

LD ACCESS

Cordially Invites You To Its

Gala Awards Ceremony & Dinner

HONORING

Ben Foss

Golden Achievement Award

Dr. Edward Hallowell

Lifetime Advocacy Award

Jo Anne Simon

Lifetime Justice Award

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Cynthia McFadden

Monday, November 5, 2007 • Harmonie Club • 4 East 60TH Street, New York City

Reception 6 PM • Awards Ceremony 7 PM • VIP Dinner following • Festive Attire

RSVP

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LD ACCESS: Mission and Momentum

LD ACCESS is one of the only organizations in America to focus on learning disabled (LD) adolescents and adults. We are steadfast in our mission to promote their full participation in a challenging world by protecting civil rights, supporting educational initiatives, enhancing lives through research and technology, and helping to increase employment opportunities.

Founded in 1995 in response to a backlash against LD individuals nationwide and an immediate threat at Boston University, *LD ACCESS* continues its role as an organization advocating for those who learn differently. The growing involvement of forward-thinking educators, attorneys, doctors and other experts – backed by nation-wide donor support – has enabled *LD ACCESS* to turn up the volume on issues typically met with mainstream silence or lack of understanding.

Currently, *LD ACCESS* is funding pioneering research into the accessibility of standardized tests; helping to challenge misguided laws and policies in courts, legislatures and schools; sponsoring seminars and producing resource materials; and pursuing other initiatives to enhance learning and end egregious practices. The challenges remain great but so are the rewards. With each step, *LD ACCESS* is heightening awareness, opening doors and, equally important, spawning other advocacy efforts intended to extend well beyond our organization. Together with our supporters, *LD ACCESS* will continue to stand up for the rights of LD individuals. We will help ensure that our organizational beacon which first began shining at Boston University a dozen years ago continues to radiate positive change.

Today, we remain just as inspired by the LD students at BU who were unwilling to concede their future to an anachronistic mindset. At the time, BU's president questioned why there should be so many (480) diagnosed LD students. The university president went so far as to portray the students as "stupid, phonies, frauds, and slackers." With assistance from *LD ACCESS*, eight courageous LD students mounted a class action suit against BU. A resounding federal court decision in 1997 upheld their rights and made clear that they were the victims of unlawful practices. The case set a standard of fairness for millions of college students.

LD ACCESS went on to fund a lawsuit against the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for flagging tests administered with accommodations. ETS agreed to stop flagging its graduate exams, and the College Board, which owns the SATs, followed suit.

LD ACCESS has also challenged the medical and legal boards (MCATs and LSATs) for unjust testing practices.

State-mandated exit exams are another major concern to *LD ACCESS*. LD test-takers are frequently denied any accommodations, even if they have had them at school. Those who fail these tests are often left back, denied college preparatory classes, given second-class diplomas (or none at all) and not allowed to apply to state colleges. In Oregon, *LD ACCESS* supported a lawsuit that caused that state to revise its policies. A similar pending case in California also has *LD ACCESS* backing, and recently Alaska was challenged to alter its practices with the LD plaintiffs prevailing.

Accessible tests are the next big hurdle for many LD test-takers. After getting accommodations, they may not be able to take the test in a standardized format. We are hopeful that our funding of LD research in that area will lead to more answers and direction.

A brief sampling of diverse *LD ACCESS*-supported initiatives follows:

Research: Albert Einstein COM – Published a nationally distributed adult literacy manual. **CAST** – Pioneers and develops universal design of curricula and accessible testing. **Civil Rights: Disability Rights Advocates** – Precedent-setting LD litigation. **Advocacy: Project Eye To Eye** – Pairs K-12 LD students with LD college mentors. **Headstrong** – Helped fund an award-winning documentary aired nationally. **Westchester Community College** – Developed employment strategies for LD undergraduates and alumni. **Technology: Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic** – Produced taped and digital college texts and funded digital recording booths. **Education: University of Pennsylvania** – Sponsored 3 national LD conferences. **Harvard University** – Led seminar on assistive technology.

LD ACCESS looks forward to continuing momentum and success in helping to bring LD individuals the fairness and dignity they deserve. We envision a world that appreciates diverse talents and ideas-- a world that welcomes all those who learn, work, and think differently.



Ben Foss

Ben Foss

GOLDEN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*By successfully navigating through a world you see differently,
are you a survivor or a genius -- or both?*

Ben Foss has trained himself to understand audio on his computer at speeds largely incomprehensible to the average listener. It's a fast-forward skill born of necessity. For Foss, a dyslexic, the printed page is torturous. Speed listening and a razor-sharp memory are among the learning tools he has used to achieve a successful career benefiting people with learning disabilities. Foss currently serves as Head Researcher for Assistive Technology at Intel Corporation and is the founder of Headstrong, an organization which supports others with dyslexia.

