

TPSID

Transition Program for Students with
Intellectual Disabilities

Need For Project

Intellectual disability is characterized by significant limitations in reasoning, learning, and problem solving as well as in adaptive behaviors, such as everyday social and practical skills. (American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities). Students with such disabilities face challenges particularly as they are about to enter the adult world. IDEA 2004 acknowledges that special education services for young adults with disabilities must provide a comprehensive approach to transition to ensure the successful adjustment from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, continuing and adult education, vocational training, integrated employment, adult services, independent living, and community participation.(IDEA 2004, Sec. 602). However, a growing number of high school students who have met all academic requirements evidence deficiencies in these transition domains.

The Department of Labor reports New Jersey's unemployment rate for May 2010 as 9.6%. As many are already aware, there remains a significant gap in employment rates between those individuals with and without disabilities. According to the American Community Survey for 2007(ACS), the employment rate for working aged individuals with disabilities was 36.9% as compared to 79.7% for those without disabilities. U.S. Department of Labor Bureau statistics released last month represent a bleaker reality estimating that the percentage of individuals with disabilities in the current labor force is only 21.7% , the unemployment rate of this percentage represents 14.4% by comparison of 70.5% of those without a disability as having an unemployment rate of only 9.4%. For those diagnosed with either an intellectual or developmental disability (ID/DD), the disparity in employment participation widens even further. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimate the average lifetime cost of someone with an intellectual disability to be \$ 1,014,00.00 (based on 2003 dollars) This figure represents

costs and services over and above those experienced by an individual without an intellectual disability. Research supports the idea that individuals who are gainfully employed achieve an economic and social value that improves their feelings of self worth as well as reduce the costs of community based services required to support their care. Part and fulltime employment options also establish essential connections that will allow individuals to become functioning and valued members of their community. While there have been improvements shown in the numbers of individuals with an intellectual or development disability employed through facility based programs such as sheltered workshops, the numbers of those supported in a more integrated setting has not greatly improved. Systems still seem to favor a more facilities based approach that remains segregated as opposed to individuals being assimilated into community based work settings with appropriate supports provided.

In New Jersey, much attention has been focused on the lack of postsecondary options currently available to this ever growing population. With improved healthcare, the lifespan of this group will increase, which will result in the need for increased services as these individuals age. Sustained and focused attention must be given to developing inclusive transitional life skills, academic and vocational programs that will allow young adults with intellectual disabilities to expand their independence, increase their ability to become gainfully employed and become engaged members of their community. While programs and services for children in the K-12 system are readily available, there are few viable options specifically designed to provide a postsecondary experience leading towards academic enrichment and or vocational skills development that includes the individualized support services needed to assist students in attaining their goals towards a more independent future. This concern was recently highlighted in the NJ Adults with Autism Task Force (October 2009) recommendations. Areas of most concern

included increasing educational opportunities for adults by expanding access to continuing educational opportunities on both a credit and non credit basis and providing adequate pre-vocational/ vocational training options and the necessary supports to promote independence and sustained community involvement. The purpose of the Task Force was to study, evaluate and develop recommendations related to a specific plan of action to support the needs of New Jersey adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder, while specific to this population, the recommendations made would benefit both ID and DD groups through the development of inclusive community based programs and services that offer expanded options.

Community colleges have long been viewed as a local, affordable alternative for those seeking academic and career focused programming options. Due to open admission standards, the vast majority of students with intellectual disabilities are and will continue to matriculate at the community college level. By developing inclusive, individualized models that are skill based and tied to private and corporate sector partners, we can optimize student placement and improve employment outcomes within the state.

Establishing such a program in both Bergen and Camden counties provides statewide accessibility to postsecondary transition programs. Grant dollars are maximized as the program can intake twice the number of students, reach a much more diverse population and outreach efforts will have the potential to reach all 20 counties of the state. In addition, the two programs can share resources: speakers, training modules, and more importantly, provide a diverse cross section of data that will reflect statewide trends and that will allow for continuous refinement of program standards and future growth potential. By maximizing our reach within the state, this partnership will provide increased availability of community based and corporate partnership opportunities that will demonstrate a strong model for other states to replicate. Each college can

share their leverage in the community and build from an existing foundation of partnerships. For example, Bergen County Community College's connection with Mosaic, a grant funded program that links individuals with disabilities seeking employment to local businesses and corporations will now be extended to Camden students. Through this affiliation, Camden County College's students enrolled in this initiative would also benefit and thereby grow and expand the existing program. Assessment data will be enhanced since it will represent a more statewide picture of employment opportunities and placement data that can thereby be used to determine patterns in employment.

The proposed program will offer two models that provide flexible options and access to vocational, certificate and or degree programs that students can take for credit, non credit or audit status. Using a Person Centered approach, student's develop individualized goals towards the development of specific career tracks leading to academic or vocational programs. Key support services such as; peer mentors, in-class support that links with group instructional review sessions and peer tutors are customized to meet the individual needs of each student. Students may also choose to take non credit courses which focus on the development of vocational and community participation experiences as well as ongoing life skill development opportunities to prepare adults with intellectual disabilities for meaningful careers and enhanced community involvement. Practicum and internship experiences involve a variety of on and off campus vocational opportunities for students to develop the skills needed to become more self sufficient. Program components follow traditional college semester timeframes of two 15 week modules in addition to an 11 week summer program. Using a "Person Centered Approach", specific objectives tailored to the individual needs of the student will be developed and assessed in the following areas: social/emotional and leisure activities, vocational rotations/ internship

experiences, independent living skills development and academic coursework. Based on interest and aptitude, students will be assigned on campus work experiences to develop marketable job skills in areas such as horticulture, childcare, office skills, record management, maintenance and hospitality that can then lead to off campus internships through our strong base of corporate and community based partners. Upon completion of the core courses, non-credit modules and vocational internship experiences students will be awarded a certificate of achievement. Upon successful completion of the program students will be linked with community based partners to assist them with placement options and services.

