



# All-in!

## NEWSLETTER

Executive Director's Report  
December 2021



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## Our Mission

CAIU provides innovative support and services in partnership with schools, families, and communities to build capacity and model courageous leadership to help them be great. #BeGreat

## Our Vision

Recognized as a trusted and influential partner in achieving life-changing outcomes in the Capital Area. #ChangingLives

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**Front and back cover:** On December 3, 2021, CAIU staff sorted 6,400 books for the Capital Region Literacy Council for a community service project.

**Share your stories,  
student successes, and  
#changinglives moment!**

Email All-In! Newsletter or social media content to [communications@caiu.org](mailto:communications@caiu.org).



**All-in!**  
NEWSLETTER

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# From the Executive Director's Desk



## Building a Bridge to Belonging

After the November 18 CAIU Board Meeting, several Board members engaged in our book study of “Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity”, authored by Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. Chapter three starts with a question, asking readers to describe a time they felt the need to change or hide something about themselves, to conform or to achieve something in order to gain acceptance or feel good about themselves. Remember that the lack of a feeling of belonging is not isolated to topics of race or identity. It can be born out of any reason for which you did not feel you belong. Check out this [video](#) for an idea of how broad the causes of belonging uncertainty are. Belonging uncertainty means that belonging is contingent on something other than being a person with the right to belong. How would you answer the question?

If you have ever felt you did not belong or felt belonging uncertainty then you are likely aware of how important belonging is to your wellbeing. In fact, research has linked belonging to life satisfaction, happiness, mental and physical health, and even impacts how long you live. It is not an exaggeration to say human beings are hard wired to belong. Knowing that all of us, our students, our coworkers, ourselves, need to belong, we must all be willing to build a bridge to belonging for all.



Lorenzo Quinn's "Building Bridges" sculpture in Venice, Italy.

The art installation in Venice, titled “Building Bridges” designed by Italian artist Lorenzo Quinn features six pairs of hands, each pair representing one of six universally essential values: friendship, wisdom, help, faith, hope and love. The concept behind the project aims to symbolize people overcoming their differences to build a better world together. The joining of hands symbolizes our commonality, what we share and our ability to unite with an emphasis on bridging differences in all aspects of life – geographically, spiritually, philosophically, culturally and emotionally. The hands suggest a need for contact beyond self-interest, striving for human collaboration and unity. Quinn uses them to communicate complex emotions through a lexicon of gestures and touch, reflecting an ethos of connection and exchange through the language of art.

Now that we know better, it is time to do better. In the face of change and extreme narratives pitching us neighbor against neighbor we have three main responses:

- Breaking – Fear, anger, othering
- Bonding – Connecting over similarities, common threads of identity
- Bridging – Empathy, compassion, belonging

Knowing that each one of us has the power to break or bridge to belonging, what will you choose?

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andria Saia".

Dr. Andria Saia (she/her/hers)  
Executive Director

The graphic at the top of the page features a large orange 'UDL' acronym on the left. To its right, a large orange pencil is shown writing on a circular whiteboard. The whiteboard contains various icons: a hand, gears, a speech bubble, a document, and a clock. In the background, there are stylized human silhouettes in shades of blue and green, along with more gears and a cloud. The overall theme is education and learning.

# UDL

## Universal Design for Learning

### Q&A with Newport Middle School Teacher Kim Potter

CAIU Educational Consultant Shana Montgomery recently had an opportunity to interview Kim Potter, a Newport School District middle school teacher, about her experience and expertise implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into her classroom. UDL is an instructional framework based on research from education and neuropsychology that educators can use to anticipate barriers to learning, and then design lessons and learning environments that will meet the needs of all learners. **#Partnership #Expertise**

#### Q: What is UDL?

**A:** UDL is a mindset. It is a framework. UDL gives educators a way to think about and plan instruction so every student, every day, has the opportunity to learn and grow. UDL benefits all learners, especially learners who learn and think in different ways. UDL takes into account that everyone has different and fluid needs.

#### Q: What does UDL look like in your classroom?

**A:** I feel I am at the beginning of my journey into understanding UDL. I have student-friendly, standards-based goals posted in my classroom. My teaching and planning are focused on these standards-based goals. When I plan, I take into consideration the environment my students will need for every one of them to reach our goals. I try to include options wherever I can, so every student in my classes will be successful in reaching our goals. All students are working toward the same goals, but there are various

ways of getting there. Right now, I'm working on self-awareness and self-direction. I'm trying to help my students get more in tune with what they need, so they can be the best learner they can be. I'm not only giving options to all students, I'm helping kids to recognize which options they need to be successful in my class every day.

