



Sam's Sibs Stick Together Panelist Biographies



Samantha Els - moderator

Student

Samantha (Sam) Els was born on May 26, 199 in the United Kingdom and moved to Florida in the United States when she was 8 years old. She graduated with honors from The Pine School and has been attending Stanford University since August 2017. Sam is majoring in Human Biology with a concentration in Global Public Health. She is a member of the Women's Rugby team and spent a semester abroad doing research in Australia. She is fluent in Afrikaans and English, and proficient in Spanish

and American Sign Language. Sam is one of the hosts of “Sams Sibs Stick Together,” a webinar series sponsored by Els for Autism and the Autism Science Foundation, which supports siblings of people with autism spectrum disorder.



Evee Bak

Student

Evee is a college student, a sister, a daughter, skateboarder and paddle-boarder. She grew up in Pennsylvania and is currently attending the University of Pittsburgh where she is studying biology with the goal of becoming an infectious disease doctor. She is also passionate about research and for several years organized the “Scoring Goals for Autism” day for families across the spectrum to join together to play soccer.



Maximilian Bazil

Student

Max is a DNA repair scientist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center starting his graduate degree soon at Mount Sinai. His younger brother, Matthew, has a form of autism that requires constant care and is believed to derive from a mutation in the CHD8 gene. Matthew, while immeasurably taller, is a year younger than Max at 20 years old and is truly a gentle giant.



Nathan Bliss

Student

Nathan will be a junior at Texas A&M University studying biomedical engineering. He was inspired by his brother, Charles, who was diagnosed with Phelan McDermid Syndrome. As a result Charles has severe developmental disability, epilepsy, limited mobility and speech, among other symptoms. Nathan spent last summer working in a lab at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston examining the function of genes involved in neurodevelopment. You can read more about Nathan here: <https://engineering.tamu.edu/news/2019/09/a-brothers-love-researching-for-a-cure.html>



Lucy Hatchell

Attorney

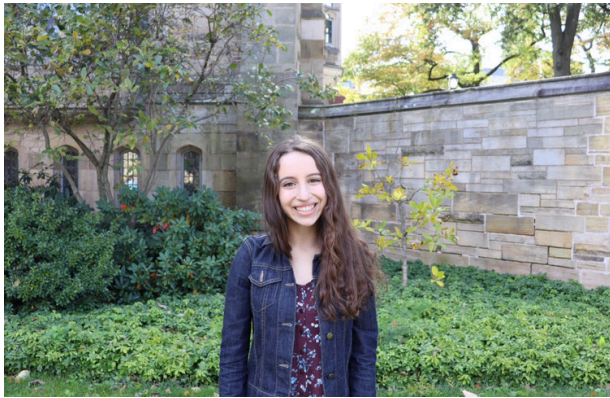
Lucy Hatchell joined DRNC in 2015 as a disability law fellow on the education team. After her fellowship, she stayed on as a valued member of the team working to resolve special education and discipline issues. Hatchell, a native of Chapel Hill, N.C., received her bachelor's degree in journalism from Indiana University and her law degree from UNC School of Law. Hatchell worked in California after college, and moved back to North Carolina to attend law school. Her brother has autism and, as a result, Hatchell has always been passionate about advocating for individuals with disabilities.



Amanda Lopez

SLP

Amanda Lopez is a Speech and Language Pathologist currently working at The Learning Center at the Els Center of Excellence. She grew up in Key West, Florida with her mother, father and two younger brothers. The oldest of her brothers, Georgie, was diagnosed with Autism at the age of two when Amanda was six years old. She credits her brother, Georgie, greatly for unlocking her passion and purpose to help her students find their voice. She received her undergraduate degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders and her Master's degree in Speech Language Pathology from Florida State University. In her graduate studies, she completed work on a grant specializing in building the capacity of SLPs to address the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Amanda has completed her fourth year working in the field and looks forward to a fulfilling career working to enhance the lives of individuals with Autism.



Lauren Singer

student

Lauren is a senior at Yale, where she is majoring in Cognitive Science. Her sister Jodie has intellectual disability and autism, and Lauren has volunteered in programs for both children with developmental disabilities and their siblings. At Yale, she is a research assistant at the Yale Child Study Center. Lauren plans to become a physician.



Amy Ursitti

Amy is ecstatic to be a part of the Sibs Stick Together initiative as a panelist! She is originally from Dover, MA, and she is currently a junior at Emory University in Atlanta, GA studying Neuroscience & Behavioral Biology and Classics on the pre-medical track. She is also sister to the amazing Jack, who inspires her every day. Outside of school, she enjoys distance running, serving as the president of Emory's chapter of Best Buddies, and conducting research at the Emory Autism Center. She is so grateful for the opportunity to discuss various topics with other panelists!