Since 2000, the HEATH Resource Center has served as a national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities, managed by The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development. Now, The HSC Foundation has partnered with the George Washington University to expand the content of this resource and to designate it as the official site of The HSC Foundation’s National Youth Transitions Center. [http://thenytc.org/](http://thenytc.org/)

**Tips to Help College Students Get the Semester Off to a Good Start**

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*Learning Specialist, Columbia University*

- Create a master weekly schedule that accounts for the study time you need. Download a tool at http://www.ldadvisory.com/time_management_tool/ to help you do this and to get hints on how to make the schedule work. Use this as a template, adding appointments and commitments as they arise each week.

- Get organized now! Set up your binder/notebook with sections for each class’s handouts, notes, and completed assignments. Do the same with your computer – create a folder for each class you’re taking and put subfolders in it for notes and assignments. I suggest using a binder like The Open Tab from Caseit.com.

- Get a bag big enough to carry everything you need when you leave for the day. Try to find one with several sections to help you organize materials and items.

- Decide which email address (personal or school) you will use for the semester. Go into any other accounts you have and set them to auto-forward messages to the primary account you have selected.

- Print (timeanddate.com/calendar) or buy a calendar that shows you a month at a time. It should have blocks you can write in. Post it over your workspace with all months of the semester showing in sequence. Cross off each day that passes so you have a visual of how much time is left before upcoming deadlines (electronic calendars are not effective for this use).
• Enter exam dates and long-term assignment deadlines on your paper (and –if you’re using one – electronic) calendar as soon as you get your syllabi. Then enter interim deadlines for the assignments (download a tool for this at http://www.ldadvisory.com/long_term_planning_tool/)

• Schedule some appointments at the tutoring center now if you are taking a course that you think will be difficult. You can always cancel them if you don’t need them. By doing this, you improve the chance you’ll be able to get an appointment when you need it.

• Buy the books/download the readings now for the classes you know you won’t drop. As soon as the first readings are assigned, do them (before class) so you start off the semester feeling on top of things.

• * If you are a student with a disability, register for accommodations now, even if you don’t think you’ll need them. You don’t have to use them, but at least they’ll be in place if you change your mind later in the semester. If you wait, there’s a chance you’ll miss having your accommodations if your requests can’t be reviewed before your next test.

If you’re reading this after the semester has begun – don’t panic! Clear your upcoming weekend schedule (sacrificing one weekend will be worth it!) and get caught up with these tips and your assignments. This way, you’ll start next week feeling on top of things. Continue reading for more tips!

Additional tips to help college students stay on top of things

**Making good use of your calendar**

• Enter your professors’ office hours into your weekly calendar so that you know when help is available. Do the same for TA hours and review sessions.

• Enter the add-drop deadline at the start of the semester so that you don’t miss this.

• Check your calendar every Sunday to get a sense of what’s coming this week.

• Check your calendar every night so you wake up knowing what you have to do and take what you need with you when you leave for the day.

**Staying on track with studying**

• Plan to meet a friend at the library for your study sessions (you don’t have to study together – just make sure you’ll meet so you actually get there).

• If you can’t get anyone to meet you, text a friend in the morning to say when you will study and ask him/her to check on you later to see if you did it.

• Use a timer to help you stick to your study schedule. Set the timer for half an hour, study, and then set it for a five-minute break. Do this sequence three more times until you have studied that one subject for two hours. If you want to keep studying, take a half-hour break at that point, then when you sit down again set the timer for half an hour again and start studying for a different class.
• If you get behind, don’t panic, and definitely don’t give up! Sacrifice the upcoming weekend to catch up and do your assignments for next week. Then try to keep up on a weekly basis.

Keeping email under control

• Unsubscribe from retail and social event email notifications to keep your inbox clear of distractions. When you have time, you can check the actual websites for businesses and events that interest you.

• If your email system allows it, have emails related to classes or other important things starred or placed in a folder called “Important” so you read them first.

• Have your email send an auto-response to all messages saying you will get back to people within 24 hours (or whatever time you need) so that you can feel less pressured about responding to messages.

Keeping important items from getting lost

• Be consistent about putting away items like keys and ID – always put them away in the same part of your bag so you know where to find them. Consider putting them together on a lanyard or leash. Don’t put them down anywhere – keep them in your hand until you can get them in the proper place (i.e., your bag or around your neck). In your room, have a hook or spot on your desk where you always put them down and can find them easily.

