Project Eye-To-Eye

Speaking Board: Mouth-To-Mouth

Breathing Life Into The Public Discourse on LD/ADHD
Speaking Board: Mouth-To-Mouth

I) Speaking Board: An Overview

Research suggests that attitudes concerning LD/ADHD students are most effectively modified, not by academic lectures or professionals, but by individuals sharing their personal LD/ADHD success stories. A core element of Project Eye-To-Eye’s programming is our grassroots speaking network. This is a speaking board led by Jonathan Mooney and David Flink, and consists entirely of LD/ADHD individuals. Project Eye-To-Eye trains each of our site coordinators, all college students, in public speaking skills and facilitation at our annual Organizing Institute (OI); a leadership conference for chapter coordinators. In 2006-2007, Mouth-To-Mouth gave over 150 public presentations to over 20,000 educators, parents, and students.

II) Program Summary:

A Project Eye-To-Eye Speaker will walk the audience through their journey of educational and personal change, empowering people to think differently about LD/ADHD individuals and the concept of learning itself. At the core of this course is a message of personal empowerment, academic success, and educational revolution for people who think differently.

The second half of the speech will focus on practical, accessible, hands-on tips for academic success based on Project Eye-To-Eye executive director, Jonathan Mooney’s book Learning Outside the Lines, which are the only available alternatives to the method of teaching and learning which assumes that everyone learns the same way.

III) Learning Outcome:

The Project Eye-To-Eye speaking board offers participants a new approach to Disability Services. Central to Project Eye-To-Eye is the philosophy of asset-based community development. Rather than pathologizing a community and conceptualizing our work as part of a continuum of services, Project Eye-To-Eye believes first in identifying what is right with the LD/ADHD community and mapping assets, not needs, to be leveraged towards change. The Project Eye-To-Eye speakers offer an archetype for community empowerment that will allow participants to leave the Project Eye-To-Eye presentation with a concrete action plan to implement within their own communities.
IV) Program Objectives

As a talk that deals with a range of educational issues, the program has the following objectives:

1) To empower the audience to understand the emotional experiences of students who think differently and to break down the socialization of cognitive difference.

2) To provide the audience with concrete tools to accommodate and empower students who are outside the lines both inside and outside the classroom.

3) And lastly, to empower teachers, students, and parents to replace the concept of learning disabilities with an understanding of the paradoxes of disability and the revolutionary concept of cognitive diversity.

Part One: The Socialization of Cognitive Difference

Understanding and deconstructing “stupid” “crazy” “lazy”

Part Two: Balancing Remediation with Empowerment

Strategies to stop fixing kids and find out what they can do

Part Three: Accommodating the Alternative Learner

Classroom accommodations for alternative learners

Part Four: Learning Outside the Lines, Outside the Classroom

Academic strategies for home and beyond

Part Five: Celebrating Cognitive Diversity

Strategies to embrace the paradoxes of disabilities, ideas on ways to celebrate the culture of the disabled, and a vision of the future—individualized education and the age of different minds and cognitive diversity in the classroom.
V) Anticipated Audience: All

VI) Preferred Session Length: 1 hour

VII) Proposed Format: Symposium Lecture

VIII) Speaking Board Price List
Jonathan Mooney: $8,000 plus travel and accommodations
President / Co-Founder, Project Eye-To-Eye

Jonathan Mooney is a dyslexic writer and activist who did not learn to read until he was 12 years old. He is a graduate of Brown University and holds an honors degree in English Literature. Jonathan is the winner of the prestigious Truman Scholarship for graduate studies in creative writing and education and was a national finalist for the Rhodes scholarship. With the publication of Learning Outside the Lines when he was 23, now in its eighth printing, a book that is part memoir and part alternative study skills, Jonathan has established himself as one of the foremost leaders in LD/ADHD, disabilities, and alternative education. In the fall of 2007, Jonathan’s second book, The Short Bus Story, will be published by Henry Holt. For this project, Jonathan drove around the United States for four months exploring the social construct of normalcy in American culture. A work of creative non-fiction, this book is part travel log and part profiles of sixteen exceptional individuals who have been labeled abnormal.

Jonathan has lectured at Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Brown University, the University of Wisconsin School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, New York University Medical School’s Grand Rounds, and Beaumont Pediatric Hospital’s Grand Rounds and hundreds of universities, schools, and communities around the world. But to this date, his favorite gig was at an elementary school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where the kids gave him hope.

