

BIOGRAPHY

Artist of the spoken word
Advocate for people with disabilities
Ambassador to all

Diagnosed with a Learning Disability in the third grade, LeDerick Horne defies any and all labels. He's a dynamic spoken-word poet. A tireless advocate for all People with Disabilities. An inspiring motivational speaker. A bridge-builder between learners and leaders across the U.S. and around the world who serves as a role model for all races, genders, and generations.

The grandson of one of New Jersey's most prominent civil rights leaders, LeDerick uses his gift for spoken-word poetry as the gateway to larger discussions on equal opportunity, pride, self-determination and hope for People with Disabilities. His workshops, keynote speeches, and performances reach thousands of students, teachers, legislators, policy makers, business leaders, and service providers each year. He regularly addresses an array of academic, government, social, and business groups, including appearances at the White House, the United Nations, Harvard University, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, and the State Departments of Education across the US. His work addresses the challenges of all disabilities, uniting the efforts of diverse groups in order to achieve substantive, systemic change.

From 2003 to 2020, LeDerick served on the governing board of Eye to Eye (eyetoeyenational.org), the only national nonprofit mentoring program for students labeled with LD / ADHD – He was Eye to Eye's Founding Board Chair and he also chaired the organization's Strategic Planning and Programming committees. He is on the advisory board for The National Resources for Access, Independence, Self-determination and Employment (RAISE) Technical Assistance Center (raisecenter.org). And he is a member of the governing board for the New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education (njcie.org).

In 2016, LeDerick and co-author Margo Vreeburg Izzo, PhD, The Ohio State University, released the book *Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success* — the definitive compendium on transition support for students with LD / ADHD and other hidden disabilities — published by Brookes Publishing Co.

He has released two spoken-word poetry albums (*Rhyme Reason and Song* in 2005 and *Black and Blue* in 2011) and co-created *New Street Poets*, a spoken-word play about the effect of gentrification on urban culture. The play received considerable acclaim including accolades at the New York City International Fringe Festival and toured extensively throughout the U.S.

LeDerick has earned a BA in Mathematics with a Fine Arts minor from New Jersey City University and also studied Mathematics at Middlesex County College. His poetry is available on iTunes and YouTube, and you can learn more about his work at lederick.com.

“LeDerick isn't just a popular speaker on disabilities in the country today—his experiences have been transformed into a very touching message of how labels and low expectations can hurt children, but also about how the care and concern of one adult can make all the difference. Whether he's encouraging others with stories from his own personal journey, helping to inform policy discussions, providing hope for those who have lost hope, or fostering a better understanding of the potential within all people with disabilities, LeDerick is an invaluable source of inspiration and leadership.”

—Melody Musgrove
Former Director, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP),
U.S. Department of Education