

# **L & C now offers workplace readiness program for people with disabilities**

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**GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College** has become one of approximately 50 other colleges and organizations nationally to offer a **Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program**, which results in a **Certificate of Achievement in Workplace Readiness**.

The program is aimed at students with intellectual disabilities who wish to seek employment. An ongoing partnership between the college and Challenge Unlimited opens the possibilities for internships, work-based training and job placement for students in the program.

“Lewis and Clark Community College has long been recognized as a state and national leader in providing appropriate and compassionate disability support services and programs to students with disabilities,” said **Director of Student Development and Counseling Kathy Haberer**.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 contains a number of important provisions that improve access to postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. L&C’s new Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program was developed using the guidelines of this law and was recently approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Students in the program are now eligible for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and Federal Work-Study programs and follow the same guidelines for satisfactory academic progress. They must meet the basic federal student aid eligibility requirements.

However, students in the program are not required to have a high school diploma or GED and are not required to be pursuing a degree or certificate of proficiency. The Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program culminates with a Certificate of Achievement in Workplace Readiness, which requires 60 credit hours.

L&C’s internships and work-based training opportunities are provided through a partnership with Challenge Unlimited, an organization committed to serving individuals with disabilities. Challenge Unlimited signed a Memorandum of Understanding with L&C and helps with job placement once a student completes the program.

With the addition of the Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program, Certificate of Achievement in Workplace Readiness, L&C offers a full array of services for students with intellectual disabilities. So that it can help students with a variety of needs, L&C’s has three programs for students with disabilities: College for Life, Supported College Transition and Special Learning Needs. These programs are all managed through the Student Development and Counseling division.

The College for Life program includes students who have had few inclusive experiences in high school and want to continue their education and expand their social growth opportunities with peers on a college campus. All College for Life students are required to take a minimum of three classes, which include Self-Advocacy and two others of their choice. These classes are continuing education, non-credit courses which are not eligible for financial aid or support from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and follow the same payment policies as all other continuing education courses.

“When the time came for our daughter to age out of high school, we were unsure of her future,” said Nancy Alexander. “Her high school teacher invited us to come to Lewis and Clark to tour the College for Life program. My husband and I immediately knew that this program was exactly what we had hoped to find for our daughter. She has made many new friends during the three years she has been here. She is now part of the community and looks forward to her classes. The students are vibrant and include her in their conversations.”

The Supported College Transition program includes students who have some mainstreaming experience in high school and have test scores that indicate they can be successful in smaller sections of college courses, developmental and/or college level, with the additional support provided by a college transition class and Study Skills class. All of these courses are college credit courses, which are eligible for federal and state financial aid.

The Special Learning Needs program includes students who have been mainstreamed in regular education classes during high school, especially in English and Math, and may continue to need additional support in order to be successful in college courses. These students are responsible for disclosing a disability and requesting the need for accommodations.

To learn more about L&C’s disability services, visit [www.lc.edu/disability](http://www.lc.edu/disability).