

CAIU: ALL IN!

CAIU: MAKING A DIFFERENCE



In this Issue:

Did You Know?

ANDRIA SAIA

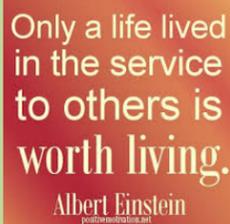
Did you know what awesome power we have as a group to make a difference? Here are some examples:

- Together we raised an amazing \$15,536 to purchase new winter coats for 777 students in our region!



- Together we raised \$1,500 purchasing masks to benefit our foundation Champions for Children

- 355+ staff have completed or are scheduled to complete a service project that benefits the communities in our region



Not only does all this good benefit others, everyone that participates in doing good is benefited personally. Helping others can actually extend your life span, staving off depressions and increasing satisfaction. In fact, helping others does more than stave off depression, it has been proven to make you happy! It also lowers blood pressure, helps with chronic pain, promotes positive behaviors in the student we work with, and gives us a sense of purpose.

Thanks to all that help the CAIU to bring true meaning and life to our value of service.



CAOLA staff brought goodies and games to the residents of Kinkora



Staff created 45 beautiful wreaths for the residents of Gardens of West Shore LTC



Do you have a story for *ALL IN!*? Do you know a member of the CAIU family we should recognize? Please send all stories and ideas to communications@caiu.org

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IN THIS ISSUE

CAIU: PROMOTING DIVERSITY

WELLNESS: GRATITUDE

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CAIU: PROMOTING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

AMY HAZEL, CHERYL GILES, VICKIE ARMSTRONG

Experts agree that a diverse workforce brings varied viewpoints and perspectives to a company, which is instrumental in improving and developing new ideas and facilitating great new ways to cater to customers. Diverse and inclusive practices in the workplace allow and support various perspectives that promote innovation, performance and result in superior work outcomes. True diversity and inclusiveness in a workplace is more than recruiting a diverse workforce; it is creating a culture where individuals with different worldviews, ethnicities, religions, backgrounds, abilities, and ages feel respected and valued for who they are as an individual or group.

This year CAIU embarked on a plan with a focus on equity. While making diversity a priority is important, the logical next step is creating a culture where people from all backgrounds feel included. Hiring diverse individuals means little when they do not feel included.

For perspective, imagine this example. Everyone on the team gets invited to attend a dance, but at the dance, only people of an exclusive, smaller group are actually dancing on the dancefloor and having a good time. Everyone on the team being invited to dance is a great first step, but everyone being asked to dance on the dancefloor is essential. As a first step, CAIU will start looking at events, such as our Annual Holiday Luncheon, to ensure that while we invite everyone, we also ask everyone to “dance.” ***Inclusivity is the key to actually sustaining, not just creating, diversity in the workplace.***

Employees who feel welcomed **and are included**, are often much more committed to their work, are more motivated, and have higher employee engagement. **So how do businesses promote diversity and inclusion?**

Below are a few ways we can all foster inclusion in our workplace:

1. Acknowledge and honor multiple religious and cultural practices. Offer ‘floating holidays’ to accommodate the religious preferences of all employees.
2. Foster a company culture where every voice is welcome, heard, and respected and the environment fosters a sense of connectedness to the organization and its people.
3. Welcome a multilingual workforce. If you truly want everyone to feel included, make sure you take into account language barriers and preferences.
4. Foster diverse thinking. While creating opportunities to hire a diverse workforce, embrace diverse thinking in generating ideas and feedback.
5. Build a multigenerational workforce. Having a workforce that recognizes and accommodates multiple generations is essential in building a diverse and inclusive workforce.
6. Reflect everyone’s needs and preferences at everyday gatherings. Whenever you have even a casual company event, be sure to include food and beverages that everyone can eat and drink. Asking proper questions about preferences and offering a variety of food and drink options will go a long way in making such experiences more inclusive.
7. Strengthen anti-discriminatory policies. A [Harvard Business Review](#) survey found that 75% of respondents found that superficial policies and language was insufficient to institute real change. Leadership must be committed to strengthening anti-discriminatory policies.
8. Create an inclusive workplace. Establish gender-friendly bathrooms and restrooms and set up dedicated nursing rooms for mothers.
9. Words Matter – Take a hard look at the language used in company documentation and update to be more equitable.

As members of our organization, we all have a part; together, we CAN improve and promote CAIU’s workplace diversity and inclusion. There is an opportunity to promote diversity and be more inclusive in almost everything we do, but we need to prioritize and make time for it.

“When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become wiser, more inclusive, and better as an organization.” - Pat Wadors

Message from the Executive Director



ANDRIA SAIA

You may recall from school that Newton’s first law of motion, also called the law of inertia, states that a stationary object will remain so – unless a force acts upon it. Not only does this law apply to objects, it is a great analogy for remaining in our own inertia, otherwise known as our comfort zone.

