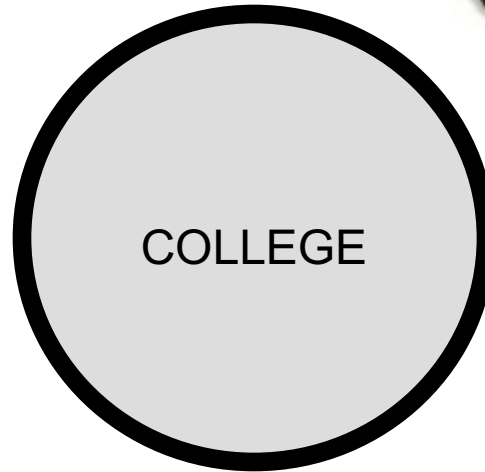

Life After High School for Students with Special Needs

- **Marybeth Kravets, Deerfield HS**
- **Julie Manning, Glenbrook North HS**
- **Imy Wax, Educational Consultant**

A Narrow Vision



A Complete Vision

Work

Life Long
Learning

Alternative
Post-
Secondary

2 year
College

POST HIGH
SCHOOL

Technical
School

4 Year
College

Community
College

Apprenticeships

Is College For You?

Why am I going to college in the first place?

Most students plan to attend college because of career aspirations, the desire to earn financial security, the desire to become independent from their families, and the desire to increase their knowledge base.

Is College For You?

- ❑ Students need to ask themselves

Why do I *want* to go to college?

Necessary Skills

- What kind of skills do you need in order to be successful in college?
 - Strong self motivation in college prep courses
 - A full scale I.Q. in the average range of intelligence
 - Solid ability to understand verbal concepts and symbols and to communicate ideas and thoughts both orally and in writing
 - Understanding of your learning style, including an awareness of your academic strengths and weaknesses
 - Ability to function independently in the academic environment

High School vs. The Real World

- ❑ No IEP
- ❑ No IDEA, working under ADA and 504 regulations
- ❑ Pay for services
- ❑ Students *must* self identify

High School vs. The Real World

□ IDEA

- Schools' responsibility
- LRE, quality and free
- Individualized Planning and related services
- Applies until student graduates or reaches age of 21
- Transition services

□ ADA

- Individual Responsibility
- Focus on accommodations
- Focus on nondiscrimination and undue hardship
- No link between federal funds and compliance with the law

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

- ❑ F.E.R.P.A.
- ❑ Students can access his/her records
- ❑ Prevents a student's record from being shared with faculty, administrators, students, peers, etc.
- ❑ Faculty can not ask for diagnostic information, they can only ask for the needs and accommodations



Preparing your son/daughter

- ❑ Understand the disability and needs
- ❑ Understand the student's strengths and how he/she learns best
- ❑ What strategies are beneficial
- ❑ Practice becoming a self advocate
- ❑ Know your rights!
- ❑ Let your student be in the driver's seat.

Preparing your son/daughter

- ❑ Encourage student to be active in the IEP process and other decision making situation
- ❑ Help student identify future goals or desired outcomes
- ❑ Develop a list of strengths and areas of need
- ❑ Develop a list of accommodations
- ❑ Understand learning styles

Understanding the Disability

- **Knowing about your disability can help you to:**
 - **Figure out the impact it has on your daily life**
 - **Make plans that include thinking about how your disability affects what you want for your future**
 - **Know when you might need extra support**
 - **Advocate (stand up for yourself)**

Finding a College that is a good “fit”

- ❑ Research and Reality
- ❑ Keep the student's interests in mind
- ❑ Location
- ❑ Size
- ❑ Programs offered
- ❑ Residential or Commuter
- ❑ Cost of attendance
- ❑ Consider a range of programs
- ❑ Do not set the student up for failure

The Application Process

- Have the materials necessary for application
 - transcript release forms
 - applications
 - personal statement/essays
 - activities sheet
 - recommendations from teachers
 - high school report form
 - release of information for testing
- For special programs, apply early!!!!!!

Personal Statements

- ❑ Personal Statement is done by the student
- ❑ Start working on a draft during Junior year
- ❑ Talk about accommodations student has used
- ❑ Talk about what made the student successful
- ❑ Use examples from CHOICES booklet
- ❑ Parents, make suggestions but let it be your student's voice.

Personal Interview

- ❑ Two way conversation between student and interviewer
- ❑ Student should call to make the appointment
- ❑ Develop a list of questions that are not covered on the college website
- ❑ Develop questions specific to your student.

Questions to Consider in the Interview with Admissions Staff

- ❑ What are admission requirements? Are they different for the support program?
- ❑ Should documentation be sent to admissions?
- ❑ Is there designated liaison from the admission office with the disability office?
- ❑ Are students encouraged to self-disclose in the admission process?

