

2024 Community of Practice Transition Conference

## CHARTING YOUR COURSE



PA Community  
of Transition

2024



# CONFERENCE

Charting YOUR Course

July 31, 2024 - August 1, 2024

In-Person & Virtual Opportunities Available

## Conference Features

Penn State Conference Center  
215 Innovation Boulevard  
State College, PA 16803



Accommodations,  
Supports and  
Resources Expo,  
Reception & Raffle

This interactive, hands-on expo, which includes a Fab Lab is designed for participants to learn about specific assistive technology, resources, supports, and services available to youth.



### Youth & Family Opportunities



#### Youth & Family Team Sessions

These sessions include youth development activities, to help youth grow and plan for adult life, with the support of their family (or supporting adult).



#### Youth Dance

On Wednesday night, youth may participate in a dance, play games, or participate in a photo booth! During this activity, youth will be able to interact with youth leaders and their peers.



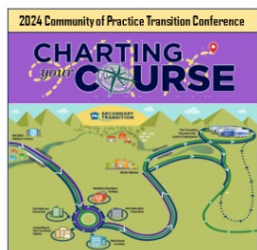
#### Scholarships Available

The PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and PaTTAN are pleased to offer a limited number of in person or virtual youth/young adult and family/caregiver scholarships to Pennsylvania residents who have transition aged youth between the ages of 14-21, with a current IEP, a 504 Plan or self-disclose that they have a disability.

[www.pattan.net/events](http://www.pattan.net/events)



Registration



# 2024 PA Community of Practice Transition Conference

## Charting YOUR Course

### July 31, 2024 – August 1, 2024

## Description

The primary purpose of this two-day conference is to expand the capacity of youth, family members, schools, and community partners regarding specific issues related to effective employment and post-secondary educational practices, development of healthy lifestyles, and the utility of assistive technology, resources, supports, and services available to youth and families.

## Conference Features

### Accommodations, Supports and Resources Expo, Reception & Raffle

This interactive, hands-on expo is designed for participants to learn about specific assistive technology, resources, supports, and services available to youth. Participants will gather valuable information from transition partners, conference presenters, and community agencies. As part of the expo, on Wednesday afternoon, there will be a raffle of items provided by members of our PA Secondary Transition Community of Practice and our vendors. **You must be present at the reception to win!**



### Youth & Family Team Sessions

Throughout the years, youth/young adults, and families have benefitted from the sessions held at the transition conference. Based upon feedback, the planning team has developed a team approach where youth and family members (or a supporting adult) attend sessions together. These sessions include youth development activities, to help youth plan for adult life, with the support of their family (or supporting adult).

## Session Topic Descriptors

To assist participants in selecting sessions, a topic area has been identified for each session.

- Cross Agency Collaboration
- Employment
- Family Engagement
- Independent Living
- Person-Family Directed Planning
- Post-Secondary
- Relationships
- Transition Planning
- Youth Development

## Credits Offered

Act 48 and Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) continuing education credits are offered for all keynote, feature, and breakout sessions. Continuing Education Credit **will be offered per day**. Participants interested in social work (SW) credits please note: Per § 47.36(a)(iv), CRCC is an approved provider under the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors. CRC Certificates are accepted as proof of continuing education. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will issue a CRC certificate to social workers as credit that can apply to SW requirements. If interested in receiving a CRC certificate (to apply towards SW credits), participants must attend individual sessions in their entirety, complete the online evaluation indicating request for CRC credits, and enter the session codes.

### In-Person Participation:

To receive continuing education credit, individuals attending the conference in-person must arrive on time and stay the duration of the day(s)/session(s) for which they are requesting credit(s). Additionally, individuals must complete the conference evaluation survey with proper codes within one week of the conference to be eligible to receive continuing education credit (Act 48 and CRCC).

### Virtual Participation:

To receive continuing education credit, participants must login to ZOOM on a computer individually. No credit will be awarded for those who attend by phone (audio alone). Additionally, individuals must complete the conference evaluation survey with proper codes within one week of the conference to be eligible to receive continuing education credit (Act 48 and CRCC).

**July 31, 2024** Act 48 – 6 hours  
CRCC – 6 hours

**August 1, 2024** Act 48 – 5.5 hours  
CRCC – 5.5 hours



# Feature Presenters

## Dr. Peg Dawson, Ed.D. NCSP



Peg Dawson, Ed.D., NCSP, received her doctorate in school/child clinical psychology from the University of Virginia. She worked as a school psychologist for 16 years in Maine and New Hampshire, and since 1992 has worked at the Center for Learning and Attention Disorders in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where she specializes in the assessment

of children and adults with learning and attention disorders. She has many years of organizational experience at the state, national, and international level, and served in many capacities, including president, of the New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the International School Psychology Association. She is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on a variety of topics, including retention, ability grouping, reading disorders, attention disorders, the sleep problems of adolescents, the use of interviews in the assessment process, and homework. Along with her colleague, Dr. Richard Guare, she has written several books for parents and professionals on the topic of executive skills, including *Smart but Scattered* and *Smart but Scattered Teens*. Peg is the 2006 recipient of the National Association of School Psychologists' Lifetime Achievement Award.

### Keynote Presentation

**Thursday, August 1, 2024 (8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.)**

***Beyond "Lazy and Unmotivated" - An Introduction to Executive Skills***

**Thursday, August 1, 2024 (11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)**

***A Strength-Based Approach to Supporting Executive Skill Development***

**Thursday, August 1, 2024 (1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.)**

***Supporting Executive Skill Growth: The Role for Educators and Service Providers***

## Loretta Claiborne

**CIO Chief Inspiration Officer for Special Olympics, Inc  
Special Olympics Athlete since 1970**



Loretta, a Special Olympics athlete, woman of faith, and a gifted motivational speaker shares her life story that carries a heart-felt message of acceptance and hope worldwide for all people with different abilities. Loretta was born with physical and intellectual disabilities and did not walk or talk until four years old. Doctors told her mother that Loretta belonged in an

institution because she would never survive in the "regular" world. Her mother refused and chose to raise her the same as her other children. Despite her [different] abilities, which led to years of strife, she credits Special Olympics as the positive force that turned her life around. Early on, Loretta discovered a passion for running and has completed 26 marathons including the Boston Marathon (x2) with her personal best of 3:03. Some of her noted accolades include Disney Production "The Loretta Claiborne Story", the 1996 ESPY - Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, 3 Honorary Doctorate degrees (Quinnipiac University, Villanova University, and York College), and was recently recognized as USA Today's 2023 Women of the Year. Her life's contributions are immeasurable. Loretta shares her message with many world leaders, including 5 US Presidents, The Pope, The Royal Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Warren Buffett, Oprah, and many other influencers; she continues to champion worldwide inclusion for all persons with different abilities.

