



Inclusive Postsecondary Education Opportunities for People with Intellectual Disabilities



THE WHO

- My Name is Kason Erwin
- I am 18 Years Old
- I am a Senior at Lago Vista High School
- I am a Licensed Driver and I Have a Part Time Job
- I am a Manager for Viking Football and Boys' Basketball
- I am a Member of PALS and the Point Venture Leo Club
- I was Born with a Genetic Disorder
- I was Diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability



THE WHAT

- I am the Co-Lead and 1 of 4 Youth Ambassadors in Texas for TCDD
- We Participate in Weekly and Monthly Trainings about Self Determination, Mentorship, Alternatives to Guardianship, and Other Topics
- I Help Engage Other Ambassadors
- We are Required to Complete a Project



THE WHY

I am Presenting To My Peers, Teachers, Organizations, and Community Members to:

- **Increase Knowledge**
- **Build Awareness**
- **Expand Access**
- **Educate and Share Information**

Students with Disabilities Can Go to College!

Check Out These Numbers

315

Programs Across 49 States

8,000

**Students are Attending College or
University Each Year**

22,899

**Inclusive Courses Taken
Between 2010 and 2020**

59%

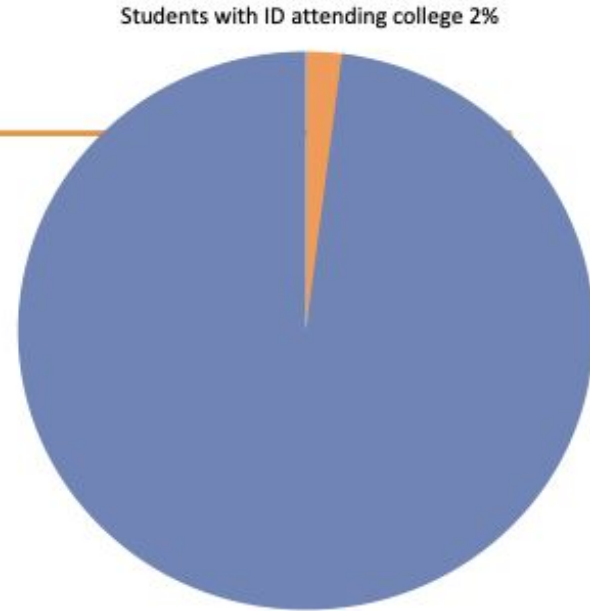
**Find Competitive Inclusive Employment
One Year After Leaving College**

<https://thinkhighered.net>

This year...

- There are more than 420,000 school age students with intellectual disability in the United States¹
- Fewer than 2% are likely to attend college after high school

1. National Core Indicators, 2022



Students with ID who do not attend college 98%



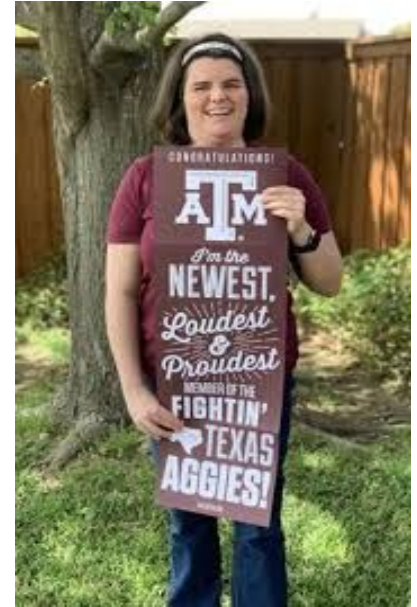
ThinkCollege
INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON

What do you Think About These Numbers?

COMMON ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

This List is from Aggie ACHIEVE which is an inclusive post secondary program. Most programs have similar requirements.

- **Must Complete High School**
- **Must Be 18-27 Years Old**
- **MUST SERVE AS OWN LEGAL GUARDIAN**
- **Must Be Diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability or Autism**
- **Must Have Received Special Ed Services in High School with an IEP**
- **Must Be Able to Live Independently and Take Care of Daily Needs**



MORE COMMON ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Must Have a 3rd Grade Reading Level**
- **Must Have Basic Math Skills**
- **Must Be Motivated to Complete Program**
- **Must Want to Get a Job After Program**
- **Must Be Able to Adapt to Change**
- **Must Be Able to Navigate Campus Safely**

***Some Programs Allow Supported Decision Making Agreements on an Individualized Basis**



College Options for Students with Intellectual Disability, October 2023

Total Number of Programs: 328



Think College

www.thinkcollege.net

Last Updated: 10/2/23

Check out the Different Options for Inclusive Post Secondary Education in Texas:

- 3 - four year with housing programs
- 2 - four year with no housing program
- 1 - three year with housing program
- 7 - two year with no housing programs
- 2 - 18 months with no housing program
- 1 - Semester to Semester Classes

*Only Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Programs are able to provide federal student aid.



