

Susan L. Senator

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Work Experience

Director of Development and Outreach, MUSE Foundation **2017-present**

MUSE (Music, Unity, and Social Expansion) in Boston, MA. Work to further MUSE's mission of providing music instruction and performance opportunities for adults with developmental delays. Lead a Parent Advisory Board for the purpose of fundraising. Draft public relations and press releases.

Adjunct Professor of English **2008 - 2016**

Suffolk University, Boston MA. Teach Freshman English, "Introduction to the Essay," and "Introduction to Literature."

Director of Autism Adulthood Services and Outreach **2012–2014**

CCCAID (Community College Consortium for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities) Fairfax, VA. Meet with Congressional and White House staff and officials to discuss autism and ID adulthood legislation and issues around community college accessibility. Appear on panels at relevant conferences. Write public relations and press pieces.

Author and Freelance Writer **1985–present**

Wrote three autism parenting books, *Making Peace With Autism*, Trumpeter, 2006, *Autism Mom's Survival Guide*, Trumpeter, 2010, and *Autism Adulthood*, Skyhorse, 2016 and 2018. Published over 100 articles to international, national, regional, and local media, journals and newspapers, (NPR, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, to name a few) on the subjects of autism, parenting, education, and politics. Wrote autism family novel: *Dirt*, Stellated Publications, 2011.

Blogger **2005–present**

"Susan's Blog," at susansenator.com. Winner 2011 and 2012 Babble.com Top 25 Autism Blogs, 2005-present, with nearly 10,000 hits a month.

Public Speaker **2003–present**

100+ conferences, workshops, parent talks, 2005-present. Autism parenting expert on radio and national television, including NPR, The Today Show, CNN, and MSNBC.

Public Relations Assistant, Cambridge Technology Group **1987–1988**

Advertising Assistant, Jordan Marsh, Boston **1986–1987**

Professional Associations

MUSE Foundation, Board Member and Director of Outreach and Development. 2017-present

Congressionally Directed Military Research Program (CDMRP) Parent Panelist, autism grant review, 2009 and 2010

Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Friends Board Co-Chair, 2014 - 2016

Boston Higashi School, Advisory Board Member, 2011–present

Brookline School Committee member, 2001–2006

Brookline PAX (Progressive Alliance) Board Member, 1999–2012

Brookline Special Education Parents Advisory Council Co-Chair, 1999–2001

Brookline Town Meeting Member, 2006–2009

Massachusetts Association of School Committees Member, 2001–2012

Massachusetts Association of Special Needs Parent Advisory Councils Board Member, 1997–2000

Publications

Books

Autism Adulthood: Strategies and Insights for a Fulfilling Life: (Skyhorse, 2016, 2018).

Making Peace with Autism: One Family's Story of Struggle, Discovery, and Unexpected Gifts (Trumpeter/Shambhala, Boston, 2005, paperback, 2006). Winner, *Exceptional Parent Magazine* Award of Distinction, 2007

The Autism Mom's Survival Guide (For Dads, Too!): Creating a Balanced and Happy Life While Raising a Child With Autism (Trumpeter/Shambhala, Boston, 2010).

Dirt: A Story of Gardening, Mothering, and Other Messy Business (Stellated, 2011).

Articles, Essays, and Columns

Washington Post op-eds: "The Simple Moment When My Autistic Son Was Treated Like a Person." (May 2017); "The Day I helped My Autistic Son Register to Vote," (March 2016); "My Autistic Son's Step into the Wider World – Through Facebook," (August 2012); "Tiger Mother to an Autistic Son," (December 2011); **and eight others**, 2003 to 2010.

On Faith at Newsweek/Washingtonpost.com: "Apology as a Rite of Passage," (February 2009); "What's Missing in the R-Word Debate," (August 2008); "Motherhood's Heaven and Hell," (October 2008); "Grief as Prayer," (July 2008)

Huffington Post: "Everyone Deserves a Kidney," (January 2012), "Crazy Little Thing Called Love," (January 2007), "A Mother Knows Best," (November 2006), "The Kindness of Strangers," (December 2006)

New York Times: "The Subject of the Sibling," *Lives*, *Sunday Times Magazine*, (February 2010); "Home Alone," *Sunday Times Education Life*, (August 2004)

Boston Globe: "My Son, the Rock Star," (December 2017), "My Autistic Son Leaves the Nest," (May 2012); "Shriver's Can-do Spirit," (August 2009); **and six others**, 2002 to present.

