



## TN Inclusive Higher Education Alliance

### What should I know about the TN Inclusive Higher Education Alliance?

The Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance raises awareness and provides information about inclusive higher education (IHE) programs in our state for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

These non-degree certificate programs provide students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) employment and independent living skills. Students typically take college courses, have internships and jobs, and participate in social activities with peers on campus. Five of Tennessee's six inclusive higher education programs are designated Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTP) for students with intellectual disabilities. Qualifying students are able to use federal financial aid to help pay for the cost of attendance to a CTP.

The Inclusive Higher Education Alliance includes representatives from state and local agencies, colleges and universities, business owners, family members, and self-advocates.

### Common Terms/Acronyms

**IHE:** Inclusive Higher Education

**I/DD:** Intellectual and developmental disabilities

**CTP:** Comprehensive Transition Programs

**STEP UP:** A Tennessee scholarship providing funding for students who attend an inclusive higher education program at one of the state's five CTPs.

### What should students know about the Inclusive Higher Education Alliance?

- Tennessee currently has six inclusive higher education programs for students with I/DD. These are:
  - Next Steps at Vanderbilt University
  - TigerLIFE at University of Memphis
  - FUTURE Program at University of Tennessee Knoxville
  - IDEAL Program at Lipscomb University
  - EDGE Program at Union University
  - ACCESS ETSU at East Tennessee State University
- If you go to one of these programs, you will take college classes, get an internship or job, learn how to take care of yourself, and become friends with other students.
- The Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance can give you and your family information about these programs.
- You do not need a regular high school diploma or SAT/ACT scores to get into one of these programs. You will need documentation of disability and support needs.



## How can I partner with the Inclusive Higher Education Alliance on Pre-ETS?

- Arrange for a former student of one of the IHE programs to speak about their experience.
- Visit a program and meet with staff and current students.
- Set up a virtual IHE night using a platform like Zoom. Feature representatives from the Alliance sharing information about how to prepare for these programs, including the application process, financial aid, and what students can expect if they attend.
- Have students send an email or call a program director of one of the six inclusive higher education programs to ask at least 3 questions about the program. Some sample questions could include:
  - What does a typical day for students look like in the program?
  - What do students typically do after finishing the program?
  - What types of colleges courses do students take?
  - Are courses offered only to students in the program or can they take courses with other students also?
  - How do students socialize with one another and with other students outside of the program?
- Help students and their families apply to one of the programs.

### Where do I find more information about the Inclusive Higher Education Alliance?

- Visit the [Inclusive Higher Education Alliance \(IHE\) website](#)
- Resource: [Inclusive Higher Education Practices and Perspectives from the Southeast](#)
- Resource: [Questions to Ask College Programs](#)
- Watch the [TN Inclusive Higher Education Programs video](#)

### How do I contact the Inclusive Higher Education Alliance?

For general questions about inclusive higher education:  
<https://tnihealliance.org/about-us/contact-us/>.

For specific questions about one of the five programs:

- Next Steps at Vanderbilt
  - [nextsteps@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:nextsteps@vanderbilt.edu)
  - (615) 343-0822
- TigerLIFE at University of Memphis
  - [mwillia@memphis.edu](mailto:mwillia@memphis.edu) or [clcssell@memphis.edu](mailto:clcssell@memphis.edu)
  - (901) 678-4303
- FUTURE Program at UT Knoxville
  - [eburgin@vols.utk.edu](mailto:eburgin@vols.utk.edu)
  - (336) 253-0167
- IDEAL Program at Lipscomb
  - [Andrea.pewitt@lipscomb.edu](mailto:Andrea.pewitt@lipscomb.edu)
  - (615) 966-5159
- EDGE Program at Union University
  - [jgraves@uu.edu](mailto:jgraves@uu.edu)
  - (731) 661-5382
- ACCESS at East Tennessee State University
  - [chamberc@etsu.edu](mailto:chamberc@etsu.edu)
  - (423) 439-7586