### Closing Keynote Presentation

**Thursday, August 1, 2024 (2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)**

***KN3 I Too Have a Voice, Please Listen to Me!***

**Youth  
Wanted!**

...for the youth-led,  
youth-driven  
experience with PYLN

**What youth gain**

- Knowledge
- Soft Skills
- Social Capital
- FUN with their Peers

**It's By Youth.  
For Youth.**

Youth attending the conference will have the opportunity to participate in sessions with their family/supporting adult during the day, including sessions specifically designed to spark conversations between youth and their families/supporting adults. On Wednesday night, July 31<sup>st</sup>, youth may participate in a dance, play games, or participate in a photo booth! During this activity, youth will be able to interact with youth leaders and their peers in meaningful ways. Scholarships to attend the conference are available! More information about scholarships can be found on page 16 of this brochure.

## Youth & Family Team Sessions

Youth and young adults, with their family's support, will have the opportunity to develop a portfolio of resources to help them as they continue transition planning activities after the conference.

Breakout	Day	Time	Session	
Pre-Conf	Tuesday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	AA-1	Soaring Through Transition (In-person only)
Pre-Conf	Tuesday	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	AA-2	Planning for the Future: Step by Step Guide (In-person only)
1	Wednesday	9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	A-01	Knowing Your Rights Against a Bully: Developing an Environment of Anti-Bullying
1	Wednesday	9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	A-05	Taking the Next Step: My Journey to Transitioning to College, Work, and Post-Secondary Life with a Learning Disability
2	Wednesday	10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	B-03	All About Relationships
2	Wednesday	10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	B-05	Young Leaders Academy (YLA)
3	Wednesday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	C-01	My Voice Matters
3	Wednesday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	C-05	Toy Adaptation: Building Empathy and Ability Awareness Through Cross Agency Collaboration and Inclusive Engineering
3	Wednesday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	C-06	Planning For Your Loved One with Disabilities: What Every Caregiver Needs to Know
4	Wednesday	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	D-01	Getting to Work! Authentic and Engaging Vocational Assessment & Skill Development
4	Wednesday	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	D-03	Empowered Encounters: Navigating Everyday Consent with Confidence
4	Wednesday	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	D-05	Programs that Support Youth Engagement in Transition, Advocacy and Systems Change
4	Wednesday	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	D-06	Once Upon a Time: Crafting Connections through Storytelling
5	Thursday	9:15 AM – 10:45 AM	E-01	Putting the Good Vibes in Youth Empowerment: Youth Empowering Youth!
5	Thursday	9:15 AM – 10:45 AM	E-03	Your Healthy Relationship Journey: Make Connections with Yourself and Others!
5	Thursday	9:15 AM – 10:45 AM	E-05	Grab Life by the Reins: Empowering Youth and Adults to Win the Race of Transition
6	Thursday	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	F-01	Navigating Services in a Rural Area Using Funding Available and Beyond. Thinking In, Out, and Around the Box of Life
6	Thursday	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	F-04	Supported Decision Making: An Alternative to Guardianship
6	Thursday	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	F-05	Making Career Exploration Fun: Weird Jobs and How Much They Pay
7	Thursday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	G-02	It's My Party and I'll Adapt It If I Want To
7	Thursday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	G-04	Navigating Tomorrow: Developing a Blueprint for a Youth Transition Conference
7	Thursday	1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	G-05	Families Reimagining Inclusive Lives (FRIL)

## Who Should Attend the Conference?

Individuals supporting post-school outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities are encouraged to attend this conference, either in-person or virtually.

- Advocates
- Agency Administrators
- Assistive Technology Professionals
- Business Owners/Employers
- Career & Technology Educators
- CareerLink Staff
- Direct Support Providers
- Drug & Alcohol Program Workers
- Education Administrators
- Family & Support Adults
- Family Health Representatives
- Foster and Adoptive Parents
- Health Professionals
- Higher Education Professionals
- Independent Living Staff
- Juvenile Justice Affiliates
- Job Coaches
- Local Government Officials
- Local Service Providers
- Local Youth Councils
- Medical Assistance Program Staff
- Mental Health Services Workers
- Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, and Speech/Language Therapists
- Office of Developmental Programs Staff
- Paraprofessionals
- Psychologists
- Public & Private Child Welfare Workers
- School Counselors
- School Nurses
- Secondary Educators
- Social Security Benefits Counselors and Staff
- Social Workers
- Special Educators
- Transition Coordinators
- Transportation Affiliates
- Vocational Evaluators
- Vocational Rehabilitation Staff
- Workforce Investment Board Members
- Youth & Young Adults
- Youth Served in Foster Care

## Agenda

<b>Tuesday, July 30, 2024</b>	6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.	Youth & Family Pre-Conference Sessions – In-Person Only
<b>Wednesday, July 31, 2024</b>	7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. . 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Continental Breakfast Registration Opening Keynote Presentation and Katie Smith Award Ceremony Break Breakout Session 1 Accommodations, Supports & Resources Expo Break Breakout Session 2 Lunch will be provided. Breakout Session 3 Break Breakout Session 4 Accommodations, Supports & Resources Reception Raffle PYLN Youth Event – In-Person Only
<b>Thursday, August 1, 2024</b>	7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. 9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. 10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Continental Breakfast Registration Keynote Presentation 2 Break Breakout Session 5 Break Breakout Session 6 Lunch will be provided. Breakout Session 7 Break Closing Keynote Presentation



# 2024 PA Community of Practice Transition Conference

## Tuesday, July 30, 2024 (6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.) In-Person Only

### AA-1 Soaring Through Transition

This is an opportunity for young leaders to learn about the purpose of and their role in the Transition Conference. There will be space for youth attendees to get to know each other as we watch the “STARS” of transition form. At the preconference we will discuss the various youth focused sessions to attend, explore the youth guidebook, and encourage socialization and participation throughout the conference.

*Natasha Fletcher, PaTTAN East*  
*Hayley Penn, PaTTAN Central*  
*Hunter Steinitz, PaTTAN West*

### AA-2 Planning for the Future: Step by Step Guide

Every student is different and should have their own individualized transition plan. The PA Planning for the Future Transition Checklist is intended as a resource for students (with support from their families, schools, and supporting agency professionals) to review and help provide information and suggestions to guide the transition process. Join us for an interactive session and learn to use the checklist to meet your child's individualized future goals.

*Diane Perry, PEAL Center*  
*Jackie White, PEAL Center*

## Wednesday, July 31, 2024 Charting Your Course (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

## Opening Keynote Presentation - 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

### KN1 After the Bell: Staying Active After School and Beyond

Activities and sports are more than just a way to pass time. They can be powerful ways for youth and young adults to make friends, learn new skills, and enjoy “school life” outside of their regular day. Sports and activities like bocce, basketball, and fishing can really make a difference. During this opening keynote, The Youth Engagement Support team will get to ask the tough questions to six students from across the state. We will learn how they have built relationships and skills beyond what they learned in class through their participation in inclusive extracurricular programs.

*Youth Engagement Specialists*  
*Youth from LEAs*

**Katie Smith Award Ceremony - 9:00 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.**

## Break - 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

## Breakout Session 1 - 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

### A-01 Knowing Your Rights Against a Bully: Developing an Environment of Anti-Bullying

*(Relationships; Youth Development)*

In this session, participants will learn about the social dynamics of bullying and the rights of those experiencing it. We will name why it's hard to change a bullying scenario and discuss tools and practices for intervening.

