The Community College Consortium on Autism and Intellectual Disabilities (CCCAID) was formed in 2007 to facilitate advocacy and support for programs at Community Colleges to serve students with autism and intellectual disabilities. Issues for young people as they “age out” of school systems include education, housing, life skills, vocational pathways, personal safety and medical care. The Consortium provides assistance to Community Colleges for program development and implementation and information on the availability of resources for sustainability of programs.
Community Colleges Provide Access

Dr. Dale Chapman
President, Lewis and Clark Community College

“At Lewis and Clark we take the access mission seriously. All of our students deserve access to the tools, instruction, and resources they need to become successful. These programs meet students with autism and other intellectual disabilities where they are and move them toward fuller, more satisfying lives.”

Program Spotlight
Lewis and Clark Community College

Lewis and Clark Community College has been providing unique services to students with intellectual disabilities for more than 21 years. The Supported College Transition (SCT) and College for Life (CFL) programs are unparalleled in Illinois higher education, providing life skills, specialized vocational training, personal enrichment and academic instruction, comprehensive support services and individualized accommodations for students with a wide variety of intellectual disabilities, light, moderate and severe.

“These programs respond to secondary special education graduates and their parents who believe that the public community college is the best alternative for continued learning beyond high school,” said Kathy Haberer, director of Student Development and Counseling.

While the CFL program offers non-credit instruction in self-advocacy, basic skills, personal enrichment and leisure that continue the educational experience and provide social growth opportunities for students, SCT focuses on transitioning students into regular college courses, where they are offered continued support in order to ensure success.

Students enroll in a variety of general education classes that teach communication skills, math applications, reading development, study skills, personal enrichment and health, in which educated, qualified instructors and educational aides emphasize the importance of ongoing self-assessment and maximizing assets and abilities. Every course employs valuable lessons in time management and responsibility (instituting absence and tardy policies and accountability for individual and group assignments) aimed at making students more employable. The program offers a Career Development course (CDEV 130) for those students who seek direct instruction in career awareness and vocational skills.

Beyond academics and vocational training, programs encourage students to enhance their relationships with community resources, and to make responsible choices. Through an assortment of internal and external resources, students receive the supports needed to pursue a variety of aspirations, and through the use of assistive technology and computer-based aids, even students with the most severe disabilities become more independent and more successful students, engaged citizens and aware consumers.