



**NASPA**

Adult Learners and  
Students with  
Children KC

February 01, 2018

# Crossroads

**Adult Learner and Students with Children  
KC Newsletter**

**Quarterly Update**

Volume 5, Issue 1  
Winter 2018



## Inside...

A Letter from  
our outgoing  
Chair

DACA and  
Adults

NASPA  
Highlighted  
Events

Runner Up for  
Outstanding  
Undergradu-  
ate Student  
Parent Award  
Program

Cory Rusin  
writes, Shifting  
the View from  
Dropout to  
Stopout

Student  
Spotlight: Meet  
Ann Madden

Pg. 2

Pg. 2

Pg. 3

Pg. 4

Pg. 5

Pg.6



**James Stewart is  
Director of The  
Adult, Veteran and  
Commuter Student  
Services at DePaul  
University, Chicago  
IL.**

**Please contact  
Chair-elect Martha  
Harper to see how  
you can be  
involved.**

ALSKnowledgeCommunity  
@gmail.com  
1-804-827-7403

## Letter from the Chair

Greetings Adult Learners and Students with Children KC, It is with many emotions that I write you for the last time as chair. This two year journey has flown by!

First and foremost, I want to thank the others in leadership and membership that have been active. Nothing in our KC could be accomplished without a team of dedicated, inspirational, intelligent, and tenacious professionals. It truly takes a village. You all helped me in so many ways get through this two year experience.

In the last two years we have developed our new quarterly open calls, laid ground work for two online learning modules, written articles, newsletters, brought on new members, and developed great content at the regional and

national level.

There is much work to do, but you could not be in more capable hands with Martha Harper. Martha has a passion for our populations that is hard to match, and I know that energy will benefit us all.

Having been with our KC since the very beginning and before, I consider it one of the major aspects of my NASPA experience. It has been a true honor and I look forward to continuing working with you all under Martha's leadership!  
James



## First Friday Forum Feb. 2nd: DACA and Adults

Four times a year, The Adult Learners and Students with Children Knowledge Community holds a forum, in place of their business meeting, in which all active, inactive, semi-active, and outside the KC NASPA members are invited to take part. These forums are designed to bring topical discussions about the work we do, especially in KCs devoted to equity and justice for students.

This month we will discuss the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Act (DACA) and the growing confusion over the Country's leadership and efforts to rescind DACA or to maintain it, and honor the promises made to Dreamers who revealed themselves, filed their I-82D, and received permission to live, work and get educated in the United States.

To join our discussion, led by James Stewart, ALSC KC Chair with support from our friends in the Latinx/a/o KC, simply open your lunch, close your office door, pick up the phone and dial 515-739-1015 at 12 Noon Central Standard Time. At the prompt enter the meeting by pressing 520-858-503. We look forward to hearing you there!

**Future Forums are on these First Fridays!**  
**May 4th, 2018**  
**August 3rd, 2018**  
**November 2nd, 2018**

**At Meeting time, 12 Noon Central, call  
520-739-1015. Follow the prompts for the  
Meeting ID and enter 520-858-503**

## Volunteers Needed!

The ALSC KC relies on the involvement of its members to continue to create content and spread best practices for serving our population. There are several positions needed now in **Volunteer Central** on NASPA, simply search for our KC. For example, we need someone who could **write this newsletter** once a quarter! We need members to **submit their programs** for our awards and volunteer to serve on committees. We need members to **present at regional and national conferences**. If you have a presentation about adult learners or parenting students, please let us know so we can support you. And, informally, any member who routinely joins our First Friday calls is considered a **leader of our KC**.

How can you help?

To get more engaged with our KC,

Make sure your notification settings are set so that you receive KC emails with reminders for our monthly meetings and important events in the ALSC KC.

If you will be at NASPA, stop in and listen at our leadership meeting and/or attend our reception. (see page 2 for Naspa details)

Go to Volunteer Central in your engagement portal and see if there is a position that is right for you.

