

Presenters' Photos and Bios



[Image description: Picture of an African American woman with black shoulder length hair, wearing a blue and green striped shirt, and smiling.]

Dr. Lissa D. Stapleton is an assistant professor at California State University Northridge in the Department of Deaf Studies. Her research focuses on equity and access, identity development, and the educational history of Deaf students, faculty, and staff with a particular interest in the intersections of race, gender, and disability. Her desire to support Deaf college students of color, lead Stapleton to pursue her doctorate at Iowa State University. She graduated in 2014 with her Ph.D. in Education with an emphasis in Higher Education and Social Justice and a minor in Women's Studies. She won the 2015 Melvene D. Hardee NASPA Dissertation of the Year award and was a 2018 Ford Postdoctoral Fellow and Penn Center for Minority Serving Institution Elevate Fellow. She is currently a 2019 Nancy Weiss Malkiel Scholar and is working on historical project that explores the connections between Historical Black Colleges and Universities and Black Deaf education. Previously, Stapleton worked in student affairs at various institutions and with Semester at Sea. She is involved with the Association for the Study of

Higher Education and the National Black Deaf Advocates. She earned her M.S.E. in College Student Personnel from the University of Dayton and B.S. in Social Work from Wright State University.



[Image description: Picture of a Latina woman with light brown shoulder length hair, wearing a blue top and black jacket, and smiling.]

Chair and Associate Professor of Education Leadership
Director of the Autism and Communication Center

Dr. Edlyn Peña is the Chair, Director, and Associate Professor of the Education Leadership doctoral program at California Lutheran University. She is an award-winning researcher who studies ways to support the transition and success of autistic students in the preschool through higher education pipeline. Her newly edited book, “Communication Alternatives in Autism” (2019), features ten prominent autistic individuals who advocate for communication and

inclusion rights. As a scholar and director of the Autism and Communication Center, a university and community resource center, Dr. Peña's service and contributions to the autism community has reached international audiences. Please visit www.edlynpena.com for more information about her advocacy efforts. Visit www.callutheran.edu/autism for more information about Autism and Communication Center events.



[Image description: Picture of a white woman with dark brown shoulder length hair, wearing glasses and a black jacket, and smiling.]

Dr. Kirsten R. Brown is a faculty member at Edgewood College. Her research focuses on disability and educational systems, neurodiversity, and constructions of ability. Dr. Brown's publications include a co-authored book, *Disability in higher education: A social justice approach* (2017) and articles in the *Journal of College Student Development*, *Journal of Community College Research and Practice*, and *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*. Dr. Brown is dyslexic. Her current projects include exploring the residential living experiences of students with disabilities, understanding disability as method, and critically examining the place of 2-year colleges in relation to disability. Dr. Brown completed her PhD in Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs at Bowling Green State University, holds a masters in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and a BS from Carroll College.

