Influential Women Features Tracey Stoll: Transforming Special Education And Autism Support Through Community Leadership

BRIGHTON, MA, UNITED STATES, September 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With Nearly Three Decades of Experience Across Education, Social-Emotional Learning, and Nonprofit Leadership, Tracey Stoll Continues to Create Meaningful Opportunities for Neurodiverse Individuals and the Families Who Support Them



Tracey Stoll has built a distinguished career around a simple but powerful belief: when individuals are given the right tools, support, and opportunities, they can develop their strengths, build meaningful relationships, and participate more fully in their communities. Based in Greater Boston, Tracey brings approximately 30 years of experience spanning special education, social-emotional learning, autism support, curriculum development, consulting, and nonprofit leadership.

Today, Tracey serves as Executive Director of The Common Room, a nonprofit dedicated to creating structured social, recreational, and cultural opportunities for young adults with high cognitive autism and related social-emotional learning profiles. Through her leadership, the organization delivers approximately 40–50 programs each week, creating opportunities for genuine peer relationships, greater independence, and stronger connections to the broader community.

Her professional journey, however, began far from the special education field. Tracey started her career in customer service and technical support within the project management software industry, working in Atlanta and New York City. Those early experiences helped her develop the communication, troubleshooting, and problem-solving abilities that would later become defining

characteristics of her leadership style.

Tracey eventually pursued graduate education at Lesley University, earning an M.Ed., while also building upon her undergraduate education at Ithaca College, where she earned her BS. Her academic preparation, combined with her experiences in the classroom, provided the foundation for her transition into education and her work with integrated early childhood classrooms and neurodiverse learners.

Over the years, Tracey continued to expand her professional expertise. Her credentials include Board Certification in Special Education, Advanced Autism Specialist Certification, Level 1 Clinical Training in Social Thinking®, Professional Licensure in Special Education PreK–9 and Elementary Education 1–6, and Professional Certification in Nonprofit Management. She has also maintained professional affiliations with the National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET) and the Association for Autism and Neurodiversity (AANE).

Yet Tracey's professional accomplishments are only one part of the story. Her personal experience as a mother of three sons, two of whom are on the autism spectrum, has profoundly influenced her understanding of the challenges families encounter and the importance of accessible, meaningful support.

That understanding ultimately led Tracey to establish Learning Solutions, a comprehensive social-emotional learning center focused on supporting children and adolescents through multidisciplinary services. Over 13 years, she developed Learning Solutions into a robust organization serving more than 100 students each week. The center offered executive function coaching, social skills groups, therapeutic learning supports, and other services designed to help young people navigate the social and emotional challenges that can accompany neurodiversity.

Tracey also provided consulting services to multiple school districts and became involved in curriculum development. Among the programs she developed were Social Fit and S.N.A.P. (Social Notes About People), which were designed to strengthen social understanding, awareness, and decision-making skills.

Throughout this period, Tracey continued investing in her own professional development, including specialized certification through the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards in autism spectrum disorders and behavioral methodology.

A Career Built on Problem-Solving
Tracey attributes much of her success to hard work, problem-solving, and the people who surround her.

She recognizes that she does not have every answer immediately, but she has built her career around the willingness to find solutions. When faced with a challenge, she works to identify one or more approaches that can help move a person, team, or organization forward.

Troubleshooting has become one of Tracey's greatest professional strengths. Problems do not necessarily discourage her; instead, they often become opportunities to think creatively and find a practical path forward. Her diverse professional background has also given her the ability to approach challenges from multiple perspectives.

As a leader, Tracey naturally focuses on the individuals working around her. When something is not going well for someone on her team, her instinct is to ask how she can help. That caregiver instinct has been valuable throughout her career, particularly in environments where understanding individual needs is essential.

At the same time, Tracey recognizes that effective leadership requires more than simply solving problems for others. One of the lessons she continues to embrace is the importance of empowering team members to solve problems themselves.

Her mentor and business coach has given her advice that has become central to her leadership development: "stay in your own lane." For Tracey, that means providing people with the tools, time, and empowerment they need rather than stepping in and doing their work for them.

It is a lesson that has helped her think more intentionally about management and team development. Instead of automatically taking responsibility for a problem, Tracey is learning to create the conditions that allow others to take ownership and grow.

