

2022
2023

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THE PITTSBURGH PROMISE
MAGAZINE

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Educators of Color Program

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The Pittsburgh Promise is committed to
raising the required resources to fund
students through the high school graduating
class of 2028 (this year's 7th graders).

1ST WORD

At a recent meeting, one of our funders who is
also a friend asked me if I knew Kevin Williams.
I did not. She proceeded to talk about the great and
impactful work he is doing in vaccine research at the
University of Pittsburgh and insisted that I should
meet him.



I had coffee with Kevin recently, and within minutes I was so thankful for my
friend's nudge. Kevin graduated from Pittsburgh Science and Technology
Academy, a public 6th through 12th school, in 2015. He entered that school
in the seventh grade, when it first opened in 2009. He had a student teacher
by the name of Dr. Edwina Kinchington, affectionately known as "Dr. K."

It is awkward to describe Dr. K as a "student teacher" in 2009, because at
that time she had a PhD in Pharmacology and had already led in the worlds
of molecular genetics and biochemistry. However, after a remarkable career
as a scientist and cancer researcher, she decided to dedicate the rest of her
career to serving high school students in public schools. To do that, she had
to gain certification, and practice under a certified teacher, something she
eagerly and humbly did.

Over coffee, Kevin told me about the work he's doing at the Center for
Vaccine Research, work that I could not pretend to understand. What I
clearly understood, however, was his love for science and his commitment
to improving the lives of others through his findings. I asked from where
this passion came. Without pausing, he said "Dr. K."

One hour later, I received a text with this photo
of him and Dr. K. (right). The other two are his
classmates, fellow 2009 graduates, and emerging
scientists who were under the tutelage of Dr. K.



Tionna James is a Respiratory Therapist at UPMC,
and Matt Moore is a Medical Staff Credentialing
Specialist at Boston Children's Hospital. They were
back at their high school recently to inspire and
encourage their younger peers.

There is a spark inside each and every one of our children. Blessed are those
who know this, are tireless in finding and fueling that spark, and then letting
its light shine for others to see ... and heal. ■

Sincerely,

Saleem Ghubril Executive Director | The Pittsburgh Promise



1

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



BUILDING COMMUNITY
PYL
PITTSBURGH YOUTH LEADERSHIP



Pittsburgh Youth Leadership (PYL) is a non-profit organization established in 2006.

Since its founding, PYL has been taking inner-city, low-income, at-risk youth on all expenses paid biking adventures across America's most breathtaking roads. In eight years, all participants have prevailed, and accomplished the seemingly impossible, showing them that they can do anything they set their mind to.

PYL has biked over 250,000 miles in shine or snow through 49 different states and provinces and continues to inspire the children of Pittsburgh to defy the odds. PYL seeks to promote positive leadership skills, develop outdoor adventurous spirit, and provide opportunity to accomplish ambitious goals, leading to the fulfillment of our participants' limitless potential. ■

Why did you choose PYL to do your volunteer work?

I chose to participate in Pittsburgh Youth Leadership to have another outlet for cross-training for cross country and because it was a new opportunity to explore my interests and challenge myself. My friends were also joining with me.

How has volunteering at PYL impacted your life?

Through participating in this program, I have created lifelong memories and been able to bond better with my friends and meet new people. It's allowed me to connect with adults who want the best for me, too! Through this supportive environment, I've been able to temporarily leave my world and enter one where biking is the focus. These experiences have all allowed me to appreciate my life more and continue getting after it. I've also become a better leader and team player.

Can you tell us a little bit about PYL and what you do there?

Pittsburgh Youth Leadership is meant to serve underserved, inner-city youth within Pittsburgh. Through this organization, we bike together, whether it be in races, joy rides, or to different states. I've personally biked with them in races, on joy rides, from Pittsburgh to Boston, and from Pittsburgh to Ohio.

What skills have you learned through volunteering do you think will be beneficial to your college career and life in general?

Through biking with this program, I've developed my hard-working, tenacious mindset while having the confidence to succeed. This is in part due to the confidence instilled from biking the many miles with this organization. Even when I didn't initially love the long bike rides, the perseverance gave me the confidence to succeed at things that I wasn't necessarily passionate about. This will be applicable toward ensuring I make the most of my college career as I will have the necessary traits to succeed. In my own life, I will be able to apply these traits to battle against difficult times and overcome adversity that is thrown at me.

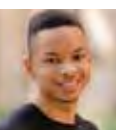
LEARN
MORE

Get Involved!

Find out more about Pittsburgh Youth Leadership at

www.pittsburghyouthleadership.org

Sean Russell is a Pittsburgh Westinghouse Academy 6-12 grad and former Promise Ambassador. He heads to Stanford University in the fall to study Bioengineering.





CHANGE

Throughout my life, I have always had a plan. I applied to numerous scholarships and programs within Western Pennsylvania and after being accepted to my top choice, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, I was able to attend completely for free, which was a huge bonus. Because of The Pittsburgh Promise, I was able to attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania completely for free, which was a huge bonus.

Everything throughout my college career was going according to plan, I was on track to graduate and receive my teaching certification. I thought it was smooth sailing until March 13, 2020, which was the day the world shut down; a day I think most of us will never forget. We were in a nationwide state of emergency. This was not part of my plan!

I remember saying “bye” to my college friends as they left for spring break. I had to stay at school to continue student teaching. On Friday, March 13 (Friday the 13th of all days!), we received communication that schools would be shutting down until further notice. I had to say goodbye to my students without any explanation as to what was happening and why they had to take everything with them. That was one of the most heartbreaking experiences I have ever had.

I had so many questions running through my head like, “What was happening?”, “Will I be able to finish student teaching?”, “Will I be able to graduate?”. There were so many questions but no definite answers. This is not what I had planned out for my senior year.

I went home with the hopes that we would be back in a few weeks. Little did I know I would be creating worksheets for my students fifty miles away at home and packing up my dorm on the last day of school. I never got the opportunity to walk across the stage and receive my diploma, so it did not even feel like I graduated.

My senior year was cut way too short, and I was thrown into the real world; I had to find a job. I had looked forward to attending job fairs, but since we were in a pandemic, everything was shut down. There were times that I sat at my computer all day long checking every school district website looking for positions and applying, and sometimes I truly felt defeated. August rolled around and I accepted the fact that I would not be teaching that year. I was devastated.

OF PLANS



Flash forward to a few weeks later in August, I received a phone call asking me to interview the next day for a middle school special education position. Middle school special education was not in my plan. I had always wanted to be an elementary school teacher. I remember my mom suggesting that I apply to the special education positions, but I always told her I did not think I would be a good fit. Little did I know, I would fall in love with it.

Even though I was fortunate to end up loving the job, college had not prepared me for teaching during such unprecedented times, and then segue to the difficulties of hybrid schooling. I had to learn how to teach students virtually on the computer from my apartment. Initially, I found it difficult teaching half of my students virtually while the other half was in front of me in the classroom. It was also extremely hard learning how to teach effectively without being able to show any facial expressions since we were all required to wear masks.

Everything that happened was not what I had planned, but that was the beauty of it. Everything ended up falling into place in the end.

The biggest lesson I learned is that there are times when you can plan out everything and follow it, and there are times when everything that is meant to be will fall in place. You just have to take the risk and give it a chance for things to come together. ■

Anita Morrison is an alumna of Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12. In 2020, she earned her undergraduate degree in education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She is currently working for Pittsburgh Public Schools at Sterrett Classical Academy and is earning her master's degree in curriculum and instruction at Carlow University.





When you picture a scientist, you may imagine a chemist in a lab coat and protective goggles mixing vials of solutions to create a big reaction. While lab coats can be part of the job, a career in science is so much more.

At PPG, scientists like me are pushing the boundaries of what is possible with paints and coatings. I work with a team to create digital tools that help customers select paint and coatings colors for anything from the walls of homes, offices, and hotels to cars and airplanes. Imagine choosing a paint color for the walls of your bedroom by viewing digital color swatches on your cell phone – it’s possible because of chemists!

I am responsible for the processes and equipment used to create a digital replication of physical paint.

This process starts with careful measurements of the coating, and advanced software programs are then used to create a digital swatch from these measurements.

You may be wondering how digital technology relates to chemistry. My background in chemistry has been so important to having a good understanding of color and light physics, which I use on the job daily. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that just about everything can be done virtually and choosing paint colors is no exception. The truth is that a career path in a science field can lead to a range of possibilities and requires an open mind.

There are a few misconceptions about a career in a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM, field. First, it’s often believed that scientists work alone. Scientific discovery in today’s world simply cannot be done solo. Every day, I put interpersonal skills to use by hosting customers in our laboratories and collaborating with PPG teams around the world. It’s highly important that scientists are good listeners. Through teamwork, we help to find creative, resourceful solutions.

If you don’t count chemistry or science amongst your favorite school subjects, don’t count yourself out on a STEM career. You may be surprised to learn how much reading, writing, and research is involved in STEM.

Creativity also plays a major factor. I always enjoyed arts and crafts. Now, I bring my personal interests and passion into the lab. Working with color, I get to see every day how my work sparks emotional reactions and creates human connections.

If physics, computer programing, or other technology areas are of interest to you, a chemistry career offers a range of opportunities to formulate new technology and innovations.

