BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Your selections will help determine the interest in each session. We encourage you to carefully consider your breakout session selections to help inform planning for Christian Brothers Conference and Breakout Session presenters. Sessions in which little interest is expressed may be dropped from the program. The final schedule will be posted on the Christian Brothers Conference website before the conference.

**Target Audience** of each session: A = All, E = Elementary, M = Middle School, YFS = Youth and Family Services, H = High School, C = College/University, D = Development/Advancement

**Breakout Session I: Friday, November 17, 1:00 – 2:15 p.m.**

**A Lasallian Formation Program for Coaches and Athletic Staff (A)**

*Sean Keefe, Assistant Director of Alumni Engagement, Mullen High School, Denver, CO*

This interactive, open forum presentation builds upon several full-day coaching formation programs conducted at Lasallian high schools each year. The results of these successful pilot formation programs encouraged the author to create the synthesis project, “A Lasallian Formation Program for Coaches and Athletic Staff” that could be disseminated to other Lasallian schools. The Lasallian coaching formation program has the potential to promote coaches’ and athletic staffs’ ability to integrate the Lasallian charism into their vocational work in concert with the themes of: concern for the poor and social justice, enhancement of church and faith continuity, and the promotion of bringing those of myriad backgrounds, faiths and convictions together for the promotion of human dignity. Through well-formed athletic staffs, student athletes will benefit from their adult leaders embracing and practicing Lasallian values in responding to the needs of the marginalized and the church community, along with showing concern for others before self.

**An Introduction to the Piro Scholars Program: How We Support our First-Generation Students from Low-Income Families (H & YFS)**

*Andrew Callery, Director of Student Support Services & Piro Program, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, San Francisco, CA*

*Alejandra Hernandez, Assistant Director of Student Support Services & Piro Program, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, San Francisco, CA*

The Founder says that as Lasallian educators, we are to know our students individually and be able to understand them (*Med* 33.1). This session will help participants to identify and understand some of the varied challenges encountered by students and families of first-generation and low-income backgrounds who attend private Lasallian high schools. Through a thorough description of the Piro Scholars Program at Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory in San Francisco, participants will hear about the supports that are provided to its students and families academically, emotionally and materially. Time will be allocated to encourage dialogue, share best practices, and plan on how participants can provide greater support to families in need at their respective schools and/or organizations.
Educational Travel: “Together and by Association” (H)
*Megan Longman, Visual Art Teacher and Department Chair, DeLaSalle High School, Minneapolis, MN*
*Brad Casey, Global Advantage Program Coordinator and Social Studies Teacher, DeLaSalle High School, Minneapolis, MN*

This session will focus on the benefits of creating an educational travel program within a Lasallian high school. Through these programs, students use leadership skills and the core principle teachings of a Catholic education while studying academics at the college level. The presenters will walk participants through the process of implementing an educational travel program, which is based on academic travel combining art with core classes and partners with local colleges and universities in destinations such as Ecuador, Italy, Costa Rica and Brazil. The presenters will also discuss the opportunities of working with and creating partnerships with Lasallian high schools in the aforementioned countries.

Going, Going, Gone: Dynamics of Religious Disaffiliation (M, H & C)
*John M. Vitek, President and Chief Executive Officer, Saint Mary’s Press, Winona, MN*

Saint Mary’s Press and the Center for Applied Research on the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University conducted a national study of youth and young adults who disaffiliated from the Catholic Church to better understand their reasons for doing so and the dynamics of the process of disaffiliation. The study included gathering quantitative data as well as personal narratives analyzed through qualitative research methods. This session will explore the underlying dynamics that lead to disaffiliation, describe the factors that reinforce those dynamics, and invite participants to reflect on and examine the pastoral implications for their particular Lasallian ministry setting.

Redefining Brotherhood: Giving Voice to Healthy Masculinity (A)
*M. Aquino, Director of Educational Technology Integration and Social Studies Instructor, De La Salle High School, Concord, CA*

If we don’t define what our institutional culture means by “Brotherhood,” we leave it open to interpretations from a variety of stakeholders, which may be counter to our mission and Lasallian values. Hear how De La Salle High School in Concord, California, (an all-boys school) is working with students to redefine what it means to be a Lasallian man in the world through conversations on respect and gender and holding bystander intervention training. De La Salle reaches students through peer group training, collaboration with its sister school (Carondelet High School), and campus-wide awareness/educational campaigns. Learn how ideas and strategies for examining your campus climate/culture and organizing your stakeholders can make positive change.

