Navigating Education
In A Changing World

Also in this issue:
If You Don’t Have It, You Ain’t Got It
Then and Now
If You Don’t Have It, You Ain’t Got It

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The Pittsburgh Foundation

The Pittsburgh Promise is a partnership between Pittsburgh Public Schools, the City of Pittsburgh, UPMC, and other key funders.

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A few months ago, I wrote a letter to Pittsburgh’s kids which was printed in TribLive. You can read the letter in full here: bit.ly/3hTjrXg

Here are excerpts:

During these strange times, and always, I want you to know that you are special and you are loved. There is nothing you need to do to become special or to earn love. And there is nothing you can do to lose either. In you just being you, you are special and loved.

As dearly loved humans who are endowed by their creator with rights, talents and responsibilities, we the adults in this world owe you — all of you — some things:

• You should not be tolerated.
  You should instead be treated with the utmost of care.
• You should not be hurried.
  You should have the time needed to be a child and an adolescent before you have adult worries and responsibilities.
• You should not be afraid.
  You should be secure in the knowledge that you are physically and emotionally safe at home, at school and in every neighborhood throughout the land.
• You should not be uncertain.
  You should be confident that your parents and relatives, your teachers and bus drivers, your police officers and mentors see you as precious humans, and look out for you as treasures to be guarded.
• You should not be taken for granted.
  You should be able to count on your school to inspire and equip you to flourish.
• You should not be passive.
  You should be engaged in service, helping to create and build a city that is good and just for all.
• You should not be tolerated.
  You should be included in the conversation and look out for you as treasures to be guarded.

Thankfully, some of you have all these things. It breaks my heart that not all of you have.

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Thankfully, some of you have all these things. It breaks my heart that not all of you can say that. If we as a community have failed some of you, we have failed. I hold to the view that all kids are our kids.

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I don’t know how many good years I have left, but I pledge to you that I will spend them using whatever influence I have to get the grownups in our city to do better until we do right by all of you.

Sincerely,

Saleem Ghubril
Every summer, ARYSE hosts PRYSE Academy to help immigrant youth become more comfortable in American culture and the school system.

After hosting PRYSE Academy on a volunteer basis for five summers, in 2017, ARYSE realized that having the summer camp wasn’t enough support for their students. So, they started other programs such as the after school clubs to help with homework and provide a safe place for children to come, hang out, and build community. ARYSE also started a girls art group where the goal is to empower young immigrant girls to be creative through art.

I began as a camper with ARYSE in 2013, when they first started their summer program called PRYSE (Program of Alliance for Refugee Youth Support and Education) Academy. There were times when I did not want to attend, but then there was a spark. The summer camp was not only about improving my abilities in writing and speaking English; I realized there was something else happening, too. The eleven-year-old Niraj was completely engulfed by American culture, and I had no interest in understanding who I really was. This “useless” summer camp was helping me realize and understand the importance of my culture through the work the counselors were doing. There were other Bhutanese and Nepali kids at this camp, and I really connected with them, more than I did at the beginning of the camp.

I attended PRYSE Academy as a camper in its inaugural year, 2013, and again in 2015. Being part of PRYSE Academy was such an amazing opportunity. I felt a deepened connection to my culture and appreciation for being with others from different cultures.

So why did I choose eventually to volunteer? Because ARYSE is doing something that I have not seen in any other summer camps before; they not only help immigrant children get used to American life, they also encourage the kids to be open and freely share their culture, so they don’t lose it. ARYSE is very important to me. There is a personal aspect to it as I, myself, have been positively influenced by its programs. I now volunteer as a mentor with ARYSE and serve on its youth steering committee so I can continue to help other kids grow in the ways that I did during the years I attended the summer program.

Volunteering at ARYSE has played a huge part in who I am now. My first year I had a hard time speaking in front of crowds, but now it’s like nothing. I’ve improved my communication skills. I am shaping and shifting a child’s life if you think about it; they’ll remember camp and think, “Wow, Niraj was a very nice and thoughtful person.” That is one of my greatest goals: to have a positive impact on others’ lives. There are times when I see kids just like the eleven-year-old me, and it makes me happy to see how they change from the start of PRYSE Academy to the end of the program. They come out of their shells and become a whole different person! Volunteering with ARYSE really helps me connect to my roots and thank the world for giving me this amazing opportunity of having a beautiful life in America. I hope to continue to give back and have the same influence on these children!
Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am a 20-year-old college student and graduate of PPS Obama Academy in 2018. I am currently a junior at Lincoln University majoring in biology. My hope is to become either a physician’s assistant or a zoologist. On campus, I am the treasurer of Lincoln’s Gentlemen’s Qualities organization and a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success.

Can you tell us about your nonprofit and why you started it?

The purpose of HBCU Majority is to promote HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) among high school students and support current HBCU students that reside in Allegheny County. Our goal is to create an awareness of Historically Black Colleges and Universities as an option. We also pair high school students with current HBCU students as a resource and to provide trusting relationships. Within the campuses, we will develop a support system with students from Pittsburgh. We also want to build a network between HBCU alumni and HBCU students.

In December of 2019, I participated in a panel discussion that was attended by at least 50 Black high school and college students. During the breakout session, I had only two students come to ask me questions about my college experience. Neither of them knew what an HBCU was! After that, I realized that HBCUs were a foreign concept for most students in this area. That is when I decided to create HBCU Majority to bring awareness about benefits of attending a Historically Black College or University.

What are your future plans for your nonprofit?

I have so many ideas and plans. Generally, I plan to connect with more HBCU college students. I want to create a network within the city that also includes HBCU alumni. I’d like to do a photo contest on the HBCU campuses. This will give high school students a better point of reference; especially if college tours continue to be on hold for a while. Scholarships are a part of my longer-term plan because HBCUs don’t always have the financial means to support students during their freshman year.