The work that takes place in PPG labs helps to create inventions that improve how society works and lives. If you’re looking for a future career that helps create new possibilities and progress, a STEM career may be for you. ■

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PPG is a global innovator in paints, coatings, and specialty materials. The PPG Foundation has partnered with The Pittsburgh Promise to create scholarships for post-secondary access to education that will help fuel a prepared, diverse regional workforce.

Learn more at ppg.com.

Rachel Harris, Ph. D. is a Research Associate II at PPG. She earned her BS in Chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh in 2012. She was awarded the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship



to pursue her graduate studies and earned her PhD in Chemistry from Northwestern University in 2017. She began her career at PPG that same year in the Substrate Protection group as a formulator for metal surface treatments. In 2019, Rachel moved to PPG’s Optical Physics group, where she is currently leading projects in digital color rendering and coatings measurement. She has been recognized by the Manufacturing Institute as a 2021 STEP Ahead Emerging Leader.

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Questions for Our Perry Coaches

C O A C H E S C O R N E R

perrycoaches@pittsburghpromise.org

the pittsburgh promise

Perry Promise Coaches answer questions about the challenges of last year and the year ahead!

Schazz Lee



Paul Johnson



1

What was the best part of in-person Coaching in 2021?

The best part of coaching in 2021 was being fully in-person. We were able to finally get acclimated and integrated into the school community which was truly awesome! Most of all, we were able to work with and connect with our students in-person!

2

What challenges did you face in your first year of in-person Coaching? How did you overcome these challenges?

One of the biggest challenges we faced was adjusting to the school schedule and culture. We had to learn how the school, students, and staff functioned which took time. By the end of the year, we found our lane and had a great finish. We did this by continuing to show up and immersing ourselves into the school culture daily. We participated in events, went on school trips, and even sat in on meetings. By the beginning of the second semester, we really understood our school's culture and community. Another challenge we faced was figuring out how to navigate in-person during the pandemic. With the pandemic not being over, we had to learn and adopt the best practices necessary to keep the students and ourselves safe. We overcame this by practicing social distancing, and we required masks in our office for a great portion of the year. Even when the mask mandate was lifted, we still made sure that we wore our masks and frequently cleaned our area.

3

What are you looking forward to most for Fall 2022? What plans do you have in place for Perry students in the Fall?

We are most looking forward to being back with our kids. We have begun to develop great relationships with our students and the school's staff, and we are excited to see them grow! We have a number of college trips to Promise Preferred College Partner schools and trade schools. Also, we have several guest speakers coming this Fall. We are really looking forward to it! ■



SINGLE PARENTS SUCCEED AT COLLEGE

Did you know that more than one in five college students are parents? And of those, almost 55% are single parents!

Getting to class on time, studying for tests, completing group projects, and working on a paper can be challenging for many students. Imagine doing all that plus feeding your daughter, getting her ready for school before your language lab, then doing her homework with her when she gets home?

The good news is that more and more colleges recognize the needs of these student parents and are putting in place the resources and support to help parents balance their family and academic lives.

Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pa., was one of the first colleges in the country to offer family housing and support to single parents and their children.

In 1996 the college created its Single Parent Scholar (SPS) program. In over two decades since then, the college has learned what single parents need to succeed and is sharing its experiences with colleges across the country.

From the beginning, Wilson's SPS program provided comfortable on-campus housing and access to daycare for children. But it soon learned that relatively simple additions could make a big difference to student parents. Access to laundry facilities in the residence building, allowing children to eat in the dining hall, and creating safe spaces and playgrounds for the children help families succeed on campus.

Also, it is important to create a supportive environment where parents and children can participate in campus life and feel a part of the learning community. Student parents are great mentors for each other and creating support groups where new parents learn from parents already a year or two into the program is an excellent way to ease the transition into college. Parent mentors can help new families navigate everything from where to shop locally to finding the academic resources they need. They can even help them make friends within the community.

As other colleges offer services to single parents and their children, they can learn from the success Wilson College's SPS program has had, serving over 190 student parents and their children to date. ■

LEARN
MORE

WILSON COLLEGE SINGLE PARENT SCHOLAR PROGRAM

LIVING ON CAMPUS

- Each family gets a two-room suite with a private bathroom
- Families on each floor share a kitchen, playroom, and computer room
- Laundry facilities are free
- Families can remain in their rooms throughout the summer regardless of whether they are taking summer courses

CHILDREN

- Up to two children can live with a parent on campus
- School-age children can attend daycare and before- and after-school programs locally at no cost to their parent
- Children eat for free in the dining hall during the academic year

STUDENT PARENTS

- Parents can be of any age but must be enrolled full-time
- Affordable tuition rates are the same as those for students without children
- 100% of SPS parents receive financial aid



Wesley R. Fugate, PhD,
is the President of Wilson College.

Board Selects Within – Appoints Dr. Wayne N. Walters Permanent Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools

A loud round of applause filled the administrative building during a press conference held by the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education on July 21st to announce Dr. Wayne N. Walters as the final candidate for permanent Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS).

It was a day the District and PPS families had been preparing for since October. The Board unanimously approved Dr. Walters' five-year employment contract as permanent Superintendent for Pittsburgh Public Schools at its July 27th legislative meeting.

Board President Sala Udin said during the legislative meeting, "The Board has complete confidence in Dr. Walters. His reputation among teachers, administrators, students, and parents over his three decades in the District speaks volumes."

Throughout his service in PPS as a Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of 6-12 Schools, Assistant Superintendent of Professional Development and Special Programming, and, most recently, since October 2021, Interim Superintendent, Dr. Walters has developed many meaningful relationships. Those relationships are apparent as over 1,000 congratulatory messages poured in after the announcement of Dr. Walters' selection was shared on social media.

Dr. Walters has said of the response, "As someone who has invested their career and livelihood into a city, it is beautiful to receive it back in such a profound way. I am genuinely humbled and grateful to the community for embracing me positively, which will only support the work that must take place to ensure that all students receive the high-quality educational experience they deserve."

The Board views Dr. Walters' appointment as permanent Superintendent as a "reset period" with an opportunity for recommitment to public education in Pittsburgh.

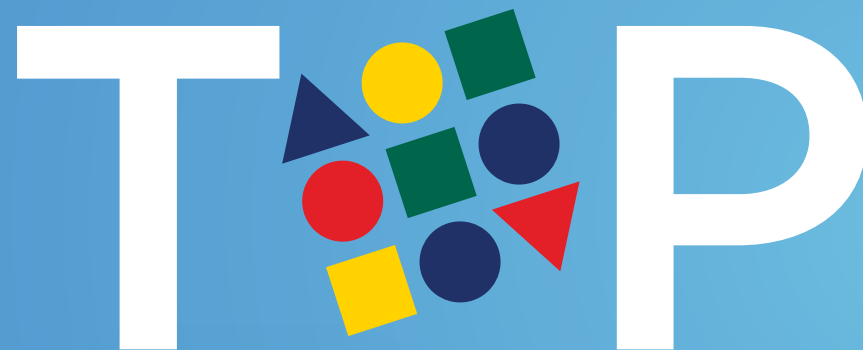
As part of this reset, the community can expect numerous changes—particularly to enhance communications with stakeholders, rebuild confidence in the District, and continue efforts that let students' voices be heard.

The Board and Dr. Walters will collaborate in developing goals and a strategic plan for the District. In addition, Dr. Walters will continue developing relationships and new partnerships, including those established with the Mayor's office, City Council, surrounding universities, community-based groups, the philanthropic community, and The Pittsburgh Promise, to garner support for advancing the District's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

"I remain unapologetically student-centered, committed, and passionate about our students, teachers, staff, and families of Pittsburgh Public Schools," said Dr. Walters. "I know firsthand the many challenges the District faces, but I believe competence, confidence, and collaboration go a long way in creating quality, equitable, well-rounded experiences and spaces of learning and joy for our students. I am genuinely excited about the tremendous opportunities ahead."

The five-year term for Superintendent Dr. Wayne Walters began August 1, 2022, and runs through July 31, 2027. ■

From Teacher to the





A Promising Future

Ngoc Ngo enrolled at Seton Hill University after graduating from Pittsburgh CAPA in 2019 to help her reach her goal of becoming an optometrist. Seton Hill's cooperative degree program with Salus University College of Optometry is allowing Ngoc to earn her biology degree and her Doctor of Optometry degree in seven years - instead of the traditional eight. After three years at Seton Hill, she is now enrolled at Salus to complete the program. "Seton Hill was like a second home to me," she said. "I was able to build really good connections with the faculty and my fellow students. The Pittsburgh Promise helped me a lot with financial aid, which allowed me to focus on my academic goals."



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Advancing

Educators of Color Program

BLACK EDUCATORS ARE CRITICALLY NEEDED

The Advancing Educators of Color (AEC) program is designed for Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) students who are eligible for The Promise scholarship, plan to pursue a teacher education program, and wish to become a K-12 teacher within PPS after graduation. AEC is a cohort model experience where students receive support and shared resources throughout their participation in the program while graduating debt-free. Over the next 7 years, 35 students will be selected as AEC scholars and will commit to working within the Pittsburgh Public Schools for at least five years following graduation.

The AEC program provides an additional final-dollar college scholarship after The Promise scholarship (of up to \$5,000 annually) is applied. AEC scholars receive a stipend for attending a summer program at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education before their freshman year of college. They also receive professional development and a chance to connect with peers and professionals who are passionate about education and understand the impact that diversifying the district's teaching staff will have on our community.

