

# STUDENTS

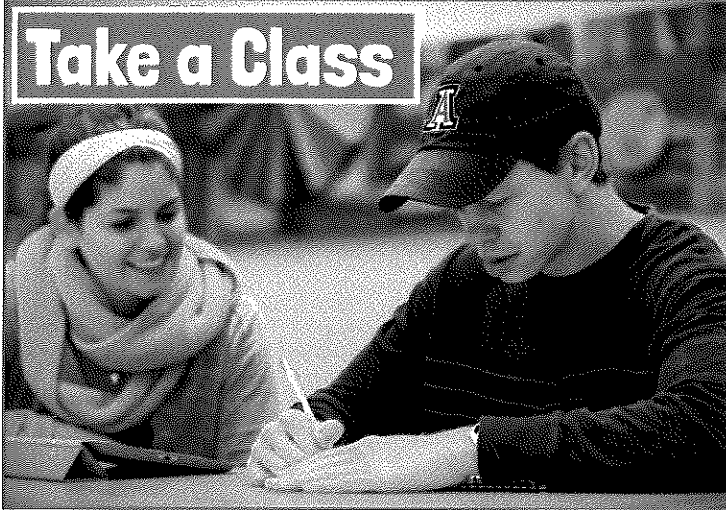


# CAN THINK COLLEGE

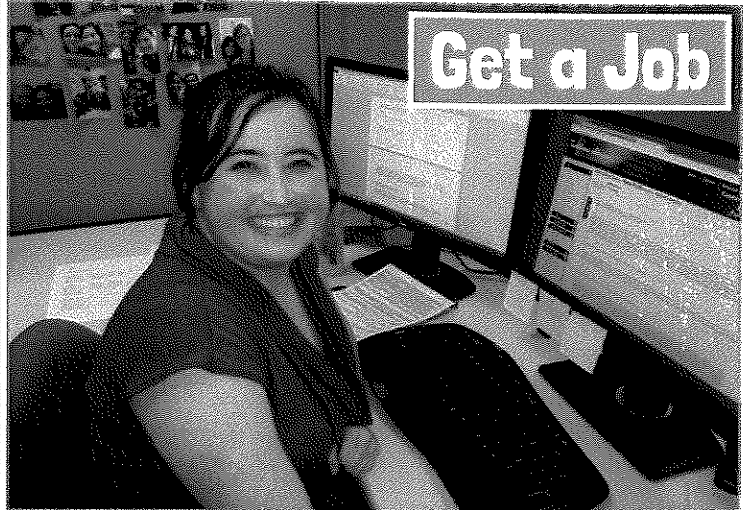
**Do you have an intellectual disability?**

**Have you ever thought about going to college?**

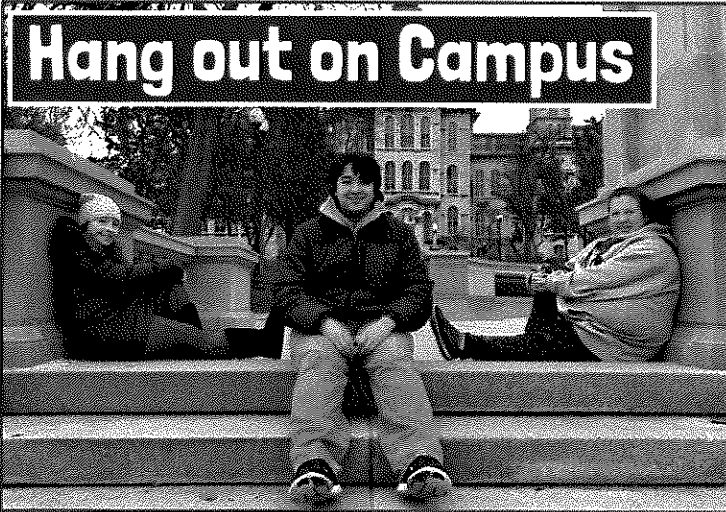
**Take a Class**



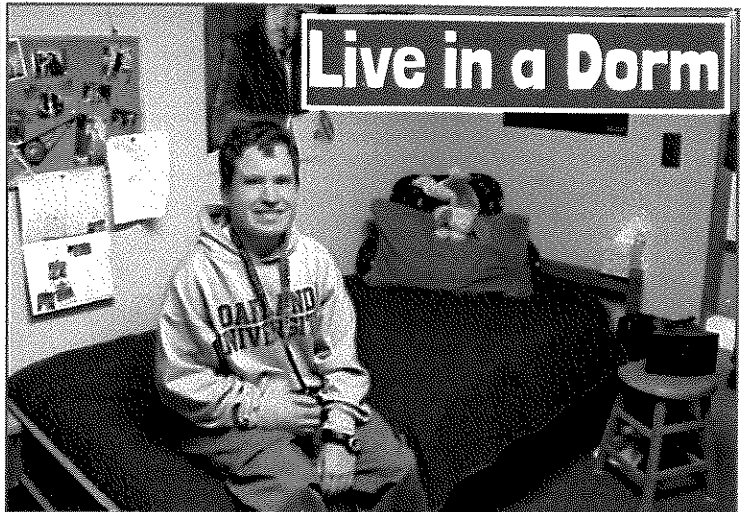
**Get a Job**

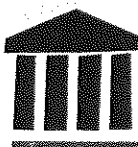


**Hang out on Campus**



**Live in a Dorm**



 **ThinkCollege**

CHANGING EXPECTATIONS. INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES.