WBUR Commentaries: Boston's NPR affiliate, "Eunice Kennedy Shriver," (August 2009); "Moving On: The Lincoln-Sudbury High School Tragedy," (January 2007); "Eunice and Me," (November 2007); "Supreme Injustice," (November 2006) **and eight others for ongoing "Cognoscenti" program** 2012-present

Essays: “Eunice and Me,” in *Educating Exceptional Children*, 12th ed, Kirk/Gallagher/Coleman, Houghton-Mifflin, college textbook for educators, (November 2008); “*First Friend*,” in *This I Believe, On Love*, (November 2010); Foreword, *Being There With ASD*, by Robert Parish, Wiley (March 2008)

Education Week: “The Autistic Kid Who Has Everything...And It’s Still Not Enough,” (October 2003), reprinted in *Teacher Magazine*, (November 2003); “A Class Act,” (February 2004)

Pennsylvania Gazette: “The Magic Pebble,” (July 2002)

Advance for Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists: “Skill-building in Preteens with Autism,” co-authored with Sheila Currier, MS, CCC-SLP (September, 2002)

Exceptional Parent Magazine: Served a term as Contributing Editor. Authored “Technology and Employment,” (November 2000); “Choosing Toys for a Child with Autism,” (October 2000); **and three others**, 1997-2000

Brookline Tab: columnist since 1998

Distinctions, Honors, and Media Highlights

- **Featured as the Cover Story, University of Pennsylvania Alumni Magazine (*Pennsylvania Gazette*),** (August 2011)
- **Vinfen “Outstanding Educator” Award,** (September 2010)
- **Voice of America,** “Autism Survival,” (April 2010), among 14 other regional and national radio interviews, (March, April, and May, 2010)
- **Today Show,** “Battling Autism: One Family’s Story,” (October 2005)
- **State Dinner guest at the White House** in honor of Eunice Shriver and Special Olympics, (July 2006)
- **Exceptional Parent Magazine’s Award of Excellence,** (April 2007)
- **ABCNews.com,** health website focusing on autism, (July 2008)
- **MSNBC,** “Coping With Autism” (December 2005)
- **CNN,** Interview, (October 2005)
- **NPR Weekend America,** Interview with Barbara Bogaev, (October 2005)
- **Parents’ Journal** radio, (October 2005, and November 2006)
- **Voice of America Radio,** (October 2005)

Keynotes, Lectures, and Conferences (partial list)

- Autism Speaks Conference, Wallingford, CT (February 2018)
- YAI Autism Conference, New York, NY (April 2018)
- Delco Family PASS, Devon, PA (April 2018)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services, Targeting Autism Conference IL (May 2018)
- Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change, Waltham, MA (April 2017)
- Bridgewell, Inc., Annual Conference, Framingham, MA (April 2017)

- New York State ARC Annual Conference, Keynote (October 2012)
- Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change, Panelist (September 2012)
- Lesley College Reading and Book Signing (May 2012)
- Autism Commission (Governor's Special Commission) Panelist (May 2011)
- Hebrew College Special Educators' Conference (May 2011)
- Unitarian Church of Wellesley (January 2011)
- Somerville Special Needs Parents Association (January 2011)
- Southern Maine Autism Society Annual Conference (March 2011)
- Wyoming Dept of Public Health, "Early Intervention Educators Conference," (August 2009)
- Harvard Medical School with Cambridge Medical Alliance, Cambridge, MA (November 2007)
- Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD (April 2007)
- Minnesota Autism Society, Minneapolis, MN (March 2006)
- Federation for Children with Special Needs, Boston, MA (March 2006)
- Sudbury Valley Jewish Special Educators Conference, Acton, MA (March 2006)
- The Barber Institute, Erie, PA (January 2006)
- The Autism Acceptance Project, Toronto, Canada (October 2006)
- Wisconsin Autism Society, Milwaukee, WI (April 2006)
- The Hattie Larlham Institute, Mantua, OH (February 2006)
- The May Institute, Randolph, MA (May 2006)

Education

Master of Arts, December 1985, 19th-century Russian and European History, University of Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Arts, May 1984, Annenberg School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania

Other Interests

Raising and enjoying my three sons, the oldest of whom has severe autism. Mountain biking, gardening, bellydance.