

Post-secondary Education Program for Emilie Kraemer
Transition and Assessment
Lehigh University

Purpose

The purpose of this proposal is to present an alternative educational model for Emilie Kraemer. The proposed model, offered by Transition and Assessment of Lehigh University is an *inclusive, individualized post-secondary educational program on a college campus and in the local community*.

Lehigh University's Transition and Assessment Program

Lehigh's Transition and Assessment program has provided individualized community-based and job-training instruction along with post-secondary experiences for students with intellectual disabilities for over 10 years through contracts with county organizations and local area school districts. Transition and Assessment offers an *inclusive, individualized post-secondary education program* in which a college campus will serve as the home base for instruction. In this individualized model, the student's vision for post-school life and individualized career and educational goals drive the services and direct the course of study which may include; social inclusion with same age-peers in college activities, clubs, and organizations; career exploration and employment training on or off campus; recreational supports and instruction, and community-based instruction. Following an individualized model, all planning is made in collaboration with the student, student's family, the school district, and other relevant adult serving agencies.

Specifically, Transition and Assessment can offer any or all of the following services:

- Comprehensive, person-centered transition assessment and planning
- Inclusion support for access to college resources such as the library, fitness center, computer lab, student union
- Support for social involvement in college activities, clubs and organizations
- Career exploration and job sampling on or off campus
- Job training and work based learning experiences (on or off campus)
- Competitive employment, along with job coaching
- Community-based instruction in the context of daily living activities on or off campus
- Social facilitation among students without disabilities (e.g., hanging out between classes, going to lunch, friendship development)
- Direct instruction in critical related skill areas (communication, self-determination)
- Coordination and planning with university representatives and officials
- Transition coordination with adult service agencies (e.g., OVR, MH/MR, adult service providers).

Benefits of an Individualized Post-secondary Program

An individualized post-secondary program offers numerous benefits that can enhance post-school outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities. The services indicated above are considered “best practices” and according to numerous research studies can improve outcomes related to social inclusion, employability, and general competence and independence. Many of these benefits cannot be accomplished through traditional transition programs. These benefits include:

- Inclusive age-appropriate experiences with same age peers, that can lead to not only enhanced inclusion and long-term friendships, but the development of self-confidence and skills needed to participate in a heterogeneous society.
- Work-based learning experiences, a key factor that leads to successful adult employment.
- Community-based instruction and related skills instruction that is conducted during naturally occurring, and not artificially constructed, contexts. The more natural the instruction, the more likely the skills will generalize to other similar situations and the more likely the student will be motivated to learn new skills. Student motivation is enhanced when learning goals and learning contexts are driven by student interests and preferences (i.e., goals for post-school life).
- Post-secondary education that will enhance overall education, foster career exploration and improve employment outcomes.
- Opportunities to develop skills in self-determination and self-advocacy; critical skills needed for life long learning and employment success
- Seamless transition to adult service agencies, through collaboration and partnerships in the transition planning process.

Planning for Emilie

Planning for Emilie’s post-secondary education experiences will begin by articulating a vision for her post-school life, identifying her preferences and goals, and by collaborating with Emilie, Emilie’s family, Northampton County representatives, and other relevant parties. Tentatively, Emilie’s plan for her post-secondary experiences include career exploration and job training, involvement in college life, and developing critical related skills identified in her ISP. More specifically, some tentative goals that would be addressed through Transition and Assessment Services would include:

- To facilitate and develop long-term relationships with same age peers
- To enroll and otherwise participate in college social activities
- To sample and explore various job opportunities
- To develop specific job skills through work-based learning experiences
- To obtain a competitive job that will help her build an employment career
- To improve specific skills needed for community participation and access including transportation and purchasing skills

- To develop skills in self-determination including self-management, self-scheduling, problem-solving and self-advocacy.
- To continue to develop social and communication skills for work, education, and social experiences
- To develop and pursue long-term recreational interests.

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