*Aaron Kittreles, PEAL Center*  
*Khaleya Spence, PEAL Center*

### A-02 Supporting Your Everyday Life: The Office of Developmental Programs

*(Person and Family Directed Planning; Cross Agency Collaboration)*

Everyday life is about being a member of the community, having a valued role, making a contribution to society, and having one's rights as a citizen fully respected. During this session, staff from the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) will help participants understand the services and supports available to individuals with an intellectual disability, autism, or complex medical condition that support an everyday life.

*Julie Mochon, Office of Developmental Programs*  
*Katie-Marie Wilson, Office of Developmental Programs*

### A-03 Are You Ready to Choose Your Direction? Explore the Top 10 Reasons to Choose Commonwealth Technical Institute at Hiram G. Andrews Center

*(Post Secondary Education)*

This session will provide participants with facts and information about the Commonwealth Technical Institute at Hiram G. Andrews Center's offerings which include vocational training programs and support services offered to students with and without disabilities. The presenters will share the information in a format that allows the audience to easily connect to all there is to offer at this post-secondary institution.

*Stacie Andrews, Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center*  
*Jason Gies, Commonwealth Technical Institute at the Hiram G. Andrews Center*

### A-04 Life After an ABA Classroom: A Parent's Journey

*(Independent Living and Community Engagement; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

Discover and learn about Sandy's journey with her son, Will, as they navigated post-secondary life after his school career in ABA classrooms.

*Janet Foor, Wilson College*  
*Sandy Moats, Parent*  
*William Moats, Young Adult*

**A-05 Taking the Next Step: My Journey to Transitioning to College, Work, and Post-Secondary Life with a Learning Disability**

*(Youth Development; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

This session will focus on helping participants express their dreams for the future and learn how to overcome the limits placed by others. The presenter will share a personal journey through dreaming about and obtaining a postsecondary degree. Topics such as learning to find and use resources and accommodations, self-advocacy, and overcoming self-doubt will be shared.

**Michelle Steiner**, *Michelle's Mission*

**A-06 Dreaming Big, But Being Realistic**

*(Transition Planning; Post Secondary Education)*

It is important for educators, parents, and teachers to encourage students to reach all of their goals. It's also very important to keep goals realistic while supporting students achieve them. Join this session to learn how Altoona Area High School helps keep it real and relevant.

**Samantha Aboud**, *Altoona Area High School*

**Jarrold Prugar**, *Altoona Area High School*

**Jennifer Turner**, *Altoona Area High School*

**A-07 Unity in Transition: Empowering Diverse Families for a Seamless Journey (English only)**

Join us for a vital session on fostering engagement with diverse families throughout the Transition Process. William Del Toro Vargas from HUNE and a representative from Community Integrated Services (CIS), with Luz Hernandez as our host, will guide you through effective techniques and strategies to empower families from diverse backgrounds to actively participate in every stage of the Transition Process.

**William Del Toro Vargas**, *HUNE*

**Luz Hernandez**, *Executive Director, HUNE*

**Courtney Mulcahy**, *Community Integrated Services (CIS)*

**Andrew Spagnolo**, *Community Integrated Services (CIS)*

**Break - 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

**Breakout Session 2 - 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**B-01 Successful Transition Plans and Employment Opportunities Through Person-Centered Planning and Mentoring**

*(Employment; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

Successful transition to both employment and independent living is found in the honest and deeply intensive plans created through a Person/Family centered approach. The creation of an effective IEP needs to progress to an even more powerful Individual Support Plan (ISP) that integrates appropriate resources, best practices and a variety of tools and experiences. Join the PA Family Network as our Family Advisors, including the new Integrated Resource Team (INVEST grant), demonstrate how a clear vision and experienced mentoring can support successful planning.

**Francine Hogan**, *PA Family Network*

**Sara Nye**, *PA Family Network*

**Diana Smaglik**, *PA Family Network*

**B-02 Growth through Storytelling: Three Students Journey to Independence**

*(Transition Planning; Post Secondary Education)*

Young adults will use storytelling to describe their independence journey at Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) through the support received from SEED (Success, Engagement, Education, Determination). Students tell their stories of growing up with disabilities, overcoming barriers, and who they are becoming as they learn lessons through direct and experiential learning.

**Meghan Duffy**, *Lehigh Carbon Community College Student*

**Mary Edgar**, *Lehigh Carbon Community College Student*

**Michelle Mitchell**, *Lehigh Carbon Community College/SEED*

**B-03 All About Relationships**

*(Relationships)*

Do you know what makes a relationship healthy? Do you know what you can do if you are in an unhealthy relationship? Join us to talk all about relationships, written and led by people with disabilities for people with disabilities. We will learn from each other about the different kinds of relationships people may have, talk about what makes them healthy, share tips on building new relationships, and learn about the different kinds of abuse that may happen in unhealthy relationships.

**Christine Breakstone**, *Self-Advocates United as 1, Inc.*

**John Knorr**, *Self-Advocates United as 1, Inc.*

**Shane Yochum**, *Self-Advocates United as 1, Inc.*

**B-04 Passing the Baton: The Race to Collaboration for Successful Transition Planning**

*(Cross Agency Collaboration; Transition Planning)*

A deep dive into building a cohesive and collaborative transition team in which roles will be outlined and connected. When collaboration occurs, transitions are successful. Collaboration between school, parents, county office of developmental programs (ODP), and supports coordinators makes for the perfect environment for a successful transition team. This session will include a panel discussion on the importance of building a cohesive and collaborative transition team identifying key roles of each team member and hearing about joint experiences of each member.

**Maria Baker**, *Rankin Christian Center*

**Rick Lipa**, *The Day School at The Children's Institute*

**Christina Lysun**, *The Day School at The Children's Institute*

**Maggie McMahon**, *The Day School at The Children's Institute*

**Christopher Rodocker**, *Allegheny County Office of Developmental Supports*

**B-05 Young Leaders Academy (YLA)**

*(Employment, Youth Development)*

The Young Leaders Academy is a program that connects students with a local business to support the development of soft skills of employment as well as provides opportunities for social interaction, collaboration, and exposure to various jobs within the establishment. Come learn what it takes to start a Youth Leader Academy.

**Conchetta Bell**, *South Fayette School District*

**Julie Hernandez**, *Bethel Park High School*

## **B-06 Empowering Success: Enhancing Inclusive Postsecondary Education through Person-Centered Planning**

*(Post Secondary Education; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

This session delves into the transformative potential of Person-Centered Planning (PCP) methods within the realm of inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. The presentation will highlight the significance of two PCP tools, PATH and Charting the Life Course, in enhancing academic outcomes, promoting student-led experiences, and preparing students for successful transitions. Two students enrolled in inclusive postsecondary education initiatives will reflect on the value of PCP throughout their college experience. The presentation will provide strategies on implementing PCP within postsecondary education and will depict how PCP can be used to promote interagency collaboration.