The phrase “comfort zone” was coined in the 90’s by Judith Bardwick, who described it as “a behavioral state within which a person operates in an anxiety-neutral condition, using a limited set of behaviors to deliver a steady level of performance, usually without a sense of risk.” In essence, within the comfort zone there is not much incentive to reach for new heights in any realm.



Moving from the comfort zone to the growth zone is not without its discomfort. Our comfort zone is, well it is comfortable. It is emotional, physical and psychological

smooth sailing. You tend to feel safe and in control, on an even keel, so to speak. The down side of this comfy zone, is that as Franklin Roosevelt stated, “a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.”

The benefits of leaving your comfort zone are well worth the effort. The first is reaching one’s full potential. Self-actualization is a powerful driver, indeed it is the top of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.



Another is the development of growth mindset, understanding that there are no limits and that all experiences are an opportunity for learning. The third benefit is building resilience, where even in the face of adversity and volatility you can thrive. Yet another benefit is the belief in your own self efficacy or the ability to reach your goal.

Planning to leave your comfort zone: Reframe stress. There is no physiological difference between anxiety and excitement. Understand you brain is malleable and you are adaptable. Prioritize your goals and be creative. Develop small steps, in addition to larger ones as the situation demands. Remember the discomfort won’t last forever. After a period of learning a new comfort zone is established, expanding our potential for growth.

How might you get to the growth zone?

What to read more?:

- <https://tinyurl.com/gogrowth>
- <https://liberationist.org/how-to-leave-your-comfort-zone-for-the-better/>

Student Services



ALICIA MCDONALD

LEA SERVICES - Special Education Audit Project

Commonwealth Charter Academy contracted with CAIU Student Services to conduct a comprehensive special education audit. This included approximately 400 file reviews, Educational Benefit Reviews, and content and fidelity checks of their special education files. The typical PDE Special Education compliance audit consists of approximately 35 file reviews but CCA wanted deeper dive and a more comprehensive review of their special education program that serves close to 3000 eligible students.

An internal and external team worked to complete this project and created a comprehensive report that addressed strengths, recommendations, focus areas, and ongoing process suggestions. Alicia McDonald, Director of Student Services submitted the draft report to CCA Administration on December 8th and met with all of the CCA special education administrators to review the findings and suggestions. A board presentation is scheduled for January 2021.

The **CAIU "How Do You Do That?" Committee** was formed to gather input from the broader CAIU staff community as a way to continually improve our processes. They recently sent out a request for feedback in order to find out from staff what questions they have, what processes and procedures need to be clarified or improved upon, and what procedures are needed! Staff were asked to complete the survey via email or to access the survey using the QR code.



PRESCHOOL/EARLY INTERVENTION

Preschool Snack Shack! Mary Fair, CAIU Preschool Teacher at Hershey Primary Elementary School

Students know it is snack time when the "SNACK SHACK" protective divider is on the table. They can easily see what the snack of the day is with the visual icons. During this SNACK SHACK activity, the modeling paired with verbal instruction is provided on how to sort Fruit Loops by color into the four sections of the napkin. The children enjoyed sorting the fruit loops.



Preschool Safety Care Recertification

A Huge Shout Out to the Preschool Safety Care Trainers (Michelle Straw, Jamie Gordon, Sarah Hancock and Lara Borne) and to the all of the Preschool staff who completed their recertification for Safety Care. Social distancing was practiced by all and everyone was successful with their recertification.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Preschool Early Intervention CAIU SLP Bridget Wiberg who earned her Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC). The CCC, is a universally recognized credential for the profession, is granted by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Bridget is a SLP at Foose School, now housed out of Enola, two days a week, and also has a number of daycares and preschools in the Harrisburg and surrounding area comprising the rest of her weekly caseload.



Occupational and Physical Therapy

OT's and PT's are innovative professionals! They have found ways to capitalize on home environments when necessary for virtual therapy! Ms. Janel Bolig with the collaboration of the family (mom and siblings) used their outdoor swingset and climbing equipment to practice balance and coordination skills. Creative PowerPoints and Google slides provide interactive ways for children to make choices about their therapy activities, which include both fine and gross motor skills.

ELECT

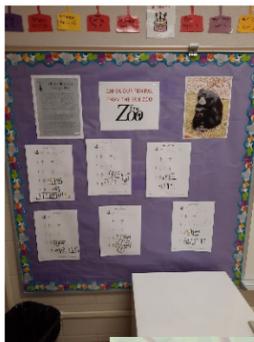
ELECT is moving forward with virtual group events for December, a month when the teens usually gather with their families for a holiday meal and Baby Buck shopping. Instead, there will be a surprise visit from Santa during a Zoom event. He will read a short story and give some friendly advice to be good this season! A group of CAIU volunteers will pack the baby bucks purchases, assemble holiday baskets, and make no sew quilts for the newborns. The case managers will distribute the items through porch drops. We are thankful for all of these CAIU elves, but especially to our very own Santa!

