

2018
COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING®
CONFERENCE

July 19, 2018

Tinley Park Convention Center, Tinley Park, Illinois



Conference Agenda

8 am – Registration Check-In Opens (South Entry)

8-8:30 am – Continental Breakfast (Exhibit South)

8:30-10:30 am – Morning Plenary Session (Exhibit South)

- **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
- **Redefining College Ready: Integrating adolescent development into college readiness efforts**
 - *Dr. Mandy Savitz-Romer, Senior Lecturer in Education and Director of Prevention Science and Practice and Certificate of Advanced Study in Counseling Master's Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education*
- **Silo Busting for Student Success: An update on cross-agency, state-wide initiatives helping students meet their postsecondary and career goals**
 - *Emily Rusca, Policy & Programs Manager, Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University*

10:30-10:45 am – Break

10:45-11:35 am – Interest Sessions

11:35-11:45 am – Break

11:45 am–12:35 pm – Interest Sessions

12:35 pm-2:15 pm Lunch Buffet & Program (Exhibit South)

- **Student Panel – Students Benefit when Organizations Work Together**
 - Moderator, Dr. Teresa Ramos, Director of Community Engagement, Advance Illinois
 - Denisse Rivera Flores, 2018 graduate Manual Academy Peoria
 - Montez Holton, 2018 graduate of East St. Louis School District with AA degree
 - Aysha Ahmad, Nicolas Senn High School, LSC Student Representative, CPS Student Advisory Council Member, National Honor Society Member
- **College Changes Everything Champion Award Presentation**

2:15-2:30pm – Break

2:30-3:20 pm – Interest Sessions

3:20-3:30 pm – Break

3:30-4:20 pm – Interest Sessions

4:20 pm – Adjourn

Interest Sessions

Round 1 – 10:45-11:35 am

- **Session 1A: District Case Study: Implementation of a Statewide College and Career Framework** (South Pavilion 3)

In 2017 Proviso Township High School District 209 and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission partnered to implement Illinois Pace. Illinois PaCE (Postsecondary and Career Expectations) is a first of its kind statewide benchmarking framework for college and career readiness for 8th-12th grade students. Illinois Pace establishes grade level specific expectations in three student-centered content areas: Career Exploration and Development; Postsecondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection; and Financial Aid and Literacy.

Presenters: Antoinette Rayburn, District Manager of Career Readiness and Student Programs, Proviso Township High School District #209; Eddie Brambila, Managing Director, Partnerships, Illinois Student Assistance Commission; Jacqueline Moreno, Managing Director, College Access Initiatives, Illinois Student Assistance Commission

- **Session 1B: Redefining Student and Academic Success: Coaching Models at National Louis University and College of Lake County** (South Pavilion 4)

Pathways at National Louis University and Coaching for Academic Success at the College of Lake County are distinctive coaching programs that provide holistic support for traditionally under-served students on their path to an affordable degree. Both

programs utilize faculty partnerships, real-time data, and personalized engagement to defeat retention odds. Presenters will highlight each program's structure, outcomes, and future plans.

Presenters: *Mariana Saucedo, Student Success Coach, National Louis University; Lady Gil, Student Success Coach, National Louis University; Eric Tammes, Director, Academic Success, College of Lake County*

- **Session 1C: *Understanding Life-Long Learning Transitions to Careers: A Longitudinal Perspective on Career Outcomes for High School Seniors*** (South Pavilion 5)

Session participants will present on life-long learning and career outcomes for Illinois High School students. Life-long learning pathways represent combinations of post-secondary enrollment/completion behaviors that capture transitions to both 2-year and 4-year institutions. We link these pathways to career outcomes, such as workforce connectivity and career earnings. Second, we examine the impact of these pathways on students' economic intergenerational mobility. Finally, we discuss the technologies for the production and dissemination of this information to students, parents and institutions.

