

LINCOLN COLLEGE
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE OFFICE FOR DISABILITY SERVICES
AND THE ACCESS PROGRAM
ISSUE #1 - SPRING 2009

WELCOME to the first edition of the Office for Disability Services and the ACCESS Program newsletter. We hope this newsletter will serve as a resource for you to learn about the activities of the Office and of ACCESS, to hear from our employees, to browse helpful learning strategies, to hear from students with disabilities, and to enjoy a few moments of easy reading. Please let us know what you think about our newsletter by emailing sgaddy@lincolncollege.edu. Welcome again—and we hope you enjoy!

THE OFFICE FOR DISABILITY SERVICES is relatively new although you may not know that by the amount of activity! Last year we assisted 342 students through answering their questions, requesting accommodations, conducting preadmission consultations, and assisting students with learning strategies. To this date, we have already assisted 300 students. We have increased our accommodations to meet the needs of postsecondary students with disabilities through universal strategies that help them to understand and compensate for the way they learn. We teach students that they have a disability because they think differently. It may take them longer as they think in alternative routes although they usually do arrive at the same destination as general students. For example, through the accommodations of extended time on tests, students have the opportunity to take the alternate route, which does take longer, and yet they still achieve. In the Office for Disability Services, we work to *promote* success for students with disabilities—not ensure their success!

PROMOTING VISIBILITY for Lincoln College and our students is also important to us. We have been invited to several college fairs throughout Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. We exhibited at the international conference on ADHD and received an international innovative program award at this conference. We were published as a cover story in a national disability compliance newsletter, and we have even been invited to post our services on the federal government website.

THE ACCESS PROGRAM is even newer than the Office for Disability Services, but again, you may not know that by viewing the number of students involved. When we started ACCESS, we only had 16 students. We enrolled 63 students for the fall 2008 semester. As we grow, we try to enhance our program continuously and our newest enhancement includes improved documentation for postsecondary students with disabilities. We have revised their Individual Goal Programs and created new Summaries of Performances that are written for each one of our students. Our students have established unique relationships with our coaches. Our goal in ACCESS is for students to move out of the program and many have. What is unique is that some students want to remain with their coaches—even when they do not need the additional support anymore!

THE ACCESS COACHES' CORNER is the place to find out who these coaches are and what they do. According to our coaches, “The amount of time we spend with our students depends upon the amount of support that is needed. We give our students strategies to use to promote academic success. During this time we go over attendance, reported grades, upcoming assignments, look over their planners, discuss any concerns, and make progress towards their individual goals. We also keep parents/guardians informed of their students’ progress. The

faculty have been very supportive and for that we are very grateful. It would be next to impossible to do our jobs well if it was not for the constant support and updates that we receive from the faculty.”

LEARNING STRATEGIES help all students. Students with disabilities may not know these strategies or they may not use these strategies effectively. This part of our newsletter will highlight a universal learning strategy that all students can use to improve their grades. Probably the most effective strategy to remember information is to use mnemonics. If you need to file a letter or look up a word in the dictionary—how do you remember the alphabet? Research tells us that most people sing the alphabet song. Try it. You will surprise yourself. Remember those great lakes? HOMES? Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior. Why not make your own acronyms to remember that report format for your supervisor, or to remember what you needed to buy at the store. Let us know if you want more information on mnemonics. We will be happy to assist you!

HI—I’M A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY in your class. Do you know, according to the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2, that 30% of all high school students with disabilities enroll in college compared to a total of 40% of the general student population? You may not be able to see the disability, as I don’t look different, but it’s there. For example, if you gave me three coins, a quarter, a nickel, and a dime, and asked me what they added up to, I might say “3.” Oooohhhh, you meant the total amount of money—that’s easy—40 cents! Hey, it took me longer, but I still got to the same destination—after a wrong answer. It is just how I think. I know I also need to learn to self-advocate better and I am working on that. Finally, thanks for your understanding!

A QUOTE to remember: “Think left and think right. Think low and think high. Oh the thinks you can think up, if only you try!” --Dr. Seuss

SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE!