

The Importance of AAC Friends Groups

January 22, 2025
7:00-8:00 p.m. EDT

PRESENTED BY: Patrick Regan, Thanh Diep and Tyson Renze



ABOUT THE PRESENTERS:

Patrick Regan lives in Anchorage, AK. He began using a speech generating device when he was 2 ½ years old. He is President-Elect of USSAAC and serves on their AAC Awareness and DEIA Committees. He is a member of the LEAD Committee of ISAAC and a frequent chat moderator for ISAAC’s People Who Use AAC. He is an organizer of LEAD’s new book club for AAC users. Patrick serves as the Coordinator of Activities and Events for Bridging Communities Through Alternative Communication (“BCTAC”), an outreach program of The Bridge School. He has presented to various groups and organizations from the perspective of an AAC user and mentored young AAC users. He works as a Media Tech Coordinator for St. John United Methodist Church in Anchorage, Alaska.

Thanh Diep is a Vietnamese American woman with Cerebral Palsy. She uses an Accent 1400 AAC device. She is a Bridge School alumnus, attending one of the first Bridge School classrooms. She graduated from San Francisco State University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies. She is a co-coordinator and Treasurer for Bridging Communities Through Alternative Communication (BCTAC) and a member of the USSAAC Awareness Committee. She is an assistant and mentor at San Francisco State University Conversation Club, where future SLPs work with individuals who use AAC. She is a mentor to artists, filmmakers and writers. Thanh lives in San Francisco, California.

Tyson Renze is a true California man, born and raised in Lodi. He uses a Tobii eye gaze system to communicate, surf the net and connect with people. He loves learning new things and figuring out how things work in his world! Going to the gym and moving helps his mind, body and soul. Tyson loves to sail on the San Francisco Bay and enjoys being outside in nature. He loves amazingly tasty food and ice-cold beer! He has an amazing job as a Mentor at The Bridge School helping students in their Self-Determination class. He loves what he does!

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION:

Bridging Communities Through Alternative Communication, or BCTAC, is an adult outreach program of The Bridge School. Prior to the pandemic, Patrick Regan became its Coordinator of Activities. When the pandemic hit, the group turned to each other for camaraderie and support, engaging in virtual activities to foster discussion and use of their AAC. The Bridge School placed the formal BCTAC program on pause but the group continued to use virtual platforms to meet on their own to strengthen their communication skills, and enjoy each other’s company. They emerged from the pandemic as friends and colleagues, increasing their AAC use in the process. The group continues to meet on a regular basis. All report ongoing positive outcomes!

MODERATED BY: Tina Moreno

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SLPs who are USSAAC/ISAAC members may have their participation in this webinar reported for ASHA CEUs at no charge. Non-members must pay a \$25 reporting fee.

This course is offered for 0.10 ASHA CEUs (Introductory level; Professional area).

PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

1. Identify three ways adult AAC users can benefit from AAC-specific peer groups.
2. Describe the benefits of adult AAC user peer groups occurring with minimal outside oversight.
3. Describe how games and music can increase AAC use and skills.

TIME ORDERED AGENDA:

- 5 minutes: Introduction of Speakers, USSAAC and topic
- 10 minutes: Introduction, leadership, planning and adapting activities and events - Patrick
- 10 minutes: Insights regarding the benefits of belonging to an AAC peer group - Thanh
- 10 minutes: Insights regarding the benefits of belonging to an AAC peer group - Tyson
- 10 minutes: Sharing comments and input from other members and their families
- 15 minutes: Q & A

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) CEUs in speech-language pathology and audiology are awarded by the ASHA CE Registry upon receipt of the CEU Participant Form from the ASHA Approved CE Provider, USSAAC. CEU Participant Forms are available online at Registration or via the QR Code displayed during the presentation. ASHA CEUs are provided to full registrations. This program is offered for .10 ASHA CEUs (Introductory Level, Professional Area).

ASHA Disclosures:

Speakers

Financial:

Patrick Regan receives an honorarium speaking fee.

Thanh Diep receives an honorarium speaking fee.

Tyson Renze receives an honorarium speaking fee. He is a paid mentor for The Bridge School.

Nonfinancial:

Patrick Regan is the President Elect of USSAAC and a member of ISAAC. He is a member of BCTAC.

Thanh Diep is a member of USSAAC and ISAAC and BCTAC.

Tyson Renze is a member of USSAAC, ISAAC and BCTAC.

Moderator

Financial:

Tina Moreno has no financial disclosures to report.

Nonfinancial:

Tina Moreno is a USSAAC Board Member.

To register for this Webinar please go to the following link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1RuelCpgRY20wG5CRFpn3g

PLEASE NOTE: Only the first 150 attendees to log into the webinar will be guaranteed spot

USSAAC EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Betsy Caporale, Kate DeJarnette, Nicole Gallagher, Richard Hurtig,
Mili Mathew, Michelle Phillipy, Wendy Quach, Sharon Redmon

about USSAAC

The United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) is the national chapter of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC). As the United States' only non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the entire AAC community, USSAAC provides an invaluable role, working to ensure that individuals who could benefit from AAC have access to the technology and services they need.

Benefits of membership include, but are not limited to:

- *Free access to USSAAC webinar series with ASHA CEUs and USSAAC Twitter chats*
- *Advocacy for maintaining & expanding access to AAC systems and services*
- *Discount to ISAAC Conferences*
- *SpeakUp publication/Blog*
- *Information updates on USSAAC website, social platforms and member finder*
- *Membership in ISAAC with their additional benefits*

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