

The “Roundtable” Roundup



Membership Information:

The updated contact information for Roundtable Participants can be found at www.pasfaa.org/wpacsr.

Attendance:

There were 19 folks in attendance at the January 10, 2017, Roundtable meeting at University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg. Rachael Banks, PSU Greater Allegheny; Ben Brudnock, formerly Wells-Fargo; Brandi Darr, University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg; Amy Davis, AIU3; Alison Gloeckler, University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg; Jayeann Harr, PHEAA; Megan Lee, Pittsburgh Technical College; Kim McCurdy, PHEAA; Melony Ohalek, Sallie Mae; Shari Payne, Waynesburg College; Sam Rapp, Manchester Craftmen’s Guild; Sean Riffle, Pittsburgh JobCorps; Antonietta Riley, City High School; Karla Romero, Slippery Rock University; Ryan Scott, Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh; Michael White, Slippery Rock University; Geoff Wood (speaker), University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg; Carol Wooten, Schools That Can; Dorothy Zilic – University of Pittsburgh- Greensburg.

Old Business:

Committee Reports

Technology: Please join our LinkedIn page if you have not yet done so and be sure to check it from time to time to view updates or information for the group. You’re also welcome to start a conversation with our members around relevant topics to the group.

Transition: The committee will be presenting a session at the CSF on Jan. 31. They did not have any further updates at this time.

Adult Learner: The committee is also presenting a session at the CSF. There was no update at this time.

Financial Literacy: Kim met with Reps. Costa and Roebuck on a conference call in December, and it looks like Rep. Roebuck (Chair of Education Committee) is opposed to having a financial literacy “requirement” for graduation. He would like to see what types of curriculum are being offered from a K-12 perspective at several schools and determine if curricula can be adapted for other schools. He is thinking that this curriculum is already in place. Jen, from Rep. Costa’s office, and I reached out to some of the schools in Allegheny County and we have found it doesn’t appear that there is a prescriptive curriculum being used anywhere. There are elective courses and some students are getting information in other courses (economics in social studies for example). We will present this information to the Reps. and see if the bill can be reintroduced with a re-write and potentially get out of committee this year. We’ll keep you updated. At this time, we have no plans to have a rally around this issue in April.

CSF 2017: The College Success Forum will be held on January 31, 2017, at Robert Morris University in Moon Township, PA. As of this date, we have 151 registrants. If you haven't registered, please do so at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSFregistration2017>. The agenda appears on the registration page and you can see there is something for everyone.

The program is free and a continental breakfast and lunch will be provided courtesy of our sponsors PACAC, PCHE, and Robert Morris University. Please invite your colleagues and spread the word.

Service Project 2017: Once again the WPACSR will conduct a supply drive for college students. You may bring donations to the CSF and to future Roundtable meetings. Rachael Banks and her committee are working to identify students and how the items will be distributed. They will provide that information at the next Roundtable meeting. A flyer will be sent to the group and with registration reminders for the CSF. Please consider donating any of the following:

- Bedding/sheets
- Towels
- Bed Risers
- School Supplies (pens, notebooks, backpacks)
- B&N gift cards

New Business:

Speaker – Dr. Geoff Wood – Director for the Center for Applied Research at University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

Dr. Wood presented information regarding the CFAR program at UPG which allows collaborative research across disciplines at the college, but also employs research assistants, allowing for undergraduate students to receive practical research experience on that level – something in which most undergraduate students do not get the opportunity to participate.

A few of my notes from the presentation – CFAR's organizing principle is problem solving. CFAR is a niche program, offering undergraduate students the opportunity to conduct applied research in the community. They currently have 13 faculty and 8 research assistants. The students work about 10 hours a week and are paid. Currently, they are working on a FutureWorks initiative to determine if career and tech ed can be used to combat poverty in Westmoreland County. The county is the 2nd oldest in the state and the least diverse (offering only a 2.5% minority population). How do you attract recent graduates to work in this area? What jobs are available?

There was also discussion regarding some of the barriers students face after high school. Tuition costs were highlighted as a huge barrier for students as they seek training. The K-12 system is not created equally everywhere was another barrier. Colleges don't offer a lot of courses for students who aren't quite ready to be there. Also, there is a stigmatization of tech programs (sometimes even by parents who have gone to a traditional college) and a general unawareness that 2+2 and other variations of a postsecondary pathway exist. It doesn't have to be an either/or situation.

It was also mentioned that some cities like NYC and San Diego are piloting career to college pathways programs. Soft skills are still essential. For instance, public speaking can make you up to 50% more marketable according to a recent article about Warren Buffett. <http://www.inc.com/carmine-gallo/the-one-skill-warren-buffett-says-will-raise-your-value-by-50.html>

Schools That Can will be holding Real World Learning for the 21st Century Forum on May 10 and 11 in Pittsburgh. The agenda is being finalized, but sessions would include networking meetings, Exploring Pittsburgh's Innovation Hub, Defining and Supporting Real-World Learning, and Ensuring Access and Opportunity: Culturally Relevant Real-World Learning. More information will be available soon. In the meantime, you can visit www.schoolsthatcan.org.

PACAC Update: Loren could not be at the meeting but was able to provide dates for future webinars and events sponsored by PACAC. They are included in the upcoming events portion below. Additionally, PACAC is between two sites for the Camp College Program in Western PA. Once the site is determined, a call for volunteers will be put out to the membership. More to come!

Early FAFSA: We had a brief discussion as to whether we thought the Early FAFSA process has been successful at most schools, award letters are out, etc. PHEAA received a report that for the first 3 months, applications are down from the prior year; however, we suspect things will even out as more returning students complete their renewal applications and families are prepared to complete the application if their student has determined where they will attend.



Mark Your Calendars

PACAC Webinars – for more information and registration information, please see www.pacac.org.

- **Loans and Grants and Discounts, Oh My! Helping Your Families Understand Financial Aid;** Wednesday, January 11; 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **I'm 17 – and I'm Not Hemingway! A Realistic Approach to College Essays;** Wednesday, February 8; 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- **There's a Path for Everyone: Options for Students with Differences;** Wednesday, March 1; 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

- **How Important Is My Major? The Many Roads to Career Success;** Wednesday, March 22; 11 a.m. – noon

- **Teacher Recommendation Letters: Developing Great Advocates for Your Students;** Wednesday, April 5; 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Additional Upcoming Events

- **Tuesday, January 31, 2017** – College Success Forum, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Robert Morris University, Moon Township, PA

- **February 9-10, 2017** – National College Fair in Pittsburgh – DL Convention Center

- **March 2, 2017** – CFA Society 2017 Financial Literacy Act 48 Accredited Program – Empowering and Preparing PA's Students for the Money Choices they ALL will make. Registration information will be forthcoming.

- **April 21, 2017** – PACAC's Western PA College Counseling Workshop @ Chatham University – Free to all.

- **May 8-9, 2017** – PACAC's College Access Forum and Legislative Action Day in Harrisburg.

- June 18-20 – PACAC's Annual Conference at Seven Springs

Future Meetings

- **Monday, March 6, 2017; 10 a.m. – noon; LaRoche College, 9000 Babcock Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15237**

- **Tuesday, May 16, 2017; 10 a.m. – noon; Penn State Greater Allegheny**

**Thanks again to University of
Pittsburgh at Greensburg and
Brandi Darr for coordinating
and hosting our meeting. We
appreciate your support and
willingness to provide us with
meeting space!**