



RMU Trees Network October 2024 Newsletter



Office for Dispute Resolution October Parent and Family Meeting Monday, October 7, 2024 7 PM - 8 PM

We are pleased to announce that Ms. Ashley Smith, Program Manager for the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) will be presenting virtually at our Monday, October 7 parent and family meeting. She will provide an overview of the services from ODR, including information on the Special Education ConsultLine, Individualized Education Program/Individualized Family Service Plan facilitation, mediation, and due process hearings. She will also be available to answer questions immediately following her presentation. To register for this family/parent meeting scheduled for **Monday, October 7, 2024 from 7:00 - 8:00 pm**, please contact contact Vicki Donne at donne@rmu.edu or Deanna Hiltz at hiltzd@rmu.edu, or by registering at [ODR Google Registration](#). Upon registration, registrants will be sent a Google Meets calendar invitation.

Twice-Exceptionality Parent and Family Meeting

Monday, November 4 7 PM - 8 PM

We have gotten requests and questions about students who are twice exceptional. Join us for our upcoming parent and family support meeting hosted virtually by the RMU Trees Network. Dr. Jennifer Shuman, Director of Special Education and Student Services from Mount Lebanon School District, along with her colleague Nicole Glover, Coordinator of Secondary Gifted Education, will be presenting about their knowledge and experience with working and advocating for students with twice exceptionalities. They will also be leaving time to answer questions from the group, so have those coveted questions ready! The family/parent meeting is scheduled for **Monday, November 4, 2024 from 7:00 - 8:00 pm**. Upon registration, registrants will be sent a Google Meets calendar invitation. Parents can register for the meeting by contacting Vicki Donne at donne@rmu.edu or Deanna Hiltz at hiltzd@rmu.edu, or by registering at [Twice Exceptionality Google Registration](#) or <https://forms.gle/RuNcMh2BHiHJTbGu6>



Upcoming Events Around the Area

The RMU Trees Network is a member of the Special Needs Consortium, a group of service providers in the Pittsburgh area. The Special Needs Consortium exists to provide a place where all services and opportunities can be networked, shared, promoted, and advocated for to increase awareness of resources available to the special needs community. The following is a list of events found through our contacts and/or were shared by members of the consortium. We hope you will find something of interest to you.

October 10th- 1PM-3:30PM Free Accessible Movie Afternoon at LAMP

Please join LAMP/Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians for a free, described audio presentation of *A Haunting in Venice* (Rated PG-13) at the library, 4724 Baum Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Scenes with no dialog will be described for viewers to follow along. Closed captioning also provided. Popcorn and drinks will be served. Registration is not required, but is suggested. You can RSVP or request more information by contacting the library. Email address: info@mylamp.org. Phone: 800-242-0586.

October 11th 6:00PM-8:00PM Halloween Dance

Ross Township Community Center, 1000 Ross Municipal Drive. For information contact Laurie Berie lberie@ross.pa.us
To Register <https://ranp.recdesk.com/community/program>

October 16th Disability Mentoring Day

Bender Leadership Academy seeks high schoolers with disabilities who would be interested in participating in Disability Mentoring Day within the greater Pittsburgh metro area. This is a national program, coordinated by Bender Leadership Academy locally, to promote career development for high school students with disabilities through job shadowing and hands on career exploration. **All participating students are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Linda Dickerson Scholarship. If interested in bringing this program to your student, or your school, contact Scott Hammerstrom at shammerstrom@benderleadership.org. If you know of a company that would be interested in hosting students, or for more information, <https://benderleadership.org/host-a-disability-mentoring-day-event/>

October 17th 1:30PM and 8:00PM Live Webinar: ADHD & The Brain

Parents of children and young adults struggling with ADHD symptoms know that hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattention are the hallmark challenges that their children face. What you want to know is WHY.