What Do We Value? What Are We Practicing in Our Workplace/Society? And Where Are We Falling Short? (A)
*Paul E. Kotz, Ph.D., Ed.D. in Leadership, Core Associate Professor, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN*
Participants will be introduced to an exercise in values, determining their top five based on 30 preset options, such as life, compassion, freedom, creativity, work, religion, wisdom, health and others. Participants will also be given four cards to add values to the list that were not reflected in the card pack. Participants will then be given a chance to answer two questions via a survey and dialogue, with no restrictions on which values they choose. The questions address which values are practiced most often in corporations and schools, and which values seem to be lacking in the workplace/society. An analysis of what values are lacking is included in this teaching exercise and study. Lively discussion of values and why we are similar and different make this a valuable experience for participants.

What Every Lasallian Needs to Know: Neurobiology and Toxic Stress (A)
Camela M. Steinke, Ph.D., Program Assessment and Effectiveness Research Specialist, LaSalle School, Albany, NY
Bill Wolff, AFSC, Executive Director, LaSalle School, Albany, NY

Have you ever had a student “go from zero to sixty in a second”? Research on the brain suggests that some of these students may not actually be at zero as a result of the toxic stress in their lives. Neurobiological research indicates youth who are exposed to toxic stress are vulnerable to a series of negative outcomes including poor academic performance, low school connectedness, and a greater potential for involvement with the justice system. Unaddressed toxic stress also puts youth at risk for a number of negative health and social outcomes as adults. While this may appear rather dire, research suggests that the trajectory toward negative outcomes can be changed through positive, supportive relationships and an environment that promotes neurogenesis, which every Lasallian can provide regardless of their role. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the neurobiological impact of unmitigated exposure to abuse, neglect and household dysfunction, examine how these impacts affect youth in the school setting, and present suggestions about how to make the educational setting trauma informed.

Working Towards Justice: How Can Volunteering Be Wrong? (A)
Sean Hutchinson, Assistant Director for Civic Engagement, La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA

There are two approaches to performing service: charity and social justice. When service work is done within a social justice framework, it is more impactful and sustainable for all parties involved. When service is carried out in a charity mindset, it is on a more superficial level and aims to solve an immediate surface problem. While this does not seem like an inherently harmful action, charity can cause more harm than good, and that is when negative consequences of service can be identified. Albeit well intended, charity does not seek to answer the deeper question of “Why?” when it comes to service. Working toward social justice addresses the causes of marginalized societies and seeks to eliminate the problem at hand. Working toward charity is an endless effort that will never achieve true justice. There are opportunities to perform service where social justice is the focus and all involved are benefitting. The purpose of this session is to bring such opportunities to light so that service can be done in the most effective way possible.
**Breakout Session II: Friday, November 17, 2:45 – 4:00 p.m.**

**Charity AND Justice: A Model for Service Learning Programs (M, H & C)**  
*Suzaanne Goebel, Program Director, Brother David Darst Center, Chicago, IL*

The Brother David Darst Center uses service learning to engage students in critically thinking about contemporary social justice issues and how they are called to address systems of oppression. For many students, urban immersion experiences are their first encounter with people or injustices they may hear about in class or on the news, but may not fully understand. Through the Darst Center’s programming, the hope is that young adults will be able to dialogue with people who may have very different life experiences and see the world differently. By building relationships and gaining a broader understanding of social justice issues, the young adults the Darst Center works with will be inspired to take what they have learned at the center and transform their home communities. This breakout session will explore how service learning can supplement curriculum, giving young adults a richer understanding of the world around them. Darst Center staff will share tools and resources for implementing service.

**Encountering Diversity in the Curriculum (A)**  
*Amanda Kintzi, Current Student, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona, MN*  
*Anna Washburn, Current Student, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN*

This presentation begins with a reflection on the current state of our curriculum in the United States and the lack of culturally appropriate materials available to students of different backgrounds. It focuses on the current use of the master narrative in schools to teach history and how this narrative is incomplete in its explanation of how the United States came to be one of the world’s greatest powers. The presentation then transitions to focus on how Lasallian ministries can utilize culturally responsive teaching in their classes to bridge the gap between students of differing cultures. This focus on culturally responsive teaching allows for a deeper understanding among communities, and peers which allow each individual to develop a strong sense of human dignity and respect for all. The presentation concludes with new ideas and strategies that teachers and ministries can use to create a more inclusive environment and a reflection on how the implementation of a curriculum focused on the empowerment of all students will affect the education of future generations.

