

# THE TRAVERSE CONNECT 2022 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING SUMMIT

# SESSION 2

## DISABILITY NETWORK SPEAKERS

### **Alanna Lahey - Associate Director**

Alanna graduated from Tulane University with a BA in Psychology and Sociology and a JD from Syracuse University. As a Traverse City native, Alanna was eager to return home to scenic Northern Michigan and the amazing community after tackling life in the deep south and the northeast. Those life journeys inspired an immense passion for civil rights and social justice: working to remove barriers, facilitating equality and empowering others in self-advocacy. She enjoys exploring new places and meeting new people while traveling, taking time for self-reflection in the great outdoors and most importantly, appreciating moments shared with her friends, family and rescue pooch, Alfie.

### **Demarie Jones - Independent Living Resource Specialist**

Demarie received her Master's in Social Work from Grand Valley University. Demarie has been advocating for people in the mental health systems for years. She is also involved with poverty issues in Leelanau County. Demarie enjoys her work at Disability Network, working with people to help them remove barriers and live full lives in their communities. In her spare time, she teaches fiber arts and tends to her animals on her fiber farm.

### **John Burtrum - Employment Specialist**

John graduated from Western Michigan University with a BA in Sociology. He has a passion for working with people with disabilities and has many years of experience providing them support in different ways. John is committed to the person-centered approach for program planning, support and services provided to people with disabilities. Prior to joining Disability Network, John was a director for an Independent Living Services program for people with developmental disabilities in Sacramento, CA. John and his family recently relocated back to Michigan from Auburn, CA to be close to family. He is very excited to be back in Michigan and happy to call Traverse City his home. John enjoys spending his free time with his wife and two kids.

### **Sherrie Goff-Hoogerhyde - Employment Specialist**

Sherrie graduated from Grand Valley State University with a Master's degree in Social Work. She has resided in Northern Michigan her entire life and has worked in a variety of fields including the court system, Community Mental Health, private agencies, schools, adult foster facility, foster care and adoption agencies. Sherrie was hired in December 2014. She serves as Outreach Coordinator to seven counties in northeast Michigan and serves as an Independent Living Specialist on the east side of the state. Sherrie is happily married and enjoys her large family. She loves assisting the most vulnerable clients and enjoys learning from them too.

## UPBOUND AT WORK SPEAKERS

**Kelly Blakeslee** is the Upbound Manager for Upbound at Work, the employment program for the Autism Alliance of Michigan. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, and a Limited Licensed Professional Counselor. Kelly works with neurodiverse candidates to prepare for and obtain competitive integrated employment. She collaborates with agencies and employers throughout the state to support neurodiverse hiring initiatives and employer training.

**Chelsea Fink** is the Account Manager for the Traverse City region within Upbound at Work (Autism Alliance of Michigan). Chelsea is the primary connector within the Traverse City area, whose role is establishing relationships with employers and developing disability-employment initiatives. Chelsea holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and is pursuing a PhD in the Naturopathic Field. Prior to Chelsea joining Upbound, she worked for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians as the Health and Disabilities Coordinator for the Head Start, Early Head Start, and Great Start to Readiness programs, as well as Behavioral Health Counseling at Munson Medical Center.