**Christa Fisher**, Gwynedd Mercy University/Pennsylvania Inclusive Higher Education Consortium (PIHEC)

**Aceline Galloway**, Gwynedd Mercy University Student

**Gabriela Hagiu**, Pennsylvania Inclusive Higher Education Consortium (PIHEC)

**McKenna Killion**, Pennsylvania Inclusive Higher Education Consortium (PIHEC)/Millersville University

**Chris King**, Millersville University Student

## **B-07 Navegando la Vida Más Allá de la Escuela: Una Discusión Dinámica sobre los Servicios de Transición (Español)**

Únete a nosotros en una exploración sobre la transición de la vida escolar a la adulta con distinguidos líderes del Estado: Dra. Carole Clancy (Directora del Departamento de Educación Especial), Ryan Hyde (Director Ejecutivo de la Oficina de Rehabilitación Vocacional), Kristin Ahrens (Secretaria Adjunta de la Oficina de Programas de Desarrollo), y Juliet Marsala (Secretaria Adjunta de la Oficina de Vida a Largo Plazo). Estas sesiones están diseñadas para arrojar luz sobre los servicios disponibles a nivel estatal y revelar futuras oportunidades que faciliten una transición más suave para los jóvenes. Ofrecemos dos sesiones para acomodar a nuestra audiencia diversa: una en inglés y otra en español.

### **Hosts:**

**William Del Toro Vargas**, HUNE

**Luz Hernandez**, HUNE

### **Presenters:**

**Kristin Ahrens**, Office of Developmental Programs

**Carole Clancy**, Bureau of Special Education

**Ryan Hyde**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Juliet Marsala**, Office of Long-Term Living

own one-page outline of your interests, strengths, needs and unique traits. With this profile in hand, you'll unlock your potential to advocate for yourself confidently in any post-secondary setting. Join us to learn how creating a thoughtful student profile lays the foundation for lifelong success. With new self-knowledge, you'll take control and thrive in education, careers, and life.

**Amber Brisbane**, Penn State University, Harrisburg

**Sandy McBride**, Penn State University, Harrisburg

## **C-02 Empowering Futures: Innovative Transition Solutions for Independent and Supported Work Experience**

*(Employment; Cross Agency Collaboration)*

This session will focus on showcasing the effectiveness and impact of programs and initiatives supporting the successful transition of students with disabilities into employment and independent living. The CHOICES Program offers community-based vocational training with full job coaching support, providing students ages 16-21 with marketable and transferable entry-level employability skills. The Possibilities Program, in partnership with St. Luke's University Health Network, offers volunteer opportunities supplemented with job coaching support, with possibilities for enhanced options leading to paid employment. Additionally, Career Connections initiative combines life skills instruction with vocational training, ensuring clear outcomes for competitive integrated employment post-graduation. Furthermore, Community Pathways program integrates domestic and personal care instruction with community-based and pre-vocational training, fostering skills necessary for community integration and volunteering. Notably, students in this program actively participate in running Cafe 71, a fully operational student-run café, in partnership with Seth and Co. Special Brew, opening doors for future supported employment opportunities.

**Christopher Felcin**, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

**John Heaney**, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

**Kasey Kinney**, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

**Bianca McGrath**, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

## **C-03 "Transition OVer to Post-Secondary Options: Creating Impactful Post-Secondary Tours for Students with Disabilities"**

*(Post Secondary Education)*

Come learn about how Pittsburgh OVR's Early Reach Coordinators help students with disabilities explore post-secondary options. Students are offered the opportunity to tour local 4-year universities and community college campuses, trade and technical schools, and registered apprenticeship programs. Tours provide both interactive and hands-on experiences to explore options after high school. Information will be shared on how to create experiences for students in your area.

**Mae Buckley**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Lindsay Coulehan**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Brett Glavey**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Andria McCourt**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Lunch provided - 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Breakout Session 3 - 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.**

## **C-01 My Voice Matters**

*(Youth Development)*

Gain empowerment through self-discovery at this engaging session. The Penn State Harrisburg Career Studies program provides students with a powerful resource: the student profile. Learn how to craft your



**C-04 Bridging the Digital Divide for Transition:  
Enhancing the PA Digital Equity Ecosystem**

*(Person and Family Directed Planning; Cross Agency Collaboration)*

PA Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) has been charged with enhancing and developing the digital equity ecosystem across PA for all residents. PBDA has developed collaborations with public and private sector partners to support education, workforce, and community development. In this session, educators, parents, and students can learn about digital equity and the importance for transition. The session will include activities to help identify resources, promising practices, and community programs.

**Stephanie Perry**, PA Broadband Development Authority at  
Dept. of Community and Economic Development

**C-05 Toy Adaptation: Building Empathy and Ability  
Awareness Through Cross Agency Collaboration  
and Inclusive Engineering**

*(Youth Development; Relationships)*

In our pilot year, Berks County Intermediate Unit Pathway to Adult Living (PAL) and Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES students along with middle and high school students from two local school districts joined forces with college mentors from Penn State Berks FIERCE Engineering club. Our mission was to take toys that were small-button operated and increase their accessibility by converting them to switch-operated systems. As a result of this project, over 60 toys were adapted and donated to local students with disabilities. The presenters are passionate about combining the worlds of STEM and Special Education to reach students of all ability levels and will share their experience, learning, and plans for growing their event in a way that continues to increase inclusionary collaboration across the scope of the project.

**Katie Kehm**, Berks County Intermediate Unit 14  
**Colleen Rios**, Berks County Intermediate Unit 14  
**Heather Wamsher**, Berks County Intermediate Unit 14

**C-06 Planning for Your Loved One with Disabilities: What  
Every Caregiver Needs to Know**

*(Family Engagement)*

This session will provide an overview of government benefit programs as well as strategies for protecting & maximizing eligibility for certain government benefits. We will evaluate the ABLE Act and how it compares to alternative options for setting aside funding for individuals with disabilities. Presenters will also address important estate planning considerations such as Wills, Special Needs Trusts, and the differences between Guardianship and Powers of Attorney. Strategies will be presented to address funding of special needs trusts, tax planning considerations, and ensuring quality of life and lifetime care are maintained for loved ones. Lastly, we will cover the added complexity of planning for retirement with a loved one with special needs. We will discuss this "3 Person Retirement" along with other financial planning considerations to look at differently when you have a loved one with special needs.

**Brett Garrison**, 1847 Financial Special Needs Planning Team

**C-07 Rompiendo Barreras: Empoderando a los Jóvenes con  
Impedimentos para Forjar Relaciones Saludables (Solo  
en Español)**

Sumérgete en una sesión empoderadora donde el tema de Jóvenes y Relaciones Saludables está lejos de ser un tabú. Únete a nosotros mientras abrimos el espacio para compartir perspectivas y aprender juntos. Este taller, liderado por Luz Hernández y William Del Toro Vargas, con Nova McGiffert como nuestra co-anfitriona, está dedicado a proporcionar herramientas y conceptos cruciales para apoyar a los jóvenes con impedimentos en el cultivo de relaciones saludables, ya sea en casa, en la escuela o dentro de la comunidad. Desde comprender el consentimiento hasta identificar necesidades personales, esta sesión está diseñada para equipar a los participantes con el conocimiento que necesitan para fomentar conexiones positivas.

