

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Ian Williams, Professional Actor and Improvisor

Ian Williams has been an improviser and actor based in Chicago since 2013. For over 10 years, he has toured and performed professionally on many stages within the United States and Canada for companies such as Chicago Improv Productions and Cards Against Humanity. As a professional working in the fields of college access and higher education, Ian has also applied his theatrical skills to support efforts off the stage and as an educator in classroom settings. In addition to having led countless improv workshops for middle and high school students, Ian also has a depth of experience in developing and implementing improv-based personal development curriculum. His curriculum has primarily been designed to teach students methods they can use to revamp their personal & professional social engagement skills as well as to demonstrate to students how/where they might apply their new social & communication strategies in everyday life.

Ian graduated from the Conservatory Program at Chicago's Second City Training Center in 2015 and also received the inaugural Diversity Scholarship to study Improv & Sketch Comedy at the iO Training Center in 2016. He currently works as the Associate Director of Academic Advising for the School of Education & Social Policy at Northwestern University.

Nancy Fell Cohen M.S. CCC/SLP

Nancy Fell Cohen is a Speech and Language Pathologist with over 40 years of experience working with the pediatric through geriatric populations. Since 2010, Nancy has focused on bringing her love of theater and improv into the social group therapy setting with middle school and high school adolescents who demonstrate social pragmatic language impairments. Professionally, Nancy worked as a Speech and Language Pathologist at Northwood Middle School in Highland Park, where she introduced theater games and improv while directing the school musical and co-chairing Northwood's debate team. Nancy regularly includes improv into pragmatic groups that she facilitates with Social Workers at Comprehensive Speech and Language, LLC.

Nancy received both her Bachelor's and her Master's degrees at University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is a member of the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the Illinois-Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ISHA), and the North Suburban Speech and Language Association (NSSLA). Nancy has a Middle School (MS) endorsement and graduate work toward the English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement from National Louis University.