

Sixth Annual National Partnership for Educational Access Conference
Beyond the Classroom: Expanding Conversations in Educational Access
April 24-25, 2014
Marriott City Center, Minneapolis, MN

Information may be subject to change prior to event.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2014

12:30 PM – 5:30 PM SITE VISITS

Please join fellow conference attendees on site visits to College Possible, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, and the University of Minnesota. You will have the opportunity to learn how an independent school, academic enrichment program, and university all strive to ensure success for the students in their communities.

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

1:00-4:00 PM

Supporting Undocumented Students and Families

- Emilia Avalos, Director of Advocacy, NAVIGATE
- Isabel Durán, College Connector, NAVIGATE

This pre-conference session will offer best practices and strategies for supporting undocumented students and families on the path to educational success. In addition to information about current policies around undocumented students, this workshop will focus on the common barriers undocumented students encounter, including communication gaps and the challenges of learning a new educational system.

4:00-6:30 PM

College Affordability and Access: Strategies for College Savings and Making Higher Education Affordable

- Kevin Fudge, Education/Financial Aid Advisor, American Student Assistance
- Julie Shields-Rutyna, Director of Early College Planning, Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA)

This interactive pre-conference workshop will present the big picture of college financing and affordability. The presenters will begin by sharing an overview of college financing including a focus on federal policies and regulations. Participants will discuss affordability and how it is defined by colleges, students, and parents. Together, participants will engage in a case study highlighting many of the issues encountered when helping students today. Topics will include identifying reasonable debt levels and helping students find their financial safety school. The

presenters will also share resources and tools to help students and families before, during, and after college.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2014

7:00 AM – 8:15 AM BREAKFAST, NETWORKING, AND REGISTRATION

Network with fellow conference attendees. Be sure to look for region specific tables to help focus your connections.

8:15 AM – 10:00 AM OPENING SESSION: ALUMNI AND FAMILY PANEL

Welcome:

- Michael P. Danziger, Founder, The Steppingstone Foundation
- Karin Elliott, Executive Director, National Partnership for Educational Access

Remarks:

- Scott Anderson, Senior Director for Policy, The Common Application, Inc., *Lead Conference Sponsor*

Alumni Panel:

Moderator: William ‘Tex’ Ostvig, Coordinator of Pre-Collegiate Initiatives, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, University of Minnesota

- My Bui, Student, Mounds Park Academy (Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholar)
- Raven Pillmann, Undergraduate Student, Carleton College (Breakthrough Twin Cities)
- Denise Quintanilla, Undergraduate Student, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities (Breakthrough Twin Cities)
- Zer Vang, Student and Family Services Director, LearningWorks at Blake (College Possible)
- Vang Xiong, Student Researcher, New Millennium Academy (College Possible)

Alumni from several academic enrichment programs will share their challenges, successes, and experiences on their paths to college and beyond, and discuss how the programs they attended made a difference in their lives and the lives of their families.

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Diversity Forum Series: An Effective Approach to Diversity Training

- Karen Dye, Diversity Dean, St. Paul Academy and Summit School

Many schools recognize the importance of providing timely and relevant training to their employees regarding diversity, multiculturalism, equity, and justice, especially as national demographics continue to change and schools and workplaces become increasingly diverse. This session will introduce an approach to professional development that has been successful at one Midwestern school by providing skills and ideas found to effectively address, celebrate, and, most importantly, normalize cultural differences in its community.

Skill Level: All levels

Why You Don't Need an RCT to Understand Your Program's Effectiveness, Improve Practices, and Position It at the Front of the Field

- Kelly Glew, President, The Steppingstone Foundation
- Anne Radday, Senior Manager of Research, Root Cause
- Liz Butler Steyer, Executive Director, Athletic Scholars Advancement Program

Ready to take a deeper look at your program to understand its effectiveness and improve practices? Not quite ready for a randomized control trial or formal evaluation? Then this workshop is for you. Increasingly, college access organizations are seeking ways to understand and showcase the effectiveness of their programs. While it certainly takes some time and resources, there are simple, cost-effective ways to get the necessary data to assess a program's effectiveness and improve results. During this workshop, participants will learn from an assessment expert and two organizations about a variety of ways to use data to understand program strengths and areas for improvement, and to improve a program and showcase the organization to increase support.