Redefining What Leadership Looks Like
Tracey's leadership philosophy extends beyond organizational management. It is rooted in dignity, accessibility, meaningful engagement, and the understanding that every individual deserves opportunities to connect with others.

Her advice to young women entering the special education and autism-support fields reflects the realities of that commitment. Tracey encourages emerging professionals to understand that the work does not always fit neatly into a traditional 9-to-5 schedule.

Families do not operate according to rigid schedules, and supporting people often requires flexibility and resilience. Professionals in the field must be prepared to continually learn, adapt, and respond to changing needs.

At the same time, Tracey emphasizes the importance of boundaries. The instinct to care for and help others can be one of the greatest strengths a professional brings to this industry, but it can also become emotionally demanding.

Finding the balance between supporting others and taking care of oneself is essential for building a sustainable career. Tracey believes professionals must preserve their compassion while also establishing boundaries that allow them to continue growing personally and

professionally.

Addressing Challenges Across the Lifespan

One of the most significant issues Tracey sees in the field today is the growing pressure on funding sources at both the federal and state levels.

Cuts and redistributions in funding have created significant challenges for individuals and families who depend on educational, therapeutic, and community-based services. The effects can extend far beyond a single organization or program.

When resources become constrained, school systems feel the pressure. Families may struggle to find experienced caregivers or appropriate therapeutic services. In some cases, a family member may be unable to work because adequate support is unavailable.

The problem can become a broader cycle of delays and limited access. Medical professionals are facing their own pressures, while families may experience long waits for therapy and other essential services.

For Tracey, the challenge is particularly significant within the nonprofit sector. Her goal is to make services as philanthropic and accessible as possible rather than transferring the full cost onto members and families.

Many of the young adults served by organizations such as The Common Room may be unemployed or dependent on Social Security. For them, the ability to participate in social and cultural activities is not simply a recreational luxury. It can represent an opportunity to develop friendships, reduce isolation, and experience a sense of belonging.

Tracey believes that access to community should not depend entirely on a person's financial circumstances.

Creating Communities of Belonging

This philosophy is reflected in Tracey's current work with The Common Room. By leading a multidisciplinary team and overseeing dozens of programs each week, she is helping create an environment where young adults can build relationships and develop independence in ways that are meaningful to them.

The organization's work reflects a broader understanding of support. It is not solely about addressing challenges or providing services. It is also about creating opportunities for people to experience friendship, culture, recreation, responsibility, and community.

For Tracey, helping one individual or one family has a ripple effect. Supporting a family strengthens the community, while strengthening the community ultimately benefits families.

That perspective has remained consistent throughout her career, from her early days in technical support and customer service to her classroom experiences, the creation and growth of Learning Solutions, her consulting work, and her current nonprofit leadership.

A Continuing Commitment to Service

Tracey Stoll's career demonstrates how professional expertise and personal experience can come together to create lasting impact. Her academic achievements, specialized certifications, classroom experience, entrepreneurial leadership, nonprofit management, and advocacy work have all contributed to a career focused on helping neurodiverse individuals thrive.

Her credentials include an M.Ed. from Lesley University and a BS from Ithaca College, along with Board Certification in Special Education, Advanced Autism Specialist Certification, Level 1 Clinical Training in Social Thinking®, professional licensure in Special Education PreK–9 and Elementary Education 1–6, and professional certification in nonprofit management. Her membership in NASET and AANE further reflects her continued engagement with the professional and advocacy communities surrounding special education and neurodiversity.

But perhaps the most defining element of Tracey's career is her willingness to keep learning.

She understands that the needs of individuals and families are constantly evolving, and effective leadership requires the ability to adapt. Her approach combines persistence with empathy, creative problem-solving with accountability, and professional expertise with genuine care.

As Tracey continues her work at The Common Room, her focus remains on creating opportunities for young adults with autism and related social-emotional learning profiles to connect, participate, and build fulfilling lives within their communities.

For nearly three decades, Tracey has demonstrated that meaningful leadership is not simply about managing organizations or solving problems. It is about seeing the person behind the challenge, understanding what support can make a difference, and creating the conditions for individuals to discover what they are capable of achieving.

Her journey continues to be defined by that commitment—and by the belief that when communities make room for everyone, everyone has the opportunity to belong.

Learn More about Tracey Stoll:

Through her Influential Women profile, https://influentialwomen.com/connect/tracey-stoll

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