**William DelToro**, Coordinator of Family & Youth Services, HUNE  
**Luz Hernandez**, Executive Director, HUNE

**Cohost:**

**Nova McGiffert**, Healthy Sexuality Project Coordinator, Temple IOD

**Break - 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Breakout Session 4 – 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**D-01 Getting to Work! Authentic and Engaging Vocational  
Assessment & Skill Development**

*(Youth Development; Employment)*

This session is designed to provide educators and vocational support providers with tools and strategies that result in authentic vocational assessment. Strategies to make workplace skills training accessible and engaging for all students will be highlighted. Presenters will share the tools of group discovery, engaging role play, and drama therapy techniques such as improvisation and fictional scenes, that make delivery of employment skills instruction and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) more effective and engaging. Evidence based outcomes of the use of the strategies with high school students will be shared with attendees.

**Nicole Emery**, The Arc of Pennsylvania  
**Jennifer Hipps**, The Arc of Pennsylvania  
**Nicole Turman**, The Arc of Pennsylvania

**D-02 Student Led IEPs: Tools to Get Started**

*(Person and Family Directed Planning; Transition Planning)*

During this session, participants will gain a framework for understanding and measuring youth engagement. Tools to improve the quality of youth engagement during an IEP meeting will also be shared. Attendees will have the opportunity to practice using the tools during hands-on activities and group discussion.

**Natasha Fletcher**, PaTTAN East  
**Hayley Penn**, PaTTAN Central  
**Hunter Steinitz**, PaTTAN West

**D-03 Empowered Encounters: Navigating Everyday Consent  
with Confidence**

*(Youth Development; Relationships)*

Consent means to give permission for something to happen or for an event to occur. More than that, practicing consent in everyday interactions with the people in our lives provides

opportunities to build empowerment, independence, and self-discovery. During this session, we will discuss why consent is crucial for our daily lives and provide concrete tools to practice consent skills with friends, caregivers, loved ones, and helping professionals. Topics include learning how to give or refuse your consent, receiving consent or refusals from others, and how to apply these skills with confidence.

**Izzy Kaufman**, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University  
**Nova McGiffert**, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University

#### **D-04 Journeys to Independence and Wellness - Empowerment through Self-Determination and Healthy Choices**

*(Independent Living and Community Engagement; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

Individuals with disabilities and mental health challenges are encouraged to lead self-determined lives. Agreement on choices poses challenges! Presenters will share personal journeys regarding becoming adults, making decisions about education, employment, relationships, housing, and community engagement. From navigating systems and developing natural supports; to self-advocacy, travel, healthcare, and mental wellness. We wish to empower individuals to pursue goals, access resources, and challenge stigma, suggesting opportunities for skill development and resilience.

**Jem Belle**, LOUD Youth Advocates (LYA)  
**KashmirPaige Capenos-Paolucci**, LYA  
**Lavender Capenos-Paolucci**, LYA  
**Marabeth Capenos-Stiffler**, LYA  
**David Floria**, LYA  
**Taylor Floria**, LYA  
**Stephanie Harshbarger**, LYA  
**Christian Huber**, Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN)  
**Brody Valentin**, LYA

#### **D-05 Programs that Support Youth Engagement in Transition, Advocacy, and Systems Change**

*(Youth Development; Relationships)*

This engaging session will highlight two initiatives that can support youth engagement within the transition process, advocacy, and systems change. Individuals with disabilities are more directly affected by policies and legislation than the general population. Unfortunately, few individuals with disabilities or their families have the opportunity to work with leaders and policy makers. This session will explore ways to work with changemakers, discuss opportunities, and learn about an advocacy training program that has supported over 100 individuals with disabilities in becoming state level advocates. In addition, this session will also showcase the youth led, youth driven "Youth Engagement Now" Project (YEN). Youth leaders joined forces to develop a set of tools for individuals and organizations to effectively engage youth and young adults with disabilities. Join us to hear from the organizations that brought the group together and the young adult leaders who developed the YEN Project. Attendees will gain access to the tools and discuss ways to use them.

**Josie Badger**, J. Badger Consulting, Inc.  
**Everett Deibler**, J. Badger Consulting, Inc.

#### **D-06 Once Upon a Time: Crafting Connections through Storytelling**

*(Youth Development; Relationships)*

Join us for an interactive session where we'll explore how storytelling can help build or enhance relationships. Together, we'll create an environment where meaningful connections are formed through shared experiences and an appreciation of our differences. Using Transition Discoveries discovery cards, we'll guide you through prompts designed to deepen understanding and foster authentic connections. This session aims to bridge gaps between age groups and life experiences, helping you discover the power of storytelling in connecting generations. By fostering relationships, understanding, and mutual respect, we can build stronger, more inclusive communities where everyone's story is valued and celebrated. Come and experience the joy of connecting with others through shared narratives and learn how storytelling can strengthen your relationships.

**Erin Weierbach**, Transition Discoveries

#### **D-07 Navigating Life Beyond School: A Dynamic Discussion on Transition Services (English)**

Join us for an insightful exploration into the transition from school to adult life with esteemed state-wide leaders: Dr. Carole Clancy, Director of Bureau of Special Education, Ryan Hyde, Executive Director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kristin Ahrens Deputy Secretary of the Office of Developmental Programs, and Juliet Marsala Deputy Secretary of the Office of Long-Term Living. This session is designed to shed light on statewide services and unveil future opportunities that facilitate a smoother transition for youth. We are offering two sessions to accommodate our diverse audience: one in English and another in Spanish.

##### **Hosts:**

**William Del Toro Vargas**, HUNE  
**Luz Hernandez**, HUNE

##### **Presenters:**

**Kristin Ahrens**, Office of Developmental Programs  
**Carole Clancy**, Bureau of Special Education  
**Ryan Hyde**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation  
**Juliet Marsala**, Office of Long-Term Living

#### **PYLN Youth Event (In-Person Only)**

**6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Games – Photo Booth – DJ – Fun

Youth may participate in a dance, play games, or participate in a photo booth! During this activity, youth will be able to interact with youth leaders and their peers in meaningful ways.

Thursday, August 1, 2024  
Navigating YOUR Course  
(8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

## Keynote Presentation - 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

### KN2 Beyond “Lazy and Unmotivated” - An Introduction to Executive Skills

When the conversation turns to executive skills, teachers and parents often say, “We didn’t know anything about these when we were growing up—and we turned out just fine.” In this keynote, Dr. Dawson confronts that sentiment head on. The co-author of **Smart but Scattered** and other books on executive skills explains the executive skills framework she’s been working with for over 20 years—why it’s a better way to describe students who struggle than calling them lazy or unmotivated, and why the more parents and teachers understand about these skills, the better they’ll be able to help students strengthen these important habits of mind. She will paint a picture of the strategies she sees as holding the most promise for helping students of all ages develop, tune up, and master critical life skills.

**Peg Dawson, Ed.D. NCSP**

## Break - 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

## Breakout Session 5 - 9:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

### E-01 Putting the Good Vibes in Youth Empowerment: Youth Empowering Youth!

*(Youth Development; Person and Family Directed Planning)*

There is nothing quite like being around other people who understand you, hype you up, or allow you to get to know yourself even better! We’re coming together to not only get to know each other, but also ourselves! What better way to do so than through the power of relationships and community? Come hang out with other young people as we envision our futures on dream boards, share our stories, and put the “FUN” into self-appreciation. Transition Discoveries and the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN) invite you to chart YOUR course by bringing good vibes to our youth community.

