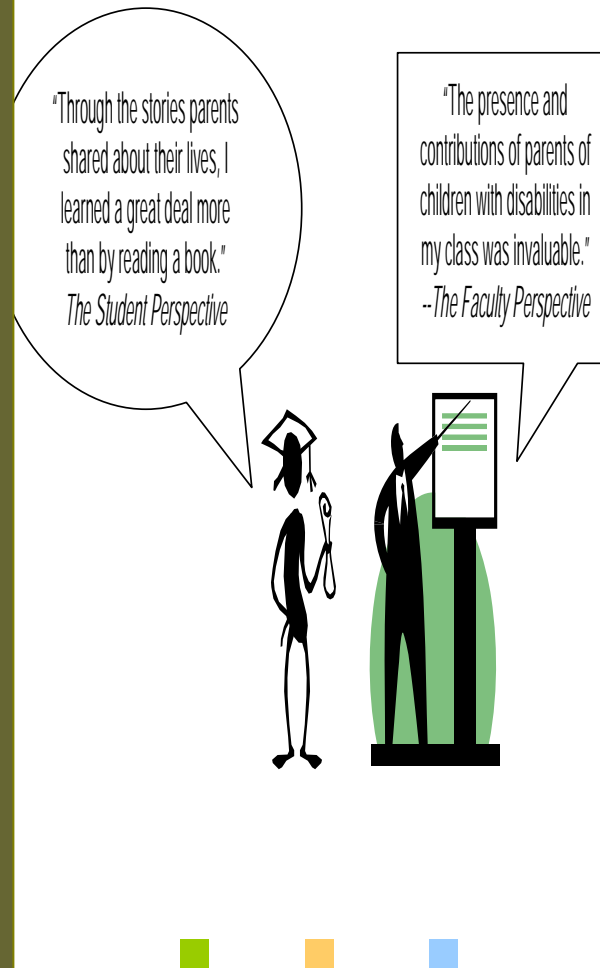


## The Erie County Parents as Presenters Program

The program helps parents and care-givers develop the skills and motivation to share their story with college students, professionals and others in the fields of early childhood education, social work, social services, Therapeutic Support Services (TSS), juvenile justice, special education, and Early Intervention (EI). Parents and care-givers learn skills with encouragement and feedback from other family members of children involved with educational and helping systems of care.

- Learn from other families' experiences
- Dynamic parents/care-givers as speakers
- Connecting colleges with families
- Cross-training professionals & others
- Building relationships with human service providers
- Empowering parents/care-givers

*You can make a difference and have a voice in Erie County by getting more involved in your child's services by telling a family story every so often.*



Sponsored by:  
Building Bridges, a family driven group of parents and professionals funded by the Erie County Department of Human Services in conjunction with the Erie Family Center, the Union City Family Support Center & the Mercyhurst Civic Institute

## "The Erie County Parents as Presenters"



**Did you know ...when college students and professionals hear directly from families, they become better at what they do or will do!!**

**In order to help encourage family connections, the Parents as Presenters workshop allows parents and care-givers of children receiving social services in Erie County to learn effective ways to share a family story with college students, professionals and others.**

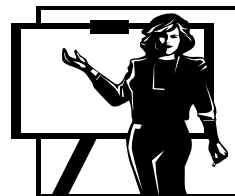
## BENEFITS OVERVIEW

The Parents as Presenters initiative links family members with college students, faculty members and professional development trainers in order to enhance the quality of education and training opportunities for college students and professionals in special education, social work and other related fields.

Currently, there are 22 parents and care-givers, which are ready, willing and able to share their stories in your classroom or at your organization. The Parents as Presenters speakers can cover a variety of topics. As an example, we have speakers able to talk about child welfare services, juvenile justice services, Early Intervention services, ADHD, Down's syndrome, Autism, social anxiety, Individual Education Plans, Family Service Plans, sibling problems, family changes, educational inclusion and many other topics.

## MEET OUR TRAINERS

Lisa Smith and Brad McGarry are graduates of the Parents as Presenters Training. Lisa has been involved as a parent representative on the Parent Provider Partnership for several years. Both Lisa and Brad have served as members of the steering committee since 2006. Lisa's background includes communication, programming, facilitating and development, the mother of two children with special needs, Lisa is always seeking more effective ways to make family life better not just for her family, but for all families who struggle with a feeling of powerlessness when it comes to their child's needs and behaviors. Brads unique perspective first comes from his many years of work as a family service provider, then and now as a father of two boys, one with special needs, and also as a professor in the field of psychology.



## WORKING TOGETHER

THE ERIE COUNTY PARENTS AS PRESENTERS AND THE BUILDING BRIDGES COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS INITIATIVE TO BRING PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND PROFESSIONALS TOGETHER FOR THE WELFARE OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF ERIE COUNTY.



If you would like to have a "Parent as Presenter" parent/kinship parent or youth tell their story in your class or at an event, please contact Lisa Smith, Project Coordinator at the Erie Family Center at 874-6990, at her home at 824-4812 or e-mail her at [beautifulmom313@verizon.net](mailto:beautifulmom313@verizon.net)