Jonathan has been featured and quoted in The New York Times, The Providence Journal, The Boston Globe, USA Today, New York Magazine and numerous other local and regional papers in the cities, states, and countries where Jonathan has traveled. His most memorable experience, however, was being interviewed for the Brazilian cable company El Globo, where his voice was dubbed into Portuguese. The company reported that they haven’t received that much mail since their feature on David Hasselhoff.
David Flink: $5,000 plus travel and accommodations
Executive Director / Co-Founder, Project Eye-To-Eye

David Flink is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Project Eye-To-Eye. Project Eye-To-Eye is a national mentoring program that matches college and high school students with LD/ADHD, acting as tutors, role models and mentors, with elementary, middle, and high school students with LD/ADHD in order to empower these students and help them find success. Like many who are eventually diagnosed with dyslexia, David Flink’s first exposure to the treatment of this learning difference was on the cold linoleum floor outside his 5th grade classroom. He existed for a year in this reading group of one where his teachers, although often well intentioned, did not teach David fundamental reading skills but instead, shame. Though struggling through much of his pre-college education, David eventually found success in school and once at Brown University, decided he needed to transcend his past experiences and attempt to empower others who might be encountering similar difficulty in school. Hence, he became one of the founding creators of Project Eye-To-Eye.

In addition to his work in Project Eye-To-Eye, David graduated from Brown University with Honors with a degree in Education and a second degree in Psychology and holds a masters degree in disability studies from Columbia University, Teachers College. The Orton Gillingham Society has recognized his Honors Thesis on the Treatment of Dyslexia through Multisensory Learning. David has lectured at Brown University, Dartmouth College, Vassar College, Columbia University, Reed College, and numerous conferences for organizations including the International Dyslexia Association.

David has served as an Admissions Officer for Brown University, where he evaluated over 4,000 applications, and was the Disability Admissions Liaison at Brown University, reviewing all applications of those who apply to Brown with disabilities.
LeDerick Horne: $4,000 plus travel and accommodations
Co-Board Chair of Project Eye-To-Eye and Director of Horne and Associates

LeDerick Horne spent most of his time in school believing he did not have much of a future. A severe learning disability (LD) combined with low self-esteem led him to doubt he would be able to go to college or pursue a meaningful career. But, in the challenging academic environment at Middlesex County College, and with the support offered for his disability through Project Connections, a Learning Disabilities Resource Program at the College, LeDerick became an outstanding student, compiling a 3.75 grade point average. He transferred to New Jersey City University and graduated with honors from NJCU in 2003.

Since graduation LeDerick has become the head of his own real estate investment company called Horne & Associates, LLC. He was appointed the Board Chair of Project Eye-To-Eye, a national nonprofit that provides mentoring programs for students labeled LD/ADHD. He is also recognized across the country as an advocate for people with disabilities. LeDerick has facilitated workshops, delivered keynote presentations, and spoken to thousands of students, teachers, and service providers about his experiences.
Marcus Soutra $2,000 plus travel and accommodations
National Program Coordinator, Project Eye-To-Eye

Marcus Soutra was diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD at a young age and spent most of his childhood feeling stupid, misunderstood, and ashamed of his learning disability. Over time Marcus grew to understand that his learning disability was in fact not going to determine his fate and after finding success in school chose to devote his life to paving the path for all students to find success in their education.

Soutra holds a degree in Social Science and Secondary Education from Keene State College and has worked extensively in both middle and high school level classrooms. Soutra is also the founder of the first ever Project Eye-To-Eye chapter at Keene State College and the creator of (KSDA) Keene State Disabilities Advocates, a group that works to motivate and educate people on disability issues in the state of New Hampshire.

As National Program Coordinator of Project Eye-To-Eye, Soutra is responsible for managing and cultivating Project Eye-To-Eye chapters nationwide. In addition, Soutra is the co-founder of Project Eye-To-Eye's Camp Vision, the newest addition to the Project Eye-To-Eye program. Soutra has given lectures at Reed College, Dartmouth College, Hobart and William Smith, Radford University, Brown University and was the keynote speaker at the New Jersey City University Conference on Transition. All of Soutra's work is done with the goal to ensure that other students that are labeled with learning disabilities are able to celebrate their differences, and through that celebration, are given the abilities to find their own success.
Project Eye-To-Eye Youth College Speaker: $500 plus travel and accommodations

Professionals continue to lecture educators on the neurology of learning disabilities, and yet the bigotry of lowered expectations remains entrenched in our school culture. Our research, however, suggests that bringing successful LD/ADHD college students into school settings as role models for educators, students, and parents is the most effective way to change teachers’ attitudes concerning LD/ADHD students. Project Eye-To-Eye’s successful LD/ADHD college students share their stories, serving as living, breathing examples to educators of what labeled LD/ADHD students can achieve given a supportive environment. Project Eye-To-Eye believes that this role modeling will not only change teachers’ beliefs about LD/ADHD students, but over time lead to concrete changes in pedagogy. Currently Project Eye-To-Eye has twenty-six mentoring programs in fourteen states, working with over 2,500 individuals.