



College Application Supports

On October 13, 2020, Transition Tennessee hosted a virtual transition fair on College Application Supports. We heard from representatives from the Accessible Education Center at Tennessee Tech University, the Inclusive Higher Education Alliance, the Admissions Office at Tennessee Tech University, the Access Center at Volunteer State Community College, and the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation. This document summarizes information from each presentation.

The Benefits of Attending College

By attending a higher education institution, students are given the chance for...

- Greater lifetime earnings
- Expanded career options
- Career exploration

Students can also...

- Meet new people
- Pursue interests and hobbies
- Develop social and study skills
- Become more independent

The Differences between High School and College Services

Responsibility Differences

Action	High School	College
Identification	School	Student
Assessment	School	Student
Programming	School + Family	Student and College
Advocacy	School + Family	Student and College
Decision Making	IEP Team	Student
Transition Planning	IEP Team	Student



Differences in Laws

IDEA (High School)	ADA (College)
Free and appropriate mandatory education	Optional education; not free
Entitlement law	Civil Rights law
Remedial learning tools	Aids and accommodations
Outcome-oriented: successful learning	Equal access-not equal outcome

Types of Services Not Offered at College

- Personal attendants
- Personal transportation
- Personal tutoring
- Individually prescribed devices and services (e.g. hearing aids or physical therapy)

Inclusive Higher Education Programs

Inclusive higher education programs are college programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. There are six programs in Tennessee.

Tennessee Programs

- IDEAL Program at Lipscomb University
- Next Steps at Vanderbilt University
- The EDGE Program at Union University
- TigerLIFE at the University of Memphis
- Access ETSU at East Tennessee State University
- The FUTURE Program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Program Components

- Academics
 - Individual programs of study
 - University courses
 - Skills of independence coursework
- Career Development
 - Employment-focused courses
 - Individualized internships
 - 75% of TN graduates are employed.



- University Life
 - Students are fully involved in on-campus activities.
- Independent Living Skills
 - Structure fosters independent skills throughout all courses, goals, and campus life.
- Residential Life
 - There are options to live on and off campus.
 - Housing options vary by campus. The EDGE, IDEAL, and FUTURE Programs currently offer on-campus housing.

College Admissions

Exploring Colleges

- Start looking at colleges by junior year of high school. The earlier you look, the better it will be for planning.
- Visit and research several schools to find your fit.
- Apply to as many schools as you want. You do not want to limit yourself, but you also do not want to overwhelm yourself.

Application Timeline

- Start applying the fall or winter before hoping to start classes.
- Keep track of deadlines to make sure you don't miss any important dates.
- Give yourself at least a month before applications are due to work on them.

Disclosure During the Admissions Process

- Disability disclosure is always up to the individual.
- If you want to disclose your disability in the application process, do it. If not, you can disclose after you are accepted to the school. Remember, you never have to disclose your disability unless you would like to receive accommodations.
- Still apply to the college if your test scores are lower than what the school recommends.
 - Recommendation: Write a letter or reach out to school to explain lower scores.

Disability Services Offices

Transitioning to College

- Plan ahead for college classes
- Work on independence skills
- Establish a strong transition plan

Disability Disclosure

- If you want to use accommodations, you will need to provide the appropriate documentation. Check with the individual school to determine what types of documentation you need.



- Even if you don't think you'll need accommodations, disability services staff encourage you to sign up for them anyways.
 - Setting up accommodations can take some time, so you can sign up for them and not use them. But if you need them, they are already in place. If you wait until you need them, you will not get them immediately.

Applying for Accommodations

- Register with disability services as soon as you are accepted to the college and decide you will attend.
- Provide copies of test reports or other documentation of disability and IEP.
- Follow up immediately if more information is requested.
- Verify registration is complete before semester starts.

Financial Aid

General Financial Aid Information

Types of financial aid

- Grants: Free money based on needs; does not need to be paid back
- Loans: Money borrowed that must be paid back with interest
- Scholarships: Free money awarded on the basis of merit, skill, or unique characteristics
- Work Study: Money received from on-campus employment

TN Promise

- Free college tuition to a Tennessee community or technical college
- TN Promise covers the remaining tuition costs after all other types of aid are determined.
- Requirements:
 - Complete FAFSA
 - Complete 8 hours of community service
 - Attend meetings

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid

- Must submit new application every year
- The application opens in October.
- Use the previous year's tax information to determine eligibility for financial aid.
- To apply, make sure you have...
 - Student's social security number
 - Parent's social security number
 - Student's driver's license number
 - 2019 tax information
 - Records of untaxed income
 - Checking and savings account balances



TN STEP UP Scholarship

- Students with intellectual disability who have completed high school are eligible.
- Recipients must enroll in an individualized program at one of the eligible postsecondary institutions:
 - IDEAL Program at Lipscomb University
 - Next Steps at Vanderbilt University
 - The EDGE Program at Union University
 - TigerLIFE at the University of Memphis
 - The FUTURE Program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville
- Receive up to \$1,750 per semester freshman/sophomore years and up to \$2,250 per semester junior/senior years
- Complete FAFSA and STEP UP Scholarship application

TCAT Grants and Scholarships 2020-2021 School Year

- Pell Grant: \$2,115 per trimester max
- TSAA: \$333 per trimester
- Wilder-Naifeh: \$667 per trimester
- TN Promise: Award amount varies

TN Community College Grants and Scholarships 2020-2021 School Year

- Pell Grant: \$3,172 per semester max
- TSAA: \$650 per semester
- HOPE Scholarship: \$1,500 per semester
- TN Promise: Award amount varies

TN 4-Year Colleges Grants and Scholarships 2020-2021 School Year

- Pell Grant: \$3,172 per semester max
- TSAA: \$1,000+ per semester (up to \$2,000 for private)
- HOPE Scholarship: \$1,750 per semester freshman/sophomore years and \$2,250 per semester junior/senior years

Out-of-State Grants 2020-2021 School Year

- Pell Grant: \$3,172 per semester max

Loans 2020-2021 School Year

- Subsidized Stafford Loan
 - 2.75% interest fixed; interest does not accrue initially
- Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
 - 2.75% interest fixed; interest does accrue
- Parent PLUS Loan
 - 5.30% interest fixed; interest does accrue



Skills to Prepare for College Readiness

- Learn time management skills
- Develop social skills and relationship building
- Understand how to use a computer: write/send emails and use search engines
- Learn effective phone skills
- Follow directions
- Take college prep classes
- Take the ACT early to allow time for retaking
- Learn and practice self-advocacy skills
- Learn and practice coping strategies that work well for you

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