Meeting Minutes – 2019-2020 Annual Business Meeting

In response to the state-wide closures due to COVID-19, the meeting was presented in a digital format through a Google Form, and members were given the opportunity to respond.

Business meeting form opened on April 9th

- 8 member responses were recorded (does not include the 4 board members)
- The form will remain open for additional responses until the Steering Committee meeting this summer
  - Access the 2019-2020 Annual Business Meeting here (https://forms.gle/1wxknNKcc2okYgsG6)

A Message from the Board (presented in video format)

- A video message from the board can be viewed here (https://youtu.be/9S0iKYPKY_s)
- Questions and comments from members:
  - Thank you for all of your hard work!!
  - Thanks for your hard work and great programming/meetings this year. Thank you also for making it a point to connect to us now.
  - Thanks so much for putting this together. The videos are great and it is so good to see everyone!
  - Great seeing all of you! Only wish I could enlarge it but it didn't allow it. I guess because it's embedded on the website? Not a problem, thought. Nice video!
    - Please note, you can click the YouTube button on the video to view larger/full screen
  - Thank you for this video! Your advice and consideration regarding this situation and how it has been impacting students and staff is inspiring!

Review of 2019-2020: Meetings

- Minutes from each meeting can be viewed online (https://ctahead.org/about/minutes/).
- Questions and comments from members:
  - These were great programs. I really enjoyed all of our meetings.
  - I was only able to attend the assistive tech resources session - which was great! Thanks so much for putting together such a dynamic series of meetings.

Review of 2019-2020: Organization Updates

- Bylaw Updates Approved November 1, 2019 - View the minutes with the approved amendments here (https://ctahead.org/2019/07/ctahead_meeting_11-01-19/)
  - The full bylaws can be found on the website (https://ctahead.org/about/bylaws/)
- Members Only Area of the CT AHEAD website
  - View Members Only Area (https://ctahead.org/resources/members_only/)
    - password: ctahead2019
  - Members can send information they wish to share on this page to board@ctahead.org.
- CT AHEAD Listserv
  - Members with Google access, view/join online (https://groups.google.com/d/forum/ct-ahead)
  - Members without Google Access can request to join by emailing board@ctahead.org
- Questions and comments from members:
  - The members only area and listserv are important vehicles for sharing information. Since many of us are in one-person offices, it is good to be able to easily connect with colleagues across the state.
  - Both the Members Only Area and the CT AHEAD Listserv have been great resources for a new disability support specialist in the field.
Review of 2019-2020: Treasurer's Report (Submitted by Tracy Carlson, CT AHEAD Treasurer)

- **Overview**
  - Initial Funds: $4,169.52
  - Current Funds: $5,478.80
  - Received (membership fees): $2,200.00
  - Total Expenses: $890.72

- **Expense Details**
  - Bluehost Domain Privacy Protection for Website (2 years): $29.76
  - Refreshments for 9/27/19 meeting (Panera): $447.96
  - Refreshments for 11/1/19 meeting (CCSU Dining): $218.00
  - Refreshments for 2/7/20 meeting (Wesleyan Dining): $134.00
  - CT AHEAD Post Office Box for 6 months: $61.00

- **Questions and comments from members:**
  - Thank you for spending the money wisely. It’s always great having refreshments at the meetings.
  - Perhaps with the funds that have accumulated over the past year, CT AHEAD could consider bringing in an outside speaker for the next academic year. This has been quite successful and well-received in the past.

**New Business Items**

- **Creating a social media presence** - *Exploring ways for CT AHEAD to promote itself and its events through public social media pages/accounts. Also exploring ways for members to stay connected to each other through private social media groups. Social media would also create more opportunities for CT AHEAD to network with other organizations.*
  - Questions and comments from members:
    - Could we recruit a student intern (communications/marketing major) or a graduate assistant in the field to take on this responsibility?
    - Would be great to connect to other University’s on Instagram.
    - I do not personally or professionally use social media. It may be a way to promote events - although I am not sure.
    - Using a social media platform to discuss our community-based work would be a great way to connect both from within and out of the organization. Promoting a stronger sense of community and an easier way to communicate throughout the year about ongoing issues, especially in times like these, would be a great way to supplement a resource such as a Listserv. A Facebook Group designed for all members would be an easy way to accomplish this.