The program will be wrapped with services critical for the success of this cohort. Extensive assessment will monitor and document progress. Student services will be critical. The grant will provide access to a job coaches, support personnel and ongoing training opportunities for mentors, tutors, faculty and staff on disability related issues. Students will also be able to access college services such as the cafeteria, library, tutoring center, and disability services office. This cohort of students will also be integrated into the college community and have access to all typical activities, events and programs offered by the institution. Focus is on integration and therefore, students will access all needed departments and services with the assistance of identified department liaisons. These existing staff members will be provided with ongoing training and support to ensure students are given the appropriate level of assistance. By using this approach, both institutions are building on existing institutional foundations as well as strengthening and expanding capacity. This will allow new modifications in process that will ensure future students are integrated into the fabric of each institution. While providing an inclusive environment is the ultimate goal, students will need to have typical peers to assist in facilitating this experience. Interaction and involvement will be provided by peer mentors who

will work with students on a weekly basis to help model appropriate behaviors and provide a higher level of support to encourage and promote ongoing participation in college community.

SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project is designed to build expand services that address the needs of the statewide population of students with intellectual disabilities. In New Jersey, there are currently only three programs dealing with the post-secondary transition of needs of this cohort: The College of New Jersey and Mercer County Community College (both supported by the National Downs Syndrome Society) and the Transitional Education Center (TREC) program of Y.A.L.E. Schools, Inc., a for-profit receiving special education school which specializes in students who are on the Autistic spectrum, particularly those with Asbergers. These programs, while vitally important, currently enroll less than a combined total of 50 students in a state where the Autistic population alone is over 9,000 students between the age of 6 and 22 (an increase of 1776% since 1992). By collaborating Camden County College and Bergen Community College can reach double the amount of students, 20 in the first year and 40 in the subsequent. As the two of the largest Community Colleges in the state of New Jersey, and drawing from a diverse sending area, Bergen and Camden are poised to significantly increase local capacity.

In addition, by developing a model that can be implemented at any post secondary institution, exponentially increase the possible number of students served. First, by serving 40 students per year the Bergen/Camden model will generate a great deal of data over the 2 year period. This information will help mold a model that increases student success. The proposal takes advantage of resources already available in most colleges, tutors, peer mentors from honors programs or Human Services majors, intake procedures through the Office of Disability. But by changing the strategies, success rates as measured by integration with the non-disabled community and attainment of a meaningful credential, will be increased. Colleges and university employ assessment loops to evaluate student outcomes, applied to this cohort is a simple

transition. In the proposed model, student progress is monitored and reported back to the student at least 5 times each semester. This constant feedback allows the student, in conjunction with their circle, makes the program extremely flexible and responsive to the needs of the individual. Self paced components of classes, also easily implemented will be piloted with this population and assessed, again a providing a wealth of data on the what does and does not work with this cohort. The ease of mobility and implementation of this proposal to other institution rests in the fact that it uses already available resources in a slightly different way, assesses the outcomes continually and is flexible to respond to the needs of the individual.

QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

GOAL 1: The program will integrate intellectually disabled and non-disabled students

Objective 1: Integration into social activities facilitated by peer mentors

Objective 2: Integration into academic classes facilitated by one-on-one tutors.

Objective 3: Integrated into the job/community environment facilitated by job shadowers.

GOAL 2: The program will demonstrate increases in literacy and numeracy for all students

Objective 1: Enhanced learning/learning assistance vocational, developmental and introductory courses

Objective 2: Implement self-paced learning modules with built-in formative assessment instruments

Objective 3: Develop a one-on-one tutoring/instruction reinforcement model

GOAL 3: The program will lead to a meaningful certificate or degree

Objective 1: Develop a personalized support system to ease transition to college

Objective 2: Develop a wide variety of coursework that will support literacy, vocational, self awareness and life skill components of the certificate curriculum

Objective 3: Provide enhanced support services including advising, mentoring, tutoring to increase student success

GOAL 4: The program will lead to skill applicable to gainful employment or continued education

Objective 1: Develop a vast network of community and business partners willing to intern/employ students in the form of a joint advisory board

Objective 2: Provide on-site job training under the supervision of job coaches

GOAL 5: Expand infrastructure for serving developmental students' needs

Objective 1: Provide Professional Development/training for all staff, faculty, peer mentors, tutors and job shadowers

Objective 2: Provide information/training workshops for K12 and community groups

Objective 3: Expand resources, such as tutoring packages, computer labs etc.

OUTCOMES: The above goals and objectives are designed to ensure student success throughout the program. This success will be assessed using both formative and summative assessments of the following: By the end of the program the student will be able to:

- 1: manage daily activities through the application of life skills, (such as personal finance);
- 2: self-determine both personal and career goals;
- 3: navigate services and supports available in their communities;
- 4: perform employable skills
- 5: self-advocate.

ASSESSMENTS:

Formative: Objective quizzes, tests, performance check lists, supervisor evaluations

Summative measures: Evaluation on internships, role play, vocational/preference tests,

Accuplacer, Student Satisfaction assessments

The proposed two year Certificate of Achievement Program will focus on academic enrichment, vocational and community participation experiences as well as ongoing life skill development opportunities to prepare adults with intellectual disabilities for meaningful careers

and community involvement. Flexible coursework is designed to provide inclusive academic, life skills and career exploration experiences that encourages students to become fully integrated members of the college community. Practicum and internship experiences involve a variety of on and off campus vocational opportunities for students to develop the skills needed to become more self sufficient and integrated members of their community. Program components follow traditional college semester timeframes of two 15 week modules per year. Students can opt to do summer program modules during the months of June and July. Course program will vary due to the individual needs of each student. Semester schedules are designed to model a “typical college” schedule, including 4 hours per week for students to access campus community activities, and programs with Peer Mentor assistance. Students will participate in vocational experiences each semester with the support of a job coach. Vocational rotations are individualized based on interests and needs of each student. During the first 2 semesters, the student will spend 6 hours per week in a job rotation. In the third and fourth semesters, students will participate in a 12 hour per week the internship. The students will also meet on campus to discuss the various aspects of their vocational experiences. The third component, in classroom work, will comprise approximately 9 hours per week so that the student will be on campus as least 19 hours per week. Specific outcomes and objectives will be developed and assessed monthly in the following areas: social/emotional and leisure activities, vocational rotations/ internship experiences, independent living skills development and academic coursework.