**Lasallian Dialogue with the Poor: The Bronx and Beyond (H & C)**  
*Kathleen Von Euw, Coordinator of Community Partnerships & Service, Campus Ministry & Social Action, Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY*  
*Lois Harr, Adjunct, Assistant Vice President, Campus Ministry & Social Action, Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY*

Manhattan College provides service-immersion experiences through LOVE, the Lasallian Outreach Volunteer Experience. The Bronx is one of the poorest urban centers in the United States. Manhattan’s Lasallian Outreach Collaborative (LOCo) provides weekly service in partnerships with over a dozen community based organizations. For the past three years, Manhattan has provided student leaders with local immersion experiences in the Bronx to further their understanding of socio-economic differences and privilege. In this breakout session, the presenters will explain lessons learned from these
experiences and discuss how intergroup dialogues can be used to foster our Lasallian call for dialogue with the poor. Intergroup dialogues are designed to empower communication and collaboration across social, cultural and power differences, and to promote equity and democracy. Lasallians are indeed called “to represent the needs of society’s most vulnerable.” We must do it by listening, in partnership, and with profound respect and humility. This session will provide tools for this endeavor.

**Lasallian Formation in an Age of Technology: Foundational Insights & Help (A)**

*Brother George Van Grieken, FSC, Ph.D., Director, Lasallian Resource Center, De La Salle Institute, Napa, CA*

*Bob Carrejo, Director, District of San Francisco New Orleans Office of Communication, De La Salle Institute, Napa, CA*

Helping young people today “understand one another and discern the one call of God” is embedded within the inescapable personal/social influences of contemporary technology and social media. Scholars, researchers and public commentators help bring facts and focus to our common understanding. “Being online isn’t just something we do. It has become who we are, transforming the very nature of the self.” (David Brooks) These voices have implications for how our “One Call” and “Many Voices” are able to “Dialogue, Inspire, Transform” in our Lasallian institutions today. St. John Baptist de La Salle himself may be called an “educational developmental engineer,” newly applying and sometimes transforming innovative educational methods, resources and insights for advancing the education and mission goals of the schools. This classic responsive-adaptive function of Lasallian pedagogy may be an effective bridge between traditional Lasallian education/formation and today’s instructional technologies.

**SCORE: Empowering Students as Lasallian Inclusion Trainers (H)**

*Scott Drain, Counselor for Students, De La Salle High School, Concord, CA*

*Cris Rosales, Counselor for Students, De La Salle High School, Concord, CA*

SCORE, the Student Coalition on Respectful Education, is a student-led program at De La Salle High School in Concord, California, that develops student leaders and empowers them to teach first-year students about the Lasallian core principles of inclusive community and respect for all persons through a series of interactive workshops and discussions. Each year, 50 students are trained as diversity and inclusion practitioners and discussion leaders and are invited to teach a series of 80-minute workshops throughout the year in freshman religion classes. Student leaders engage in conversations regarding their own identities and are trained in public speaking and small group facilitation. With these skills, they then lead their assigned class in small and large group conversations, personal testimonies, physical team-building activities, and journaling. Workshops include topics such as stereotypes, privilege, collusion, bullying and the introduction of identity development theories. Through videos, discussions and interactive activities, participants will learn a method for promoting the Lasallian principles of respect and inclusion through student-led education.
Servicing Youth and Families Above and Beyond (YFS)

Brother Michael Reis, FSC, LICSW, Chief Executive Officer, Tides Family Services, Inc., West Warwick, RI
Jessica Crowe, LICSW, Coordinator of Evidence Based Programming and Program Evaluation, Tides Family Services, Inc., West Warwick, RI

One in five children in Rhode Island is living in poverty, according to the 2017 RI Kids Count Fact Book data from 2015. Children living in poverty face more challenges in all areas of their lives solely based on family income. These children are more likely to develop mental health disorders, more at risk to use substances, more likely to have difficulties in school, and are less likely to have pro-social opportunities within the community. Tides Family Services is a non-traditional agency that utilizes a strengths-based and trauma-informed approach with a focus on building trust and establishing a therapeutic relationship with our families served, who come from the most distressed and poverty-stricken areas of Rhode Island. This presentation will highlight the importance of using a combination of evidence-based and holistic approaches to result in the development of trust, touching hearts, instilling hope and transforming lives for the youth and families entrusted to our care. Participants will learn how the ecological perspective drives the approach to continuously engage all systems connected with families served. This presentation will show how to go beyond your office, data and typical work day to ensure families are receiving the support and care they need.