Presenters: *George Putnam, Economist, Illinois Department of Employment Security; Ewa Gallagher, Illinois Department of Employment Security; Greg Bilobran, Deputy Director, IT, Illinois Student Assistance Commission*

Moderator: *Jeff Mays, Director, Illinois Department of Employment Security*

- **Session 1D: *Changing the Narrative: Young Men Who Are Making Education the Great Equalizer*** (South Pavilion 6)

Nationally-recognized mentoring initiative, Boys II Men, has a track record of academic success that has resulted in hundreds of young men matriculating to and graduating from college. See how this Aurora-based movement has inspired audiences throughout the country.

Presenters: *Justin Evans, Plainfield North High School & Morehouse College; Sebastian Chiu, East Aurora High School & Stanford University*

Moderator: *Clayton Muhammad, Chief Communications Officer, City of Aurora*

- **Session 1E: *Transitional Math: Reducing Remediation While Increasing College Readiness*** (Samuel Tinley Room)

The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act's transitional math courses smooth the college transition for high school seniors. This session will provide information about these courses including their content and teaching approach as well as their implementation. Upon successful completion, students will earn guaranteed placement out of remediation at all Illinois community colleges and some Illinois universities. Attendees will receive updates about the scaling of the courses including the implementation plan, professional development plan, and more.

Presenters: *Kathleen Almy, Illinois Director for Transitional Math, Northern Illinois University; Brian Durham, Deputy Director for Academic Affairs, Illinois Community College Board*

- **Session 1F: *Helping to Make Good Mentoring Programs Even Better: Using the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring Programs*** (Bremen Room)

Mentoring can be extremely rewarding for the youth and mentors in our programs, but it can also be hard work for the staff who manage these programs. Learn about mentoring best practices and find out how you can strengthen (or start) your program using evidence-based approaches. This session will help attendees understand the six key elements in creating and running a mentoring program; examine existing programs and get ideas for how to strengthen or change program delivery; hear directly from a MENTOR Illinois Gold Star college-based mentoring program on how they are implementing the Elements of Effective Practice.

Presenters: *Cheryl Howard-Neal, Director of Programs and Partnerships, MENTOR Illinois; Michaela McGill, Director of Workforce & Corporate Partnerships, One Million Degrees*

- **Session 1G: *Consumer Guide to Higher Education and Student Loans*** (North Pavilion 1)

To protect Illinois student loan borrowers and to educate our community about student loan debt, this presentation will provide: (1) common student lending issues seen by the Illinois Attorney General's Office; (2) recent federal developments affecting consumer rights; (3) information about debt relief scams targeting students; and (4) the new Illinois Student Loan Bill of Rights.

Presenters: *Theresa Geary, Senior Program Specialist, Policy Bureau, Office of the Illinois Attorney General; Abe Scarr, Director, Illinois PIRG & Illinois PIRG Education Fund; Jessie Gotsdiner, Policy Associate, Women Employed*

- **Session 1H: *Ensuring College Graduation Success*** (North Pavilion 2)

Waukegan to College (W2C) will share their Persistency Framework for ensuring college graduation success. Learn about the pivotal role that both parents and mentors play in making certain that first-generation students successfully graduate from college, and their "web of support" effort among W2C Staff, parents, mentors, and peer mentors. College freshman receive: a personal mentor who stays with them until they graduate from college; a peer mentor; a college visit by W2C staff; college success workshops; and care packages.

Presenters: *Elyse Danckers, Executive Director, Waukegan to College; Brandi France, Program Associate/AmeriCorps Service Member, Waukegan to College; Brandon Antonio, W2C College Student studying at Northern Illinois University*

- **Session 1I: *Bridging the College Transition and Career Readiness Gap between Secondary and Post-Secondary Education for Students with Disabilities*** (North Pavilion 3)

Starting in early adolescence, transition can be influenced by parental relationships, social inclusion, and usage of academic/non-academic accommodations. Whereas, postsecondary education needs to improve disability and career services if students are to experience success. Cumulatively, these factors influence the development of vocational identity. We will discuss the issues, recommendations and critical stakeholders to improve students with disabilities' transition to college, leading to eventual employment. This holistic discussion transpires from a personal, professional, and research perspective.