Skill Level: All levels

Financial Aid and Financial Literacy Training for Students and Families

- Kenneth McGhee, Financial Aid Manager, The SEED Foundation

With a median student loan debt load of \$22,000, college students are paying more as the gaps in financial aid and loan amounts increase. How can we, as educators and higher education administrators, be part of the solution to the national college affordability problem? This workshop will introduce participants to The SEED Foundation's Financial Education Model, a developmental approach to comprehensively advising students and families about college affordability. The model is designed to address financial literacy and college affordability from middle school through college. It consists of: 1) student and parent seminars for 6th-12th grade students; 2) 6th-12th grade school curriculum; and 3) regular advising services for high school graduates and their families. Learn ways to implement similar strategies and programs to help students and families become informed consumers about college funding options and affordability.

Skill Level: All levels

Intentionally Developing Leaders of Color

- Prasant Nukalapati, Program Manager, Northwest Region, A Better Chance
- Keith Wilkerson, Senior Program Manager, Mid-Atlantic Region, A Better Chance

Too often, students of color gain access to greater educational opportunities at the secondary and collegiate level, but do not have the tangible skills they need to leverage those opportunities to the fullest. This workshop will introduce the leadership curriculum A Better Chance has developed to hone skills in Scholars such as public speaking, group organizing, goal setting, and communicating effectively with peers and adults. The presenters will share their experiences launching regional Scholar Leadership Councils and collaborating to expand best practices in their own educational communities.

Skill Level: All levels

The SET Program: Building an Authentic, Effective, and Sustainable Private-Public Educational Partnership

- Alison Doernberg, Director of Public Purpose, Rye Country Day School

In 2011, Rye Country Day School created the Office of Public Purpose through an initiative to develop an innovative framework for community engagement and partnership-based service learning. The shift from a traditional community service model to a public purpose approach underscored the school's institutional commitment to making a positive impact on the community by cultivating authentic and enduring partnerships. The SET (Saturday Enrichment and Tutorial) program, in its seventh year at Rye Country Day School, is one such partnership. SET is a literacy-based academic enrichment program for at-risk 1st-4th grade students from neighboring Port

Chester, New York. This interactive workshop will focus on the opportunities and challenges in the collaborative process of building a meaningful, sustainable private-public educational partnership. Student, family, and faculty perspectives will illuminate the SET program's mutually beneficial short- and long-term impact on educational outcomes within the Rye Country Day and Port Chester communities.

Skill Level: All levels

Addressing Deficits while Leveraging Opportunities: How to Develop Scaffolded Curricula in Academic Enrichment Programming for High School Students

- Zeva Levine, Coordinator of Academic Services, Philadelphia Futures

Staff at educational access programs that offer multi-year academic enrichment face the unique challenge of how to develop a scaffolded curriculum that both addresses the specific deficits in local schools and leverages opportunities to empower students to be leaders among their peers. In fact, whether a program offers a one-day workshop or a four-year curriculum, the design, facilitation, and assessment of this programming is critical to achieving student outcomes. Philadelphia Futures has long explored this issue throughout its history of serving low-income, first generation students since its inception as a mentoring program in 1989 to its current state as an eight-year after-school and summer academic enrichment program. Using Philadelphia Futures as a case study, and encouraging attendees to share wisdom with one another, this workshop will examine best practices and lessons learned in curriculum design for academic enrichment programming for under-resourced students.

Skill Level: All levels

Out of School Time: Addressing Academic Achievement and College Enrollment Disparities for Hispanic/Latino Students

- Lucia Mendez, Programs Associate, Latino Student Fund
- Rosalia Miller, Co-Founder and Board Chair, Latino Student Fund

This workshop analyzes two critical junctures of Hispanic/Latino students' academic careers and will discuss how academic support services provided at certain stages impact the later academic success of students. While providing high school students with guidance and support on college admissions is crucial to address the enrollment of Hispanic/Latino students in institutions of higher education, the importance of early childhood education is often neglected. This workshop will examine the pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade years, as well as grades 10-12. In order to understand the importance of intervention and academic support strategies at both points, this workshop will present a case study analysis and findings from previous studies to share the importance of intervention and support services for Hispanic/Latino students.