As a child, Foss would "listen" to a movie and play it back word for word. What he could not do was read. When his mother would suggest that he just summarize the film, he'd retort: "And miss telling you all the good parts!" Both knew from the start that he had a different path to follow. "Having parents who accepted my learning differences when I was young was a crucial component to my success," Foss says, adding that it's "essential to the success of any child with learning disabilities." Foss believes anyone with learning disabilities should stop listening to people who tell them to keep trying to do it the "normal" way.

In addition to being formally recognized as a special education student in second grade, Foss always innovated and improvised. He would try to read about 20% of an assignment and then answer a teacher's question with another question, or pursue his own version of classical sophistry. Foss also learned that becoming an "independent dyslexic" is as much about explaining how he learns, as it is about struggling to read.

Foss had no epiphany that set him on a successful track. Rather, he says it was a series of deliberate steps. "I was never going to be 'normal,'" he explains, and I just had to get past it." Fortunately, Foss tested well. That skill, along with his athletic ability, helped him gain admission to Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. Later, while earning law and MBA degrees at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, Foss began using assistive audio technology. First there were readers and recorded books, then a talking computer and the self-training which allows him to listen at about 500 words per minute. Foss also holds a Masters of Science in Moral Philosophy from the University of Edinburgh where he was a Marshall Scholar.

As a student, and now at Intel Corporation,

Foss has used his skills and experience to help people with learning disabilities to succeed. His own challenges over the years – met with hard work, perseverance and a brilliant mind – have clearly shaped his mission. Foss was appointed Head Researcher for Assistive Technology at Intel in 2006. His objective is to "present people with information in a format they can use." Working in Intel's Digital Health Group, he leads a team of industrial designers, mechanical engineers and software architects who develop mobile computing systems for people with disabilities. The group focuses on improving communications and access for people who learn differently. Foss is also responsible for convincing Intel that there is a commercial market for these tools.

In 2003, Foss launched Headstrong for the dyslexic community and to encourage others to join the disability rights movement. His organization's first film, *Headstrong: Inside the Hidden World of Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder*, was recently broadcast on public television stations across the country. Earlier this year, the film was honored by *SUPERFEST XXVII*, the oldest disability rights festival in the United States. The film can be viewed at www.headstrongnation.org, a web site funded in part by *LD ACCESS*. Foss also serves on the board of Disability Rights Advocates (DRA), a not-for-profit legal advocacy group focusing on civil rights for people with disabilities. While a Truman Scholar Fellow, he served on the White House National Economic Council during the Clinton Administration. He also has worked for the Children's Defense Fund.

Foss believes that learning disabilities can either hold you back or make you stronger. He recognizes that many people with LD "don't have the support and access that gave me a fighting chance." Because of that appalling reality, he continues to give back to those unable to find opportunity to succeed. Foss considers himself a member of the first generation of LD adults to begin benefiting from the rights so tenaciously fought for by others, especially *LD ACCESS*. Looking "fast forward," he says that the next battles are full access to education, civil rights, and meaningful employment for those who learn differently.

LD ACCESS recognizes all of Ben Foss's accomplishments. We feel confident that we will be presenting him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2040.



Dr. Edward Hallowell

Dr. Edward Hallowell

LIFETIME ADVOCACY AWARD

*Developing and implementing an action plan based on how you learn
helps create the environment for success.*



Edward (Ned) Hallowell has a personal connection with the millions who have read his books and those who have attended his lectures or worked with him. He's an expert who speaks from his own experience with learning disabilities. Dr. Hallowell, founder of The Hallowell Center for Cognitive and Emotional Health and the author of 14 books, has known since first grade that he was dyslexic. The "ah hah" moment identifying his Attention Deficit Disorder came much later – after Harvard College and Tulane University School of Medicine. He first heard about ADD during his postgraduate studies and recognized a condition that described him to a "T." It was a career-changing discovery that shifted his path from orthopedics to child psychiatry.

Dr. Hallowell knew early on that his patients and their families needed written information and that he'd have to write much of it himself. "When the piles of paper on my office floor covered the carpet, I realized it was time to write a book." That book, a groundbreaking bestseller, was *DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION; Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood through Adulthood*, co-authored with John Ratey. Today, Dr. Hallowell is also a widely read author on psychological topics including ADD and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), the power of the human connection, the childhood roots of happiness, methods of forgiving, dealing with worry and managing excessive busyness. His latest book, in collaboration with Peter Jensen is *RAISING YOUR ADD CHILD: A Strength Based Approach*.

Throughout his career, Ned Hallowell has never stopped learning – from his patients and their families and from the professionals he constantly seeks out. He credits Priscilla Vail, a world-famous expert on learning, with pointing him "in many right directions" from the outset. To Vail, young people with learning disabilities were never problem children but rather

"conundrum kids." Dr. Hallowell has devoted his career to resolving the conundrums and strives to bring the "medical model" to the forefront of public attention. In doing so, he has helped shatter myths that learning differences can not be "cured" and result from a child "not working up to his potential... not trying... sheer laziness" or other outmoded clichés. Dr. Hallowell is also taking the medical model to the next step, focusing on the strengths of those with learning differences. "These differences can be markers of a specific talent," he explains: "We have to get away from the notion that these children are completely disabled. We have to help them unwrap and discover their hidden gifts and talents. We have to work from a strength based approach...and we need to empower these kids."

Dr. Hallowell is passionate about strong parenting and the benefits of having an authority figure help a child believe in his or her potential. He has written an enchanting children's book, *A Walk in the Rain with a Brain*, illustrated by Bill Mayer, which clearly speaks to every child's heart – telling them that they each have special talents and that each of their brains is one of a kind.

Dr. Hallowell was a member of the Harvard Medical School faculty from 1983 until he retired from academics in 2004. He founded The Hallowell Center for Cognitive and Emotional Health in Sudbury, Massachusetts, a decade ago and now devotes his professional attention to clinical practice, lectures and writing. Recently, he expanded his practice with an office in Manhattan.

A husband and father of three, Dr. Hallowell says his greatest love is spending time with his family. That includes a month on Lake Doolittle in Connecticut each year where they reconnect and slow down.

LD ACCESS salutes Dr. Edward Hallowell for his intellect, his insight and his humanity. Millions of children and adults who "do it differently" are forever in his debt.



Jo Anne Simon

Jo Anne Simon

LIFETIME JUSTICE AWARD

*A single tenacious visionary who questions, challenges and fights for justice
can be the catalyst for change.*

Counsel on the landmark *Bartlett v. NYS Board of Law Examiners* case and a Fordham University School of Law Adjunct Associate Professor, Jo Anne Simon is a national leader in disability civil rights law. Closer to home, she's been a community leader in her Downtown Brooklyn neighborhood for more than 25 years and currently serves as the Democratic District Leader and State Committeewoman for Brooklyn's 52nd Assembly District. Simon's other credentials include former teacher of the deaf, President of the Boerum Hill Association, Chair of the Gowanus Stakeholders Group, past chair of the Committee on Legal Issues Affecting People with Disabilities of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, and member of the ADA Advisory Committee to the New York State Office of Court Administration. The list goes on and on.

More simply, however, Jo Anne Simon's passionate public service work through the years can be summed up in two words: *advocacy* and *action*.

Simon's optimism about the potential for positive change is rooted in her experience. "Neither of my parents had the opportunity to go to college. I grew up learning how to develop hands-on solutions to everyday problems," she explains. "When I came into this field, I found a problem with no solutions. I am not someone who can turn away from an injustice. A mentor of mine once said of those times that 'I kinda fell into creating a new body of law.'"

With a degree in speech pathology from Iona College in New Rochelle, New York, and a Master's in Deaf Education from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., Simon was hired at Gallaudet as Director of Student Special Services after several years of teaching. "It was the 70's," she recalls, "and we were learning and creating as we went along. It was the time when people thought that learning disabilities went away with the onset of puberty... and when legislation for those with any disability was just beginning to be written."

Work toward a doctorate in psychology and yet another career on Wall Street followed, along with a law degree from Fordham University in New York where she won the prestigious *American Jurisprudence Award*. The accolades have continued – with good reason. Most recently, Simon was honored with the Women's History Month Award, pre-

sented by the 20th New York State Senate District.

Today, Simon is President-Elect of the New York Branch – International Dyslexia Association, a member of the Professional Advisory Board of the Learning Disabilities Association of America, and a founding member of the Coalition for Transparency in Public Education. She is a founding member and has served on the board of directors of the Association of Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD).

Not surprisingly, Simon is in constant demand as a speaker in the field of learning disabilities, the law, and politics. Keynoting the Pennsylvania State [University] Diversity Summit, she remarked: "Disability has not been viewed within the traditional diversity circles as a legitimate component of diversity efforts. So, in some ways, I'm actually a controversial choice. Including people with disabilities in any institution's diversity mission, however, adds a whole new dimension to its intellectual and interpersonal development value." As always, Simon's heartfelt words were based on her far-reaching knowledge as an expert advocate.