Post pandemic, we plan to provide transportation for Cheyney and Lincoln students to return home during breaks. In September, we will collaborate with other education agencies to conduct a FAFSA workshop with parents. We will also be conducting a HBCU Day at Lincoln K-5 in the spring. It is never too early to introduce the concept of college to children. Avery Day will be our first anniversary celebration, to acknowledge Avery College, a HBCU that was located in Pittsburgh in the 1800s. This will be a community event with food and entertainment. Of course information about HBCUs from across the nation will be available.

Can you give us the details of the Hamper Drive and the results from it?

My initial idea was to have a free store for HBCU students. As a freshman, I was able to get essential items that were offered by NEED. I wanted to duplicate the concept and open it to all HBCU students. Due to the pandemic, I had to adjust my ideas.

The purpose of the Hamper Drive was to make back to school shopping a little easier for students returning in the fall. I also wanted to get the community involved in the effort. There would be a meaningful and purposeful feeling for the giver, as well as the receiver. As for me, I was overwhelmed with the support we received. Knowing that I was doing something that would positively affect other students was pretty great too!

In preparing for the drive we solicited local businesses and corporations. Donations were made by Walmart, Home Depot, CVS, Costco, and The Pittsburgh Promise. The Cheyney Alumni Chapter of Pittsburgh also made a generous donation for the cause. A drop-off day for the community was held on July 19. Individual donors pulled up to Lincoln K-5 with bags and boxes full of cleaning products, toiletries, and bathroom essentials. Principal Pam Parks was helpful getting items dropped off from the PPS Lincoln Staff. The collection would not have run efficiently without the help of Nyabingi Michi, (Lincoln University) and Erica Johnson, (Hampton University). They both are high school friends from Obama Academy and attend HBCUs.

Enough items were collected to fill 26 hampers for the HBCU students that registered to participate. Nine of the recipients are Promise Scholars and are upperclassmen at Lincoln University. Twelve of the participants are Promise eligible; however, they will be attending an HBCU outside of Pennsylvania.

A pickup event was held Saturday, August 1. HBCU students gathered, socialized, and took home a hamper filled with useful items: detergent, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, body wash, lotion, hand sanitizer, bandages, blankets, bedding, towels, and much more.

The turnout was awesome! This was my first real event, so I was pretty nervous. People donated more than I expected. We will do this event again next year. My hope is to reach more community members and students.

With community support, Reed turned his dream of helping HBCU (Historically Black College or University) students into a reality.
For those who think.
For those who create.
For those who have big ideas and won’t let anything stand in their way.
For those who work harder.
Smarter. Faster.

Extraordinary growth leads to extraordinary outcomes.
Just ask the 99% of 2017 graduates surveyed who are working or studying in their chosen fields within one year of graduation.

BJ Durham, a former Yellow Jacket basketball player, earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology in 2016 and a master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling in 2018. Currently, he is a doctoral student at NC State University.
The best way to use a credit card, if at all, is as a substitute for “real” money (i.e. cash in your pocket or bank account).

If you don’t have it, you ain’t got it: Too often, I used mine when I didn’t really have the money – the fellas were starting a Madden tournament in the dorm and we surely needed a proper TV set. Here’s the thing – you should know how you’re going to pay within no more than 30 days before you swipe the plastic. Because…

If I could do it over again, I’d ask that guy with the round face – why do I need this credit card? I suspect he’d tell me because every grown-up has one. Maybe he’d say that it’s good to have the plastic in case you need something you can’t afford. I’d say to him, in a voice as big as his – if I don’t have it, I don’t need it. Then, I’d buy my own thermos – with cash!

Credit cards aren’t free. In fact, they’re pretty expensive:

And your credit score matters: Who knew that I was being graded for everything I did with my credit card? Not paying it off each month – oh, that gave me a B credit score. Not paying on time – slipping down to a C, a D, an F! Meanwhile, the places where I applied for jobs were checking my credit score to check me out. Years later, when my wife and I bought our house, our credit scores were the first thing we had to bring to the table.
If this is your first experience with virtual learning and you’re unsure of how to structure your days for success, you’ll want to adopt good habits to succeed in online learning. To the right are some tips to help ensure your success. They can be incorporated across subjects and grade levels, as well as in both virtual and non-virtual settings. You may just need to tweak things here and there. Hopefully these ideas can give you a starting place for making your virtual experience a positive one!

8. Learn to deal with setbacks. Everyone has them! Every person who succeeds has had to struggle to get there. When you get a bad grade, have an argument with a friend, or experience other frustrations, realize that this is a learning experience. Talk to someone to get another point of view—you could be worried about something that’s pretty small in the long run. To move forward, you must take responsibility for what you’ve done (or not done) and decide to change your behavior in the future. Making a plan for achieving greater success in the future will help you build confidence too!

2. Get organized—and stay organized. Creating an orderly learning space to do schoolwork will put you ahead of the game. Be sure you have room for your books, computer, pens, paper, and other supplies. Label folders to hold papers and notes for each subject. Go ahead and create electronic folders for each class on your computer and in your email program. If your virtual school provides an online planner, use it to schedule your personal appointments and create your “to do” list, with items ranked in order of urgency.

3. Establish a flexible routine. While online school and blended learning school do give you a more flexible schedule, having a routine will help keep you on track with your schoolwork. It’s a good idea to find out when your teachers have their office hours, so you can arrange your schedule to overlap with when they are available. Naturally, you can vary your schedule when needed.

6. Start on track and stay on track. It’s always better to be ahead than to be struggling at the last minute! Break down big projects into small, manageable parts—and give each one a deadline. Don’t drag your feet—make yourself do things on time and you’ll be better off in the long run.