• Before you go to bed each night, check your bag to make sure it has what you need – pens, flash drive, books, phone, etc. If it helps, keep a list over your desk showing what should be in there.

About the Author

Elizabeth C. Hamblet, a learning specialist at Columbia University, has worked in college disability services offices for over fifteen years. Her published works include her book, *7 Steps for Success: High School to College Transition Strategies for Students with Disabilities*, her laminated guide, *Transitioning to College: A Guide for Students with Disabilities*, and her contributions to various journals. She offers information and advice on her website, [www.LDadvisory.com](http://www.LDadvisory.com).
HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC) Collaborative Announcements!!

NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR TASH’S 2015 AWARDS PROGRAM

TASH is accepting nominations for their 2015 Awards Program. The deadline for submitting nominations is **August 25, 2015**. The awards will be handed out at their 2015 TASH Conference. To learn more and nominate an individual, please go to this [link](#).

**National Youth Transitions Resume Database**

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is developing a resume database. We are seeking the resumes of young people and young veterans with disabilities, who are looking for work (full-time or part-time) in the private sector. These resumes will be incorporated into a database that will help employers connect with qualified young candidates with disabilities. The National Youth Transitions Resume Database will be national in scope and will be open to young people and employers from across the country.

If you are, or know of someone, interested in submitting a resume, please submit it at [ytf@aapd.com](mailto:ytf@aapd.com). Once a resume is received individuals will be asked to complete a short form, which details their occupational and geographic preferences, etc.

**Resume Guidelines**

All resumes should include the following:

- **Objective statement** (a 1-2 sentence statement regarding your skills, interests, or career aspirations to give employers a better sense of the type of employment you are seeking)
- **Contact information** *(Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email Address)*
- **Education history**
- **Work history**
- **Volunteer experience**
- **Professional skills**
Follow the National Youth Transitions Center Facebook and Twitter Page!

The National Youth Transitions Center officially has a Facebook page that can be found this link. If you or your organization has a Facebook account, please “Like” the NYTC page. The NYTC also has a Twitter account that be found here. Please check out their information and resources for youth and veterans with disabilities!! Please “Like” and “Follow” their Facebook and Twitter pages!!

Follow the HEATH Resource Center at the Facebook and Twitter Page!

The HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center has a Facebook page that be found here. We also have a Twitter account that can be found here. Please check out both of our social media sites for the latest updates, resources, and scholarship information for students with disabilities!! Please “Like” our Facebook page and “Follow” us on Twitter!

Educational Opportunities at The George Washington University

Transition Special Education Distance Education Certificate Program

The George Washington University offers a 12-credit Transition Special Education Certificate Program. Students who have enrolled in this program will be given priority when being considered for admission to the Master's program and all credits earned will be easily transferred. Candidates who decide to apply to this program using ApplyYourself, the on-line application system, can use this link.

Please list only official degree transcripts that indicate completion of a Bachelors and/or Masters. Listing all colleges attended may delay approval of your application. This will allow sufficient time for your application to be reviewed and approved, which must take place before they can register for class. **Deadline: Rolling Admissions.** For further information or additional questions, please contact Dr. Michael Ward, Program Coordinator, by e-mailing mjward@gwu.edu.
Secondary Special Education and Transition Services: Distance Education, Master’s of Arts (Non-teacher Licensure)

This 39 credit, on-line Youth Transition, Career, and Vocational Services Master's degree program prepares professionals as change agents in teaching, leadership and support roles that assist youth with disabilities and youth at-risk to make successful transitions through high school to post-secondary education, employment and independent adulthood. Students will build knowledge and skills for performing the roles and functions of transition specialists through assessment, interdisciplinary planning, collaboration, and implementation of services for individuals with disabilities. The program encourages student involvement in research, scholarship, publishing and leadership activities as adjuncts to their program of study. Candidates who decide to apply to this program using ApplyYourself, the on-line application system, can use this link. For more information about the program, please email Dr. Michael Ward at mjward@gwu.edu.

Secondary Special Education and Transition Services: Acquired Brain Injury Master’s Degree Program with Teacher Licensure

Prepare to become a special education teacher to serving school age children and youth with traumatic and acquired brain injuries. The program includes on-campus and on-line coursework, and is possible to complete within two years.

The George Washington University was the first post-secondary institution in the nation to have developed and implemented a specialized graduate degree program, geared toward training professionals in the field of special education and brain injury. The brain injury special educator may work directly with children with acquired brain injury (ABI) or with the school teams and families who support them.

The curriculum is focused on training teachers to work in high need school districts and high poverty schools where the incidence of pediatric brain injury is very high. Students are offered the opportunity of specialized coursework, high quality supervised practica and internships, as well as ongoing school and community-based mentorship opportunities.

Already a licensed teacher? Become a recognized brain injury professional by completing the Master’s Degree in two years! Professionals interested in the content may also apply for the 15-Credit Graduate Certificate Program, all 5 courses are offered through distance learning! For more information on the ABI focus, please contact Theresa Sacchi Armstrong at tjsacchi@gwu.edu. Deadline: Rolling Admissions.
National Survey Shows People with Disabilities Are Striving to Work & Overcoming Barriers
Source: Disability.gov

The 2015 Kessler Foundation “National Employment and Disability Survey” has found that nearly 69 percent of Americans with disabilities are working, actively preparing for employment or looking for jobs. Barriers to work include lack of education or training opportunities, transportation issues and employer attitudes. The survey also found that having a flexible work schedule (flexible start and end times, work at home, taking more breaks) was one of the most important workplace accommodations. The survey includes responses from more than 3,000 working-age Americans with disabilities.

U.S. Department of Education Launches Second Chance Pell Pilot Program for Incarcerated Individuals
Source: U.S. Department of Education

As part of the Obama Administration’s commitment to create a fairer, more effective criminal justice system, reduce recidivism, and combat the impact of mass incarceration on communities, the Department of Education today announced the Second Chance Pell Pilot program to test new models to allow incarcerated Americans to receive Pell Grants and pursue the postsecondary education with the goal of helping them get jobs, support their families, and turn their lives around. The deadline for postsecondary institutions to apply for this pilot program is Sept. 30, 2015 for the 2016-2017 academic year. For more information, please read here.

U.S. Access Board Releases Next Installment of the Online Guide to the ADA and ABA Standards
Source: access-board@service.govdelivery.com

The next installment of the U.S. Access Board's online guide to accessibility standards issued under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) is now available. This material features a series of technical bulletins covering requirements for accessible routes in Chapter 4 of the ADA and ABA Standards, including doors and gates, ramps and curb ramps, and elevators and platform lifts. There is also a bulletin on referenced requirements for accessible means of egress. The documents explain and illustrate requirements in the standards, answer common questions, and offer best practice recommendations.

The Guide to the ADA Standards covers design requirements for places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities covered by the ADA. The Guide to the
ABA Standards addresses similar standards that apply under the ABA to facilities that are designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal funds.

Transition QuickGuide: Take Charge of Planning and Managing Your Own Health and Career Goals
Source: http://thenytc.org/partners

The Alliance between ODEP, Youth Transition Collaborative, MCHB’s Center for Health Transition Improvement (Got Transition) has focused on improving health care transition and employment of youth and young adults with disabilities. The Alliance Partners have created a career and health checklist for youth and young adults with disabilities. The career and health checklist was released in July 2015 in coordination with the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

PACER’S New National Parent Center on Transition and Employment Website Offers Resources for Families, Youth, Educators, and Employers
Source: PACER

For families of youth with disabilities, the transition from high school to employment, postsecondary education, and life in the community presents a variety of challenges. PACER’s innovative National Parent Center on Transition and Employment has launched its ground-breaking new website to provide important information and resources to support families, youth, educators and employers as they help teens and young adults with disabilities reach their goals in adulthood. Discover the practical tools, reliable research, and interactive training.

Conference, Webinar and Forum Opportunities

August 26, 2015
Twitter Chat on Disability and Academia
Easter Seals
Join Thrive on August 26th at 2 p.m. EST for their twitter chat on disability and college! Follow the conversation and chime in with your own thoughts using the hashtag #thrivecollege. For more info, visit this link.

September 2, 2015
Integrating Employability Skills into Everyday Instruction Webinar
The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), College and Career Readiness and Success Center (CCRS Center), Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center), and RTI International is highlighting a new, interactive learning module, Integrating Employability Skills: A Framework for All Educators on Wednesday, September 2, 2015 (2:00-3:15 p.m. EST). To register, please go to this link.
September 17, October 1, and October 8, 2015
Transition RTC and Virginia Commonwealth University
Transitions RTC and Virginia Commonwealth University’s Center on Transition Innovations offer three free webcasts featuring Maryann Davis this fall! You must register to attend the webcasts. To register, please go to this link.

