Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

# COLLEGE ACCESS & ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES


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**November 7, 2026**

**Presented for 2026 NYC Citywide Transition Summit**

# What is Advocates for Children (AFC)?

AFC is an independent agency that protects the rights of all NYC students in K-12 Education and in College

Our Services:

- Helpline: **1-866-427-6033** (Mon-Thurs, 10am – 4pm)
- Guides and resources: www.advocatesforchildren.org
- Workshops and trainings
- Free legal services to low-income families

# Today's Training

- College Programs & Search
- Disability Accommodations
- Additional College Supports
- CUNY Disability Services
- CUNY Disability Programs



# What is a Disability?

- A Disability is defined as an impairment of a major life function such as seeing, hearing, walking, thinking or caring for oneself.

- A disability may visible or invisible.

  - Physical and Mental Conditions
  - Emotional Disabilities
  - Learning Disabilities
  - Medical Condition
  - Short Term Disability

# Statistical Data

## NATIONALLY MORE THAN 20% OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS REPORT SOME TYPE OF DISABILITY

**National Center for Education Statistics**

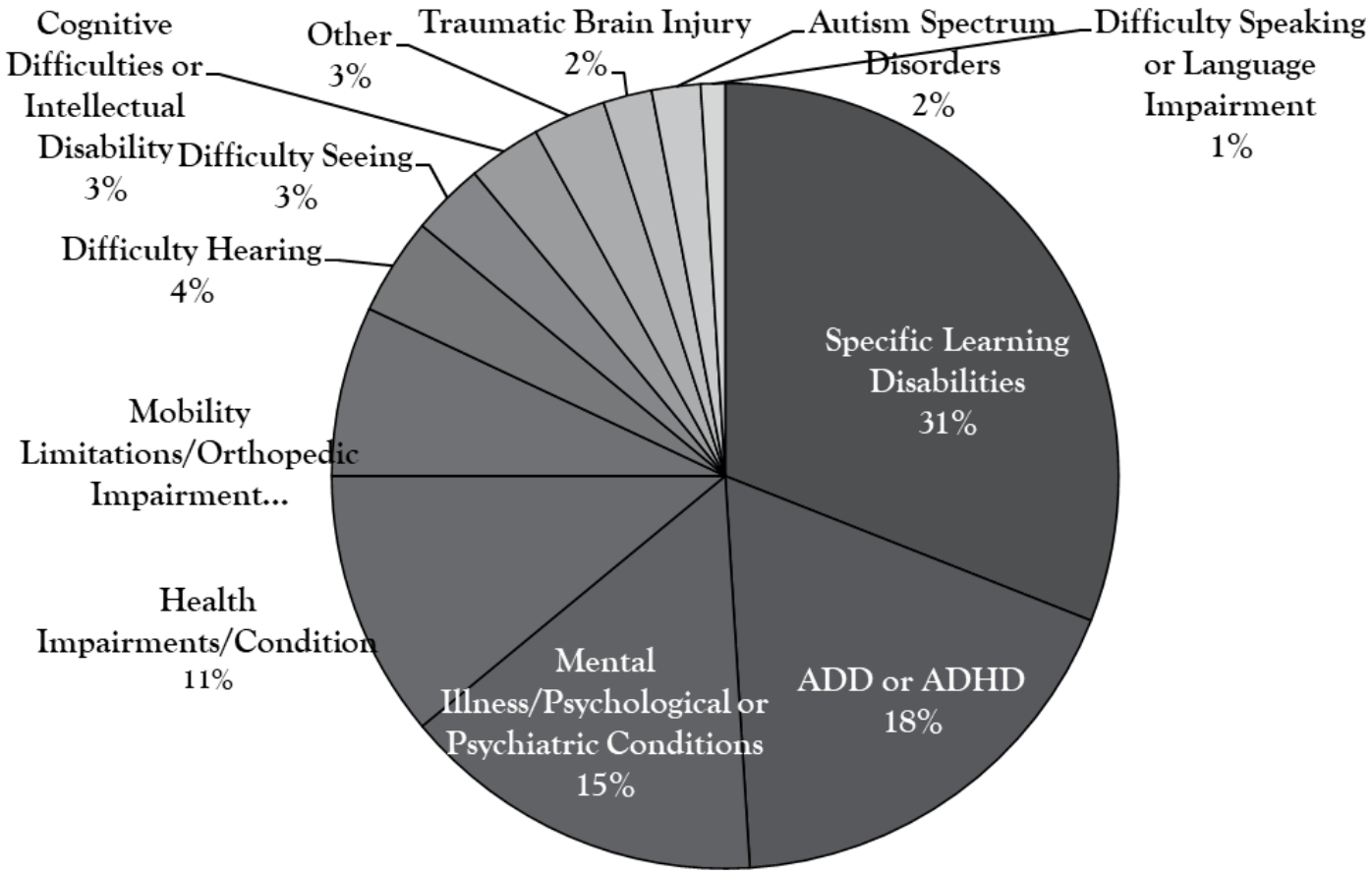
Table 3.12.

