



### Inclusive Higher Education Program Information

On May 12, 2020, Transition Tennessee hosted an Inclusive Higher Education Virtual Transition Fair. Each of the six Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Programs presented about their programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Disability Pathfinder shared information as well about their services. This document summarizes information from each presentation.

#### Next Steps at Vanderbilt University

- Location: Nashville, TN

#### Program Overview

- 4-year program
- Classes include any undergraduate courses of interest to student and specific Next Steps classes such as: Steps to Employment, Living Independently, and Money Management.
- 91% employment rate post-graduation

#### Admissions Criteria

- Be between the ages of 18 and 26
- Have successfully completed high school and received one of the four TN high school diplomas
- Received or was eligible for services under IDEA
- Express a strong personal desire to attend college
- Be excited to become better prepared for the world of work and a future career
- Demonstrate both the need and desire for greater independence
- Can learn to navigate the college campus on their own
- Can communicate reliably with others and exhibit socially responsible behavior on campus
- Have satisfactory record of school attendance from their previous school
- Have an open case with VR
- Attend Next Steps Summer Institute

#### Safety

- Constant communication between students and staff
- Staff lead travel training with students to learn how to get around campus and to their internships.
- Students must always have a plan to get home if staying on campus past 4:00 or 5:00 pm.
- The campus police department holds safety training and provides walking escorts around campus whenever students request.
- All peer mentors have background checks.



### **Eligibility**

- Students must have diagnosis of intellectual disability but can have additional diagnoses

### **Examples of Internships**

- Owen School of Business, Undergraduate Admissions Office, Vanderbilt University Medical Center Human Resources, Governor's Office, and the District Attorney General's Office
- Staff work with students to find internships that meet their interests.

### **Financial Aid**

- 2019-2020 Tuition: \$20,180/year
- Pell Grants and/or supplemental federal student aid
- Vocational Rehabilitation monies for 4 semesters
- Tennessee STEP UP Scholarship
- TN Promise Scholarship
- Tennessee Reconnect Grant

### **Student Experiences**

- There are over 600 campus organizations, and Next Steps students can join any as long as they qualify. The qualifications are the same as they would be for any Vanderbilt student, and Next Steps staff will try to arrange for peer support for initial meetings.
- Vanderbilt has a very strong Best Buddies chapter, and most Next Steps students are involved.
- Students participate in all orientation activities.
- Residential opportunities are in the long-term plan. For now, most students live close to campus with family or roommates.
- Each Next Steps student has a circle of support made up of peer mentors called Ambassadors.

## **The EDGE Program at Union University**

- Location: Jackson, TN

### **Program Overview**

- 2-year program with optional 3rd year
- Residential; students live with 3 roommates and have a private room, kitchen, and bathroom in their residence.

### **Admissions Criteria**

- Be between the ages of 18 and 26 when program begins
- Demonstrate basic literacy in reading and writing
- Have the capacity to handle and adapt to change with supports
- Demonstrate the ability to accept and follow reasonable rules and behave respectfully toward others
- Demonstrate the desire to attend the program and adhere to program policies regarding attendance and participation in coursework and required activities
- Have the potential to successfully achieve his/her goals within the context of the Union EDGE program's content and setting
- Be able to sit through 90-minute courses and function independently for 2-hour blocks of time
- Have an open case with VR
- Attend Union Edge Summer Beginnings Program
- Every applicant is invited to interview



### **Eligibility**

- This program is for students with an intellectual disability and/or developmental disabilities

### **Financial Aid**

- Tuition: \$16,580/year; room and board costs may add an additional \$9,000 per year
- Step UP Scholarship
- Vocational Rehabilitation monies
- WIOA monies
- Pell Grants
- TN Promise
- Private scholarship

### **Student Experiences**

- Since it is a small campus, it is easy to get to know people.
- There are lots of student activities like sporting events.
- EDGE students love their weekly cooking lab!
- There is a student mentoring program.

## **The FUTURE Program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville**

- Location: Knoxville, TN

### **Program Overview**

- 2-3-year program
- Piloting a residential program
- 80% employment rate post-graduation
- Approximately 20 students each year

### **Admissions Criteria**

- Be between the ages of 18 and 29 at the start of the program
- Have proof of eligibility for IDEA or 504 accommodations while in school
- Have a high school diploma in any of the TN diploma pathways
- Have no severe behavior or emotional problems
- Have a basic math understanding
- Have a recommended fourth-grade reading level or higher
- Able to function independently for a sustained period of time
- Ability to change supports and schedules without being overly stressed
- Ability to be successful in competitive employment
- Desire and motivation to complete the program
- Demonstrate ability to communicate with staff, faculty, and mentors
- Actively participate in application and interview

### **Safety**

- Free on campus bus and trolley system can get students from apartments to campus
- T-Access bus can take students around campus
- Local bus has disability pass that is available



### **Eligibility**

- Students must have diagnosis of intellectual or developmental disability

### **Examples of Internships**

- Athletics and sports-related sites, early childhood-related sites, museums, YMCA, and research programs on campus
- Internships are flexible and can change as the student grows and changes.
- Program staff work with students to match up interests and future goals and are open to student and family suggestions

### **Financial Aid**

- Tuition: \$9,300/year
- Federal Financial Aid
- Pell Grants
- Vocational Rehabilitation monies
- Tennessee STEP UP Scholarship
- TN Promise Scholarship
- UT Promise

## **Access ETSU at East Tennessee State University**

- Location: Johnson City, TN

### **Program Overview**

- 2-year program
- Non-residential
- Currently have 1 student in pilot year but hoping to expand for more students, residential opportunities, and permanent staff

### **Admissions Criteria**

- Students must be 18-28 years old.
- Students must have a personal desire to continue their education at the university level.
- Students want to expand their employment prospects.