"The importance of Black educators cannot be overstated," said Dr. Valerie Kinloch, Professor and Renée and Richard Goldman Endowed Dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Education. "Research shows that Black teachers are undeniably successful at improving the overall well-being and academic and nonacademic engagements of Black children and youth, which increases high school graduation rates and the likelihood of college attendance. However, statewide, Black educators comprise less than 4% of the teacher population in K-12 public and charter schools. By undertaking new efforts to recruit, retain, and support Black educators, we will be able to ignite learning, transform education, and uncover the genius, joy, and love that already exist within all of our students."

Studies show that Black students who have had at least one Black teacher in elementary school have significantly increased high school graduation rates and increased post-secondary interest. A 2017 study by the IZA Institute of Labor Economics, points out that low-income Black boys' risk of dropping out of high school decreases by nearly 40% due to having a black teacher. The Advancing Educators of Color program is one of the ways The Promise will continue to promote high educational aspirations among urban youth. ■

Black educators are critically needed. It is well-documented that the presence of Black teachers in the education of Black students has transformative impacts on students' vision for their futures as well as academic outcomes. These include higher educational attainment, lower dropout rates, and reduced disciplinary actions. Unfortunately, many students move through their K-12 education without being taught by a Black educator. This scholarship, in partnership with the University of Pittsburgh educators' academy and Pittsburgh Public Schools, will eliminate financial burdens and provide mentorship, networking, and professional development to students that are dedicated to the profession of education.

Janay Coleman is the Strategic Initiatives Workforce Manager at The Pittsburgh Promise. For more information about the AEC program, contact janay@pittsburghpromise.org.



This past summer, The Pittsburgh Promise hosted its inaugural AEC Amp Camp, a week-long series of workshops and activities to help AEC scholars prepare for the first year of college while amplifying the voices and experiences of our future educators of color. Students participated in college prep workshops, volunteered at Pittsburgh Miller, an African Centered Academy, and held small group discussions about the education system.

“Research shows that Black teachers are undeniably successful at improving the overall well-being and academic and nonacademic engagements of Black children and youth, which increases high school graduation rates and the likelihood of college attendance.”

-Dr. Valerie Kinloch

STUDIES SHOW THAT BLACK STUDENTS WHO HAVE HAD **AT LEAST ONE BLACK TEACHER** IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HAVE **SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES AND INCREASED POST-SECONDARY INTEREST.**



Vaughn Bryant is a Pittsburgh Sci-Tech graduate, attending Washington & Jefferson College, and majoring in mathematics.

“My biggest drive is to become a positive Black role model for young men and women. I can not only strengthen the minds of our next generation, but also guide them to success no matter what path they take after high school. This program will take away a lot of stress and allow me to focus on growing as an educator.”



Tainyah Kidd, is a Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, attending Penn State University - Greater Allegheny, and majoring in secondary education and English.

“After my mom passed, I began looking after my siblings. This helped me figure out what I wanted to do because it is good to have older people look out for you. This program will give me the opportunity to experience more than I’ve ever seen while learning important things to change the next generation.”



Emmanuel Myers is a Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, attending Waynesburg University, and majoring in mathematics.

“I believe that the relationships we build with students are important. The relationships I have had with my teachers are what helped me in some of the toughest times. This program will allow me to stay focused on my schoolwork by providing me with the funding I need and help me give back to the community that gave so much to me.”

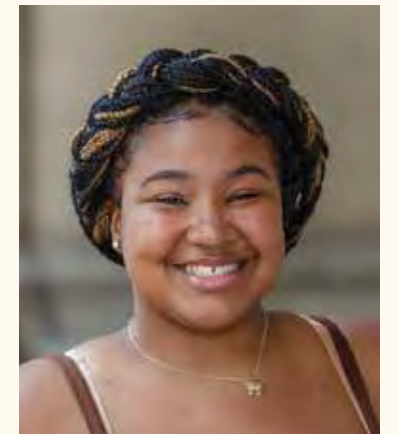
Maysam Suhail is a Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, attending Duquesne University, and majoring in biology.

“After immigrating to the U.S., I noticed a large gap in representation. I would love to help my students learn from someone who looks like them. My primary goal is to help provide diversity in the teaching field. This program will give me the opportunity to help students learn new cultures and see things differently.”



Taliah Baldwin is a Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, attending University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg and majoring in education.

“Black teachers are extremely influential to Black students. I hardly had any teachers who looked like me. This program will give me the opportunity to give students the love and support I was given.”



Bailee Preston is a Pittsburgh CAPA graduate, attending University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg, and majoring in early childhood education.

“Working with small children has been a skill I didn’t realize I have until recently. I feel like it is important to provide a safe space for students, which is why I feel like I should be a teacher. I’ve also had several great teachers show me what it means to be perseverant and dedicated to teaching which was very inspiring. This program will allow me to add representation to education in PPS. During my time in school, I haven’t had many black teachers, but this will allow me to show students a Black teacher that is supportive and encouraging.”



Turkano Mada is a Pittsburgh Perry graduate, attending CCAC, and majoring in early childhood education.

“Working with kids for over four years has inspired me. I like seeing them develop and it inspires me to become a teacher. I have never seen someone who looks like me in the classroom. This program will give me the opportunity to help bring representation into the classroom that I lacked.”



Let's Talk About It

Overcoming the Stigma of Mental Health

I think that effective communication is the only way we're going to overcome the challenges and stigma surrounding mental health and the issues that come with it. Let's talk about it.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), "Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood." One of the ways they suggest dealing with this in a healthy way is by making strong connections and strengthening relationships. Since its founding, the Artist Talk workshop series has given a platform to dozens of artists, welcomed over 200 guests, and connected at least 5 of our neighbors with therapists and mental health support.

Art is an expression of our deeper selves, our lives, and our experiences. Art offers a way for us to connect through common themes and normalizes the fact that we all go through different phases of life. Creators need a place to connect on a deeper

level with others who share the same lifestyle and experiences they do, and that's the inspiration behind Artist Talk.

Artist Talk was birthed because of the impacts that the pandemic had on artists. Within my community there was a great need for counseling and therapeutic support and when I began to look for them, I was disappointed by the lack of their availability. I didn't have health insurance and neither did a lot of my artist friends. We couldn't afford to pay an hourly rate for a therapist and the only other option was to be placed on an 18-month waiting list. I immediately started thinking of a way to fill in this gap and to create a support system. It was important for me to do this to help myself, my friends, and other artists in the Pittsburgh community.

During the events we encourage engagement and the power of sharing your story. Through professionally guided conversations we have created a safe space to be vulnerable and authentic in an environment of fellowship.

Understanding the need for inclusivity, artists of all backgrounds are invited to join this movement. So far 7 LGBTQ artists, 22 black artists, 3 white artists, and 1 autistic artist have contributed to the group's efforts. ■

Sydney Davis is a native of the city of Pittsburgh, graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, entrepreneur, owner of Niplids LLC, and founder of Artist Talk.



July 2022 Event
Cue Perry, Featured Artist
Adam Michaels Photography



March 2022 Event
Sydney Davis, Xavier Thomas, and guests
Adam Michaels Photography

LEARN MORE

More information about Artist Talk events and resources can be found at artisttalkmentalhealth.com

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- Farnam Jahanian
President, Carnegie Mellon University

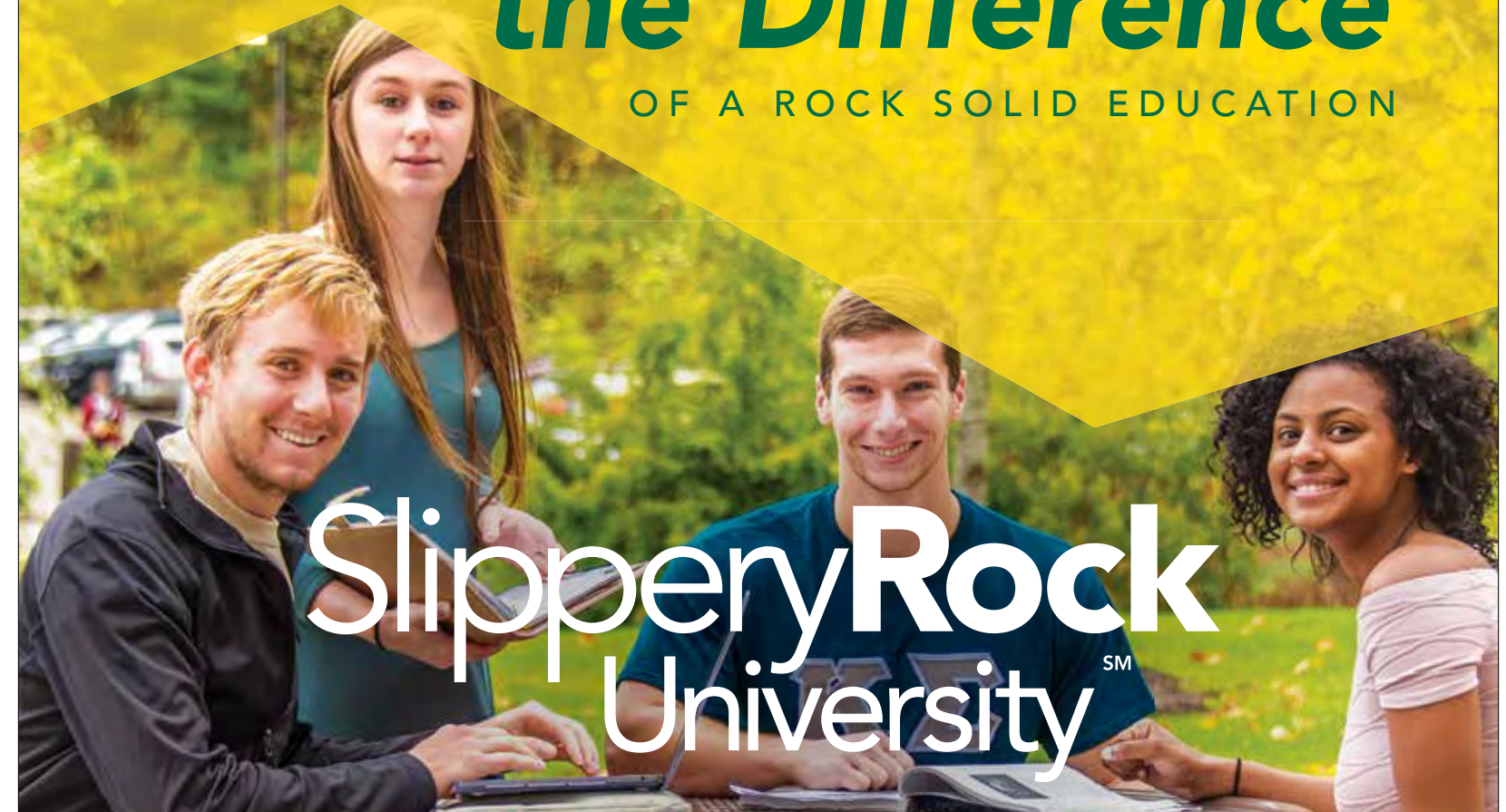
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Standing Up To Stress

