

2026 MINI CONFERENCE

Presented by Family Support Network & Family Advocate Program

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Jay Bohn

**Medicaid Services &
Updates**

Division of Developmental
Disabilities

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel

5000 W. 127th Street
Alsip, Illinois



qr.link/FLohNE

Registration is required.



SPECIAL GUEST

**Shahzaib (Shazz)
Shakeel**

**Social Security & SSI
Benefits**

Social Security Administration



**FREE for Families &
Self-Advocates**



**CEUs Available & Fees
for Professionals**

ALSO FEATURING

Samantha Alloway • Bill Bogdan • Eileen Morrissey • Patty O'Brien
Lynn Rivero • Brian Rubin • Tasha Whiteside



QUESTIONS?

Ruth Aguilar
Ruth@thearcofil.org

Shirley Perez
Shirley@thearcofil.org

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Hilton Hotel • Alsip, IL**

AGENDA

10:00 – 10:05 AM

Welcome and Conference Overview

*Presented by Shirley Perez, Program Director;
Ruth Aguilar, Senior Family Advocate; and the
Family Advocate Program and Family Support
Network Team*

Meet the team and learn what to expect
throughout the day.

10:05 – 10:15 AM

The Arc of Illinois Updates

*Presented by Samantha Alloway, Executive
Director, The Arc of Illinois*

10:15 – 10:55 AM

SSI & Social Security Benefits Overview

*Presented by Shahzaib (Shazz) Shakeel, Public
Affairs Specialist, Social Security Administration*

10:55 – 11:10 AM | BREAK

11:10 – 11:50 AM

PUNS Presentation: Eligibility, Autism- Only Diagnosis & the Process

*Presented by Patty O'Brien, Independent Service
Coordination, Suburban Access Agency*

11:50 AM – 12:30 PM

Understanding Self-Direction Assistance (SDA)

*Presented by Eileen Morrissey, Director of Family
Support, Envision Unlimited*

12:30 – 1:15 PM | LUNCH BREAK

1:15 – 2:10 PM

Keynote Address: Medicaid Updates & Waiver Services

*Presented by Jay Bohn, Division of
Developmental Disabilities (DDD)*

2:10 – 3:00 PM

Panel Discussion & Audience Q&A

*Facilitated by Shirley Perez, Ruth Aguilar and or;
Ruth Aguilar, Senior Family Advocate; and the
Family Advocate Program and Family Support
Network Team*

Panelists:

Jay Bohn • Shahzaib (Shazz) Shakeel •
Samantha Alloway • Bill Bogdan • Eileen
Morrissey • Patty O'Brien • Lynn Rivero • Brian
Rubin • Tasha Whiteside

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Samantha M. Alloway is an accomplished and influential leader, known for her expertise in government relations, advocacy, and human services. Samantha has served as a CASA/GAL for Kane County, advocating for the rights of children in the foster care system. Additionally, she has worked as an advocacy coordinator and operations manager at Lazarus House, providing support to unhoused individuals. Samantha is also a certified Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault advocate through the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Samantha is also a member of the Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership Training Academy, class of 2024. This prestigious membership highlights her commitment to personal and professional growth, and it positions her as a promising leader with a forward-thinking mindset for the state of Illinois. As a mother of three sons, Samantha encountered a pivotal moment when her middle child was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder at the age of three. This deeply personal experience has driven her to become a passionate advocate for disability rights. She has emerged as a highly effective and influential communicator, successfully engaging with families, participants, and legislators at both the federal and state levels.

Ruth Aguilar, QIDP, has over fifteen years of combined experience advocating for people with disabilities. She holds a B.S. Psychology from the Illinois Institute of Technology and Professional Graduate Studies in Non-Profit from Harvard University. Ruth's professional experience stems from working previously in an ISC Agency and then as a Self-Directed Assistant serving the community with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Moreover, with her personal expertise as a mother of a teen girl with Rett Syndrome and Seizure Disorder, Ruth brings a wealth of knowledge to the families by assisting them in how to obtain services and understanding their options by being assertive, yet professional. Ruth is inspired by her husband and her daughter to be a servant leader who helps those around her without hesitation.

William "Bill" Bogdan has served for more than 25 years as the Disability Liaison for the Illinois Secretary of State's Office. In this role, he coordinates, develops, and implements programs and services for people with disabilities. His work includes addressing accessibility concerns, contributing to disability-related legislation, supporting drivers who use adaptive equipment, and helping shape Illinois' Parking Program for Persons with Disabilities.

