The WCU University Participant (UP) Program: A Postsecondary Learning Model for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

Overview of 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 in fall 2011

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
- Have an expressed interest in living and working as independently as possible in their community after completing the UP program and supported by parents and families to do so
Five UP Program Components

- Personal Development Skills (e.g. communication skills, personal care skills, self-determination, etc.)
- Community Participation Skills (e.g. public transportation, budgeting, grocery shopping, etc.)
- Vocational Preparation Skills (e.g. learning specific job skills on or off-campus)
- Social Participation and Learning (e.g. participating in university athletic events, university clubs or organizations)
- Course Auditing (e.g. auditing 3 to 4 courses per semester) Participants must pay current university fees for auditing courses

UP Certificate Requirements

- Completion of 1800 hours of learning activities over a four semester period (450 hrs per semester)
- Achievement of at least 80% of the objectives per semester within each component of the Individual Plan for College Participation (IPCP)
- Recommendation for a UP Certificate of Accomplishment by the UP coordinator and the UP Program Steering Committee

What do UP Participants do?

- Same thing as other college students!
- 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
Class Experiences

- **Aaron:** Foundations Technology; First Aid and Safety; Career Majors and Exploration; Personal Development
- **Anna Grace:** First Aid and Safety; Theatre Education; Intro to Speech Communications; Personal Development
- **Corey:** Natural Resource Conservation; Career Majors and Exploration; Stress Management; Personal Development
- **Elizabeth:** First Aid and Safety; Aquarobics; PE for Elementary Teachers; Recreation Therapy; Personal Development

Vocational Training

Office Assistant in Human Services

Job Sampling

Mailroom  Clothing Store  Recreation Center
Vocational Training

• We expanded the job sampling into internships for the 2010 UP participants.

On Campus Job Internships

• Anna Grace: Hunter Library and Student Mail Center
• Corey: Facilities Management and Grounds
• Aaron: Clerical work for the Department of Human Services
• Elizabeth: The Kneedler Campus Daycare Center

Everyone Learns Independent Living

• Cooking
• Laundry
• Budgeting
• Cleaning
Funding and Scholarships

- Students pay normal tuition and fees
- Scholarships of $6,500 per year and coordination support through Walmart Foundation/Arc of Haywood County
- Community Alternative Program (CAP) if applicable
- Donations from individuals and community
- Volunteers providing natural supports
- Vocational Rehabilitation funding (if eligible)

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
- Disability Partners

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)
Volunteer Supports

• Duties include:
  – Coordinating drop off and pick up with other supports
  – Job coaching
  – Communicate with family members
  – Natural support during campus activities
  – Teaching lessons for personal development course
  – Personal care assistance
  – Cooking and budgeting (independent living skills)
  – Suitemate care

Organized YET Individualized!

Parent Perspective

Charlotte Pritchett