



MAKING STRONG COLLEGES
STRONGER
THROUGH COLLABORATION

ANNUAL REPORT: 2019-2020



WELCOME FROM THE LVAIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year was certainly one for the record books with both amazing successes and amazing challenges!

The LVAIC community began this year celebrating the 50th anniversary of our collaboration with the second half of our Facing Higher Education's Future Thought Leadership Series and kicking off the third cohort of our Higher Education Leaders Institute. In October, we were delighted to host colleagues from 35 other consortia at the annual meeting of the Association for Collaborative Leadership. Through the Lehigh Valley Research Consortium (LVRC), we presented the annual State of the Lehigh Valley report on the state of women in our community. We undertook an exciting strategic planning effort to redefine our collaboration as we face the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education and created a bold vision for our collective future.

As we were beginning to turn that vision into an operating plan, our campuses made almost an overnight pivot to online operations and learning. Our activities immediately pivoted as well to support faculty as they reimaged their classes, to support staff as they established online tools and platforms, and to support students with remote learning resources. We facilitated groups with virtual meetings and communications, sourced online tools and resources to support the emerging campus needs, and we pivoted many of the regular spring events to virtual formats.

Throughout this year, we have celebrated the successes of our past and present collaborations. We have worked with our campuses as they navigated into virtual activities that will never completely go away. As a result and before completing our implementation plan, we have begun to move into the bold collaborative future we have collectively envisioned.

Diane Dimitroff
LVAIC Executive Director

The Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges includes

2,021
Faculty

+

2,175
Staff

+

15,990
Students

on the campuses of Cedar Crest College, DeSales University, Lafayette College, Lehigh University, Moravian College, and Muhlenberg College.

Pivot to Virtual Collaboration

Collaborating Through Crisis

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, LVAIC institutions continued to collaborate, sharing ideas, solving problems, and connecting at a time of isolation. The LVAIC staff pivoted to virtual meetings, events, and programs. This changed the way members of the LVAIC community connected with each other. The LVAIC staff devoted much of their time to facilitating conversations at all levels of member institutions. In addition to engaging communities of practice, LVAIC also hosted all of its professional and faculty development programs virtually from March through June. LVAIC participants reported increased learning outcome achievement, increased applicability to their roles, and increased engagement with virtual programs. 32% of LVAIC's programs were conducted online and these programs accounted for 48% of LVAIC's overall program participation. LVAIC will continue to develop and offer online learning opportunities in the future.

Accessing Online Resources

16% of LVAIC Website Activity was Accessing COVID-19 Resources

Feedback from Programs

Average increase in understanding of program content

39%
ONLINE

11%
LIVE

LVAIC Collaborative Programs

Follow the links to see photos from many of the events and programs that showcase the collaborative efforts of the LVAIC community.

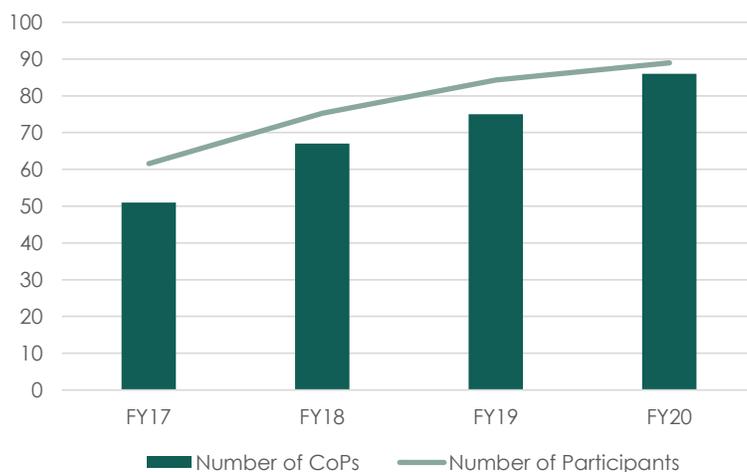
- [Facing Higher Education's Future Learning Series](#)
- [Higher Education Leaders Institute](#)
- [State of the Lehigh Valley](#)
- [Association for Collaborative Leadership Conference](#)
- [Virtual Implicit Bias Education Workshop](#)
- [Virtual Small Teaching Online Series](#)



