



10th Annual College Success Forum

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

UPMC Events Center

Robert Morris University

AGENDA

8 – 9 AM	Registration/Networking Refreshments sponsored by Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE)
9 – 9:05 AM	General Welcome/Housekeeping Amy Sawdey , President, Western PA College Success Roundtable; PHEAA <i>PACAC remarks: David DeBor, Director of Public Advocacy, PACAC; University of California – Santa Barbara</i>
9:05 – 9:15 AM	Opening Remarks Dr. Michelle Patrick , President, Robert Morris University
9:15 – 9:45 AM	Keynote Speaker— Elizabeth McCloud , Vice President of PA State Grant and Special Programs (PHEAA): Headlines in Higher Ed
9:50 – 10:35 AM	Breakout Session 1
10:35 – 10:50 AM	Break
10:50 – 11:35 AM	Breakout Session 2
11:40 -12:25 PM	Breakout Session 3
12:30 – 12:35 PM	Closing Remarks and Colonial Cupboard Service Project
12:35 – 1:15 PM	Networking Lunch Opportunity <i>*Boxed lunches available to take for those unable to stay*</i> Lunch sponsored by PA Association for College Admission Counseling (PACAC)

9:50 – 10:35 a.m. Breakout Session 1 - Select 1 of the following options:

PA FAFSA Go!

Hall 1

Presenters: Dr. Kim McCurdy, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)
Alyssa Dobson, Slippery Rock University
William Lindsey, Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)
Karen Rubican, Canon-McMillan High School

This session will review the work of the PA FAFSA Go! campaign and task force that has been working collaboratively as a result of the decreases in FAFSA filing in past years. The groups origination as well as resources and a project tracker will be reviewed. Come, take your seat at the table, and share your best practices with us.

Advocating for an Ethical Process

Hall 2

Presenters: Justin Mohny, Carnegie Mellon University
David DeBor, University of California – Santa Barbara

Participate in an interactive conversation led by two experienced professionals about how to be a better advocate for ethical practice in the post-secondary counseling and admission process. This session will use ethical dilemmas drafted by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) as the basis of conversations on how to best advocate for students and will provide attendees with resources to learn more about advocacy and ethics.

Building Scholastic Community for Parenting Scholars

Hall 3

Presenter: Dr. Diamonte Walker, Pittsburgh Scholar House

This session will provide practitioners with best-in-class strategies to engage, support and develop college students with parenting responsibilities. We will explore how the Pittsburgh Scholar House developed the Wayfinders program to establish a two-generational model designed to activate economic mobility and parental effectiveness for economically constrained single parent families. We will address engaging this population with intentionality and awareness of the unique needs of students with complex responsibilities. We will provide key insights into conducting focus groups, designing programmatic interventions, and creating partnerships which help parenting scholars start and finish degree programs while raising their children. Attendees will develop greater empathy and insights for working with this high opportunity population. Learning to effectively engage and support this key population could bolster enrollment for non-traditional students while bolstering completion rates.

Breakout Session 1 (Continued)

Stacking Coins: Expanding Banking Access Through Education and Partnerships

Hall 4

Presenter: Anton Reed, Homewood Children's Village

As adults, we know (sometimes first-hand) how poor financial decisions can negatively impact lives. The best way we can be proactive and tackle this issue within our community is education. This session is for anyone looking to up-skill their students, so they're better prepared to tackle post-secondary life. We'll use practical examples and review opportunities to expand student access to banking resources, as well as educate them on financial empowerment. Our students need problem-solving strategies when it comes to banking and financial literacy. We'll cover the process starting from the pilot through how we leveraged a technology to deliver the content by building a mobile app.

The New Digital SAT: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Hall 5

Presenters: Sunghoon Kim, Pittsburgh Prep
Phil Mcafferty, 3rPrep

The Digital SAT and PSAT will be rolling out in the US and internationally over the next two years. We'll be covering the good, the bad and the ugly side of the test going digital, covering the perspectives of students, schools, test prep professionals, colleges, and counselors.

10:50 – 11:35 a.m. Breakout Session 2 - Select 1 of the following options:

Understanding FAFSA Simplification

Hall 1

Presenters: Wendy Dunlap, Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)
Julie Fontana, Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)

Significant changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are required because of recent legislation. We will discuss how simplification changes the 2024-25 FAFSA and as a result, the required changes to policies and procedures that need to be made at post-secondary schools. We will discuss the SAI and how it will replace the EFC. In addition, we will share how the federal poverty level will be tied to calculating Pell Grant eligibility.

Investing: It's Not Important You Know How, It's Imperative!

Hall 2

Presenter: Gene Natali, Troutwood

Investing is the most overlooked subject in financial-literacy education. It is also one of the most difficult to teach. Most students and young professionals will be responsible for the management of their financial future. That makes understanding how to invest not just important, it's imperative.

PA 529 and Keystone Scholars Usage, Access, and Benefits

Hall 3

Presenter: Jesse Streeter, Pennsylvania State Treasury

Explore how Pennsylvania families can save for higher education using PA 529 plans. Discuss the advantages and lesser-known usages of each program. Join us to learn more about how Pennsylvania is promoting these opportunities to residents.

Meeting Students' Basic Needs

Hall 4

Presenter: Dr. Heather Starr Fiedler, Point Park University

Point Park University was recently awarded a Hunger Free Campus + designation by the State Department of Education. We believe that we cannot successfully educate our students unless we first support their basic needs. We sponsor a campus food pantry, monthly produce pop ups, Thanksgiving meal program, winter clothing drive, campus thrift store and basic needs research to help support our students. This session will talk about the importance of the work supporting students' basic needs and the opportunities and challenges it presents.