Think College is a national organization dedicated to developing, expanding, and improving inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disability.

Published June 2018



Think College is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education (Grant No. P407B15002).

# In 2008

the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)...

- ✔ defined inclusive higher education
- ✔ emphasized access to college courses and internships
- ✔ focused on integrated employment outcomes
- ✔ provided access to financial aid

As a result of HEOA there are... **257** higher education programs in **49** states.

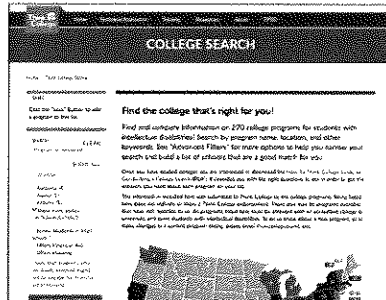


The Think College website is the trusted source for information, training, and resources about inclusive higher education for students with intellectual disability.

Learn more @ [www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)



**Rethinking College**  
This 25-minute video shows perspectives of students, parents, educators, and others on the possibility of college for students with disabilities.



**College Search**  
This database allows you to personalize a college search to suit your preferences.



**Think College Stories**  
These publications feature student voices on their experiences in college.

## THINK COLLEGE SOCIAL MEDIA



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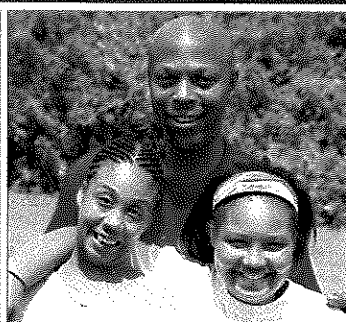
## CONTACT THINK COLLEGE



[thinkcollege@umb.edu](mailto:thinkcollege@umb.edu)

# PARENTS

# CAN THINK COLLEGE



**"College has opened my son's world; he is learning things I thought he'd never get to learn."**

-Kathy, parent of a college student with ID

## Did You Know?

**More than 250 colleges & universities in 49 states support students with intellectual disability.**

**Those enrolled in higher education saw a 135% increase in employment, compared to peers.**

**Currently, 17 states have policy or legislation on inclusive higher education.**



**OVER  
5500**

**students with intellectual disability are attending college in the USA.**

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**To help you explore college options for your child.**

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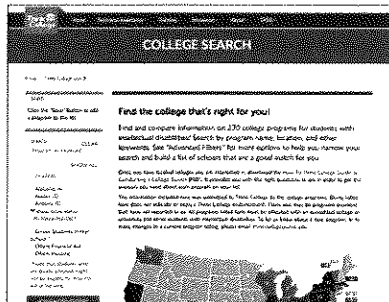
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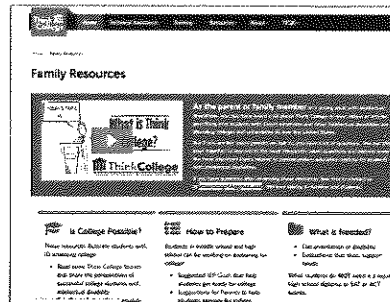


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**Searchable Program Directory**  
Discover college options and key program attributes.



**Family Resources**  
Helpful guidance and resources on transition and college search processes.



**What's Happening in Your State**  
Find out about state legislation and other state level efforts related to inclusive higher education.

## THINK COLLEGE SOCIAL MEDIA



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[www.facebook.com/thinkcollege](http://www.facebook.com/thinkcollege)

» Please request to be added to the Families Think College Facebook group!

## CONTACT THINK COLLEGE



[thinkcollege@umb.edu](mailto:thinkcollege@umb.edu)



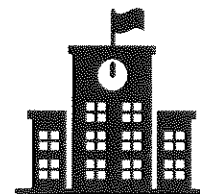
# HOW TO ThinkCollege

ISSUE NO.3, 2018

By Think College Transition Project

## UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

Students getting ready to enter college need to plan for the ways that higher education will be different from high school. These differences include higher academic expectations, increasing independence, and new social environments. A key difference is that students must advocate for themselves in postsecondary education. In high school, students often rely on parents, family members, and teachers to get the services they need. It is important for students to prepare for the changes that will occur within the college classroom and with receiving accommodations and services.