**DISABILITIES: Percentage of undergraduates who reported some type of disability and, among those who did, percentage distribution of main type of disability, by control and level of institution and selected student characteristics: 2015–16**

| Control and level of institution and selected student characteristics | Any disability[1] | Main type among students with disabilities | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Visual | Hearing | Speech | Ortho-pedic | Specific learning disability | Attention deficit disorder | Mental illness/ depression | Other[2] |
| **Total** | **19.5** | **4.2** | **3.9** | **1.3** | **5.9** | **3.5** | **26.4** | **40.0** | **14.7** |
| Type of institution | | | | | | | | | |
| Public | 19.3 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 1.4 | 5.5 | 3.8 | 27.6 | 39.9 | 14.2 |
| Less-than-2-year | 20.9 | ‡ | 8.1 ! | ‡ | ‡ | ‡ | 31.6 | 37.4 | 16.2 |
| 2-year | 20.8 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 1.3 | 6.2 | 4.7 | 27.2 | 36.0 | 15.5 |
| 4-year | 17.7 | 3.4 | 2.4 | 1.4 | 4.5 | 2.8 | 28.1 | 45.0 | 12.4 |
| Non-doctorate-granting | 18.4 | 3.9 | 2.4 | 1.9 ! | 5.8 | 3.6 | 25.0 | 42.4 | 15.2 |
| Primarily subbaccalaureate[3] | 20.0 | 3.8 ! | 2.1 ! | 1.6 ! | 5.8 | 5.0 | 22.8 | 41.3 | 17.7 |
| Primarily baccalaureate | 17.0 | 4.0 ! | 2.6 ! | 2.3 ! | 5.7 | 2.1 | 27.3 | 43.4 | 12.6 |
| Doctorate-granting | 17.4 | 3.2 | 2.4 | 1.1 | 3.8 | 2.4 | 29.7 | 46.3 | 11.1 |

# Statistical Data

## CUNY Enrolled Students by Disability Category



# College Programs & Search



# IDEA → ADA

| IDEA<br>(birth - graduate/age 22) | ADA - Post-secondary<br>(all ages) |
| --- | --- |
| • Entitlement (Student Rights)<br>• IEP (Individualized Education Program)<br>  ○ Special education setting<br>  ○ Related services<br>• No cost to families<br>• Parents are involved<br>• Annual IEP meeting | • Eligibility (Meet Criteria)<br>• Self-disclosure<br>• IEP retires (no longer active)<br>  ○ No special education services<br>• College supports<br>  ○ Office of disability services<br>• Students need to register<br>• Reasonable requests<br>• Burden on student<br>• Increase in responsibility |

# Planning for College

All students are likely to face some challenges as they begin their college experience

Students with disabilities will need the same skills as any other college freshman plus the ability to compensate for their disability

Readiness for college extends beyond academic skills and achievements

Unrealistic expectations of the types of services in college and being uninformed about the process to access accommodations, can leave students and parents surprised and unprepared

# Planning for College

## Admissions

- Each college has the right to determine its own admissions policies
- Students must meet the same admission criteria , academic & technical standards required for participation in a class, program or activity

## Study Expectations

- In college, students will generally need to study/work on assignments at least 6 hours per week for each class (x 4 classes = 24hrs/per week)

# College Programs – Related to Disability

## General Education with Accommodations

- All schools must provide ADA accommodations

## General Edu with Accommodations and Supports

- Learning Specialists, Coaching, Resource Centers, etc
- Mitchell College, Adelpi University BRIDGES Program

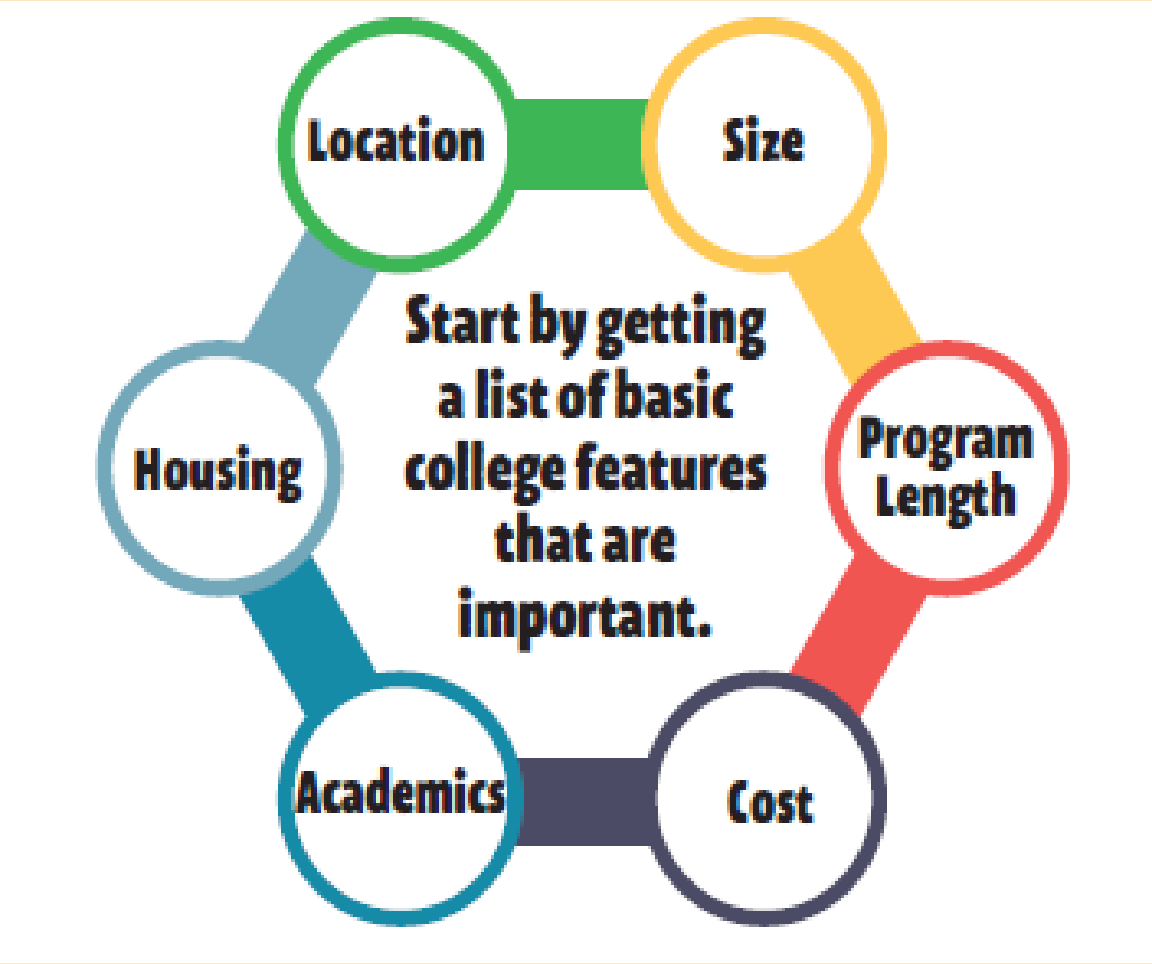
## Individualized & Customized Programming

- Tailored Instruction and Universal Design Learning Curriculm
- Landmark College, Melissa Riggio Program / CUNY Unlimited

Additional Considerations:

- What are student's needs?
- Campus inclusion and community
- Student goals and outcomes

# College Search



# College Search – Selecting the Right Program



# Information Gathering Tips

**<u>Very important to know and get answers</u>**
- lots of variation between schools

Disability offices may be reluctant to discuss services and specific requests before enrollment