Jay Bohn began his career in Illinois state government more than 26 years ago with the Illinois Department of Public Aid, now the Department of Healthcare and Family Services. Before entering state government, he spent 10 years in the private sector operating mental health and intellectual and developmental disability group homes and providing community case management. He currently serves as an Analyst with the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Medicaid Administration. He specializes in developmental disability waiver eligibility and Medicaid issues affecting waiver participants.

Eileen Morrissey graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Psychology. She has been employed by Envision Unlimited for over 23 years. She is a QIPD and currently serves as the Director of Family Support Services for Envision Unlimited. She has worked serving families in the Home-Based program since its inception. She currently serves over 120 families by providing Self Directed Assistance Service.

Patti O'Brien serves as the Developmental Disabilities Program Manager at Suburban Access. Before joining Suburban Access, she spent 25 years working for a large service provider agency. Her professional philosophy is to do whatever it takes to get the job done so that families in need receive the services and support they deserve.

Lynn Rivero is the Quality Assurance Coordinator at Suburban Access, an Independent Service Coordination agency supporting children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in suburban Cook County. She has extensive experience helping individuals and families understand PUNS, Medicaid eligibility, developmental disability services, and the steps involved in accessing community-based supports. Lynn regularly shares her expertise through family workshops, community events, and presentations designed to make Illinois' disability service system easier to understand and navigate.

Brian Rubin, JD, is the founder of Rubin Law, a former IRS Agent, and former IRS Attorney, has been a practicing attorney since 1976, has been married to his wife Linda for the past 45 years, and is the parent of three children, one of whom, Mitchell, 41, has Autism. Brian's law practice, for four decades, since Mitchell was one year old, has been dedicated to serving the legal and future planning needs of his fellow Illinois families of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, and/or mental illness.

Shahzaib (Shazz) Shakeel is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Social Security Administration, located in Chicago Illinois. As a Public Affairs Specialist, he aims to educate and inform the public about their Social Security benefits by participating in public speaking engagements, resource fairs, webinars, & radio and television interviews. Over the past 10 years with Social Security, Shazz has held many technical positions, taught entry-level training classes, and mentored new employees. Shazz is a native New Yorker, born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. He completed undergrad studies in Brockport, NY and graduated from law school in 2013 in Grand Rapids, MI. He began his Social Security career in 2014 at their Jamaica, Queens New York office and moved to Chicago in 2017.

Tasha Whiteside has held the role of Program Director of Operations at ACES\$ since 2014 demonstrating exceptional skills in ensuring a high-quality experience for contract administrators, participants, and stakeholders. She has been instrumental in fostering a service-oriented culture within the organization and among her reporting staff. In her capacity, Ms. Whiteside oversees Illinois FMS operations for approximately 11,600 participants enrolled in the HBS waiver program. Ms. Whiteside holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Governors State University and is a licensed Nursing Home Administrator. Her career journey began as a direct support person at Frances House, where she later advanced to the position of Residential Services Director. Throughout her career, she has served in various roles such as Traumatic Brain Injury Case Manager, life skills instructor, and program administrator for disability-related program. Beyond her professional responsibilities, Ms. Whiteside is actively engaged in volunteer work, contributing to projects such as Meals on Wheels, KABOOM, Toys for Tots, and Chicago Coat drives. Additionally, she is a charter member of the Evergreen Park, IL Silhouette.

COST & REGISTRATION

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Alsip, Illinois

Registration Fees for Participants are:

The Arc of Illinois Members:

Professional.....\$90
Self-Advocate/Family Member.....FREE

Non-Members of The Arc of Illinois:

Professional.....\$130
Self-Advocate/Family Member.....FREE

Please complete the attached registration form, fax it to 815-464-5292, then mail the hard copy along with your check to:

The Arc of Illinois
7550 183rd Street
Tinley Park, IL 60477

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Notice of any special accommodations is required
two weeks prior to the event

CEUs

CEUs will be offered for this training.
Licensed Social Workers, Licensed
Nursing Home Administrators and
QIDP's signing in and out on the day will
have the opportunity to earn credits.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Participants canceling their registration
72 hours in advance will be entitled to a
credit or refund, less a \$25.00
administrative cost. No refund or credit
will be given for cancellation less than 72
hours before the seminar.

REGISTRATION FORM

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One form per person, please print legibly.

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

ACCOUNT PAYABLE: _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

_____ Fax form and mail check to The Arc of Illinois
(815-464-5292)

_____ Check enclosed payable to The Arc of Illinois

_____ P.O. or State Voucher #

Charge to my Credit Card

Name as it appears on credit card:

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ **CVV Code:** _____

Billing Zip Code: _____

Card holder's signature: