

## **Gale Hann Vision Statement for 2024 AUCD Board Nominees**

- Name of Candidate: **Gale Hann (they/them)**
- Race/Ethnicity (voluntary): **White and Arab**
- Disability status (voluntary): **Multiply Disabled**
- AUCD Member Organization: **University of Oklahoma – OKLEND**
- Current Position (role and date range): **PhD Student and Leaders for Transition Scholar (doctoral student worker); August 2024-present**
- Total Years Employed/Active in an AUCD Member Center or Program: **4**

**My vision for the Association:** My vision for AUCD is to create a space where all people with disabilities and those who care about them feel supported, inspired, and engaged. I see AUCD as a hub for all things related to disability advocacy, education, and research. My hope for the future is that AUCD continues to be a leader in these areas while demonstrating diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA). As a LEND trainee alumni and autistic/disabled advocate, it is very important to me that AUCD models how organizations can uplift people with disabilities and trainees/early career professionals as leaders. I envision AUCD as a place where all are welcome and diversity is celebrated as we actively work to make the world more accessible and inclusive for all people.

**What I would like to accomplish on the Board:** As the emerging leader representative, my primary goal is to ensure the needs of trainees, trainee alumni, and early career professionals/advocates (emerging leaders) are met. I believe emerging leaders should have opportunities to stay connected to the AUCD network throughout their careers and lives. I would like to create space for emerging leaders to network, receive/provide mentorship, develop professionally, and engage in meaningful work. I aim for the AUCD network to truly represent emerging leaders and have space that is by and for them. I would like for emerging leaders to be proud to be a part of this network because of how we do things and what we accomplish.

**How I have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate leadership in the network:** From 2020-2021 I was an Oklahoma LEND trainee while completing a Master of Public Health degree. In this role, I represented the discipline of public health while sharing my experiences as a multiply disabled autistic advocate. From 2022-2024, I served as the data coordinator for Oklahoma LEND and the Center for Learning and Leadership, Oklahoma's UCEDD. As data coordinator, I provided data management and evaluation on variety of projects led by advocates, family members, professionals, and students. Recently, I started a new role as a PhD student and doctoral student worker at the University of Oklahoma's Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination. In my new job, I serve as an advisor for undergraduate students who have intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). I also research ways to improve quality of life for people with IDD during adolescence and adulthood.

As an advocate and researcher, I try to center people with disabilities in everything that I do. There are many projects that I am proud to be a part. Some of these projects include *Autistic Teens Learning About Sexuality (ATLAS)* sex education resource development, The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma's Suicide Prevention and Awareness Campaign *Surviving the Spectrum* documentary development, and Temple University's (PA UCEDD) Community Advisory Board for the project *Mapping a Strategy to Improve Healthcare for Sexual and Gender Minorities with Disabilities*.

For the past few months, I have served as the interim AUCD board emerging leader representative. In this short time, I have learned so much about the AUCD network and how boards function. I have loved connecting with incredible people from across the network. I know that I have grown an advocate and disability professional because of AUCD, and I would love to support others in their growth.