



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 29, 2015

Bethany Alvaré
(202) 540-8014
balvare@tash.org

The TASH Conference Visits Portland

TASH will hold its 40th annual conference in Portland, OR, December 2-4, 2015

WASHINGTON, DC - TASH, an international disability advocacy organization, will hold its 40th annual conference in Portland, Oregon, December 2-4, 2015. The conference will be held at the Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront Hotel.

“The TASH Conference provides an environment of unconditional acceptance that the world should emulate,” said Jean Trainor, current TASH Board member. “As the mother of a son with a disability, I attend the TASH Conference because it is a great resource for strategies to include my son in his community.” Each year, the TASH Conference impacts the disability field by connecting family members, researchers, educators, service providers, policy makers, and self-advocates to innovative information, resources, and each other. The TASH Conference offers attendees over 300 sessions to choose from and features topics such as: inclusive education, communication, transition, employment, human rights, life in the community, and more.

In light of the federal class action lawsuit, *Lane v. Brown*, the TASH Conference will emphasize the importance of integrated employment. Individuals at the TASH Conference can learn to create career pathways with real wages in Oregon by attending over 25 sessions on integrated employment, transition, and the *Lane v. Brown* case itself. Many sessions will also highlight the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and ways attendees can use federal policies to drive change in their home states.

Currently active in Oregon, the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) provides academic and behavioral support to promote the learning and academic achievement of students with disabilities. During the conference, principals from three schools in the Portland Public Schools (PPS) School District will share their personal experiences with the implementation of SWIFT. This session along with other SWIFT-related sessions will highlight the evidence-based practices implemented in Oregon partner schools in order to promote inclusive educational practices.

The TASH conference will feature two general sessions. The first, *What Matters Most: Toward a Future of Flourishing*, will be presented by Erik Carter, professor in the

Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Carter will highlight promising pathways that enable young people with significant disabilities to live lives marked by rich relationships and real opportunities. The second general session, *Make the ADA Count: Supporting People to Live the Lives They Want*, will highlight the Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) Waiver Settings Rule and the possibilities it has and will create for people living with disabilities. This session will include a panel of professionals, advocates and self-advocates: Alison Barkoff (Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law), Scott Shepard, Heather Hardman and Christopher Lin, (Avenues Supported Living Services), and James Toews (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services),

TASH invites you to visit the conference website <http://www.tash.org/conference2015>. The sidebar navigation allows you to search via session type and the search bar function allows you to search via keywords, such as “SWIFT,” as well as speaker names. The TASH Conference will take place December 2-4, 2015 at the Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront Hotel, 1401 SW Naito Pkwy, Portland, OR 97201. Tickets are available for purchase at www.tash.org/conference2015. To receive a press pass, please contact Bethany Alvaré (balvare@tash.org).

###

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, TASH is an international grassroots leader in advancing inclusive communities through research, education and advocacy. Founded in 1975, we are a volunteer-driven organization that advocates for human rights and inclusion for people with the most significant disabilities and support needs – those most vulnerable to segregation, abuse, neglect and institutionalization. The inclusive practices we validate through research have been shown to improve outcomes for all people. More information about TASH can be found at www.tash.org.