**Erin Black, Transition Discoveries**

### E-02 A Crucial Conversation: Examining and Understanding the Costs of Living with A Disability

*(Post Secondary Education; Transition Planning)*

In this session, participants will learn the significance of helping young adults with disabilities and their families understand the direct and indirect costs of living with a disability. Costs of living with a disability are diverse. Therefore, as part of the transition planning process, it is important for young adults and families to become informed decision makers when examining, understanding, and addressing the costs of living with a disability for today and tomorrow.

**Kris Koberlein, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23**

### E-03 Your Healthy Relationship Journey: Make Connections with Yourself and Others!

*(Relationships; Independent Living and Community Engagement)*

This session is based on Sexual Self-Advocacy, an idea coined by Green Mountain Self-Advocates in Vermont. Just like self-advocacy, it is about speaking up and honoring the right to make healthy decisions for the right to live and thrive in society. There are many important things to learn about. These include understanding consent by talking openly, knowing what makes a relationship healthy or not, making good choices about sexual health, understanding your own feelings, knowing when and where it's okay to talk about sex, feeling good about yourself, knowing your rights, plan for if something bad happens, learning about different sexual identities (LGBTQIA+), and getting good education about sexual health. Everyone's journey to sexual self-advocacy is different, and it's based on what each person needs and goes through. In this session, participants will learn the basics of healthy relationships. They will be asked to make their own plan for sexual self-advocacy (which they do not have to share with others). They'll learn how to set goals for having good relationships and experience healthy sexuality. This session is especially good for young people who want to plan to follow to reach their relationship goals. Participants will get lots of tips and resources from trauma-informed and experienced educators in the disability field.

**Izzy Kaufman, Institute on Disabilities at Temple University**

### E-04 Partners for Progress: Outcome Driven Interagency Collaboration

*(Cross Agency Collaboration)*

Berks County Transition Coordinating Council (BCTCC) Members will share the background of their organization and the development of an interagency focused structure. The presenters will provide examples of how interagency collaboration has been the catalyst to developing ideas and how BCTCC has been able to take ideas and turn them into opportunities for students throughout Berks County.

**Andrea Merrick, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)**  
**Colleen Rios, Berks County Intermediate Unit 14**

### E-05 Grab Life by the Reins: Empowering Youth and Adults to Win the Race of Transition

*(Independent Living and Community Engagement, Relationships)*

During this session, participants will hear from youth leaders about their lived experiences in their IEP and Transition processes, share resources to empower youth to grow into leaders in their process, and showcase the power and importance of young adult leadership. Additional highlights will include system acknowledgement and cooperative partnering to actualize goals.

**Hayley Penn, PaTTAN Central**  
**Kathryn Poggi, PaTTAN West**  
**Hunter Steinitz, PaTTAN West**



### **E-06 The Teaching Time Management Inventory: Identifying Gaps in Time Management Skills**

*(Transition Planning; Post Secondary Education)*

This interactive session presents data collected from a pilot study on a time management assessment that was conducted with two post-secondary students enrolled in a university-based transition program as part of their transition planning process. Presenters will walk participants through the assessment and discuss key findings and future applications of the assessment inventory. The importance of time management during adult life will be discussed along with the various strategies and priorities for individual students that can be revealed in the assessment process.

**Caroline DiPipi-Hoy**, East Stroudsburg University

**Dylan Doran**, East Stroudsburg University

**Daniel Steere**, East Stroudsburg University

**Ariel Kyle**, East Stroudsburg University

### **E-07 Preparing Students for Digital Fabrication in the Workplace**

In the 1970's the idea of a personal computer was laughable. Only 'engineers' or 'specialists' would work with those machines. Now, you need to know how to use a computer in every job. Digital Fabrication is already in so many workplaces, and students will need to know how to navigate and use this equipment in their professional lives.

**Ben Kusserow**, Mobile Fab Lab at Carnegie Science Center

## **Break - 10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

## **Breakout Session 6 - 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

### **F-01 Navigating Services in a Rural Area Using Funding Available and Beyond. Thinking In, Out, and Around the Box of Life**

*(Cross Agency Collaboration; Youth Development)*

Living in a rural area presents a unique set of challenges. Join this session to explore possible services available through various agencies including grants and low or no-cost services in your community. We will delve into creating meaningful employment goals and ways to engage in the community leading to a more independent life. Topics including banking, transportation, employment preparation, grocery shopping and community living will be discussed.

**Christina Barr**, The Learning Community of Pennsylvania

**Charles Lansberry**, The Learning Community of Pennsylvania

**Michael Sabatani**, Summer Program Participant

**Autumn Temple**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

### **F-02 The Development of a College Prep Program for Autistic High Schoolers**

*(Post Secondary Education)*

During this session, a description of a two-year college preparation program designed for autistic high school students will be shared. Best practices in transition planning were incorporated into a comprehensive curriculum designed to teach high schoolers critical skills to be successful in college. Autistic college students provided feedback on the content and learning activities. The curriculum arranges

targeted skills into 6 pillars of success: self-advocacy, health, wellness and safety, interpersonal skills, community engagement, independent living, and executive functioning. Each pillar includes specific learning objectives and activities designed to enhance engagement and build sustainable skills. Successes and challenges with developing lessons that are authentic, relevant, and evidence-based for autistic adolescents will be shared.

**Megan Joy**, Devereux Education Strategies and Solutions

**Kaitlin McCombs**, Devereux Education Strategies and Solutions

### **F-03 The Changing Landscape of Employment Services and Pre-Employment Services by an ID/A Waiver**

*(Transition Planning; Employment)*

This session will review employment-related services that are available for individuals who are registered with a County Intellectual Disability/Autism (ID/A) Program or enrolled in an ID/A Waiver that should be considered when transition planning to the community. This will include an overview of how to access these services, how to overcome any challenges or barriers, and how to plan for a smooth transition from school to competitive integrated employment (CIE).

**Tom Flynn**, Office of Developmental Programs

### **F-04 Supported Decision Making: An Alternative to Guardianship**

*(Person and Family Directed Planning; Family Engagement)*

Guardianship is a legal process in which a person (guardian), is granted the authority by the court to make decisions on behalf of someone who has difficulty making safe and informed choices – especially when they are related to money, health, or everyday activities. The problem is that guardianship can really limit, or wholly remove, a person's legal rights. Instead, whoever is chosen to be that person's guardian gets to make those choices for them, regardless of what the person may like, agree to, or enjoy. Supported Decision Making (SDM) is an approach for people with disabilities to make their own decisions about their life, with the aid of a team of supporters. Instead of taking the decision-making power away from the person, SDM aims to empower individuals to be involved in making decisions about their lives. Through funding from the PADDC, LVCIL and Jewish Family Services of the Lehigh Valley have developed a website that provides information and resources about Supported Decision Making and how a decision maker can go about this process with support from supporters, educators, and professionals. Attendees will be informed about Supported Decision Making as an alternative to guardianship, be shown how to use the website, and be provided with other information and resources related to SDM and alternatives to guardianship in Pennsylvania and beyond.