Skill Level: Experienced in the field

Storytelling, Writing Fluency, and College and Career Success

- Carol Barash, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Story To College
- Megan Nestor, Assistant Director of Programs, The Opportunity Network

This interactive workshop will address the latest neuroscience of storytelling and include case studies from several community based programs that use storytelling to foster college and career success for urban youth. The presenters will explore program design and outcomes from two different settings: a settlement house in New York City that provides after-school and summer programming for local grammar, middle, high school, and college students, and a nonprofit that provides academic and professional support to inner city youth from 6th-12th grade. Through these case studies, participants will learn how storytelling improves students' confidence, communication, leadership, and mentoring skills in the academic and professional world. Finally, through interactive exercises, participants will gain specific storytelling skills they can implement in their own programs.

Skill Level: Experienced in the field

11:45 AM – 1:30 PM LUNCH GENERAL SESSION AND KEYNOTE

Speaker Introduction:

- Jim McCorkell, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, College Possible

Remarks:

- The Honorable Alan C. Page, Associate Justice, Minnesota Supreme Court; and Founder, Page Education Foundation

Keynote Speaker:

- Janie Ward, Professor and Chair, Africana Studies and Education, Simmons College; and Author, *The Skin We're In: Teaching Our Teens To Be Emotionally Strong, Socially Smart, and Spiritually Connected*

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Access is Not Enough: Balancing the Equation for Student Success Through Effective Post-Secondary Partnerships

- Tanesha Ford, Program Director, Kauffman Scholars, Inc.
- Nicole Jacobs-Silvey, Assistant Program Director, Kauffman Scholars, Inc.
- Eric Wilkinson, Assistant Program Director, Kauffman Scholars, Inc.

In the ever-changing landscape of college access, persistence, and completion, Kauffman Scholars, Inc. works to bridge the degree attainment gap of underrepresented low-income students from the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. Through investigation, evaluation, and action, Kauffman Scholars has made efforts to help Scholars successfully navigate the post-secondary experience and prepare them for their transitions from campus to community. Student success can be attributed to effective collaboration with post-secondary partners. This session will explore the creation of mutually beneficial formalized agreements with various post-secondary institutions, referred to as the Kauffman Scholars Post-Secondary Network, in an effort to increase the likelihood of success for Scholars. This workshop will also examine the creation of advisory councils at numerous post-secondary institutions as an added layer of support for students outside of the classroom. Key components of the agreements and advisory councils will be shared. Challenges, benefits, successes, and lessons learned in implementation will also be identified. Additionally, a step-by-step approach to executing the network concept will be shared in an effort to support reproducing the concept in other organizations.

Skill Level: All levels

Collaborative Fundraising

- Rachel Cleaver, National Director of Programs, Let's Get Ready
- Nakia Navarro, New England Regional Director, Let's Get Ready

Let's Get Ready (LGR) is a nonprofit organization that serves first generation and/or low-income students, helping them enter and complete college using a near-peer model. The LGR footprint spans from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Lewiston, Maine. LGR has developed creative ways to sustain both indirect and direct expenses in high-need populations with low foundation/corporation investments. This presentation will demonstrate how LGR has been successful in building strong collaborative funding streams and ways participants can expand and improve their funding models.

Skill Level: Experienced in the field

Building for Success in STEM

- Daniel Zaharopol, Executive Director, The Art of Problem Solving Foundation

Even among students who get to college, low-income students are less likely than their peers to choose STEM majors; of those who do, they have lower GPAs and graduation rates than their peers. Frequently, the problem is in mathematical reasoning skills. This workshop will look at the pathways taken by high-performing students and consider how to help underserved students achieve similar success. Session participants will come away with a big-picture view of the pathways to STEM careers, as well as specific resources to build mathematical reasoning skills in classrooms, after-school programs, and experiences beyond the classroom.

Skill Level: All levels

Empowering First Generation Students

- Marcia Cantarella, Author, *I CAN Finish College: The How to Overcome Any Obstacle and Get Your Degree Guide*
- Yvonne Romero Da Silva, Vice Dean of Admissions and Director of Strategic Planning, University of Pennsylvania
- Chelsea Jones, Student Support Associate, Center for Student Opportunity/I'm First

There's something special about being first. More and more, first generation students are beating the odds and becoming the first in their family to attend college. However, it remains too common that these students do not persist and graduate from college. Presenters in this workshop will first address background evidence around trends and challenges first generation students face from the college selection and application process through persistence to college graduation. The presenters will then discuss strategies and best practices educational access providers and colleges and universities can use to better assist first generation students.

