

# Northern Region Community Collaborative

9/21/16

## Notes

**FSM Welcome: Maddy Day, Focusing on the 7 life domains framework.**

**NMC Welcome: Lisa Thomas, NMC, Susie Greenfelder, DHHS—**

- How did NMC start a program for students from foster care? Informal discussions/connection between Susie and Lisa began to move toward a formalized partnership, which led to the first community college in Michigan to establish a campus based support program.
- What do students need coming to college? Key: finding key collaborative partnerships
  - 3 main partnerships
    - Internal
      - Admissions
      - Financial aid
      - Student life/residence life
      - Registrar
      - Waiving fees

External: MYOI, private placement agencies, dhhs, etc, churches, local car dealerships, lots of creative, collaborative partnerships in each domain have been important...partnerships open doors “social capital”

### **7 Life Domains Overview: Maddy Day**

- List of resources available for students
- Appeal to people’s sense of what is right, what serves the student in the best way possible, takes the “rocket science” out of it
- Expanding social capacity for partners, self, students, more diverse network is, more diverse students’ network is
- Data isn’t great
- Graduating more students here in Michigan
- NMC: 10 students supporting
- Every year number of campus support programs have increased statewide, partnerships increase statewide
- Lose a lot of students after first year of college
  - Campus support is so necessary

## Casey Life Domains Framework: Education

- Education is first because we want to ground this year of work, FSM is grounded in education domain
- Education is in the center
- how do other domains support success in education/how does education support success in all other domains?
- Barriers
  - Failure to diagnose learning disabilities: high mobility often leads to students falling through the cracks
  - Loss of credits
- Increasing success
  - Engaging students as partners and experts
  - Reciprocity, ie: “pillow project”
  - Problem-solving/prioritizing using 7 Life Domains, celebrate areas of thriving

## Take-away, networking activity

- Identity was the most difficult domain
  - Not one narrative
  - People are not the same from day-to-day
  - Offering support instead of advice
  - Guide individuals into who they want to be instead of telling them who they want to be
- Most people had more than one domain, we all “wear several hats”
  - Breadth rather than depth, FSM encourages experts to dive into expertise, depth in specific area, encourage a network of experts
- The more you invest in a client, the more they will invest in themselves. Go with a client when they need to connect to a new resource, it will help you as a professional. Ask the question, go with them, “warm hand-off” instead of “referral”

**NMC Parking Ticket Inquiry: Deb Patterson 231-995-1113**

## Panel Discussion

### What role does the Education Life Domain Play in your life?

**David:** Has not been the greatest, failed first year of college, not so great following year. Now with supports and other people, I attend University of Phoenix online pursuing

**Lorenza:** Wonderful, loved every step of my education from kindergarten through college. Pushed me farther than I thought I could ever go.

**Susie:** Focus on education, Helping students get through HS and graduate on time, then go on to college

**Olivia:** Has always been a good experience, love school, huge help for me

**Lisa:** Dean of Students, focus here has been education. Learn so much from students who share their journey with us

**Michele:** Public policies work for everybody, young people and families that face challenges. Education policies and the system work much better for some than others. Lots of spaces where systems change are necessary. These stories help inform us.

### **How is education important to your future life goals?**

**David:** Education, playing into the foster care world, has kept me centered, in the same neighborhood, I did change schools one time. I was never quite sure what would happen.

**Lorenza:** Even though everything in my life was changing I still had my education, and that stayed the same.

**Olivia:** I have struggled with anorexia for five years, it's been a huge struggle for me. DHS was called because they thought I was being abused but I was not, and that's why I went into foster care. Education was always there for me. I really appreciate the fostering system, they have helped me a lot.

**David:** For future success, my overall goal is to have a Masters in Social Work. I see that as an attainable goal. I've always loved going to school. As long as I believe in the goals I have for my life, school is going to be a huge focus for me.

