

Pathways for Life

Fact Sheet

Pathways for Life is a program for post-high school men and women with disabilities developed by the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies as part of its TEEM (Transition, Education and Employment Model) project.

The mission of Pathways for Life is to enhance the quality of life for individuals by providing opportunities for community inclusion, empowerment, self-determination, independence and pursuit of personal, vocational, residential and recreational goals.

Program

Pathways for Life gives young adults opportunities to develop skills needed to increase their independence and capacity to successfully transition into adulthood. Within a person-centered approach, personal goals are identified and an individualized action plan is created based on the four themes of Pathways for Life: community connections, independent living skills, life skills and self-determination.

The young adults, with the support of their families, define personal success. They are responsible for determining their own destiny by exercising the freedom to problem solve, make personal decisions, make mistakes and learn from these experiences. The university campus, community, home environment and neighborhood serve as a training ground for Pathways for Life programs—a classroom without walls.

Research

Educational Research conducted by the Center for Disabilities Studies includes studies about Pathways for Life. Projects may include investigations about the types of supports and services that are needed for people with disabilities to be independent; how people with disabilities define quality of life; and what types of recreation, employment and socialization activities persons with disabilities prefer.

Students

Pathways for Life students are young adult residents of Delaware who are motivated to increase their independence, try new things and become involved in community activities. The student's family and support networks are expected to be actively involved in assisting the student to reach his/her goals. Ongoing training is provided to families and caregivers to support the student as attitudes and abilities change and independence increases. All Pathways for Life students have their own health care coverage and are responsible for any personal assistance needed to participate in the program.

Team

The Pathways for Life team includes a project leader, life coaches, family members, the student's support network, volunteers, and students and faculty from the University of Delaware. Life coaches play a unique role by providing encouragement, instruction, information and guidance to the students. Representatives from other organizations also provide opportunities for inclusion, participation in University and community events, and access to a broad array of services and supports.

For additional information contact:

Debbie Bain
Project Leader
Center for Disabilities Studies
University of Delaware
461 Wyoming Road
Newark, DE 19716
Phone: 302-831-6974
Fax: 302-831-4690
Email: dbain@udel.edu