LVAIC Communities of Practice

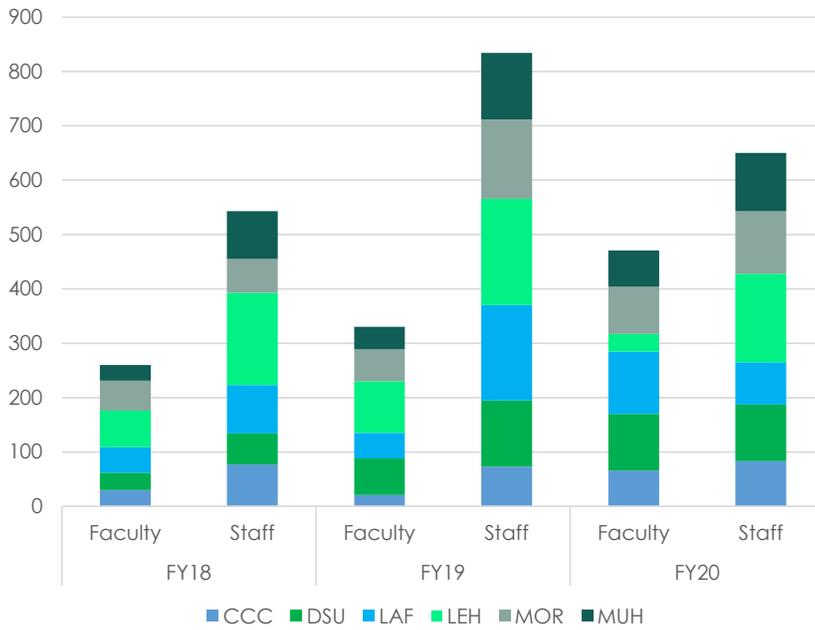
Most of the collaborative work of the LVAIC community occurs through communities of practice (CoP). These communities promote information and best practice sharing and foster the relationships and trust necessary to nurture new collaborative efforts. CoPs are generally peer groups of faculty or staff in

Community of Practice Participation by Year



similar roles or disciplines. New groups gather each year, some with a more specific purpose that draws them together. For instance, the Health Center Directors began gathering around reopening plans while the Language Department Chairs are exploring collaborative efficiencies related to hiring and managing adjuncts. While traveling between campuses sometimes poses a challenge to these groups, the pivot to virtual collaboration increased the frequency at which many of these groups meet, now often gathering on a weekly or bi-weekly basis due to the rapidly evolving nature of plans and operations.

Faculty and Staff Participants by Campus



LVAIC Professional Development & Engagement

Participation in LVAIC professional and faculty development programs has remained steady despite offering fewer in-person programs and a shift to virtual events. LVAIC has continued to focus on skill development, such as digital literacy and pedagogy, while also offering programs around the changing landscape of higher education. These programs reach all levels of the LVAIC community. Overall, LVAIC’s programs engaged more unique participants with fewer event offerings. Unique to FY19-20, LVAIC hosted the annual meeting of the Association for Collaborative Leadership, spearheading the

19% Saturation Rate*

*+4% from FY19

planning and delivery. This conference was attended by representatives from 35 other consortia and allowed LVAIC to showcase several of its collaborative programs as a benchmark for other consortia, pulling expertise from several members of the LVAIC community.