#### Q: Who benefits from UDL?

**A:** All of my students benefit from UDL. I would say especially my students who are "outside the norm", which could be any student on any given day, benefit the most. UDL helps ensure all students reach their full potential and find success in school. Because of UDL, I view every student as a student with variable and fluid needs. UDL has helped me understand that variability in learning is the rule and not the exception.

#### Q: Why do you think UDL is important?

**A:** UDL helps teachers create a learning environment and situation that gives every student the best opportunity, every day, to learn and find success in school. It also gives students the knowledge they need to become expert, life-long learners.

**This understanding has been instrumental in my journey to design an environment in which every student that walks through my classroom door will learn at their highest potential.**

#### Q: How has UDL impacted you as a teacher?

**A:** UDL has given me a framework for planning; it has helped me to be more focused in providing options to meet the variable needs of all students every day. UDL has helped me understand the variability of learning and learners. This knowledge understanding has been instrumental in my journey to design an environment in which every student that walks through my classroom door will learn at their highest potential.



**Q: How has UDL impacted your learners?**

**A:** In using UDL in my classroom, I've made learning more accessible for all my students. My students now have more than one way to interact with the material in the classroom. Because options are available to all students, stigma is reduced for kids with more formal accommodations. Any student might need different options at any time, so no student should feel self-conscious about doing things in different ways. When given options of different ways to reach our academic goals, all students can be successful.

**Q: What are some barriers that your students face and how has UDL helped to reduce those barriers?**

**A:** I teach reading. Sometimes my students are better able to comprehend a text and work toward our goals that have to do with comprehension if they can listen to the text. When working with a text, some students would be reading it, some would be listening with a headset, some might listen to a peer read. With text-based writing, some students would be writing independently, some might be using speech to text with a headset, some might have sentence starters, some may have met with a peer to talk about the prompt beforehand. Some kids need a break, and may take a quick walk, or sit on a moving cushion. Some students may lack background knowledge, so a small group might do an activity to build background knowledge or introduce vocabulary before a lesson. This background knowledge might be in a video, slides, text, or a meeting with a teacher. These are a few examples of the barriers I'm trying to remove by giving my students options.

We have bigger, systemic barriers too. Kids in our school are grouped by ability, we have kids who are being retained, we have chronically absent students, and also a lot of transient students. It seems with the pandemic and inconsistent schooling a lot of our students have mental health needs. A school-wide dedication to UDL would help address these bigger, systemic barriers to learning. I hope providing kids an environment in which they can succeed will make kids more likely to stay in school and come to school every day. Maybe being successful will help improve kids' mental health. There is only so much I can do as one teacher. The power of UDL is greater if the whole school is on board.

**Q: What do you want families to know about UDL?**

**A:** UDL is for all students. All students are reaching for the same clear goals but every student's path may be different based on the flexible options available to all students. With UDL, every student will learn and grow.

**Q: What advice would you give to an educator who is thinking about implementing UDL in their context?**

**A:** My best advice would be to find someone to work with on your journey into using the UDL framework. I was fortunate to work with educational consultants at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) who have been instrumental in helping me grow. I would also advise starting slowly. I started by writing student-friendly goals. Once I had the goals, the options I needed to provide to my students so they could all succeed became more obvious to me. As I started providing options, I realized I needed to help my students become more self-directed learners. It seems my journey is taking its own path. It is important to take it piece by piece.

***Living our mission. Communicating our vision.***

Each month, our team shares stories of how CAIU's vision, mission, and values are being incorporated into every day services and practices. Staff can submit articles and ideas to [communications@caiu.org](mailto:communications@caiu.org).

*Kim Potter and Shana Montgomery recently had the opportunity to participate in a podcast about UDL. Hosted by Loui Lord Nelson, the podcast discusses Kim's and Shana's success implementing UDL into a middle school reading class.*

*Listen here: <https://theudlapproach.com/podcasts/episode-72-kim-potter/>*



# Children's Mental Health

## CAIU Mental Health Services

Article by: Dr. Keith Watson,  
Assistant Director of Student Services

Mental health needs among children have a significant impact on the way they function, learn, handle emotions, and self-regulate. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), anxiety, depression, and behavior disorders are the most frequently diagnosed mental health concerns among children. Some of these disorders commonly occur together and are often barriers to learning.

