



# LEARNING TO FLY



SELF-ADVOCACY AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Saturday, September 21, 2019  
8:30 am – 12:00 Noon  
9607 East State Road 70  
Bradenton, FL 34203

Cost: \$35 Parent/Professional  
\$10 Sibling  
\$60 Couple  
\* Limited scholarships available

For More Information and to Register Visit  
our Website at [www.fndmanasota.org](http://www.fndmanasota.org)

**Continental Breakfast and All Handouts Included**

Thank you to our Sponsors: Bailes Consulting Services, FL SAND - Florida Self-Advocates Network'D, Easter Seals Happiness House, The Florida Center for Early Childhood, Woodland Community Church, FDLRS Suncoast, The Haven, Soul to Soul Yoga, Butler Elder Law, P.A, Pediatric Therapy Solutions, Dr. Stacie Herrera



**FND Manasota**

See back for information on sessions.

The Family Network on Disabilities (FND) for Manasota is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Our Federal I.D. Number is 65-0156905. FND of Manasota's registration number with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is CH16350. The Family Network on Disabilities of Manasota employs no contracted solicitors and receives 100% of all contributions. A copy of this official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free 1-800-435-7372 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS: A TALE OF TWO VOICES

Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (FL SAND) President Amanda Baker of Tallahassee and founding member Mary Jo Pirone of Stuart will discuss their self-advocacy journeys in this keynote address. Both have unique stories that span their lifetimes from childhood and school to their work in Florida's self-advocacy movement. Their stories and wisdom will inspire and affirm parents and caregivers in the importance of encouraging youth with disabilities to rise above low expectations and find their voices about things that are important to them and that impact their lives.

## BREAKOUT TRAINING: FROM POTATO CHIPS TO THE PRESIDENCY - ANYONE CAN BE A SELF-ADVOCATE

From the day she told her mother and school counselor that she would be participating in her second grade IEP review, Amanda Baker knew self-advocacy was one of her passions. She is a strong believer that self-advocacy can be taught to children and youth with all types of disabilities and challenges. This session will address the overall importance of self-advocacy and finding one's voice at a young age; the usefulness of self-advocacy skills in a variety of contexts such as school, employment, and socialization; and strategies for building self-advocacy skills and support for such skills in children and youth. Potato chips will be discussed.

## BREAKOUT SESSION - COUNT ON ME

This breakout session is specifically designed for siblings who have a brother/sister with a disability or special need that are age 7 and up. Participants will hear from our expert panel of siblings who will tell their own stories of what it was like growing up as a sibling with a special needs brother or sister from their childhood and beyond. The panel is a combination of a current college student, a young adult with a unique personal perspective, an Executive Director of a local non-profit organization, and an Occupational Therapist/Yoga Instructor. Participants will be able to ask questions of our sibling panel and participate in our "Wishing Well" activity.



**Mary Jo Pirone** is a self-advocate from Stuart. She is a founding member of Florida's first documented self-advocacy group, People First of South Florida, which just celebrated its 40th anniversary in March. She has been a leader of three FL SAND self-advocacy groups, People First of South Florida, Abilities Venti in Pembroke Pines, and is currently a mentor to the Stand Up for Independence Group (SUF) in Martin and St. Lucie counties. She is a graduate of Partners in Policy Making and an Idelio Valdes Leadership and Advocacy award winner. It was Mary Jo's and former roommate Carol Rudinsky's friendship with folk singer David Roth that inspired Roth to co-write the beautiful "My Voice Matters" self-advocacy anthem at the 2014 FL SAND conference.



**Amanda Baker** is a self-advocate from Panama City now living in Tallahassee. She is vice chair of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, president of FL SAND, and founder of the Elephant Herds self-advocacy group in Panama City. She is a graduate of Partners in Policymaking and recipient of the 2015 Idelio Valdes Leadership and Advocacy Award. Amanda has a bachelor's degree in communication and is a Certified Work Incentives and Planning Practitioner. Before launching Matriarch Consulting in the spring of 2019 (a benefits counseling practice), she worked for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.