Request informal meeting
– ask what is offered generally

After admission but before enrollment (decision) may be a good time for discussion

Consider reaching out to other students

# General College Programs with Support Programs

**For Learning Disabilities**

- Hofstra University
  - PALS Program – academic coaching
- Adelphi University
  - Bridges Program
- Mitchell College
  - Bentsen Learning Center
- Dean College
  - Arch Learning Community
- Iona University
  - Comprehensive Assistance Program (CAP)
- Manhattanville College
  - Pathways & Connections Program (PAC)
- Marist College
  - Learning Support Program

**For ASD**

- Daemen College
  - College Autism Transition Support (CATS) Program
- Nassau Community College
  - ASPIRES Program
- Pace University
  - OASIS Program
- Rutgers University
  - College Support Program (CSP)
- Ramapo College
  - ENHANCE Program
- Fairleigh Dickinson University
  - COMPASS Program

# Specialized Disability College Programs

## Specialized LD College Programs

- Landmark College
  - Fully tailored for students with learning disabilities
  - Close to special education
  - Multiple centers of support
- Beacon College
  - Fully tailored for students with learning disabilities
  - College readiness programs
  - Multiple support programs

## Pre-College Transition Programs

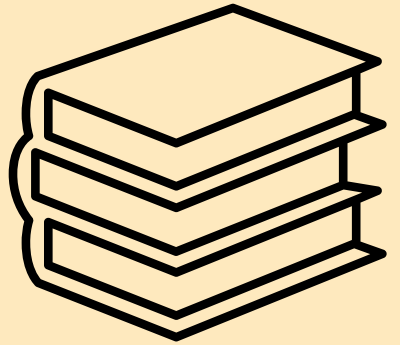
- Molloy College
  - Molloy Opportunity for Successful Transition (MOST) Program
  - CONNECT Program
- Mitchell College
  - Thames – pre-college transition program
- Transitions USA
  - Transitions College Program

# College Experience Programs

- Generally for students with I/DD
- Usually require student mentors or direct support professionals
- Non-degree programs
- Main resource for these programs is Think College – see directory -- https://thinkcollege.net/college-search

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- **Examples**
- CUNY Melissa Riggio
  - Partnership with AHRC
  - Several campuses
  - Modified curriculum
  - Student coaches/mentors
- Rockland Community College
  - College Steps Program
- University of Mount Saint Vincent
  - Bridge Program



# College Disability Accommodations



# Disability Services and Accommodations
## Secondary vs College

- As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), post-secondary schools and programs must be accessible to students with disabilities.
- Under ADA, students are now eligible for services and must advocate for their needs. This is a shift from high school, where you were ***entitled*** to accommodations and services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- In College:
  - Student must initiate accommodation request
  - Student must prove accommodation is needed

# Disability Services and Accommodations
# Secondary vs College

- Differences between secondary education (high school) and college
  - IDEA vs ADA – “good education” vs accommodating tasks/activities
  - Environment – specialized vs general education (example: class size)
  - Curriculum – customized vs fundamental alteration
  - Supports – special education vs accommodations (“equal access”)
  - Administrative or financial burden (additional consideration)
- Most IEP services are not offered in college
- Your IEP is not determinative of what services you’ll

# Common College Accommodations

- Extended time on exams and quizzes
- Testing in an alternative, distraction-reduced location
- Breaks during exams
- Calculator or laptop access
- A note-taker, reader, and/or scribe
- Access to audiobooks and E-books
- Accessible specific classroom seating/layout
- American Sign Language interpreters
- Assistive Technology (iPads, smart pens, calculators, auxiliary aids, etc.)
- Facilitated Consultation with Faculty/Advocacy
- **Accommodations for Activities and Experiential Learning**
- **Housing Accommodations**

Lots of variation across colleges

Link: https://includenyc.org/help-center/resources/college-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities/

# Common College Accommodations

- Referrals to and follow up with college and external resources (Counseling, ACCES-VR)
- Student is provided with advanced copies of overheads and PowerPoint presentations
- Permission to tape-record class lectures
- Closed captioning
- Priority course registration
- Access to voice recognition and text-to-speech software
- Class materials in alternative format (Braille, Digital File, Recorded)
- Regular meetings with an accessibility counselor or learning specialist
- **Reduced course load and extended time to complete degree requirements**