At the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU), we provide direct mental health support or access to support in all programs across Student Services. Social Workers regularly use a research based universal screening tool, the Behavioral Health Screener (BHS), to identify at risk signs across 13 domains and provide targeted services to address elevated areas. Across our Emotional Support (ES) continuum, which includes ES, Capital Area Therapeutic Emotional Support (CATES), Capital

Area Mental Health Program (CAMhP), and Diakon Center Point, social workers provide explicit instruction and therapeutic intervention at varying levels ranging from once a week to daily. In addition, students receive group instruction to address age appropriate social emotional learning needs.

As we continue to collaborate with our partnering districts, we share and recognize the same concerns regarding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the mental health and social-emotional well-being of our students. While we strive to unlock the potential of each of our students, we are cognizant that we have to address the needs they bring with them to the classroom. In the coming months, the Student Services Leadership Team will be working on a realignment of our ES continuum to foster more individualized mental health support and services at the classroom level. This will start with a more detailed and in depth intake process. We will also be adding additional mental health screening tools to our repertoire to more precisely identify and provide intervention for mental health concerns.

## CDC's Children's Mental Health Information

**9.4%**

of children aged  
2-17 have received  
an ADHD diagnosis

**7.4%**

of children aged  
3-17 have a  
diagnosed  
behavior problem

**7.1%**

of children aged  
3-17 have  
diagnosed anxiety

**3.2%**

of children aged  
3-17 have  
diagnosed  
depression

# Noteworthy

#BeGreat #ChangingLives



## DHH Class Explores Zoo

Students in Mrs. Bogdan's deaf and hard of hearing classroom at Susquehanna Township Middle School have been learning how to read maps. In order to get real world experience, they ventured to Zoo America and practiced their new skills by locating where they were along their route and learning about different animal habitats inside the park. They were very successful and it was a fun and exciting way to teach the students functional skills for life. #changinglives

## CAIU staff featured in Central Penn Parent Article

Educational Consultant Kellie Custer was recently interviewed by Central Penn Parent on the topic of ADHD. Custer stressed the importance of communication when it comes to developing the best ways to help a child with ADHD learn. "Some students struggle with a cognitive load understanding dense content, while others find noise, or distractions, a challenge."

Read the article here: <https://www.cpbj.com/how-much-do-you-know-about-adhd/>



## Carlisle Sertoma Club supports Champions for Children

On December 2, Kellie Custer was invited to speak with the Carlisle Area Sertoma Club on behalf of Champions for Children. The Sertoma Club is a civic organization that works to improve the quality of life for those at risk or impacted by hearing loss. Following a presentation on the mission and projects funded by Champions for Children, representatives from the Sertoma Club presented a donation of \$750 provided by the sponsorship committee. Loretta Connolly, former CAIU EI Speech Pathologist and Sertoma Club Sponsorship Chair, recommended the committee make the donation to Champions for Children based on her experience with their support during her time at the CAIU. For more information on donating to Champions for Children or becoming a committee member, please contact Kellie Custer at [kcuster@caiu.org](mailto:kcuster@caiu.org).

## American Education Week 2021

Check out a video from CAIU students to their educators: [https://youtu.be/KqM3\\_g71Vu4](https://youtu.be/KqM3_g71Vu4)





CAIU Compliments is a Capital Area Intermediate Unit initiative that allows CAIU staff the opportunity to share words of thanks, tout successes, or tell a story about what makes us great as an organization; our people. Submit a CAIU Compliment [here](#).

**Bridgid Wills (Program Secretary): #Dedication** Since transitioning to Preschool, Bridgid has gone above and beyond to help me! If I ever have a question and she doesn't know the answer (which is rare) she will find someone that can answer my question. Bridgid is always quick to respond! I'm so thankful to have her as a resource! *Submitted by Kristen Kimsey*

**Kelly Morris (Social Worker): #Innovation** Kelly is truly a class act social worker! She has perfected the balance of holding students accountable in supportive, compassionate ways. She has created many classroom practices that benefit student and staff well-being and health, such as creating a virtual calm room, developing an initiative to challenge other CAMhP classroom to get students engaged in their physical health, and working closing with our transition coach, Leah, to create new opportunities for work experience for students. Kelly has a passion for transition planning and helps her students and families to develop wellness plans and goals for beyond high school! Kelly is an incredible social worker and forward thinker! *Submitted by Julie Mestemaker*