Skill Level: All levels

Readiness Matters: The Impact of College Readiness on College Persistence and Degree Completion

- April Hansen, Account Executive, ACT, Inc.

ACT's most recent research validates the importance of academic readiness in college persistence and degree completion. This workshop will report on new research findings relating to underrepresented students and their persistence in college to degree completion. The study is based on a nationally representative random sample of ACT-tested high school graduates who immediately enrolled in either a two- or four-year post-secondary institution after high school and were tracked for seven years. Participants will also learn about four major strategies for increasing persistence and completion, such as using multiple measures to predict success and the importance of interest-major fit.

Skill Level: All levels

Working with Diverse Middle School Students: A Workshop on Deepening Educators' Comprehension of Race as a Social Construct and a Lived Experience

- Sarah Bellamy, Associate Artistic Director, Penumbra Theatre Company
- Jill Romans, Middle School Principal, St. Paul Academy and Summit School

The middle school years present challenges for students in the social-emotional realm as they begin to question, understand, and solidify their own sense of self and the communities or groups to which they belong. In order for students to engage collaboratively and fully in the academic experience, they must feel safe socially and emotionally in doing so. Presenters in this session will share how one middle school has collaborated with the Penumbra Theatre Company to directly support the school's diversity initiatives. Workshop participants will be able to: 1) deepen their comprehension of race as a social construct and lived experience; 2) develop an increased ability to recognize controlling images and narratives (stereotypes) and how, where, and when to intervene; and 3) learn strategies for engaging in responsible, direct, and encouraging conversations with

students about race and difference.

Skill Level: All levels

The Common Application Redesigned: Year Two Preview

- Scott Anderson, Senior Director for Policy, The Common Application, Inc.
- Chris Mitchell, High School Program Manager, College Possible

The first year of the new Common Application generated helpful feedback from applicants, counselors, and member colleges. Join this conversation about how The Common App intends to incorporate these ideas into the second year of the new system. The presenters will also offer suggestions on how to use The Common App as an advising tool for helping students and families understand the college admission process.

Skill Level: All levels

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS

The BLAST Approach to Tackling College Persistence for Underrepresented Students: An Exploration of the Implementation of a New Bridge Program

- John Barker, Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Students, Tufts University
- Robert Mack, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education/BLAST Director, Tufts University

Many scholars contend that students of color, first generation college students, and/or low-income students remain underrepresented within higher education, particularly at four-year private and elite institutions. Often, this same population struggles with a sense of belonging to their campus community, which directly impacts their persistence. In response, Tufts University recently implemented the BLAST (Bridge to Liberal Arts Success at Tufts) program to support, develop, and retain students who may be first in their family to attend a four-year college and/or have attended under-resourced high schools. This workshop will provide an overview of the successes and challenges in implementing a new bridge program, student outcomes and experiences from quantitative and qualitative perspectives, and an opportunity for attendees to discuss how Tufts' model may or may not be applicable to their respective institutional needs.

Skill Level: All levels

College Counseling and SAT/ACT Prep: Exploring Synergies

- Rachel Fried, Director of College and Career Counseling, Making Waves Academy
- Traci Kirtley, Director of Programming and Evaluation, College Possible
- Jay Rosner, Executive Director, The Princeton Review Foundation

By second semester junior year, it becomes difficult to improve a student's high school GPA. Two important opportunities for enhancing four-year college access for first generation juniors are high-quality college counseling and a solid SAT/ACT score. The combination of college counseling and SAT/ACT prep has substantial potential synergies. The presenters have direct experience with a number of different models of this interaction, and each presenter approaches this domain from a slightly different perspective. Great counseling and strong SAT/ACT prep are each worthwhile, but optimally combining both might be best for most students. This session will explore collaborations between these two student services, and will encourage a discussion among the participants as to ways in which they can enhance one another.

