



NAVIGATING THE COLLEGE SEARCH FOR STUDENTS WHO LEARN DIFFERENTLY

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College & Career **Pathways** 2025

Agenda

- Definition of terms
- What We Can Learn from the Data
- Level of Support in College
- Finding the Right Fit
- All about Disclosing – Why and When
- Landmark College – Unique Support and Programming

Key Terms

Neurodiversity is ALL of us

- All brains function differently
- This diversity is natural and beneficial for all species

Neurotypical

- what society considers “typical” brain development and cognitive/intellectual functioning

Neurodivergent

- What society considers “atypical” brain development and cognitive/intellectual functioning, e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, autism, ADHD, etc.

Recognize and acknowledge your strengths

Providing Context, The Numbers

Did you know?

- 1 in 5 students have a learning difference

How many students are disclosing this to their post-secondary institutions?

- **Students with:**
 - Learning disability – 24%
 - “Other health impairments” (includes ADHD) – 25%
 - Autism – 63%

The Impact

Post-Secondary Completion Data

(young adults out of high school for 6 years)

- **In the general population:**
 - 51% completed a post-secondary school
- **Among neurodivergent students:**
 - 38% of students with learning disabilities
 - 35% of students with autism
 - 34% of students with other health impairments (includes ADHD)

Levels of Support in College

ADA COMPLIANT

- Meets ADA requirements for providing access
- Accommodations vary by institution
- No cost
- Small number of staff
- Student MUST advocate for services

COORDINATED SERVICES

- Accommodations **plus** some skill building services
- Universally available services
- Better student/staff ratio
- No cost
- Student MUST advocate for services

STRUCTURED PROGRAMS

- Comprehensive academic, tutoring, & skill-building support
- Weekly meeting with a learning specialist
- Full-time specialized staff
- Fee-based
- Less student advocacy required

LD COLLEGES

- Accommodations & beyond access supports embedded
- Comprehensive academic, social pragmatic, & executive function support
- Full time support staff
- No additional fees
- Often used as a springboard.

Finding the Right Fit

Importance of Self-Knowledge

Ask Yourself:

- Who am I and what am I looking for in a college experience?
- What type of learner am I?
- In what environment do I learn best?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What accommodations and supports will set me up for success?

The Process

What do you need?

- What supports are in your IEP or 504 plan?
- Have you consulted with your counselor, teachers and family for input?
- Develop a list of accommodations and supports you're looking for?

What does a school offer?

- start a list of schools
- Explore college websites: disability services & universally available services
- K&W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Differences
- Reach out to Admissions or Disability Services
- Location of Disability Services
- Connect with current students and parents at the college

Disclosing

Why don't student disclose?

Fear

Desire

Denial

Unfamiliarity

Invisibility

Underestimating

Disclosing: When & Why

Why Disclose?

- Only way to receive accommodations

When?

- Before semester begins
- Two Options:
 - During application process
 - After admission decision

Highly Recommend to Disclose Early

Accommodations: An Ongoing Process

- Request each semester
- Discuss effectiveness
- Be vigilant
- Self-advocate!

