

Beyond Graduation: Preparing Students with Disabilities for Postsecondary Success



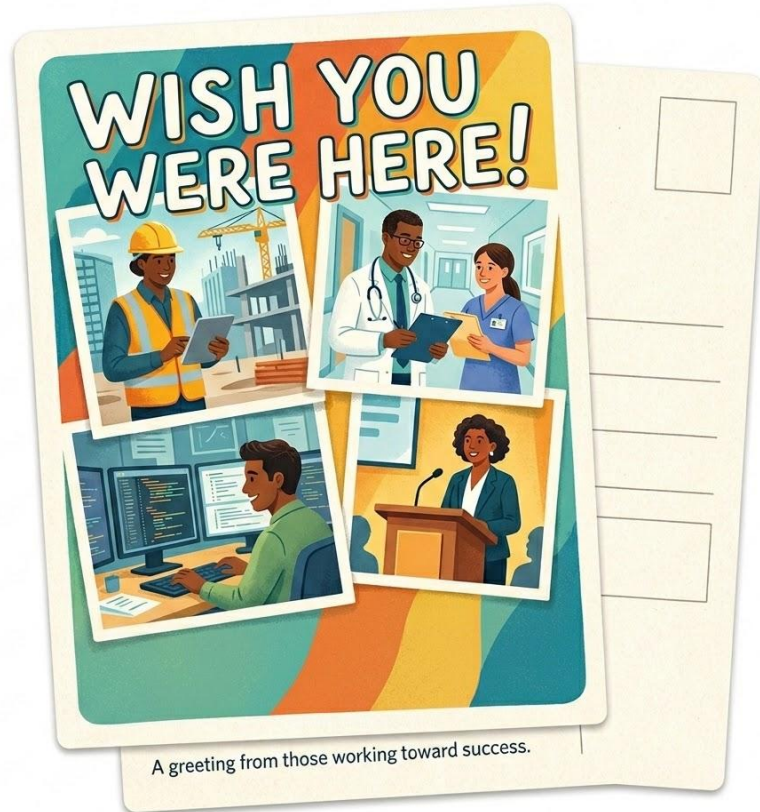
Bonnie Boaz & Jeremy Hogue
Arkansas Transition Services

Goals for today:

- Provide strategies for intentional planning and strong partnerships.
- Share information about College Bound Arkansas, an Arkansas Transition Services summer camp experience.
- Share information about Film Camp.
- Provide practical ideas to better align transition services with postsecondary expectations and improve student outcomes beyond graduation.



Postcard from the Future



- Where am I now?
- What am I doing?
- What helped me get here?
- Which educator made a difference, and how?

For example:

Dear Ms. Johnson,

I'm finishing my second year in the welding apprenticeship program and just bought my first truck. What helped me most was when you showed me that college wasn't the only path to success and helped me explore careers that matched my interests. Thank you for believing in me.

—Marcus

Post Secondary Education Options for Success

- Post- Secondary Education
 - Traditional college or university
 - Military
 - Comprehensive Transition Program
 - UAPTC - 3D Program at the Culinary and Hospitality Institute
 - Technical or Certificate Program
 - Project Search
 - Supported Employment/Job Coach
 - Apprenticeships
 - On the job training

The Three Es

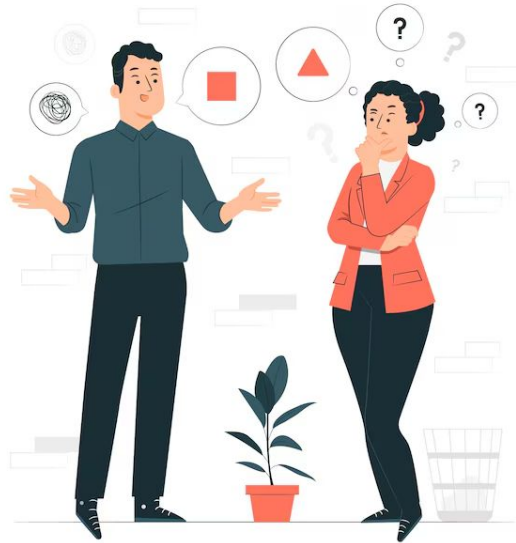
Who can tell us what the three Es are?

- Employment
- Enrollment
- Enlistment

Making Connections

- Traditional college or university
 - Enrollment
- Military
 - Enlistment
- Comprehensive Transition Program
 - Enrollment
- UAPTC - 3D Program at the Culinary and Hospitality Institute
 - Enrollment
- Technical or Certificate Program
 - Enrollment
- Project Search
 - Enrollment/Employment
- Supported Employment/Job Coach
 - Employment
- Apprenticeships
 - Employment
- On the job training
 - Employment

Misperceptions about special education and higher education



What you can expect at the university level:

PROCESS	College
<i>Identification</i>	Students must self-identify*
<i>Documentation</i>	Students must pay for their testing, if needed
<i>Services</i>	Students must seek out services Student allowed only certain accommodations in college classroom and testing Students must seek out tutoring, if needed, and may be charged if the university does not provide tutoring for all students.

What you can expect at the university level:

PROCESS	College
<i>Communication</i>	College not allowed to contact parents without student's permission*
<i>Accommodation arrangements</i>	Student must make requests for accommodations. The student is responsible for much of the accommodation process (Making requests, discussion with professor/instructor) This is a collaborate effort*

What you can expect at the university level:

PROCESS	College
<i>Accommodation Differences</i>	No reduced assignments; no grading changes, no test changes other than <i>accommodation</i> (such as providing extended time or providing a test in large print or Braille)

Skills needed to attend college with success



Study Skills

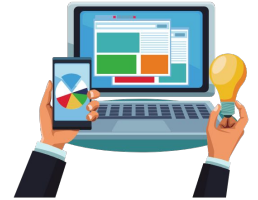


Time Management

Organizational
Skills



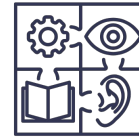
Technology and
Research Skills



Readiness to be
treated as an adult

Needs and Support at the Post-Secondary Level

- How does the disability impact the learning process?
 - What is the barrier?
- How does the disability affect their living space?
 - What is the barrier?
- How will medication or doctor visits be handled?
- Can they speak to how they learn best?
- Do they know/can they speak to strategies used in high school?



Students will have an advantage if they are able to:

- Understand their own situation
- Articulate and anticipate their needs
- Self-Advocate
- Recognize resources
- Believe in themselves
- Understand that every professor is different
- Be patient with the process



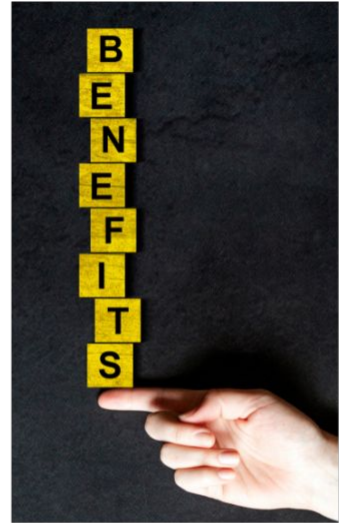
Strategies from Higher Education

- Know that accommodations are not retroactive
- Get informed about college programs at some universities
 - [TRIO](#)
 - [EMPOWER](#) ([click here](#) for other programs)
- Be prepared to tell your “disability story”



Benefits of Meeting with Disability Support Services Early

- Become aware of services offered by Disability Services
- Possibility of arranging services/accommodations early
- Opportunity to find campus services that collaborate together
- Can provide documentation needed
- Opportunity to get acquainted with location of services are on campus
- Empowers students to be part of the transition process
- Allows college to encourage the use of accommodations for ACT, SAT



Tips and Advice

- Know your instructor's name and help them remember your name
- Know your instructor's office hours and office location
- Know the logistics of how your accommodation will be provided ahead of time
- Know drop dates and/or withdrawal dates
- Know what funding you receive (scholarships, third party funding, grants, etc.)
- Walk through your schedule of classes on campus before the first day
- Compare anticipated experiences to the typical experiences of college students - they could be very similar

How can you better support your child or student?



Core Skill Domains for Post-Secondary Success

- Self-Determination/Self-Advocacy
- Executive Functioning Skills
- Academic and Training Readiness
- Independence and Adaptive Skills

Educator Roles in Preparing for Success

Transition activities can focus on each of these domains

List best practices and skills

Self-Determination

Goal Setting

Understanding needs

Understanding supports

Including meaningful activities like these in the transition plan

Self-Determination/Self-Advocacy opportunities

- Assess self-determination skills (use the [Self-Determination Inventory](#))
- Ensure the student is involved in the transition planning process
 - Student-led iep meetings
 - [GSC App/Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction Project](#)
- [Summary of Performance](#)
[SOP Tip Sheet](#)
- Contacting disability supports office in student's senior year
 - Provide opportunity for student to practice talking to professor about needs

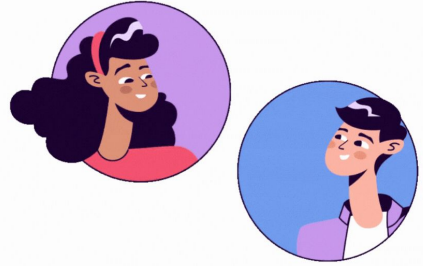
Sample Conversation with a Professor

- **Student (Alex)** – A college student with a disability.
- **Professor (Dr. Smith)** – A supportive college professor.