In this free webinar, we will discuss the root cause of ADHD symptoms like inattention and impulsivity and how to address this cause, rather than coping with the symptoms. You will learn the importance of brain connectivity, how Brain Balance can help address the underlying cause, and what you can do at home to help conquer ADHD symptoms. All registrants will receive a free resource guide!

Register Here:

<https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/webinar-high-five-parent-discovery-event>

October 19th 11PM - 2PM A Miracle League Halloween

1551 Mayview Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15241 at the Miracle League Field

Link: <https://www.miracleleaguesouthhills.org/a-miracle-league-halloween.html>

October 25th - Carnegie Science Center Sensory Friendly “Behind the Scenes” tour.

The Carnegie Science Center will be hosting a sensory friendly “behind-the-scenes” tours of the Miniature Railroad and Village. This relaxed-format program has a limited number of spots available at each tour date, to create a calm and welcoming environment for attendees. *The tours take place outside of regular museum hours; they are all-ages appropriate and family-friendly, and are open to anyone who would enjoy touring one of our most popular exhibits in a more private, small-group environment where visitors can feel comfortable being themselves.* Tours will be led by our expert Miniature Railroad staff, who are happy to share little-known facts and point out their favorite parts of the Miniature Railroad & Village exhibit.

Tickets for the Sensory Friendly Miniature Railroad and Village tours are a flat \$10/person, regardless of age and/or museum Membership status. For all members of your party, *tickets must be purchased and your spot reserved ahead of time.*

Reservations can be made via the Call Center at (412) 237-3400, or by visiting <https://carnegiesciencecenter.org/events/mrrv-sensory-friendly-tours/>.

October 27th 1PM-4PM - RMU Trees Network and Band Together Pittsburgh Game Day and Halloween Bash

Play games. Enjoy snacks. Make a craft. Socialize. Costumes welcome, but are not required. Located in “The Basement” of Nicholson Center, 610 Massey Way. Register here by scanning the QR code. <https://givebutter.com/kpbjyC>



Advocating and Empowering Parent and Family Meeting Highlights



On Monday, September 9, we held our first of the 2024-2025 school year parent and family meeting. Melissa Skiffen, Arc of Greater Pittsburgh Disability and Family Support Advocate, graciously presented about her experience as a parent having the support of an advocate, who the Arc of Greater Pittsburgh/Achieva is and what they offer, and discussing tips to empower families to be advocates. Everyone that attended learned a great deal and were given valuable resources and answers!

Resources for Parents and Educators

The Network provides resources for parents and teachers and these resources can be found at the [RMU Trees Network Website](https://donne94.wixsite.com/rmu-trees-network) (<https://donne94.wixsite.com/rmu-trees-network>).

Information on RMU Trees is also posted on the RMU website and the previous newsletters can be read and viewed at <https://www.rmu.edu/academics/provost/trees>. In each

newsletter we provide links to resources of topics discussed in

our parent meetings and workshops as well as other information that may be helpful to families, schools, and the community. Below are some links to resources in preparation for our September 9 meeting on advocacy.



Achieva/The ARC of Greater Pittsburgh - Achieva envisions a community where all people with disabilities lead lives of personal significance. Achieva advocates with, empowers, and supports people with disabilities and their families throughout their lives. They offer a number of services, advocacy, outreach and resources. [Achieva | Home](#)

SMART IEP Goals - Your child's IEP will have annual goals. These will lay out what your child will be working toward over the school year. For kids to get the most out of an IEP, the goals shouldn't be vague or general. Instead, they should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Time-bound. [How to tell if your child's IEP goals are SMART \(understood.org\)](#)

IEPs and 504 Plans - IEPs and 504 plans are both designed to support students with disabilities, but they work in different ways. This resource will explain the differences. [The difference between IEPs and 504 plans \(understood.org\)](#)

Inclusion Benefits - Facts and resources about how inclusive settings benefit everyone. [inclusive Settings Benefit Everyone \(pealcenter.org\)](#)

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[RMU Trees Website](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/RMUtrees/>

