

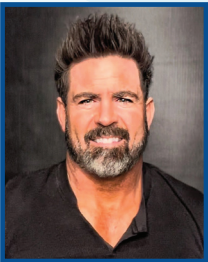
UASSP Assistant Principals Conference

Speaker Bios



Melody Apezteguia - Assistant Principal of the Year

Melody is in her thirty-first year as a professional educator and her seventh year as an AFHS assistant principal. She worked for 22 years as a high school math teacher. Although Melody is known for her teaching and instruction, she uses her skills of connecting with students to help individual students in all aspects of their lives. Melody is the 2016 Utah Teacher of the Year and the 2013 recipient of the George Shell Award for teaching excellence in mathematics. She is pursuing a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Utah.



Josh Downs - Mental Performance Coach

Josh is a motivational speaker, a Mental Performance Coach, the podcast host of The Drive and a father of two daughters. Josh is part of the Stand4kind Foundation that is focused on improving the mental health of teenagers by helping to turn their life's traumas into triumph and promoting opportunities for them to lift and serve those around them. He is currently traveling to schools around the state sharing his message and encouraging students to lift themselves by lifting each other.



Shauna Haney - Principal, Ogden High School

Shauna began her teaching career at Bonneville HS in 1994 and, in 1996, transitioned to Northridge HS, where she remained until 2015. Her teaching experience spans special education, health, exercise science, emergency response, human development, and physical education. Between 1993 and 2019, she coached soccer, basketball, and volleyball, and served as assistant athletic director. She was named High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year in both 2008 and 2013, and received the Distinguished Service Award as the 5A Coach of the Year in 2014. In 2015, she moved to North Davis JH, where she worked as an assistant principal. Shauna later became an assistant principal at Ogden HS before becoming the principal in 2020, a role she continues to hold.



Ben Kjar – A Victor not a Victim

Ben Kjar was born with Crouzons Syndrome, a craniofacial anomaly. As a young boy the doctors told him that he would live a different life – and that’s exactly what he has done! Ben has risen above any of life’s challenges and become **A Victor, Not a Victim**. Ben is Utah Valley University’s first-ever NCAA Division 1 Wrestling All-American. This year, at 40 yrs old, Ben represented the USA at the World Championships in Greece and became a World Champion in Greco-Roman Wrestling and won a silver medal in Freestyle Wrestling. He is in the middle of filming his documentary called Standout: The Ben Kjar Story. Ben’s book and documentary will be released in 2025. Ben and his wife are proud parents of three beautiful adopted children, all under the age of 5.



Paula Logan – Canyons School District

Ms. Paula Logan is the Director of Federal and State Programs in the Canyons School District. With a career spanning over three decades, she served as a middle school principal for 17 years at both Butler MS and Midvale MS within the district. Ms. Logan began her career teaching middle school for eight years before transitioning to school administration as a high school assistant principal for six years. She eventually returned to middle school administration, where her passion for student success continued to thrive. Her commitment to educational excellence has been recognized with the 2019 Apex Award for Outstanding Administrator, the highest honor presented by Canyons School District, and the UASSP Principal of the Year award in 2020.



Mariama Kallon-Olayemi – Lover of Learning, Lover of Life

Mariama narrowly escaped torture by murderous rebel forces. After losing her entire family and everything she owned, she was guided to safety as she found refuge with a family in her native, Sierra Leone. She is grateful that she was eventually led from war-torn West Africa to a new life in a new land. Mariama is a very out-going person and loves people. She prays daily for a heart that is captivating. Her desire is to be teachable in all aspects of life and always desires to see the good in others. She is a team player and willing to learn. Her desire is to always leave things better than she found them.



Doug Welton – Utah State Legislator – Educator in Nebo School District

Doug Welton currently represents District 67 in the Utah House of Representatives, a role that has allowed him to create change across a wide range of issues. In fact, each bill he sponsored during the most recent legislative session passed in both the House and the Senate. As an educator and highly-skilled debate coach, Representative Welton would often encourage his students to participate in the political process. It wasn’t long before an interest in issues and concerns within his own community led him to take his own advice. Representative Welton serves on the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, House Government Operations Committee and the House Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Committee.

