

# The "Roundtable" Roundup



## Attendance:

The following people attended the July Roundtable Retreat at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary:

Danielle Ball La Roche University  
Tanya Baronti United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania  
James Bender CCAC  
Cheryl Biggs NEED  
Joanne Borgesi ETS  
Jarrett Boxley Clarion University of Pennsylvania  
Janay Coleman The Pittsburgh Promise  
Amy Davis Allegheny Intermediate Unit  
Linda Ebel Citizens School of Nursing  
Denise Fisher Pittsburgh Technical College  
Julie Fontana PHEAA  
Russell Graham Grand Canyon University  
Erin Grimm AIU3  
Katie Koncar Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Amy LaSota Bidwell Training Center  
Sherryl Lisco La Roche University  
Patricia McCarthy IUP  
Kimberly McCurdy PHEAA  
Melony Ohalek Sallie Mae  
Natalie Olup Rosedale Technical College  
Shari Payne Waynesburg University  
Mike Rose CCAC South  
Peggy Schmiedecke AAUWPACU  
Marcia Sturdivant NEED  
Kyle Wyche University of Pittsburgh  
Ashley Zahorchak YWCA - Greater Pittsburgh

## Speakers:

**Tanya Baronti from the United Way** provided an update on their survey of student service organizations. United Way will share this information with the Heinz Foundation.

**Reuben Mills from the Pennsylvania Department of Education** shared current PDE initiatives. He followed up by email with additional information concerning questions discussed during our retreat. Reuben appreciated that a number of our members reached out to him with further information about certain items of discussion. Please see below for Reuben's email response:

*How do we keep Pennsylvania students in PA to attend post-secondary school?*

This is an area that the Secretary has been focused on for the past year hence our many discussions around reducing college debt and the burden this places on our students. We recognize that according to the National Student Clearinghouse only 65% of PA high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education within 16 months of graduation... yet less than 60% of those students ultimately earn a degree or credential within 6 years (Clearinghouse). We strongly believe that some of our initiatives being developed will increase the number above and keep our students in the commonwealth. Some of those initiatives include:

- Articulation agreements between industry stakeholders, private licensed schools and our Higher Education Partners
- Under PA's ESSA Consolidated State Plan, local education agencies may use Title IV Part A and other Federal funding to support college and career exploration and advising. This includes hiring guidance counselors and other support staff to help students and especially underrepresented students to have information and tools they need to

gain awareness about funding and how to access PA Colleges and Universities.

- The expansion of College Symposia 2 which supports the work of guidance counselors equipping them with more information about PA colleges and universities while also providing tools around financial aid and scholarships.
- The PA College Application which was discussed at the event.
- Providing more opportunities to create dual enrollment programs between high schools, community colleges and 4 year institutions.
- Working with PASSHE and GEARUP. Next year there will be more than 2300 students participating in GEARUP and attending our state institutions.
- We need to talk with our legislators about the importance of setting aside more dollars for financial aid and other need based programs.
- The importance of working with TAOC and helping more students to take and pass IB programs, Dantes and CLEP exams which further strengthens the relations between our CC's and four year colleges to reduce debt even further.

**Wendy Dunlap and Kim McCurdy of PHEAA** presented the group with ways to effectively communicate through email and text. Studies show you have only eight seconds to grab someone's attention. Attendees discussed how they manage emails, text and other forms of written communications.

### Committee Reports

**College Success Forum:** College Success Forum at RMU had over 100 attendees and we received positive feedback on the attendee survey. The next CSF is scheduled for January

28, 2020 at the same location, Yorktown Hall, RMU. Please reach out to Kim McCurdy at [kmccurdy@pheaa.org](mailto:kmccurdy@pheaa.org) if you would like to present a session at the upcoming CSF.



### Future Roundtable Meetings

- **September 10, 2019** – University of Pittsburgh - Greensburg
- **November 12, 2019** – Waynesburg University - Southpointe
- **January 14, 2020** – La Roche University
- **January 28, 2020** - Yorktown Hall, RMU – College Success Forum.
- **February 28, 2020** – Student Transition Forum – Allegheny IU
- **March 17, 2020** – Rosedale Technical College
- **May 12, 2020** – Citizen's School of Nursing