University.

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