As you race toward graduation and college, does your heartbeat seem to keep speeding up? That feeling, and a lot of others you might wish would just go away, reflect your natural responses to stress. Take a look at what's happening beneath the surface, why it's not all bad, and how you can make it work for you.

Words by George Heidekat • Illustration by David Pohl



You already know some things that stress can do: Wreck your concentration. Swamp you with sadness. Shorten your temper. Even make your face break out. But what is it, exactly? And why does it happen?

Take comfort: Emotional stress, and the mechanism behind those side effects, is standard equipment. Not just for you and your friends, but for every living thing, from an amoeba on up. It starts with the fight-or-flight response—nature's way of automatically kicking our bodies into survival mode when we feel threatened.

"It's an adaptation," says Dana Rofey, PhD. She's a psychologist with the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. "Back in prehistory, if a bear jumped out at you, you had an instant to run or defend yourself."

Your life would depend on lightning-fast hormonal changes, triggered in your brain and flashing through your body. Your blood pressure and heart rate would climb. Extra blood would turbocharge your muscles for strength and speed. Sugars and fats, stockpiled for just such an occasion, would fuel a burst of energy. Momentarily, you'd be a superhero.

Then the show would be over. Your body (if still in one piece) would settle down to a quieter, hunting-and-gathering pace. Stressful situation resolved.

Fast-forward a couple of million years. This morning, anxiety about ACTs or homework, or that blowup-with-a-significant-other may be stirring your conscious mind. But, deep inside, your brain is still designed for the Pleistocene. Your Stressful Situation dial is still set to "BEAR!" So your body goes to battle stations, with no chance for physical action to release the tension. You're stuck in a stressed-out state that can linger a lot longer than is good for you.

You're not alone. According to a recent survey by the American Psychological Association, U.S. teens report chronic stress that penetrates every aspect of their lives. More than one in four say they feel extremely stressed during the school year. Many blame stress for angry, nervous, overwhelmed, or depressed feelings.

Fortunately, while stress can be hard to avoid, you can stand up to it, says Jonathan Pletcher, MD, who's the director of the Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine Division. "Understand that it's neither good nor bad in itself. Some kids tell me, 'I like it, I perform best when I'm stressed.'"

Dr. Rofey concurs. "Stress can drive some of us to do what we need to do in a short time, or excel under pressure."

But beware of stress overload. Monitor your levels, like a driver keeping one eye on the dashboard, Dr. Pletcher suggests. Learn to tell when

positive, exciting stress (the kind that energizes you for a game, an exam, or a social situation) crosses the line into toxic, overwhelming distress.

"Trust your feelings," Dr. Rofey says. "There's a sort of peak beyond which it doesn't feel so nice. When distress gets impairing or unmanageable, that's a warning."

Preventive tactics like regular exercise, a good night's sleep, and occasional timeouts to relax or socialize—away from your computer—can help keep stress from piling up and disrupting your life. But watch for overload signals like:

- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Increased moodiness or irritability
- Difficulty sleeping
- Sadness or depression
- Urges to drink, smoke, overeat, or do drugs

More than one in four teens say they feel extremely stressed during the school year. Many blame stress for angry, nervous, overwhelmed, or depressed feelings.

When overload threatens, "Ask for help," says Dr. Rofey. "If you feel you're tipping over into distress, you don't have to handle it yourself. Talk to your pediatrician or primary care provider, guidance counselor or school psychologist, the school nurse, or a supportive teacher."

"I'd add athletic coaches," says Dr. Pletcher, "and, certainly, parents, uncles, and aunts. Go to someone who really gets you, who's concerned about your success—one of your adult allies who knows what you're going through. Together you can think of ways to handle the situation."

Many overstressed teens find that talk therapy—a process of guided self-discovery—can help them overcome difficulties, develop inner strengths or skills, or fine-tune themselves or their circumstances, Dr. Rofey says.

"Sometimes a teen comes to see me and says, 'I'm never going to get better.' Actually, our data show the opposite," says Dr. Pletcher. "Stress symptoms such as anxiety are some of the most treatable disturbances a teen can have."

"Stress is an everyday part of life. Learning to deal with it is a lifelong process. And there's no better time than right now to start sharpening those skills." ■

Reprint from 2015 Spring Ideapod

STRESS STRATEGIES

Talking Can Be a Relief

Feeling stressed? Collect your thoughts in a journal or listen to music. Exercise can be a big help as well, even just a short walk to clear your mind. Talking things over with friends, a therapist, or parents can be a relief, too.

A Break From Electronics

Take a purposeful break. Getting away from your desk may make you more productive. A timeout from electronics—cellphones, laptops, social media—can also be helpful when you're stressed, because your mind is in so many places at once. And of course scheduling regular sleep time can definitely help.

Let People Help You

Try thinking systematically about the things on your plate. This may enable you to tackle them in a more regimented manner. Also, let people help you! Find a sympathetic ear. Say out loud the things that are stuck in your head. Sometimes this makes you realize how silly they can be. You may think it's your battle to fight on your own, but you really don't have to handle it all by yourself.

Pathways to College for Student Athletes



Upon graduation from high school, many 18-year-olds ponder the age-old question “What do I want to do after high school?” If they are not thinking it on their own, someone else is asking them. Between 60-70% of students have an answer for how they will spend the next few years: in college. This path is not for everyone, but what if there was greater continuity between high school and college?

The Pittsburgh Promise creates a pathway for many students to go on to pursue their education beyond 12th grade. We know that attendance and grades matter. But what about sports? Nearly 60% of students across the country participate in at least one sport while in high school. But only 7% of student athletes continue playing their favorite sport in college.

This got me wondering: what happens to the other 93% of high school student athletes? Sure, some of them are ready to call it quits on their athletic career and

hit the books. Others head straight into the workforce and might play a pickup game here or there. But there’s got to be a lot more than just 7% of them who want to continue to play sports at a high level and are unable to.

Why?

Because most athletes don’t just like their sport. They love it. And they learn a lot more than proper shooting technique and game strategy. Student athletes learn about teamwork, communication, goal setting, and respect. They learn about time management and how to balance many things like practice, games, homework, and sometimes a part-time job. If the coach is doing their job, student athletes also gain a sense of self-worth and belonging on their team. They build community. So, why does all this have to end after high school?

For many, there is simply no pathway to collegiate sports. Without a significant financial investment, there are few accessible and affordable platforms to get a “look” from a college coach. No college showcases. No highlight reels. No opportunities to show their skills. No looks, in a lot of cases, means no books. Without an opportunity to play sports, some choose not to go to college.

Community college presents a pathway to higher education for many young people, especially first-generation college students. Getting accepted is one thing; staying enrolled often proves more difficult. Only 60% of community college students return after their first year. This means nearly one in two drop out.

Sports present an opportunity to change these statistics. Team sports provide a level of accountability and community, often missing from 2-year colleges, which is essential for the success of any student. Student athletes can combine their passion for sport with an associate degree to achieve success in their sport, in the classroom, and in their future. ■

ABOUT OPEN FIELD:

Open Field is a global sport-based youth development organization that engages more than 500 Allegheny County youths from marginalized, immigrant, and refugee communities in Soccer + Life Skills programs through the game of soccer. In 2022, they partnered with CCAC to start a men’s club soccer team. Learn more www.openfieldintl.org/college

JUSTIN FORZANO,
Founder & CEO of Open Field







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The Pittsburgh Promise Preferred College Partners

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- NICOLE LINKES '16



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Preferred College Partners

The Promise has thirty-seven Preferred College Partners (PCPs).