Setting: Dr. Smith's office during office hours.



A simple conversation...



Alex: *[Knocks on the door] Hi, Dr. Smith. Do you have a moment?*

Dr. Smith: Of course, Alex! Come in. How can I help you?

Alex: *I wanted to talk about accommodations for your class. I have a documented disability, and I receive support through the college's disability services office.*

Dr. Smith: I appreciate you letting me know. What accommodations do you need?

Alex: *According to my accommodation letter, I'm approved for extended test time and access to class notes. Sometimes I also need to record lectures to help with comprehension.*

Dr. Smith: That sounds reasonable. Do you have the official accommodation letter from the disability office?

Alex: *Yes, I have a copy right here. [Hands over the letter]*

Dr. Smith: Great, I'll make a note of this. For extended test time, do you prefer to take exams in the testing center, or would you rather arrange something else?

Alex: *The testing center works best for me.*

Dr. Smith: That's totally fine. And for class notes, do you have a notetaker, or would you like access to my lecture slides?

Alex: *If I could get access to the slides, that would be really helpful.*

Dr. Smith: Absolutely. I'll upload them to our course website after each class. If anything else comes up, feel free to reach out. I want to make sure you have what you need to succeed.

Alex: *Thank you, Dr. Smith. I really appreciate your support.*

Dr. Smith: Of course, Alex. I'm happy to help.



Provide Opportunities with Arkansas Transition Services

- [College Bound Arkansas](#) - @ University of Central Arkansas in June
 - 30 students come together to learn how they can be successful in college
- [Film Camp](#) - every April, at University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College
 - 50 students come together to learn how to make a short film with team mates
- [CTE Summer Exploration Camp](#) - at Career Centers for rising 8th graders (will be in 9th grade in the fall)
- Other agencies camps ([Youth Leadership Forum](#), Transition Employment Program with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services)

Executive Functioning Skills

- Time management
- Organization
- Task completion
- Emotional regulation

EFS Assessment and Tools

[EFS Questionnaire](#) - find out what you can be working on with your students!

Best Practices:

- Use planners (digital/paper)
- Break down long-term assignments
- Teach prioritization routines
- Embed self-monitoring/check-ins

Try out these [EFS tools!](#)

Academic and Training Readiness

[College Readiness assessment](#) - share the results with students so they know and understand what they can work on to better prepare for college.

Strategies:

- Note-taking, studying, test prep
- Using assistive technology

Best Practices:

- Teach multiple ways to access content (UDL)
- Model study strategies
- Introduce college-level expectations (syllabi, pacing)



Independence and Adaptive Skills

Strategies:

- Managing schedules
- Communication with professors(Practice "real-world" scenarios)
- Problem-solving
- Reducing modifications
- Asking about accommodations and what benefits students (SOP, Part 5), student awareness
- Gradual release of responsibility
- Encourage self-management over adult prompts

Commonly requested accommodations

Family and Community Partnerships

Family Tools: find them at this [link!](#)

[Questions for Families to Ask in Transition IEP Meetings](#)

[CIRCLES](#) - all about interagency collaboration for students

[Career Councils](#) - information specific to CC starts at 5:40

Lunch and Learns Arkansas Transition Services presents:



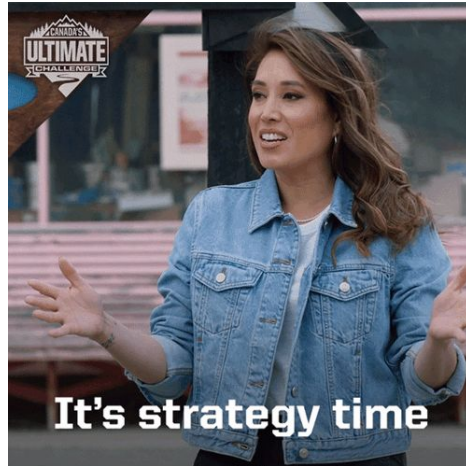
Preparing for College - PART 2

Special guest speakers: Julie Shelby (UA Little Rock), Jennifer Michaud (University of Arkansas), Ashlee Leavell (Arkansas Tech University)

Wrapping Up

What strategy will you apply to be more intentional about giving students the opportunity to learn and to apply their knowledge/skills?

How might you support parents and families to do the same?



Any Questions?

Thank you for attending our session and please check out our website:

www.arkansastransition.com

And don't forget to register for the ATS Summit!

October 28-29, 2026