CAIU Social Workers - Trauma Trainers

In partnership with Lakeside Global Institute, Julie Mestemaker, Myisha Freeman, and Michaella Fickes have completed the requirements to become adjunct trainers. This allows them to present licensed Lakeside Global Institute workshops to CAIU staff as well as our school districts. This train the trainer series focused on rich and sophisticated exploration of trauma with an emphasis on encouraging professionals to become highly sensitive regarding the nature of trauma and learning key properties and principles. Julie, Myisha, and Michaella are currently working towards certification to be deemed Trauma Competent Professionals. This additional series of training focuses on deepening trauma awareness and applying principles of trauma in practice. Upon completion, a plan will be developed to roll out training for school age professionals and support staff.

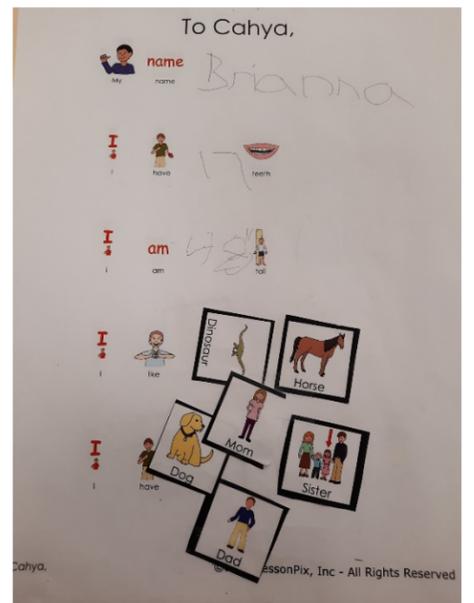
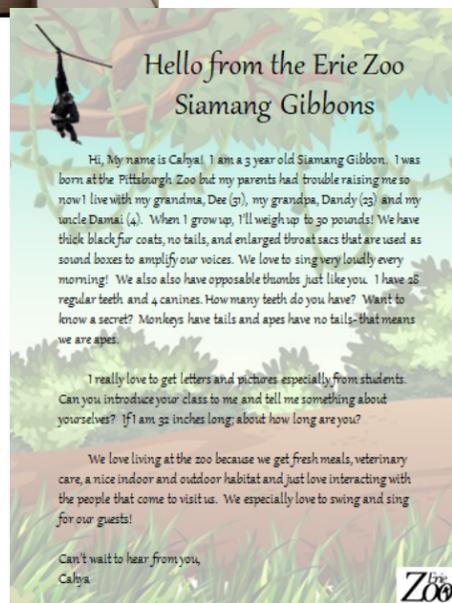
Hill Top Academy & Mr. Music

Elementary students at Hill Top Academy were introduced to Mr. Music (Lenny Tepsich) on November 19th. Mr. Music brought his guitar and tons of positive energy as he actively engaged students in singing and playing the drums! The students enjoyed the songs which all sent positive messages and taught coping strategies. The song 'Be Your Best Self' stood out as a student and staff favorite, and aligns perfectly with our 'LABS' mantra (Learn first, Act responsibly, Be your best self, Show safe actions). Mr. Music will return to Hill Top on December 4th, when he plans to debut a fresh new theme song for the school! You can listen to examples of Mr. Music's songs and find resources to support pro-social behavior on Pennsylvania's PBS website called *Ready Set Music*.



Erie Zoo Pen Pal

Mrs. Stephanie Klinedinst Autism Support Classroom at Dillsburg Elementary has found a new pen pal this year. This pen pal is unique in that Cayha is a 3-year old Siamang Gibbon! Students in the program learned about Cayha and each wrote a personalized letter back to Cayha. (3 photos)



Tech Services



DAVE MARTIN

Play Games, Heal Kids!

Every year, staff complete many service projects to benefit our local communities. For the last five years, one of those projects has been supporting local hospitals through a program called Extra Life. Have you heard of Extra Life? What about Children's Miracle Network(CMN)? Extra Life is a CMN hospital program designed to raise money for kids through playing video games and board games. "Play Games, Heal Kids" is their mission and they have been doing it since 2008 to honor Victoria Enmon, who died of acute lymphoblastic leukemia. What started as a Local Area Network (LAN) Party is now a multiplatform event that is streamed online all over the world. Since 2008, Extra Life has raised over \$70 million dollars to help sick and injured kids in local hospitals!