AREA OF DIFFERENCE	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
<b>Personal freedom</b>	Less freedom: living at home with parents	More freedom, especially if students live in a dorm or in an off-campus apartment
<b>Structure</b>	More structure: school sets schedule	Less structure: student sets schedule
<b>Class sizes</b>	Predictable: typically 15 to 35 students	Less predictable: some classes can have 100 to 200 students or more
<b>Teacher contact</b>	Frequent: may see teachers every day	Less frequent: may only see professors one to three times a week
<b>Study time</b>	May be able to get studying done in a study hall or spend minimal time outside of class studying	Significant reading and independent work demands which may require an additional two to four hours a day
<b>Tests</b>	More frequent tests on less information	May have only a few tests a semester and assessments may cover many chapters or be cumulative
<b>Grades</b>	Course grade often based on many assignments	Course grade may be based on only a few assignments
<b>Physical environment</b>	Classes often held in one building	Classes may be held across campus in many different buildings
<b>Legal protection</b>	IDEA: students are entitled to a free appropriate public education	ADA & 504: students must be found eligible for services and reasonable accommodations
<b>Special education classes</b>	Specialized instruction, classes, and resource room services for students with disabilities	Special education classes do not exist at the postsecondary level, but supports do exist
<b>Documentation</b>	The school district evaluates the student and develops the individualized education program (IEP)	Student must provide disability documentation to receive accommodations Student's IEP or Summary of Performance (SOP) may not be considered sufficient documentation
<b>Accommodations</b>	Determined as part of the IEP process	Student must contact the person/office on campus responsible for providing accommodations
<b>Advocating</b>	Teachers and parents advocate for services	Student must advocate for accommodations and services
<b>Communication</b>	Parents notify school when student is going to be late or absent from school	Student must notify professor if they are going to be late or absent from class
<b>Parents' role</b>	Parents can see student records and are notified and must sign permission for any changes or decisions for the student	Students are protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Parents do not communicate with professors or have access to grades and student information

Adapted with permission from [www.going-to-college.org](http://www.going-to-college.org) (Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University) and [centerontransition.org](http://centerontransition.org) (Center on Transition Innovations, VCU)

# INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) GOAL IDEAS TO SUPPORT COLLEGE READINESS

By Kathleen Becht, PhD

This document is intended for secondary educators and families of students with intellectual disability when developing individual education program (IEP) goals for students who intend to transition to postsecondary education. The suggested goal ideas focus on the skills and knowledge necessary for students to be prepared for college. The ideas are organized into four areas: education, career and employment, community engagement and services, and independence. Each goal idea has a number of components to choose from and may be used in tandem or sequentially.

To begin, assess the student's skills, areas for growth, and support needs related to the listed goal areas. Next, choose goal ideas that align with a student's motivations, support needs, and present levels of performance. Then, develop each chosen idea into a measurable goal that is individualized to the student and specific to an activity.

The goal ideas and example components contained in this document are written to inform goal development. The goal ideas are not written as complete goals and should not be copied directly to an IEP.

## Area 1: Education

### Goal 1.1 Demonstrate increased independence/success in electronic communications through (*choose one or more*):

- Initiating texts, phone calls, or emails
- Responding to texts, phone calls, or emails
- Identifying and deleting spam emails
- Deleting outdated emails
- Exploring, choosing, and using adaptive software or apps for personal use to write messages/email

### Goal 1.2 Completes and submits assignments electronically through (*choose one or more*):

- Completing course assignments in Microsoft Word (or another program)
- Submitting assignments through email or electronic classroom
- Creating presentations in electronic format (e.g., slides, video, audio)
- Identifying and using adaptive software to create assignments and access written text
- Creating an electronic class folder system for assignments
- Presenting electronic assignments to peers, instructors
- Completes assignments by due date through (*choose one or more*):
  - » Recording assignments in agenda, electronic calendar, or assignment book
  - » Creating adapted list(s) or task schedule(s) for assignment completion



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**Goal 1.3 Increases problem solving through (choose one or more):**

- Communicating needs, preferences, and aptitudes in writing
- Identifying and using adaptive software when appropriate for completing assignments and accessing text
- Reading and following assignment/environmental directions independently, using adaptive software, or by initiating peer or instructor support
- Using an electronic dictionary or search for unknown terms

**Goal 1.4 Makes course selections based on career goals through (choose one or more):**

- Making and keeping appointment(s) with school or vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor to review results of career interest/aptitude inventory
- Identifying career interests and finding activities to learn about identified career(s)
- Discussing and requesting career and transition goals in IEP meetings
- Making and keeping appointment(s) with counselors for interest and course change requests

**Goal 1.5 Applies organizing strategies or activities through (choose one or more):**

- Using graphic organizers in academic courses
- Developing graphic organizers for personal use
- Using app/alarm to create lists/reminders/self-cues
- Navigating textbooks/websites/articles through use of (choose activity):
  - » table of contents
  - » glossary
  - » index
  - » bold and italics in text
  - » headlines
  - » article titles
  - » captions
  - » chapter summaries
  - » photographs and images

**Goal 1.6 Uses internet to access information or register for activities through (choose one or more):**

- Using login name and password to access computer and website(s)
- Navigating website(s) to enter personal information for activity registration
- Identifying dangerous or spam popups and websites
- Identifying activities with dates and times already passed
- Scheduling activity date and time on personal calendar (electronic or paper)
- Identifying personal information to keep private/off the internet

**Goal 1.7 Increases literacy through (choose one or more):**

- Reading course material or lectures using adaptive software or modified reading methods
- Identifying and taking notes on main points of a class lecture or text chapter
- Taking notes from course material or lectures using adaptive software (e.g., speech-to-text, copy-and-paste)
- Conducting research using the internet
- Identifying credible and non-credible sources of information

**Goal 1.8 Increase assignment completion through (choose one or more):**

- Developing an idea or topic for a presentation or assignment
- Choosing ideas related to one another for a presentation or assignment
- Answering short questions with a complete sentence
- Responding to a writing prompt with complete sentences
- Entering close-enough spelling approximations to enable the spell check feature to provide the intended word per task/assignment
- Using the spell-check feature and correcting identified spelling errors per task/assignment
- Submitting a research paper with a defined quantity for item(s) chosen below:
  - » page length
  - » spelling errors
  - » complete sentences
  - » paragraphs
  - » introduction
  - » conclusion
  - » Evaluating peers' presentations or assignment topics

**Goal 1.9 Increase literacy in responding to directions and signs in the environment through (choose one or more):**

- Recognizing and follow signs in the classroom (e.g., homework bin, check-in/check-out, daily updates, news)
- Recognizing and following signs in the school building indicating classrooms, special rooms (e.g., office, gymnasium, library), exits, etc.
- Recognizing and following traffic lights, street signs, and walk signals
- Recognizing and correctly interpreting community signs such as do not enter, closed, and caution

**Goal 1.10 Increase time skills and time sense through (choose one or more):**

- Choosing a preferred device (e.g., smart phone, tablet, computer) to keep and manage time and calendar
- Daily use of students' personal calendar (phone, computer, or paper) by
  - » Entering activities with beginning and ending times onto calendar
  - » Setting activity reminders
  - » Accepting a calendar invite
  - » Identifying activities (e.g., homework, holidays, appointments, tests, due dates) in the past, present, or future
  - » Identifying recurring activities by weeks, months, and years
- Estimating the length of time for activities, (using electronic timers, cell phones, and apps)
- Budgeting travel time to/from activities
- Demonstrating awareness of time by:
  - » Arriving to class or appointment on time
  - » Returning from break on time
  - » Submitting projects or assignments by due date/time



## **Area 2: Career & Employment**

### **Goal 2.1 Works as a regularly scheduled employee through (choose one or more):**

- Using internet, newspaper, 'help wanted' signage, community members, and other sources to locate employment opportunities
- Identifying job opportunities within area of identified interest
- Submitting job applications (paper/online)
- Engaging in interview role plays
- Dressing in professional attire for interviews
- Arriving at interviews on time
- Clocking in/signing in to work by start of shift
- Calling supervisor when absence from work is necessary
- Receiving positive job evaluation ("satisfactory," "meets expectations," or higher) on a chosen percentage of evaluation items.

### **Goal 2.2 Serves as a regularly scheduled volunteer through (choose one or more):**

- Using internet, newspaper, 'help wanted' signage, community members, and other sources to locate volunteer opportunities
- Identifying volunteer opportunities within area of identified interest
- Clocking in/signing in to work by start of shift
- Notifying site when absence from volunteering is necessary

### **Goal 2.3 Explores and identifies career options based on interests and ability through (choose one or more):**

- Completing interest and/or aptitude assessments
- Reviewing assessment results and using information to identify career goals
- Developing or revising career goals based on career selection and job requirements
- Exploring careers of interest through interviews, job shadowing, or volunteer experiences

### **Goal 2.4 Demonstrates agency and self-awareness in developing career goals through (choose one or more):**

- Identifying areas of strength and areas of interest
- Identifying careers that align with interests and strengths
- Identifying potential environmental support needs in career of choice
- Planning access to support needs in employment environment
- Identifying strategies to use for succeeding on the job

### **Goal 2.5 Initiates solving a problem through (choose one or more):**

- Identifying a problem
- Brainstorming and evaluating potential solutions
- Identifying resources that can be used to solve the problem (e.g., service, staff, website, friends, or classmates)
- Choosing solution to solve a problem
- Reflecting on the outcome of a solution used
- Using problem-solving strategies when working in teams or cooperative groups

**Goal 2.6 Pursues competitive employment through (choose one or more):**

- Creating or requesting help creating a resume (digital or paper) or career portfolio (GACollege411, Career Cruising, or similar)
- Identifying counselor or agency to assist in developing job leads
- Scheduling appointment with counselor or agency
- Asking family members or friends for job leads
- Attending job fairs
- Applying for positions of employment
- Interviewing for positions of employment
- Sending thank-you follow up messages to each interviewer after interview

**Goal 2.7 Manages conflicts at work through (choose one or more):**

- Reflecting on personal responsibility for conflict
- Communicating with employee/supervisor of concern
- Discussing solution with co-worker/supervisor
- Reflecting on whether the problem was effectively solved
- Making changes as needed

**Area 3: Community Engagement & Services****Goal 3.1 Engages successfully with community members through (choose one or more):**

- Introducing self in new situations
- Describing area of career interest and related experiences when asked
- Describing strengths and support strategies when asked
- Requesting assistance, when necessary
- Observing and identifying appropriate/inappropriate behaviors for the environment (e.g., classroom, park, restaurant, store, job site)

**Goal 3.2 Accesses transportation through (choose one or more):**

- Scheduling ride (paratransit, public, or shared ride) via phone call, app, website, or transit map
- Waiting at designated area for transport
- Managing travel fares (ticket, card, coins, digital app)
- Stating destination and confirming correct transport (through signage, driver response)
- Exiting transport at desired stop
- Identifying strategies for missing stop (e.g., notify driver, use cell phone to request help, stay put until stop is reached again)
- Utilizing strategies when missed stop

**Goal 3.3 Engages in clubs or community organizations/groups through (choose one or more):**

- Identifying sources for activities, clubs, organization listings (e.g., city website, newspaper, school, church or community bulletin board, radio, town newsletter, sport or hobby shop, library, websites)
- Selecting a club/organization/activity of interest based on interest preference, career choice, proximity to home or school, or friends involved
- Contacting a club/organization for more information (location, time, date, frequency, number of people, cost, expectations, activities involved, etc.)
- Attending meetings/activities

**Goal 3.4 Seeks and obtains services and supports as needed through (choose one or more):**

- Contacting vocational rehabilitation (VR) for services
- Making and keeping appointment with VR counselor for services
- Making appointment with school counselor for financial aid options
- Making quarterly appointments to meet with Medicaid waiver support coordinator to discuss support needs and purchasing plan
- Finding the hours that a business or service is open (using the internet)

**Area 4: Independence**

**Goal 4.1 Advocates for assistance through (choose one or more):**

- Making and keeping appointment(s) with teacher or counselor to review course schedule
- Making and keeping appointment(s) with teacher(s) to review accommodations and supports
- Making and keeping appointment(s) with employer or supervisor to discuss job accommodations and supports needed
- Identifying safe individuals available to ask for help
- Initiating request for help

**Goal 4.2 Demonstrates ability to set and follow daily schedule and routines through (choose one or more):**

- Creating and following daily morning, evening, and/or homework routines (including times)
- Setting and following morning wake up/evening bedtime alarms
- Maintaining a shopping list of necessary items to purchase
- Charging cell phone, computer, tablet, earbuds regularly

**Goal 4.3 Increases money literacy through (choose one or more):**

- Identifying the money type (coins, dollars, card) needed to make purchases
- Reading purchase totals on receipts
- Tracking purchases through collection of receipts
- Estimating funds for food, hygiene, and entertainment expenses
- Budgeting funds for food, hygiene, and entertainment expenses

**Goal 4.4 Demonstrates ability to purchase items through (choose one or more):**

- Estimating the money required to make a purchase, using the next-dollar-up strategy
- Identifying the closest bill to purchase a single item, using one-, five-, and ten-dollar bills
- Calculating the cost of multiple items, using a calculator app
- Calculating the cost of tax on total items, using a calculator app
- Identifying a solution when the purchase total is more than the money available
- Planning for and purchasing items with a set amount of money
- Using a credit or debit card to purchase items.

**Goal 4.5 Demonstrates ability to purchase meals at cafeterias/restaurants through (choose one or more):**

- Choosing food and carrying tray, drink, and utensils to a table
- Ordering food from a menu
- Identifying healthy and less healthy food choices
- Pre-planning meal purchase with limited funds
- Carrying tray and trash to receptacle
- Paying for food and leaving a tip (when appropriate)

**Goal 4.6 Demonstrates agency and self-determination through (choose one or more):**

- Leading meeting(s) (e.g., circle of support, person-centered planning, IEP) to discuss and develop goals and/or supports related to learning, personal development, community engagement, career/employment, physical fitness, and/or social connections/friendships
- Identifying supports or strategies needed to succeed in (choose one): learning, personal development, community engagement, career/employment, physical fitness, or social connections/friendships
- Advocating for self by making suggestions or approving/ disapproving others' suggestions for goals and supports
- Initiating discussion of personal concerns, problems, or support needs

This resource is a publication of Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion at University of Massachusetts Boston. It was developed by the Think College National Coordinating Center, which is funded by a grant from the Office of Postsecondary Education (Grant No. P407B200001). The opinions contained in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the funder.

For more information on creating IEPs for students transitioning to postsecondary education, contact the author.

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## **Paying for College: Exploring Funding Sources for an Inclusive Postsecondary Education Program**

By Cate Weir

A college education is an investment in the future of every student who pursues one, but it does not come cheap!

College expenses include tuition, fees, books, equipment, and room and board, if a student chooses to live on campus. These all add up, and every student must determine where the funding for college will come from.

Students with intellectual disability (ID) are likely to use many of the same resources as other college students to pay for college. There are some resources specific to individuals with disabilities to consider as well. Students are using numerous approaches to pay for college, often braiding together several different funding sources to cover the costs.

Here is some information about a variety of possible funding sources that students and their families can consider as they determine what will work for their specific situations:

### **FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID**

As of May 2022, over 125 college programs for students with ID have been approved as Comprehensive Transition Postsecondary Programs (CTP programs), and this number continues to grow. These programs offer access to federal student aid for eligible students with ID, even if they do not have a regular high school diploma or are not working toward a degree. Students who meet the income eligibility requirements may be eligible for Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Federal Work-Study. Students in non-degree CTP programs are not eligible for federally subsidized student loans. This Think College Federal Financial Aid Brief

shares details on accessing federal student aid for students with ID attending approved CTP programs.