Presenters: *Paige Lindahl-Lewis, M.S., Associate Director, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign/Beckwith Residential Support Services; Susann Heft Sears, M.Ed.,*

Director, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign/Beckwith Residential Support Services; Elizabeth Flora-Swick, MSW Student & Beckwith Residential Support Services Resident, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

- **Session 1J: Civic Leadership Skills as Workforce Skills – How Service and Experiential Learning Can Lead to Workforce Development** (North Pavilion 6)

Leadership and civic skills learned through service and experiential learning are becoming more in-demand for today's employers. This session will explore how staff and faculty in higher education can develop civic literacy and leadership among students and how to help students leverage those skills to potential employers. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of what skills today's workforce demands and a toolkit that can aide in developing their students into successful employees and community leaders.

Presenters: *Natalie Furllett, Executive Director, Illinois Campus Compact; Marina LoCasto, Assistant Director, Illinois Campus Compact*

Break – 11:35-11:45 am

Round 2 – 11:45 am-12:35 pm

- **Session 2A: College Ready for Real: Bridging the Gap between High School Completion and College Success** (South Pavilion 3)

The disparities between secondary and postsecondary institutions' definition of college readiness impact students' ability to succeed at colleges and universities. The college readiness gap is further perpetrated by what high schools teach and what colleges/universities expect. Growing numbers of students enter college unprepared for the academic rigor required to be successful. To alleviate differences in college preparedness (high school) and college readiness (college/university) requires authentic programming that aligns secondary and post-secondary curriculum to promote student success. One program that is bridging the gap is DePaul University's College Connect. College Connect is a summer enrichment program for high school sophomores and juniors in Chicago providing an opportunity for teens to take a college-level course at DePaul University plus workshops and seminars on various elements of college readiness. Program targets students of color, first generation college students, and low-income students from traditionally under-resourced communities and provides a glimpse of college experience to encourage students to pursue post-secondary education, while widening college access and college degree attainment.

Presenters: *Pinkey Stewart, Director, Student Success, Northeastern Illinois University; Kate Agarwal, Assistant Director of College Access, DePaul University*

- **Session 2B: Taste of College: A Community Partnership** (South Pavilion 4)

Middle school, high school, higher education, and community partners come together to support Taste of College, an opportunity for middle school students that have the potential to be first-generation college students to have hands-on experiences on a number of college campuses. Come hear from some of the partners to learn how this innovative community partnership connects middle school students to their high school, higher education, and future career options.

Presenters: *Sarah Stashkiw, Manager, College Readiness and Dual Credit, College of Lake County; Gretchen Garza, Parent Coordinator, ELL Teacher, Carl Sandburg Middle School; Luis Fuentes, Community Liaison, Broker Associate, Mundelein High School and*

Remax Showcase; Dr. Myra Gaytan-Morales, Assistant Dean for Academic Services and Programs, University Center of Lake County; Carolyn Brugioni, Program Coordinator, College of Lake County

- **Session 2C: *What Does Professionalism Look Like: Bringing Inclusion to an Exclusive Concept*** (South Pavilion 5)

Professionalism is crucial for students' success in the workplace; as educators, mentors, and advisors, it is equally essential to have professionalism curricula that respects diverse identities and acknowledges the risk professionalism poses to systematically exclude people. What are the practices that we are currently using to inform students as they prepare to transfer or enter the workforce? Using the popular education model, presenters and attendees will share knowledge and experiences to refine our best practices.

Presenters: *Xochitl Cruz, Manager of College Partnerships, One Million Degrees; Michael Hernandez, Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Melanie Wagner, Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Maria Gonzalez, Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Noufo Nabine, Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Krishae Beamon, Senior Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Amanda Abraham, Program & Recruitment Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Laila Sadat, Senior Program Coordinator, One Million Degrees; Terrence Pryor, Recruitment Coordinator, One Million Degrees*

- **Session 2D: *Advising 201: Working with Returning Non-traditional Students*** (South Pavilion 6)

Discussion of strategies for working with returning adult students based documented research and over twenty-five years of combined experience. The participants should be able to incorporate practices to assist students to more comfortable and successful in their college experience.