7. Exercise with friends online. Middle and high school students will spend a lot of time online—completing lessons, chatting with peers, and touching base with their online teachers. So scheduling physical fitness into the day is also important. Physical exercise improves mood, energy, and brainpower. You won’t even have to leave the living room with the many online exercise videos available on social channels like Instagram and YouTube.

4. Set personal goals. To make great things happen in your life, it helps to set goals for yourself. Think about what you’d like to accomplish, both short and long term. Is there a class you want to ace this semester? Maybe you want to get a certain grade point average or achieve a certain score on the SAT exams. Preparing for college and getting admission into a specific college might also be on your list. Be sure to put your goals in writing and post the list where you’ll see it often.

5. Make the most of your resources. As an online or blended learning student, you have many helpful resources available. Naturally, your texts, the library, online instructional tools, and trusted websites come to mind. But don’t forget the many human resources you can use: parents, teachers, school counselors, and principals are great sources of information. A good rule of thumb is if you’ve been looking for an answer for more than five minutes, reach out for help!

8. Learn to deal with setbacks. Everyone has them! Every person who succeeds has had to struggle to get there. When you get a bad grade, have an argument with a friend, or experience other frustrations, realize that this is a learning experience. Talk to someone to get another point of view—you could be worried about something that’s pretty small in the long run. To move forward, you must take responsibility for what you’ve done (or not done) and decide to change your behavior in the future. Making a plan for achieving greater success in the future will help you build confidence too!

1. Be Positive. Thriving through a change is tough but doable with a positive attitude. A positive attitude about online learning is the best gift you can give yourself. Everything you learn, whether it’s your most favorite or least favorite subject, will help you grow as a person.

Citation of the 8 tips: Stephanie Becker | “8 Tips for Middle and High Schoolers to Get Started in Online School” www.connectionsacademy.com

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For students preparing to transition out of the K–12 school system, the COVID-19 pandemic is as much a time of uncertainty as it is for adults. Whatever the 2020–21 school year may bring, rising juniors and seniors will need continued support while they work towards goals and aspirations during such tremendous uncertainty. Fortunately, schools and educators serve as the places and people who provide stability and continuity in students’ lives, especially those students whose families may be currently experiencing incredibly challenging circumstances.

**Staying connected is critical.** The adults with whom students interact in schools play a key role in sharing information and guidance to help students select and pursue postsecondary pathways. To the extent feasible, schools should find ways to help students remain connected to resources like counselors and to ensure that students know where to go to find information about key milestones, requirements, and postgraduation opportunities when they’re not in school.

**The Promise is starting something new this year!** We now have Promise Coaches working in partnership with PPS staff and the community to focus on providing career exploration, mental strengthening, and interventions to every high school student starting in the 9th grade. We are starting this work inside three high schools: Carrick, Milliones/UPrep, and Perry.

Too few PPS 9th graders graduate from high school, enroll in education after high school, and earn a credential. This deprives students from being able to compete for jobs in today’s workforce. It also creates a challenge for employers who are looking for new workers to grow their businesses and replace workers as they retire.

The goal of the Promise Coaches is to increase the number of 9th graders who enroll in post-secondary education and earn a post-secondary credential. Our coaches’ talents are many and varied! They bring experience working with youth, college students, families, higher education administration and K-12 colleagues. They are all passionate, dedicated professionals eager to serve Pittsburgh public school students.

As they spent the summer attending a myriad of webinars and information sessions to prepare themselves to support students, they also began strategizing best practices in virtual support. They are prepared to offer virtual workshops to 9th through 12th grade students that will help them begin to explore their own interests, learn about the options that lay before them and map out their post-secondary plans. They’re prepared to walk students through the college and career search process, to support them as they complete college applications and to assist families in completing the FAFSA.

The Coaches are eager to begin building individual relationships with the students and staff of Perry, Carrick and Milliones/UPrep High Schools – even if it must happen on a screen instead of in a school building.

**Promise Coaches Will Help Students:**

1. **Identify their available financial and emotional resources**
2. **Know their educational and career options**
3. **Understand their skills and interests**
4. **Navigate the workforce to find and apply for jobs**
“What advice do you have for kids as they navigate this school year?”

Meet the Promise Coaches

- **Kelcey Bailey**
  - There is no way you will let us down; you’re here, you’re amazing, and we are so excited to support you as you seize this year!

- **Kameron Bronson**
  - Stay diligent, focus on one thing at a time, and communicate with your teachers.

- **Vanessa Dunn**
  - Asking for help is a sign of strength, and there are so many people rooting for you this year, so don’t be afraid to reach out for help when you need it!

- **Paul Johnson**
  - Learn to roll with the punches.

- **Sean Spencer**
  - Considering everything that has happened in 2020, never lose sight of yourself and the goals you can achieve.

- **Schazz Lee**
  - Take care of yourself and ask for help.

- **Dalonta Pond**
  - The only way you succeed in our ever-changing world is to learn how to truly embrace changes as they come.

- **Maria Owens-Bailey**
  - Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

- **Kameron Branson**
  - Stay diligent, focus on one thing at a time, and communicate with your teachers.

- **Sean Spencer**
  - Considering everything that has happened in 2020, never lose sight of yourself and the goals you can achieve.

- **Schazz Lee**
  - Take care of yourself and ask for help.

Coaches Contact Info:
- CarrickCoaches@pittsburghpromise.org
- PerryCoaches@pittsburghpromise.org
- UPrepCoaches@pittsburghpromise.org

KristineHAMMER is the Communications Manager at The Pittsburgh Promise.
Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT) and One PA launched All-In to Reopen Our Schools, an effort to bring the Pittsburgh community together to plan the safe and successful reopening of schools this fall.