To access federal student aid, students will be required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. This is the same form that all college students use to determine eligibility for aid. Learn more on the FAFSA website.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarships typically do not cover the full cost of attendance for any student, but they can be an important part of financing education. Think College publishes a list of scholarships (updated annually) that are possible resources for students with ID attending non-degree programs. Read this resource to learn about state level, program level, and disability-specific scholarships.

### **MEDICAID WAIVER FUNDS**

An increasing number of states allow students with ID to use Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers to support participation in postsecondary education programs. Medicaid waivers have been used to fund a variety of supports and services for college students with ID, as well as tuition or fees in some cases. Think College has published a brief that describes how Medicaid waiver funds are being used to support college attendance. Students who are eligible for Medicaid waiver services can pursue this source of funding to see if Medicaid can help pay for college costs as well as related support services such as transportation, peer support, or independent living instruction while in college.



## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Students with ID may be able to access support from vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to help cover college costs while working to achieve their employment goals. In addition to employment counseling, guidance, and disability related interventions, VR may provide funding for tuition, fees, books, housing, and other education related services. Funding options and amounts vary based on the individual needs of each student as well as policies and practices of each state. VR may also use information about access to Pell Grants and other grants, as well as a financial needs assessment, to determine how much they will pay and which services the money can be used to pay for.

Students must be eligible for VR services to receive any VR funded services, including college. For VR to consider supporting a student's college attendance, the program they are enrolled in needs to relate to an identified vocational goal that is part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, or IPE. The decision to support a student to attend college is based on this IPE and the belief that attending college will result in the student becoming competitively employed with career advancement opportunities. If there is a disagreement related to what VR will pay, students have the right to have the funding decision reviewed. You can contact your state's Client Assistance Program or ask the agency for their due process policy.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) EDUCATION BENEFITS/GI BILL

Some students have been able to access dependent Veteran's benefits when attending a college program for students with ID. This requires the program to be approved by the VA, and for the student to be eligible for dependent benefits. If these conditions are met, then students may be eligible for funds to help pay for college.

**Funding options vary depending on several factors, such as what state you live in and what services you are eligible for.**

## LOANS

Federal loan programs, such as Direct Student loans or Parent PLUS loans are **NOT available** to students with ID attending a college program. As previously mentioned, while federal student aid is available to students in approved CTP programs, this only includes Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Work-Study, not federal student loan programs.

Some, but not all, private student loan lenders have options for non-degree seeking students. To be eligible for these loan programs, the student must be "enrolled at a degree-granting school and pursuing a certification or an associate or bachelor's degree." It is not completely clear if "certification" includes credentials awarded by an approved CTP program. However, there are a few known instances of students in CTP programs being able to obtain a private student loan to help pay for college. Review requirements of each lender to determine if non-degree programs for students with ID will qualify.

Learn more about non-degree student loan programs in this blog post, [\*Non-Degree Seeking Student Loans\*](#).

## SOCIAL SECURITY

Families often have concerns about how going to college will impact their student's Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The key thing to know is going to college does not automatically make someone ineligible for social security benefits. Some students use their social security benefits to help pay for school-related expenses. In addition, it is important to note that financial aid should not impact SSI.

The [Plan for Achieving Self-Support \(PASS\) program](#) is a social security program that allows Social Security beneficiaries to exclude income that is being used to assist the person in returning to work. Under a PASS program, income is set aside for current or future expenses for training, equipment, services, or supports—including college—if it is related to a specified employment goal.

## INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

The preamble to IDEA 2004 regulations, as well as 2019 guidance from the US Department of Education, allows for the use of IDEA funds under certain circumstances to pay tuition and other costs of college attendance for students who are still eligible for IDEA services. School districts in several states are partnering with local colleges or universities to establish college-based transition programs and supporting students aged 18–21 to complete their educational program in a college setting.

## FAMILY FUNDS

Students and their families are often called upon to fund at least part of the expenses associated with a college education. For families, this can be difficult without a savings plan in place for college. [ABLE Accounts](#) offer a relatively new way to save for college expenses without negatively impacting benefits. If your family has a 529 College Savings or Prepaid Tuition account, these may be a source of funding for students attending a college program as well. It is important to look at the options for how to use these funds when attending a non-degree college program. Families and students should review the specific rules for ABLE and 529 College Savings plan accounts in their state.

## STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Many college students contribute toward their own college expenses. This can be the same for students with ID and should not be overlooked as another option for paying for college. Student contributions could be from income from jobs during the school year, summer employment, or even income received from Social Security. This will look different for each student, but it is something to keep in mind as you are thinking about all the ways to pay for college.

**Most students and their families use a combination of personal resources and supports from other funding sources to pay for college.**

## RELATED RESOURCES

### Benefits Counseling

Benefits counseling is a service that helps individuals with disabilities and their families understand how employment and other life decisions, like going to college, will impact their benefits (e.g., Social Security Disability Insurance, health insurance, housing assistance). Benefits counseling addresses the fears and concerns many individuals and their families have about a reduction in benefits if they start to work. Learn more about how to access benefits counseling.

Learn more by reviewing additional resources related to *Paying for College: Paying for College Resources on the Think College website.*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Scholarships are one resource that can help students pay for college. Students with intellectual disability (ID) can access a range of scholarships.