Program objectives are designed to address the following:

1. Assessment of academic and vocational skill development,
2. Development of Personal Plan of study that will identify leisure, academic and career skills desired
3. Identify Peer Mentors for students to access community activities
4. Address independence and social skills development

5. Link students with internal and external employment services to facilitate a smooth transition to the community.

The model encompasses three phases designed to encourage the development of self advocacy skills and promote student success. The first phase involves the development of a realistic individualized plan, the outcomes of which can be clearly assessed. Using a Person Centered approach, a team comprised of college Academic Advisors, program staff and members of the student's circle of support will meet with the student to identify goals and develop a plan and course of study. Students can choose a full or part time schedule (it should be noted, if a student opts for part time, it will take longer than 2 years to complete the program which may have funding implications). Necessary accommodations and supports will be identified and added to the student's program through the Disabilities Service Office. Team members will meet at the end of each semester to evaluate progress towards goals and implement changes as needed. With assistance, students begin to connect achievement in college with adult outcomes such as employment.

Prior to start of first semester students and family members attend a one week orientation session that includes the following: course registration; vocational rotation schedule, overview of departments and services offered, assignment of Peer Mentors and job coaches. Students work with Peer Mentors to become acclimated to the campus (ie; cafeteria, library, Learning Assistance Center/Tutoring Center, etc.)

In the second phase, based on aptitude and chosen program concentration, students begin core credit course offerings that may include: College Success, Basic Mathematics, and Basic Writing electives will also be offered, such as Computer Literacy, Theater, Dance, Health and Wellness and Basic Nutrition. In addition to courses, instruction will be supplemented by the presence of a

tutor in the classroom. This tutor will also run weekly review sessions for all students in the class. This universal design approach will foster independent learning, while providing an extra layer of support for students taking academic courses in an integrated collaborative atmosphere.. Information gained through this process will be used in weekly tutoring sessions. Life skills and community skill (i.e. interpersonal communication) modules will also be included in the program. Students will be supported by Peer Mentors, academic advisors, accommodation specialists, job coaches, and peer tutors throughout the semester. Weekly interim assessments will be used to monitor and report progress as it relates to student's goals.

During the first two semesters, students will be assigned on campus work experiences to develop marketable job skills in areas such as landscaping, office skills, maintenance, electronic record keeping and hospitality management and retail. Students will receive ongoing support from a job coach during the entire experience, skills development will be assessed regularly and shared with program staff at weekly meetings. Based on individual need, students will either work one on one with a job coach or as an enclave of 2 to 3 students per site. Students will receive grades for all components of the first year experience at the end of both the fall and spring semesters. Based on program, students must complete two semesters of on campus vocational experiences prior to moving on to their second year internship experience. The second two semesters may be on campus as well, or could be at a community setting.

In year two, in addition to coursework, students will participate in either on campus or off campus internships.. Upon completion of the core courses and internship experiences student will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement. Students will work with internal (Mosaic, HireAbility) and external agencies (DVR) to identify employment opportunities within the community.

The program will be wrapped with services critical for the success of this cohort. Extensive assessment will monitor and document progress. Student services will be critical. The grant will provide access to a job coaches, support personnel and ongoing professional development/training opportunities for mentors, tutors, faculty and staff on disability related issues. Students will also be able to access college services such as the cafeteria, library, tutoring center, and disability services office. This cohort of students will also be integrated into the college community and have access to all typical activities, events and programs offered by the institution. Interaction and involvement will be facilitated by peer mentors who will assist students weekly to encourage and promote participation within the college community.

QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES

Both Camden County College and Bergen Community College recruit from a diverse population. This practice will be continued in the proposed project. Student will be accepted from all sending districts, LEAs and other portals. For example, Camden County College, through its division of School and Community Programs, reaches all the high schools in the Camden County district. This presence in the high school provides the opportunity to recruit into the program. Both Bergen Community College and Camden County College actively recruit participants from traditionally underrepresented populations, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability.

The proposed services are designed specifically for the needs of this population, which are academic reinforcement, socialization with non-disabled peers and integration into the workforce community. The program addresses each by providing individual support in each area. Academics are supported by a one-on-one tutor for each student. This tutor will attend classes with the student, help with note taking, help organize information and reinforce the lesson. The Tutor will also supply valuable data on the status of the student in the class, issues with attention, frustration, satisfaction via formal evaluations and informal conversations. In this way an intervention needed can be done as soon as possible to stabilize the situation and give the student the best chance for success.

The peer mentors will support the student outside the classroom acting as a conduit to the social aspects and functional tasks of the college. These mentors will be trained. They will also function in the assessment of the processes giving both objective feedback on participation (number of events, extent of engagement) as well as qualitative data (student satisfaction, etc.)

Job shadowers/coaches will be assigned to each student. They will be present on the job site at all times. They will be responsible for developing a list of necessary and appropriate job skills for the area as well as for the assessment of those skills. Job coaches will be part of the Transition team and their formative assessments throughout the rotation will be critical for program adjustments for the student.

The entire program is rooted in academics. All courses will bear college credit. Students will be integrated in all courses with non-disabled students. The credential will be a Certificate of Achievement and will reflect credits from both theoretical and practical classes (including the work rotations). Our previous experience in our pilot with YALE shows this model to be very effective. For example, one TREC student that worked in the automotive department was able to find employment in a tool store. Socialization will also be integrative. The students will register, get an ID card and parking sticker with the rest of the population. They will have access to all clubs and social events. Their peer mentor will also assist them in participating in these events by helping them feel comfortable in the setting. The YALE students participated in a drive to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti with the college population for example.