“During this global pandemic, the health and safety of our students, teachers, and staff is a top priority for the 2020-2021 school year,” said Dr. Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent. “As a caregiver to tens of thousands of children, we see the plan for reopening our schools essential to the effective reopening of the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County as a whole.”

The All-In to Reopen Our Schools plan was developed by 14 subcommittees, composed of a cross-section of stakeholders, within four categories: Academic Programming and Instructional Support, Family Support & Wellbeing, School Operations for a Safe and Healthy Environment, Communications, Outreach and Community Coordination.

From foundations to local businesses, more than 50 organizations have collaborated as All-In to Reopen Schools partners. These partners have provided valuable input within the 14 subcommittees and yielded a total of 407 recommendations for Executive Cabinet to review.

In July, members of the All-In to Reopen Our Schools subcommittees highlighted vital recommendations during a virtual event held on Zoom and live streamed on the District’s Facebook page and website. More than 100 subcommittee members and staff participated in the event, and 16,000 individuals viewed it online. Viewers asked questions that were answered in real-time or placed on the District website under All-In Frequently Asked Questions.

Some immediate actions for the reopening we have announced include:

• The switch to Schoology as the District’s online Learning Management System, with the integrated use of Microsoft Teams to support communications. Schoology, currently used at the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy, rated high for its ease of use, accessibility, technical integration, and content management.

• All Pittsburgh Gifted Center classes will be held virtually.

• A change in the school calendar to provide additional days for teacher and staff professional development.

As for fall sports, the Board of Education approved the Athletics Resocialization Health and Safety Plan. This 12-page plan outlines how the District will provide a safe space of fun, learning and camaraderie for PPS students and covers procedures for conditioning, daily safety checks for athletes, coaches and staff, and the use of masks. The plan was developed with input from coaches, principals, parents, athletic trainers and other medical personnel to ensure alignment to guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Since 2003, in many different capacities, Mercedes J. Williams has worked in over 20 Pittsburgh public schools. Currently, she works for the district’s Office of Public Information as Media Manager where she handles social media, event planning, good news stories, and serves as a liaison between the media and school district. Mercedes is a proud Pittsburgh Public Schools alumna, employee, and parent.

For more information about All-In to Reopen Schools, please visit www.pghschools.org/allin.

“The PFT has been eager to work with the Pittsburgh Public Schools on a plan that will bring our students and staff back to school safely,” said Nina Esposito Visgitis, President Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers. “Teachers have voluntarily embraced our remote learning reality, but of course, they are eager to get back inside of the classroom, where teaching and learning flourish best.”
The Preferred College Partners program is intended to strengthen relationships between The Pittsburgh Promise and certain post-secondary institutions that provide additional financial aid and robust support services for Promise Scholars. **Preferred College Partners** will provide grants for room and board to Promise-eligible students who are accepted to the institution and live in on-campus housing.

**These Preferred College Partners** will extend program benefits to Promise Scholars who enter as freshmen in fall 2021:

- Allegheny College
- California University of Pennsylvania
- Carlow University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Chatham University
- Cheyney University
- Clarion University
- Duquesne University
- Edinboro University
- Geneva College
- Grove City College
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Juniata College
- Kutztown University
- La Roche University
- Mansfield University
- Mercyhurst University
- Mount Aloysius College
- Penn State (Beaver, Greater Allegheny, Hazleton, Mont Alto, and Schuylkill campuses)
- Pittsburgh Technical College
- Point Park University
- Robert Morris University
- Rosedale Technical College
- Saint Vincent College
- Seton Hill University
- Shippensburg University
- Slippery Rock University
- Susquehanna University
- Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology
- Thiel College
- Washington & Jefferson College
- Waynesburg University
- Westminster College
- Williamson College of the Trades

Our thanks to these Preferred College Partners, who share The Pittsburgh Promise’s commitment to helping make post-secondary education more accessible and affordable.

**NEXT STEPS FOR FUTURE PROMISE SCHOLARS:**

1. Be certain to consider Preferred College Partners during your post-secondary school search.
2. Visit the schools and ask about financial aid and support services for Promise Scholars.
3. Apply to all schools of your choice.
4. Complete the FAFSA (FAFSA.gov) and PA State Grant Form (PaFree.org) as early as possible (Oct. 1st) and no later than May 1st.
5. Once accepted to a Preferred College Partner school, reach out to the school’s financial aid office to learn more about your individual financial aid package. Financial aid packages will vary by school and by student.
Almost 10 years after receiving "The Pittsburgh Promise" I can truly say I am still a direct beneficiary of the vision that was sown back in 2008, I’m still being granted opportunities, I’m still pursuing dreams, I’m still making connections, and I’m still just as grateful to have been a recipient. Since 2011, I have endured my fair share of struggle and success. I’ve been challenged to an uncomfortable degree, and I’ve been ready to give up a number of times. Every time, however, I remembered the “Promise” made to me on behalf of people who believed that I could succeed. Currently:

- I serve as Assistant Principal at Pittsburgh King PreK-8.
- I am a music director at 2 churches in the city of Pittsburgh.
- I am employed by the Pittsburgh Penguins where I serve as an occasional National Anthem Singer.
- I am married and we own a home up the street from Langley High School where my brother attended and was one of the first Pittsburgh Promise recipients.
- I’ve obtained a bachelor’s degree in Music Education and a master’s degree in K-12 Administration.
- I am in pursuit of a doctorate degree at Duquesne University.