Link: https://includenyc.org/help-center/resources/college-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities/

# College Accommodations That May be More Difficult to Obtain

- Extensions for specific assignments
- Alternate test format (e.g. multiple choice, true/false, essay)
- Tests and directions read out loud, or read and repeated
- Reduced course load and extended time to complete degree requirements

Link: https://includenyc.org/help-center/resources/college-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities/

# Additional Supports

- Admissions assistance
- Financial aid assistance
- Mentoring and peer network programs
- Recreation and social programs
- Dormitory support
- Course auditing or online coursework
- Educational support such as peer tutoring

# College Disability Accommodations Request Process



# Accommodations - Generally

- All accommodations are individualized and based on the specific student's needs.
- Colleges and universities must look at each individual disability and the functional impact of the disability for each student (case-by-case and class-by-class).
- When evaluating a student's request for accommodations, the overall objective of the law is to afford "equal access" to the opportunity, not unfair advantage.
- Postsecondary institutions are not required to lower or substantially modify essential academic requirements or make adjustments that would **fundamentally alter** the nature of a service, program, or activity, or that would result in an **undue financial or administrative burden.**

# Disability Services and Accommodations Application Process

- Student must initiate process ("make request") and disclose disability
- Must contact Disability Services office
- **Recommended to discuss options with Disability Services office first (if possible)**
- Disability documentation required
  - Student must prove accommodations needed
- All documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis
- Interactive process – case by case, depending on disability and class activities
  - Actual legal standard – must engage in discussion

# Standard of Review for Accommodations

- Temporary vs permanent disabilities
- Different disabilities
- Different accommodation types
- Different classes and activities
- Different "functional limitation" impacts
- Strength of documentation

Lots of variation across colleges – No uniform standard of review

# Accommodations Request Process

Steps to Apply For Reasonable Accommodations

1. The student decides what to disclose and what accommodations to request.
2. The student then submits application and documentation to the college's accessibility office.
3. The student will meet with an accessibility counselor to discuss available accommodations.
4. A decision on the request is rendered.
5. Once accommodations are agreed upon, the student or office will inform professors and teaching staff of which courses they are requesting accommodation.
6. The student applies for specific testing accommodations 1-4 weeks before they are needed.
7. Repeat as necessary.

Apply early! 4-6 week review time

# Documentation Requirements

- To receive academic accommodations for their disability, a student must present documentation (at their expense) from a licensed or certified professional to the disability office.
- All documentation must be within the last 2-3 years (varies).
- All documentation must be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- The purpose of documentation:
  - To establish that an individual has a disability.
  - To describe and document the functional impact of the disability to establish the need for a specific accommodation.

# Confidentiality

All colleges or universities will treat data on students with disabilities with confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Disability information and documentation is housed separately from students' academic information.

# Student Rights and Appeal

Students have the right to appeal a denial of disability accommodations.

Review the denial letter and gather supporting documentation.

Contact the disability services office for guidance on the appeals process.

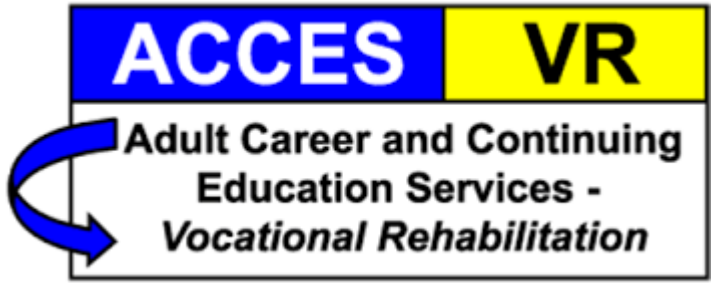
Initiate the appeal following the college's established procedures.

Be prepared to present your case, follow up on the progress, and seek external resources if needed.

# Additional College Supports



# What is ACCES-VR?




- Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation
  - A state agency that helps people with disabilities explore their job interests, find a job, and keep it.

