**Post Secondary Education Opportunities in North Carolina for Students with Intellectual/Developmental disabilities**

  

More and more high school students with intellectual/developmental disabilities are planning to continue their education in postsecondary schools, defined as education after the high school level. Options include vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges and universities, as well as other forms of adult education. Intellectual disability refers to “students with significant learning, cognitive, and other conditions, whose disability impacts their ability to access course content without a strong system of educational supports and services. These are not students who would access the postsecondary education system in a typical manner; rather, they require significant planning and collaboration to provide them with access. This population typically (though not always) includes students who (a) take the alternative state assessment; (b) exit secondary education with an alternative diploma, such as IEP diploma or a certificate of attendance, instead of a typical high school diploma; and (c) qualify to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) until they are 21” (Hart, 2006).

Post secondary options are growing by leaps and bounds both nationally and in North Carolina. This growth in interest and programming has led to the creation of the North Carolina Post Secondary Education Alliance at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities. The PSE Alliance is a diverse group consisting of emerging leaders with developmental disabilities, representatives of state agencies and organizations, legislators, educators, and families and other advocates, whose mission is to expand options for postsecondary education for individuals with developmental disabilities throughout NC. Listed below are options available at community colleges and universities in NC as of 4.28.11.



**ALAMANCE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Contact: Monica Isbell, Coordinator of Special Needs & Counseling Services

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Career College  
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Program Description: Career College is a 16 week post secondary certificate program for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This entry-level program provides a foundation for transitioning into a career or additional coursework. The students further develop reading, math and computer skills along with participation in a hands-on practicum experience within a specific program of study. Students at least 18 years old, who have been referred by high school OCS teachers, transition coordinators, OE Enterprises, or Vocational Rehabilitation, can attend. Career College currently offers two programs: automotive assistant and health and public services assistant.

**CENTRAL PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Program Description: CPCC'S Compensatory Education/Project Search program has been developed for students interested in transitioning from college to work. In 2008, CPCC's Compensatory Education Program initiated Community Transitions as a two year program of study. The program is designed to culminate in the awarding of a certificate that enables students to enter employment and access community resources that facilitate independent living. Services provided through Community Transitions prepare students for setting life goals, obtaining and maintaining appropriate employment, and acquiring independent living skills. To meet the need for specific employment training, CPCC has partnered with Project SEARCH - a program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities that focuses on training employability skills through internships with local businesses.

In Charlotte, Project SEARCH is operated by the In Reach Program at Mecklenburg County's Community Rehabilitation Program and is licensed by the Project SEARCH founders. In 2010, the Central Piedmont's Compensatory Education program became the education partner for the first replication of Project SEARCH\* in North Carolina. Project SEARCH is fidelity based internship training program that was developed by Erin Riehle and Susie Rutkowski at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and is now in over 150 sites nationally and internationally. Project SEARCH is a nationally recognized, award winning internship training program for students with intellectual disabilities. After completion of these internships, students will continue to work with a Job Coach for job placement in their targeted area of interest.

**RANDOLPH COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Career College

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Program Description: Career College is a 16 week post-secondary certificate program for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This entry-level program provides a foundation for transitioning into a career or additional coursework. The students further develop reading, math and computer skills along with participation in a hands-on practicum experience within their program of study. Classes are offered on campus Monday-Thursday. Students participate in all campus activities including fall and spring fests and various holiday projects. Currently at RCC, there are two programs of study for Career College:

Hospitality & Tourism: Instruction will focus on hospitality standards, customer services, restaurant, housekeeping,  hotel/motel front desk, and tourism. Graduates of this training pathway may be employed in hotels/motels, restaurants and other tourism locations. Students may be able to earn their Career  Readiness Certificate, ManageFirst Certificate and ServSafe Certificate.

Automotive Assistant: Instruction will provide entry level training for general car maintenance, oil change, tire rotation and balancing, automotive detailing, brake repair, OSHA regulations, exhaust systems, proper care of the starting and charging system, part identification, identification and maintenance of tools, fluids recognition and customer service skills.  Graduates of this training pathway may be employed in dealerships, garages and repair shops in the automotive service industry.

Students must apply for Career College and complete an application package. All applications go through an application review process. Students are notified of acceptance or denial by phone and letter.

**CAROLINA INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

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Program Description: The LEND Self-Advocate Leadership Training at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities offers a pilot program for a student with an intellectual or developmental disability to participate in graduate-level training in the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program as a self-advocacy trainee. The emphasis of the LEND experience is on improving health care for children with developmental disabilities and their families. The selected individual will engage in learning experiences with a cohort of interdisciplinary trainees including graduate students, faculty, community members, and parents of children with developmental disabilities to build skills and knowledge that prepares them to work in this area. These learning experiences include a weekly course about developmental disabilities (2 hour credit or audit), a leadership skill building program, and participation in faculty-led projects.

The UNC LEND program provides individualized accommodations for academic

activities and supports the self-advocacy trainee with an educational coach. In

addition, each LEND trainee works with a faculty mentor to develop personal

and professional skills. The training program fosters growth in critical thinking,

communication, leadership, professionalism, evidence based practice, advocacy,

policy, and research.

Interested applicants are encouraged to email for additional information or to

receive an application packet.

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO**

Contact: Joan Johnson, Executive Director

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Beyond AcademicsTM

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Program Description: The post secondary education option at UNCG **is a four-year, post-secondary certification in *Integrative Community Studies,*  for individuals with intellectual disabilities age 18 and up, offered through the Office of Undergraduate Studies. The course of study prepares enrolled students for a self-determined lifestyle after college emphasizing careers, meaningful avocations, and community living. Students in the certificate track attend classes on campus. A portion of the classes are dedicated to the students in the certificate program and others are fully inclusive education experiences with matriculating students, including opportunities to audit degree track classes. Students are eligible to receive individual supports while residing in university student housing, according to their academic and community living aspirations.**

**WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY**

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Program Description: The University Participant (UP) Program at WCU is designed to provide a two-year, on-campus living and learning experience for persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities between the ages of 18 and 25. The goal of the program is to facilitate the transition of participants from secondary school to adult life. During the two year period, participants are expected to complete requirements for receiving a UP Certificate of Accomplishment based on successful completion of an Individual Plan for College Participation. Many of the activities and goals for this certificate involve participation in various activities (i.e. , social, academic, vocational, personal, community) that are individually designed to address specific interests and future goals related to education, independent living, and employment for each participant.