Another strength of the project services is that they are designed specifically around the individual student. This person-centered planning involves and integrates all 5 areas, literacy skills, life skills, community skills, job skills and personal enrichment courses. All are electives to be selected by the student after the intake process assessments and consultation with the team. Frequent formative assessments and student satisfaction surveys will allow adjustment of the program at any time. For example, a student after completing the intake procedure chooses to pursue a curriculum in the Allied Health Area will have their course work and work rotation supporting that choice. Courses could include Introduction to Careers in Allied Health and the

job rotation might be in the Ophthalmic Clinic. If the student demonstrates either by a lack of skill or lack of satisfaction, that this area is not an appropriate fit, the curriculum can be changed, again based on the individual student. If the student skills and personal decision would be to move into office skills, the program can be easily modified to accommodate the switch, in all areas: academic classes (eg. Personal Computer Applications), life skill classes (eg. College Success), Community Skills (eg. Fundamentals of Speech), Career Exploration Classes (eg. Introduction to Careers in Business) and work rotations (in various office settings) will then be All of these will support the ultimate goal of the person-center goal set by the student.

Career development will begin will courses in career exploration, such as An Introduction to Careers in Allied Health. It will continue with rotations through appropriate on-campus work sites beginning the very first semester. These rotations will be 15 weeks in duration and and will involve approximately 120 hours (depending on the student, and the nature of the job site) The second semester will consist of the same amount of time, but in a different setting to give the student a second type of experience, particularly if they were not satisfied with the first placement. During the second year the job placement will be of a longer duration. And by the third year will also have the option of an off-campus internship where appropriate.

Both Bergen County and Camden County Colleges have extensive work force development divisions with numerous business and industry contacts. From these contacts an advisory board will be established for this program. From this collaboration, internships and other supports will be developed. For example, Bergen has an advisory board through the disabilities office which has members from external agencies that support individuals with disabilities, sum of those entities include Bergen County Division of Disability Services, NJ Transit/Access link, Bergen

County Special Service School District, Heightened Independence and Progress (HIP), DVR, and WIB. The college also has internal and external advisory board for their autism center.

QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

One of the strengths of the Bergen/Camden model is that it recognizes that student success rests on the support of all areas, academic, student services and vocational skills. This strength is reflected in the varying backgrounds of the project personnel. The co-PIs come from very different backgrounds, offering both points of view to program development. Mrs. Tracy Rand has spent 30 years in area of disabilities, first as a teacher and then as an administrator. She is currently the Coordinator of the Office of Specialized Services for Bergen County College. In her position, Mrs. Rand has spearheaded many initiatives that focus on integrating students with disabilities into the campus community and providing resources and information to educate the campus community. She has provided in-service workshops to transition and guidance counselors on the post-secondary process of accessing services and how to promote independence and self-advocacy skill to young adults as they prepare to transition into higher education. Teresa A. Smith, Ph.D. is currently Dean for Curriculum and Assessment at Camden County College. In her position Dr. Smith has worked with LEAs to develop courses and curricula to serve the intellectually disabled population. As liaison to Y.A.L.E, Bancroft and the Center for Neurological and Neurodevelopmental health, she has also participated in developing training programs as well as coordinating job shadowing experiences on the campus.

Two new hires will compliment this team. The first, the position of coordinator will be posted for someone who acts to support the integration of students with disabilities into the student community and serves as a resource for faculty and staff regarding disability issues. responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating systems and processes of the essential functions of the office. The Coordinator ensures that programs and services are implemented with attention to high standards, quality, collaboration and fiscal soundness. This position will require a

minimum of a Bachelors Degree (Masters preferred) in the areas of Education, Special Education, Human Services or a related field and five years of field experience, two of which should be in a post-secondary transition setting.

The second position, a vocational expert, will be responsible for rehabilitation activities which support students with vocational evaluations, work adjustment training, job placement, skill training and/or employment. This person will provide vocational assessments, utilizing aptitude, interest and other assessment tools, develop individualized training plans for students in the program as necessary, coordination activities at assigned work stations/sites, monitor client progresses and complete assessments of job skills. This position will require a Bachelors degree in Rehabilitation or a related field, with three years of field experience.

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

In 2009 Camden County College entered a partnership with Y.A.L.E. Schools developing the Transitional Education Center. In this program, students 18-21, who had not met the graduation requirements, were given an on-campus experience which involved: inclusion with the non-disabled population in Academic Credit bearing courses, non-credit literacy courses and a job experience in one of the areas on campus. Y.A.L.E., as the LEA, provided the transitional literacy piece and Camden County College provided the courses and the work site experiences. Of the 9 students who began the program, 3 were placed in gainful employment by the end of the first year. In 2010, Camden County College will not only expand this program with Y.A.L.E but they will engage in a similar program with Bancroft neurological, bring students with potentially more severe intellectual disabilities onto campus for the same type of program. Camden County is committed to serving this population. The proposed program in this grant will allow Camden County to expand even further, taking in students not connected to the DOE. Based on this history and the dedication of funds to develop these programs, Camden County College intends to sustain these programs well beyond the five year scope of the grant. YALE and Bancroft pay a minimal fee to secure a classroom on campus. These funds are used to provide training and equipment (such as smart boards) to the program.

Bergen Community College's continues to commit resources to previously established programs serving this population. For example, Mosaic, a regional center for disability employment. The program was designed to attain two equally important outcomes: to increase services to the number of individual with disabilities, (the single most underserved portions of

the workforce,) who need to get a job, and develop skills to keep those jobs a and secondly to increase the number of private and public sector companies that employ the disabled.

