



SILO's 2024 Self-Advocacy Conference Agenda

8:00am-8:45am- Registration & Breakfast

9:00am-9:15am- Introduction (*Ballroom*)

9:15am-9:45am- **Opening Keynote -**

Melissa Firmes, Executive Director, President/ Co-Founder and Champion of Fun & Friendship at *KiDS NEED MoRE* (*Ballroom*)

10:00am-10:45am- **Workshop Session I**

1. Voting: Know Your Rights (*Room 1*)

2. Dignified Healthcare Committee Panel (*Room 2*)

3. Women's Group; It's the Body Image, Not the wheelchair (*Ballroom*)

11:00am-11:45am- **Break/Networking**

11:50am-12:50pm- **Lunch** (*Ballroom*)

1:00pm-1:45pm- **Workshop Session II**

4. Building Community Friendships and Reducing Isolation Through Recreation (*Room 1*)

5. Inclusive Housing Utilizing OPWDD Self Directed Services (*Ballroom*)

6. Cultural Competency (*Room 2*)

2:00pm-2:30pm- **Closing Keynote -**

Pamela Schuller, Disability and Mental Health Advocate and Professional Stand up Comedian (*Ballroom*)

There is to be no soliciting unless you are a paid sponsor. Photographs are permitted, however, videotaping during the conference is prohibited.

Self-Initiated Living Options, Inc. (SILO) has been providing programs and services to people with disabilities in Suffolk County since 1985. We have since expanded our range of services to include Nassau County. SILO is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, consumer controlled, non-residential, civil rights, mentoring and educational organization. SILO's philosophy is tied to the nationwide Independent Living Movement which asserts that people with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities, needs and desires, as their non-disabled peers.

Board of Directors

Board Chair

MaryAnn Sciacca

Board Vice Chair

Roger Smith

Secretary & Board Clerk

Lori Connelly

Members

Sophia Ardi

Dawn Cookler

Krista Giannak

Peter Raymond

Barry Rosenthal

Anna Maria Trimboli

Chief Executive Officer

Joseph M. Delgado

SILO

3253 Route 112, Bldg 10

Medford, New York 11763

(631) 880-7929

www.siloinc.org

SILO's Self-Advocacy Conference 2024

Please join SILO, along with guest speakers, workshop facilitators, professionals, community members and their families, in sharing experiences on empowerment through self-advocacy for people with disabilities!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18TH 2024

8:00AM-2:30PM

BELLPORT COUNTRY CLUB

40 S. COUNTRY RD.

BELLPORT, NY 11713

WWW.SILOINC.ORG/SELFADVOCACYCONFERENCE



Self-Initiated Living Options, Inc.
education - advocacy - empowerment

SPEAKERS

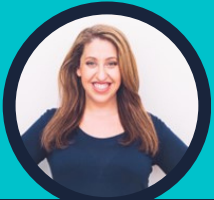
Melissa Firmes

Executive Director, President/
Co-Founder and Champion
of Fun & Friendship at
KiDS NEED MoRE



Melissa Firmes is a chaos organizer extraordinaire, a title earned through her ability to bring order, joy, and laughter to the most challenging situations. Melissa has been a dedicated advocate for children and families. Her efforts have always centered around creating safe and joyful spaces for those facing serious illness.

Melissa's life changed dramatically when she was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML), leading to a stem cell transplant. This experience marked a profound shift, compelling her to leave the corporate world and fully embrace the support systems she had been cultivating for others. In 2012, she co-founded KiDS NEED MoRE (Motivational Recovery Environments, Inc.), an organization that continues to transform lives by providing recreational and supportive programs for families coping with serious illnesses.



Pamela Schuller

Disability and Mental Health
Advocate and Professional
Stand up Comedian

Pamela Rae Schuller had the most severe documented case of Tourette syndrome in the nation, coupled with a touch of OCD and a whole lot of anger. She grew up wishing away her differences. But when Pamela began reframing her life, harnessing her adversities as the driving force behind her journey, she experienced a transformative shift. She now stands as a globally recognized disability and mental health advocate and professional stand-up comedian. Her engaging, funny, and powerful stories resonate with audiences worldwide, and she is an expert at translating her expertise into a repertoire that imparts pride in young people, fosters profound inclusivity in communities, and inspires innovation in corporate teams, compelling them to make strategic and audacious moves to strengthen their team through inclusive efforts.



Workshop Descriptions and Presenters

Voting: Know Your Rights

Time: 10-10:45am

Breakout Room 1

Facilitators: Helen Hellmuth and Jenessa Seymour, Disability Rights New York

Learn about voting rights and accessibility, including physical accessibility of polling places, the use of Ballot Marking Devices, absentee ballots, and what you can do if you witness a violation.

Dignified Healthcare Committee Panel

Time: 10-10:45am

Breakout Room 2

Facilitator: Justin Ainsworth, SILO

The Dignified Health Care Committee is a committee developed by people with disabilities who are concerned about our community receiving health care which recognizes our disabilities and provides accommodations for them.

Women's Group; It's the Body Image, not the Wheelchair

Time: 10-10:45am

Ballroom

Facilitator: Roberta Karant with Melissa Firmes of Kids Need More

Body Image through the decades and how we use body image to empower each other through identification and common themes.

Building Community Friendships and Reducing Isolation Through Recreation

Time: 1-1:45pm

Breakout Room 1

Facilitator: Ira Dunne, The Social Brain

Building a network of opportunities to find new friends makes a big difference in emotional well-being and how individuals view themselves, they have a connection with others and find that friendships come before disability.

Inclusive Housing Utilizing OPWDD Self Directed Services

Time: 1-1:45pm

Ballroom

Facilitator: Trish Calandra, THRIVE

This discussion will help participants and families understand how to utilize Self Directed services for creative, sustainable options for inclusive, supported housing and living in the communities of their choice.

Cultural Competency

Time: 1-1:45pm

Breakout Room 2

Facilitators: Codi Hill and Kaitlin Perrino, SILO

Focuses on the subtleties of cultural competency and the relationship between a person's self-identity and their culture and disabilities. It entails comprehending and appreciating the attitudes, values, and beliefs of various cultural groups.

Conference Sponsors



(BRONZE SPONSOR)

BRANDOW LAW

(TABLE SPONSORS)

-ELARA CARING NETWORK

-RES HOME CARE

**-GURWIN JEWISH NURSING AND
REHABILITATION CENTER**

**-FAMILY RESIDENCES AND ESSENTIAL
ENTERPRISES (FREE)**

-COMMUNITY CARE COMPANIONS

-NYSARC TRUST SERVICES

-ALLEGIAN HOME CARE

Thank You!

**For a TEXT-ONLY brochure for
zoom-in capabilities or screen readers,
go to www.siloinc.org/textonlybrochure**