Join our monthly leadership team meeting calls. First Friday of the Month

## Lets Get Ready to NASPA

It's that time of year and we are so excited to meet everyone at NASPA. Our KC is proud to sponsor two sessions this year as well as hold our annual leadership team meeting and reception for our award winning programs.

### KC Sponsored Education Sessions and Other Programs

<b>Monday, March 5th</b>	<b>Venue/Room</b>
<b>8:00am to 8:50am</b>	KC Sponsored
<i>Keeping Parenting Students in School: What Schools have done to Increase Student Parent Success</i>	Convention Center / 121C
<b>2:30pm to 3:20pm</b>	KC Sponsored
<i>Serving and Retaining Non-Traditional Undergraduate and Graduate Students: Adult, Online and Graduate Students</i>	Convention Center / 121C
<b>Other Programs of Interest March 5th</b>	<b>Venue/Room</b>
<b>8:00am to 8:50am</b>	KC Relevant
<i>Former Students Returning: A Model for Building Confidence</i>	Junipers Ballroom /Courtyard
<b>10:10am to 11:00am</b>	KC Relevant
<i>Strategies to Engage Traditional and Non-Traditional Students in Campus Programming</i>	Convention Center / 116

The Leadership Team Meeting will be Sunday March 4th from 1 to 3pm EST. All who are members of our KC are invited to attend and observe this business meeting which will be in lieu of our March First Friday meeting. This year there will be a virtual opportunity for those not attending NASPA. [Marriott Downtown Rm. 304 \(515-739-1015 ID 520-858-503\)](#)

### 3rd Annual Outstanding Undergraduate Program Awards

**You are cordially invited to join our annual KC Reception at NASPA 2018,**

**Tuesday March 6th, 4:00 to 6:00pm Courtyard Marriott Salon 1**

**We are excited to celebrate another successful year and our**

The Outstanding Undergraduate Adult Learner Program Award goes to...

Broome County HEARS  
Binghamton Univ.  
SUNY Broome  
Broome County Promise Zone

The Outstanding Undergraduate Student Parent Program Award goes to...

The Adult Reentry and Parenting Students Program  
California State Fullerton

The ALSC KC Research Grant to further knowledge in our field goes to...

Erica Phillips  
*Financial Wellness Among Students with Dependent Children*

# West Virginia University Student Family Resources

## 2018 Runner Up

### Outstanding Undergraduate Student Parent Program Applicant

**The Student Parent Resource Center offers the following support for Pregnant and Parenting Students.**

**Summer Camps  
Drop In Care Hours  
Lactation spaces  
Childcare Resources  
Child Learning Center  
Financial Assistance  
Babysitting network  
Lending Library  
Parent Education**

**The 2018 Winner of the Outstanding Undergraduate Student Parent Program will receive their award at the NASPA ALSC KC Reception Tuesday March 6th 4-6pm Courtyard Marriott Salon 1**

If any of us who work with Student Parents could dream our lottery dream for this population, the first thing we would put in place is comprehensive childcare. While many universities continue to assess their childcare services by whether or not they lose money, West Virginia University is fighting to show that student success outcomes require wrap around support. The cost of childcare can be high, but the success of student parents is an investment that will return.

With the help of a Federal CCAMPIS grant, the team in Student Family Resources

provides wrap around support for students in need of childcare. Whether they need a grant for an off campus facility or enrollment in WVU's Child Development Center, they get the help they need from Director Leslie Haning and her team. WVU does have its own full service Child Learning Center; however, students cannot always use university childcare services that are competitively rated with the community, and require a full time commitment. For this reason, many childcare centers on campuses are dominated by the children of staff and faculty not students. WVU creatively

helps students by providing childcare scholarships that can be used at on and off campus facilities, and they provide comprehensive lists of accredited childcare services in Morgantown. The best part is Mountaineer Kidzone, a separate function from the Child Learning Center that provides interactive and age appropriate activities for kids in the Student Rec Center that allows parents to attend a class, exercise, go to a club meeting, speaker or other event.