Beyond Academic Support

Student Life &
Campus
Connectedness

Availability of
Social Pragmatic
Support

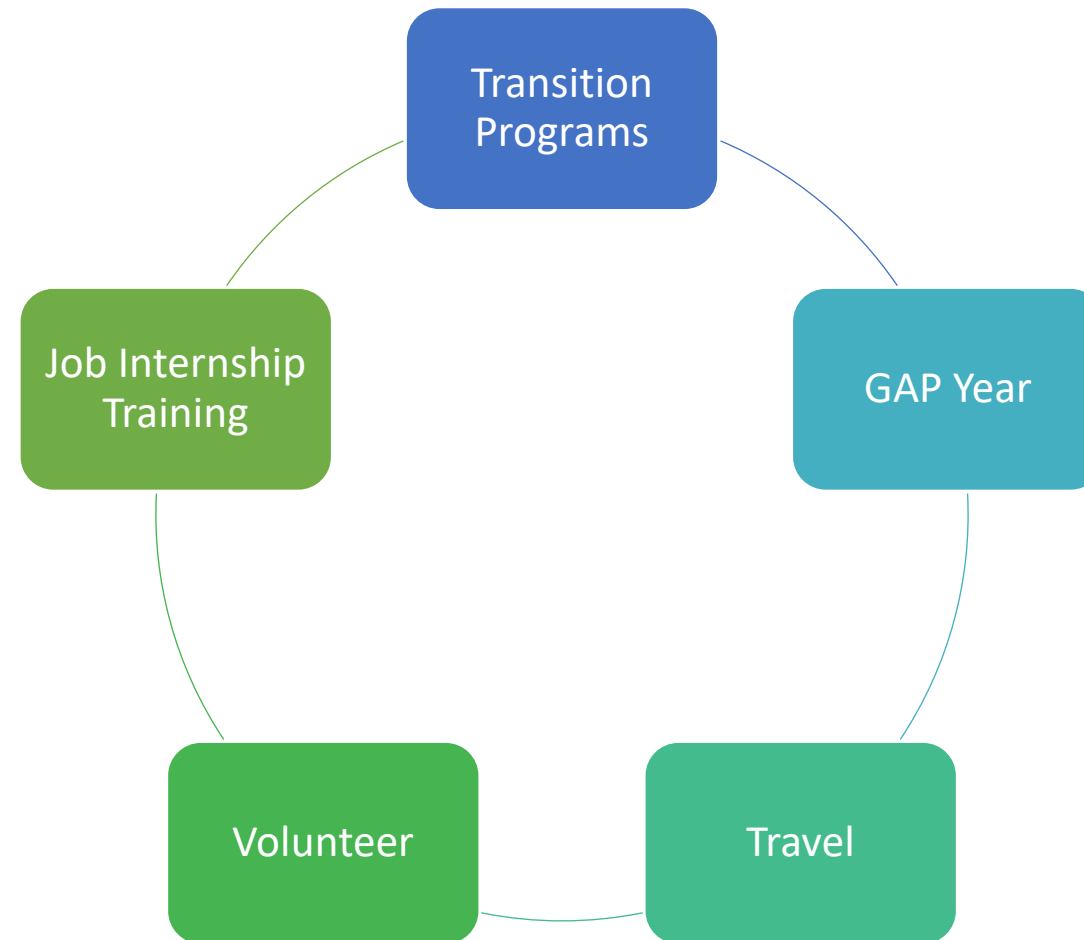
Mental Health
Services

Career Readiness
Support

Ask lots of questions

- Is assistance 1:1 or in a group?
- Who does the academic advising for students who have LD's?
- Can students take a reduce course load?
- Is the college test-optional?
- What are the college's retention, graduation, & placement rates for students with LD's?

Is College the Right Next Step?



Landmark College

Devoted Exclusively to Students Who Learn Differently



Landmark Fast Facts

Putney, VT
125 acres

450 students
38 States, 10 Countries

7:1 Student/Faculty
ratio
8-12 average class

11 Associates &
Bachelor's Degree
Programs +
Concentrations

87% bachelor's degree
students are employed
or in graduate school



Landmark Support

- ✓ Wraparound, fully integrated support services
- ✓ No Additional fees
- ✓ Academic advising – weekly meetings
- ✓ Drake Center for Academic Support / Executive Function coaching available
- ✓ Educational Technology
- ✓ Counseling & health services
- ✓ Residential support system
- ✓ Therapy Dog Program
- ✓ Social Pragmatic Support for Students on the Autism Spectrum
- ✓ Career Connections

Why Landmark?



- ✓ **Multiple Paths:** Online Dual Enrollment, Summer Programs, Bridge Experience, College START & Online Associate Degrees, TaC, Associates and Bachelor's Degree
- ✓ Universal Design for Learning
- ✓ **Perspectives in Learning:** Learn how you learn
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Landmark College Institute for Research and Training
- ✓ Center for Neurodiversity
- ✓ Centers for Diversity & Inclusion
- ✓ **Activities:** Sports, Speakers Series, Clubs, Social Events, Trips off campus
- ✓ Study Abroad led by LC Faculty

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Work Cited

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