Facing Higher Education’s Future Learning Series

LVAIC continued the year-long learning series to commemorate 50 years of collaboration. As a community, LVAIC continued to explore key topics relating to the shifting landscape of higher education. This series combined speaker events and workshops to promote understanding of the impact of this changing environment over six learning sessions. One of the main goals of this series was to engage faculty and staff in key discussion and understanding of internal and external challenges facing higher education. The series aspired to engage 20% of the LVAIC community in these discussions to increase dialog and understanding. About 7% of the LVAIC community participated with generally low participation by faculty. About half of those who attended indicated that this was their first LVAIC program. Feedback from program participants indicated that their understanding of each covered topic increased by an average of 0.62 on a 5-point scale. Additionally, the program was intended to foster this dialog back on each campus and the pivot to virtual collaboration has rapidly accelerated these conversations. The resources produced from the series have been accessed over 2,200 times, especially with focus on campus economics and finances, public perception of higher education, and the future models of higher education explored in the Next Steps session. LVAIC plans to continue with future higher education thought leadership programs.

Understanding of the topic before and after the **Exploring Campus Economics** program



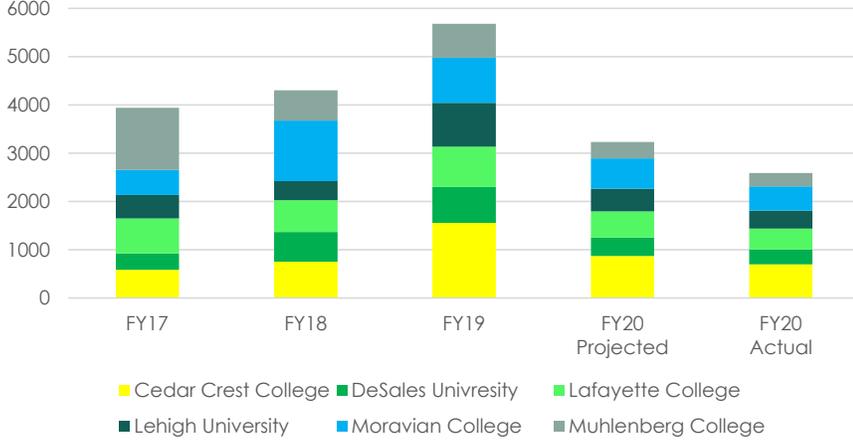
Understanding of the topic before and after the **Community Perceptions & Expectations** program



Understanding of the topic before and after the **Next Steps for the LVAIC Community** program



Interlibrary Loan Usage Rates by Campus and Year



Interlibrary Loan

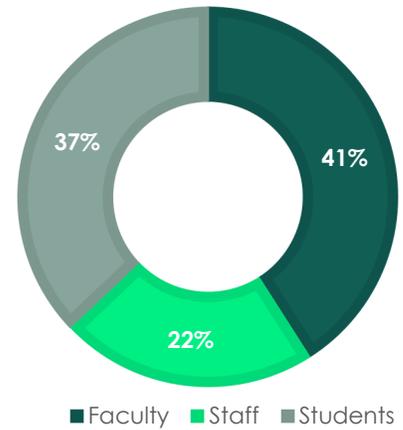
Sharing resources remains an important component of LVAIC collaboration. The interlibrary loan program, one of the consortium’s earliest collaborations, was experiencing steady growth in usage after the recent collection analysis that eliminated duplicate resources across a broad network of libraries. Moving to virtual collaboration suspended the interlibrary loan program for the last quarter of FY20. However, usage rates for FY20 were

significantly lower overall even before the spring shutdown. Utilization decreased across every campus as the shared materials age and new materials are created digitally. As the demographic of the LVAIC student population continues to shift, this trend will likely continue. Additionally, the member campuses continue to focus on open-source resources to reduce the cost of accessing educational materials. This limits the need for library resources and contributes to the reduced usage over time.

LVAIC Funding for Collaborative Programs

LVAIC continues to provide funding to faculty and staff groups and CoPs to support the organic creation and delivery of collaborative programs. Moving to virtual programs in the spring reduced the number of collaborative conferences and symposia held by 67% and decreased participation by 82%. Many of these programs have been rescheduled to virtual Fall 2020 delivery. The programs that were held in FY20 received financial support of \$10,502 and served 339 individuals at an average cost of \$31 per participant, \$17 per person higher than FY18-19. This increased cost per person reflects the increased catering expenses. However, these high quality programs remain very cost effective and accessible by sharing resources through collaboration.

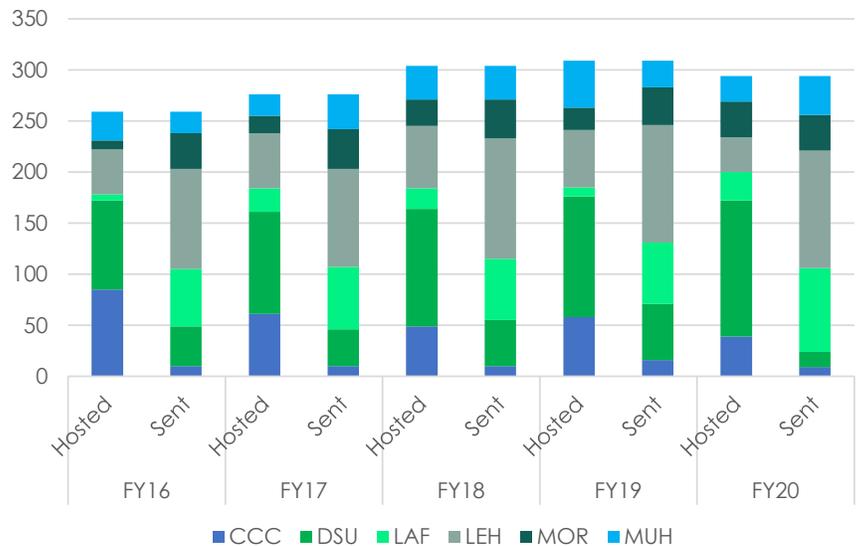
Faculty, Staff, and Student Participants



Cross Registration Program

Cross registration utilization by undergraduate students and by employees and spouses remains relatively stable. This program continues to have low utilization as less than 2% of the LVAIC community participates. Efforts to scale this program persist, such as aligning language courses to maximize scheduling. The supporting technology was upgraded this year with a redesigned online portal and enhanced administrative features which will decrease manual operations for Registrars, increase communication for students, and eliminate any need for paper registration once the employee/spouse function is completed in FY20-21.

Cross Registrants by Fiscal Year



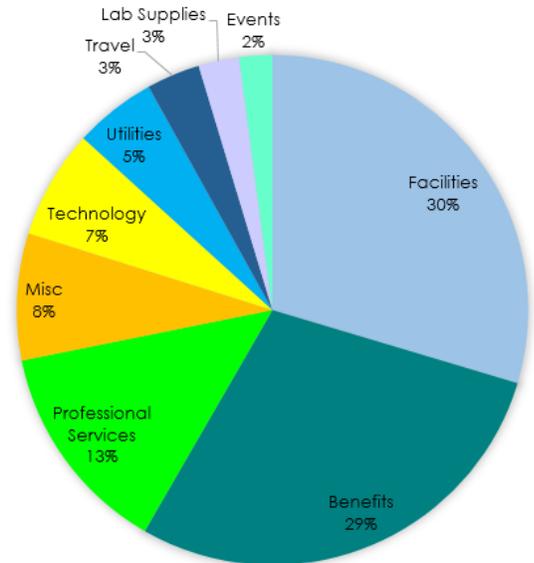
Sourcing v. Purchasing

The LVAIC institutions, along with their Purchasing Partners, pursue a combination of strategic sourcing approaches to drive cost savings. The oldest and most straight forward approach is leveraged contracting and LVAIC currently maintains 16 leveraged contracts with total spending of approximately \$6.4 M. In addition, LVAIC supports its member institutions by collecting and analyzing campus spending data to monitor compliance with campus policies and contracts and to strategically target areas of high cost and identify areas of potential savings. Utilizing the results of last year's spend analysis, LVAIC laid the groundwork for a new Facilities Management Information System to be shared across three LVAIC schools and two LVAIC Purchasing Partners. Sharing this system will allow LVAIC to begin collecting data on facilities department purchases and staffing patterns, and to standardize materials and processes that will result in future cost savings.