The Changing Face of Inequality (H & C)

Antar Salim, Core Faculty, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Inequality is a topic that has been discussed amongst academics for years. This is particularly true for economists, as some focused on how to increase the proverbial pie (aka GDP) while others, a notably smaller percentage, committed their efforts on how to divide the pie more equitably. The atomizing of the pie is analogous to the study of inequality. More recently however, the term inequality has surfaced in many news outlets. Granted, there is value in the discussion, however, the construct is discussed from a pedantic perspective and in doing so, the moral component is abrogated from the conversation. Inequality is a measure of dispersion as it relates to income or wealth within a population. Generally speaking, the inequality that is discussed in the popular press and highlighted in the daily news is income inequality. The purpose of the presentation is to explore the various forms of inequality while examining its impact on society. Finally, the presenter aims to discuss strategies that may be implemented at the high school and university levels in order to combat increasing levels of inequality.

The Work is Ours: Lasallian Volunteers Program in the 21st Century (A)

Margaret Naughton, Associate Director of Lasallian Volunteers, Christian Brothers Conference, Washington, DC
Katie Christensen, Recruitment Coordinator, Lasallian Volunteers, Christian Brothers Conference, Washington, DC

The Lasallian Volunteers program is one of the most diverse formation programs in the Region. The volunteers come from a wide variety of socio-economic, religious, racial and educational backgrounds. The staff plans and executes programming that respects and nurtures differences while uniting the volunteers around association for mission so that each volunteer is treated with profound care and
dignity. This presentation will allow the participants to gain an understanding of how the Lasallian Volunteers program walks with the volunteers so that “they may have life and have it to abundance,” (John 10:10) so that in turn the volunteers will procure salvation for their own students and clients.

**Breakout Session III: Saturday, November 18, 10:15 – 11:30 a.m.**

**Caring for Our Common Home: A New Model for Dialogue, Inspiration and Transformation (A)**

*Elizabeth Berkes, Ph.D., Director of Faculty Development, De La Salle High School, Concord, CA*

*Elizabeth Guneratne, Ed.D., Lecturer in Educational Leadership & Director of Catholic School Partnerships, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA*

In the 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis called “for a new dialogue” on the grave problem of climate change, the degradation of the natural environment, and the global effects of the ruination of common resources on the poor. Animated in part by the Lasallian core principles, especially concern for the poor and social justice, a conference called Reflective Innovation for Sustainable Knowledge (RISK) (www.tinyurl.com/2017RISK-SCU) was designed to instantiate the urgent call of Pope Francis. Inspired by the Holy Father’s call, the RISK model explores the possibilities of a professional development experience that prepares educators to meet the interdisciplinary, politically complex, and technologically interwoven environmental challenges ahead by promoting deep listening, scholarly discourse, and responsive, justice-oriented teacher practice. Modeled after the RISK conference, this interactive workshop will teach educators how to prepare students and teachers to be climate ambassadors, lead reflections on the theological implications of climate justice, integrate sustainability in the pre-K – 12 curriculum, and engage religious and civic community partners in climate justice efforts.

**Changing the Conversation with Students: A Collaborative Partnership (A)**

*Michelle Batista, Director of Student and Family Services, De Marillac Academy, San Francisco, CA*

*Adam Vincent, Assistant Principal, De Marillac Academy, San Francisco, CA*

Lasallian schools have a distinctive way of bringing major Gospel values into the world of education. Experience how social emotional learning and discipline go hand in hand in helping students discover how to live their best life now. In this research-based, trauma-informed approach, the Lasallian culture of accompaniment serves as the foundation for interaction between students and educators. Learn common language and tools to effectively use empathy, define problems, and invite students into a collaborative and proactive solution.

**Face to Faith: Interfaith Dialogue with Students Around the World (H & C)**

*Charles Beach, Religion Teacher, Christian Brothers College High School, St. Louis, MO*

This secure online learning community helps to ensure that interfaith and intercultural dialogue between students does not end when the video conference cameras shut down. “Face to Faith” not only helps students to better understand and appreciate different worldviews and value systems, but also
helps them learn how to better articulate and explain their own Roman Catholic worldview and value system as well. Participants will learn how to access and implement lesson plans, video conferences, and online resources provided by the “Face to Faith” Initiative of the Generation Global Foundation.