Camden County College and Bergen Community College are prepared to absorb the full time salaries outline in the budget. The structure other personnel and service are expansion of already existing infrastructure of the college. For example, the tutors for the program are an already available resource on campus using the Tutor Center/Learning Assistance Center of the institutions. The intake procedure will be conducted through the Disabilities Office, which is already processing such documentation and conducting these types of interviews. The need for additional job training experiences can be accommodated on campus, however, as outline in the program, internships in the community will developed through the program. The establishment of an advisory board composed of key stakeholders from the North and the South is also a demonstration of the commitment to this program. Through these community leaders outside sources of funds will be pursued to continue to supplement the program after the grant period.

QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION

There are two distinct types of assessment, formative and summative. Summative assessments are cumulative evaluations used to measure student growth after instruction. They are generally given at the end of a course in order to determine whether long term learning goals have been met. Teachers can use summative information to reshape how they organize their curricula or what courses schools offer their students. This data is also beneficial in the evaluation of student placement within a program

In contrast, the purpose of formative assessment is to give timely feedback to students regarding gaps in their knowledge and understanding of both academic and career skill sets. An extensive literature review conducted by Black and Wiliam (1998a) revealed that well designed formative assessments produced significant learning gains helping students with learning disabilities, even more than it helped other students (Black and Wiliam, 1998b). The key component to this success is providing feedback directly to the student. The most valuable feedback contains specific the comments and suggestions for improvement (Bangert-Drowns, Kulick, & Morgan, 1991). . Formative assessment helps support the expectation that all children can learn to high levels by emphasizing the value of constant improvement (Ames, 1992).

Before any project can consider assessment, the goals and outcomes must be clearly articulated. The goals reflect the effectiveness of the program and include 1) literacy and numeracy gains for all students, 2) attainment of a degree or certificate and 3) placement in employment or educational setting after completion of the program. These are based on the performance measures established by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) at the U.S. Department of Labor (Timmons et, al. 2005). Assessment of literacy gains can be performed using summative instruments such as the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) pre

and post program (value added assessment). In the same way, CASAS produces standardized test for living, community and work skills. The additional goals are easily measured by the percentage of students that earn a degree/certificate and the percentage of students that are employed or continuing their education after the completion of the program.

While the goals of the program address the desired result from an institutional perspective, the outcomes articulate the desired gains from the student perspective – what will the student be able to do because of the program. Once completing the proposed program the student will be able to 1) manage daily activities through the application of life skills, (such as personal finance, nutrition); 2) self-determine both personal and career goals; 3) navigate services and supports available in their communities; 4) perform employable skills 5) self-advocate. A wide variety of formative and summative instruments will be used to assess these outcomes.

Student Assessment

Management of activities of daily living will be addressed in both Academic (courses who's credit can be counted toward a college degree) and Transitional coursework (credits do not count toward a college degree) . On the Academic side, College Success/Freshman Experience will tackle topics such as time management, problem-solving, listening skills, speaking skills, team building, and conflict resolution The course also addressed daily issues such as transportation, childcare and family obligations. Each model has a defined formative assessment, for example, students perform a personal time management analysis to evaluate their own use of time; role play is extensively used to assess communication skills and problem solving strategies.

Transitional classes, such as life skills and Social Skills will address topics such as personal finance, interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. These courses will be assessed in the classroom with formative instruments, such as role play, using a grading rubric.

Summative assessment of these skills will be performed by observation of the students community situations. For example, going to the school bookstore and purchasing an item, or attending a club meeting with a peer mentor. The foundation for these skills will be addressed in classed such as Language Arts and Mathematics.

In these transitional classes students will participate in a person centered program that is designed to increase their literacy and numeracy by engaging in a curriculum that contains self paced learning. Initially an assessment, such as the TABE, will be performed to more specifically identify a students strength and weakness in these particular areas. The use of computer programs such as Alex, My Math Lab and My Comp Lab, allow additional time to be spent on those specific areas. Each module is accompanied by an assessment, and students cannot move forward until there has been a determined level of mastery for that area.

Additional college course electives such as Health and Wellness, Personal Computer Applications and Acting are also important components of the program. These courses extend the student's ability to customize their curriculum, selecting courses that they are interested in. They also provide the opportunity for the student to be integrated with non-disabled peers in an academic setting. Assessment of these courses is spelled out in the course syllabi which is distributed to all students on the first day of class. One critical piece is that students in the program will be assigned a tutor/note taker who will attend all college classes with them. These tutors will not only assist the student in class, but will also reinforce the lesson and help the student organize the material after class. The tutor will also have an informal assessment each day which reflects the students ability to attend to the material, the level of difficulty the student may be demonstrating in class and other factors. With this daily information reported to the

team, more support and other adjustments can be made in a timely fashion to increase the students' ability to succeed.

The key to this and all assessment in the program is that they will be continual. Assessments will be analyzed each week. The team will meet to review the students progress and will meet with the student and parent to determine adjustments in the student program each month. This feedback is essential for the success of the student. It allows the program to have maximum flexibility as changes can be made at any point during the semester. It also allows the student to feel ownership of their program, that they can create for themselves a positive experience. This is as valuable as the coursework, and is a strength of our program.

The second student learning outcome to be addressed states that each student will be able to self determine both personal and career goals. In order for this to be accomplished the students must be provided with both information and assessment data. During the initial intake, each student will be given a summative assessment to evaluate their career skills and interests. Such standardized assessments, such as the Talent Assessment Program or Voc-Ties & Career Development Plan Career exploration courses, are readily available. This information will be shared with the student and in conjunction with the team, this information will be used to personalize both the academic and vocational pieces of curriculum that deal with career placement.