Questions to Consider in the Interview with the Disability Service Provider

- ❑ Is there a separate application and what are the procedures and timelines for that application?
- ❑ Are there fees for services?
- ❑ What is the procedure for accessing accommodations and services?
- ❑ May students request a waiver or substitution of graduation requirements?
- ❑ Are there any developmental or remedial courses? For credit?
- ❑ Does the college offer a pre-college summer program?
- ❑ Is anybody on the staff certified in learning disabilities?

Special Consideration?

- ❑ At *most* schools you need to meet the admissions requirements to be accepted. *After* you are accepted you work through the disability support centers to gain accommodations.
- ❑ There are some colleges that will be flexible in the admission process based on disclosure of a disability.

Accessing services

- In order to get accommodations, you need to provide the school or program with documentation of the disability
 - Sign off on consent to disclose
 - Ask Case Manager/Transition Coordinator to send the documents directly to the school
 - Remember that students files are held by the the District for 5 years after graduation
 - Documentation should be current within the last three years.

Visiting Campus- Good Signs

- ❑ **Can find the person directing the program**
- ❑ **Can find the place where disability services is housed**
- ❑ **Can easily find information about disability support on the college web site**
- ❑ **Colleges who are up front with information about disability services**

Visiting Campus- Warning Signs

- ❑ **Director of support services wears many hats**
- ❑ **Director of support services has no background in LD**
- ❑ **One-person shop and lots of students needing services**
- ❑ **The admission office needs a “directory” to find the name of the Director of Support Services**
- ❑ **When tutors are not trained to teach students who learn differently**
- ❑ **When professors are not accommodating**
- ❑ **When administration does not support disability services**

Two and Four Year Colleges



Programs vs. Services

- ❑ Case Management Model – Schools work on an individual basis with students to insure success.
- ❑ Services Model – School provides appropriate accommodations for students based on their needs.

Services in College

- ❑ Decisions regarding the exact accommodations are made on an individual basis.
- ❑ College selects the services
- ❑ Colleges are not required to provide aides, services or devices for personal use or study
- ❑ Requirements for graduation are the same as general population.

Schools with Special Programs (examples)

- ❑ UW – Oshkosh (Project Success - LD)
- ❑ UW- Whitewater (Project Assist)
- ❑ Southern Illinois University (Achieve Program)
- ❑ Lynn (Comprehensive Support Program)
- ❑ Loras (Learning Disabilities Program)
- ❑ University of Arizona (SALT Program)
- ❑ U of Indianapolis (BUILD)
- ❑ Vincennes (STEP Program)
- ❑ Lincoln (ADHD) also good for LD

Schools Specific for Disabilities (examples)

- ❑ Landmark – specifically for students with LD or ADHD
- ❑ Beacon – specifically for students with LD

Community Colleges



Community College

- ❑ Offer a variety of programs both technical and academic
- ❑ All schools have offices for students with disability
- ❑ Remedial classes are sometimes necessary
- ❑ Some students will not be eligible for CC coursework

Alternative Post- Secondary



Alternative Post-Secondary Programs

Some programs focus on basic skills review and reinforcement of independent life skills.

- ❑ usually have their own contained facility or separate facilities on traditional campuses.
- ❑ strong vocational component.
- ❑ An experiential approach to skill building and vocational planning leads to non-degree status upon graduation from the program.
- ❑ These programs are designed to accommodate students whose options may not include traditional college

Post Secondary Options (local)

- ❑ PACE Program (National Louis)
- ❑ ELSA (Elmhurst College)
- ❑ Career Foundations (Harper College)
- ❑ College Living Experience (Skokie, IL)
- ❑ Personal Success Program (College of Lake County)

Post-Secondary Options (not local)

- ❑ Chapel Haven; Westville, Conn.
- ❑ Lesley College- Threshold Program; Cambridge, MA
- ❑ Life Development Institute; Phoenix, AZ
- ❑ Minnesota Life College; Richfield, MN
- ❑ New York Institute of Technology - VIP Program;
- ❑ Riverview School - GROW Program; East Sandwich, MA Univ. of
- ❑ Alabama - Birmingham; Horizon Program.
- ❑ Supported School to Work Transition Program, Lewis and Clark Community College., Godfrey, Il
- ❑ Reach Program, University of Iowa

Summer Programs



Summer Programs

- ❑ Usually held on campus and give students a “feel” for what college is like
- ❑ Both academic and social components
- ❑ Not always limited to graduating seniors or students who have been accepted to the college

Summer Programs

- ❑ **College Living Experience (CLE)** -*The CLE Summer Program Denver, CO*
- ❑ **Colorado Mountain College (CMC)** *Summer College-Prep Program Alpine ADVANTAGE Steamboat Springs, CO*
- ❑ **George Washington University** - *The GW Summer Scholars Washington D.C.*
- ❑ **St. Ambrose University** *Davenport, IA*
- ❑ **Curry College** *The Learning Academy Milton, MA*
- ❑ **Landmark School** *Preparatory Summer Program Prides Crossing, MA, South Putney, VT*
- ❑ **Southern Illinois University** *Carbondale, IL*

Myth vs. Reality

from Mary Ellen Anderson, Indiana U.