Testing is among many complex issues Simon strives to bring into focus. "We have to get out from under the yoke of high-stakes standardized tests," she says, "They are simply not valid.... One day, we can and must put a stop to these tests." Advocating across numerous academic and political circles, she is quick to point out that testing is a huge for-profit business that requires fairness and legitimate accommodation for people who learn differently. A supporter of *LD ACCESS* since its inception, Simon has been an invaluable mentor and expert resource in shaping our organization's agenda on testing and other concerns. Students in her private practice have also learned how best to navigate the bureaucratic maze of admissions and credentialing tests. Simon is optimistic: "We are learning through research more and more how to differentiate what tests do." She applauds the increasing work underway to erase the "widespread but unfounded perception that people with accommodations are being given an unfair advantage."

LD ACCESS recognizes Jo Anne Simon for lifelong commitment to those who need to be seen and heard, for those individuals who society marginalizes, ignores, and discriminates against.

Cynthia McFadden

Awards Presenter



Cynthia McFadden has covered major stories throughout the country and around the world for ABC News. She is currently the co-anchor of both *Nightline* and *Primetime*. McFadden joined ABC News in February 1994 as the network's legal correspondent.

Over the course of her career Ms. McFadden has won nearly every major award in broadcast news, including a George Foster Peabody Award, a DuPont award and an Emmy. She has interviewed major political leaders such as President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, along with entertainment icons George Clooney and Clint Eastwood. Her award-winning investigations into human rights abuses, often focusing on women and children, have taken her around the world. She recently reported live from China on the devastating environmental impact of that

country's rapid economic growth.

Before joining ABC News, McFadden had been an anchor and senior producer at the Courtroom Television Network, beginning with the network's inception in 1991. From 1984 to 1991, McFadden was the executive producer of Fred Friendly's Media and Society seminars based at Columbia University.

A native of Maine, McFadden graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude from Bowdoin College. She received her law degree from Columbia University.

LD ACCESS thanks Cynthia McFadden for her willingness to share her time and her talent with us. By hosting the Award's Ceremony for the third time she honors us once again with her presence.

THE *LD ACCESS* AWARD

The Tortoise and Hare Nancy Schön, Sculptor



Nancy Schön and The Tortoise and Hare at Copley Square®

LD ACCESS knows that speed is not the sole criteria for being successful in the race of life; we have met countless individuals whose endurance and will to succeed got them across the finish line. We are proud to present to our award recipients a maquette (scale model sculpture) that embodies all that we believe.

The *Tortoise and Hare at Copley Square®* was created by Nancy Schön as a tribute to the runners from all over the world who have participated in the Boston Marathon, the oldest road race in America. The sculpture, sponsored by the Friends of Copley Square, was commissioned to celebrate the 100th anniversary of this historic event.

“The Boston Marathon has been a part of my life as long as I can remember,” says Schön. “We would go to ‘heartbreak hill’, watching [the runners] as they sweated and pulled themselves up that long hill, knowing that they might be able to finish the race if they could manage that tough climb. Many runners don’t run for time, they run for the challenge to finish. The tortoise speaks to that strength and persistence.”

Schön wanted to create a sculpture that would attract children, yet have meaning for the race. She felt the fable of *The Tortoise and the Hare* was a perfect metaphor for the wide variety of people from all over the world who participate in the Marathon - people of all ages,

shapes and sizes, many of whom walk across the finish line. It is her hope that the sculptures will inspire all those who face special challenges.

Internationally renowned, Nancy Schön is best known for her sculpture in the Boston Public Garden - *Make Way For Ducklings* - based on Robert McCloskey’s book. Barbara Bush gave a replica of this sculpture to Raisa Gorbachev at the 1991 START Treaty ceremony. The sculpture is on display in Moscow’s Novodevichy Park. She also created *Lentil*, based on McCloskey’s first book, which features aspects of his Hamilton, Ohio home. In 2004, she created a seven-foot diameter Sundial that sits on a ten foot granite pedestal, for the Massachusetts General Hospital Nurses Alumni, to honor the entire nursing profession.

ISCAR, LTD commissioned Nancy to create a life size bronze sculpture of a **Dancing Girl** for their corporate office in Tel Aviv, Israel in 2006. She is presently working on several others commissions to be dedicated in 2008.

LD ACCESS can never thank Nancy Schön enough for her generosity in permitting us to present her vision of the *Tortoise and Hare*. Our mission and her famous sculpture have become synonymous with all those who strive to get to their goal with different strategies and unique styles.

PAST HONOREES

2005

*Hon. Thomas H. Kean
Anne & Howard Schneider
Emily Hall Tremain Foundation*

2003

*Barbara Corcoran
Jonathan Mooney
Dr. Judith Rodin*

2001

*David Boies
Dr. Ruth L. Gottesman
Dr. Joseph N. Hankin*

1999

*Dr. Marilyn Bartlett
CAST: Dr. Anne Meyer & Dr. David Rose
Clark Hunt & Embry
Disability Rights Advocates
Drs. Sally E. & Bennett A. Shaywitz*

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