**Seth Hoderewski**, Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living (LVCIL)



## **F-05 Making Career Exploration Fun: Weird Jobs and How Much They Pay**

*(Youth Development; Employment)*

The Reading District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will introduce the concept of Labor Market Information to students as well as some basic career exploration facts and resources. OVR staff will also lead students through a game of Weird Jobs and How Much They Pay. Following the game, career exploration resources and handouts will be shared.

**Traci Kowalick**, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)  
**Trish Lapotsky**, OVR  
**Andrea Merrick**, OVR  
**Lynn Zale**, OVR

## **F-06 Job Coaching and Apartment Life: Improving Post-Secondary Outcomes**

*(Independent Living and Community Engagement; Employment)*

Does your students' work experiences and transition programs yield job offers before the students age out? Lessons learned from implementing a "home grown" 18-21 transition program with individualized job coaching will be shared. Results of implementation include increased job placement, secured adult services, and improved student attendance.

**Mike Ubbens**, Avon Grove School District

## **F-07 A Strength-Based Approach to Supporting Executive Skill Development**

*(Independent Living and Community Engagement)*

By the time students reach high school, most are well aware of the personal challenges that make school difficult for them. They tend to be less informed about the strengths they bring to any learning task. Having a clearer understanding of their executive skill strengths and how they can leverage these strengths to boost performance can help students plot a route to next stage of their lives. Participants will have the opportunity to assess their executive skill strengths and to learn strategies to use the strengths effectively in high school, college, or in the workplace.

**Peg Dawson**, Ed.D. NCSP

**Lunch provided - 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**Breakout Session 7 - 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.**

## **G-01 Collaboration and Connection: Joining Forces to Engage and Develop the Youth Transition Experience**

*(Cross Agency Collaboration; Independent Living and Community Engagement)*

Did you know students can successfully collaborate across LEAs in the virtual setting? For the last two years, Pennsylvania Council on Cyber Transition has been planning engaging and interactive transition focused events for high school students. Come learn how eleven cyber charter schools joined forces to create events for students to participate in and develop critical transition-focused life skills. Each virtual event focuses on a primary life skill that all students can benefit from including budgeting, career

planning, and overall health and wellbeing. Sound interesting? Let us show you how we share ideas, collaborate, and put the good of ALL of our students above the silos created in the virtual educational setting. By utilizing the 9 indicators developed by Transition Discoveries, we select target skill areas as a focus for our sessions. Students participate in interactive live sessions and leave with strategies and tools they can apply to everyday life.

**Whitney Bargerstock**, PA Council on Cyber Transition  
**Zachary Carroll**, PA Council on Cyber Transition  
**Elizabeth Habbyslaw**, PA Council on Cyber Transition  
**Nicole Krol**, PA Council on Cyber Transition  
**Christina Scottillo-Sowa**, PA Council on Cyber Transition

## **G-02 It's My Party and I'll Adapt It If I Want To**

*(Family Engagement; Relationships)*

This interactive session will outline the importance of accessing assistive technology in party planning for all individuals and demonstrate techniques for putting this into practice. Presenters will demonstrate the effectiveness of assistive technology used for choice-making, party planning, and adapted-play and provide specific examples. All examples will have tangible goals and feature students with complex needs, including physical/motor impairments, intellectual disabilities, and cortical visual impairment, demonstrating their successful use of assistive technology. Presenters will identify ways to implement these strategies within the school, home, and community settings. Come participate in hands-on party planning and leave with a virtual goody bag!

**Teresa Giardina**, HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy

## **G-03 #College Prep: Tips for Students with Disabilities**

*(Post Secondary Education)*

Obtain advice from college professionals on the differences in rights/responsibilities of students with disabilities from high school to college, the process to request accommodations/supports, and the importance of incorporating self-advocacy skills along the way!

**Dawn Dickey**, Pennsylvania College of Technology- Disability and Access Resources  
**Katie Mackey**, Pennsylvania College of Technology

## **G-04 Navigating Tomorrow: Developing a Blueprint for a Youth Transition Conference**

*(Youth Development; Transition Planning)*

Unlock the potential of youth and pave the way for their successful transition into adulthood through the development of a youth focused transition conference. This session will guide you through the strategic planning, program design, and logistical considerations necessary to develop a successful youth event. Participants will leave with tools and resources to replicate a similar event within their community. Leave inspired, equipped, and ready to infuse positive change in the lives of the youth in your community. Together, let's unlock the potential and shape a brighter future for the next generation!

**Mindy McMahan**, Westmoreland Intermediate Unit 7  
**Lisa Tamino**, Westmoreland Intermediate Unit 7

### **G-05 Families Reimagining Inclusive Lives (FRIL)**

*(Transition Planning; Family Engagement)*

Families Re-imagining Inclusive Lives (FRIL) is a Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council funded family education program for parents of young children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program is designed to dispel myths about segregated settings and encourage families to consider inclusive settings for their children's education and services. The program is being developed to include disabled self-advocates, family members, and disability professionals in the design and implementation of the training, and to empower youth and family members to strengthen their training and leadership skills and share knowledge with the community. In particular, we are targeting members of historically marginalized communities, including people of color and English as a Second Language (ESL) speakers, and have partnered with HUNE, a non-profit organization in Pennsylvania which provides bilingual language-based program supports, to provide resources and training in Spanish as well as English. This presentation will detail the research base for the program, our curriculum development, how we built the program with the input of self-advocates and community partners, and our plans to expand the program. We will also share opportunities to get involved with this program. We hope this information will be helpful for self-advocates and families, who can learn about the research supporting inclusion and our efforts to share this research with the community.

**Stacy Phillips**, Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

**Chloe Smelser**, Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

**Jenifer Taylor Eaton**, Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

### **G-06 Building a Bigger and Better Transition Program**

*(Employment; Transition Planning)*

The planning of the 12+ program incorporates numerous facets of transition and includes many, if not most, of the indicators from Transition Discoveries. Presenters will showcase how a high school can provide job internship opportunities in their own building as well as the community for extended periods of time to build on students' strengths and interests. The ultimate goal is to provide students with robust opportunities to meet their post-secondary transition goals.

**Amanda Kerdzaliev**, East Stroudsburg Area School District

**Mary Olszewski**, East Stroudsburg Area School District

**Amy Polmouner**, East Stroudsburg Area School District

### **G-07 Supporting Executive Skill Growth: The Role for Educators and Service Providers**

*(Post Secondary Education)*

Teenagers are tricky. They often think they're further along the road to maturity than do the adults who work with them. This session will offer tips to parents and service providers on how to talk with kids about the importance of strengthening their executive skills to prepare for their post-secondary world.

**Peg Dawson, Ed.D. NCSP**

**Break - 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Closing Keynote Presentation - 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

### **KN3 I Too Have a Voice, Please Listen to Me!**

Growing up in the housing project of York, PA, a black child with an intellectual disability (ID), partially blind, #4 out of 8 siblings, all raised by a single mom, Loretta faced life challenges beyond what many people could ever comprehend. She didn't walk or talk until the age of 4. Loretta will share her personal struggles when trying to receive the most basic healthcare, social services, and an education in a public school system. What she has learned from her life experiences, and will share with the audience, is the importance of having a voice and being heard. Loretta is the Chief Inspiration Officer and former Vice-Chair of the Executive Board for Special Olympics International. She will showcase the importance of physical, mental, and emotional strength and how Special Olympics turned her life around.

