

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT COLLEGE ACCESS AND P-16: A WINNING COLLABORATION

by Adele Gelb, Program Officer, Stark Education Partnership

College Access in Stark County is a result of multiple pathways with converging strategies and broad based community support. How did that happen? The answer is the Stark County P-16 Compact.

The Compact is a collaboration of K-12 educators, postsecondary leadership and business, philanthropic and civic leaders. Formed in 2002, its purpose is to foster and sustain a community conversation on ways that Stark County can support and sustain all students in realizing their academic potential and in achieving readiness to pursue and be successful in post secondary education. The twin goals of the compact are 100% high school graduation rate and raising the college going rate.

One converging strategy focuses on OCAN Access Advisors who work in four Stark County districts – Alliance, Canton City, Canton Local and Massillon. Collaborating with guidance counselors within the high schools, our advisors meet with students and families regarding selection, application and financial aid. P-16 member support has enhanced these services through grants. The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton provided a grant of \$10,000 for ACT prep class materials; Dominion (East Ohio) provided a grant of \$10,000 to support fees for qualified students to take the ACT a second time; the Stark Education Partnership provided matching funds for a GearUp grant that has provided earned stipends to students to take the ACT, apply to college, pay for matriculation fees and/or books.



Selecting a college is the task of the day at Canton South High School for Barbara Tscholl, Guidance Counselor, Rachel Cheviron, Student, and Ryan Gracia, OCAN Advisor.

P-16 is the venue for the conversations that lead to “stepping up” to meet the goals. Outcomes include: Canton Local’s partnership with two local colleges to provide familiarity and access; Walsh University’s new program to insure freshman succeed and persist; Kent State Stark’s pilot project to provide applications as a cohort to a senior class; Stark State College of Technology and Canton City Schools partnership to start Early College; and a Summer Scholars program for 125 students across the county to earn 12 college credits while in high school funded in part by OCAN.

Stark County’s P-16 Compact has been described by Stephen Portch, Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Georgia and the father of the P-16 movement, as the finest local P-16 in the country. The success of our endeavor is collaboration by visionary leadership empowered to effect change.

For more information about the Stark Education Partnership go to [www.edpartner.org](http://www.edpartner.org)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Member Spotlight College Access and P-16: A Winning Collaboration