# Services available through ACCES-VR

## After High School Services (Ages ~18 to 25)

- Vocational counseling and guidance
- Job training at a vocational school, college, or on the job
- Job coaching (sometimes called "supported employment")
  - OPWDD eligibility (prior to age 25)
- Coaching supports – at job or internship
- Help with transportation costs (including accessible transportation)
- **Help with school & vocational training costs, like tuition, fees, dorm, or books**
- **Funding for college supports, like note-takers or tutors**
- Technology/equipment you may need to work
- Adaptive driver training
- Physical and mental restoration services
- Medical care for acute conditions arising during the program
- Modifications to homes, vehicles and worksites

Link: https://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/vocational-rehabilitation-services

# Funding for College

**Degree needed to achieve employment goal –**
Ability to complete college-level courses

Covers tuition, books, transportation and more –
Maximum contribution, based on CUNY/SUNY rates

Based on Financial Need –
Must apply for comparable benefits (e.g. FAFSA, grants)

Lots of documentation required and rules –
Full-time, timeframes, grades, acceptance

Link: https://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/40500-college-and-university-training-services-policy

# Services available through ACCES-VR

## Job Placement Services (Any Age)

- Community work experience
- Job search & placement
- Job readiness training
- Work-based coaching & supports
- Employment customization
- Extended job placement services
- Work Try-Out & On the Job training
- Occupational tools and equipment
- Occupational and business licenses

Link: https://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/vocational-rehabilitation-services

# Funding Resources

- Pell
- TAP
- Scholarships
- ACCES-VR
- Commission for the Blind
- OPWDD

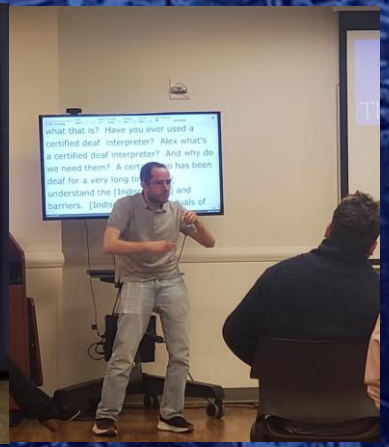



# CUNY Disability Services & Programs
# CUNY *LEADS, Project REACH, Adaptive Sports*

Office of Student Inclusion Initiatives

**Raymond Perez**
**Tayler Resnick**





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# Welcome























# Who are the students we support?

Nearly 14,000 students registered with the Accessibility and Disability Offices

## Areas of study (84% enrolled in):

- Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Health Professions and Related Programs
- Business, Management Marketing, and Related Degrees
- Psychology
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Computer and Information Sciences and Support Svcs
- Social Sciences
- Public Administration and Social Service Professions
- Education
- Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protective Services
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences
- Physical Sciences

## Most frequently registered disability groups:

- Learning disability 34%
- Mental health 21%
- Physical including mobility 16.6%

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# Access vs. Success

*CUNY Disability Services provides equal access & opportunity to students with disabilities through reasonable accommodations.*

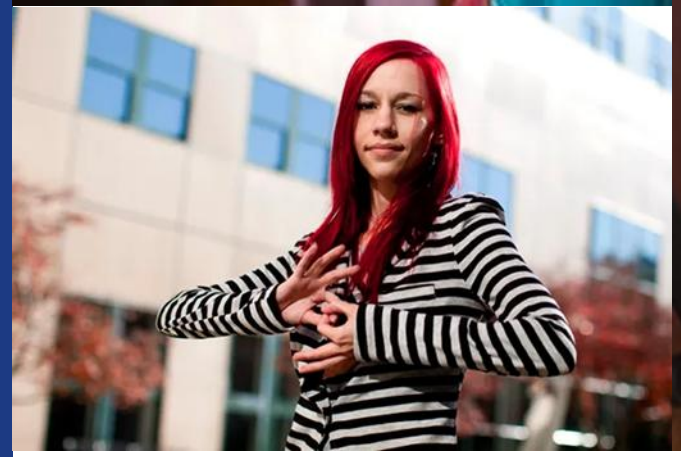
*CUNY Disability Programs builds on the access mission to strive for full inclusion and success of students throughout their college experience and beyond.*