When I graduated from Pittsburgh CAPA in 2011, I had no idea of where I would go, what I’d go on to do, or if I’d make an impact at all, but I know one thing for certain: The Promise was more than just money or a scholarship; it has represented that little bit of hope that someone such as myself needed to know that I can, and now will, make it. Financially, college never seemed possible for me. Still, college was a definite goal. I needed to help get me where I am today. The Pittsburgh Promise helped me to go to school thanks to the financial scholarship, but it gave me a chance to become the Persistent, Resilient, Optimistic, Motivational, Intentional, Secure, and Educated young man I am today. Just as I was unsure of where I’d go 10 years ago, I am unsettled as to where I will go in my near future, but I am eternally grateful for what The Promise was to me, and I’m hopeful that others will have the chance to experience the same in the years to come!

As I reflect on what The Promise was to me, I am encouraged “to be” for someone else, whatever that might mean. I plan to be a person of Peace, Respect, Obedience, Mindfulness, Inspiration, Safety, and Energy for all the students who will come after me with hopes and aspirations to achieve the unimaginable. I want to help remind all people that no matter what, all things are truly possible, and when we work together, we will be able to accomplish anything we put our minds to. Yes, it sounds so cliché, but I’ve lived it, and can attest that collaboration and community are key ingredients to the success of an individual.

To those who were key in founding this wonderful initiative, I thank you! To those who are going to be fortunate enough to receive support from this organization, I congratulate you and extend well wishes as you embark on your educational journey. Finally, to those who have received support from The Promise AND to those who believe in the mission of The Promise, I implore you to give! Your support is a large part of what helps the visionaries fulfill a promise to the young scholars of the Pittsburgh Public Schools and what helps those same young people fulfill a promise to themselves: to not let anything interfere with them accomplishing their goals, no matter the circumstance.

Thank you, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh Promise, and thanks to all the people who helped me become the best me, despite the many challenges I’ve faced. Now, let’s continue changing lives and offering “Promise” to many more!

Michael J. Warren | 2011 Graduate of CAPA

(Reprinted from our Fall 2011 Magazine)
Seton Hill University
is proud to be a
Pittsburgh Promise Preferred Partner.

Seton Hill University, a Catholic, liberal arts university, has been educating students in the best tradition of the Sisters of Charity since 1918. With new programs in Nursing, Cybersecurity, Global Studies, Data Analytics, Digital Humanities and flexible online Master’s and Adult Degree offerings, Seton Hill is preparing students "for that world in which they are destined to live."

For more information on Seton Hill University’s academic programs, visit www.setonhill.edu, email admit@setonhill.edu or call 724.838.4281.

STRIVING TODAY
TOWARD A BETTER TOMORROW

The challenges the world faces are continually evolving. Today’s young people — relentlessly curious and creative — will lead the way in solving tomorrow’s problems.

Carnegie Mellon University’s collaborative environment cultivates critical thinking, communication and problem solving — skills that are essential to tackle our most pressing issues. Even in these extraordinary times, CMU’s research continues to make a positive global impact on humanity.

We are proud to partner with the Pittsburgh Promise in supporting young dreamers and strivers as they set forth on a journey of change, opportunity and lifelong learning.

“Carnegie Mellon University is positioned like no other institution to define and lead the space where technology and humanity intersect.”

- Farnam Jahanian
President, Carnegie Mellon University

Jonathan Borofsky is a graduate of CMU’s College of Fine Arts.

© Art ("Walking To The Sky") was donated to the university by Jill Kraus, a CFA alumna, and her husband, Peter.
WE ARE PROUD TO INTRODUCE OUR 2020 CLASS OF EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS.

THE EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS PROGRAM BUILD A PIPELINE BETWEEN HIGH-PERFORMING STUDENTS AND OUR MAJOR CORPORATE DONORS.

The program provides students with the chance to connect with the prestigious company with which they are matched and pursue professional development opportunities and relationships during their college years. High school seniors with a strong academic performance, a commitment to community service, and leadership skills are encouraged to apply. The Executive Scholars Program is one of the ways that The Promise can help students transition not only from high school to college, but also from college to a career. We are very proud of our 2020 Executive Scholar Class. Congratulations!

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Hajer Alshehail
While attending high school at Pittsburgh Online Academy, Hajer participated as a research mentor at Pitt. Her assistance on a project to find a cheap, biodegrade alternative to plastic inspired her to pursue biomedical engineering at University of Pittsburgh to promote environmental conservation.

Chloe Blair
Over her four years at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Chloe is proud to have grown into a strongly educated and well-rounded individual. Through community service she has learned gratitude and leadership skills. At Duquesne University, Chloe is studying to become a dentist with goals of operating her own practice.

Glenn Fenton
As valedictorian at Pittsburgh Brashear, Glenn has been awarded a scholarship to attend University of Pittsburgh where he is studying physical therapy. Glenn’s biggest aspirations in life are to work hard and help others. During high school Glenn played soccer and served as a Promises Student Ambassador.

Seán de Riad
As a Challenge Program participant at Pittsburgh CAPA, Sean won an award for most community service hours. Sean also participated on the track and cross-country teams and as a Promises Student Ambassador. He is attending Temple University where he is pursuing a degree in public relations.

Valeria Sheva Yepes
Along with Global Minds, French Club, and Social Justice Club, Valeria participated in Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild Apprenticeship Training Program. She is most proud of her journey learning English during her years at Pittsburgh Allderdice. Valeria is attending University of Pittsburgh where she studies biomedical engineering.

El Anish
Bills a dedicated student having won many competitions and awards, including back-to-back District Individual Cross Country Championships. Building upon his athletic success at Pittsburgh Allderdice, El runs competitively for University of Pittsburgh where he is studying health sciences.

Janine Kirwa
Jane is studying biology at Duquesne University with aspirations of becoming an OB/GYN. This profession will allow her to fulfill her goal of caring for others and making a positive impact on society. As a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice Jane received an award for perfect attendance.

