



## Participant Biographies, Town Hall Panel Discussion

### Fran Levin Bowman, Ed.D.

Dr. Bowman is a Fellow in the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, and has over 39 years experience in teaching, testing, and guiding families of children with learning differences. In 1983 she opened Bowman Educational Services, Inc. to provide testing and tutoring services. To share her knowledge, Dr. Bowman has written **Bowman's Orton-Gillingham "Plus" Guidebook**. Dr. Bowman has a master's degree in Special Education with a specialty in Educational Diagnosis, and a Doctorate in Educational Administration. She is an adjunct faculty member in the Graduate Department of Education at Goucher College in Towson. Dr. Bowman has also been a recipient of the R.M.N. Crosby Lifetime Achievement in Education Award and the Keeper of the Creek Teacher Training Award from the Radcliffe Creek School for Dyslexic Children.

### Deborah Weiner

Deborah Weiner is an anchor and reporter at WBAL-TV and a Baltimore native. Ms. Weiner has spent more than 25 years in television after graduating from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. While she has won numerous awards for her reporting, her proudest accomplishments are her two children, Mia and Alex.

### Katharina Boser, Ph.D.

Dr. Boser specializes in working with technology and students who struggle with communication and language. She is currently the technology coordinator and a teacher at the Glenelg Country School in Ellicott City, MD, and president of Individual Differences in Learning, Inc., an educational non-profit in Maryland providing professional development to teachers and parents regarding brain-based teaching techniques. Dr. Boser received her Ph.D. in Developmental and Cognitive Psychology from Cornell University and completed a post doctorate at the University of Maryland studying language rehabilitation using computing technologies for patients with aphasia. Dr. Boser is also a board member of the Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center (ASDEC) in Rockville, MD.

### Paul Nebel

Paul Nebel is a junior at Chopticon High School in St. Mary's County where he is the Captain of the JV soccer team and leads a Fellowship of Christian Athletes group. Mr. Nebel plays the violin and enjoys working with his hands -- he is a creative and talented wood and leather worker. For fun, he likes airsoft combat games and often travels with friends to Virginia to compete on an outdoor field with 150 other people.

### Christine Bellotti

Christine Bellotti is the mother of two children who attend Montgomery County Public Schools. Her ten-year-old son is dyslexic and was identified with a specific learning disability in February 2014. Ms. Bellotti is the bookkeeper for the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, a nonprofit headquartered in Kensington, Maryland.

### Lavaunda Roundtree, M.Ed.

Lavaunda Roundtree has a Master's Degree in Special Education from the University of Maryland and has been educating students with special learning needs for 18 years. When she realized that some of her students had dyslexia and she couldn't teach them to read, she sought out specialized Orton-Gillingham training and recently received training to become an Academic Therapist. Ms. Roundtree is a middle school special education teacher in Anne Arundel County, and also tutors students after school. Ms. Roundtree was appointed to the Maryland Dyslexia Education Task Force that is charged with developing a pilot program to identify and educate students with dyslexia in Maryland Public Schools.

## **Donald Bolger, Ph.D.**

Dr. Bolger is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland College Park where he studies how the human brain learns to read. Using structural and functional MRI, he is able to compare what happens in the brains of skilled and disabled readers, and understand how impairment and remediation are reflected in the cortex of the brain. Dr. Bolger earned his Ph.D. in Cognitive Neuroscience from the University of Pittsburgh and his bachelor's degree in Psychology and Education from the University of Massachusetts. Dr. Bolger is an affiliate of the Center for Advanced Study of Language and a founding member of the Maryland Neuroimaging Center.

## **Mary Murray Stowe, M.Ed.**

Mary Stowe is a reading and inclusion specialist at the Training & Technical Assistance Center at the College of William and Mary. She provides support to Virginia teachers with secondary reading instruction, collaboration/co-teaching, inclusive practices, and best practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities. Ms. Stowe earned her B.A. and M.Ed. from James Madison University, with additional certification work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has worked in both general and special education with a focus on reading skills and strategic reading instruction. Ms. Stowe is the past president of the Alabama Branch of the International Dyslexia Association.

## **Marilyn Zecher, M.A., CALT**

Marilyn Zecher is a nationally certified academic language therapist, former classroom educator/demonstration teacher, teacher trainer and frequent presenter at conferences including national presentations for the International Dyslexia Association, Learning Disabilities Association and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. She specializes in multisensory strategies for reaching all learners, but which are essential for meeting the needs of students with learning differences. She holds an advanced professional teaching certificate in the state of Maryland and currently offers workshops and classes in literacy skills, written language, study skills and graduate level methods courses in Multisensory Math. She is currently the president of the DC Capital Area Branch of the International Dyslexia Association.

## **Amy Siracusano, M.Ed.**

Amy Siracusano has been an elementary educator in New York and Maryland for the past 16 years. She has a bachelor's degree in 1960's American History and Secondary Education from Stony Brook University, and a master's degree in Elementary Education from Dowling College. Ms. Siracusano has been a fourth grade teacher, a learning specialist, a Title I teacher, school dean and is now the vice principal at Patuxent Appeal Elementary Campus in Calvert County. Ms. Siracusano is an adjunct instructor with McDaniel College in Westminster, MD teaching graduate courses in reading instruction; and a continuing professional development course instructor in Calvert County. Ms. Siracusano was appointed to the Maryland Dyslexia Education Task Force that is charged with developing a pilot program to identify and educate students with dyslexia in Maryland Public Schools.

## **Lisa Blottenberger, Laura Schultz; Decoding Dyslexia Maryland**

Both Lisa and Laura are Maryland natives and parents of students with dyslexia whose children attend Maryland public schools. Lisa and Laura started Decoding Dyslexia Maryland after attending the International Dyslexia Association meeting in late 2012 and meeting other parents from across the country whose kids struggled with reading, writing, spelling and calculation. Since 2012, Decoding Dyslexia has grown from 2 families to more than 500 families who participate in 8 regional parent and teacher leadership groups across the state. DD-MD collaborates with organization that want to improve reading for all students and both Lisa and Laura were appointed by the Governor to the Dyslexia Education Task Force.