



# Ariya Palmer

Director, Student Parents and Caregivers Resource Center

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## SUMMARY

Higher education **student affairs** leader with 11 years of progressively responsible experience supporting **student parents**, **caregivers**, adult learners, and students facing complex barriers. Directs basic needs, case management, retention, **financial wellness**, emergency assistance, and grant supported services across undergraduate and graduate populations. Builds effective partnerships with financial aid, advising, academic colleges, graduate education, counseling, childcare resources, and community organizations. Supervises professional staff, student employees, and peer staff while setting clear service standards and supporting development. Uses assessment findings, persistence indicators, student feedback, and stakeholder input for strategic planning, resource allocation, policy recommendations, and program improvement. Brings an inclusive, equity minded, student centered approach to advocacy, resource coordination, fund stewardship, and institutional service.

## EXPERIENCE

### Associate Director, Student Support and Basic Needs

Riverbend State University 📅 July 2022 - Present 📍 Grand Rapids, MI

Directs coordinated support for parenting students, caregivers, and students facing food, housing, transportation, or financial instability across undergraduate and graduate programs. Leads professional and student staff, emergency assistance, grant supported resources, referral systems, assessment, policy advice, and annual planning.

- Directed coordinated support for parenting students and caregivers across **undergraduate** and graduate programs.
- Administered **emergency assistance** through eligibility reviews, budget controls, case review, and referral pathways.
- Supervised four **professional staff** and six **student employees** through coaching, standards, and development.
- Convened **financial aid**, advising, graduate education, and college representatives around complex student needs.
- Used service utilization, persistence indicators, case themes, and feedback for annual planning.
- Advised student affairs leaders on policy needs affecting parents and **nontraditional students**.

### Assistant Director, Student Success Programs

West Michigan University 📅 September 2019 - June 2022 📍 Kalamazoo, MI

Managed retention focused programs for students facing financial hardship, family responsibilities, academic disruption, and other complex circumstances. Oversaw emergency grants, staff supervision, campus partnerships, **assessment** reporting, intake improvements, and resource access in collaboration with financial aid and student support units.

- Managed **retention** programs for students facing hardship, family responsibilities, and academic disruption.
- Administered emergency **grants** from application review through award documentation with **financial aid**.
- Supervised two coordinators and peer staff through training, consultation, and feedback.
- Built referral partnerships with advising, **counseling**, childcare resources, and community organizations.
- Combined service volume, student characteristics, outcomes, and persistence data for funding discussions.
- Revised intake and follow up procedures, clarifying documentation standards and resource access.

### Student Services Program Coordinator

Lakeshore College 📅 August 2017 - August 2019 📍 Muskegon, MI

## STRENGTHS

- ♥ **Student centered case support**  
Used listening, clear follow up, and practical referrals during difficult student situations, helping people feel supported and able to act.
- 👥 **Cross campus partnership building**  
Brought financial aid, advising, and academic partners together when referrals stalled, creating smoother support for students.
- ♥ **Assessment driven planning**  
Turned service patterns and student feedback into planning choices, giving colleagues clearer evidence for resource decisions.
- 👥 **Staff development**  
Coached professional and student staff through case consultation, and peers became more confident handling sensitive situations.
- ➦ **Financial assistance stewardship**  
Applied documented eligibility and budget controls to emergency support, building trust with students, partners, and fund administrators.

## SKILLS

Student affairs leadership

Student parents and caregivers

Student success   Retention

Basic needs   Financial wellness

Case management

Emergency assistance

Grant administration

Budget stewardship

Staff supervision

Campus partnerships

Strategic planning

Program assessment

Problem solving

## LANGUAGES

English Native

Spanish Intermediate

## MY CAREER



● Associate Director, Student Support and Basic Needs at Riverbend State University (4.2 Years)

● Assistant Director, Student Success Programs at West Michigan University (2.8 Years)

● Student Services Program Coordinator at Lakeshore College (2 Years)

● Student Support Specialist at Midstate Community College (2.1 Years)

Coordinated student success programming for adult learners, **student parents**, and students balancing employment or caregiving with enrollment. Managed cases, workshops, grant records, referrals, expense tracking, participant feedback, and annual program review with academic and community partners.

- Coordinated **student success** programs for adult learners, parents, and **caregivers** balancing enrollment.
- Managed cases requiring academic, financial, and community resource referrals using established practices.
- Organized **financial wellness** and persistence workshops around recurring student questions.
- Tracked program expenses and grant allocations, reconciling records with finance staff.
- Established referral relationships supporting childcare, transportation, and **basic needs** access.
- Collected feedback and service data, identifying gaps for targeted **communication**.

### Student Support Specialist

Midstate Community College 📅 June 2015 - July 2017 📍 Battle Creek, MI

Provided structured student support for academic, financial, and personal barriers through appointments, case documentation, referrals, outreach, resource guides, and workshops. Shared recurring concerns with program leadership, contributing case evidence to semester planning and retention work.

- Identified academic, financial, and personal barriers through structured student appointments.
- Maintained persistence caseloads with contacts, action plans, referrals, and follow up milestones.
- Connected students with **financial aid**, advising, counseling, tutoring, and community resources.
- Conducted **retention** outreach for students showing early signs of disengagement.
- Prepared resource guides covering **basic needs**, financial literacy, and academic support.
- Summarized recurring concerns for leaders, contributing case evidence to semester planning.

## PROJECTS

### Coordinated Caregiver Referral Network 📅 2024

Aligned financial aid, advising, graduate education, and college partners around clearer referrals for students with complex caregiving and basic needs concerns.

### Emergency Assistance Review Process 📅 2021

Improved grant intake and follow up practices with financial aid partners, helping students access documented support through clearer case procedures.

## LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Recognized by student affairs leadership for coordinated support serving parenting students and caregivers.
- Commended by campus partners for clear emergency assistance administration and resource coordination.
- Selected to guide cross campus planning for retention and basic needs initiatives.

## EDUCATION

### Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Affairs

Western Michigan University 🎓 GPA: 4.0 📅 2015 📍 Kalamazoo, MI

**Coursework:** *Student affairs, higher education administration, student development, program assessment*

### Bachelor of Arts in Sociology

Central Michigan University 🎓 GPA: 4.0 📅 2013 📍 Mount Pleasant, MI

**Coursework:** *Social inequality, family studies, community organizations, research methods*

## CERTIFICATIONS

- Case Management Certificate 📅 2020
- Higher Education Assessment Certificate 📅 2018

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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- **Student Support Systems:** Case management, student referrals, persistence caseloads
- **Financial Assistance:** Emergency grants, eligibility review, award documentation
- **Budget Administration:** Budget controls, fund stewardship, expense reconciliation
- **Program Assessment:** Service utilization, persistence indicators, student feedback
- **Strategic Planning:** Annual planning, resource allocation, stakeholder input
- **Staff Supervision:** Professional staff, student employees, peer staff
- **Campus Partnerships:** Financial aid, academic advising, graduate education
- **Basic Needs Services:** Food access, housing support, transportation resources
- **Student Success Programs:** Retention initiatives, academic support, financial wellness
- **Communication Tools:** Resource guides, workshops, intake procedures

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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- Member, NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.
- Member, Association of Higher Education Parents and Caregivers Professionals.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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**Work Status** : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

## REFERENCES

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AVAILABLE ON REQUEST