

## Highlights of the 2012 MOSPA State Conference

"**Value the Moments**" was the theme for the 2012 State Conference. Everyone enthusiastically welcomed back Tim Cusack as keynote speaker. Tim spoke about learning more through participation. He demonstrated a variety of experiential exercises that can be used in the classroom and with coworkers. The goal is to enhance teamwork, leadership skills, self-advocacy and personal development. A wonderful time was had by all. They left with exercises that allow students and colleagues to own their own discoveries.

There were multiple individualized breakout sessions for participants to choose from throughout the course of the conference:

**The Top Ten Etiquette Tips for Building Business Relationships** was presented by Jim Benak, Hospitality Instructor from Southwestern Michigan College.

**Our Invisible Students: Homeless Children and Youth** was presented by Pam Kies-Lowe, State Coordinator for Homeless Education from the Michigan Department of Education and Shelly Marcusse, Prevention Consultant from the Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District. This session provided a basic overview of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the educational rights of homeless youth. Participants learned about the prevalence of homelessness among families and youth in Michigan, how to identify and assist homeless students, general guiding principles for support the education of this special population, and strategies to work with unaccompanied homeless youth to succeed, graduate and go on to post-secondary education.

**Looking at Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder** Differently was presented by Susan Sullivan from Southwestern Michigan College. This presentation was to provide individuals a better understanding of ASD and the strategies that are most effective for them to be successful in employment, independent living, higher education, and/or community participation.

**The Special Populations in CTE**, the Student Story was presented by Jacqueline Dannis, Education Research Consultant, Office of Career and Technical Education and Norma Times, Special Populations, Title IX Coordinator, both from the Michigan Department of Education. This session was to help participants recognize who these students are and how they are doing. It included specific longitudinal data on the enrollment and performance of each category of special populations students identified in Carl D. Perkins who enrolled in Michigan CTE programs. Questions were answered using data provided through CTEIS and survey results. The data used in this presentation is [here](#).

**Secondary Best Practices by Pathway** was presented by Charles Schwarz, CTC Principal/Assistant Director from Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center. Attendees were grouped by pathways to meet with peers and build new relationships. Discussions included how teachers can assist you in doing your job more effectively (lesson plans, IEP info, etc.), motivation strategies for the less than enthused student, and how to advocate for students.

**Behavior Intervention Teams (BIT)** was presented by Bev Baligad, Director of Student Compliance from Lansing Community College. Attendees learned how LCC BIT was created and the processes it uses to address students who may be of concern to their campus. They learned how to tell the difference between a student who is concerned versus a student whose behavior is concerning. Attendees were also provided with the kind of information the team is expected to know and the resources needed to assist students.

Partnering for a Smooth Transition to WORC (Work Opportunity Readiness Collaboration) was presented by Venita King, District Manager, Oakland County from the Michigan Rehabilitation Services. Attendees learned about WORC and its unique partnership between Michigan Rehab Services, school districts, families and business. WORC provides training, skill building, work experience and employment to students in their last year of high school. WORC requires a commitment and active participation from families.

**Bullying: Tips for Calming the Wave of School Violence** was presented by James Stockel, At-Risk Counselor from the West Intermediate School. The session defined bullying and provided bully prevention strategies for schools. Research has indicated that school and community-wide efforts are necessary for positive results.

**Maximize Generational Capabilities** was presented by Janis Petrini, Owner/Operator of Express Employment Professionals and Jocelyn Hodack, Human Resource Consultant. Express Employment Professionals is constantly studying workplace and workforce trends. Express identifies the history leading up to the present job market and economy, looks at the jobs today by industry and projects the job needs leading into 2016. Express examines the past, present and future of the workforce and workplace taking into consideration the generations and how generational paradigms impact the world of work.

**Hot Topics Secondary and Post-Secondary** was presented by Norma Tims and Sheree Price. An overview of current secondary and post secondary issues and hot topics were presented with opportunity to ask questions opening the floor up to discussion.

Presenters came prepared to answer questions, provided hand-outs, and statistics. A huge thank you goes out to each of the presenters.

**Tim Cusack closed with "Three Steps to Self-Directed Learning."** Professional development can be more fun and fascinating than it sounds. PD is really about learning in life's classroom. He walked us through three styles of self-directed learning by tapping into our intuitive creativity and innovation. It is then that you walk away professional developed. Here is an excerpt from "One Moment, Please" presented at the 2011 conference.

To learn more about Tim Cusack visit his website at <http://timcusack.com/>