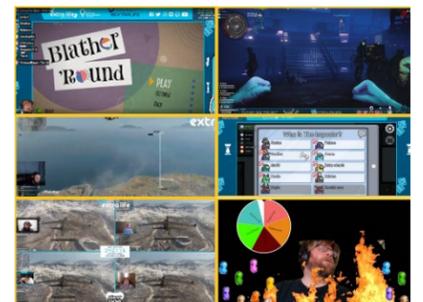
Five years ago, a group of individuals from the Technology Team were trying to figure out what to do for a service project. How can we use our experience in technology to make a difference in our community? Hence Player One Project was created. Every year, the Player One Project streams video games to raise funds through Extra Life. Over the last five years, our team has raised over \$7,500 for the Penn State Children's Hospital. In 2020, we raised over \$3,600 – falling in the top 10% of teams!



I know what you are thinking– “they are only playing video games for fun for a few hours That does not sound like a service project.” That is only part of it. Much of our team puts in time behind the scenes to raise funds through personal social media campaigns, reaching out to friends and family, organizing sub-teams, streaming production and event setup through Extra Life. After all the work behind the scenes is completed, then we play games. Our team continues their work during our sessions, encouraging others to donate if they can, and even introducing incentives for donations such as eating spicy jellybeans, wearing wigs on stream and smoking a

brisket for a certain donation level.

The Player One Project team is not the only team in the area to contribute to this cause. We are part of a group of over 205 gamers in our area who raised a combined total of over \$47,000 for Penn State Children's hospital just this year! Check out the links below for more information. Also, consider visiting our team page to make a donation. Donations are still being accepted throughout the end of the year.



Player One Project Extra Life Team Page: <https://www.extra-life.org/team/52121>

Check out Extra Life : [What Is Extra Life? | Extra Life \(extra-life.org\)](https://www.extra-life.org)

How Extra Life got started video(tissues required): https://youtu.be/rHSZ_82wiJg

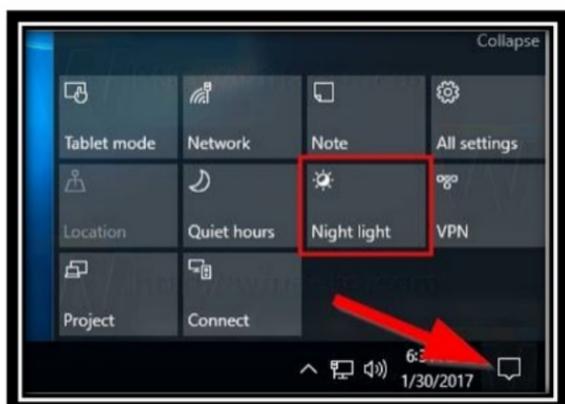
CMN Hospitals - Penn State Children's Hospital: <https://pennstate.childrensmiracletnetworkhospitals.org>

Written by: Dan Conway, Software Engineer

Tech Tip of the Month

Reduce Eye Strain at Night!

Computer screens emit blue light (similar to the light your eyes receive naturally during the day), which at night can mess with your internal body clock and negatively affect the production of melatonin, as a result disrupting your sleep quality and causing discomforts in your eyes. Night Light is a mode in Windows 10 that reduces the amount of blue light on your screen, and displays warmer colors that can help to reduce eye strain. This can help users fall asleep easier after using their computer at night. To enable night light mode, simply click on the Action Center icon at the bottom right of your screen and click night light.



Educational Services



BRIAN GRIFFITH

Arts in Education

CAIU's Arts in Education Partnership is proud to announce the start of our first Artist Residency! The residency is hosted by Cornwall-Lebanon School District's Virtual Academy and is being run by artist, Rand Whipple. Rand is working with students on creating their own virtual story books and stop-motion videos! Check out the teaser video for the virtual residency here:

<https://vimeo.com/483347938>. If you are interested in hosting a residency for your school, contact Beth Cappello at ecappello@caiu.org today!

Summer Camps

CAIU is continuing to build its 2021 Summer Camps offerings! We are seeking individuals in the region to facilitate camps that are educational, engaging, and hands-on. We want to provide these summer learning opportunities to any student in our region who will be entering grades 1 through 12, Fall 2021. If you are interested in becoming a facilitator, submit your proposal here: <http://bit.ly/33NaObG> or email summercamps@caiu.org for more information!

Spring Equity Conference

Capitalizing on the success of our fall equity and anti-racism conference, CAIU will host a second conference in the spring of 2021. With a theme of "Promoting Social Justice in School Discipline and Equity Policies", this virtual conference will be held over successive Wednesday mornings on March 10, 17, 24, 2021. Our call for proposals and registration are open now. Visit <https://bit.ly/EquitySpringSeries> to submit a proposal or to register. Be on the lookout for an exciting announcement about our keynote speakers!

Emerging Leader Development Program

Fourteen participants in our Emerging Leader Development Program are finishing the fall term right now. Our readings and discussions have centered around such topics as Ethics, Building a Team, Motivating Your Team, and Coaching and Developing. This month, each of the fourteen will be interviewing CAIU leaders for COVID-compliant Job Shadow experiences in order to explore these and other leadership topics of interest. Contact Mark Hennes at mhennes@caiu.org with any questions.

