

# Local News

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## Northumberland Transition Conference held at SU

SELINSGROVE — The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) and the Northumberland County Transition Council welcomed more than 200 students in Susquehanna University's Stretansky Concert Hall for the 2020 Northumberland Transition Conference.

The objective of the annual conference is to recognize special needs junior and senior students from the region who have gone above and beyond in their efforts and preparations for life after high school.

Students from Milton, Warrior Run, Shikellamy, Mount Carmel, and Mifflinburg school districts participated, along with students who attend CSIU's Work Foundations+ program. Also participating were student nominees from Mid-West and Selinsgrove Area school districts.

The conference commenced with keynote speaker, Ken Altenbach, a leadership and team building coach, encouraging students to rid themselves of the burden of labels placed on them by society. "One thing we need to understand is that when we put labels on people, it becomes another voice inside your head and if we're not careful, it can take on a life of its own," said Altenbach.

Prior to the conference, students can be nominated by their transition coordinator to receive the Dr. Cynthia Schloss Transition Education Award and/or the Andrew Hergan Transition Education Award.

To honor the memory of Dr. Schloss, the Dr. Cynthia Schloss Transition Education Award is presented annually to a nominated student from a school district in the Central Susquehanna



PROVIDED

**Award nominee, JeanPaul Pancheco Acevedo, Ashley Eades, teacher/transition coordinator of award winner, Josh Stanchick and Andrew Hergan.**

Intermediate Unit region who demonstrates "a strong personal work ethic and commitment to preparation for adult life."

Three students received the Dr. Cynthia Schloss Transition Education Award. They were Colton Wehry from Line Mountain School District and CSIU Work Foundations+ program, Kaitlin Podzielnny from Mid-West School District and Isaiah Harris from Selinsgrove Area School District and SUN Area Technical Institute.

The fourth award was to be presented during the Columbia Montour Transition Conference. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and out of an abundance of caution, the venue decided to cancel that conference. The award has been presented to Hope Mullery, of Danville Area School District.

When asked what the award means to her, Kaitlin said, "It means a lot; it means the world!" After

graduation, Kaitlin plans on attending Wilson College in the Veterinary Medical Technology program. Dr. Spangler, Kaitlin's transition coordinator said she couldn't be prouder of Kaitlin.

The Andrew Hergan Transition Education Award is presented to a nominated student from a school district in the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit region who demonstrates "a strong personal work ethic and commitment to preparation for adult life." This award was presented to Joshua Stanchick.

Stanchick is a junior from Mount Carmel Area School District, who attends the Northumberland County Career and Technical School in the construction trades program. Josh is employed part-time at CVS and also part-time for a landscaping company. In addition to his employment, Josh volunteers his time and carpentry skills by building dugouts for his high school baseball



PROVIDED

**Award winners Colton Wehry, Isaiah Harris, and Kaitlin Podzielnny.**

team, building a shed for a local church and helping to build a tiny house that will be auctioned when completed.

Following the awards ceremony, students attended breakout sessions on various topics including employer expectations, social media and cyber offenses, interviewing techniques, financial literacy, stress, and the college experience, among other topics.

The theme of this year's conference was "Believe, Achieve, Lead, Succeed." The conference program cover art was designed by Aden Lewis of Selinsgrove Area School District and Work Foundations+.

The conference has continued each year because of generous donations from sponsors and donors. To learn more about the Transition Conference, or to be a sponsor or donor, contact Misty Harris, CSIU Educational Consultant at 570-523-1155, extension 2251.



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**Award winner, Hope Mullery, of the Danville Area School District.**