**Loretta Claiborne**, Chief Inspiration Officer (CIO) for Special Olympics International (SOI)

# Registration Information

## In-Person Registration Fee:

The registration fee is \$150.00. Payment may be made by credit card, check, or money/purchase orders.

**Credit card payment** – The PaTTAN registration system is equipped to process payments made by credit card. Credit card payments are entered online as part of the registration process.

**Check or money/purchase order payments - Make check or money/purchase orders payable to INTERMEDIATE UNIT 1** and send to the attention of the Business Office, PaTTAN West, 3190 William Pitt Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. Email purchase orders to [ConferencePO@pattanpgh.net](mailto:ConferencePO@pattanpgh.net). Checks or money/purchase orders **must include registrants(s) full name(s).**

Please note that if your registration fee is not received by July 15, 2024, you will be required to submit payment at the registration desk prior to registering and receiving your conference materials. (Parents of children with disabilities and youth/young adults are exempt from this charge.)

## Virtual Registration Fee:

The virtual registration fee is \$75.00. Payment may be made by credit card, check, or money/purchase orders.

**Credit card payment** – The PaTTAN registration system is equipped to process payments made by credit card. Credit card payments are entered online as part of the registration process.

**Check or money/purchase order payments - Make check or money/purchase orders payable to INTERMEDIATE UNIT 1** and send to the attention of the Business Office, PaTTAN West, 3190 William Pitt Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. Email purchase orders to [ConferencePO@pattanpgh.net](mailto:ConferencePO@pattanpgh.net). Checks or money/purchase orders **must include registrants(s) full name(s).**

Payment must be received prior to July 15, 2024, to ensure access to the virtual platform. **Online access to the conference will not be available to participants who have not submitted payment.**

## Cancellations:

If you are unable to attend the conference you must cancel your registration by July 15, 2024, by contacting Paula Quinn via email at [pquinn@pattanpgh.net](mailto:pquinn@pattanpgh.net), or your registration fee will not be refunded.

## Conference Registration:

All participants should register for this PaTTAN-sponsored event by visiting our website at: <http://www.pattan.net>. Click training calendar and go to July. If you prefer, you may email the registration form to Paula Quinn, [pquinn@pattanpgh.net](mailto:pquinn@pattanpgh.net).

# Hotel Information



The Penn Stater Conference Center is reserved for conference staff and scholarship recipients only. Listed below are the hotels in State College that are close to the conference center. Book early to secure your hotel accommodations.

<b>The Atherton Hotel</b> 125 South Atherton Street State College, PA 16801 Phone: 814-231-2100	<b>Hilton Garden Inn State College</b> 1221 East College Avenue State College, PA 16801 Phone: 814-272-1221
<b>Courtyard by Marriott</b> 1730 University Drive State College, PA 16801 Phone: 814-238-1881	<b>Holiday Inn Express</b> 1925 Waddle Road State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-231-1899
<b>Days Inn by Wyndham</b> 240 South Pugh Street State College, PA 16801 Phone: 814-238-8454	<b>Marriott SpringHill Suites</b> 1935 Waddle Road State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-8671807
<b>Fairfield Inn &amp; Suites</b> 2215 North Atherton St. State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-238-3871	<b>Residence Inn Marriott</b> 1555 University Drive State College, PA 16801 Phone: 1-800-Marriott
<b>Hampton Inn &amp; Suites WS</b> 1955 Waddle Road State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-231-1899	<b>Rodeway Inn by Choice Hotels</b> 1040 N. Atherton Street State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-238-6783
<b>Hampton Inn State College</b> 1101 East College Avenue State College, PA 16801 Phone: 814-231-1590	<b>Toftrees Golf Resort</b> One Country Club Lane State College, PA 16803 Phone: 814-234-8000

**For questions about registration, contact:**

**Paula Quinn**, PaTTAN West  
[pquinn@pattanpgh.net](mailto:pquinn@pattanpgh.net)

**Pam Ranieri**, PaTTAN West  
[pranieri@pattanpgh.net](mailto:pranieri@pattanpgh.net)

**For questions about conference sessions, contact:**

**Lisa Bolla**, PaTTAN West  
[lbolla@pattanpgh.net](mailto:lbolla@pattanpgh.net)

# Youth and Family Scholarships Information



The PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and PaTTAN are pleased to offer a limited number of **in-person** and **virtual** youth/young adult and family/caregiver scholarships to Pennsylvania residents who have transition aged youth between the ages of 14-21, with a current IEP, a 504 Plan or self-disclose that they have a disability. Scholarships will be awarded through an application selection process. Please address all fields of the application fully, as the Conference Committee will carefully review each application. Scholarship opportunities for families from underserved and underrepresented communities will be given preference.

## Eligibility to Apply:

*Scholarships are available to all of the following conference attendees:*

- Transition-aged youth with a current IEP, a 504 Plan or self-disclose that they have a disability between the ages of 14-21 accompanied by an adult (family member/ caregiver) - **Scholarships will not be awarded if the student is age 22 or older or will turn 22 before July 31, 2024.**
- Family member or caregiver of a transition-aged youth between the ages of 14-21, with a current IEP, a 504 Plan or self-disclose that they have a disability (youth **NOT** attending).
- Youth Ambassadors who work collaboratively with teachers, Local Education Agencies (LEA) Transition Coordinators and OVR, PaTTAN, and Bureau of Special Education (BSE) staff to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome.

## Important Information:

- To be eligible for a scholarship from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), there must be an OVR-244 (Pre-ETS Request) on file **or** an open case with OVR.
- Please Note: If an OVR-244 is not currently on file or an open OVR case, then a referral to OVR is required to receive a scholarship. Any questions, please reach out to Melissa Wert-Thrush at [mwertthrus@pa.gov](mailto:mwertthrus@pa.gov).

## Each Scholarship Covers:

1. **Registration Fee** - For either in-person or virtual registration.
2. **Lodging** - For those traveling 50 miles or more to the conference, the cost of one, double occupancy hotel room for July 30 & 31, 2024 will be paid.
3. **Conference Meals** - Continental breakfast and lunch on July 31 and August 1st will be provided. All other meals will be the responsibility of the conference attendee.

**Scholarships do not include travel expenses;** all conference attendees will need to provide and pay for their own transportation.

Conference registration and session attendance is required to participate in conference amenities. Childcare is NOT provided.

## Application Process and Deadline:

- Scholarship applications must be submitted by June 05, 2024.
- If more than one youth/young adult with a disability will be attending in-person, per family, a separate application must be completed for each youth/young adult.
- Preference will be given to first-time applicants.
- Scholarship notifications will be sent no later than June 7, 2024.
- For assistance completing this survey, please contact Paula Quinn at [pquinn@pattanpgh.net](mailto:pquinn@pattanpgh.net).