Julie Pasciuto
In addition to being valedictorian at Pittsburgh Brashear, Julie participated in Drama Club, school musicals, International Thespian Society, and was president of National Honor Society. Julie also worked as a Promises Student Ambassador. Julie is studying health care administration at Slippery Rock University.

Sachin Thaparjangar
Driven by a passion for learning and a desire to become a physician, Sachin is a pre-med major at University of Pittsburgh. He hopes to work with Doctors Without Borders and serve as a trauma surgeon in the U.S. Military.

Aayush Thomas
Aayush is pursuing a nursing degree at Chatham University. She plans to work as a travel nurse before training to be a nurse anesthetist. As a Global Leadership Council Member at Pittsburgh CAPA, she earned a scholarship to participate in an immersion program in Japan.

Misiah Bennett
Misiah is passionate about empowering others and ensuring everyone’s voice is heard. She helped create Student Council at Pittsburgh CAPA, and was elected Class President. At Temple University she studies political science. She aspires to become a lawyer to advocate for justice in our political systems.

Ning Nget
Motivated by helping others and the importance of culture, Ning volunteers with AMIDE working with refugee and immigrant youths. At Pittsburgh Carrick he was active in sports, National Honor Society, and International Thespian Society. Ning studies computer science at Duquesne University.

Amila Niksic
As valedictorian at Pittsburgh Obama, Amila was awarded a scholarship to attend University of Pittsburgh where she is studying biomedical engineering. Amila founded the Obama Academy Speaker Series, taught English at SOS Children’s Villages International, and was a research assistant at Pitt.

Isabella Scialli
Isabella strives to be a successful businesswoman full of confidence and motivation needed to succeed in her career. As a Pittsburgh Allderdice student she was a member of National Honor Society and participated in a Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraiser. She is majoring in business at La Roche College.

Steven Toukalides
Steven studies mechanical engineering at University of Pittsburgh and has dreams to design and manufacture aerospace technology. At Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy he participated in BotIQ Robotics competition, Ruth Leavy, and was president of National Honor Society.

Vera Ishchik
While attending Pittsburgh Allderdice, Eva was named Society of Women Engineers Student of the Year. Eva hopes to work for the WHO in public health. She is also enthusiastic about social justice and women’s rights. Eva studies bioengineering at University of Pittsburgh.

Dylan Bloom
As a vocal major at Pittsburgh CAPA, Dylan has been awarded numerous awards including American Mathematics competition winner, AP Scholar, and Outstanding Vocalist award. He was also a member of the Junior Mendelssohn Choir. Dylan studies statistics at Temple University.

Shakir Bowen
Shakir is a graduate of Pittsburgh Milliones where he achieved high honor roll. At Indiana University of Pennsylvania he majors in business and hopes to one day become a real estate agent. He enjoys acting, the arts, and entertainment technology. Shakir is active in volunteering at his church.

Corin Frison
Corin attends Indiana University of Pennsylvania and is studying business management and human resources. At Pittsburgh Brashear she was the treasurer of Future is Mine, a member of Black Student Union, Rock Climbing Club, National Honor Society, and African American History Bowl Team. Corin also worked as a Promise Student Ambassador.

Christos Marangopoulos
His passions for playing music, being active, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. He enjoys traveling to participate in music, cross-country, track, volleyball, and basketball while as a member of the Jr. Football team.

Eva Michter
As valedictorian at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Eva was named Society of Women Engineers Student of the Year. Eva hopes to work for the WHO in public health. She is also enthusiastic about social justice and women’s rights. Eva studies bioengineering at University of Pittsburgh.

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**2020 EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS**
**UPMC Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise**

Haajar Alshehail

Chloe Blair

Glenn Fenton

Seán de Riad

Valeria Sheva Yepes

El Anish

Janine Kirwa

Julie Pasciuto

Sachin Thaparjangar

Aayush Thomas

Misiah Bennett

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Amila Niksic

Isabella Scialli

Steven Toukalides

Vera Ishchik

Dylan Bloom

Shakir Bowen

Corin Frison

Christos Marangopoulos

Eva Michter

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**Highmark Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise**

Misiah Bennett

Ning Nget

Amila Niksic

Isabella Scialli

Steven Toukalides

Vera Ishchik

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**PNC Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise**

Eva Michter

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**BNY Mellon Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise**

Dylan Bloom

Shakir Bowen

Corin Frison

Christos Marangopoulos

Eva Michter

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**352 PROMISE SCHOLARS TO DATE HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AS EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS**

"THE EXECUTIVE SCHOLAR PROGRAM HELPED ME LEARN HOW TO CONDUCT MYSELF IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER. I’VE DEVELOPED NEW AND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO MAINTAIN A PROFESSIONAL MINDSET AND APPEARANCE THAT WILL BE BENEFICIAL IN MY FUTURE CAREER.

ANAIYA JONES, 2018 KEYBANK SCHOLAR"
Nicole Linkes - NICOLE LINKES '16

Alyssa Zito

A graduate of Pittsburgh Carrick, Frankie Tomsic was a member of National Honor Society, and Campus to Career Crossroads. Currently, Frankie attends Pittsburgh Technical College where he studies business, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He hopes to one day open his own business.

Alysa Zito

Alysa is a dedicated student who has received numerous honors and awards for her work in the STEM field, including top honors from PA Junior Academy of Science. She studies biomedical engineering at University of Pittsburgh. Alysa is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice.

Ericka Morton

Ericka Morton Dance has been a major part of Ericka’s life. Ericka graduated as a dance major from Pittsburgh CAPA where she participated in Student Council, National Honor Society for Dance Arts, and Black Student Union. She has taken her love of dance to a Slippery Rock University to study the art form.

Chloe Sherbon

At Pittsburgh Allderdice, Chloe was captain of the cross country and track and field teams. She was also a member of National Honor Society, Global Minds, and Students Against Destructive Decisions. Chloe studies psychology and criminal sciences at Penn State University and strives to support criminal justice reform.