Students will be able to select from Academic courses, such as Careers in Allied Health to be exposed to the many types of jobs available and what these jobs require. Other academic courses will be developed in this vein, for example, the Veterinary Technology department may offer a course in animal grooming, the Automotive department may offer a course in routine maintenance, and the Office Systems department may offer a course in basic office skills. The

college is committed to developing these courses and offering them to both, the disabled and non-disabled population. These course will be for college credit, and will be able to be applied to the Certificate of Achievement. Assessments here will involve objective formative assessments regarding the requirements of each career. In addition, student surveys will be used to assess the students interest in each area. This assessment will be communicated to the student during the monthly team meetings so that program decisions can be made to further personalize the curriculum

The information will also be used to place students at job sites on the campus. For example, a student who shows interest and aptitude in office skills based on an initial summative assessment would be encouraged to develop their person centered curricula around an office worker curriculum. This would then include academic courses such as Personal Computer Applications, transition courses focusing on various office skills and functions and a job rotation in one of the on campus office work sites. The reinforcement from all aspects of their curriculum will improve their preparedness to enter the workforce in this capacity. In addition, formative assessment throughout the course of the first semester will give feed back to the student and the team as to the student's satisfaction and aptitude in this area. This self-determination is a critical component to the success of the program.

The third outcome, the ability to navigate services and supports available in their communities will be assessed in much the same manner. This will begin to be addressed during orientation, when peer mentors are matched with students and begin to introduce the students to the campus and to the available services. Assessment of the orientation will include a student satisfaction survey which will provide data as to the students and peer mentors perception of how successful the event was for lowering stress and beginning to incorporate the students into the

community. Transitional courses will focus on life skills and community skills and Academic courses, such as Fundamentals of Speech will support this outcome. Formative assessments, such as role play will provide feedback for the students and the team on skills to focus on. In the second year summative assessments will involve placing the student in controlled situations where they will be called on to demonstrate the skills they have learned in an integrated manner. For example, a student will be tasked with going to the bookstore to purchase a notebook. A rubric will be developed to assess the skills to be assessed such as personal finance (purchasing the notebook), communication skills (interacting with the salesperson), problem solving (choosing an alternate note book if the one they were sent to purchase is not there). More qualitative data, a survey of the student, will provide data on how well the student felt prepared as well as their own perception of skill mastery. This is very important as one of the key factors to success is an increased sense of self.

The ability to advocate, the fourth outcome, rests on this increased self-concept. This outcome is supported by all aspects of the program. First and foremost, the program is person centered, so that the student has ownership in the selection of the academic and vocational experiences. Peer mentor and tutor support are designed to maximize success both in the classroom and in the community. It is this success that builds self confidence. Dr. David McClelland, a Harvard psychology professor and a leading authority on achievement motivation, concluded from years of research that the most important factor for developing self-confidence is to master the needed skills. Dr. Tom Stevens, professor emeritus at California State University, based a Life Skills Questionnaire to measure the relationship between life skills and success using both self-rated and objective criteria. Although this instrument was designed for the non-

disabled population, it could easily be modified to use as an assessment tool in this program. In addition, observations of the team will provide additional qualitative data in this area.

Program Assessment

Parallel to the assessment of the student's progress is the assessment of the program itself. In considering the evaluation of the program, several factors must be considered. First and foremost are the goals set by the student and family. In this person-centered model, success may be defined very differently from student to student. However, more objective criteria must also be used. Again, this will be both formative and summative. The intake process involves three steps: documentation review, interview with students and parents and standardized testing for placement in academics as well as vocational areas. While it is critical to evaluate the accuracy of placement instruments, staying in the initial program should not be the criteria. Indeed, the strength of this program is the flexibility it allows as student's focus and skill sets become more defined.

The effectiveness of peer mentors and tutors is essential. These supports, missing in most programs for the intellectually disabled are put in place to increase student success, build self-confidence in the student and assist in socialization with the non-disabled community. While facilitating this, these personnel are not intended to be a crutch and part of their training will be in affording the student as much independence as possible. This assessment will begin with an objective rubric including items such as time spent with student. A more qualitative assessment will come from surveys of the student and the mentors and tutors.

The level of integration with the non-disabled population will also be assessed. Objectively, the number and type of events each student participates in will be documented. Evaluations of level of participation and personal satisfaction will be measured. For example,

the students will be encouraged to participate in the Spring Fling, a lunch time barbeque hosted by student government for all students. Once the activity is over, the student and peer mentor will be asked to evaluate the experience. Did the student participate in activities such as securing their own lunch, talking with other non-disabled students, etc. This information will be kept in a portfolio style assessment to see longitudinally, if participation and satisfaction in these events increases throughout the duration of the program.

Job site experiences will be evaluated through objective rubrics. A set of skills will be associated with each job rotation and the students will be evaluate on a scale, such as non-mastery, emerging and mastery of skill. The job coach will make bi-weekly reports to the rest of the team. This information will assist in adjusting the work site environment or changing the work site to benefit the student. For example, in the current model being piloted with YALE schools, the job shadower reported that the student in the mail room was much more productive and happy when a non-disabled work study student was also present. The supervisor took this data, scheduled the two at the same time and allowed them a break so that they could talk sports. Student satisfaction was reported as high, job skills were obtained and the student was given additional activities in the area.

Lastly profession development for the staff, the K12 community and the general public will be assessed. Effectiveness in this area is, for the most part, qualitative through satisfaction surveys.

Mission and Purpose

The program proposed by Bergen and Camden Community Colleges meets the statutory definition of a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual

disabilities. The program outcome is the awarding of a Certificate of Achievement. The curriculum is flexible, combining academic, life-skills and workforce preparation. Students will enroll in College courses such as Health and Wellness, earning credits that could be applied toward an associate's degree. The second part of the curriculum includes pre-college course that earn college credit toward the Certificate of Achievement, for example, the College Success course. Non-credit modules in life skill and job skills round out the academic curriculum and will be award college credit by assessment at the end of the program. In addition, the students will participate in a work experience which begins with rotations through several job areas in the first year, then, in the second year, focuses on the particular job chosen by the student with consultation from the advisor and job coach. The unique ability to gain workforce skill on campus in a variety of areas ensures that the student will have exposure to skills which will lead to gainful employment. A pilot of this program, run on the Camden County Campus has led to employment of 3 of the original 9 students. Students will be assisted in personalizing their curriculum by the aid of a dedicated advisor, assigned to the student upon acceptance into the program.

Throughout the curriculum, the students will be integrated with the non-disabled population. In addition they will participate in any and all social functions offered by the colleges. Both Bergen County and Camden County offer a variety of social activities ranging from a wide choice of club participation to sporting and community service events. Spring Fling and Diversity Weekend bring the entire college populations together to celebrate both the uniqueness of each student and their common purpose for being on campus.

It is this purpose that defines the mission of the proposed program and aligns it with the overall mission of the institution. The goal of each community college is to provide accessible

and affordable education – associate’s degree and occupational certificate programs along with non-credit development courses and customized job training – to all who can benefit as well as to support both the economic development of Camden County and the region and the personal development of their citizens. This is the foundation of the Colleges. This purpose is made transparent in its communication in the strategic plan of the college, through the colleges’ websites as well as through the colleges’ website. Through the division of School and Community outreach, the program will recruit, advise and report back to the local districts. Stakeholders will be surveyed to determine the extent to which they are aware of the program and asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the program as it relates to them. Data from both disabled and non-disabled students will provide assessment on how well the two populations are being integrated. The results will be used to guide the planning offering of events to maximize integration of the two cohorts. Information from the community and K12 institutions will provide data on the acceptance, success and value of the program in terms of public perception. Such acceptance will lead to increased enrollment and funding sources.

Leadership

Leadership for the program will be strong and streamlined so that funding goes directly to the support of the students. The Primary Investigators at each institution will oversee the program and report directly to the appropriate Vice President in each institution. A Coordinator of the program (a new hire) will be responsible for the everyday operation of the program and will report to the PI. Their duties will primarily focus on the academic portion of the program, acting as a liaison with the faculty for curriculum development, academic assessment and coordination of services with the departments of Disability Services and Enrollment and Student

Services. Reporting to this position will be a Vocational Coordinator (new hire). This person will oversee the work service portion of the program, the external job placement of participants, assessment of work skills as well as advise students on career issues.

These two new positions will work closely with a tremendously supportive College leadership team already in place at both campuses. Both Presidents have positioned their Colleges to be part of the Intellectual Disabilities Consortium. Both have made significant commitments to the education of this cohort. At Camden County, the collaborative program with YALE is an example of the College leadership's commitment. Under these agreements, CCC operates the program at a loss of revenue, charging a minimal fee for room rental and providing work experiences for no charge. In its first year the collaboration was so successful, that the college has expanded the program to a second partner, Bancroft Neurological. Focusing now on this cohort of intellectually disable students, the Colleges will bring the same intense commitment. The college will dedicate space (at a premium), expand tutoring and advisement, increase professional development and implement a peer mentoring program.

The additional cost of the program include the salaries for the FT Coordinator, and Vocational Coordinator, and for PT tutors (one-on-one aids) and PT job coaches, PT clerical assistance. Ongoing training for Peer Mentor training and for professional development will also be a cost to the program. The program will also put added pressure on students services, such as registration, which will be absorbed by the college. The program is leveraging connection with outside sources to ensure the sustainability of the program past the grant period. Shared service agreements with Camden County are already in place which could in the fourth and fifth year provide job sites and coaches. The Center for Neurological and Neurodevelopmental Health (CNNH), a current partner of Camden County can provide peer

training as well as professional development workshops. CNNH is also able to provide evaluation/documentation update services. Bergen Community College has in place a program, “MOSAIC”, grant funded program through the Henry Kessler Foundation that provides job placement assistance and support to individuals with disabilities throughout the region. Camden County has a long standing partnership with HireAbility, a nonprofit organization that matches qualified people with disabilities to job openings at various businesses at no cost to employers or applicants, housed on Camden County College’s main Campus. Both Bergen County and Camden County College have robust workforce development contacts including: FritoLay, Baxter Pharmaceutical, Campbell Soup and others that, during the course of the grant will become supporters of this initiative.

Climate and Culture

In order for any program to succeed support must emanate from all corners of the campus. Both Bergen Community and Camden County Colleges have a history in building a climate of acceptance and support for diverse people. Bergen celebrates this in its annual Diversity Weekend and Camden has incorporated a diversity course into all of their associates degrees. In the pilot program at Camden, buildings and grounds, the cafeteria, mailroom, library, physical plant, automotive department, chemistry department, computer lab and information technology area all hosted a student work experience. The fitness lab provided both an academic setting as well as a socialization opportunity. This campus wide participation is expanding next year in terms of hours on task as well as the variety of work experiences open for each student. The proposed program will expand to more students this opportunity.

Bergen hosted an autism initiative on campus and was one of the state sites for the listening session to determine how the college could assist the community. They have hosted

conferences on Autism and worked closely with West Bergen Mental Health developing Autism Center. Currently Bergen is serving over 50 students with Asbergers/Autism. This commitment continues in the development of this program, expanding to all students with intellectual disabilities.

One of the main reasons for past success was the extensive training and communication between all stakeholders. This will continue with professional development for faculty and staff, community awareness lectures, web site postings, and reporting out monthly to stakeholders. In fact, funds from a Fiddle Foundation grant are being used to sponsor a three part workshop by Peter Gerhart, a national expert in Autism in January. This lecture and several others have been offered through the Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility at Camden County and this unit will play a significant role in the coming grant through their newly formed Institute for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities.

Nurtured by an understanding and supportive community, each student will have the ability to self-determine. Each student will have a supportive team, headed by the program Coodinator, including the students advisor, job coach, site supervisor and other appropriate members, this team will give the student input as to their strengths and weaknesses. The student will then be able to select course work as well as job experiences based on their own preference. The program design provides for a number of academic electives as well as a number of job site experiences. This allows for a rich, individualized program for each student. Also, it provides the flexibility necessary to allow students to move between experiences until a satisfactory match is made.