PCP's provide grants for room and board to Promise-eligible students who are accepted to the institution.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT pittsburghpromise.org/the-scholarship/about/preferred-partners

Preferred College Partners

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 2022:

Allegheny College
Cabrini University
Carlow University
Carnegie Mellon University
Chatham University
Cheyney University
Duquesne University
Geneva College
Grove City College
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Juniata College
Kutztown University
La Roche University
Lincoln University
Mansfield University
Mercyhurst University
Mount Aloysius College
Penn State (Beaver, Greater Allegheny, Hazleton, Mont Alto, and Schuylkill campuses)

PennWest University (California, Clarion, and Edinboro 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
Wilson College

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 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 (Pheaa.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.

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30
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ratio

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SCHOLARSHIPS
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of students receive
financial aid

Wilson College is proud to be a preferred partner of The Pittsburgh Promise.

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The Pittsburgh Promise

Executive Scholars

WE ARE PROUD TO INTRODUCE
OUR 2022 CLASS OF
EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS.

THE EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS PROGRAM BUILDS 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 2022 Executive Scholar Class. Congratulations!

UPMC Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Robert Gilbert Throughout his time at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Robbie was a member of the baseball team and club. He also takes pride in volunteering to help clean up his neighborhood. Continuing his passion for baseball, Robbie is playing baseball at Clarion University where he studies human resource management.



Lexie Kennally Over the four years Lexie spent at Pittsburgh SciTech, she was a member of the National Honor Society, senior class council, Stand Together, THIRST project, and the feminine student union. She also enjoyed volunteering for the American Red Cross in her free time. Lexie is attending the University of Pittsburgh, with the hopes of landing a career that helps people.



Isaiah McCrommon Isaiah is a proud graduate of Pittsburgh Carrick who shined as a student. He participated in the health careers technology program, sparking his passion for working in the healthcare field. In pursuit of his passion, Isaiah is studying nursing and radiology at CCAC with the goal of becoming a radiology technician.



Anyssa Oden Anyssa is passionate about becoming a leader in the Black community by promoting change and advocacy. Her dedicated involvement at the UPMC Hillman Academy and the Pitt Gene Team while at Pittsburgh SciTech fueled her desire to enter the medical field. Anyssa is a student at Carnegie Mellon University studying biomedical engineering.



Kaitlyn Pellegrino Kaitlyn dreams of using her love for fitness to help others overcome obstacles in their life and become their best selves. At Pittsburgh Obama, she was captain of the soccer team and devoted time to volunteering at Pivot Physical Therapy. Kaitlyn is proud to have been accepted into Gannon University's accelerated Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

Highmark Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



José Andres Aiello Andres has a passion for business and aspires to own stores selling his own fashion designs. During high school, he volunteered as a basketball coach for the Jewish Community center and Friendship Circle Pittsburgh. Andres is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice pursuing a business degree from Clarion University.



Fatemeh Al-Nagash Fatemeh was an active student at Pittsburgh Brashear. She enjoyed dedicating time to the STEAM program, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Breakthrough Pittsburgh. Her passions include art and the emotions it provokes in people. Fatemeh is attending the University of Pittsburgh where she studies biology.



Holden Eagle During his time at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Holden became impassioned about sports. He was involved in basketball, track and field, and cross country. Holden is studying data science at Duquesne University, where he will continue to compete in sports. He aspires to have a career that aligns with his passions.



Morgan Snyder At Pittsburgh CAPA, Morgan was involved in the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and serving as a Student Representative to Pittsburgh's District 7 in the Pittsburgh Youth Participatory Budget Council. Feeding her passion for access to equitable healthcare, she is pursuing a nursing degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



Chloe Wellons Chloe aspires to impact the lives of children in foster care, an issue that is very close to her heart. During her time at Pittsburgh Brashear, she participated in the Black Student Union, Tobacco Free Allegheny, and Dietary for Allegheny Heath Network. In line with her passions, Chloe is attending the University of Pittsburgh pursuing a degree in social work.

PNC Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Liam Beresteanu In his local community, Liam was a participant of the Diller Jewish Fellowship Program and a member of the Jewish Youth Group at BBYO. At Pittsburgh Allderdice, Liam was a member of the soccer team, Chess Club, Robotics Team, and Debate Team. Liam studies economics and statistics at the University of Pittsburgh.



Jamir Jackson Jamir is a believer of being the change you want to see in the world. With aspirations of becoming a City of Pittsburgh police officer, he is pursuing a degree in criminal justice at PennWest - Clarion. While balancing his studies and being a Student Envoy at Pittsburgh Milliones, Jamir found time to serve as a volunteer firefighter.



Thalia Lash At Pittsburgh Sci Tech, Thalia was a member of the Black Student Union, African American Center for Advanced Studies, and the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. They are driven by promoting body positivity and self-expression. With aspirations to give back to underrepresented communities, Thalia is pursuing a degree at Temple University.



Trinity Panza Trinity is a student at Arcadia University studying actuarial science. Trinity graduated from Pittsburgh Allderdice where she was involved in theatre, Feminist Student Union, and National Honor Society. Trinity also participated in Breakthrough Pittsburgh and worked as a ride operator at Kennywood Park.



Keegan Schueler At Pittsburgh City Charter, Keegan enjoyed being a member of the Robotics Club and the National Honor Society. Keegan reached the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. He also became a shift supervisor at Shop 'n Save and spent time as a ball boy for the Pittsburgh Steelers. Keegan is an accounting major at Robert Morris University.

BNY Mellon Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Zain Adamo At Pittsburgh Allderdice Zain enjoyed being a member of the National Honor Society, the Allderdice Theater Club, and volunteering at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. With the goal of being able to write and direct films, Zain is majoring in film and media studies at the University of Pittsburgh.



Taheerah Cutler Taheerah enjoyed serving others at Pittsburgh SciTech. During her time there, she was a member of the National Honor Society and volunteered with the American Red Cross and the Neighborhood Learning Alliance. She hopes to find a career that allows her to travel the world and learn new culture. Taheerah is attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



Madison Dalverny As a successful athlete, Madison was involved in softball, cross country, track, unified track, and wrestling at Pittsburgh Carrick. Outside of sports, she served as a member of the Carrick community council and president of the National Honor Society. Madison is attending La Roche University to study athletic training.



Robert Famiglietti Robby is passionate about being active in his school community. At Pittsburgh SciTech, he was a member of the National Honor Society, Mock Trial, and the Interact Club. He also spent time as a researcher on the University of Pittsburgh's Gene Team. Robby is continuing his studies at Carnegie Mellon University.



Margaret Loya Maggie was a stellar student and athlete at Pittsburgh Allderdice. She was a member of the volleyball, softball, snowboarding, and Quiz Bowl teams, and volunteered at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank during high school. Maggie is continuing her education at Penn State University.

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PROMISE SCHOLARS TO DATE
HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AS EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS

American Eagle Outfitters Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Sofi Baker Sofi excelled in high school, becoming valedictorian at Pittsburgh Allderdice. She was a member of National Honor Society and captain of the lacrosse and volleyball teams. Sofi volunteered her time by tutoring kids, helping at nursing homes, and assisting at blood drives and soup kitchens. Sofi is studying business at Saint Joseph's University.



Noah Bauman Noah graduated from Pittsburgh SciTech where he held leadership positions in Chess Club, Debate Club, and Student Council, among other leadership roles. Noah offered weekly information sessions to his peers to provide resources on financial topics. Noah is an econometrics and business administration major at Carnegie Mellon University.



Carly Caplan As an advocate for those around her, Carly has become impassioned about building connections. She has been a force in her community by volunteering at Friendship Circle of Pittsburgh, participating in Teen Leadership Board, Allstar Cheer, and BBYO. Carly is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice studying communications at Penn State University.



Sebastian Diaz-Tafel Studying International Business at Chatham University, Sebastian has dreams of using his Spanish and business skills to one day work abroad. Sebastian has spent time volunteering for Visions Service Adventures in the Dominican Republic and British Virgin Islands. He is a graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA, who is eager to continue traveling internationally.



Gabrielle Reed A Pittsburgh Obama graduate, Gabrielle is now attending Temple University. She is studying international relations and business administration with aspirations of starting a non-profit organization to help Black girls learn how to take care of their hair. Gabrielle was involved in Youth and Government and served as manager of the basketball team.

Giant Eagle Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Amare Code Amare believes that if students have a positive impact on their lives while they are young, it could have a significant impact on their future. During her years at Pittsburgh Brashear, she spent time engaging with the Magnet Teaching Program and Cultivating Resilient Youth. Amare is an early education major at Penn State University.



Spencer Corbesero-Smith Spencer is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice. He is motivated by excelling academically and following in the footsteps of his scholar mom. In high school, Spencer took nine advance placement courses leading him to fall in love with psychology. On track to becoming a therapist, Spencer is studying psychology at Penn State University.



Haider Hattab As a Pittsburgh Online Academy graduate, Haider has a passion for learning. After moving to the United States at the age of 12, he faced the challenges of learning English. Rising to the challenge, Haider is looking forward to continuing to acquire knowledge and build relationships as he studies marketing at CCAC with plans of becoming a business owner.



Lyniece Jones Lyniece is majoring in Criminal Justice at Seton Hill University. While at Pittsburgh CAPA, she participated in the Debate Club, Student Government, and African American Centers for Academic Success Executive Council. Lyniece also devoted her time to volunteering for the Alliance for Police Accountability and Neighborhood Learning Alliance.



