Small Offices, Big Results: Creating a Mutual Support Network That Bridged Gaps in Services at Separate Colleges

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What are we doing here?

Learning Goal 1: This presentation will offer insights into the options and opportunities that will help small disability offices improve their access to resources to better serve with institutions by sharing the process for our successful collaboration.

Learning Goal 2: This presentation will communicate how the partnership that developed through our overall campus alliances has developed into eliminating barriers that are present due to the limitations of being a small disability office by walking through our co-created content and how that applies to each of our institutions.

Outline

- Who we are
- How this partnership started
- What this has expanded into
- How we use this network
Clair Harris, MSED., LPCC

Education:
- BA in Sociology and Psychology – Kent State University
- MSED. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling – Youngstown State University
- Ed.D. in Education (current) – Florida Southern College

Career Experience:
- Behavioral Interventionist and Expulsion Prevention Coordinator
- Case Manager for Community Mental Health
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor

Higher Education Experience:
- Adjunct Instructors – Kent State University
- Mental Health Counselor and Accessibility Coordinator – Mercy College of Ohio
- Director of Student Access Services – Ringling College of Art and Design

Marra Piazza Brass, MSED.

Education:
- Dual BA in Spanish and International Studies – Le Moyne College
- MSED. in School Counseling – Syracuse University

Career Experience:
- High School Counselor, 9-12
- Director of Guidance, 9-12

Higher Education Experience:
- Assistant Director of Admission – Cazenovia College
- Financial Aid Counselor – Le Moyne College
- Academic Coach – St. John’s College
- Director of accessibility – Eckerd College
- Assistant Director of Student Disability Services – New College of Florida
- Health Services Secretary, Student Accessibility Services – University of South Florida

How our past experiences influence approaches

- Experiences working in the K-12 structure
- Advocacy for students
- Experience with high level parental involvement
- Collaboration with Faculty, Staff, and Campus Offices
Where it all started

- Cross College Alliance
  - Began as a partnership with the local colleges in the Sarasota-Manatee area that could work together to promote student engagement and campus opportunities between campuses
  - Evolution of the alliance brought together the local disability offices
    - Group Meetings
    - COVID support and technology really brought us all even closer
    - Became the template for Florida AHEAD structure for networking

What it has expanded into

- FL AHEAD
  - Marra became President 2019-2020
  - COVID
  - Used Cross College Alliance model to structure what is now the regional consortiums
    - West Central – Regular Attendees
      - USF – Tampa, Sarasota-Manatee, Siesta Pete
      - Ringling College
      - State College of Florida
      - New College of Florida
      - Stetson Law
      - Eckerd College

How we partner

- Creating informational content to share across campuses
  - Step by step for students
  - Helpful guides to implementing and making the most of accommodation
  - Faculty informational handbook
  - Summaries of our campus structure lead to development of a resource guide and handbook for faculty to understand accommodations, the process, available campus resources, and outlines specific office roles and responsibilities as it pertains to disability
  - Documents, forms, etc
    - SSA, audio recording, equipment check, housing requests, testing processes and forms, policy and procedure outlines
    - Programming ideas and flyers
    - Disability events on campuses and cross college attendance, autism awareness programming, disability awareness month programming
    - Data Management System/Learning Management System
    - Templates, Workflow, updates, trainings, system upgrade options
How can we work as one office

- Regularly scheduled meetings and check-ins
- Peer Support
- Decision Making – processes and barriers
- Approaching campus adjustments, changes, challenges
- Case Reviews
- This works small scale to large scale

Questions & Comments