-Martha Harper Awards Selection Committee ALSC KC NASPA



*"Thank you for making this program for us, because without it we would have been struggling from graduating early or even enrolling in more credits and not being able to sign up in some classes because of the early time or late time."* Hadi Alameer (WVU Engineering and Mineral Resources)



# Shifting the View from Dropout to Stopout

Page 5

“Dropout.” What is the first thought that comes into your mind when you hear this phrase? By definition, a dropout is one who abandons an attempt, activity, or chosen path.<sup>1</sup> The experiences of the students I work with<sup>2</sup> fit more closely to the definition of ‘stopout,’ to withdraw temporarily from enrollment at a college or university.<sup>3</sup> Their displacement from higher education is not a result of abandonment, but of a change in the direction of their path.

How we frame the language around students leaving college is important. If we begin conversation about college re-enrollment by calling them a dropout, by insinuating that they ‘gave up’, we ignore the true obstacles they face. We resign these students to failure instead of asking how we, as administrators and faculty, can help these students complete their education.

## Barriers to education

So, why do college students leave school in the first place? There are multiple obstacles I’ve seen in my own work as well as those that have been documented by research such as a mental or physical health crisis, lack of financial resources, gaining full-time employment, or starting a family.<sup>4</sup> These barriers ultimately take form in three categories: situational, institutional, and dispositional.<sup>5</sup>

Imagine that you are 20 years old and a computer engineering company you had a summer internship at has offered you a high salary with full-benefits. They want you to start immediately, but that would mean putting your education on the back burner. What would you do? Many of my students have chosen employment, whether because they received an offer they “just couldn’t ignore” or to support their families. They often realize later they need a degree in order to advance further in their career. This is one example of a visible situational barrier that competes with a student’s academic goals.<sup>6</sup>

Let’s say you end up deciding you do want to go back to finish your degree, but you want to maintain full employment since after leaving school you started a family. Your situational barriers may start to clash with

institutional barriers, those that are embedded within the college or university itself. The courses you have left to complete may not be offered as night, weekend, or online courses. If you do find courses that fit into your free time, your faculty’s office hours may not accommodate your extended schedule.<sup>7</sup>

Now imagine you’ve gone through this process several times. You’ve come close to re-enrolling before, had your classes picked out, paid the deposit, but each time a barrier has popped up that required you to withdraw for the time being. What kind of toll would this take on your confidence in returning to school? Dispositional barriers account for these personal characteristics that can affect degree completion. These include low self-esteem, anxiety about succeeding in school,<sup>8</sup> and feeling out of place at a college.<sup>9</sup>

## Why does the language matter?

The term dropout does a disservice to students. This mind frame supports a “single standard” for college students,

where those who fail to take the normal, two or four-year path to a degree are labeled negatively and blamed for abandoning<sup>10</sup> their education.<sup>10</sup> This is not a matter of political correctness, it is one of framing the question on how we help

students who have stopped out. By acknowledging that there are oftentimes multiple barriers that affect a student’s withdrawal from college and looking at their leave as a temporary stop instead of as a decision to abandon their education entirely, we set the stage for better policies and supports that help students to succeed.

I challenge you to shift the view, start the conversation, and stop calling students who take a different path towards their educational goals dropouts. Not only that, be the guide these students need. Ask more questions. When you receive a re-enrollment form, offer a student information on support services at the university. If a student isn’t showing up for class or office hours, ask why. Break down the barriers to re-enrollment, don’t build them.

Cory Rusin

**Cory Rusin**  
Is a Student Success Coordinator for Broome County HEARS at Binghamton University.

Cory is pursuing her Ph.D. in Community Research & Action focusing on the barriers to re-enrollment in higher education.