Network Meetings

In spite of COVID restrictions and operational changes, our Women's Network and People of Color In Education groups have continued to meet monthly via Zoom. These two groups bring together education professionals from across our region to discuss topics of interest and to provide support to each other. Contact Mark Hennes at mhennes@caiu.org with any questions.

#SpringIntoLearning with the CAIU's Spring Professional Learning Series! These bite-sized sessions will run a bit differently from our Fall PL offerings. The Spring sessions will all be offered asynchronously via recordings, and attendees can access the content for up to two months. Costs are \$15 per one-hour session and \$45 for each three-hour session. Check out the attached flyer or here: <https://www.smore.com/n92xe>

Our partnership with WITF and Pennsylvania PBS

continues to grow! On November 16, Ready Set Music launched with music videos and companion activities to help students. Performed in different styles by different artists, the songs provide opportunities for students, teachers, families to engage in conversations about feelings. Contributing team members were from Student Services, Educational Services, and Administration. The materials and videos can be found at <https://pennsylvaniapbs.org/learning-at-home/ready-set-music/>



On December 8, Sue Voigt and Cari Kozicki from WLVT/PBS 39 presented at **PDE's annual SAS Institute** on the partnership that has developed among the PBS stations, PAIU, and PDE. Their presentation, *Connectivity to Learning – PBS Stations Bridging the Digital Divide*, illustrated how existing broadcast programming and infrastructures can support students with limited internet access.

Business Services



DAREN MORAN



What do you get when you cross an accountant with a detective? An auditor! What seems like more than a lifetime ago I started my career as an independent auditor. I struggled for many years trying to explain to friends and family what I did on a daily basis. Auditors love

accounting work mixed in with a bit of investigative work. They are responsible for looking at the validity of a company's financial statements and writing a report at the end of their investigation. This process is called an audit and I was responsible for it. Fast forward a few years and now I am sitting on the other side of the table as the one responsible for the IU's financial statements and now I am being audited.

The CAIU is required to go through an independent audit on a yearly basis. This audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The audit also included steps to obtain an understanding of the IU and its environment, including the internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements. As required by Uniform Guidance, the audit also included tests of controls to evaluate the effectiveness of the design and operation of internal controls that, in a professional opinion, are relevant to preventing and detecting material noncompliance with the requirements applicable to a major federal program.

You might wonder why this is important to you. The testing of internal controls is extremely important in an audit and that is why so many processes and procedures at the IU have to follow such strict rules when it is related to finances. Approvals, signatures, contracts, purchase orders, etc. are all just examples of checks and balances that are in place to ensure we are being good stewards of IU resources.

Like any test or examination there is a final report on the outcome of the yearly audit. I am happy to report that the IU once again received an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and other supplemental information. When an auditor is able to satisfactorily conclude that the financial statements are free from material misstatement they express an unmodified opinion.

Thank you to all the business and operations staff that ensure our finances are in great shape and thank you to all the staff that follow the policies and procedures related to finances.

HR & COMMUNICATIONS



TOM CALVECCHIO

Updated Quarantine Recommendations for Persons Exposed to COVID-19

DOH is providing options to shorten quarantine **for close contacts** of persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection. The most protective recommended quarantine period remains at 14 days post exposure. Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. When testing resources are sufficient, quarantine can end after day 7 if a diagnostic specimen (e.g., RT-PCR, antigen) tests negative and is collected on day 5 or thereafter and the person remains asymptomatic. Quarantine may not be further shortened beyond the end of day 7.

Testing of symptomatic persons seeking evaluation for infection must be prioritized over testing for early discontinuation of quarantine.

These updated recommendations are for the community at large and **do not apply to healthcare settings.**

Info on Emergency Paid Sick Leave: The Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) that provides E-FMLA and Emergency Paid Sick Leave is set to expire December 31, 2020. Eligible employees can utilize this leave until the end of the calendar year. Should the FFCRA be extended beyond December 31, 2020, the HR Office will notify employees via email.

HSA Funding Update: HSA funding will occur on January 15, 2021. Below is a list of qualified expenses that HSA funds can be used towards. Just keep in mind that only medical and RX expenses count towards your annual deductible.

What qualifies?