Presenters: *Paula McMullen, Academic Advisor, Governors State University; Tina Hughes-Burke, Academic Advisor, Governors State University*

- **Session 2E: *Get Ready! College and Career Ready*** (Samuel Tinley Room)

Abe Lincoln said, "The best way to predict your future is to create it." Creating your future begins with a plan. Whether the goal is college, career, or both the Illinois Career Information System and Illinois workNet have the tools you need. Learn about these interactive tools: Employment 101; CIS Assessments; and Reality Check. Let's ensure that all students become equipped for success in college and career readiness, and the transition from education to employment.

Presenters: *Dee Reinhardt, Field Operations Supervisor and Trainer, Illinois workNet; Troy McMillan, Career Systems/Labor Market Outreach Specialist, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Career Information System*

- **Session 2F: *Progressive Pathways to Post-Secondary Success*** (Bremen Room)

The Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance (CWFA) has come together with a number of local education funders to advance a shared interest in promoting the development of an education and workforce system with a seamless transition from secondary to post-secondary programs. Together they formed a new fund within the Funder Alliance, the Pro Path Fund, with the aim of improving that seamless transition by expanding the universe of transparent and accessible Progressive Pathways to Post-Secondary Success.

Progressive Pathways allow individuals to alternate between and combine periods of education/training and employment, and thereby progressively build toward college and career success over an extended period of time. The Pro Path Fund wants to be part of changing the “college for all” mindset, replacing it with the vision of a well-connected and transparent career pathway system with multiple entry points and multiple exit points for all. This session will feature an overview of the stakeholder organizing required to drive consensus as well as detail the specific work underway.

Presenter: *Adrian Esquivel, Deputy Director, Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance; Emily Rusca, Policy & Programs Manager, Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University*

- **Session 2G: *How Students Can Earn More and Save More with Advanced Placement*** (North Pavilion 1)

In 2016, Illinois high school seniors missed 16,220 opportunities for earning college credit at little to no cost. Learn how to leverage the benefits of Advanced Placement to save time and money, and increase salaries for college and non-college bound students in Illinois along with helping students recognize the multitude of opportunities in AP.

Presenters: *Malinda Aiello, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Marci Johnson, Director of Teaching and Learning, Illinois State Board of Education*

- **Session 2H: *Certificate of Employability – A Program to Enhance Soft Skills Among Freshmen*** (North Pavilion 2)

At our Business Education Council meetings in Grundy County (a panel that combines the education and business communities' minds to better our workforce) we continually hear how across all industries and employers that soft skills among candidates are majorly lacking. So as a group we came up with a Certificate of Employability program for business members to teach to freshmen. The students learn from local employers directly the importance of an appropriate appearance, eye contact, putting their phones away, taking initiative, first impressions and other soft skills. The presenters are from businesses the students will likely apply for their first jobs at - retailers, fast food restaurants, and other companies that hire teenagers so that they realize early on the importance of these skills and that they can't wait until college graduation to improve these skills. In return, the students who participate in the presentations and take part in a practice interview with a business person earn the certificate that they can then attach to their applications making them stand out among other applicants because they've taken an extra step to prepare themselves for their first job and the workforce. In Grundy County our Chamber and Community Foundation run the program in the high schools. Working with similar business organizations and local high schools this program could easily be executed anywhere and everywhere.

Presenters: *Christina Van Yperen, Executive Director, Grundy County Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Julie Buck, Executive Director, Community Foundation of Grundy County*

- **Session 2I: *Smart Kids with Special Needs Are Not Graduating from College: Why Not, and What To Do About It*** (North Pavilion 3)

Students with non-cognitive special needs are much less likely than their “typical” peers to graduate from college (34% vs 60%). Why is that, given that their cognitive abilities are the same? In this interactive workshop we explore some of the answers to that question and discuss best practices for overcoming this. We discuss the skills students

need to master in order to get the supports they need, and how schools can help them develop those skills.

Presenter: *Marci Koblenz, President, Center for Companies That Care*

- **Session 2J: *The Persistence Gap: How might colleges' values and biases impact student success and what can we do about it?*** (North Pavilion 6)

In this session, we will explore the misconceptions that colleges have about how to support the success of low-income students. We will dig into research in small groups and engage in a participatory workshop to examine the impact of our own biases and culture. We will close by asking: How might we leverage these new insights to best support students in each of our individual contexts?