LVAIC staff provided sourcing expertise in support of the rapid pivot to online operations and learning and identified solutions to support the sudden need for online platforms. LVAIC negotiations leveraged the collective volume to establish a shared Amazon Business Prime contract, and modified other existing contract terms to allow employees to have supplies delivered to their home addresses during campus shut-downs.

As cost savings increase in importance, LVAIC will continue providing guidance, support, and expertise on resource maximization, from shared contracts to business process change and improvement.

Top Categories of Spending on Campuses



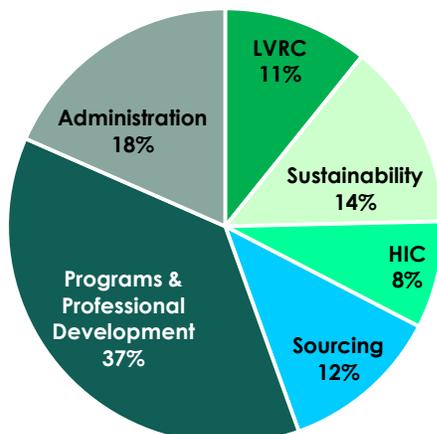
*Chart represents total annual spending ~\$200M

Health Insurance Consortium

The single largest LVAIC cost savings initiative is the LVAIC Health Insurance Consortium (HIC) with approximately \$20,000,000 in spending annually where LVAIC serves both as the plan sponsor and the plan administrator. This self-funded health plan, established in 2009, provides employee health benefits to Cedar Crest College, DeSales University, Moravian College and Muhlenberg College. The HIC achieves savings for its participants through shared administration and leveraged purchases and has reduced costs for campuses and employees by more than \$1M per year.

The HIC has engaged the same consulting firm since its inception in 2009. LVAIC staff conducted an extensive market assessment and competitive consultant proposal process resulting in a change in consultant to be effective 7/1/2020. The new broker, USI Insurance Services, has completed the transition and has already identified new opportunities for administrative and claims cost savings to benefit both the member institutions and their employees in FY21.

LVAIC Expenses by Initiative



LVAIC Expenses

As a result of the pivot to online operations and cancellation of several in person events, expenses decreased by 5% year over year. The most significant program expense continues to be Professional Development, followed closely by Sourcing, LVRC, and Sustainability. LVAIC expenses totaled \$1.1M but do not include the additional \$26.4M in collaborative campus contracts and HIC spending that resulted in more than \$3M in campus cost savings.

Vision

Making strong colleges stronger through collaboration.

Mission

LVAIC is a community of strong, independent colleges and universities in eastern Pennsylvania growing stronger through collaboration that optimizes opportunities and resources for students, faculty, and staff.

Governance

As an independent non-profit organization, LVAIC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the presidents from the six founding colleges and universities. It receives core funding through a formula assessment to the members. The LVAIC Executive Director serves as the consortium's chief executive officer.

LVAIC Board of Directors

Elizabeth Meade - President, Cedar Crest College
James Greenfield - President, DeSales University
Alison Byerly - President, Lafayette College
John Simon (Chair) - President, Lehigh University
Bryon Grigsby (Chair-Elect) - President, Moravian College
Kathleen Harring - President, Muhlenberg College
Diane Dimitroff (Secretary) - Executive Director, LVAIC
Kent Dyer (Treasurer) - Chief Business Officer & Treasurer, Muhlenberg College

LVAIC Audit Committee

Bryon Grigsby (Chair) - President, Moravian College
Audra Kahr - Chief Financial Officer, Cedar Crest College
Deanne Fenstermacher - Controller, DeSales University
Mark Reed (Vice Chair) - Vice President for Finance & Administration, Moravian College
Craig Becker - Associate Vice President for Finance & Business, Lafayette College

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