Staffing and Professional Development

As stated above the program will hire a director/coordinator for each campus. This person will have at least a Masters degree in an appropriate field, but more importantly will demonstrate extensive experience in dealing with this population. The second position, that of Vocational Coordinator, would have credentials in the area special education/counseling and experience in training and placing individuals with special needs in gainful employment. Peer mentors will be recruited from the current non-disabled college populations. These students will be drawn from education and human services majors as part of their field work experience as well as from the honors program students who have as part of their curriculum service learning. Job coaches/shadowers will be hired part time from an outside source. These coaches will need to have extensive experience in determining skills and performance for this cohort.

Training and professional development for new hires as well as for existing faculty and staff will be on going. CNNH, a partner, will provide several workshops on understanding and working with this special needs population. They will also provide workshops for the general population on learning issues. As discussed above, the Institute for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities has offered and will continue to offer a significant and continual program of professional development and community awareness events.

Curriculum and Instruction.

As discussed above the course level student learning outcomes and assessment instruments for each course are tied into the overall program student learning outcomes and goals. Attachment one shows an example of a typical course syllabus complete with assessment measures for each module. The modules are linked to employment skills, personal development as well as independent living and socialization skills. One of the strengths of this program is a

variation on instructional methods, and that is having a one-on-one tutor attend each class with the student. This tutor will be able to help develop notetaking skills, organization and study skill as well as reinforce for the material with the student.

Student Engagement.

As described above the entire program is founded on the principle of student engagement and person centered program. With information provided by assessment, the students will have the ability to choose their own course, job rotation and social activities on campus. The program is flexible enough that if these preferences change, a student can have their program modified at anytime, minimizing the amount of frustration the student might feel.

Transitional Planning and Support.

As the student finishes the post-secondary transition program, another transition awaits, that into the community and the work force. This passage out of the college has to be supported with the same care and attention as the transition into the college. As part of the overall program, Camden County and Bergen Community Colleges have partnered with several agencies who's focus is on placement of the disabled student into the workforce, these include: HireAbility, Mosaic, DVR. HireAbility is located on the main campus of Camden County College and Bergen has a deep connection with Mosaic. These relationship will allow the students of this program to have access to these placement services throughout their time on campus in internships and as gainful employment after graduation.

Parent/Guardian Involvement.

Parents/Guardians as key members of the student's circle will be involved throughout the program. They will participate in the intake process during the interview and will be asked to contribute as the person-centered curriculum is developed. During the orientation week, sessions

will target Parents/Guardians to help them understand the available services of the college and to make them more familiar with the college setting. There will also be activities during the week for them to participate with their child, such as tours, a barbeque lunch and other information sessions. As a member of the students team, the parents will gain feedback as to the students progress and satisfaction with the program. In fact, they will be surveyed to gather data on both the student's progress as well as their satisfaction with the program. With this data, adjustments to the program can be made to increase the success of the student. As the end of the program approaches, family will be included in job fairs and other activities leading to the placement of the student into the workforce.

Collaboration.

The program is collaborating with a wide range of partners. Camden County currently is running a pilot program with Y.A.L.E. schools target the intellectually disabled on the autistic spectrum. These students are on campus, and are enrolled in college credit courses which could lead to a degree. The program also has a vocation portion where the student are working in different areas on campus ranging from buildings and grounds to the Chemistry Lab. Of 9 students in the program during the 2009-2010 academic year, 3 found gainful employment in job settings in the community. The faculty member from YALE is now participating in the colleges Student Services area to help non-disable students as well. Other partnerships include HireAbility, housed on the main campus of Camden County College, who find employment for disabled students. The Center for Neurological and Neurodevelopmental Health is also a partner. They have committed their resources to evaluate students for learning disabilities as well as to provide experts for professional development and training, including our peer mentors and tutors.

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Competitive Priority 1: Sustained and Meaningful Partnership

Camden County College and Bergen Community College have had long-standing relationships with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) such as Y.A.L.E., Mosaic, and HireAbility. For example, HireAbility, a nonprofit organization that matches qualified people with disabilities to job openings at no cost to employers or applicants has been housed on the Camden County College main campus for over 10 years. The formal Memorandum of Understanding between the Y.A.L.E. schools and Camden County College created the Transitional Education Center which has doubled in the number of students served and continues to grow. Mosaic, a grant funded program, facilitates placement, retention, and advancement in family sustaining careers for individuals with disabilities. Bergen and Camden also have strong relationships with the local Workforce Investment Boards, (WIB) which focus a range of employment services. All will be leveraged in this grant.

Competitive Priority 2: Involve Students Attending the Institution of Higher Education

Camden County and Bergen Community College students participate in this program. They will be recruited from the Honors program, the Human Services and Education area all of which require some type of Service Learning, as well as the current pool of peer tutors. As tutors, these students will attend classes with the student, help with note taking, help organize information and reinforce the lesson. As peer mentors will support the student outside the classroom acting as a conduit to the social aspects and functional tasks of the college. They will also function in the assessment of the processes giving both objective feed back on participation (number of events, extent of engagement) as well as qualitative data (student satisfaction, etc.)

Invitational Priority: Expanding an Existing Program

Both Bergen Community College and Camden County college have worked extensively with the intellectually disabled population. The TREC (transitional education program) run in conjunction with the LEA, YALE Schools has already been successfully piloted and is doubling its capacity in the 2010-2011 academic year. Funds from this grant would be used to expand the program to other LEAs, as well as to offer the program to non IDEA students, already in the adult population and most likely, already on campus. Specifically the funds will expand training and professional development and also pay for additional course development. Bergen has implemented an Autism Initiative program and served as a site for the state sites for a listening session to develop strategies to serve this population. The current proposal will allow Bergen Community College to expand such initiatives to students with other types of intellectual disabilities