Presenters: *Rachel Oppenheimer, Director of Program Innovation, OneGoal; Molly Rankin, Director of Partnerships, Program Innovation, OneGoal*

Lunch Program and Break – 12:35-2:30 pm

Round 3 – 2:30-3:20 pm

- **Session 3A: *The Knack to Student Success*** (South Pavilion 3)

Learn about how the Illinois Student Assistance Commission is leveling the playing field of college access with Knack, a technology company that allows individuals to discover talent, skills, and potential through the power of mobile games and artificial intelligence. Through this partnership, ISAC and Knack will be catalyzing a paradigm-shift in career exploration and college admissions. Through this multi-stakeholder initiative, students, mentors, counselors, teachers will be working together to re-imagine the high school to college to career process. Attendees will learn how technology solutions can complement and help scale college access work, as well as gain a basic understanding of AI and predictive analytics and how they can positively impact educational outcomes.

Presenters: *Will Geiger, Director of Education Strategy & Partnerships, Knack; Jacqueline Moreno, Managing Director, College Access Initiatives, Illinois Student Assistance Commission; Eddie Brambila, Managing Director, Partnerships, Illinois Student Assistance Commission;*

- **Session 3B: *A Grow Your Own Engineering Partnership: NIU@RVC*** (South Pavilion 4)

The Rockford area aero-space manufacturing sector is threatened by a looming shortage of engineering talent. In collaboration with industry partners and RVC, NIU created a community-based, industry-integrated education solution to address the demand for engineers. Rockford area students can now earn bachelor's degrees in mechanical engineering and applied manufacturing technology without traveling to NIU's main campus in DeKalb. Third and fourth year NIU courses are taught by NIU professors on the Rock Valley [Community] College (RVC) campus. Students have paid internships with area companies and are mentored by local NIU and RVC alumni.

Presenters: *Gina Caronna, Director, P-20 Regional Network, Northern Illinois University; Kelly Cooper, Executive Director of Engineering Our Future, Rock Valley College*

- **Session 3C: *Building Effective Partnerships to Improve College and Career Outcomes*** (South Pavilion 5)

America Needs You (ANY) and Genesys Works share in the work of reducing the opportunity gap for students in underserved communities through career development, meaningful work experiences and impactful relationships. 26% of first-generation college students leave school after freshman year, but the problem does not stop there. Only 11% will graduate within 6 years, and for the 11% who do graduate, they are earning 10% less than their peers in the workplace. It is extremely difficult for any organization or college to independently provide every support necessary to reverse this trend. However, organizations and schools can thoughtfully partner so that students have continuous support as they navigate college and prepare for a career. During this workshop, we will share an overview of our organizations and our student support structure. We will discuss why we've chosen to partner, how we partner and the results of this partnership. Audience members will learn how to effectively seek out and build partnerships that will ensure maximum support and both college and career success for their students.

Presenters: *Liz Buerger, Illinois Program Manager, America Needs You; Julia Logan, Senior Program Manager of Alumni Services, Genesys Works; Charlene Figueroa, Program Coordinator, America Needs You*

- **Session 3D: *It Takes a Village to Retain a Student*** (South Pavilion 6)

Roosevelt University has developed a retention strategy, which has resulted in an increase in freshmen retention of 11%. This strategy enlists the help of a "village" – Academic Advising, Tutoring, Financial Aid Services, and Career Services – and takes a holistic approach for each student. By revising student communications, implementing early alerts and building student milestones, the approach has made a difference at Roosevelt and can make a difference at your institution too.

Presenters: *Michelle Stipp, Director, Financial Aid Services, Roosevelt University; Linda Davis, Associate Director of Advising, Roosevelt University; Katrina Coakley, Associate Provost, Student Success, Roosevelt University*

- **Session 3E: *High School Healthcare Internships and So Can You: A Case Study*** (Samuel Tinley Room)

This session will focus on the creation of a high school internship program at one of Greater Peoria's largest healthcare institutions, UnityPoint Health - Peoria. Over the past two years, a partnership between UnityPoint and the GPEDC has worked to create, pilot, formalize, and scale internship experiences for local high school students in a range of healthcare careers, including clinical areas that will have hosted 22 students by the end of 2018. Our presentation will highlight the process from conceptualization, to employer engagement, to program creation/stabilization, and scaling/sustainability into the future.

