What is the UP Program?

- Started as a pilot program in 2007
- Provides a two year, on-campus living and learning experience for individuals with developmental disabilities between the ages of 18 and 25
- Has served two participants since 2007, expanding to 4 participants per year in 2010, maximum of 8 participants attending by fall 2011

What are Developmental Disabilities?

- A person with developmental disabilities is one who has a “severe, chronic disability” that can affect life functioning in areas such as self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.
- Persons with developmental disabilities include those diagnosed as having intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, or autism spectrum disorder.
Rationale for UP Program

- Allows WCU to develop a leadership and model role in a nationally developing trend
- Enhances WCU’s aspiration of creating “responsible citizens in a global community”
- Offers multiple benefits to UP participants, primarily learning to live in a typical community environment with their same-age peers
- Provides practical field experiences to special education majors and other college students

UP Admission Requirements

- Participants are between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of admission
- Previously enrolled in a high school special education program that does not lead to completion of a regular high school diploma and that does not allow students to complete requirements necessary for regular admission to WCU
- Demonstrates adequate communication skills and socially acceptable behavior to interact with others on the WCU campus
- Motivated to learn and benefit from participation in the UP Program

What do UP Participants do at WCU?

- Live on campus and experience college life with same age peers
- Have an individual plan that would allow personal development for post-UP success
- Attend a limited number of classes
- Participate in social events and activities
UP Certificate Requirements

Satisfactory completion of five program components:

• Personal Development
• Community Participation
• Vocational Preparation
• Social Participation
• Academic Improvement

Notable Reactions to the UP Program

• UP Participant was nominated for homecoming court by his peers during fall 2007 semester
• Peers as well as professors have provided natural supports on their own time
• Student volunteers have enrolled in classes for credit in order to support UP Participants
• UP Participants have participated in many groups, activities, and sporting events on campus
• Campus internships based on feedback from employers have been positive
• Current UP mentor position for first graduate and additional community awards

Funding for UP Program

• Students pay normal tuition and fees, scholarships of $6,500 per year and coordination support through Walmart Foundation and the Arc of Haywood County
• Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) for program operations; future plans to apply for Federal Pell Grant and Work Study funds
• Community Alternative Program (CAP) if applicable
• Donations from individuals and community
• Volunteers providing natural supports
Current Community Partnerships

- North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation
- North Carolina Assistive Technology Program
- Haywood County Schools
- Parents
- The Arc of Haywood County
- Easter Seals United Cerebral Palsy
- Pathways for the Future

Current WCU Partnerships

- Residential Living
- Disability Services
- College of Education and Allied Professions
- WCU Foundation (for donations)
- Undergraduate Admissions
- WCU Office of Service Learning
- Educational Outreach (for UP Certificate)
- Department of Human Services
- Various WCU employers (e.g., facilities management, library, daycare)

Organized YET Individualized!
First Hand Experiences

From Aaron B. Hoefs

Questions?

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