There are numerous scholarships available, but sometimes it can be hard to find the ones that apply to your situation. We have identified some disability-specific scholarships that are appropriate for students with disabilities who are pursuing a non-degree program. As these types of scholarships can be extremely limited, offering only a few for the entire country, we share some other tips for finding local or college-specific scholarships as well. We encourage you to look beyond disability-specific scholarships to these opportunities as they can also be a great source of funding.

## SCHOLARSHIPS OPEN TO ANY STUDENT

**Scholarships awarded based on your location.** Many high schools have a counselor dedicated to supporting students in the college search process. Counselors have a lot of information about scholarships that other students in your area have accessed. Local scholarships to consider include:

- » scholarships specific to graduating seniors in your school district
- » scholarships from local organizations, foundations, Rotary Clubs, and others

**Scholarships awarded by your college or university.**

Once you have decided on a college, you should discuss possible scholarship opportunities with the college program staff as well as the college financial aid office. They may have information about specific scholarship opportunities available through that college. They can assist you in navigating scholarships that other students may have been able to access.

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you search for disability-specific scholarships, you will find a long list of national scholarships. To save you some time, we compiled a list of disability-specific scholarships for which students with intellectual disability are eligible to apply.

### TIP



College programs for students with ID are typically non-degree certificate programs. Be aware if a scholarship you are interested in requires a student to be pursuing a degree. Don't be afraid to ask whether they can make an exception. Non-degree programs for students with ID are relatively new, and the scholarship program may not have considered offering the scholarship to students pursuing a certificate. They may be open to this option if you ask.

### TIP



Some scholarships require students to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You can learn more about this application on the [FAFSA website](#).





## SCHOLARSHIPS BY DISABILITY

### AUTISM

#### *Autism Can Do Scholarship*

Co-sponsored by John's Crazy Socks and Doug Flutie Jr Foundation for Autism, the program provides one scholarship to someone on the autism spectrum to advance their education.

- Award amount: \$5,000
- Due: March 25, 2022
- Number of awards: 1

#### *Making a Difference Autism Scholarship*

Kerry Magro has made it his mission to help others with autism via this scholarship program. The winning applicant will receive a \$500 scholarship to pay for their postsecondary education.

- Award amount: \$500
- Due: April 25, 2022
- Number of awards: 1

#### *Organization for Autism Research*

The Lisa Higgins Hussman Scholarship supports students attending 2-year colleges; life skills or postsecondary programs; or vocational, technical, or trade schools. Hussman applicants typically make up the pool of talented students who face daily challenges related to autism and attend programs that assist in skill-building, job-readiness, and other transition-related skills.

#### *Synchrony Scholarship for Autistic Students of Color*

This supports students attending any type of undergraduate postsecondary education, including 2- or 4-year colleges; life skills or postsecondary programs; or vocational, technical, or trade schools. Applicants must belong to an underrepresented racial and/or ethnic group.

- Award amount: \$3,000
- Due: May 2, 2022
- Number of awards: Varies

## DOWN SYNDROME

#### *National Down Syndrome Society O'Neill/Tabani Enrichment Fund*

The mission of the O'Neill Tabani Enrichment Fund is to offer financial assistance to adults with Down syndrome who are continuing to enrich their lives by taking classes or enrolling in postsecondary educational programs.

- Award amount: Up to \$5,000
- Due: May 15, 2022
- Number of awards: Minimum of 10 each year

#### *Ruby's Rainbow*

Ruby's Rainbow provides college scholarships for students with Down syndrome, spreading awareness of their capabilities and supporting their dreams of higher education and independence.

- Award amount: \$1,000-\$10,000
- Due: April 18, 2022
- Number of awards: Various

#### *United Parent Support for Down Syndrome Scholarship*

The Katie MacDonald Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to an individual with Down syndrome who is pursuing educational or job training opportunities beyond high school. Personal connection and/or family involvement in support of UPS for Down syndrome activities or programs is a requirement.

- Award amount: \$1,500
- Due: April 1, 2022
- Number of awards: 1

#### *Varghese Summersett Down Syndrome Scholarship*

Varghese Summersett offers an annual scholarship for students with Down syndrome to honor two of their attorneys who have children with disabilities. This scholarship is intended for a child who needs financial aid to support educational or recreational opportunities. Recipients may use the scholarship toward a camp, tutoring, education, or any tool to help the child prosper.

- Award amount: \$500
- Due: April 1, 2022
- Number of awards: Varies

### ***Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio***

The Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio offers college scholarships to assist Ohio residents with Down syndrome or those who are siblings, parents, cousins, or other relatives of individuals with Down syndrome. Specifically, recipients must pursue careers that will positively impact the lives of individuals with Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome who are enrolled in a college program are eligible and strongly encouraged to apply.

- Award amount: \$5,000 and \$2,500
- Due: In 2022, the deadline to apply was Jan 31, 2022
- Number of awards: 6

### ***Jake Pratt Scholarship Program sponsored by UPS - Alabama***

The Jake Pratt Scholarship Fund sponsored by UPS provides individual grants to Alabama residents with Down syndrome who intend to enroll or continue enrollment in a postsecondary program that will enhance their life through employment, independent living or life skills, or interests in any other areas.