**Shelby Cordeiro (Social Worker): #Dedication** Shelby is a truly outside the box thinker and social justice advocate! She is cultivating a culture of belonging for students at CD East's CAMhP Classroom and getting students invested in the world around them. She is helping students develop their own mental wellness by exposing them to the role of self-advocacy, goal setting, and learning new things. Shelby is always one of the first social workers to volunteer to help students and staff. Shelby is an incredible social worker and team player! *Submitted by Julie Mestemaker*

**Heather Smith (Educational Consultant): #Service** Heather is an exceptional team member. She is a wealth of resources, communicates effectively, and encourages analytic thinking across our staff. More personally, Heather has been incredibly supportive as I navigated health issues and an increased workload. She checks in on me regularly to make sure I'm taking care of myself and offers to take on tasks to free up some of my time. She's really just the best! *Submitted by Kellie Custer*

**Andrea Schwartz (EPP): #Service** It was hard to pick one category because she demonstrates them all so well. Andrea is and has always been dedicated to our students and our team. She is committed to developing relationships

with all the students. She is a trailblazer with demonstrating equity and acceptance of all. She innovates by helping identify new ways to help the students succeed and continues to find ways to lead and become an expert in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives by attending trainings above and beyond what is asked, researching, and teaching others. All of these demonstrate her dedication to serve the children and adults in this organization. *Submitted by Jen Sciacca*

**Pam Topper (Teacher): #Innovation** Pam has adapted her schedule this year and integrated new exciting activities for some of the classes exploring appropriate pre-k science concepts such as water circulation in plants which the students have loved! She has been accommodating and open to integrating support staff ideas, such as outdoor learning. Making these changes has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. Pam's class is a pleasure to be a part of. *Submitted by Emily Robenolt & Jocelyn Colyer*

**Lisa Klinger (ANPS Program Supervisor): #Service** Thank you so much for all your help with the food drive at Bishop McDevitt. Helping us move all the food, over 2,600 pieces of food, was a huge task and you all did it with a smile on your face. We truly could not have done this without your help. Your dedication and service to Save the Bananas is truly appreciated. We are truly blessed to have such an amazing co-worker. Thank you. *Submitted by Rebecca Slavinsky and Kelly Myers*

**Hillary Williams (ANPS Program Coordinator): #Service** Thank you so much for all your help with the food drive at Bishop McDevitt. Helping us move all the food, over 2,600 pieces of food, was a huge task and you all did it with a smile on your face. We truly could not have done this without your help. Your dedication and service to Save the Bananas is truly appreciated. We are truly blessed to have such an amazing co-worker. Thank you. *Submitted by Rebecca Slavinsky and Kelly Myers*

**Marilla Clay (ANPS Program): #Service** Thank you so much for all your help with the food drive at Bishop McDevitt. Helping us move all the food, over 2,600 pieces of food, was a huge task and you all did it with a smile on your face. We truly could not have done this without your help. Your dedication and service to Save the Bananas is truly appreciated. We are truly blessed to have such an amazing co-worker. Thank you. *Submitted by Rebecca Slavinsky and Kelly Myers*



**Beth-Ann McConnell (Social Worker & Interagency Coordinator): #Service** Thank you so much for all your help with the food drive at Bishop McDevitt. Helping us move all the food, over 2,600 pieces of food, was a huge task and you all did it with a smile on your face. We truly could not have done this without your help. Your dedication and service to Save the Bananas is truly appreciated. We are truly blessed to have such an amazing co-worker. Thank you.

*Submitted by Rebecca Slavinsky and Kelly Myers*

**Elizabeth Chiodo (Speech Therapist): #Partnership** Liz is always willing and able to help others with anything that anyone is struggling with. She just helped me complete an IEP using Hello Sign since I am not familiar with this program yet. She was so patient and kind while showing me how to send and process the IEP from start to finish. I am truly thankful for her as a co-worker! *Submitted by Rima Wilson*

**Kevin Fatherree (Teacher): #Dedication** Kevin has a gifted ability to find the exact right words at the exact right moment in time. He builds up the students and his colleagues with his kindness, encouragement, and his steadfast loyalty! Working alongside Kevin has been one of the greatest privileges in my career. *Submitted by Krista Werner*