### **Eligibility**

- Students must have a documented intellectual or developmental disability

### **Examples of Internships**

- ETSU's Basler Center for Physical Activity

### **Student Experiences**

- Student has complete access to campus activities.
- Student has participated in zumba classes, physical education, and all aspects of campus life.

## **The IDEAL Program at Lipscomb University**

- Location: Nashville, TN

### **Program Overview**

- 2-year program with optional 3rd year



- Residential
- 97% employment rate post-graduation
- 10 students currently per cohort

#### **Admissions Criteria**

- Be between the ages of 18 and 26
- Have completed high school
- Not qualify for college as a traditional student
- Cannot apply until 12th grade year

#### **Eligibility**

- Students must have a documented intellectual disability

#### **Examples of Internships**

- Nashville Soccer Club, Special Olympics, and Nashville Zoo

#### **Financial Aid**

- 2020-2021 Tuition: \$16,867/year
- Pell Grants
- STEP UP scholarship
- Vocational Rehabilitation monies
- Private loans
- Tennessee Reconnect Grant

#### **Student Experiences**

- Students report it is easy to get involved on campus since it is a small campus.
- Students report that classes are fun.
- There are about 120-125 mentors within the IDEAL program

### **TigerLIFE at the University of Memphis**

- Location: Memphis, TN

#### **Program Overview**

- 2-year program
- Non-residential

#### **Admissions Criteria**

- Enter the program at 18-26 years of age
- Completed high school under an IEP
- Third-grade reading level (if lower, may be considered for conditional admission)
- Is independent in maintaining personal needs
- Can function independently for at least two hours
- Able to communicate with others
- Willing to follow reasonable rules and instructions
- Have sufficient emotional stability to participate in all aspects of TigerLIFE coursework and campus



- Have transportation to and from the campus
- Have a desire to be gainfully employed
- Ability to walk two to four miles each school day; student must provide any mobility assistance needed

#### **Eligibility**

- Student must have a diagnosis of intellectual or developmental disability

#### **Examples of Internships**

- On-campus and off-campus
- Art museum, Rec Center, food services, retail, churches, and the Ronald McDonald House

#### **Financial Aid**

- \$275/credit hour
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible
- Step-Up Scholarship (must have graduated from a TN high school within the past 16 months)
- FAFSA (Pell Grant based on financial need as determined by FAFSA)

#### **Student Experiences**

- Dedicated TigerLIFE classrooms and Labs
- Community Exploration
- Health Labs

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

- Mission: To build strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education, and support services
- Vision: To revolutionize the customer experience through innovation and a seamless network of services

#### **Disability Pathfinder**

- A free statewide information and referral service for disability services
- Search for disability and community services from more than 3,400 agencies based on keyword service categories and counties
- Find disability-related events posted by service agencies across the state
- Have a multicultural program called Camino Seguro to find bilingual (English/Spanish) service providers
- You can contact staff for assistance via an online request form, phone, or email.



## Contact Information

### Next Steps at Vanderbilt University

- Tammy Day- [tammy.l.day@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:tammy.l.day@vanderbilt.edu)
- Website: <https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/departments/nextsteps/>

### FUTURE – University of Tennessee

- Emma Burgin - [eburgin@vols.utk.edu](mailto:eburgin@vols.utk.edu)
- Website: [futureut.utk.edu/](http://futureut.utk.edu/)

### EDGE – Union University

- Jennifer Graves - [jgraves@uu.edu](mailto:jgraves@uu.edu)
- Website: [uu.edu/EDGE](http://uu.edu/EDGE)

### IDEAL – Lipscomb University

- Andrea Pewitt - [andrea.pewitt@lipscomb.edu](mailto:andrea.pewitt@lipscomb.edu)
- Website: <https://www.lipscomb.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/ideal-program>

### Access ETSU– East Tennessee State University

- Pamela Mims - [mimspj@etsu.edu](mailto:mimspj@etsu.edu)
- Website: <https://www.etsu.edu/coe/access/default.php>

### TigerLIFE – University of Memphis

- Maurice Williams - [mwillia@memphis.edu](mailto:mwillia@memphis.edu)
- Website: [memphis.edu/tigerlife](http://memphis.edu/tigerlife)

### Disability Pathfinder

- Megan Hart - [tnpathfinder@vumc.org](mailto:tnpathfinder@vumc.org)
- Website: [www.disabilitypathfinder.org](http://www.disabilitypathfinder.org)

### Vocational Rehabilitation

- Jennifer Wright- [Jennifer.m.wright@tn.gov](mailto:Jennifer.m.wright@tn.gov)
- Website: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.html>

### Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance

- Website: <https://tnihealliance.org/>

*Last updated May 18, 2020*