Nuts and Bolts of Coordinating Natural Supports in the University Participant (UP) Program at Western Carolina University

Kelly R. Kelley
Tiffany Love
Chloe Mutz

NC PSE Capacity Building Summit: Leading the Way
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Goals and Objectives

• Share Western Carolina University’s UP Program model

• Describe ways we recruit, train, support and organize, with natural supports

• Encourage learning and professional development through direct contact

• Share first hand perspectives
What is the UP Program?

• The University Participant (UP) Program is a two year, inclusive program for college-aged individuals with intellectual disabilities.

• Operated as a pilot program from 2007 to 2010; 2 participants completed the program by 2010.

• Expanded to 4 participants in 2010, 4 additional in 2011 for a total of 8 participants.

• Funded as a model demonstration site in 2010 by U.S. Department of Education.
Five UP Program Components

Participants must pay current university fees for auditing courses
UP Certificate Requirements

1800 hrs in 4 semesters

80% of objectives in IPCP*

Recommendation based on satisfactory progress

*Individual Plan for College Participation (IPCP)
Systems for Functioning in PSE

- Specific criteria for admission
- Consistent application of values (inclusion & self-determination)
- Inclusive opportunities in all of campus life
- Integration of work-based learning and transition to employment
- Administrative support of program development
- Support from student volunteers
What are Natural Supports?

- Are “resources inherent in community environments that can be used for habilitative and supportive services” (West, Kregel, Hernandez, & Hock 1997)

- “Natural supports refers to reliance on persons within typical environments,” (Westling & Fox, 2009, p. 565).
Natural Support: UP Definition

- Paid and unpaid WCU students of approximately the same age as participants who intervene as necessary to facilitate inclusive participation in dorm-life, course work, and social & recreational activities.
Why have ‘Natural Supports’ for college students with ID?

• Identification as a college student
• Social network expansion / reducing isolation
• Reduce stereotypes
• Step to independence
# How do we Recruit?

## University Resources
- Intro to Special Education, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Recreation Therapy
- Designing instruction course
- Whee Teach and Teaching Fellows
- Psychology service-learning
- Participants’ classes
- Fraternities and Sororities
- Federal work study positions

## Community Resources
- Developmental therapy/NC Innovations funding
- AmeriCorps scholarships
- Internal and external grant funds
## What do Natural Supports Do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Support Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td>• Attending and supporting participants in classes</td>
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<td>• Support/tutoring with projects and homework</td>
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<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td>• Attending sporting events</td>
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<td>• Campus social events (e.g., religious groups, cheerleading, swimming, clubs, movies, plays, ballgames)</td>
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<td><strong>Vocational</strong></td>
<td>• Serving as a job coach</td>
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<td><strong>Personal Development</strong></td>
<td>• Suitemate: morning and night routines</td>
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<td>• Personal care goals</td>
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<td>• Attendance and input at person centered planning meetings</td>
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<td>• Help collecting data on IPCP goals</td>
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Training and Evaluation

• Training
  • *Training sessions*: kick off meetings, assignment modification; homework assistance; professional development workshops; data collection
  • *Other*: volunteer manual, shadowing, instructional approaches/practice lessons, reflective journaling, summative and formative feedback

• Co-evaluation
  • *Criteria*: dependability; engagement/initiative; decision making & professionalism; communication/teamwork; professional development; problem solving
Organization and Logistics

- **Weekly schedules** detail when, where, and what type of activity has been designated.
- **When to work** online scheduling program: shift trade boards, notifications, volunteer availability.
- **Blackboard**: participant goals, schedules, learning profiles and homework assignments; support journaling, newsletters, collaboration of resources.
Organized Yet Individualized

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<th>Wednesday</th>
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<td>1/30/12</td>
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<td>9:30-10:45 am CRIMINAL JUSTICE CLASS IN BARDO</td>
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<td>Hannah Kiziah 828-502-XXXX</td>
<td>ARTS CENTER 130 Hilari Griffin 828-305-XXXX</td>
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<td>Chloe Mutz 919-457-XXXX</td>
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<td>10:00-11:00 am HOMEWORK Natalie Cannon</td>
<td>10:45-11:15 am TRAVEL TO LIBRARY</td>
<td>10:00-11:00 am HOMEWORK Natalie Cannon</td>
<td>10:45-11:15 am TRAVEL TO LIBRARY</td>
<td>11:00am-12:15 pm HOMEWORK Destiny Jordan</td>
<td>10:00 pm – 7:45 am SLEEP Haley Gower</td>
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<td>11:00-11:15 am TRAVEL TO KILLIAN 108</td>
<td>11:15am-1:30 pm WORK IN LIBRARY/CIRCULATION</td>
<td>11:00-11:15 am TRAVEL TO KILLIAN 108</td>
<td>11:15am-1:30 pm WORK IN LIBRARY/CIRCULATION</td>
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<td>12:15-12:30 pm TRAVEL TO LUNCH</td>
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WCU Student Perspectives

Tiffany Love and Chloe Mutz

• What are your roles and responsibilities with UP Program?
• What does the UP Program mean to you? Why do you do it?
• How has the UP Program helped you for your future career?
• Memories or other perspectives you wish to share
Contact Information

- [http://up.wcu.edu](http://up.wcu.edu)
- Kelly R. Kelley - WCU UP Program Coordinator
  - kkelley@email.wcu.edu
  - 828-227-3298
- Tiffany Love - Natural Support, WCU student
  - tmlove2@catamount.wcu.edu
- Chloe Mutz - Natural Support, WCU student
  - clmutz1@catamount.wcu.edu
Additional PSE Resources

- [http://up.wcu.edu](http://up.wcu.edu) - WCU UP Program website
- [www.cidd.unc.edu/psea/](http://www.cidd.unc.edu/psea/) - NC Postsecondary Education Alliance
- [www.transitiontocollege.net](http://www.transitiontocollege.net) - Post-Secondary Education Research Center (PERC). Info on options and trends.
- [www.ThinkCollege.net](http://www.ThinkCollege.net) – Database, TA, newsletters
- [www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org) -- The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center