<p>Doctors, Labs, and Hospitalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor's office visits and procedures • Drug addiction treatment • Ambulance services • Fertility treatment • Health plan deductibles and copayments 	<p>Hospitalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital services • Laboratory fees • Surgery, excluding cosmetic surgery • Vasectomy 	<p>Alternative Care and Special Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acupuncture • Alcoholism treatment • Chiropractor • Drug addiction treatment • Long-term care services (limited) • Physical therapy • Psychiatric care for mental health • Special education for learning disabilities • Speech therapy • Weight loss programs (limited)
<p>Medicine and Medical Devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescription drugs • Over-the-counter medications • Artificial limbs • Bandages • Blood sugar test kits • Breast pumps and lactation aids 	<p>Crutches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing aids and batteries • Insulin • Stop-smoking programs and nicotine gum or patches • Walkers • Wheelchairs 	<p>Eye Doctor, Glasses, and Contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision examinations • Eye glasses • Eye surgery • Lasik/laser surgery • Contact lenses • Saline solution
<p>Dentists and Orthodontics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental treatments • Dental x-rays • Extractions • Teeth cleanings • Tooth removal • Braces • Dentures/Artificial teeth 	<p>Need more information? View a full list of qualified expenses at irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf</p> <p>Save your receipts. Keep detailed receipts for all HSA expenses in case of an IRS audit.</p>	

CAIU Compliments



CAIU STAFF IN ACTION

 **Amy Moyer, Preschool Data Coordinator** - Having Amy being a part of the EI Preschool team makes a substantial positive difference. I genuinely enjoy working with her and never hesitate to ask her for assistance when needed. She has ALWAYS been there for me and is always volunteering to help and thinking of others. Amy, thank you again for being a wonderful co-worker and friend. ~ Tana Thomas Program Secretary

 **Kim Claypoole, Educational Paraprofessional** - When recent transportation issues resulted in a child remaining at school for an extra hour at the end of the day, Kim offered to stay to be a second set of hands to ensure child and staff safety. In addition to safety, she helped entertain the child amid COVID restrictions. This made necessary calls to the child's family run smoothly and in a timely manner. By the time the child was able to leave, Kim and I were nearly the only staff still in the building, but she remained helpful and positive the entire time! This is not the first time this year she has done this, and it is immensely appreciated. Thank you so much, Kim, for selflessly volunteering to help the children and staff of Delbrook! ~ Mary Jane Fledderjohn, Early Intervention SLP Educational Consultant

 **Courtney Punchur** - Courtney has been instrumental in helping me facilitate meaningful and relevant powerpoints for my virtual students. She responds in a very timely manner, is creative and expert with powerpoint. Thank you, Courtney, for helping to enrich the learning experience for all my students! ~ Barbara Breckenridge/Inclusion Consultant

 **Patrice Bixler, Coach** - Patti sharing an office with you I can truly testify to your amazing IEP Compliance knowledge and the unending support that you provide to all of the district-based classroom staff. Your patience and dedication to everyone is amazing and I am truly lucky to be your coworker! Danielle Curzi

Patrice Bixler, Coach - Greatly appreciate this lady! She is so supportive and knowledgeable when it comes to anything IEP related. Just want to give Patti a "SHOUT OUT!!!" you rock! :) ~ Erika Grove-Teacher

 **Karen Robbins, Elementary Emotional Support Teacher** Karen is so dedicated to her students she comes to school hours early every day to make sure the room is set up for them to be a welcoming place. If a student needs extra attention she is able to make them feel important and safe without taking anything away from the other students. She talks to every student in a way that makes them feel important and special, and creates leaders out of everyone she teaches. ~ Shelby Cordeiro, School Social Worker

 **Missy Lyon** - To summarize all the reasons Missy deserves recognition would be impossible. She is dedicated to her students and committed to their progress. She is so incredibly knowledgeable far beyond speech and language. Missy is flexible and tackles challenges without hesitation and with such a great attitude. I am grateful to call her a co-worker and friend. ~ L. Waters, ANPS School Counselor

 **Danielle Curzi** - Danielle has been helping to get the paid version of SeeSaw up and running for all of preschool. This has been quite the process because of the number of students and the lack of being able to Zoom with the SeeSaw support staff during the process (their rule). She has been patient and kind in dealing with all of the questions and glitches. Her expertise in technology and her people skills have been crucial! We could not be implementing this initiative without her! ~ Kathy Gottlieb, Program Supervisor

 **Danielle Curzi** - As a new teacher in the CAIU with many tech questions, I can't say enough about Danielle Curzi. From her tutorials on the CAIU website utilized in the Spring when I was newly hired to her personal 1:1 Zoom meetings, she has provided me with a wealth of information. My compliment, however, is for her willingness to go above and beyond in her assistance with me on my tech journey. I reached out to her several weeks ago regarding my personal growth goals for the year. She made a point to make her schedule work with mine and provided (and continues to provide) me with information to help me grow as a teacher. Although I know I have just scratched the surface of the many programs available, Danielle has provided me with a good starting point to expand. Ms. Curzi is a wonderful example of the many incredible CAIU employees that I have met since the beginning of the school year. As a Floater Teacher, I am fortunate to meet many CAIU teachers and employees and I can truly say that I am blessed to be working with such caring, wonderful people. ~ Meggan Morrison, Floater Teacher



The Boone Team at Lemoyne Preschool - This amazing group of employees including Emma Robinson EPP, Liz Chiodo and Jackie Schubert Speech Therapists, Emily Robenolt Physical Therapist, Kristen Schreiber