Lexibella Miknevich Lex is a graduate of Pittsburgh Carrick. They were engaged in their school community by participating in Color Guard and serving as manager of the wrestling team. They maintained being an excellent student while being involved in extracurricular activities and working part-time. Lex is studying counseling in psychology at Chatham University.

F.N.B. Corporation Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Marceona Brown While attending Pittsburgh Millionnes, Marceona was a Student Envoy and a counselor at The Grayson Center. Fueling her passion for graphic design and liberal arts, she is currently pursuing a degree in graphic communications and visual arts at PennWest - Clarion. Marceona aspires to be a graphic designer creating custom designs, game design, and logos.



Yadira Garcia At Pittsburgh Allderdice, Yadira found a passion for STEM while presenting her research at science fairs. She participated in Engineering Club, Chain Reaction Contraption, Spanish Club, Future of Latino Youth, and Breakthrough Pittsburgh. Yadira followed her passion for engineering to the University of Pittsburgh where she studies biomedical engineering.



Sophia Magliocco A recipient of the Loti Falk Scholarship, Sophia devoted time to competing in ballet while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She also volunteered for the Biden/Harris campaign and was a member of the Student and Government Council at Pittsburgh Online Academy. Sophia is pursuing a degree in finance at Penn State University, while continuing her love for dance.



Jeff Straney Studying computer science and Japanese at the University of Pittsburgh, Jeff aspires to become part of the animation industry. At Pittsburgh Allderdice, he was engaged in Startable Pittsburgh, neighborhood clean-up, and practiced jiu-jitsu. Jeff is motivated by becoming a part of the few Black anime novelists and paving the way for others to follow.



Maurice Tinsely Maurice graduated from Pittsburgh Allderdice. During high school he was active in the music studio building on his passion for music production. He enjoys sports and served as a counselor for Urban Impact. Maurice is especially appreciative of his grandparents and the support they've given him. At Slippery Rock University Maurice is studying finance.

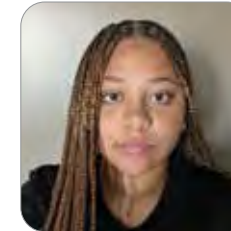
Highmark Wholecare Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Heaven Ballard Heaven has a knack for helping others work through their problems. During her time at Urban Pathways she was involved in Techno-teens and Bird Watching Club. She is a student at PennWest - Clarion pursuing a career in the medical field. Heaven is working toward her dream of helping people in need, especially those in the Black community.



Aden Banks As a student at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Aden was active in the National Honor Society and played lacrosse and hockey. He has always enjoyed working with his hands, building, and learning how things work. The enjoyment of creating things led to Aden choosing to study geotechnical engineering at Slippery Rock University.



Makiyah Carrington Participating in French Club, Black Student Union, African American Center for Advanced Studies, and National Honor Society kept Makiyah busy at Pittsburgh Allderdice. She also found time for part-time work at a pizza shop and as a Pittsburgh Promise Student Ambassador. Makiyah now spends her time studying software engineering at University of Pittsburgh.



Nina Mathis Nina is a former student at Pittsburgh CAPA who is proud of her completion in Investing Now, a three-year program organized by Pitt's Swanson School of Engineering. She was part of the National Dance Honor Society and Speak up Spoken Word Club. Nina is on the pre-law track, studying political science at the University of Pittsburgh.



Kenyh Taylor At Pittsburgh Brashear Kenyh participated in cheerleading, marching band, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and programs at Manchester Craftsmen's Guild. She aspires to make a positive impact on future generations by becoming a teacher. Kenyh studies early childhood education at CCAC.

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Howmet Aerospace Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Arian Afont-Garcia Arian is a civil engineering student at the University of Pittsburgh. At Pittsburgh Allderdice, he was a member of Global Minds and the manager of Allderdice Esports helping new players learn how to play the respective games. Arian values maintaining long lasting relationships to achieve true happiness.



Anthony Butch Anthony aspires to be an aerospace engineer. He was an active student at Pittsburgh SciTech, participating in Thirst Project, National Honor Society, and Senior Class Council. He was a member of the Greenfield Baseball Association and church-affiliated youth group. Anthony is studying aerospace engineering at Penn State University.



Nasir Crownie Nasir shined as an athlete and student at Pittsburgh Obama. He was team captain of the varsity football team and worked as a peer tutor. His passions include math and engineering fueling his desire to become a computer engineer. Following his passion, Nasir is studying electrical and computer engineering at Carnegie Mellon University.

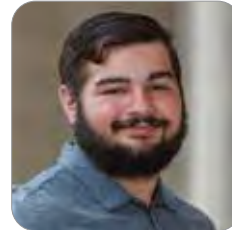


Mya Hudson-Goodnow At Pittsburgh Allderdice, Mya excelled in academics and being involved in numerous clubs. She held an internship with Youth Climate Advisory Committee and conducted research at the University of Pittsburgh. Mya is attending the University of Pittsburgh, where she studies engineering with plans of becoming an environmental engineer.



Barbara Pimentel Barbara is proud of being part of the top 25 students of her class at Pittsburgh Brashear and receiving multiple college scholarships. During high school she was part of the Asian Club and played on the volleyball team. Barbara is a student at the University of Pittsburgh studying business management.

KeyBank Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Alexander Mann Alex is motivated by excelling in academics and athletics. He dedicated himself to playing baseball throughout high school at Pittsburgh Carrick. Alex will continue playing the sport while studying at Penn State University Greater Allegheny. He participated in the Information Technology Career and Technical Education Program and is leaning toward majoring in IT.



Victoria Murphy Victoria was active in Mock Trial, Student Council, Green Team, Students Demand Action and National Honor Society at Pittsburgh CAPA. During her senior year, Victoria conducted the school musical. She has been active in her community playing piano for dementia patients and as a counselor for preschool nature camps. Victoria attends the University of Pittsburgh where she studies theater arts and political science.



Camryn Ross-Taylor At Pittsburgh Millions Camryn strived to make school better for her peers and teachers as Vice President of Student Government. In the future Camryn hopes to own a daycare center to support the development of children. In her free time, she enjoys softball and drawing. Camryn is studying early childhood education at Carlow University.



Jana Skowvron At Pittsburgh Obama, Jana demonstrated exceptional leadership skills. As captain of the varsity soccer team, she rose to the challenge of showing up for others. She also participated in varsity track and field, varsity Equestrian Club, and Manchester Craftsmen Guild. Jana is pursuing her bachelor's degree in nutrition and dietetics at Seton Hill University.



Akiya Wilkerson Akiya stayed involved at Pittsburgh CAPA by engaging in Yearbook Club, serving as Vice President of the Black Student Union, and captain of the soccer team. She is attending PennWest - California studying psychology and hopes to become a forensic research psychologist. Akiya desires to make the world a better place.

McGuinn Family Foundation Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



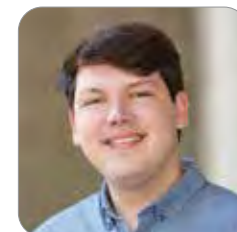
Bena Bingham Bena enjoys the therapeutic aspects of painting, watercolors, and scratch board. While at Pittsburgh CAPA, she held multiple jobs, participated in the Social Equity Club, and showed great academic resilience. She is interested in traveling and learning about marine biology and gemstones. Bena is studying art at Temple University.



Oluwatomisin Olaore Oluwatomisin completed an internship at the Boys & Girls Club in artificial intelligence, while serving as Vice President of her class at Pittsburgh CAPA. She also participated in the Hillman Academy Research Program. Oluwatomisin attends Penn State University majoring in computer science and hopes to become a mobile app developer.



Josiah Russle Josiah is passionate about art, athletics, and fashion. During their time at Pittsburgh Westinghouse, they participated in softball and tennis. They aspire to be an independent artist and role model for future generations. Josiah is pursuing their bachelor's in art at PennWest - Clarion.



Jack Ruzanic While attending Pittsburgh Online Academy, Jack enjoyed being a member of the National Honor Society. He also volunteered at the local food pantry. Feeding his love of film making and music, he attended the Steeltown Film Academy. In line with his passion, Jack is studying cinema production at Point Park University.



Mariah Sanchez Mariah dreams of becoming an animator. At Pittsburgh CAPA, she was involved in Steeltown Entertainment, Garfield Jubilee, Startable Pittsburgh, and volunteered with Toys for Tots. Mariah is attending Point Park University, where she studies animation to pursue her passion of art and learn about the creation of animating.

PPG Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Griffin Englehardt At Pittsburgh Brashear, Griffin shined as a well-rounded student. He participated in National Honor Society, CTE Auto Body, and the STEAM Program. Growing up, he found a passion for baseball which helped him to mature not only as a player, but as a person. Griffin attends Point Park University, where he is majoring in Mechanical Engineering.



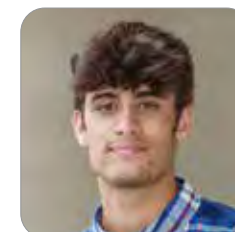
Aaliyah Pendleton Attending the University of Pittsburgh's Nursing Degree Program is an achievement Aaliyah is honored to have earned. At Pittsburgh Obama, she proved her determination by taking advantage of the dual enrollment program at CCAC. Aaliyah aspires to give back to her community by working in Pittsburgh area hospitals after graduation.