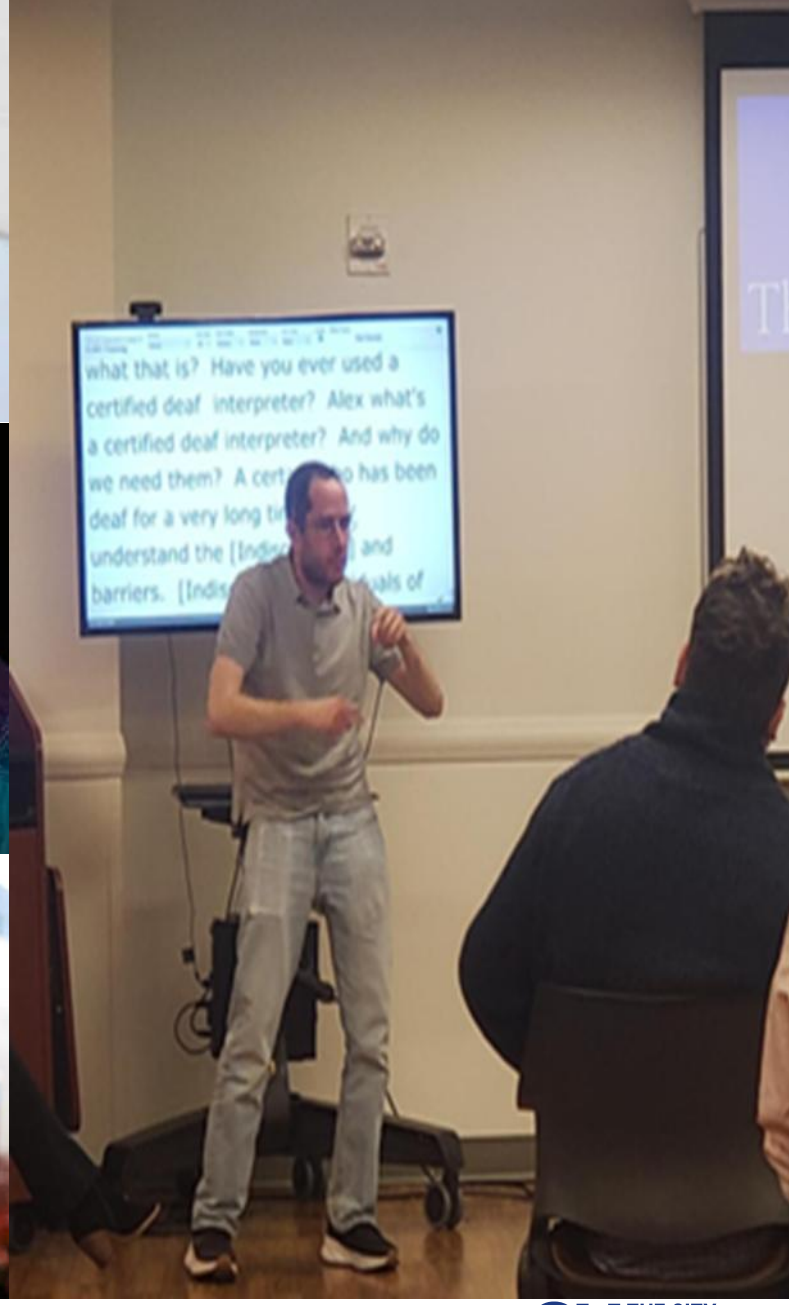
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- CUNY campuses have Deaf and Hard of Hearing students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Out of the 14,000 students with disabilities, deaf and hard of hearing are about 2.4%.
- Some are involved in clubs, advocacy groups, sports, and the honor society:
  - CCSD (CUNY Coalition of Student with Disabilities)
  - Malave Leadership Academy (MLA) is the resource for student leadership development.
  - Delta Alpha Pi (DAPi) a student-led honor society for students with disabilities.
  - Central Office of Student Affairs Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee.
- CUNY has invested in making our campus disability offices accessibility by providing assistive devices to support student agency and access to services.
- Our initiatives to provide training, accessible events and engage student on the campuses continues to align with our mission on access and success!










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# What are we doing at CUNY regarding DEIA?

- The entire University Community is involved in Accessibility practices
- Active Disability Councils
- Provide PD & Training on UDL (Blackboard ALLY)
- Created job opportunities for students to partner in creating an accessible campus
- CUNY HS Transition Programs (CUNY Empowered)
- CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities (CCSD)
- Enrollment initiatives specific to students with disabilities
- Recruiting (Students and Employees) and Hiring individuals with disabilities
- Inclusive Athletics
- CUNY Accommodate

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# What's new at CUNY?

