

PRACTICES EXCHANGE

NEWSLETTER

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Issue 50

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: Keuka College

Keuka College is a private, four-year college in the heart of the Finger Lakes region of New York state. Its 290-acre campus is on the shore of Keuka Lake. Keuka's total undergraduate enrollment of just over 1,300 students, and its total graduate enrollment is approximately 230 students. Since the College's founding in 1890, Keuka has consistently honored and carried forward the vision of its founder, the Rev. George Harvey Ball, "to bring strength to our nation and help to humanity." Keuka College joined the Yes We Must Coalition in 2013.



Keuka offers students more than 50 bachelor's and master's degree programs, provides evening and online classes to online students throughout much of central and western New York; and has sister schools in China and Vietnam. Among the College's signature academic

programs are education, business management, and a variety of health and human services disciplines including occupational therapy, social work, and nursing. The nursing program was launched in the early 1940s at the behest of Eleanor Roosevelt, who twice visited the campus.

Education at Keuka is augmented by its trademark Field Period® program, a 140-hour experiential-learning activity begun in 1942. Students work with their professors and advisors and the Office of Internships to design and choose a location for one Field Period per year, an experience that might take place in their hometown or somewhere around the world. More than 94% of students credit Field Period as important in developing their careers, and graduates leave Keuka with significant real-world experience because of their immersion in experiential learning.



The annual Carl and Fanny Fribolin Lecture — bringing to campus notable speakers such as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Coretta Scott King, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and tennis star and Civil Rights advocate Arthur Ashe — also enriches the education Keuka offers.

More than 90% of Keuka College graduates are either employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation. A 2017 study by *The New York Times* found that Keuka College was in the top 10% of the nation's small private colleges for upward financial mobility. A majority of Keuka graduates build lives and careers in the communities of upstate New York. Alumni pursue productive and fulfilling lives as educators, scientists, business leaders, healthcare professionals, police officers, therapists, accountants, artists, and a host of other professions.

Keuka College fields 16 varsity athletics teams and is a member of the Empire 8 Conference, which it joined in 2020. The College was a founding member of the North Eastern Athletic Conference in 2004.

With 225 employees, Keuka is the largest private employer in New York state's Yates County. The College also hosts thousands of summer conference guests. Its annual regional economic impact is estimated at more than \$110 million. For more information, please contact Kevin Frisch, Director of Communications and Public Relations, at kfrisch@keuka.edu.

Institutional Resources/Practices

Closing the GAP: Trocaire College's Global Achievement Project Works to Alleviate Challenges Faced by International Students

Several years ago, Sister Marian Mullen RSM, '67, noticed a concerning trend among the international students she advised at **Trocaire College**. Many of them did not graduate, and if they did, their achievement came after significant academic and personal challenges.

Based on her observations and anecdotal stories from students, she proposed to Trocaire President Bassam Deeb a concentrated effort to look into these issues. Thus, the Global Achievement Project (GAP) was born.

“What I wanted to do is to find the gaps in our systems. What’s not happening, or what is, for international students? What are we doing or not doing that influences their success?”

Trocaire's roughly 70 international students represent more than 40 countries. Many lived in several countries before settling in the United States and during that time have acquired multiple languages. Trocaire launched GAP in fall 2017 with a semester of research into national-level studies concerning the issues international and refugee students face when they enroll in an English-speaking institution. The results reflected the experiences Trocaire students reported.

For instance, there is a documented hesitancy to ask questions in class among students who don't speak English as their first language. It can be a cultural issue, fear that it will be seen as disrespecting the teacher. It can also be a lingual issue. Formulating complex ideas in English that gets their question across clearly is difficult and there is fear of being mocked by classmates.

Another challenge these students face is timed testing. Until the students can “think” in English, they often cannot finish within the allowed time, leading to failing grades even if they know the material.

One important aspect of GAP is awareness. Faculty and staff workshops shared research and knowledge on language proficiency, differences in teaching and learning models throughout the world and cultural influences on learning. This has led to an overall increase in cultural awareness across the campus.

Students meet with the GAP coordinator regularly as well as with their academic advisor to receive guidance and support. The College also hosts two informal gatherings for the students to assist them in building community. Study groups among the students have also formed.

These international students bring so much to Trocaire College — perseverance, strength of character, adaptability. They will be a gift to the Buffalo community when they graduate. For more information about the GAP program, please contact Jacqueline Matheny, Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs/Communication, mathenyj@trocaire.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, barbarakirby@yeswemustcoalition.org.