
HARSHBERGER APPOINTED TO PASSHE FOUNDATION BOARD



January 20, 2026

The PASSHE Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education, has appointed Darrek Harshberger of PennWest to its Board of Directors.

Harshberger serves as associate director of Student Development and Engagement at PennWest and brings a long-standing commitment to the PASSHE mission and to expanding opportunity for students across the Commonwealth.

“PASSHE has always had a special place in my heart — from serving on the PASSHE Board of Student Government Presidents to being appointed as a student member of the PASSHE Board of Governors in December 2022 and serving through mid-2024,” Harshberger said. “Even after stepping away from the board due to my current role, I knew I wanted to continue advocating for PASSHE in meaningful ways.”

During his time as a student member of the Board of Governors, Harshberger remained actively engaged in the State System, including service on the PASSHE Summit Student Track Committee and the PASSHE Student Affairs Conference Committee, which brings together staff, faculty and students from across PASSHE institutions.

A proud two-time graduate of PennWest California, Harshberger earned his bachelor's degree in communication studies and his master's degree in corporate communication, along with a certificate in student affairs. He has since begun a Ph.D. program in educational leadership and administration, with a concentration in higher education leadership, at Slippery Rock University.

"As a PASSHE scholarship recipient, I understand firsthand the impact the foundation can have," Harshberger said. "That support eased the financial stress of college for me and helped make my education possible. I'm excited to help extend those opportunities to others."

Harshberger's appointment reflects the PASSHE Foundation's focus on leaders who understand the student experience and are committed to helping students persist, succeed and complete their degrees.