Sophia Swiderski As an environmental science major at Chatham University, Sophia is looking forward to helping solve the climate crisis. Sophia is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice. She has enjoyed serving on the Phipps Youth Climate Activist Committee and being a member of the Pittsburgh Junior Roller Derby team.



Niya Tyler Niya completed a research project at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, which was accepted for the ABRCS ePoster Spring Symposium for emerging scientists. At Pittsburgh Obama, she served as a member of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and was co-captain of the softball team. Niya is studying biology at Penn State University.



Joseph Weaver As a member of the Pittsburgh Allderdice soccer team, Joseph helped to create an initiative aimed at combating racism in high school athletics. He was also a Global Minds Fellow of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh. Joseph is a chemistry and psychology major at the University of Pittsburgh with aspirations of becoming an emergency medicine physician.

EXECUTIVE COMPANIES

Currently, fourteen organizations are members of The Pittsburgh Promise Executive Scholars program.

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Thermo Fisher Scientific Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



Gabe Barash Gabe is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice. Being involved in National Honor Society, marching band, and musical theatre has shaped his ability to be a good teammate and leader. He has great interest in screenwriting and all things concerning the film industry. Gabe is pursuing a degree in supply chain management at the University of Pittsburgh.



Skyla Regan Skyla is a graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear, where she was involved in National Honor Society, Student Voice, and Russian Olympiada. Her passions include scaling back climate change, finding renewable energy resources, and learning more about how to help nature and wildlife. Skyla attends Penn State University where she studies biology and Russian.



Dharma Trang Dharma served as a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador and aspires to break cultural barriers. At Pittsburgh SciTech, she was active in National Honor Society, mock trial, dance, and musical theatre. She enjoys traveling and sewing. Dharma is continuing her studies at Carnegie Mellon University majoring in statistics and machine learning.



Laniah Walker As a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador, Laniah was determined to be a good role model for her school. At Pittsburgh Millions, she was active in Student Envoy, volleyball, and a leader amongst her peers while working part-time outside of school. Her commitment to pursuing a career in activism has led Laniah to study political science at PennWest - California.



Tyrique Whitson At Pittsburgh SciTech, Tyrique was active as a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador and participated in the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council, African American Center for Advanced Studies Executive Committee, and National Honor Society as the Vice President. Tyrique is pursuing a degree from PennWest - California.

Viatrix Scholars of The Pittsburgh Promise



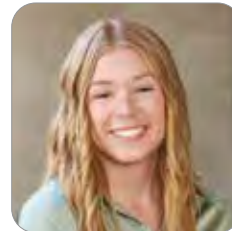
John Grimm A graduate of Pittsburgh Carrick, John was a member of the baseball and swim teams and worked as a Promise Student Ambassador. He hopes to fulfill his passions for helping others and giving back to his community by becoming a teacher. John is a student at Slippery Rock University studying elementary and special education.



Allahna Johnson Being passionate about the criminal justice field is fueling Allahna to become a lawyer. While at Pittsburgh Obama, she took pride in being an excellent student as well as being dedicated to cheerleading for the last six years. Allahna is pursuing a criminal justice degree at Lincoln University.



Kailey Keating Kailey stayed active in her time at Pittsburgh Carrick, where she excelled as a student and an athlete. She was a member of National Honor Society, the volleyball team, and senior class committee. Kailey is studying criminal justice at Robert Morris University.



Normah Salazar During her years at Pittsburgh Carrick, Normah enjoyed volunteering at toy drives, food drives, trash clean-ups, and youth centers. She was a member of the National Honor Society, and the cheerleading, soccer, and cross-country teams. Normah is on a pre-med track at the University of Pittsburgh with aspirations of becoming a surgeon.



Della Wagner Della was an active student at Pittsburgh Allderdice. She was a member of the National Honor Society and Chamber Choir. Della also participated in Reaction Contraption club, Global Minds, and the Readiness Institute. She is now a student at Ursinus College, excited to explore her interests in Japanese and film.

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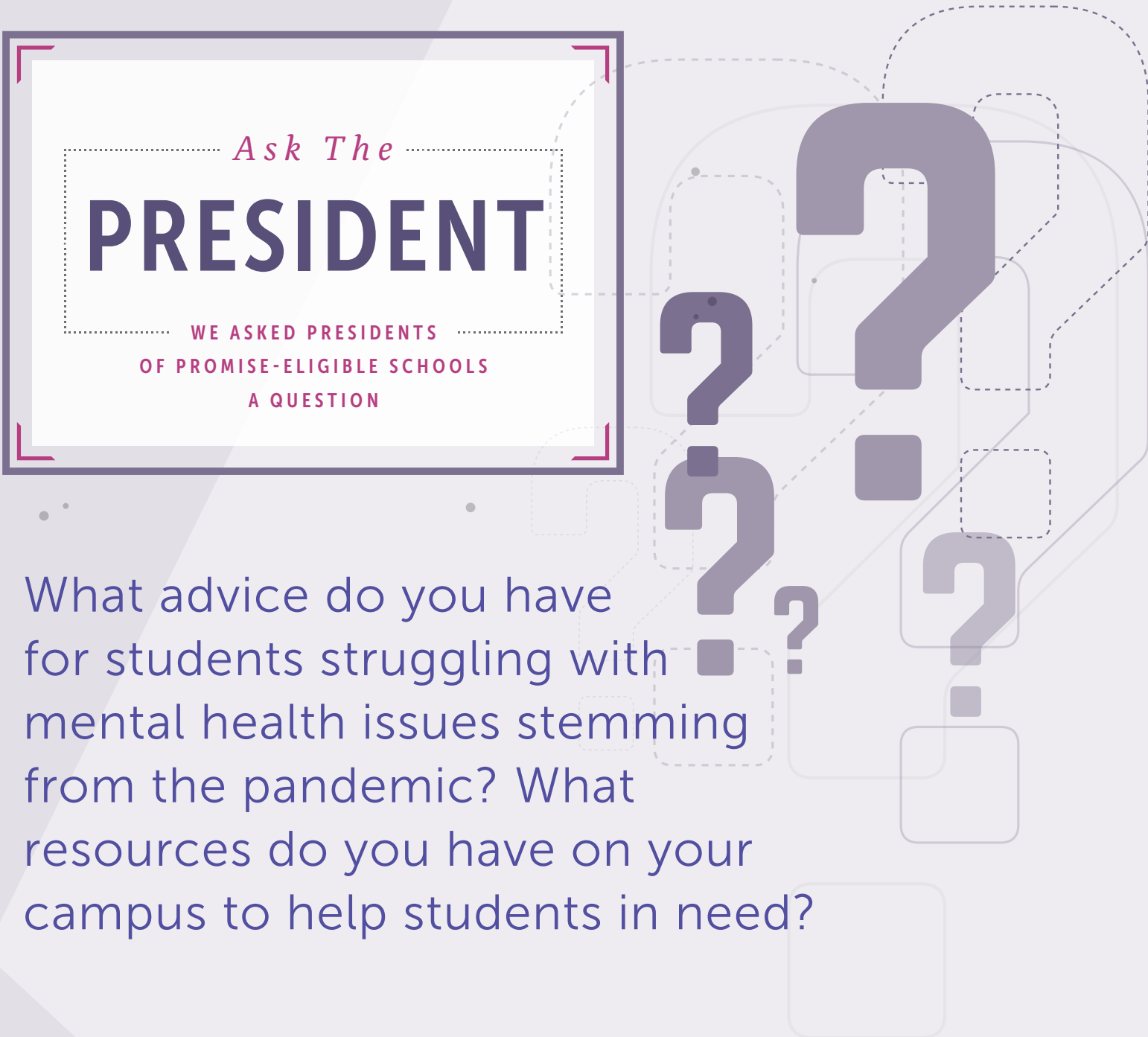
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What advice do you have for students struggling with mental health issues stemming from the pandemic? What resources do you have on your campus to help students in need?



Helen Drinan *Interim President, Cabrini University*

Located in the suburbs of Philadelphia, Cabrini University is tight-knit, welcoming community of learners, faculty, and staff. My hope is that when students may be struggling, they reach out to roommates and friends, a trusted instructor, an advisor, or a staff member who can guide them to the appropriate on-campus resources and aid them in getting the help they need. I hope, too, that when someone recognizes a student having a hard time that they reach out and offer help. The University offers several resources to help ensure the health and wellness of our students and all members of our community.

Cabrini's Health Services Center provides students with direct and preventive care, health counseling, and education outreach. The Counseling and Psychological Services Office provides individual and group counseling for Cabrini students, as well as crisis response and consultation for faculty, staff, and others who have concerns about students. The office emphasizes healthy and adaptive choices, reaching one's fullest potential, and functioning successfully within one's global and local community.



Farnam Jahanian *President, Carnegie Mellon University*

If you are a student experiencing mental health struggles because of the pandemic, you are not alone. The pandemic has brought many complex issues to the forefront of our society, and while it may be disconcerting to experience these feelings, students across the country are experiencing similar challenges. Seeking help is an incredible sign of strength, and my advice is to find the people and resources that can assist you through challenging times.