CUNY | Accommodate



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# CUNY Accommodate

1. The Confidential Accommodations Request Form allows the access process to begin with a single click!
2. Student inputs information about their disability and uploads relevant documentation, while designating a “home campus.”
3. Student receives correspondence from the campus Disability Service Office within a few business days, initiating the intake process.

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# CUNY Accommodate

## For Students

Streamlines the request process for accommodations. Ensures timely access to necessary resources. Supports a more inclusive educational environment.

1. Allows students to register with the Disability Services Office and provide necessary documentation for accommodations without waiting.
2. Allows Students to activate their accommodation request each semester or request supplemental accommodations, testing accommodations, or assistive technology remotely without physically stepping into the office or scheduling an appointment.
3. Students' accommodation requests seamlessly transfer with students, and as they transfer from one CUNY campus to another



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# CUNY Disability Programs

CUNY Project REACH

CUNY LEADS

CUNY Inclusive and Adaptive Sports

CUNY Unlimited

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# Resources and Education on Autism as CUNY's Hallmark

**Project REACH** is a program on various CUNY campuses that provides no-cost additional layers of support to autistic students to assist with the transition to college life.

**Services may include:**

- Peer mentoring (Group and/or Individual)
- Transition to College Support
- Coaching services
- Student Interest Groups
- Workshops

CUNY | Project REACH

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# Project REACH Campus Programs

**Connect with Project REACH:**
www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/disability/asd-project-reach/contacts/

BMCC Borough of Manhattan Community College

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Brooklyn College The City University of New York

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK College of Staten Island

HUNTER The City University of New York

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE ★ DREAMS BEGIN HERE ★

LaGuardia Community College

STELLA AND CHARLES GUTTMAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LEHMAN COLLEGE

QUEENS COLLEGE

CUNY Project REACH

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# Options at CUNY for People with Intellectual Disabilities

- **Melissa Riggio Higher Education Program**
  ***AHRC NYC***
- **Inclusion Program at Queens College**
  ***NYC DOE***




CUNY | Unlimited

# CUNY LEADS: Linking Employment, Academics, & Disability Services

A CUNY program supporting students with disabilities from college to career through integrated academic and employment services.

**Student Benefits**

- Career planning & goal setting
- Internships & job opportunities
- Resume & interview preparation
- Employer connections & networking
- Ongoing support toward employment

**Key Roles:**

**LEADS Advisor (Campus)**

- Academic & career guidance
- Student engagement & self-advocacy
- Resource coordination & progress tracking

**LEADS Job Developer (Systemwide)**

- Employer partnerships
- Internship & job placement
- Career readiness & workforce preparation
- Employment outcomes tracking



# Connect to CUNY LEADS

- On most campuses, CUNY LEADS is connected to the Disability Services Office, but some Advisors are housed in Career Services
- Students do not have to register with the Disability Services Office to sign up for CUNY LEADS
- **Find your LEADS Advisor:**

  https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/disability/cuny-leads/




CUNY LEADS

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# CUNY LEADS Success




CUNY LEADS

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# Inclusive and Adaptive Sports




- CUNY-wide wheelchair basketball team, based at Queens College
  - Launched officially in 2021
  - Only teams on eastern seaboard
  - Men's and Women's teams competing nationally
  - Recruiting nationally, internationally
  - National recognition for coach and players
  - Expanding to include tennis, swimming and track & field

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# CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities

The CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities (CCSD) is the biggest umbrella organization in the disability field at The City University of New York, organizing 19 student member organizations across 26 schools and colleges, and representing  14,000 students with disabilities.








CCSD
CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities

# Connect with Disability Programs!

**Online at** cuny.edu/disability

**On Twitter** @CUNYDisability

**On LinkedIn** CUNY LEADS

## Find your Campus Disability / Accessibility Services Office:

www.cuny.edu/disabilityservices

## Find your CUNY LEADS Advisor:

https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/disability/cuny-leads/

## Connect with Project REACH:

https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-services/disability/projectreach/



# Thank you!



# Give us Your Feedback!

Please complete this Short survey!



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

# Call us with questions!



**Helpline: 866-427-6033 (toll free)**

**Monday-Thursday, 10am-4pm**

**info@advocatesforchildren.org**