Broome County HEARS is the 2018 Outstanding Undergraduate Adult Learner Program Award Winner for the ALSC KC



Courtesy of Steve McFarland Flickr

1. dropout. In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved Sept 24, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dropout>

2. Student Success Coordinator, Broome County HEARS (Higher Education Access, Retention, and Success)

3. stop out In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved Sept 24, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stop%20out>

4. Osam, E. K., Bergman, M., & Cumberland, D. M. (2017). An integrative literature review on the barriers impacting adult learners' return to college. *Adult Learning*, 28(2), 54-60.

5. Osam, E. K., Bergman, M., & Cumberland, D. M. (2017). An integrative literature review on the barriers impacting adult learners' return to college. *Adult Learning*, 28(2), 54-60.

6. Goto, S. T., & Martin, C. (2009). Psychology of success: Overcoming barriers to pursuing further education. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 57(1), 10-21.

7. Hardin, C. J. (2008). Adult students in higher education: A portrait of transitions. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2008(144), 49-57.

8. Goto, S. T., & Martin, C. (2009). Psychology of success: Overcoming barriers to pursuing further education. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 57(1), 10-21.

9. Flynn, S., Brown, J., Johnson, A., & Rodger, S. (2011). Barriers to education for the marginalized adult learner. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 57(1), 43-58.

10. Seidman, E. (1983). *Handbook of social intervention*, 54.

## Meet Ann Madden

Ann started at APSU in the spring of 2015 after some tough academic and personal setbacks. She graduated from APSU on December 15th, 2017 with a 3.9 Institutional GPA and a B.S. in Psychology. Ann's transcript is the picture of what returning students can do when given the support and care they need.

Do you know a nontraditional student with a unique perspective like Ann? Encourage the student to share their story and we will select compelling ones for publication here and on our social media.

You can send spotlights to Alscknowledgecommunity@gmail.com

# Student Spotlight

*When I first met Ann Madden, she was sitting in a meeting room around a large square table and just a little nervous. Her hair was dyed cherry red and her backpack on the table, securely hugged to her breast waiting for Adult Café to start. Little did I know that Ann would go on to be my biggest marketing machine and enthusiastic supporter for adult engagement at Austin Peay State University. Here is Ann in her own words. Martha Harper , former Coordinator of Adult & Nontraditional Student Center APSU*

**As an undergraduate nontraditional student, what measures did you take to engage in your university?**

*My very first semester back, I was fortunate to see a poster for "Adult Café: Involvement for the Rest of Us." I was not sure what that exactly meant, but knew that I wanted to get involved in something. I, like so many others, believed that there were no opportunities for a nontraditional student to get involved on a college campus. I became a member of Adult Café and my involvement on campus grew from there.*

**At what point did school really click for you?**

*School really clicked for me after I started meeting other Adult students. When I realized that I was not the only person my age trying to get my degree. Also, meeting people allowed me to have someone to hold me accountable for my school actions. The people in my first Adult Café group are my friends to this day.*

*We have helped each other get through college and made sure that we all graduated and are ready for our next adventure in life.*

**As an award winning student, what was the favorite honor or award you received while at Austin Peay?**

*My favorite award that I received from my university was the Outstanding Graduate for my department. This award means so much to me because I feel as though I won this award for every nontraditional student. This award proves that nontraditional students can be just as competitive and successful as any traditional student. To me, this award says "Do not count us out because of our age or life situations.*

**What is the first piece of advice you would give to an adult who is thinking about going back to college?**

*The first piece of advice I would give to an adult thinking of returning is DO IT!! You can do this. It is never too late to learn and to make a difference in your own life, and those around you. Get involved, make your presence known on that campus. Take that university by storm!!!*

**What is next for Ann Madden?**

*I learned a lot about myself in the years of my undergraduate degree. I found that inside a lab doing research is my happy place. For me, the next step is a graduate program in experimental psychology. I want that hood. After that, my PH.D. I will not stop until I get to the top of the mountain. Despite all the hurdles, I know that view will be beautiful!!*



Photo: Stephen Schlegel

**Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter!**



<https://www.facebook.com/naspaalsckc>

<https://twitter.com/NASPAALSCKC>