Presenters: *Brent Baker, Greater Peoria Pathways Co-Director, Greater Peoria Economic Development Council; Courtney Newgard, Talent Acquisition Manager, UnityPoint Health - Peoria*

- **Session 3F: *Understanding & Diversifying the Teaching Profession: Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois*** (Bremen Room)

In an effort to understand the current teaching demographics in Illinois, we are presenting current information available through ISBE along with Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois impact in increasing diversity across Illinois school districts. The goal is to inform participants of the need for qualified, diverse teachers in the profession.

Presenters: *Lauren Perez Pietruszka, Director of Academic and Social Supports, Golden Apple Foundation; Dave Marcial, Director of Recruitment, Golden Apple Foundation*

- **Session 3G: *Statewide Implementation of the State Seal of Biliteracy*** (North Pavilion 1)

The State Seal of Biliteracy is gaining momentum as it recognizes graduating high school seniors for their language skills. Now, state colleges are required to award college credit to the Seal recipients. Learn more about this exciting initiative.

Presenter: *Luis Narvaez, Director, Chicago Public Schools*

- **Session 3H: *Financial Literacy as a Strategic Tool for College Choice, Readiness and Persistence*** (North Pavilion 2)

Families describe college as one of the most important goals in their lives – and it's also one of the most expensive. Often, though, students and parents are making crucial decisions about which school to attend, academic major and career plans without a clear understanding of the long-term financial impacts. This session will explore the results of a nationwide survey on school counselors' attitudes toward, and preparation for, advising students on college affordability, as well as offer advice on how college access practitioners on the ground can support counselor efforts to help families make better informed decisions. Presenters will also share details of how one university is developing a culturally relevant, financial literacy strategy to help students thrive in higher education and create a more level playing field for underserved students who struggle to enter higher education and persist.

Presenters: *Ashley Norwood, Manager of Community Outreach, American Student Assistance; Evie Peterson, Program Coordinator, North Park University*

- **Session 3I: *Governor State University & Crete Monee High School Partnering Up for Student Success*** (North Pavilion 3)

GSU and CMHS formed a solid partnership by creating a MOU for identified high school students in getting them college prepared. We are aware that a majority of high school students are "ghost" which is uninvolved and silent. These students need that special touch when it comes to being a successful student in college. Learn what it took to build this 4-year College and High School relationship, how to identify the right students, and what it takes to create positive outcomes for student success.

Presenters: *Kristy Goodwin, Director, College Pathways Program, Governors State University; Marjorie Triche, Principal, Crete Monee High School*

- **Session 3J: *College and Career Programs Supporting Youth from Foster Care*** (North Pavilion 6)

Find Your Future, My Time, First Star Scholars, Bridging Success, and Foster Progress come together in this panel of programs serving youth from foster care to discuss the intersection between college and career readiness and our programs' impact on the vulnerable population we serve.

Presenters: *Kate Danielson, Executive Director, Foster Progress; Leticia Fiorito, Find Your Future at Kaleidoscope; Molly Uhe, Deputy Director of Education and Transition Services, Department of Children and Family Services; Jeremy Harvey, Deputy Director of Strategy and Innovation, Department of Children and Family Services*

Break – 3:20-3:30 pm

Round 4 – 3:30-4:20 pm

- **Session 4A: *Redefining Engagement: Connections that Cultivate Persistence and Maximize the Campus Experience*** (South Pavilion 3)

Governors State University's Dual Degree Program & Male Success Initiative are building a network of high schools and colleges working together to graduate more men of color. This session will detail the mission of these unique programs, while discussing the lessons learned and best practices when constructing programming for underrepresented male students. Join us for an interactive conversation on how we can redefine campus engagement and maximize the academic experience for this population of students.

