

Editorial

Welcome to the Conference Proceedings of the 39th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability & Diversity 2024

Holly Manaseri¹ and Lauren Lum Ho²

¹ Conference Chair 2024, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

² Conference Co-Chair 2024, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Abstract

This is a welcome message for the Conference Proceedings of the 39th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability & Diversity 2024 organized by the Center on Disability Studies, College of Education, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Keywords: Pacific Rim, disability, conference

**Welcome to the Conference Proceedings of the 39th Annual
Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability & Diversity 2024**

We are pleased to share the Conference Proceedings for the 39th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity 2024. This collection documents some of the diversity of work presented at the conference in Spring 2024. Since 1988, the Pacific Rim Conference has served as an important international forum celebrating efforts by those with disabilities and their allies to create more inclusive spaces. In the decades since the conference's inception, it has emerged as the premier global gathering on disability. The conference draws people with disabilities, educators, researchers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, policymakers, advocates, and others from across the globe to come together and consider ways we may help make our communities more inclusive and equitable places.

As such, this collection represents some of the many diverse voices present at the Pacific Rim Conference 2024. Drawn together by the conference's theme, *Beyond Access: Building a Culture of Belonging*, participants were invited to consider the ways in which we can help create a culture of belonging, where each of us can fully contribute to the communities we are part of while receiving the support and accommodations we need to flourish.

Presentations and events at the conference were organized within seven broad strands:

1. Public Health & Healthcare—Health and Healthcare Inequities; Flexible Public Health and Healthcare; Community-Designed Practices; and Culturally-Grounded Practices.

2. Inclusive Physical Activity, Recreation, and Sport—Accessible and Inclusive Physical Activities; Recreational Activities; Sports; Physical Activity Across the Lifespan
3. Neurodiversity—Neurodivergent Identities and Perspectives; Neurodiversity and Education; Neurodiversity and Culture; Self-Advocacy and Empowerment; Intersectionality
4. Built Environments: Digital, Physical, and Social—Digital Environments; Physical Infrastructure; Social Inclusion; Climate Resilience and Disasters; Digital Accessibility; and Transportation.
5. Employment—Employment First; Culture of Belonging through Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Disability Benefits; Transitioning from High School to Post-Secondary Education to the Workforce; Technology for Inclusive Workforce
6. Inclusive Practices in Education
Strand Topic: Instructional Design & Technology—Accessibility; Assistive Technology; Universal Design for Learning; Collaboration and Communication; Professional Development
Strand Topic: Higher Education—Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Belonging and Social Justice; Higher Education Research in Public Policy
7. Low Incidence Disabilities/Extensive Support Needs—Advocacy; Communication Access; Curriculum Access; Vocation; Language and Culture; Independent Living; Legal Rights and Issues; Inclusion and Intersectionality; Family Support

Within these strands, the contributions reflect a broad, cross-section of work in the field. In “Navigating Uncertainty: The Family Perspective of Preparing for Crisis with a Disability,” Stjernholm discusses the importance of including individuals with disabilities in family disaster planning. Based on interviews, the study explores gaps in information and support, emphasizing the need for proactive and inclusive planning to enhance resilience. Schmid, Heil, Yoshida, Ching, Kalua, and Sentell outline a study to evaluate the physical activity benefits and metabolic equivalents of outrigger canoe paddling, a culturally relevant means for promoting physical activity for those with and without spinal cord injuries. Park, Nip, and Feliciano discuss the Hōkūlani program that helps Native Hawaiian high school students explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through a culturally supportive, strengths-based approach. Kashihara, Hasegawa, Takahashi, Ogura, Haraguchi, and Sasaki explore how chatbots and professionals can provide helpful information for neurodiverse people through text-based chats. They analyzed data from a chatbot developed in Japan to clarify the roles of the chatbot and professionals in improving support for those facing daily challenges.

For all contributions to this volume, plain language versions of abstracts may be accessed at: <https://rdsjournal.org/index.php/journal/2024CP> proceedings.

We wish to thank all the attendees and presenters attending the event. The Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is honored to host this important yearly event for our global community. At the time of writing, we are eagerly anticipating the [40th Pacific Rim Conference](#) taking place at the Hawai‘i Convention Center to be held in person in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, April 15 to April 16, 2025. The conference theme is *By Us and For Us: Legacy and Future of Our Movement*, and it invites us to think about how we may collectively both honor the past and consider the future of the movement we create together.

We hope to see many of you there and thank you for all your continued efforts toward these shared goals.



Editorial: Welcome to the Conference Proceedings of the 39th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability & Diversity 2024 by Holly Manaseri and Lauren Lum Ho. <https://rdsjournal.org/index.php/journal/article/view/1390> is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) and based on works at <https://rdsjournal.org>.