**Olivia:** I have always wanted to be a nurse, as a student I have always wanted to help people. Also going through my illness I have always wanted to help people and serve.

### **Maddy: Professionals, how can education serve as a bridge?**

**Susie:** I started out working for DHHS as a foster care worker. I thought I did a good job maintaining stability for students, if they did have to change schools I thought we did it as smoothly as possible. I thought I was doing a good job until I began working in education.

**Lisa:** I started my career in child welfare, my husband and I were foster parents for 12 years, so I have personal experience. When I started working in higher ed and looked at a study that youth in foster care have a very low completion rate in college, that was when I realized there had to be some steps we could take with our community partners to get those numbers up. I got connected with FSM, Susie, and had natural community connections.

**Michele:** From a public policy perspective, there is much more urgency to put a finer point on how we are improving the system for youth who have been through care. Success is doable through public policy and it's exciting to be part of that process.

### **What challenges have you encountered related to this domain?**

**David:** I feel like my biggest challenge coming from HS, I had special needs type of help, and coming to college it didn't transfer. It took me awhile to adjust to the college life, the workload, me knowing now that I have to get it all done by myself. It really hasn't changed since then, but now I know people where I can go to.

**Lorenza:** The most difficult thing is just living. The way that my situation is, my contract ends and I don't have anywhere to go home, so finding that place where I can go. That has been very challenging for me. I should have graduated in 2 years and now it's been 4.

**Olivia:** My biggest challenge is finances. I have to work for what I get, That's been really hard for me. That's why I really help the appreciate the work from Susie with the Fostering Success scholarships.

**Susie:** My role is to support students through the transition from HS to college. I see challenges in trying to keep students stable, in the same school, getting them onto graduation on time. And then making transitions from HS into college, into adulthood, into life on their own.

**Michele:** The biggest challenge, from a policy perspective, most people making decision concerning policy and education have no idea about foster care, parents, etc. It's hugely important for us all to help policymakers understand how things are working or not working.

**What are some solutions you would like to find to address these challenges?**

**David:** Asking questions, not being afraid to ask those questions. Education-wise, you're probably not the only person who is asking.

**Lorenza:** 90% of my questions go to Susie, we can always find the answer together.

**Olivia:** Susie has been a great support system.

**(asking for help, raising awareness, relationships you can trust to look to navigate these issues, is there something about Susie and her role that has been particularly helpful?)**

**David:** Her track record is proven for success. She puts in the effort most people wouldn't. She doesn't have a caseload like a normal social worker does.

**Lorenza:** I agree she puts in the effort and gets back to you in a timely manner.

**Olivia:** With other caseworkers I've dealt with I have to call them and remind them to do a task and with her she remembers and gets things done. She's very efficient.

**Susie:** One, I love working with these wonderful students. They are ready to step out and take control of their lives. The best thing about my job is asking them what they want to do with their life and then I help them get it. I am a coach.

**Lisa:** Those of us that work in higher ed, one of the factors that leads to success is not a student's IQ or SAT, it's are they willing to ask for help. There's research that shows that when student's form a relationship with one professional on campus success skyrockets. They know their name, they know they can go to them with their questions, it's something we all need to be thinking about. Higher ed is reachable with those resources.

**What resources are you aware of related to this domain?**

**David:** Having someone who came before you like an alum of foster care.

**Lorenza:** I agree, an alum who has been through foster care.

**Olivia:** Get yourself a Susie, someone who cares about you.

**Lisa:** For first year college students, we've done a lot with working with students pacing themselves. Success is defined in a lot of different ways.

**Susie:** From a state perspective, there aren't very many education planners, campus coaches are normally affiliated with a college. Someone from the MYOI program or foster care in general, someone who could be a child welfare champion to help a student navigate the first year.

**Michele:** I would reiterate that public policy takes a role, Susie is one of a very few child welfare education planners, we need to invest in more people like Susie throughout the state, a better access point to people like her. These need to be prioritized in investment.