Presenters: *Sean Smith, Coordinator - Male Success Initiative, Governors State University; Jessica Specht, Dual Degree Program Director, Governors State University*

- **Session 4B: *Unequal Opportunity in Illinois: A Look at College Graduation*** (South Pavilion 4)

In 2017, the Partnership for College Completion released a report on college attainment in Illinois that provided a detailed look at college access, affordability, and completion in the state. In the fall of 2018, we will release another report on college-going, persistence and completion in the seven county region surrounding and including Chicago. Through an interactive discussion, we will examine student trajectories in our state and progress in pursuit of Illinois' 60 by '25 Goal through an equity lens, with a focus on college degree attainment, achievement gaps, and institutions that are beating the odds.

Presenter: *Kyle Westbrook, Executive Director, Partnership for College Completion*

- **Session 4C: *A Strengths-based Approach to Career Development*** (South Pavilion 5)

This workshop will showcase a strengths-based model for career development that is both digital and advising-centered. Students explore their talents (Gallup Themes), areas of interests (Holland Occupational Themes), and values to navigate academic and career planning with self-awareness. Following this, students research relevant career possibilities and set goals informed by their own strengths and real-world job market data. Workshop participants will walk away with a toolkit for implementing effective, strengths-centered career advising.

Presenter: *Jesse Rutschman, TRIO Enrollment Coordinator, Northeastern Illinois University*

- **Session 4D: *Promoting STEAM Learning in Preparation for College Access and Success*** (South Pavilion 6)

Participants will explore a path of two pre-college programs to motivate students, started from middle to high school, to investigate the STEAM fields and STEM career opportunities, as a possibility to continue their education in college. Activities and evaluations of the middle school program, Scientists for Tomorrow, and the high school program, Junior Research Scientists, will be introduced in the presentation.

Presenter: *Marcelo Caplan, Associate Professor, Science and Mathematics Department - Columbia College Chicago*

- **Session 4E: *College Graduation Myths: The Fallacies Driving Inequality*** (Samuel Tinley Room)

In this panel discussion with college students and recent graduates, we discuss college graduation myths, using facts and data to dispel them as false. As an organization focused on dramatically increasing college graduation for over 10 years, we have noticed there are college myths that have become significant barriers for many students. Topics we cover include: some college is better than no college; if you're smart enough and work hard, you'll graduate; remedial classes are a stepping stone to success; money myths; and more. Learn how and why we need to change aspects of our current system that are based on these outdated myths, so that everyone has the same opportunity to succeed.

Presenter: *Marci Koblenz, President, Center for Companies That Care; Ama Appenteng, Program Director, Center for Companies That Care*

- **Session 4F: *TransferREADY*** (Bremen Room)

Learn about this recently launched web tool that serves as a resource to high school students/parents/counselors for planning the transfer path to a baccalaureate degree. This site is broadly applicable across institutions, to all users, and brings together a myriad of statewide resources on transfer. It was developed based on need expressed among IL high schools' college counselors.

Presenter: *Dena Lawrence, State Coordinator, Illinois MyCreditsTransfer*

- **Session 4G: *When Money Is Just Part of the Problem: Hidden Barriers to Financial Aid*** (North Pavilion 1)

This session will familiarize those without a financial aid background with some common non-financial issues encountered by students trying to access financial aid, as well as how to help point the student in the right direction toward solving them. These include issues related to citizenship status, gender identity, criminal history, and others.

Presenter: *Danielle Long, Financial Aid Specialist, College of Lake County*

- **Session 4H: *Connecting Illinois Youth to Services Before, During and After College: the Service Provider Identification and Exploration Resource (SPIDER)*** (North Pavilion 2)

The Service Provider Identification & Exploration Resource (SPIDER) is a FREE, comprehensive online resource identification database for the state of Illinois. SPIDER connects service providers, individuals, families, and communities to useful and timely social service resources. It includes detailed information on more than 1,700 agencies and over 4,200 social service programs like mentoring, financial assistance, counseling, and much more. All agencies and programs are geo-coded to allow users to locate programs near a preferred location. During this session you will learn the ins and outs of SPIDER, how to use it, and how your students and their families can use it to locate needed resources in their community.

Presenter: *Noelle Cothorn, MSW, Health Interviewer & Training Coordinator, SPIDER, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and Northwestern University*