**College Options for Students with LD**

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I’m a firm believer that students who learn differently can be successful at any college if they self-advocate and choose to take steps to ensure a good fit and that suitable academic supports are available. Recent studies from the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) have concluded that “the college completion rate for young adults with LD is 41% (compared to 52% in the general population).” According to NCLD, “only 24% of those who received special education services in high school self-disclose to disability support services.” If students feel confident in themselves and their potential to be successful college students, then there should be no reason for them to hide their unique learning styles and ask for whatever supports they need. Strong self-determination and self-advocacy are keys to academic success over a lifetime.

Finding the right college fit for any student is a more complicated task than just matching majors or desired activities. I urge my students with LD to also consider how each college approaches learning and how that fits with their preferences. For example, a few questions to ask are:

* Are classes lecture-based or conversation based?
* How satisfied are students with interaction with faculty?
* Are all classes writing-intensive?
* Is there a culture of support? Are the faculty willing and open to helping students regardless of disability? Do students help each other?
* Is there a foreign language requirement across the college?

Students with an LD diagnosis should also examine how the formal college supports are structured. Is the academic and disability support provided by trained professionals or is it peer-based? There is no single style that’s right for all students, however, successful students will ask themselves what they need to succeed before entering college and will continue to self-advocate through the admissions process by visiting with disability offices during the early stages of their searches. For some students, basic ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant accommodations coupled with self-advocacy will suffice. For others, there are colleges who offer more structured or tiered support programs. These additional comprehensive programs usually involve regular check-ins with a support coach and are often offered for an additional fee or acquired through an additional application. Each college has its own procedures, so families should consult college websites for specific offerings, costs, and documentation requirements for admission.

A selection of colleges that have good reputations for strong support options and generally accepting cultures for diverse learners are listed below in no particular order. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and that programs or cultures may change over the years. Not every college is right for every student. This list represents a range of professional services offered, campus sizes, admissions selectivity levels, locations, and support options. Each student and family should consider their own wants and needs through the college search and application process.

* High Point University (NC)
* Misericordia University (PA)
* Muskingum University (OH)
* McDaniel College (MD)
* West Virginia Wesleyan University (WV)
* East Carolina University (NC)
* Appalachian State University (NC)
* American University (DC)
* University of Arizona (AZ)
* Lynn University (FL)
* Beacon College (FL)
* Landmark College (VT)
* Marist College (NY)
* Temple University (PA)
* West Chester University (PA)
* Lebanon Valley College (PA)
* Adelphi University (NY)
* Marshall University (WV)
* Curry College (MA)
* Dean College (MA)
* Edinboro University (PA)
* Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ)
* Hofstra University (NY)
* Manhattanville College (NY)
* Mitchell College (CT)
* Marymount Manhattan College (NY)
* Northeastern University (MA)
* Kutztown University (PA)
* Pace University (NY)
* Rochester Institute of Technology (NY)
* University of Connecticut (CT)
* University of Denver (CO)
* DePaul University (IL)
* American International College (MA)
* Johnson & Wales University (RI)
* Alfred University (NY)
* Allegheny College (PA)
* Elizabethtown College (PA)
* Muhlenberg College (PA)
* Bentley University (MA)
* Catholic University of America (DC)
* University of Dayton (OH)
* Otterbein University (OH)
* Centre College (KY)
* Eckerd College (FL)
* University of Tampa (FL)
* Albright College (PA)
* College of Charleston (SC)
* Drexel University (PA)
* Fairfield University (CT)
* Rollins College (FL)
* University of Hartford (CT)
* Ithaca College (NY)
* Monmouth University (NJ)
* Washington College (MD)
* Mount St. Mary’s University (MD)
* Pennsylvania College of Technology (PA)
* Savannah College of Art of Design (GA)
* St. Joseph’s University (PA)
* Towson University (MD)
* University of Delaware (DE)
* Villanova University (PA)
* Warren Wilson College (NC)
* Widener University (PA)
* Cabrini University (PA)
* Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (NY)