- **Organization’s website goals** - *We are seeking input from members on what they would like to see included on the website. More/different resources? Additional professional development opportunities publicized? Photos from our past events? For reference, view the website [https://ctahead.org].*
  - Questions and comments from members:
    - Local resources and events.
    - I think that the website already has a robust set of resources available, although it would be great to include photos from events.
    - PD opportunities would be great!
    - Given the current circumstances, I think that publishing and compiling available webinars or online trainings that are free to those who wish to further their professional development would be great! That way, we know where to look first and use CT AHEAD as a primary place to find resources.
    - Having photos from meetings/community-based initiatives are a good way to promote our work, especially when paired with social media platforms.
    - It might be an interesting idea to organize the "Resources" page based on who is looking. For example, Resources for Students, Resources for Parents, Resources for Providers/Specialists, Resources for Members Only could be helpful for organizing resources.
Adding a 5th board position - A 5th board position would be an individual responsible for “Maintaining the organization’s web presence and updating public digital information related to the organization”, rather than have this be a duty of the Secretary. Discussion of the need for an additional, separate position could be determined based on the first two New Business items.

Questions and comments from members:

- Yes, we need a 5th member!
- This does seem to make a lot of sense. It is quite a lot to manage the distribution of minutes and the website within one position - although the person responsible for these combined tasks has done a stellar job this year.
- Depending on the initial work needed for the above items, having an additional board position could be helpful for keeping this additional work separate from all of the other responsibilities that are important to running the organization.
- Other topics for discussion?
- I confess that as a newbie, I'm not as familiar with the website and forget to review it often. I also forgot the password for the member's only section so I can't really speak to it. At this time, my goal is to gain more familiarity with it this year.

Introduction to 2020-2021 (Looking ahead to the 2020-2021 year.)

- Steering Committee - The CT AHEAD Board would like to extend an invitation to all members to join the Steering Committee meeting this summer. The Steering Committee traditionally meets with the Board in June or July to provide recommendations for CT AHEAD in the upcoming year.
  - The Steering Committee will review member comments from the New Business items and make recommendations for further discussions or proposed voting by the members.
  - The Steering Committee will also review the member suggestions related to future meetings and make recommendations to the Board for meeting dates, topics, and meeting format for the 2020-2021 year.

- Steering Committee Interest
  - We are planning to hold a Steering Committee meeting, whether in person or virtually. If you are interested in being a member of the Steering Committee (and have not indicated so on the form), please email board@ctahead.org (even returning Steering Committee members); we will be in touch this summer about scheduling a meeting.

- Potential Meeting Topics and Schedule for 2020-2021
  - We are planning to reschedule the discussion with the CT School Counselors, which was originally scheduled as the April 2020 meeting.
  - Additional suggested meeting topics from members:
    - UDL conference, website/document accessibility, more round tables.
    - More on UDL.
    - Self-care, employment support for students with disabilities, possible disability resources event or transition event, explore research opportunities.
    - Serving the increased numbers of students with ASD on our campuses. Maybe ask a campus that has a specific program to share at a meeting.
    - Not sure where the topic fits, but perhaps we can add topics that pertain to online learning environments with strategies and resources to support both students and faculty.
    - As someone new to the field who is going to be working with first year college students who are transitioning to the college experience, it will be interesting to hear from CT School Counselors about that initial process for students incoming.
    - Networking with other organizations would be a great opportunity to compile more resources and policies regarding UDL, especially during this time.
  - Meeting dates and times - Comments from members for 2020-2021:
    - Go back to Fridays in the Morning.
    - Prefer all Friday mornings; Friday afternoons are not easy to make work.
[List of bullet points]

**Next Steps**
- Members who indicated their interest in joining the Steering Committee will be contacted and a meeting will be scheduled for this summer.
  - If you are interested in being a member of the Steering Committee (and have not indicated so on the form), please email board@ctahead.org.
- Membership Renewal - *The membership year runs from September 1st to August 31st*
  - We hope you have enjoyed your year with CT AHEAD, and we look forward to working with you again next year. *Please mark your calendars to complete your renewal in August!*
  - As you are connecting with colleagues from Connecticut, if they are not yet members, please spread the word and encourage them to join!
  - Information on membership, and the Annual Membership Form, can be found on our Membership web page ([https://ctahead.org/membership/](https://ctahead.org/membership/))

**Thank you for your time and contributions!**
- If you wish to add your comments to the business meeting, the form will remain open for additional responses until the Steering Committee meeting this summer
  - Members can access the 2019-2020 Annual Business Meeting here ([https://forms.gle/1wxknNKcc2okYgsG6](https://forms.gle/1wxknNKcc2okYgsG6))

*Thank you so much for your participation and membership this year! We are saddened that we were not able to meet for our April meeting. We look forward to seeing you in the fall (whether in person or virtually).*

*Please remember we are a community. As we face uncertainty while working remotely, our work can seem overwhelming if we begin to feel isolated. Remember, we are in this together. Don’t hesitate to reach out to other members to ask for or offer support and encouragement, and please let us know if there are other ways in which we can support you during this time.*

Sincerely,

CT AHEAD Board
Jennifer Boylan, President
Kristen Scavone, President-Elect
Tracy Carlson, Treasurer
Crystal Rose Hill, Secretary

Respectively Submitted,

Crystal Rose Hill
CT AHEAD Secretary