



September 2021

vol 11, no 17

# The Focus



Oregon APSE  
Special Virtual Event

September 21, 2021 | 9am

**Register Now!**

Students: \$10 | APSE members: \$25  
General: \$50 (\$60 after September 1st)  
OR APSE Members received a discount code by email  
Don't miss this one-time event! Event will not be recorded



Guest Speaker

**Marlee Matlin**

Academy Award Winning Actress & Activist

Starring in the recently released and highly acclaimed movie, **CODA**, winning the Grand Jury Prize at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival, Academy Award Winning Actress, Author and Activist, **Marlee Matlin** will share her story, boldly challenging us to advocate inclusion, acceptance, and access for all people. She asks that we live a life without judgement of others: everybody's different, and nobody's perfect.

Marlee Matlin is one of the most dynamic keynote speakers in the world. She never let her loss of hearing deter her dreams. In her movie debut at only 21 years old, she won the Academy Award for Best Actress for **Children of a Lesser God**. More recently, in 2015, she developed "Marlee Signs," the first celebrity-driven app teaching basics of American Sign Language (ASL). In 2016, Matlin returned for her 3rd Super Bowl appearance singing the National Anthem alongside Lady Gaga. She has too many award winning roles to mention here but she returned to the stage in 2015 after a 30 year hiatus and made her Broadway debut in the revival of the Tony Award-winning musical **Spring Awakening**.



Oregon APSE

oregonapse.org

The Focus  
September 2021



Along with her successful Hollywood career, Matlin has dedicated her life to **humanitarian causes**, including raising awareness for diversity and LGBT rights. She is a staunch advocate for children and a champion for those struggling against domestic abuse and addiction; these are causes she has advocated for a very long time. Matlin has also raised awareness for better hearing health for millions of deaf and hard of hearing children and adults in developing countries, in support of the [Starkey Hearing Foundation](#).

Oregon APSE is honored to host Marlee Matlin who will inspire you to make a difference in the world. **Submit your questions for Marlee Matlin ahead of time** at [oregonapse@gmail.com](mailto:oregonapse@gmail.com). **Click here for registration** to join us for this Special Virtual Event.



## A Highlight of the 2021 Oregon Legislative Session Funding Direct Support Professional (DSP) Wages

The 2021 Legislative Session wrapped up on June 26th this year. There were many highlights from this five-month long virtual session, including a positive revenue outlook that led to much-needed investments in Direct Support Professional (DSP) Wages and the passage of other important bills. All of these bills have significant impact on APSE's values and the disability community in Oregon. If interested, you can find a complete list [here](#).

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) provide crucial supports to people with developmental disabilities at home, at work and in our communities. For years due to low wages there has been a DSP staffing crisis that has created a cycle of turn-over. This crisis leaves people with disabilities who use these services stuck explaining the personal details of their support needs repeatedly to a revolving door of strangers. The legislative allotment of additional funding will be a tremendous support for direct support professionals who have been historically underpaid.

GET INVOLVED with OREGON APSE

- ★ Attend APSE Hour
- ★ Volunteer for a Committee
- ★ Run for the Governing Board
- ★ Attend or teach a Training

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 21 - \*SPECIAL EVENT\*- GUEST SPEAKER, Marlee Matlin followed by the Oregon APSE Annual Meeting (all are welcome to join, [click for registration link](#)) 9:00-11:00 AM.**

**OCTOBER IS DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH**

**October 6 — Speaker TBA APSE Hour 4-5pm.**



Oregon APSE

oregonapse.org

The Focus  
September 2021



The legislature has agreed to create a historic investment in Direct Support Professional wages:

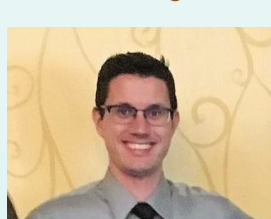
- Starting July 1, 2021, DD provider rates will increase by 3.2%.
- Starting July 1, 2022, the DD Provider rate model will be fully funded. This means the average DSP wage included in rate structures will go from \$14.16 per hour to \$17.28 per hour.

In doing this investment, the Legislature created a budget note to explain its intent as follows: "It is the Legislature's intent to fully fund provider rates for adult and children's group home services, day support services, employment services, attendant care, supported living and non-medical transportation." You can find more in-depth data on the DSP wage investment [here](#)

by Oregon APSE Public Policy Chair, Ryley Newport

## A Deeper Look into Autism, Part 1

by APSE Member, Eric Thompson



**Eric Thompson**

Want to know more? email me at [runningeagle.eric@gmail.com](mailto:runningeagle.eric@gmail.com)

**When you think of the word "Autism" what comes to your mind?**

Autism is a disability and for many it's a challenge. To me, autism is a disability, change, and an opportunity. There is no cure for autism but it is possible to manage it. I manage by using my skills and abilities and involving myself in other things. My skills and abilities also help me manage my time. Some of my skills include playing the piano, watching TV shows, reading a book and listening to music while working at home.

**What are common traits for people with autism?**

People with autism commonly have what I call "Autism moments". These include obsession, sensitivity, isolation, interest, trying new and different things, resistance, and stubbornness.

**How did your life change when you graduated from high school?**

When I graduated from high school my friends left and I was alone. I needed to figure out what to do next. Special Olympics gave me an opportunity to compete in different sports. Living Opportunities (organization for people with disabilities) helped me find a job and to get started on my first job. I've had many challenges but have been able to overcome them.

**What were other resources that you used after high school?**

In addition to having a job I participated in two groups: Both of these made a tremendous impact on how I communicated with others. At the time I was talking about myself and eventually learned to ask questions of others. The Social Group was at a place called The Speech Center Plus where I learned from a speech pathologist. She helped me understand what communication is and also provided a course manual called Healthy Relationships where I learned the difference between a personal and professional relationship. **(to be continued in Nov. 2021, edition).**

