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Building awareness of the inclusive postsecondary experiences that are offered across the state has been a key strategic objective of our Consortium. Now with 27 member institutions of higher education along with others who have joined to be a part of our energy and enthusiasm, supporting our unified vision, we are also charged with helping programs develop sustainability. In the recent weeks, several of our Consortium members have been faced with the reality that the programs they operate may not continue. Regardless of how long a program has been operating, our postsecondary initiatives for students with intellectual disability as a field, remains in its infancy; every program is fragile. There are some who claim that our programs are not "financially sustainable"; this, however, is far from the truth. We have resources in our state that other states do not, i.e. Medicaid Waiver for postsecondary education. What we have learned is that financial sustainability can be achieved with a few key ingredients:

- 1) A sound business plan that produces revenue within a 3 to 5 years period after initial implementation;
- 2) Stakeholders that come from across university departments that take ownership and understanding of the mission we are aiming to achieve;
- 3) A key champion who develops a core team of individuals to achieve the development and implementation of a program of study; and
- 4) Administration that understands and supports the inclusive mission that we embrace.

Finding the "hacks" or quick ways to achieve these ends is never easy, and yet it is simple. The answer is found in building relationships with each person with whom we engage. Every interaction that we encounter, we have the opportunity to build a meaningful relationship and share our message. We learn from one another and continue to lean on our Consortium network. Education, coupled with bountiful perseverance is what helps to achieve our objective – program sustainability.

As each of you focus on your program each day, I encourage you to share successes and challenges with others in our Consortium. The strength of being part of a bigger movement to bring full inclusive college experiences for young adults with intellectual disability is contagious.

Ann Marie Licata, Ph.D., Director



Program staff and students from West Chester University RAM Initiative (above) and Mercyhurst Oasis (left) share smiles of achievement of efforts made in their respective programs.

WHAT IS HAPPENING

- [PEAC 's 8th Annual Inclusion Conference: Leadership Brings Change will be held at the Event Center at Sugar House Casino in Philadelphia on November 6, 2019](#)
- [The Secondary Transition Options and Resources Fair will be held on November 7th, 2019, at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 in Doylestown, PA](#)
- [STATE OF THE ART 2019 will be held on November 13-14, 2019 at the Silver Legacy Expo Center and University of Nevada, Reno](#)
- [Lehigh Carbon Community College's The Next Step, Transition Resource Fair will be held here on Schnecksville campus on November 15, 2019.](#)
- [2019 AUCD Conference, Leading Change Together will be held on November 17-20 in Washington, DC](#)
- [2019 TASH Conference: Building Diverse and Inclusive Communities will be held on December 5-7, 2019 at the Sheraton Grand in Phoenix, AZ](#)
- [EVERYDAY LIVES Conference will be held on January 7-9, 2020 at Hershey Lodge, PA](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ticket to Work (Ticket) program is a free and voluntary program that can help Social Security beneficiaries go to work, get a good job that may lead to a career, and become financially independent, all while they keep their Medicare or Medicaid.

Find more at: <https://www.ssa.gov/work/>

