

Research Study 4: Themes from Our Focus Groups



Inter-Department/Agency Relationships:

Participants emphasized the importance of collaborative relationships across departments and agencies - calling it “key” to student success.

Roles: Participants report taking direct roles in areas such as skill training and job search assistance to help students prepare for the workforce, and supporting roles in areas such as goal-setting.



Support Services: Students report widely using support services, and listed mentors as especially important influences.

Accommodations: Students reported that their experience with accommodations focused widely on academics, and that many did not have experience or knowledge of accommodation options in the workplace.



Job Searches and Networking: Students indicated that their support services helped with job development activities (e.g., resumes, interview practice), and that networking was an important skill learned in college.

Work-Based Learning: Work-based learning activities, such as paid internships and job shadowing, were broadly listed as being significant facilitators to paid employment for students with IDD.



Concerns and Needs: Barriers to providing student-specific services as reported by college staff included a lack of training, funding, and resources, as well as staffing issues, including turnover.