Occupational Therapist and our newest member Connor Yourkavitch, work together to bring out the best in our students and each other. If not for this group of coworkers, I would undoubtedly be retiring in this year of COVID! ~ Becky Boone, Early Intervention Specialist



Pat Knouse, Program Secretary, Hill Top Academy - Pat Knouse is not only an incredible secretary, but a truly wonderful person, inside and out. It's truly been a pleasure working with and learning from her over the last 3 1/2

school years. After 41 years with the IU, Pat deserves a shout-out! :-)
Thank you for teaching me how to be a good support staff member! ~ Jenn Simpson, Program Secretary, Hill Top Academy



Scott Snyder - Scott Snyder is a phenomenal colleague to work with. He is our go to for Zoom and Google and always is available and has an answer no matter what time of day.

He helped so many times with the many questions that arose with the Equity Virtual Conference Series we held. We cannot thank him enough for the continuous support and speedy responses to emergency questions that would arise during and after the conference each day! He truly is a one of a kind and we are incredibly grateful for his help. ~ Cheryl Giles, Educational Services Supervisor and Beth Cappello, Special Projects Coordinator



Irene Reedy - I would like to compliment Irene Reedy for the many hours she put into making the Ready Set Music videos and curriculum materials with WITF come to life!

Music can help students learn how to handle feelings. Her work to develop materials to accompany each video will reinforce the skills through classroom and family activities. Irene's influence will be felt well-beyond the local region, as these videos and materials are being distributed state-wide through CAIU's partnership with Pennsylvania PBS. Thank you, Irene! ~ Sue Voigt, Educational Services Supervisor

#changinglives

#begreat

CAIU Wellness

ELIZABETH CAPPELLO



An attitude of gratitude means making it a habit to express thankfulness and appreciation in all parts of your life, on a regular basis, for both the big and small things alike.

We're living through unusual trying times. The COVID-19 pandemic has people feeling stressed and frightened. That's why it's perhaps more important than ever to focus on gratitude – the practice of noticing and being thankful for what is valuable and meaningful to you. It's good for your mental and physical health, it can help you relax, and its effects can help you stay well through the coronavirus pandemic and beyond.

Focusing on silver linings. Counting your blessings. Stopping to smell the roses. These aren't just clichés; they are activities that research shows may enhance your quality of life.

The health benefits of practicing gratitude are wide-ranging – and maybe even a bit surprising.

- **Improving your immune system.** The practice of gratitude can improve immune function, according to the American Heart Association. This is especially important during the COVID-19 crisis, since people with compromised immune systems face a high risk of becoming severely ill from coronavirus.
- **Lowering your risk for mental health issues.** Studies have shown that people who practiced gratitude showed a significantly lower risk for major depression, generalized anxiety disorder and substance dependence and abuse, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.
- **Getting a handle on stress.** Focusing on positive emotions can help improve your ability to cope with stress, according to the National Institutes of Health.
- **Setting yourself up for success.** In clinical trials, grateful people have been shown to exercise more and eat healthier diets.

Practicing Gratitude Can Be Easy, Rewarding — And Fun

Cultivating thankfulness isn't homework, and it doesn't require much time or energy. You can start small by taking a few moments to notice things that are going well in your life.

To help make this a regular habit, set aside a short time each day to intentionally practice gratitude. Try one or more of these activities to start.

Jot Down Your Joys

Make a habit of writing down the things you're grateful for. It doesn't have to be a long list, but if you regularly challenge yourself to identify and name your gratitude, you may begin to notice improvement in your emotional well-being.

Try sitting down and listing out:

- One place that is safe and relaxes you
- One thing that's going well in your life
- Three things you enjoy
- Three things you're looking forward to
- Two people whom you love and who love you

Or try an easy-to-remember acronym, HEART, as suggested by the [American Heart Association](#):

- **Health:** Think of what your body allowed you to do today. Maybe your feet enabled you to walk around the house or your arms allowed you to hold a pet you love.
- **Eat:** What nourishment did you provide your body today? What was your favorite meal?
- **Activity:** Did you do something today that you really enjoyed? Take a moment to reflect on and savor it.
- **Relationship:** Did you see or talk to someone today who brings you joy? Or are you planning to see someone on a video chat who fits that description? (Remember: The person in the mirror counts.)
- **Time:** There's no time like the present. Allow yourself to be grateful for the fact that you're here.

If you find yourself saying that you have nothing to be grateful for, try thinking about all the little things you have. You may find that you're taking for granted certain abilities or privileges you have that others don't.

Why we need Gratitude Now

In times of crisis, it's important to stay connected to others, and among its many other benefits, gratitude can help with this, too. The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that people who practice gratitude are:

- More generous and helpful
- More likely to offer emotional support
- More likely to share their possessions
- More willing to forgive others

If ever there was a time when these traits were needed, it's now. Please stay safe and stay healthy during the holidays and practice gratitude each and every day!