Skill Level: All levels

Building and Reinforcing Organizational Culture Through Effective Group Facilitation

- Angela Bouchard, Senior Director of Support Services, The Steppingstone Foundation
- Elizabeth Parfit, Admissions Senior Associate, The Steppingstone Foundation

What does it really mean to be a part of an organization? Mission-driven organizations have the

opportunity to answer this question every time they put themselves in front of a live audience, and they should! Over the past few years, The Steppingstone Foundation has placed an increased emphasis on reinforcing its organizational culture across all areas of its program: from the first contact made with middle school students to speaking with Scholars at their college graduations ten years later. In this workshop, presenters will demonstrate some of the group facilitation techniques Steppingstone has used to instill organizational culture into everything they do. This will serve as a framework for talking about the specific strategies other organizations can use to deliver a focused and consistent message to a group, while ensuring the audience leaves with a lasting and clear impression of what it means to be a part of an organization.
Skill Level: All levels

Creating Best Practices for Communication Between High School and CBO College Counseling Offices

- Demisha Lee, Director of College Counseling, Schuler Scholar Program
- Sean Logan, Director of College Counseling, Phillips Academy
- Sherry Smith, Managing Director, Making Waves Foundation

This panel will examine the challenges low-income, first generation students face in the college admission process when they work with both their high school and community based organization college counselors. The stress of the application process, coupled with the expectation to engage with two or more college counselors, can be counterproductive, duplicative, and cause even greater anxiety. This session will examine these issues and offer best practices schools and community based organizations might consider to most effectively serve these students.
Skill Level: All levels

Evaluation for All: Demystifying Data

- Sarah Singer Quast, Project Manager, OMG Center

Participants in this workshop will learn a variety of evaluation approaches and ways to think about data, including different types of data, various analysis strategies, and the multiple uses of data (i.e., for continuous improvement, communicating results, and sharing lessons more broadly). The presenter will tackle issues of using data both as part of interventions and to evaluate the progress of interventions, and will discuss opportunities for increasing the use of data at the individual and organizational levels, and even across multiple organizations.
Skill Level: All levels

Leveraging Mentoring to Reimagine a New Model for College Success

- Tara Goderez, Senior Partnership Manger, iMentor
- James Wilson, Director of Outreach, iMentor

What is often characterized as intrusive or proactive advising has become the education community's go-to for ensuring low-income students make it to and through the maze of higher education. However, while proactive advising is highly effective in addressing the needs of each young person served, many lament it is too labor and capital intensive to serve all of America's young people in need. Meanwhile, the mentoring community reaches over three million young people every year, but struggles to state its impact on those individuals' educational outcomes. iMentor provides both communities with a new model for college success that marries the best practices of each. This workshop will demonstrate ways to preserve proactive advising's deep individual impact while also engaging the breadth of individuals that mentoring alone has the capacity to embrace. This integrative model can ensure all students experience college success.
Skill Level: All levels

Navigating Transitions and Increasing Attainment: Developing and Evaluating an Alumni Advising Program

- Mike Larsson, Chief Operating Officer, Match Education
- Joanna Sanborn, Director of College Counseling, Match Charter Public High School
- Jenna Weber, Associate College Counselor, Match Charter Public High School

First generation college students disproportionately leave higher education before earning their degrees. Frequently, these departures are motivated by feelings of academic inadequacy, social isolation, or the pressure of financial burden. In the past three years, Match Charter Public High School has overhauled its support of students from 9th grade through college graduation. Expanded alumni advising, an innovative dual-enrollment program, a new 9th-11th grade college readiness class, and student opportunities advising have changed student preparation for college. In this workshop, participants will learn how Match continues to develop and refine the alumni advising program with the input of stakeholders, collaboration of partners, and the outcomes and adjustments thus far. Presenters will discuss the process of defining programmatic needs, the development and evaluation of programs, and how these services can translate to different organizations and educators.

Skill Level: All levels

We Can Hear You Now: Responsive and Economical Solutions for Improving College Readiness

- Mike Andrews, Program Manager, College and Career Readiness, D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- Michael Longaro, College and Credential Completion Network Manager, D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education

The landscape of college access and readiness increasingly demands solutions that are both data driven and budget friendly. Over the past two years, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in Washington, D.C. has used both qualitative and quantitative data gathering to build stronger partnerships with schools, community based organizations, and higher education institutions. Session participants will learn how OSSE has strategically targeted agency resources towards responsive programming and professional development to fill critical gaps in college readiness services in the District. In particular, the session will discuss the increased focus on holistic college readiness (versus access) through programs that engage students, families, and school administrators. Participants will be able to identify college readiness challenges in their own communities and find potential solutions through partnering for improved data sharing.

