

# Transforming Educational Practices FOR THE STUDENT OF TOMORROW

There have been profound changes taking place in education across the United States over the last several years—through innovative approaches involving interpersonal and technical skills, through leveraging strategies and committing to new practices aimed at dismantling systemic racism and other inequities in our schools and educational programs, and through adopting new practices that address the numerous demands for academic success and social-emotional well-being that have arisen. Currently, there is a huge opportunity for educational and community leaders to accelerate the work to implement these transformative practices in education, collaboration, and administration.

With the shift away from in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing equity in education toward greater equity for deaf and hard of hearing students, families, teachers, staff, and professionals, many of us were compelled to be resourceful in different ways, developing new interpersonal and technological skills in seeking to deliver high-quality educational experiences in alternative formats as well as promote a growing sense of awareness of how we are all connected to one another.

In this issue of *Odyssey*, professional and parent authors share stories and experiences on a range of topics. For example, Amy Szarkowski and Candace Lindow-Davies describe Fostering Joy, a movement created through a family/professional effort to celebrate the joy of raising deaf and hard of hearing children. Amanda Howerton-Fox, Michelle Veyvoda, Hannah Park, and Julia Silvestri write about teaching literacy to deaf and hard of hearing children through movement. Lauren Trainor writes about the challenges of face masks during the pandemic and how they impacted accessibility in the classroom and community. Cat Valcourt-Pearce discusses her dual role as a professional working remotely and a parent remote schooling four children (deaf, deafdisabled, and OHKODA) with very different needs. Millicent Musyoka, Hadeel Alawad, and Sulaiman Adeoye explain how utilizing more diverse and inclusive literature can help to address and dismantle inequities based on disability, race, or ethnicity. Sarah Brandt and Rachel Benjamin describe how through shifting our mindset and integrating academic and functional learning, we can transform our practices and create meaningful learning. Sarah Wainscott and Bill Wainscott describe how they took middle school students on a virtual Texas Deaf Ed Road Trip. Also included are articles about shared leadership as a way of transforming deaf education, using music to transform classes for students with multiple disabilities, teaching to foster self-determination and learning, strategies to combat teacher burnout, teaching and using ASL graphemes to develop preschool deaf and hard of hearing students' English literacy skills, and building a deaf school online.

Next year's *Odyssey* issue will focus on access and equity in deaf education. Check out page 87 for more information. We hope you will share your stories with us at [Odyssey@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Odyssey@gallaudet.edu).

—**Marianne Belsky and Nicole Sutcliffe**  
Chief Academic Officer/Chief Administrative Officer  
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center  
Gallaudet University



Marianne Belsky



Nicole Sutcliffe