



CT AHEAD

Connecticut Association on
Higher Education and Disability

Meeting Minutes – October 22, 2021

CT AHEAD Community Chat

Brooks called the meeting to order at 9:05 am (12 in attendance)

- Purpose of the meeting was a brainstorming session to review and evaluate CT AHEAD's Mission and approach to ensure alignment with the work we are doing. While the Association by-laws have been updated over the past several years, a re-evaluation of our Mission and approach had not been formally reviewed in quite some time. The meeting provided an opportunity to compare our Mission to that of National AHEAD.
- ***Member review and feedback are requested. Please share any thoughts and updates regarding the below Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals to the CT AHEAD Board.***
- National AHEAD has a Vision Statement and Core Values listed in addition to their Mission Statement. CT AHEAD only lists our Mission Statement and Goals. It was suggested that CT AHEAD adopt the Vision and Core Values of National AHEAD.
- Some of the key items noted as a benefit to the CT AHEAD Mission Statement is the succinct and clear language used, whereas National AHEAD is a bit wordier and more complex. One notable aspect included in the National AHEAD Mission that is a critical component to CT AHEAD is the aspect of "grounded in social justice principles." Incorporating that verbiage was suggested.
- Understanding that National AHEAD focuses on supporting the entire U.S. and all affiliates, a suggestion was made to incorporate that CT AHEAD helps promote and develop its members' work to better support our students.

CT AHEAD Original Mission Statement

CT AHEAD is a statewide organization of professionals committed to full participation in higher education for qualified individuals with disabilities. The Association is a vital resource, promoting excellence through education, communication, and training.

CT AHEAD Proposed Mission Statement

CT AHEAD is a statewide organization of professionals committed to every aspect of equitable participation in higher education for qualified individuals with disabilities. The Association is a vital resource grounded in social justice principles that promote our members' development and excellence in education, communication, and training, to better support those with disabilities in higher education.

Vision Statement (adopted from National AHEAD)

CT AHEAD envisions a postsecondary experience that embraces disability and is free from barriers.

Core Values (adopted from National AHEAD)

- **Diversity:** We believe in creating and promoting diverse educational communities to foster the exchange of ideas and perspectives, offering the opportunity for individual growth and developing a forum that honors the disability experience.
- **Equity:** Recognizing that equality is NOT the same as equity, we believe in developing resources and fostering attitudes that provide a truly equitable experience that is responsive to individuals' strengths, weaknesses, and differences.
- **Respect:** We believe in providing everyone with an opportunity to express individual thoughts, feelings, ideas, and needs; we listen and honor the individual's right to be heard, even if we do not agree.
- **Inclusivity:** We believe in creating an inclusive community that encourages participation of all members, colleagues, practitioners, students, and stakeholders in an environment of mutual respect, opportunity for development, and honor of personal experience.

Goals

The goals of CT AHEAD are to:

- Develop communication, cooperation, and coordination among institutions of higher education on issues relating to individuals with disabilities
- Promote public awareness of the needs and issues of individuals with disabilities
- Support institutions in balancing academic integrity with academic accommodations
- Work with other professional, public and private agencies and consumers to promote institutional and statewide initiatives to meet the educational needs of individuals with disabilities
- Collaborate with secondary schools and employers to facilitate transition to, and from, post-secondary education and public and private businesses
- Provide professional development for Association members and other professionals working within this field
- Promote and support policies (e.g., admission, staffing and accommodations) which increase access and opportunity in higher education for individuals with disabilities
- Promote systematic data collection to gather information across institutions for enhancing knowledge and awareness of factors relating to postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities

Meeting ended 9:45am

Respectively Submitted,

Debbie Kosior
CT AHEAD Secretary