

Workshop Descriptions

Morning Concurrent Sessions – 10:20am-11:20am

Transforming Workplace Stress and Creating Balance

Presenter: Thulani DeMarsay, GEAR UP Educational Advisor at East Boston High School and Life Coach

Description: Thulani offers a holistic approach to understanding the root causes of stress and provides practical strategies for creating balance and building resilience. Thulani will guide you on a restorative relaxation journey that can be done daily to maintain balance and well-being.

Gang Awareness

Presenter: Sgt. Steven Roche, Gang Unit for Worcester Police Department

Description: When you think of gangs, you might think of a movie that takes place in L.A., but the truth is gangs are real and quite relevant in MA cities. Sgt. Roche will offer a fascinating look into the world of gangs and discuss what is happening in the Worcester and surrounding communities in regards to gang activity. He will also describe the various gangs in the area and educate staff as to how to identify if students are exploring and/or actively participating in gang activity. Participants will receive information on how to identify gang involved youth through their clothing, behavior, and signs.

It's Never Too Late! Giving Hope and Opening the Door of Opportunity for Adult College Students

Presenters: Holly Kreidler-Phaneuf, Assistant Director of North Central Educational Opportunity Center at Mount Wachusett Community College and Valerie LaPorte, Director of North Central Educational Opportunity Center at Mount Wachusett Community College

Description: This workshop will provide those working with adult students perspective on the role we play in offering hope and guidance to this population. Drawing from our experience, we will define the adult student's learning needs and explore their concerns and fears in attending college. Using a student-centered model, we will come up with tools that can be integrated into our daily work that encourages and challenges our students to persevere with their educational goals.

Bullying and Cyber Safety Presentation from the Office of Worcester District Attorney Early

Presenter: Ellen Miller, Community Outreach Liaison, School and Community Outreach Program, District Attorney Earl's Office

Description: This workshop will cover the new bullying law and existing laws around bullying. Participants will walk away with clear definitions of bullying and cyberbullying. Participants will also hear about emerging and existing technology and how this technology fits into bullying/cyberbullying issues.

Workshop Descriptions

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions – 1:00pm-2:00pm

My FAFSA is Complete—What Do you Mean I’m Not Done?

Presenters: Joanne Dashiell, Manager of Student and Parent Education Services, MEFA and Lynne Myers, Director of Financial Aid, College of the Holy Cross

Description: Completing the FAFSA is the first step in applying for financial aid, but often times it isn't the final step in the process. This session offers a detailed look as well as updates regarding other components that are often required in order for colleges to calculate a financial aid award - including completing the CSS Profile and federal verification. The discussion will focus on how advisors can effectively advise low-income, first generation students through the process.

Financial Literacy and More with Making it Count

Presenter: Tracy Early, Motivational Speaker and Trainer

Description: In this presentation participants will learn more about the presentations Making It Count has to offer. Making it Count offers free, interactive presentations for students nationwide. These are their three presentations for high school students. Making College & Career Count is a program for seniors about making the transition into college and/or a career. This program covers many topics including time and money management and avoiding credit card debt. Making Your College Search Count is for juniors about the college search process and how to manage it. This program includes information on the financial aid process and difference between grants, loans & scholarships. The third program is Ultimate Money Skills: High School which is their financial literacy program about developing smart money management skills. This program covers everything from banking, budgeting, credit, and loans. These programs can be used for adults.

Bringing Mind-Body Medicine into the Classroom: An Experiential Approach

Presenter: Megan Furnari, 4th Year Medical Student, University of Massachusetts Medical School and Vinny Mitchell, 4th Year Medical Student, University of Massachusetts Medical School

Description: This workshop will explore how to creatively engage students with alternative medicine practices. A short discussion about theory will be followed by an interactive session using mind-body stress reduction techniques focused on tuning into the breath and the body. The ultimate goal being to empower students to think about their health, wellness, and their own family's culture of medicine.

A Student-Centered Approach to Implementing College Readiness Assessments

Presenter: Heather Woodcock Ayers, Senior Educational Manager, K-12 Services at the New England Regional Office of the College Board

Description: What does it mean to organize assessments like the PSAT, SAT, AP and ACCUPLACER in a manner that makes them truly educationally effective? What strategies help students not only to prepare and perform to the best of their ability but to derive the full benefits of these programs in preparation for post-secondary studies. These guiding question will be the focus of an interactive conversation where we'll take a look at the relationship among and between what can seem like an "alphabet soup" of assessments, available resources, and best practice approaches to leveraging these resources in our work with students.