Skill Level: All levels

4:30 PM – 6:30 PM NETWORKING RECEPTION

Network with fellow conference attendees and continue conversations from earlier sessions. Be sure to bring your business cards!

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2014

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM BREAKFAST AND NETWORKING

Network with other conference participants. Be sure to note the designated topic tables to help facilitate conversation around popular topics, including financial aid, fundraising, parent engagement, and more.

8:00 AM – 9:30 AM MORNING GENERAL SESSION AND KEYNOTE

Award for Excellence in Collaboration

Presenters:

- Cammy Dubie, Community Engagement Coordinator, Park Tudor School
- Mark Mitchell, Vice President, School and Student Services (SSS By NAIS)
National Association of Independent Schools

Speaker Introduction:

- Edward Kim, Head of School, The Breck School

Keynote Speaker:

- Scott Barry Kaufman, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychology, New York University

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS*Breaking Down Barriers to Persistence Through Collaboration*

- Jason Cardinal, Dean of Students, Century College
- Lara Dreier, Program Director, College Possible
- Janet Morales, Manager of College Access Partnerships, Augsburg College

This presentation will demonstrate a unique partnership helping low-income students overcome the social, financial, and academic barriers that can prevent college success. Since 2001, College Possible has succeeded in helping 98 percent of its students gain college admission, and is successfully leveling the playing field for students as they progress towards a college degree. Augsburg College is an urban campus with a commitment to enrolling and serving diverse students, and Century College is a community college focused on providing a clear pathway to higher education for an increasingly diverse and underserved population. College Possible has worked with numerous institutions including Augsburg and Century to attract diverse, qualified applicants, and help them achieve college graduation through a unique campus-based coaching model. College Possible, Century College, and Augsburg College will share some of the most common barriers experienced by the low-income students they serve, as well as best practices useful to other institutions.

Skill Level: All levels

Small Changes, Big Results: Understanding the Evolution of a Summer Program

- Elaine Leigh, Director of Support Services, Steppingstone Scholars, Inc.
- Saroya Royster, Associate Director of Support Services, Steppingstone Scholars, Inc.

Steppingstone Scholars has a 14-year reputation in Philadelphia of helping underserved students to navigate and succeed in independent, parochial, and public school environments. Using this program as a case study, the presenters will discuss the advances and obstacles in developing a multi-year program and curriculum that supplements classroom learning while also addressing academic gaps, social needs, and diversity issues within the students' school environments. The presenters will describe ways Steppingstone Scholars has rebranded and enhanced summer programs and share program mapping tools and rubrics. The presenters will also discuss university-community collaborations to address academic preparation gaps, particularly focusing on creating blended learning models that make academic enrichment more effective and impactful for Scholars and school partners.

Skill Level: All levels

Comprehensive School-Wide College Readiness

- Jim Bierma, Director, Ramp-Up to Readiness™, University of Minnesota College

Readiness Consortium

- Julie Sweitzer, Executive Director, University of Minnesota College Readiness Consortium

Learn how middle and high school college and career readiness programs help students connect career, post-secondary, and academic planning, and gain the knowledge, skills, and habits needed for post-secondary success. Topics will include: 1) making informed decisions about possible career paths; 2) finding the best post-secondary options for careers of interest; 3) creating middle and high school academic plans to reach post-secondary aspirations; 4) learning about and developing financial strategies to cover post-secondary costs; 5) building on personal/social strengths and habits that lead to post-secondary success; 6) utilizing progress monitoring tools to help students, staff, and parents set and reach college preparedness goals; and 7) cultivating parent partnerships. As an example, participants will discuss Ramp-Up to Readiness™, a school-wide college readiness advisory program developed at the University of Minnesota that helps schools prepare students in five areas: academics, admissions, career readiness, financial aid knowledge, and personal and social development.

Skill Level: All levels

Driving Quality (with a capital Q)

- Jessica Banks, National Manager of Program Design and Technical Assistance, BELL-Building Educated Leaders for Life

Many schools and organizations have missions and values that are meant to drive the level of quality implemented in classrooms. Often, it becomes difficult to align many of these values to concrete practices and behaviors they want implemented with students. In mission-driven environments, where time is of the essence, it is important to provide staff with actionable information and strategies to drive quality. During this workshop, presenters will discuss how to develop quality assurance indicators that align to larger missions and values using a backwards-planning model. Participants will walk through the process of articulating what quality really looks like when implemented, identifying and creating tools to support staff in bringing the vision to life, and using them in conjunction with one another to establish a culture driven by a focus on quality.