Breakout Session 2 (Continued)

Reaching Across the Desk—Best Practices for Admission and Secondary School Counselors

Hall 5

Presenters: Caitlin Engel, Robert Morris University
Joseph Fraas, Ed. D., Gateway HS

What we wish we could tell you: Admissions reps and high school counselors discuss what they would like each other to know about their jobs. A panel of people from both sides of the desk discusses hot topics in admissions for the panelists and audience to discuss and bridge gaps in understanding. We will also come up with solutions to common communication issues.

11:40 – 12:25 p.m. Breakout Session 3 - Select 1 of the following options:

The Justice Scholars Institute an Equity-Focused, College Preparatory Initiative

Hall 1

Presenters: Erica Roberts, Justice Scholars Institute
Kelcey Bailey, Justice Scholars Institute
Kaleah Malloy, Justice Scholars Institute
Jackie Spiezia, Justice Scholars Institute

Justice Scholars Institute is a social justice-anchored, community engaged program housed in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt). Since 2016, we have partnered with College in High School (CHS) at Pitt to provide a credit-bearing, college preparatory experience to students in Pittsburgh Public Schools. In addition to college courses, the program provides a host of educational enhancement opportunities, including college preparatory workshops, out-of-school time justice-focused youth development opportunities and justice-focused research training. The program was birthed in response to educational inequities in the post-secondary transition among Pittsburgh high school students. Our aim is to highlight educational equity as a social justice imperative. Students in the CHS courses are invited to a series of workshops that provide enhanced learning opportunities for success in the transition to college. Workshops focus on college-ready skillsets, applying to college, scholarly research, and professional communication.

Why Entrepreneurship Education Is Critical to Pave the Way for College and Career Success

Hall 2

Presenter: Emily Donato, BUILD.org
Lamar Blackwell, BUILD.org

BUILD's mission is to ignite the potential of youth of color, in under-resourced communities to build Career success, Entrepreneurial mindsets, and Opportunity. We help students become the CEOs of their own lives. Entrepreneurship education can be a great equalizer with improved outcomes across racial and economic lines. Research shows that it results in youth actively engaged in learning, reduced school dropout, and maximized "real-life" application of 21st century skills.

In this session, we will share with educators our best practices for supporting students to learn and apply innovation and tech skills using Human Centered Design and Project Based Learning to create successful businesses from scratch.

Breakout Session 3 (Continued)

The Importance of Financial Literacy

Hall 3

Presenters: Janet McLaughlin, University of Pittsburgh
Joel Philistin, University of Pittsburgh
Juli Louttit, Butler County Community College

This session will discuss the importance of Financial Literacy for the college student and beyond. The University of Pittsburgh recently implemented the Center for Financial Education and Wellness. This center is here to assist students with financial decision making that will impact their college years and beyond.

ACT WorkKeys for Pennsylvania Students

Hall 4

Presenter: Greg Napierala, ACT

Students MUST possess the workplace skills employers need. The ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is rooted in ACT WorkKeys assessments that enable students to show evidence of foundational cognitive skills essential for workplace success. The NCRC is also now an alternative graduation pathway tool available to Pennsylvania secondary students through the recently passed PA ACT158. And from a recent American Council on Education (ACE) recommendation, postsecondary institutions can award college credit to students who demonstrate the 21st-century skills needed for success, using this nationally recognized credential that measures foundational, work-ready skills. In this session, you will learn how the ACT WorkKeys assessments can unlock opportunities for students and set them up for success. The WorkKeys career readiness benchmarks can be used in career counseling to guide individuals who are exploring different college majors, CTE programs, or job training programs linked to different career pathways. Students can put WorkKeys score results on college applications or present them at job interviews.

Understanding FAFSA Simplification

Hall 5

Presenters: Wendy Dunlap, PHEAA
Julie Fontana, PHEAA

Significant changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are required because of recent legislation. We will discuss how simplification changes the 2024-25 FAFSA and as a result, the required changes to policies and procedures that need to be made at post-secondary schools. We will discuss the SAI and how it will replace the EFC. In addition, we will share how the federal poverty level will be tied to calculating Pell Grant eligibility.

Keynote Speaker: Elizabeth McCloud



Elizabeth McCloud serves as Vice President of State Grant and Special Programs for the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), which administers the PA State Grant Program and other state-funded postsecondary student aid programs. Prior to joining PHEAA in 2015, Elizabeth served as the Director of Financial Aid at Elizabethtown College, where she spent 20 years assisting students and families in the pursuit of postsecondary education. Elizabeth is committed to promoting access to postsecondary education for students at every need level.



Thank you to our sponsors, Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling (PACAC) and Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE), for providing refreshments to attendees so we can keep the program free to participants. We know the value of the program and appreciate everything you do for us.

Thank you to Robert Morris University and in particular, Stephanie Hendershot and Dr. Michelle Patrick, for supporting the Roundtable efforts and for always making your campus available for this event. We really appreciate you!

Finally, thank you to all the presenters who have volunteered their time and expertise to make the CSF a valuable professional development opportunity. And to all the attendees, thank you for continuing to attend and support our efforts to share ideas and ensure student success.

Amy Sawdey, President, WPACSR