□ Myth

- Determine the disability needs of the student as the foundation of a college search

□ Reality

- Meeting disability needs is important but this should not be the foundation of a search. The college list should depend on the student, the disability and services.

Myth vs. Reality

□ Myth

- Many colleges today are providing programs for students with learning disabilities or other special needs.

□ Reality

- There are more schools with minimum mandated services and comprehensive services than programs. There are about 100 schools with actual programs

Myth vs. Reality

□ Myth

- Waivers are never given for college mathematics requirements.

□ Reality

- Colleges may have a policy for a course substitution such as philosophy, physics or computer science or may make other academic adjustments.

Myth vs. Reality

□ Myth

- Always inform a college about a student's disability because it will increase the chances of acceptance

□ Reality

- Some colleges may consider disability information to better understand the student and some don't. Check with the college.

Myth vs. Reality

□ Myth

- Colleges have a responsibility to ensure success for students with special needs.

□ Reality

- Colleges have not responsibility for student success. Colleges are only required to provide equal access to an education.

Myth vs. Reality

□ Myth

- The parent of the college student should be the person in direct contact with the office of disability services.

□ Reality

- The student must communicate what the disability is, his/her strengths, weaknesses, how the disability impacts and functionally limits major life activities. The student must file the request for services.

Suggestions for Parents to Encourage Independence

- ❑ **Keep the disability in perspective**
- ❑ **Understand the child's needs**
- ❑ **Celebrate strengths**
- ❑ **Teach everyday living skills**
- ❑ **Involve the student in activities**
- ❑ **Acknowledge strengths**
- ❑ **Develop a structure to the day**
- ❑ **Create a good support system**
- ❑ **Help develop good organizational skills**
- ❑ **Work on time management skills**
- ❑ **Teach good eye contact**

More Suggestions for Independence

- ❑ **Help the child to understand body language and facial expressions**
- ❑ **Practice casual conversations**
- ❑ **Praise good behavior**
- ❑ **Deal with inappropriate behavior**
- ❑ **Reinforce good judgment**
- ❑ **Make home a non-competitive environment**
- ❑ **Encourage your child to learn to drive at the appropriate age**
- ❑ **Be sure that the house rules apply to everyone equally**
- ❑ **Be cognizant of times of stress**
- ❑ **Plan for transitions**
- ❑ **Encourage independence**
- ❑ **Never let the learning disability become an excuse**

Un-Advice from “A Nation of Wimps”

Hara Estroff Marano

- ❑ **Chill out! If you're not having fun, you may be pushing too hard**
- ❑ **Allow time for free play! It's a natural way to learn regulation, social skills and cognitive skills.**
- ❑ **Be reasonable about what is dangerous and what is not. Some risk-taking is healthy.**
- ❑ **Do not overreact to every bad grade or negative encounter your child has. Sometimes discomfort is the appropriate response to a situation- and a stimulus to self-improvement.**
- ❑ **Don't willingly slap a "label" on your child at the first sign of a problem; Instead, spend time helping your child learn how to deal with the problem.**

More Un-Advice

- ❑ **Peers are important, but children also need to spend time socializing with adults to know how to be adults.**
- ❑ **Modify expectations about child-raising in light of the child's temperament; the same actions don't work with everyone.**
- ❑ **Recognize that there are many paths to success. Allow your child latitude.**
- ❑ **Don't manipulate the academic system on behalf of the child; it makes the kids guilty and doubtful of their own ability.**
- ❑ **Remember the goal of child rearing is to raise an independent adult.**
- ❑ **Encourage children to think for themselves, to disagree (respectfully) with authority, even to incur the critical gaze of their peers.**

Resources

- ❑ CHOICES fair www.postsecondarychoices.org
- ❑ Transition Coordinator
- ❑ Naviance/CareerCruising
- ❑ College and Career Center
- ❑ College Visits/Internet Exploration
- ❑ Financial Aid Nights

Websites

http://www

- heath.gwu.edu
- Chadd.org
- Ncld.org
- ed.gov/ocr
- Ahead.org
- **postsecondarychoices.org**
- Ldonline.org
- Ldanatl.org

Questions?

