

PRACTICES EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER

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<https://yeswemustcoalition.org>

Issue 43

This year the Practices Exchange Newsletter is dedicated with appreciation and admiration to the memory of Dr. Nia Lane Chester, the newsletter's founding editor and program manager of the Yes We Must Coalition.

Higher Education in These Times In order to provide a forum for YWMC members to share strategies and raise questions with one another during these uncertain times, the Yes We Must Coalition will continue the Open Forums begun last year. Each month we will offer both a general session, open to anyone at a member school, and a faculty session for all faculty at member schools. Information regarding links to these sessions is sent out via the email lists for YWMC Google Groups. We welcome all members who wish to join the conversation.

Growing the Coalition If you know a school that should be a member of the Yes We Must Coalition, please connect us with them. Growing numbers make us stronger in the work we do together and the voice we raise on behalf of low-income students. Please get in touch with Gloria Nemerowicz, President, at glorianemerowicz@yeswemustcoalition.org.

YWMC MEMBER SHOWCASE: Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology



Vaughn College, located in New York City and founded in 1932, is a private, nonprofit, four-year college that enrolls 1400 students. With a student-faculty ratio of 14 to 1, those who attend Vaughn are ensured a highly personalized learning environment. Many of the students are first-generation, and 90% of students receive some type of financial aid. The College is recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. For 12 years in a row, U.S. News & World Report has recognized Vaughn as a best regional college in the Northeast. Vaughn joined the Yes We Must Coalition in August 2019.

Vaughn offers associate and bachelor's degree programs in engineering, technology, management and aviation on its main campus and online. It also offers a master's degree in airport management and an MBA in aviation management. Vaughn is one of the only institutions in New York to offer a degree in mechatronic engineering, and it is one of only four institutions in the country that received accreditation for the programs by the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of ABET. Students have opportunities to engage in internships with engineering, management and aviation-related companies such as United Technologies Corporation, NASA and the MTA. This real-world experience helps them to explore career options as well as to build expertise in their field of study. Ninety-nine percent of Vaughn College graduates are placed in professional positions — 89 percent in their field of study — or choose to continue their education within one year of graduation.

Recent improvements in the College's laboratory equipment have added to the Vaughn experience. A leading-edge engineering lab allows students to experience the application of automation technology through the use of robotic devices. A new chemistry lab and a new energy conversion and smart grid power system lab have also been added. The engineering curriculum provides students with opportunities to learn and apply design software such as SolidWorks and CATIA (Computer-Aided Three-Dimensional Interactive Application).



Vaughn houses a \$1-million flight simulator laboratory that enables students to take off alongside a member of the flight faculty to complement the learning experience. Partnerships with flight training institutions enable students to pursue Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight certifications and ratings. Vaughn recently expanded the current training program with an air traffic control simulation laboratory that allows students to train on the same state-of-the-art equipment used by the FAA; and an associate of occupational studies in aviation maintenance, along with FAA airframe and powerplant certification, is available through Vaughn's Aviation Training Institute.

The College's residence hall features panoramic views of Manhattan, and staff are eager to assist students in taking advantage of all that New York City has to offer. The College provides students with an array of clubs and organizations including the Robotics Club, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Club, American Association of Airport Executives–Student Chapter, Women in Aviation, International and the Hispanic Society of Aeronautical Engineers. Vaughn competes in intercollegiate athletics as a member of the Hudson Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (HVIAC) and offers eight intercollegiate sports program — men's and women's basketball, men's soccer and baseball, men's and women's cross country and men's and women's tennis. For more information, contact Maureen Kiggins, Assistant Vice President, Public Affairs, at Maureen.kiggins@vaughn.edu.

Institutional Resources/Practices

University of the Ozarks: Trio Student Support Services

We know that a student's experience during their first semester is crucial to persistence and performance throughout the student's college education, and this is especially true of first-generation and low-income college students. At the **University of the Ozarks**, 58% of the domestic students are Pell-eligible, and of the University's 800+ students, nearly 40% are considered first-generation.

In the fall of 2019, as a first step in assisting this at-risk population, Ozarks' Student Support Services (SSS) conducted a student survey to gauge areas of concern for students. The results found that 91% of students said that exams created anxiety, and 52% said they had difficulty managing their time. More than half of the students (52%) said that high school did not adequately prepare them for college, and 79% said that an orientation to college class would have better prepared them for their freshman year.

With those results in mind, Ozarks decided to create a mandatory "introduction to college" course called Ozarks Seminar (OS) for first-semester freshmen. To prepare the instructors to lead this new program, three Trio staff members joined seven other University staff members to take part in a Master Coaching Academy. Led by the consulting firm Take New Ground, this academy consisted of three separate three-day sessions over a four-month period as well as weekly coaching calls and assignments. The OS model was set up so that the University pays a percentage of the Trio staff salaries, enabling the Trio staff members to teach Ozarks Seminar.

In the fall of 2020, Ozarks implemented 13 Ozarks Seminar classes with an average of 15 freshmen in each. All instructors followed the same syllabus and focused on topics such as time management, test anxiety, budgeting, goal-setting, choosing a major, social media, campus resources, etc. Classes were supplemented by workshops led by campus experts that included Living with Stress, Thinking about Vision and Goals, Plagiarism, Library Resources, Majors and Careers and iPad Tips and Tricks. Students received one credit for the OS class.

The COVID pandemic necessitated adjustments in the first-year program. One OS class was taught online to support students not able to be on campus, and all workshops were held in a Zoom format and recorded so that students could go back and watch at their convenience.

To provide continuity with the OS support system, Ozarks Seminar instructors were assigned as advisors to the students they had in class thereby ensuring that instructors could monitor and assist their OS students throughout their entire freshman year. Once a student declared a major they were transitioned to a faculty advisor.

All students are encouraged to evaluate all their classes. The evaluations received for OS were so positive that Ozarks decided to continue the course in fall 2021 and move OS from a one-credit class to two 50-minute classes per week for two credits.

Ozarks' Student Support Services is committed to providing assistance to their participants throughout their academic career. For more information on Student Support Services, contact Connie High, SSS Director, chigh@ozarks.edu.

Submissions for Future Issues

YWMC members are encouraged to submit examples of policies, practices and/or resources that you have found to be effective in promoting student success and that you would like to share with your YWMC colleagues. We are particularly interested in examples of how members are addressing issues of social and racial justice. Send ideas for the newsletter to Barbara Kirby, Operations Manager, barbara@yeswemustcoalition.org.