Resources to further your journey with gratitude:

<https://www.adventhealth.com/blog/why-gratitude-important-during-coronavirus-pandemic>
5-Minute Friday - <https://lewishowes.com/podcast/5-minute-friday/>
Podcasts to listen to: *The Gratitude Diaries* or *The Gratitude Podcast*
[How to start a Gratitude Journal](#)





Community Aid Donation Bin Removed.

Due to restrictions resulting from COVID-19, Community Aid reevaluated donation bin locations and removed those that could not be regularly serviced. This included the removal of CAIU's Community Aid bin at the Enola facility.

Our 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation, Champions for Children, received funds from Community Aid based on the weight of donations collected from our bin. With most Champions for Children fundraisers canceled this year, this is one of the few fundraising efforts available to our program.

You can still help! Donations can still be dropped off at any Community Aid location, just be sure to **provide our PARTNER ID NUMBER: 10213**. Providing



this number ensures that Champions for Children continues to receive funding based on the weight of your donation. See the attached PDF for more information.

In the News

Director of Student Services, Alicia McDonald and a CAIU family were recently part of an abc27 news story highlighting the PA budget's Early Intervention funding that was only approved through November 30, 2020. See the full abc27 News story at <https://bit.ly/2UGokd1> It was worth saying THANK YOU to our team members who wrote emails and called legislators, or shared our message on social media. CAIU's Facebook post on October 27, 2020 was "shared" 62 times, reaching almost 7,000 people. It is CAIU's second-most shared post of all-time.

Our Students Share Their "Teacher for a Day" Ideas

To celebrate American Education Week's Thursday theme "Educator for a Day," we asked some of our CAIU students' what school would look like if they were a teacher. Watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/9OdqaNrtfZO>

Casual Days for a Cause: First Quarter Results

CAIU's "Casual Days for a Cause" for the 2020-21 school year supports six local charities in hopes of raising \$500 for each. After the first quarter of the year, \$1,359.00 has been raised toward our \$3,000 total. This puts us ahead of our \$750 first quarter goal!

Upcoming Celebrations:

January 2021 Celebrations:

- Be Kind to Food Servers Month
- School Board Recognition Month
- National Technology Day – January 6, 2021
- National Compliment Day – January 24, 2021
- National Have Fun at Work Day – January 28, 2021

February 2021 Celebrations:

- AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month
- Career & Technical Education (CTE) Month
- Black History Month
- National School Counselor's Week – February 1-5, 2021
- Random Act of Kindness Day – February 17, 2021

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

"Change is inevitable, but transformation is by conscious choice." ~ Heather Ash Amara

The best project you will ever work on is you! Take some time to explore all the ways there are to grow – personally and professionally.



Log into [Frontline](#) for the complete list of upcoming Professional Development Opportunities.

Here are just a few upcoming sessions:

- Equity Networking Sessions
- All Staff Day Service Projects
- Diversity & Equity 101 – Session 2 & 3
- Fall & Spring Professional Learning Series
- CAIU Reading Network
- High Impact Strategies for Student Teachers

For instructions on how to register, please see our website [HERE](#)

Help Wanted!

Do you want to know what positions are open at the CAIU? Below is a list and a link to our application portal.



"The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle." - Steve Jobs

Paraprofessional

- 10 EPP
- 1 Job Coach
- 4 PCA

Professional

- 1 Service Coordinator
- 3 Speech Pathologist
- 7 Teacher

Link to CAIU Job Search: <https://www.applitrack.com/caiu/onlineapp/>
Know someone looking – please share!

State of the Union



CAEA
Capital Area Education Association

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanza, Happy Holidays.

I know that this year all of our holidays look different. This weighs on each of us differently and I ask that we all have a little more patience and grace for each other as we move through the last days of school in 2020. Please use the many resources at our disposal like the EAP. Mazzitti & Sullivan serve our Employee Assistance Program and do a remarkable job. To access, either call 1-800-543-5080, or for online resources, please visit www.mseap.com and click "Member Login" in the top right corner. Use the access code CAIU to sign in, or create your own account. Live Chat is also available on the website!

Your union has been hard at work for you behind the scenes volunteering in the election process, working with legislators, and supporting pro public education. There are many ways you can be involved and at different levels of time commitment. Please reach out to me if you are interested. This spring we will hold officer elections and are looking for a new Vice President. As much as I am sad to see Stephanie leave, I know she will be very happy in her new adventure in Oklahoma.

I wish you all a merry holiday season and a wonderful winter break. May 2021 be more joyous than we can imagine.

Michelle Sholder
CAEA President
msholder@caiu.org

Do you have a story for *ALL IN!*? Do you know a member of the CAIU family we should recognize? Please send all stories and ideas to communications@caiu.org

Happy Holidays