Elijah Terry

Elijah is interested in studying how the universe works, particularly the makeup of planets and formation of minerals. These interests have led him to University of Pittsburgh where he studies astrophysics. At Pittsburgh Braxton, Elijah received Citizenship, President, and High Honor awards.

Amari Turner-Field

Among the top graduates of Pittsburgh Westinghouse, Amari was a vocal advocate for her school. She served as class secretary, participated in the PACT Program, and earned a semester’s worth of college credits by taking dual enrollment courses. Amari studies psychology at Duquesne University with plans to become a child and family psychologist.

Dominic Victoria

Dominic dreams of a career advocating for Pittsburgh residents. At Pittsburgh Obama, he participated in Youth and Government, the Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council, Obama Eagle newspaper, A+ School’s TeenBloc, and was a Promise Student Ambassador. He attends University of Pittsburgh where he studies politics and philosophy.

Jacob Vorther

Jacob aspires to earn a medical degree and have a fulfilling career aiding in the health of others. At Pittsburgh CAPA he was editor of the school newspaper, vice president of National Honor Society, and a member of Student Council. Jacob attends University of Pittsburgh where he major in biology.

Mara Cohen

Mara Cohen - MARA COHEN participated in Asian Student Union, Jewish Student Union, UPMC Teen Facilitator Program, and tennis. Driven by her experiences as a child, Mara aims to become an art therapist to help children express their feelings creatively. She studies art therapy at Temple University.

Zaki Mosel

With dreams of becoming a forensic scientist or pharmacologist, Zaki studies biochemistry at La Roche University. He enjoys physical fitness, music, and the sciences. At Pittsburgh Allegheny, Zaki participated in soccer, track and field, National Honor Society, Social Justice Club, and ski TV Productions.

Katelin Kostelnik

Katelin attends Slippery Rock University where she studies early childhood and special education. She values education and hopes to build a strong foundation for her students so that they may flourish.

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The world needs strivers, drivers, and doers.

LA ROCHE UNIVERSITY

The Pittsburgh Promise and La Roche University made an investment in me because they believed I was worth it. Because of The Promise, in addition to welcoming, encouraging and positive atmosphere of La Roche, I can proudly say that I am a college graduate.

- NICOLE LINKES '16

Engaging Minds. Embracing the World.
WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS PROGRAM? EMAIL:
executivescholars@pittsburghpromise.org.
TOGETHER, WE RISE.
Saint Vincent College attracts high-achieving students who place we ahead of me.

98% of recent alumni are employed or furthering their education
100% of freshmen receive scholarship aid
Up to $32,000 in renewable scholarships

Experience your city from a different view.

Walk to internships, jobs, community partnership opportunities and all that the city has to offer.
Conduct research alongside renowned faculty who are changing the world.

99% of freshmen receive financial assistance
80 undergraduate majors
14:1 student-faculty ratio
250+ student organizations

Duquesne University is pleased to be a Preferred College Partner of The Pittsburgh Promise.
Allegheny is doing the work that more schools should be doing: challenging students and holding them accountable to their potential.

— Hilary Osvald, Editor
问询 Those That Change Lives

At Cal U, it’s all about you. We believe in your abilities to rise up and achieve. And we give you the tools and teaching to actually do it.

DON’T SETTLE. BUILD YOU.

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What advice do you have for students who are preparing to enter the workforce?

Geraldine Jones  President California University of Pennsylvania

Our world has changed dramatically in a few short months, and those changes will continue to reverberate. Your job search may look a little different from what you planned, but your education and hands-on experience are still the keys to unlocking a bright future. Start with the basics: Work with your college’s career center to polish your resume and format it the basics: Work with your college’s career center to polish your resume and format it. Use the alumni networks at your institution (high school and university-level), contact friends of friends, be willing to put yourself out there humbly to ask people to share their insights and experiences, and ask them if they can put you in touch with others to do the same. You might be surprised what people are willing to share and what opportunities might eventually arise. Most people will be happy to share their stories and help those starting out, if they can. Do not fear changing paths at any time; you will learn and shift focus as you go. Even if it means changing careers and trying and failing, remember this is an evolving journey. Finally, when you do find your path, remember to look back and help others trying to get there in the way that people will have helped you.

Ken Gormley  President Duquesne University

The benefits of a university education extend far beyond the hard-earned degree. There are countless resources at students’ fingertips, available throughout their education and long after graduation. As early as their freshman year, students should begin to make good use of their universities’ career development resources. At Duquesne, for instance, our Center for Career Development offers extensive support and guidance, both in person and virtually. It ranges from lining up internships and job shadowing to career consultation, interview practice and creating direct lines to recruiters and hiring managers. Students quickly learn the importance of the trusted networks they’re developing – including academic advisors and professors who are eager to help them succeed, and who have many professional connections that can be leveraged. They also benefit greatly from volunteer experiences that foster networking opportunities — both on campus, and throughout the greater community. And they’ll be forever connected to one of the university’s most valued networks: university alumni, who remember what it’s like to look for that first job and want to help. I can’t tell you how many solid careers are built from alumni-student relationships. They should get comfortable with the notion that the job they have at twenty-two may be different than their career later in life — and that’s OK! By constantly rekindling the fires of their own curiosity, they will be prepared when the landscape shifts beneath them and they will also develop a stronger sense of their own passions.

