

# 2018 BEACON FOR INCLUSION AWARDS LUNCHEON

Massachusetts State House  
Great Hall  
June 6, 2018  
12:00–2:00pm



Institute for Community Inclusion



**The Beacon for Inclusion Awards recognize individuals who are advancing disability rights throughout Massachusetts and beyond.**

## Oanh Thi Thu Bui

### Federation for Children with Special Needs

Ms. Bui is first and foremost the parent of a child with multiple disabilities, and has first-hand experience navigating the US system for appropriate services for her now young teenager. She has worked tirelessly to advocate for the most appropriate educational and community services to meet her daughter's needs.



Ms. Bui came to the Boston area as a Ford Scholar, completed the LEND Fellowship through the Shriver Center at UMass Medical School, and earned master's degrees in health administration and sustainable international development. She is a full-time outreach staff member for the Federation for Children with Special Needs. She is also an advocate for other parents, particularly working with Boston's Vietnamese and Vietnamese-American, Arabic-speaking, and Haitian communities. Ms. Bui completed a diversity leadership fellowship with the Institute for Community Inclusion in 2016 and was the recipient of an Emerging Leader Scholarship from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

## Robert A. DeLeo

### Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives

Speaker Robert DeLeo has been a champion for people with disabilities since he was first elected in 1990. His career began with standing up for special education, and this commitment to inclusion has continued ever since. In the Massachusetts House of Representatives, he has propelled the Commonwealth to a position of national leadership in the inclusion of people with disabilities in society.



Speaker DeLeo created the first publicly funded college opportunity for students with intellectual disabilities in the nation. He also supported the "Real Lives Bill," a law that gave people with disabilities greater control over the services they receive. Under his leadership, Massachusetts has consistently dedicated resources so that our citizens with disabilities can lead fulfilling lives in their communities.

## Colleen Flanagan

### Executive Director, Disability Action for America

Ms. Flanagan is a strong advocate for health and inclusion, and never hesitates to fight for justice and equity. In a recent example of this bravery, she was one of the advocates with disabilities who were forcibly removed from the US Capitol during the 2017 debate and protests around health care legislation.

In her role for Disability Action for America, Ms. Flanagan leads the organization's work in endorsing candidates who are committed to disability rights, and advocating for more political leaders with disabilities. She is a consultant for the Disability Policy Coalition, and previously led youth-related efforts at Easter Seals.



## Ludwik Szymanski, MD

### Boston Children's Hospital

Dr. Ludwik Szymanski is a neurodevelopmental psychiatrist and a pioneer in the field of mental health for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). One of his areas of focus has been recognizing, understanding, and treating mental health conditions in individuals with IDD. He has worked with the juvenile justice system and courts to advocate for people with IDD, who often face court proceedings and are misunderstood within the system.



Dr. Szymanski's decades-long career as a physician, as well as his work teaching and mentoring students, has impacted the field of disability broadly. In 1967, he founded the mental health–developmental disabilities program at the Developmental Evaluation Clinic at Boston Children's Hospital, which evolved into today's ICI. Through the LEND Program at Children's, Dr. Szymanski continues to advocate for inclusion and equality.

## Abdirahman A. Yusuf

### Executive Director, Somali Development Center

Abdirahman Yusuf is the co-founder and executive director of the Somali Development Center. He is a former senior public health program manager, with over 20 years of managerial experience in community health.



Mr. Yusuf has mentored Sudanese and Eritrean community start-ups to establish themselves as nonprofits. He has embraced inclusion within the Somali Development Center, and consistently educates his constituents about what youth and adults with disabilities can accomplish.

Mr. Yusuf has worked closely with the ICI and our affiliated LEND Program at Boston Children's Hospital for about 20 years. We are grateful to him for teaching our staff and faculty about Somali culture, enabling us to increase culturally responsive supports.

## About the Institute for Community Inclusion

Since 1967, the Institute for Community Inclusion, or ICI, has advanced the rights of people with disabilities through advocacy, training, and research.

We started out as the Developmental Evaluation Clinic at Boston Children's Hospital, founded by the pioneering developmental behavior pediatrician Dr. Allen C. Crocker. From our earliest days, we collaborated with local universities and family support groups to increase the rights of citizens with disabilities. This clinic was one of the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, or UCEDDs, started by the Kennedy administration.

Today, we are still a UCEDD and are based at UMass Boston's School for Global Inclusion and Social Development and Boston Children's Hospital. At today's ICI, we work in 4 main areas: education, employment, health care, and community life. We use a collaborative model that involves people with disabilities in shaping our work.

During our first 50 years, we have helped shape changes in disability policy here in Massachusetts, as well as on a national level. And our work now extends internationally as well, with consultation and research projects in nations such as Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, and Japan.

We are proud of what we've accomplished so far, and full of anticipation of what the next 50 years will bring. Thank you for being part of our journey.

**REGISTER: [50.communityinclusion.org](https://50.communityinclusion.org)**