- Award amount: Varies
- Due: April 8, 2022
- Number of awards: 3

## **OTHER DISABILITY SCHOLARSHIPS**

### ***Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association Scholarship***

Scholarships are for individuals who have hemiplegia, hemiparesis, or hemiplegic cerebral palsy due to any cause, or a diagnosis of pediatric stroke. Students must be attending a postsecondary school leading to a degree or certification or attending a postsecondary vocational education program.

- Award amount: Varies
- Due: Application opens in May and is due August 31, 2022
- Number of awards: Varies

### ***Dylan's Journey Memorial Scholarship***

Dylan's Journey Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to one student with Neurofibromatosis (NF) and/or a learning disability of any kind.

- Award amount: \$1,000
- Due: Mar 20, 2022
- Number of awards: 1

### ***Williams Syndrome Association Educational/Vocational Postsecondary Scholarship***

The Williams Syndrome Association (WSA) provides scholarship funding to young adults who are members of the WSA and are pursuing postsecondary education in academics and/or vocational and life skills programs. WSA awards scholarships based on financial need.

- Award amount: Varies
- Due: Two opportunities per year - March 31 and July 31
- Number of awards: Varies

### ***Buckfire Law Disability Scholarship Program***

The scholarship is available to students of any age, with any type of disability, including but not limited to physical disabilities, medical conditions, mental or psychiatric conditions, speech and language disabilities, learning disabilities, behavioral conditions, and all other conditions. Students must have completed one semester of college classes to apply.

- Award amount: \$1,000
- Due: October 1, 2022
- Number of awards: 1

### ***Wells Fargo Scholarship Program for People with Disabilities***

Wells Fargo has developed this scholarship program to help people with disabilities obtain their education or training necessary to succeed in the career path of their choice.

- Award amount: \$1,250
- Due: February 18, 2022
- Number of awards: unknown

## **STATE SCHOLARSHIPS SPECIFIC TO STUDENTS WITH ID**

Several states have developed scholarships specifically for students with intellectual disabilities who are accessing inclusive postsecondary education options. For many of these scholarships, students need to be enrolled in an approved Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP). ***This list on the Think College website*** shows the programs that are currently approved. We encourage you to check with programs about other state or program specific scholarships that may exist.

### ***Delaware Advance Scholarship Program***

H.B. 326 created the Delaware Advance Scholarship Program (DASP), seeking to defray tuition costs for eligible students with intellectual disabilities to attend Delaware comprehensive transition and postsecondary (CTP) programs. To qualify for DASP financial assistance, students must apply for federal Pell grants as well as state grants, such as those provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Developmental Disabilities.

- Award amount: Varies
- Due: N/A – The college program supports students to access these funds. Currently, the University of Delaware’s Career and Life Studies Certificate program is the only in-state CTP program, but H.B. 326 will apply to any other programs established in the future.

### ***Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program Scholarship***

The Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program Act established the Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program Scholarship for eligible students to attend approved Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Programs (FPCTPs). Scholarships are available to students with an intellectual disability who have provided required documentation regarding their intellectual disability, who physically attend the eligible institution, and who are enrolled in the FPCTP.

- Award amount: \$7,000
- Due: N/A – The college program supports students to access these funds

### ***Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES)***

Students are eligible for the KEES if they received an alternative high school diploma, or if they have an intellectual disability and attended a Kentucky public high school. Eligible students must also enroll in an approved CTP in Kentucky.

- Award: \$250 (enrolled in at least 6 credit hours) & \$125 (enrolled in less than 6 credit hours)
- Due: N/A – The college financial aid office works with students to access these funds

### ***Minnesota Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities***

The Minnesota Legislature established the Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID Grant) program to provide students with intellectual and developmental disabilities with financial assistance for tuition and fees. To qualify, a student must be enrolled in and attending a CTP; have tuition and fees not covered by the Federal Pell Grant, state grant, or institutional aid; be a Minnesota resident; and complete the FAFSA or MN Dream Act application.

- Award amount: Varies
- Due: The college program supports students to access these funds

### ***Tennessee Step Up Scholarship***

This program is designed to assist students with intellectual disabilities who have completed high school and enrolled in an individualized program of study of up to four years at an eligible postsecondary institution.

- Award amount: \$1,750 (freshman, sophomore) & \$2,250 (junior, senior)
- Due: Fall – September 1; Spring – February 1; Summer – May 1

**There may be other scholarships awarded by local disability organizations in addition to the scholarships in this list.** There are several organizations that have chapter-specific scholarships. As these frequently change based on funds available, we’ve provided some examples of the types of groups you might contact in your local area to ask about scholarship opportunities:

- » Chapters of: United Cerebral Palsy, Autism Society, Council for Exceptional Children, state chapters of The Arc
- » Down Syndrome Associations
- » Disability advocacy organizations

Finding resources to help pay for college can be time consuming. Scholarships are only part of the solution, but they can be an important resource. These general strategies for finding out about scholarships and this list of disability-specific scholarships can assist you to identify possible scholarships they can use as a part of your college funding plan.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit our **Paying for College** page with a variety of resources for families and others looking for ways to fund college.

Find out which schools accept federal financial aid and a lot of other information by visiting our **College Search**.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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