Skill Level: All levels

Increasing the Value of Admissions Test Preparation: Making the SSAT, ISEE, SAT, and Other Tests Work For, Not Against, Your Students

- Akil Bello, Co-Founder, Bell Curves
- Keith Wilkerson, Senior Program Manager, Mid-Atlantic Region, A Better Chance

Bringing more than 40 years of collective experience working with low-income students and standardized tests, the workshop presenters will outline the major themes of standardized tests and the typical challenges these tests present low-income and minority students. Participants will learn how to reduce test fear and provide families greater insight into the tests' objectives and how they fit into broader educational objectives. Drawing on their experiences and the input of the audience, the presenters will outline solutions for motivating students to see the tests as a positive challenge, informing families of resources to maximize results, and preparing effectively for standardized admissions tests such as the ISEE, SSAT, HSPT, SHSAT, SAT, and ACT.

Skill Level: All levels

Meeting the Need: Supporting Families During the Independent School Financial Aid Process

- Meg Ahern, Director of Financial Aid and Middle School Admission, Morristown-Beard School
- Andy Hoge, Director of Admissions and Placement, New Jersey SEEDS
- Marie Myers, Director of Admissions, Concord Academy

- Bernadette Sarlo, Associate Director of Placement, New Jersey SEEDS

In this workshop, presenters will discuss how to effectively navigate a family through the independent school financial aid process, from the point of the initial financial aid application through the student's time at the school. Representatives from partner schools will share how they create inclusive environments for students from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The panelists and participants will discuss ways to collaborate effectively with families and community based organizations regarding financial aid contracts, as well as the appeal and re-enrollment processes. The presenters will borrow from the federal government's recent push on college financial aid offices to create a user-friendly form when disclosing their financial agreements.
Skill Level: All levels

Transforming Fear into Inspiration: Understanding Non-Cognitives and Their Impact on College Success

- Angela Bugayong, Program Officer, Recruitment and Selection, College Success Foundation-D.C.
- Brett Gotlib, College Preparatory Advisor, College Success Foundation-D.C.
- Kevin Mungin, Senior Program Officer, HERO Program, College Success Foundation-D.C.

This workshop will explore the importance of building relations with all stakeholders involved in a child's education to help students increase positive outlooks and resiliency. The College Success Foundation-D.C. (CSF-DC) engages high schools and the community by recruiting mentors, readers, and interviewers for two scholarship programs, which serve 250 high school juniors each year, 98 percent of whom are African American. CSF-DC collaborates with community based mentors and partners, including readers, interviewers, mentors, program and school staff, and community and/or corporate partners to strengthen scholars' non-cognitive skills in order to successfully graduate from high school and college. This workshop will explore the importance of building a community of support to help students hone the non-cognitive skills necessary for success.

Skill Level: Familiar with the field; Experienced in the field

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Career Readiness: Grades 5-12

- Janna Heffernan, Teacher and Junior Internship Advisor, Boston Collegiate Charter School
- Jenna Ogundipe, Chief Academic Officer, Boston Collegiate Charter School

To succeed on a college campus, students need a strong foundation in academic content taught by excellent teachers. Boston Collegiate Charter School (BCCS) believes students also need high-quality career exposure and career readiness programming in high school in order to persevere through college. Students must see college as their destination, not because teachers or peers or family members say they should go, but because college is a critical step towards their future goals. This workshop will share the strategic career exposure and readiness programming developed by BCCS. The presenters will share best practices and lessons learned from BCCS's well-developed program, which includes job fairs, career days, classroom curriculum for career readiness, networking events, and a culminating two-week intensive internship program for high school juniors.

Skill Level: All levels

The Education Lifecycle of African American and Latino/a Students: From Middle School Preparation to College Admission and Completion

- Sheilah Shaw Horton, Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students,

Loyola University Maryland

- Cindy Perez, Director of College Guidance, Prep for Prep
- Ricco Siasoco, Director of Undergraduate Affairs, Prep for Prep

A recent national study concluded that in the absence of interventions, low-income, high-achieving students disproportionately fail to achieve their potential at every academic juncture. For African American and Latino/a students in particular, research shows lower rates of college admission and higher rates of undergraduate attrition than their counterparts. What are the socioeconomic barriers to, and cultural capital necessary for, college success among African American and Latino/a students? How might an extended educational lifecycle, beginning with intensive middle school preparation and extending to college guidance and undergraduate retention, impact their graduation rates? In this session, stakeholders from all areas of higher education will present research and institutional partnerships that connect community based organizations, funders, and colleges serving African American and Latino/a undergraduates and share best practices for supporting these students.