- **September 17, 2015 at 3 p.m.**: “Overview: What are the challenges for youth with psychiatric disabilities as they transition to adulthood.”
- **October 1, 2015 at 3 p.m.**: “Needs and supports for pursuing postsecondary education and training for youth with psychiatric disabilities”
- **October 8, 2015 at 3 p.m.**: “Research-based employment supports for youth with chronic mental health disabilities.”

December 4-6, 2015
The 40th TASH Conference
Portland, Oregon
This year’s theme, “Celebrating 40 Years of Progressive Leadership,” acknowledges TASH’s 40 years of generating change within the disability community and anticipates a brighter, more inclusive future for people with disabilities in all aspects of life. Each year, the TASH Conference impacts the disability field by connecting attendees to innovative information and resources, facilitating connections between stakeholders within the disability movement, and helping attendees reignite their passion for an inclusive world. To register, please visit this link.

February 15-18, 2016
The 53rd LDA Annual International Conference
Orlando, Florida
The Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) will hold its annual conference on February 15-18, 2016 at the World Center Marriot in Orlando, Florida. LDA’s mission is to create opportunities for success for all individuals affected by learning disabilities and to reduce the incidence of learning disabilities in future generations. LDA believes everyone can succeed at school, at work, in relationships, and in the community given the right opportunities and supports as needed. Registration begins in Mid-September 2015. For more information, please visit this link.
Money, Money, Money!
Who’s got the money?

2015-16 Do You Need Money for College? Federal Student Aid at a Glance
Federal Student Aid has created a fact sheet that provides an overview of the major federal student aid loan and grant programs. The federal government provides federal funds for students attending colleges, including career colleges and universities. Students can find more information about federal student aid programs at www.studentaid.gov. To receive a copy of the fact sheet, please go to this link. In Spanish, please go to this link.

The Washington Center Scholarship

The Washington Center Scholarship for Students with Disabilities funded by the AT&T Foundation and HSC Foundation, these awards provide housing assistance in varying amounts (up to a full housing scholarship) to competitively selected students who self-identify as having a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Priority consideration is given to undergraduate students; however, Postgraduate Program applicants may be considered. http://www.twc.edu

Add to your Favorites!
(Websites)

PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment

From PACER - The road to adulthood for youth with disabilities is filled with opportunity, and parents play a key role. PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment is ready with the information families want, presented in a way families can use.

Founded in 2014, PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment builds on PACER’s decades of experience providing high quality assistance and support to parents, youth, and professionals on transition topics. This innovative new project will keep the needs of families at the forefront and help youth with disabilities find success in postsecondary education, employment, and life in the community.

PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment provides relevant information and resources to parents, youth, and professionals through a variety of services:
- A new, cutting-edge website that inspires, educates, and engages families around transition.
• Technical assistance and training to professionals on best practices for engaging families, including those who are underserved.
• In-person and online workshops for parents on youth on topics such as assistive technology, postsecondary supports, and finding work in the community.

To learn more about this website, please visit: http://www.pacer.org/transition/

Disability.gov Offers Information Guides on Disability Benefits, Programs, and Services

Disability.gov has developed a series of 14 guides about topics such as disability benefits, housing assistance, job training programs, and financial help for families with low incomes. Other guides cover services that promote independence for people with disabilities such as home health care, programs for caregivers, assistive technology, and more. Each guide begins with a series of “quick links” that answer many frequently asked questions. Disability.gov’s Guides to Information & Resources also connect you to information about local organizations that offer programs and services that promote the inclusion and full participation of people with disabilities in their communities. To learn more, visit Disability.gov.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the following individuals and organizations for their support in the development of this newsletter:

Elizabeth Hamblet, Learning Specialist, Columbia University, which can be found at http://LDadvisory.com;

Dr. Jessica Queener, Manager, National Youth Transitions Initiative at The HSC Foundation, which can be found at http://www.hscfoundation.org;

John Gugerty’s Listserv, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison;

Theresa Sacchi Armstrong, Research Associate & Coordinator, George Washington University, Washington, DC;

Dr. Mike Ward, Transition Special Education Distance Education Certificate Program, George Washington University, Washington, DC;

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition E-News, which can be found at http://www.ncset.org/enews
Submissions

We welcome submissions from transition-related organizations and entities to post resources and information in our quarterly newsletter. Please email us at askheath@gwu.edu to include your submission in our next newsletter.