**Ashley Hoffer (Program Secretary): #Partnership** Ashley stepped up and took on the Champions for Children Fall Clothing Drive completely on her own. This months-long project involves communicating with multiple requesters, coordinating the acquisition and distribution of funds, and following up with all the shoppers to ensure they have what they need to shop for the students. Without her support, this crucial project that provided clothing to nearly 30 students would not have been possible. *Submitted by Kellie Custer*

**Samantha Forsythe (Educational Consultant): #Partnership** Sam is an amazing consultant and a huge asset to our team. Sam is always willing to pitch in on new cases and support new ideas and initiatives. Our team is lucky to have her! *Submitted by Heather Smith*

# CAIU is celebrating 50 years of #changinglives

Intermediate Units (IUs) were established on July 1, 1971, by the Pennsylvania General Assembly to operate as regional educational service agencies, providing cost-effective and management-efficient programs to Pennsylvania school districts, charter schools, and more than 2,400 non-public and private schools.

Learn more about our state's Intermediate Units by visiting [paiu.org](http://paiu.org).

*Help us educate the community about IUs by sharing our "Then & Now" social media posts.*



# opportunities to do good

## CAIU Staff Service Projects!

Each year, more than 400 staff participate in community service projects.



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

## Upcoming Professional Growth Sessions

12/17/2021 to 1/17/2022 - [The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher \(CPE Course\)](#)

12/21/2021 - [School Improvement Network](#)

1/6/2022 - [High Impact Strategies Training \(Virtual\)](#)

1/11/2022 to 5/5/2022 - [HELP STUDENTS BECOME LEADERS OF THEIR OWN LEARNING](#)

1/11/2022 - [Instructional Coaching Collaborative Network Meeting \(January 2022\)](#)

1/11/2022 - [ELD Networking](#)

1/12/2022 - [High Impact Strategies Training \(Virtual\)](#)

1/12/2022 - [Messiah Students-High Impact Strategies Training \(Virtual\)](#)

1/14/2022 to 2/13/2022 - [Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom: Strategies, Techniques, and Material \(CPE Course\)](#)

1/25/2022 - [CAIU Instructional Technology Collaboration Winter Meeting](#)

1/27/2022 to 3/31/2022 - [Facing Challenges and Addressing Local Land Use Issues](#)

## Upcoming Service Projects (For CAIU Staff)

12/16/2021 - [ALL STAFF DAY - Stocking Stuffers!!](#)  
Only 5 spots available!

Project Coordinator is Andria Saia. Participants will wrap small gifts/candy and fill stockings that will be given to children in shelters in Perry County. Special Instructions: There is a \$5.00 materials fee to cover the gifts/stockings.

12/18/2021 - [ALL STAFF DAY - Wreaths Across America](#)  
Only 20 spots available!

This event is dedicated to remembering the sacrifices veterans have made in wars since the American Revolution. Following a ceremony at 12 pm, we will spend several hours laying wreaths on each grave in the cemetery. As we lay wreaths on each individual veteran's grave, we say the veteran's name aloud, as we remember their life, service and sacrifice. Every name will be said, every veteran will be remembered. Please keep in mind this event can be very cold, it is held in December! Dress accordingly - hats, gloves, scarves, boots, etc. Any Special Instructions: I will send an email closer to the day of the event with details on where to park, how to meet up with me, etc. If you would like to follow information when it is posted on the website, the address is: <https://www.wreathsassacrossamerica.org/pages/17107/>



# Welcome New Hires!

## Amanda Hummel

is an EPP at Hill Top Academy.



## Amanda Bachmann

is an EPP at Middlesex. She is a US Army Veteran.



## Jamie VanMeter

is an ANPS Social Worker.



## James Rudy

is an EPP at Hill Top Academy. He can manipulate bad situations with humor.



## Jennifer Zimmerman

is an EPP at Middle Paxton Elementary. She's a momma of 5 awesome boys.



## Julia Williams

is a S/L Clinician at the Enola office. She is an avid horseback rider.



**Jill Herb** is an EPP at Middle Paxton Elementary. She's traveled to all but three states in the US.

## new Beginnings

### CAIU Enola Facility Renovations to Begin in December

- Improved safety and security
- Welcoming visitor area with an interactive family waiting room
- Landing spaces for visitors to recharge and connect
- Café for students to manage
- State of the art conference rooms with the latest technology
- Adaptable conference room designs



SUSQUEHANNA



MIDDLE LOBBY



LOBBY



DOGWOOD