Farnam Jahanian, Ph. D.  President Carnegie Mellon University

Today’s students are pursuing their ambitions at a pivotal time for humanity. The challenges we face as a global society as a result of COVID-19 are unprecedented, and when combined with accelerating advances in technology, the future seems to be constantly evolving. To prepare for this era of unrelenting change, I would encourage students to seek opportunities to develop the essential ‘human’ skills that will always be in demand, even as automation pervades our world — skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and collaboration. At CMU, we have embedded these competencies throughout our curriculum and have invested in interdisciplinary programs that better reflect society’s needs. I would also urge students to embrace lifelong learning and expand their horizons throughout their lives. This includes leveraging all opportunities that come their way, even if they are non-traditional pathways. They should get comfortable with the notion that the job they have at twenty-two may be different than their career later in life — and that’s OK! By constantly rekindling the fires of their own curiosity, they will be prepared when the landscape shifts beneath them and they will also develop a stronger sense of their own passions.

Follow your creative interests and your “gut” instincts as much as possible. Think about what environments make you happy and feel satisfying — solitary, collaborative, fast-paced, multi-task oriented, research-based, etc. — and then talk to anyone you can in that type of environment about their roles, their career paths, the first position they held. Use the alumni networks at your institution (high school and university-level), contact friends of friends, be willing to put yourself out there humbly to ask people to share their insights and experiences, and ask them if they can put you in touch with others to do the same. You might be surprised what people are willing to share and what opportunities might eventually arise. Most people will be happy to share their stories and help those starting out, if they can. Do not fear changing paths at any time; you will learn and shift focus as you go. Even if it means changing careers and trying and failing, remember this is an evolving journey. Finally, when you do find your path, remember to look back and help others trying to get there in the way that people will have helped you.

Next, reach out to potential employers. Check company websites for employment opportunities and post your resume to online jobs boards. At Cal U, for example, students can use the Handshake platform to connect with thousands of businesses, large and small. Share news of your job search widely — networking is still an effective way to get tips and job referrals, whether you’re searching in person or making contact remotely. Finally, remember that your first job won’t be your last. An opportunity that moves you one step closer to your “dream job” might be worth pursuing. Be brave. Be persistent. You can do this!

Dr. Calvin L. Troup  President Geneva College

Farnam Jahanian, Ph. D.  President Carnegie Mellon University

Here are three pieces of advice among many for students today to consider:

First, pursue studies that provide deep knowledge in an area that equips you for a variety of professional paths. For example, degrees in the sciences, business, liberal arts, medicine, etc., open a range of opportunities in the workplace. A good college education prepares people to adapt professionally in a world bound to change in ways over the course of one’s working life. Second, include internships in your plan of studies from the start. Internships help you understand the nature of the work and the culture of different workplaces firsthand, before you commit to a longer term of service. Third, always ask, "Whom would I serve with this degree?" Remember that service to other human beings is a prime motive for meaningful work. What are the places and people you would like to serve and what human needs will you be working to meet? A lifetime of rewarding work is most likely when your interests, passions, and service to others intersect.
Fit for the World program includes required development services that are integrated into program provides students with robust career or industry. Seton Hill University's nationally recognized Fit for the World career preparation opportunities and resume writing services are undergirded by the university's professional coursework and career preparation program, or a family, work or volunteer setting. Analyzing and describing how you accomplished this task strengthens your resume and preparation for a job interview.

• Identify mentors who can provide support as you do in order to build your competencies, and to set yourself apart from others in the same field, can be beneficial. In time, the money will follow.

Dr. Kathy B. Richardson  President Westminster College

The advice I would offer is similar to how I guide Westminster students:

• Seek opportunities to widen and deepen your technical skills and “soft skills” like communication, collaboration, critical thinking and “coachability.”

• Explore options to see how your specific set of skills aligns with various job opportunities.

• Engage in the career development opportunities provided through your school or volunteer organizations.

• Ask your school counselor about self-assessments that help you gain insight into your talents, gifts and abilities. Similarly, teachers or coaches can help identify your strengths.

• Document your achievements in and out of school, thinking about how you would describe a particular task you completed, in a school assignment, athletic team, leadership program, or a family, work or volunteer setting. Analyzing and describing how you accomplished this task strengthens your resume and preparation for a job interview.

• Identify mentors who can provide support as you begin your job search and as you take your initial job. Effective mentors can review your resume, help you improve your interview skills, and give you tips on being a successful employee.

• Offering your best during the first job prepares you to offer your best throughout your career and at your final job, too.

Mary C. Finger, Ed.D.  President Seton Hill University

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, students preparing to enter the workforce face enormous challenges as economic uncertainty has led to downsizing and hiring freezes at organizations large and small. In these times especially, it is important for students to build a network of contacts and mentors within a company or industry. Seton Hill University’s nationally recognized Fit for the World career preparation program provides students with robust career development services that are integrated into their classes starting in their freshman year. The Fit for the World program includes required internships or other experiential learning, career survey opportunities and resume writing workshops. Our Career Connections program connects Seton Hill alumni working in a variety of industries with current students to help answer questions and offer guidance. Seton Hill’s professional coursework and career preparation services are undergirded by the university’s liberal arts curriculum, which offers students the communication, critical thinking and leadership skills employers are seeking. As a result, 98 percent of bachelor’s degree recipients in the Seton Hill Class of 2029 were employed or enrolled in graduate school within six months of graduation while 100 percent of master’s degree recipients were employed. Seton Hill continues to support our students and recent alumni who are entering a changed workforce.
Your future looks promising, and Penn State can open doors. Take advantage of all we offer to help you achieve your potential.

- Twenty campuses and over 275 majors for undergraduates
- Tools for success: academic advising, career planning, internships, scholarships, and other funding options
- Leadership opportunities through a variety of student organizations
- Resources for multicultural students: educational services, guidance, support

Contact one of our campuses and take the first step toward fulfilling your promise.
The Pittsburgh Promise is on Instagram!

We share information that is helpful to students.

Please follow us @pittsburghpromise