**Raise Your Hand if You Have Heard of These
Types of Inclusive Postsecondary Programs?**

Would Anyone Like to Share What You Know?



Going Back to Guardianship Since it is an Eligibility Requirement for Some Programs.

Guardianship is a legal process where someone makes big and small decisions for another person and has the final say in that person's life.

Some examples include legal, financial and health care decisions.



Why Being Your Own Legal Guardian is VERY Important

- Being seen as a decision-maker in your life is important to who you are
- When others make decisions for you, it may not be what you want
- People may doubt and underestimate you and your decision-making, but you have the right and the ability to make decisions about your own life
- It is ok to get help and advice making decisions

Alternatives to Guardianships

- Supported Decision-Making (SDM)
- Medical Power of Attorney
- Durable Power of Attorney
- Representative Payee
- Establishing a Joint Bank Account
- Management Trust
- Special Needs Trust
- Advanced Medical Directives
- Medicaid Services
- Money Management Programs

Have You Heard of Any of these Alternatives?


“Alternatives to guardianship empower youth, respect their rights, and encourage their independence, creating responsible and capable citizens.” Kason Erwin

Is Supported Decision-Making Right for You?

Let's Learn More About Supported Decision-Making

Alternatives to Guardianship
Including Supported Decision-Making





Supported Decision-Making is all about receiving the right support at the right time to live as independently as possible. SDM helps you:

- 1. Communicate Your Wants and Needs**
 - 2. Make Decisions For Yourself**
 - 3. Learn From Your Mistakes**
- 

**I Plan on Being My Own Guardian but will Still Rely
on my Family to Help Make Some Decisions.**



Post Secondary Programs

To Create an Inclusive Education and Support Independence and Personal and Professional Growth, Students Have Access To:

Academic Classes

Internships

Social Clubs

Greek Life

Athletics

Campus Rec

Residence and Dining Halls

Campus Offices

Employment Opportunities





Students Take Classes For:
Audit or Credit

After the Program is Complete Students:
Graduate From Their Program
Earn a Certificate
Live and/or Work in the Community



Students Get Help From:
Program Staff
Peer Mentors
Employer/Internship Mentors
Residence Assistants
Counselors
University Disability Services





Think Higher. Think College.

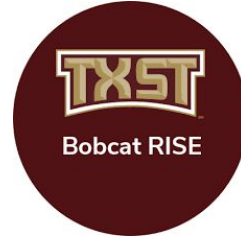
Let's Watch a Video About These Programs





When I go to college, I plan on studying Sports Management. I will be working with the the football team as a student manager and I will work in the equipment room.

4 Year On Campus Programs in Texas I Have Visited



Other Programs I Have Visited



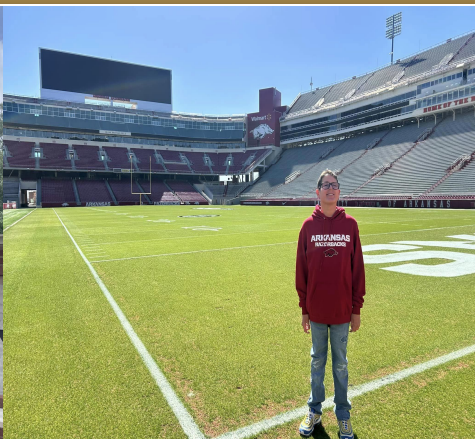


Pictures from Some of My College Visits





Pictures From My Top Four College Choices





By visiting the campuses and attending program summer camps, I was able to meet with the program staff and I learned more about what going to college would be like. I got to see classrooms, dorms, and dining halls. It helped me decide which programs would be a good fit for me and which colleges I wanted to apply to.

Life Update

I am excited and proud to share with you that I have accepted an early admission offer to the EMPOWER program at the University of Arkansas for Fall 2025.

2014



Woo Pig!
Go Razorbacks!

2024



**4 Year On Campus Programs Range from
\$30,000 - \$60,000 per year**

Private Pay is Most Common But Very Difficult for Families



Financial Aid Available:

Pell Grants

Program Grants

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

Local Scholarships

Work Study



What Can You Do?

Spread the Word

Support and Donate to Inclusive Postsecondary Programs

Develop Scholarships Specific to Inclusive Postsecondary Programs

Offer Scholarships to All Types of Students

Become a Mentor or Supporter for Decision Making



**Do You Have Any
Questions?**

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR TIME!**