CMU has a wide range of services available for students struggling with mental health concerns. Through our Counseling and Psychological Services, we offer mental health assessments, crisis services, consultations,

treatment, support groups, and skills workshops. Support, including assistance in connecting to the appropriate resources, is available through both the Residential Education and Student Support Resources teams. If financial stress is a contributing factor, our Financial Aid office can also provide assistance. Opportunities to learn stress management, coping and resiliency skills can be found through Wellness Initiatives, Health Promotion, and Campus Recreation. Connection to others is such a vital part of emotional health, and we provide opportunities to engage with others through student organizations, academic department interest groups, Campus Recreation, and the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion.



Ken Gormley *President, Duquesne University*

"As both a university president and a father of four young adults, I've seen firsthand the impact the pandemic has had on young people, including college students. I also understand that students who come to Duquesne with a variety of aspirations may, like all young people, need different kinds of support, including mental wellness.

Our Center for Student Wellbeing, for which I'm a Wellbeing Ambassador, is fabulous. It includes counseling services, health services and recreation services. The Center promotes a holistic understanding of health that recognizes the importance of nourishing the whole person.

Student success is about more than grades and career preparation—it's about nurturing and shaping the person you become. That includes navigating the stress associated with being a college student and dealing with issues that all young people face.

As a student preparing for college, check out the wellness resources that your university offers before you get there. It's an important piece of having a rich and successful college experience."



What advice do you have for students struggling with mental health issues stemming from the pandemic? What resources do you have on your campus to help students in need?



Michael Driscoll *President, Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

Reach out. You are not alone in what you are feeling, and we are here for you. Talk to your faculty, to your resident assistant, to a trusted friend. The Counseling Center and its staff are available, but that doesn't have to be your first step. Please, don't let your stress build up, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

Get tools in place to manage your time. Schedule time for your work, especially those tasks that make you stressed or nervous. Really focus on those assignments during that scheduled time and remove distractions as much as you can. Stop when you said you were going to stop. Make sure to schedule positive things that you enjoy and that help you relax: sleep and eat well, talk to friends and family, take a walk. Build this habit now, before you are stressed. IUP's University College provides resources to help with time management, managing classes, study skills, and exploring your interests and majors.

IUP's Counseling Center has incredibly dedicated and talented professionals. In addition to individual counseling, the center offers peer

group sessions on topics students said they wanted, including how to manage life challenges and interpersonal and social interactions. Just Paws, our therapy dog program, has been a popular stress reliever for students. This fall, IUP will launch Togetherall, a safe, confidential online community in which students share their feelings anonymously to improve mental health and well-being. The site is monitored by licensed and registered mental health practitioners in case students need immediate support.

The financial challenges caused by the pandemic were unprecedented, and I couldn't be prouder of the IUP community for its response. IUP's Student Assistance Fund has distributed more than \$700,000, donated by alumni, employees, and friends for students affected by the pandemic. Thousands of students receive help from the Food Pantry and Help Center, informal mentoring from our Guides program, and quick answers from the Hawks Q&A Center. We will continue to listen to our students, focusing on meeting them where they are and doing everything in our power to help them to succeed.



Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson *Founding President, PennWest*

Graduating from high school and planning for college can be stressful, especially during the ongoing disruptions of COVID-19. If you are feeling anxious or uncertain as you navigate these challenges, please know that you are not alone.

Now and always, self-care is critical. Prioritize your mental and physical health and consult a medical professional if you are overwhelmed. Eat a balanced diet and find healthy ways to manage stress. Stay connected with family and friends, and stick to a routine – including a structured study plan, regular exercise, and a consistent sleep schedule.

Biking around our beautiful PennWest campuses is one of my favorite ways to unwind. Try new activities

until you find what works for you – whether it is yoga, cardio, hiking, or a favorite hobby.

Our students have access to comprehensive academic support services, a health and wellness center, state-of-the-art recreational facilities, vibrant living-learning communities, hundreds of clubs and professional organizations and many other options to explore new interests, stay active, and build meaningful connections. Licensed professionals provide a range of mental health services so that students can focus on their education and enjoy the experiences that come along with it.

Learn more about our campus resources at PennWest.edu.



Mary Finger *President, Seton Hill University*

All of us at Seton Hill University are acutely aware of the marked increase in mental health issues experienced by college students that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic, and we have long had resources in place to help our students in need and have encouraged them to take advantage of these programs. In addition to offering on-campus mental health counseling and increasing remote counseling offerings during the pandemic, Seton Hill has extensive connections with community mental health providers to offer assistance to students. Faculty and staff also have access to systems where they can report changes in a student's behavior that may necessitate a check-in from a counselor.

We have also embraced the use of technology to help our students assess their own mental health to help make it easier for them to reach out. As a Catholic, liberal arts university, Seton Hill also has a robust campus ministry program that embraces students of all faiths who may feel more comfortable speaking in that space. Seton Hill also returned to in-person learning in the Fall of 2020 because we recognized it was critical to our ability to meet the pastoral, intellectual, and wellness needs of our students; and we knew it was the most effective way for us to support students as they faced the sense of isolation and loneliness that many have felt during the pandemic.



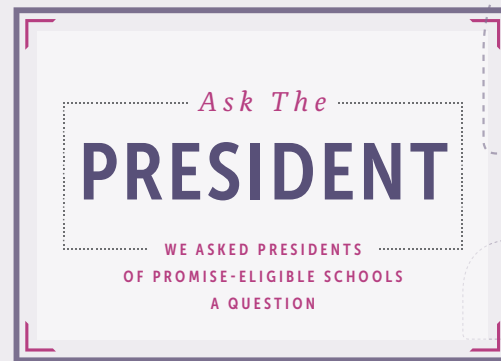
William J. Behre *President, Slippery Rock University*

As a society, we need to stop speaking about mental health as if it is something distinct from other forms of health. Mental health care is health care, plain and simple. We need to continue to work in order to reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for mental health concerns. During the pandemic, several of our students reported feelings of depression, anxiety, stress, and lack of motivation.

In response to what our students were reporting, SRU acted in the following areas:

- We launched faculty/staff trainings that were designed to help those two groups talk to students about emotional health and make referrals to resources.

- Our Student Counseling Center added a variety of group sessions, including one specifically on COVID and one for student-athletes, for peers to share their situations and coping mechanisms with one another.
- Our Student Support Office launched the Concern Center at SRU, a virtual space for the campus community to find resources that may be helpful in a time of need; allowing people to access resources in personalized ways. Information is available in both English and Spanish and users who need additional information can do so by clicking the "Connect to Care" button at the bottom of the webpage.



What advice do you have for students struggling with mental health issues stemming from the pandemic? What resources do you have on your campus to help students in need?



Kathy Brittain Richardson *President, Westminster College*

I offer Promise students the advice that I frequently give Westminster students:

- You are not alone. Many people are struggling with mental health issues associated with the uncertainties, stresses, and losses caused by the pandemic.
- You are not alone. Find the people who can help you work through the trauma you have experienced, maybe without even realizing it. This may be a parent, counselor, teacher, friend, or minister.
- You are not alone. Offer support to friends and classmates who are experiencing issues. Offering kindness to others may bring you a regained sense of control and empowerment.
- Emphasizing the "WE in Westminster," we recognize the stress and other mental health

issues our students, faculty, and staff are facing, and we now offer a greater variety of support and services. These resources include:

- The Wellness Center, with two full-time counselors and a part-time counselor who provide confidential appointments online and in-person. Wellness coaching focuses on strengthening coping skills and achieving personal goals.
- Increased fitness opportunities for students who find stress relief through physical activity.
- The College Chaplain offers individual religious counseling and assists students who need help with family or economic issues.
- A supportive faculty who wants you to succeed personally and academically.



Wesley R. Fugate *President, Wilson College*

First and foremost, individuals struggling with mental health need to know they are not alone and there are resources available. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and even before, the Wilson College Counseling Center has experienced a growing number of students seeking services. While there are many different underlying reasons for mental health issues, students most commonly seek counseling for the following: adjustment to college, managing mental health symptoms while in college, relationship conflict, past trauma, and academic stressors.

All full-time undergraduate students at Wilson who are actively taking 12 or more credits and enrolled

in a degree program can seek services at the counseling center at no charge. We offer individual counseling, crisis assessment and management, educational workshops and programming, support groups, and medication management services on campus. Individual counseling can be conducted in person or via Zoom and workshops and programming primarily occur in person with topics varying each semester. Individual counseling is also available by appointment. Most services are flexible and can be modified to fit a student's needs and schedule.

Most importantly, all services are confidential and remain separate from a student's academic record.

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**LAST
LOOK**

SENIOR SIGNING CELEBRATION DAY Over 800 members of the Pittsburgh Public Schools' Class of 2022 focused on graduation and their educational and career plans at The Pittsburgh Promise's annual Senior Signing Celebration Day on April 21, 2022. An overcast spring day did not dampen the enthusiasm at PNC Park during their first, collective, in-person event since the start of the pandemic. PPS Superintendent Dr. Wayne Walters, Promise Board Chair Franco Harris, Promise Executive Director Saleem Ghubril, and Promise Alumna Ciera Wilson fueled the event with encouragement and heartfelt respect for these young people who have overcome so many adverse pandemic constraints, and are looking forward to productive and meaningful post-secondary paths. Hundreds of colleges, universities, trade schools, technical schools, military branches, two-year programs, and workforce choices were called out as students cheered for each other and the post-secondary choices they've made.



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The Pittsburgh Promise is committed to raising the required resources to fund students through the high school graduating class of 2028, this year's 7th graders.

For more information on
The Promise scholarship visit
pittsburghpromise.org.