



## RMU Trees Network July 2024 Newsletter

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### Upcoming Special Education Conference

On Monday, October 14, 2024, the RMU Trees Network will be holding its annual Special Education Conference. This year the theme is Nurturing Potential in Every Learner. It is being held virtually to allow for more participation from special educators, administrators, paraprofessionals, and related service staff looking for professional development on important topics in special education. FREE registration here:

<https://forms.gle/QccBaxSBr5FeYXq76>

### SAVE THE DATE

#### RMU Trees Network Special Education Conference Nurturing Potential in Every Learner

**October 14, 2024**

**A free, virtual conference with sessions on:**

- Artificial Intelligence
- Math & Special Education
- Spelling & Dyslexia
- Behavior & Data Collection
- Due Process
- Support Coordinators & Waivers
- Truancy - Motivation & Discipline
- Graduation Pathways

#### **Keynote Speaker topics:**

- Mental Health
- Relationship Building

**Registration begins August 1**

For additional information, contact: [donne@rmu.edu](mailto:donne@rmu.edu) or [hiltzd@rmu.edu](mailto:hiltzd@rmu.edu)

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### Sweet Treats and Drinks

The RMU Trees Network does not partner with any of the following businesses nor do we endorse any of their products. However, these businesses all hire and employ individuals with disabilities. The Trees Network provides



services and training to enhance the support for children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities and their families, so we thought it was worth mentioning some local companies that provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and sweet treats that you might want to enjoy over the summer.

- ★ **Cookie Cookie Ice Cream** provides sweet treats while creating meaningful work to teens and adults with disabilities. Their store promotes self-advocacy, community, and dignity. <https://cookiecookieicecream.com/about-us>
- ★ **Bitty & Beau's Coffee** is a coffee shop where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are valued in the workplace. It is a place where diversity is appreciated and celebrated. <https://www.bittyandbeauscoffee.com/location/pittsburgh/>
- ★ **Brother Andre's** mission is to share the many talents of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with the world. Its employees and artisans create products for you to enjoy. <https://brotherandres.org/collections/baked-goods>
- ★ **Butler Coffee Lab & Hot Pod** was inspired by a desire to start the day with a good, flavor filled cup of coffee. Their journey started with a conversation about the ways to give back. They discovered a coffee shop built to accommodate the talents and the desire for employment of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. <https://butlercoffeelab.com/our-story/>
- ★ **Bunny Bakes** mission is to provide quality baked goods aimed at providing adults of all abilities with opportunities to work in an accessible space with any and all necessary supports. <https://bunnybakes.org/>

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## 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.

**Disability Acceptance Through Literature** - Contact Celia at [cmorrison@includemepa.org](mailto:cmorrison@includemepa.org) or Jennifer at [jmacsisak@includemepa.org](mailto:jmacsisak@includemepa.org)

**Title:** *A Blind Guide to Stinkville*, by Beth Vrabel

**Group:** Kids 8-12 years old

**Day/Time:** Thursdays, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

**Dates:** July 11 – August 29, 8 weeks

**Title:** A Kind of Spark by Elle McNicoll  
**Group:** 'Teens' 12-17 years old  
**Day/Time:** Wednesdays 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm  
**Dates:** July 10 – August 14 (6 weeks)

**Title:** *The House in the Cerulean Sea*, by TJ Klune  
**Group:** Young adults age 17 and up  
**Day/Time:** Mondays 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm  
**Dates:** July 8 – August 5 (5 weeks)

### **July 26<sup>th</sup> - July 28<sup>th</sup> - Pittsburgh Blues and Roots Festival**

Band Together Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh Shrine Center 1877 Shriners Way, Cheswick, PA

<https://bandtogetherpgh.org/event/2024-pgh-blues-and-roots-festival/>

### **July 29<sup>th</sup> - August 9<sup>th</sup> - EVOLVE Future Camp**

Annual two-week summer arts camp hosts neurodiverse and neurotypical learners ages 12 and up for a series of classes including writing, visual arts, animation, music, and more. In addition to classes led by teaching artists, Future Camp wraps with a celebration called “Future Fest” which features local arts programming vendors, college resource booths, and more.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd6gnk7aKVdWVU9FPr22p26V5t2j1tTT\\_fsneK793LHL07uaQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd6gnk7aKVdWVU9FPr22p26V5t2j1tTT_fsneK793LHL07uaQ/viewform)

### **August 4<sup>th</sup> - All Abilities Day at PNC Park**

A portion of each ticket sold will benefit a local non-profit that uplifts and celebrates each person’s uniqueness and gives them a chance to have their voice amplified. Come together as a community to help show that everyone can be a fan of baseball.

<https://fevo-enterprise.com/event/allabilities>

### **August 6,, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22 - Open Up Summer Camp 9AM-12PM**

In this FREE inclusive camp, students will participate in an engaging yoga class, play imaginative games intended to promote community building, and make crafts they can use to help support a mindfulness practice at home. Space is limited with no more than 12 students and is located in the yoga studio in Lawrenceville. Open Up staff is trained at making this program accessible for students and we welcome anyone who is interested. [Inclusive Summer Camp — Open Up \(open-up.org\)](https://open-up.org)



## **Summer Reading Activities and Experiences**

Summer reading is critical for retaining knowledge and skills learned. Each newsletter this summer will contain some reading suggestions and activities.

The RMU Trees Network created a padlet of reading activities and resources that can be accessed by clicking this link: [Reading activities padlet](#). Additionally, here is the link to access the Carnegie Library’s calendar of events

<https://www.carnegielibrary.org/events/month/2024-07/> as well as their book mobile that goes to various places throughout Allegheny County <https://aclabookmobile.org/find-us/>. Our scholars also created a list of summer reading to help narrow down your search. For July, they suggested books based on the farm. Here were their top three: *Click, Clack, Peep!* by Doreen Cronin and *Market Day* by Carol Cordsen *FARM* by Elisha Cooper. Additionally, they made a fun craft for each theme. Use this link to access a step-by-step farm animal craft: <https://youtu.be/5R4DeyFTX0c>

## 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](#). 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. This month, we are including resources about Mental Health.



**The American Journal of Men's Health** published an article on fathers of children with disabilities and their well being.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1557988310372538>

**Exceptional Families** is an organization that provides resources to develop family resiliency for families of children with disabilities. Check out their mental health pages.

<https://exceptionallives.org/blog/fellow-parents-lets-talk-about-mental-health/>

**Healthy Mothers Healthy Families** provides resources and educational programs to support mothers of children with disabilities. <https://healthymothers-healthyfamilies.com/>

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** video on supporting family members and caregivers. <https://www.nami.org/your-journey/family-members-and-caregivers/>

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## RMU Trees Network Contact

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[RMU Trees Website](#)

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