Skill Level: All levels

Evaluation Evolution: Start, Build, Grow

- Kim Stezala, President, Stezala Consulting, LLC

Wondering how to evaluate programs or services? Unsure what true evaluation even means? This session will present a basic framework for evaluation meant to serve as a springboard for further conversation within an organization. The presenter will discuss different types of evaluation, budget considerations, communicating the results, and more. Participants will gain a better understanding of evaluation, a basic framework/worksheet for planning, research method terminology, and a glimpse at quick case studies. Participants will be encouraged to start where they are, build upon it, and grow their capacity for internal and external evaluation.

Skill Level: All levels

Promising Practices for Students Transitioning to Independent Schools

- Wonjen Bagley, Assistant Director of Programs, The Steppingstone Foundation
- Yully Cha, Chief Operating Officer, The Steppingstone Foundation
- Pamela Pleasants, Assistant Dean of Admission, Milton Academy

Many college preparatory organizations collect information about program participants after they place into independent schools, from report card grades to college acceptances. Often, they find the anecdotal feedback from individual students and school staff provides insights that enrich their understanding of the roadblocks and bridges to success for underrepresented students in independent schools. How can schools and organizations that offer placement services work together to support underserved students with a culturally responsive experience that increases student success, academically and socially? This workshop will explore common characteristics of culturally responsive institutions through case study scenarios and survey results of students in independent schools.

Skill Level: All levels

Engaging Parents for Student Success

- Jeanne Ting Chowning, Associate Executive Director, Rainier Scholars

This workshop will feature an interactive discussion about strategies for engaging parent communities. Participants will share challenges their organizations face, discuss attempts to address those challenges, and learn successful practices used by others. This session will explore diverse approaches for parent engagement along the spectrum from elementary school through college. It will also present elements of the parent engagement model utilized by Rainier Scholars in Seattle, Washington over the past 13 years. Workshop participants will broaden their understanding of the variety of strategies used by Rainier Scholars and other NPEA organizations

to partner with this important group of stakeholders.

Skill Level: All levels

The SEED Institutional Supports Evaluation: Addressing Gaps in Campus-Based Supports for Historically Underserved Students from a P-16 Perspective

- Tiffany Blacknall, College Success Specialist, The SEED Foundation
- Melissa Freedman, College Success Manager, The SEED Foundation

Join The SEED Foundation in a discussion about improving campus supports and sharing practices that best serve underrepresented students. As access to higher education has increased for the three subpopulations of historically underserved students in higher education, students of color, low-income students, and first generation college students, so has the number of campus-based support services. Despite the increase in access and support, there still exists a substantial disparity in degree attainment. This workshop introduces the SEED Institutional Supports Evaluation (ISE), an assessment of an institution's current campus-based supports from a P-16 perspective with special regard to serving historically underserved students.

Skill Level: Familiar with the field; Experienced in the field

We Are Ready: Middle to High School Transition

- William 'B.J.' Lohr, Program Manager, Chicago, After-School All-Stars

The After-School All-Stars' We Are Ready program prepares 8th grade students for success in high school and beyond. By identifying early warning signs, such as poor behavior, low school attendance, and failing core classes, We Are Ready helps combat the dropout crisis affecting teenagers throughout the country. This workshop will discuss topics such as high school readiness, study and organizational skills, college exposure, career exploration, and family engagement. The activities in the program are fun and engaging, appeal to kids, and can be used to educate students on how to connect their passions to be successful in high school, college, and in the workforce.

Skill Level: All levels

12:45 PM – 2:30 PM CLOSING LUNCH GENERAL SESSION AND KEYNOTE

Speaker Introduction:

- R.T. Rybak, Executive Director, Generation Next

Keynote Speaker:

- Esmeralda Santiago, Author, Screenwriter, Essayist, *When I Was Puerto Rican*

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Book Signing

Esmeralda Santiago is pleased to sign copies of her book immediately following her remarks.