**Fostering Grit in Lasallian Students: Applications of Care (A)**  
*Matthew Nowakowski, MBA, Ed.D., Core Associate Professor and Doctor of Business Administration, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN*

Our Lasallian students often face challenges due to poverty of spirit, finance or academic under-preparation. Helping our students develop “grit,” which is the passion to accomplish challenging long-term goals with the perseverance of follow-through, may be a key factor supporting their success in our schools, regardless of the student’s age or educational level. Using practical examples, this breakout session will review the core constructs defining “grit” based on foundational and current research and share practical strategies that may foster grit within our students. In our Lasallian charism, we believe that no student entrusted to our care, regardless of age, spirituality, poverty level or educational preparation, should ever feel overlooked, forgotten or hopeless. Our dialogue will focus on the key process of how our educational and faith communities can provide the relational and academic support required to advance the resilience needed to develop grit.

**In Living Color: Gathering Student Voices on Race (A)**  
*Jaime Longo, Ph.D., Executive Director, De La Salle Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning, La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA  
Karen Reardon, J.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Business Law, La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA*

In recognition that the campus community houses “many voices” on issues involving race, a small group at La Salle University in Philadelphia sought to inspire and encourage dialogue within and beyond campus by publishing an *Anthology of Student Voices on Race*. Beginning in December 2014, the creators solicited student submissions of all types, including personal essays, poetry, academic essays and artwork, that address race and racism. While many submissions focus on ongoing racial tensions between black and white Americans, submissions on the experiences “outside the encampment” faced by other people of color were also welcomed. This anthology is considered to be a means to create common ground and foster transformational dialogue in courses across campus, so faculty colleagues and Brothers were approached to submit framework essays that provide educational bridges to the academic study of race and of the Lasallian context for promoting human dignity for all. The presenters will share their experience of developing this project, including using campus events to share and amplify student submissions, their thoughts on using the anthology as a course text across the curriculum, and suggestions for developing similar projects at other ministries.
Vocational Exploration as Humanization (H, C & YFS)
Rebecca Pruitt, Ph.D., Program Director, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood, Special Education, Lewis University, Romeoville, IL

Recently, Lewis University administration, faculty and staff have increased efforts to support students’ search for purpose and meaning as they navigate through their college years. They engage in conversations that expand the notion of “vocation” to include the one call of God on all of our lives. This is no small endeavor, as the current economic and political climate brings a “tyranny of choice” (Cavanaugh in Cunningham, 2014, p. 34) to complicate and paralyze the efforts of American young adults in discerning vocation. This is especially problematic for our students who are disadvantaged by their socio-economic positioning. Raised by families with fewer options, they feel the weight of their own choices in light of economic responsibility to themselves and their families, as well as the weight of experiencing some form of dehumanization along the way. Riswold proposes that educators “are in a unique position to help students examine – and sometimes to interrupt – these (dehumanizing) systems and institutions” (Riswold, 2016, p. 74). This presentation will engage participants in a review of recent literature on vocational exploration, of particular strategies and their effects, and the impact of these endeavors on our efforts to dialogue with the poor and the culture.

Voices of the Homeless: Lasallians Making a Difference (A)
Lisa Anne Rizopoulos, Ph.D., Professor, Education Department, Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY
Lisa Juncaj, Director of Student Accounts and Bursar Services, Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY

As of June 2015, the number of homeless men, women and children in New York City tallied nearly 60,000, up 60 percent from June 2010. The number of homeless New Yorkers living in the shelter system has reached its highest level since the Great Depression, and there are an estimated 3,500 more homeless people living on the streets and in the subways, in New York City alone. How do these children live and how can schools and teachers serve their physical, social, emotional and academic needs? How can teachers serve the whole child and create interventions for success for children who live in shelters? Listen to the voices of our students, teachers and principals and get a glimpse into the lives of homeless families and discover unique and effective ways to serve this struggling population.

Women in the Lasallian Mission (A)
Maryann Donohue-Lynch, Associate Executive Director, Office for Mission and Ministry, District of Eastern North America, Eatontown, NJ

In 2010, Circular 461, Associated for the Lasallian Mission ... An Act of HOPE, first offered a perspective on the unique role of women in the Lasallian Mission. Since the publication of Circular 461, there have been four International Women Symposia and numerous local gatherings considering this topic. Women represent over 50 percent of Lasallians and are uniquely animating the Lasallian mission across the Institute. This breakout session will bring those events into focus, with an emphasis on the outcomes from the Lasallian Global Women’s Symposium held in New Zealand this past summer.