

Christina Nguyen & Sasha Fowler

3:45 - 5:00PM

Building a Future of Possibilities From Cradle to College; How to Best Foster Thriving in Individuals with Down Syndrome

Have you ever found yourself asking, "Why do I do what I do?" Let this presentation serve as a powerful reminder of that "why." Through videos, photos, and interviews with Club21 families, we explore how self-determination, self-advocacy, and belonging are fostered in the lives of individuals with Down syndrome. We will share the hopes, dreams, challenges, and supports experienced by these folks, presenting these insights through compelling stories and data trends. This session celebrates the strengths of the Down syndrome community and showcases how they are empowered by their loved ones. Join us as we wrap up the conference with inspiration, reaffirming the purpose that drives educators, families, and advocates alike. Let us come together and remember the amazing potential within the community we serve and the "why" that guides us all.

Christina Nguyen (top photo) and Sasha Fowler (bottom photo) are Second-Year Genetic Counseling students at Keck Graduate Institute. Christina received her Bachelor of Science in Molecular Cellular Biology with an Emphasis in Bioethics from the University of Puget Sound. Sasha received her Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of California Riverside. They have had previous clinical internships working with genetics providers ranging from Prenatal to Pediatrics. They were paired together during their clinical internship at Club21, where they learned how to best communicate with members of the Down syndrome community. This fostered their excitement and willingness to humanize the patients that they have seen in the clinic. They will bring the skills learned from Club21 to help advocate and remind providers that a diagnosis is more than a test result, but a human that deserves compassion and care. Christina and Sasha anticipate graduating with their Master's in Genetic Counseling this May and continuing their roles as community advocates in their future careers.

