


Tomorrow starts here.



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An equal opportunity/affirmative action university, which accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities.

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**SUPPORTING TRANSITION  
and EDUCATION through  
PLANNING and PARTNERSHIPS**

## FACING CHALLENGES

High school students with significant learning disabilities face a variety of academic, social, and life-skills challenges. In the minds of some individuals with learning disabilities, the thought of going to college may be a distant dream at best—even for those who have shown potential to earn a degree.

Students with learning disabilities may struggle with maintaining a grade point average or scoring high enough on the SAT for college entry. Furthermore, they may need more comprehensive support than can be offered in most college settings.

East Carolina University is addressing this important need with Project STEPP (Supporting Transition and Education through Planning and Partnerships). Funded primarily with private gifts, this program provides a unique opportunity to a population that traditionally has not gone to college.

## STEPS TO SUCCESS

Project STEPP is a collaborative program that partners East Carolina University's College of Education with other colleges and schools on campus, area high schools, and community resources. The program offers comprehensive academic, social, and life-skills support to a select number of students who show the potential to succeed in college.

Meeting the needs of these students is another example of how East Carolina lives its motto, To Serve. Project STEPP empowers students with the skills they need to earn degrees in the majors they choose, enjoy a complete college experience as members of a campus community, and achieve in life beyond their years at ECU.

**Admissions:** Project STEPP uses an alternate admissions program based on predictors for college success for students with learning disabilities, supplemented by recommendations from an advisory board. Students identified as potential candidates for the program follow the standard East Carolina application process, as well as apply to Project STEPP.

**Transition:** During the students' senior year of high school, when families and schools are helping them plan for life after high school, Project STEPP faculty are involved in that planning process. Candidates

are identified for the program, and once students are admitted to ECU, the program helps them make the transition to college life. Likewise, as students approach graduation, the program assists them through real-world internship experiences.

**Extended Program:** Students admitted to Project STEPP and East Carolina take a reduced course load each semester. The program is designed to take five years to complete and includes summer support.

**Support Network:** Project STEPP offers a unique network of advisors, assistive technology specialists, tutors, counselors, instructors, and other experts across East Carolina's campus whose services are customized for each student.

**Program Course Work:** In addition to the standard curriculum in their majors, students take parallel Project STEPP courses that will help them in many ways—both on and off campus. Sample course topics include self-advocacy, time management, study skills, note taking, learning strategies, and medication management.

**Residency:** With the support of Project STEPP, students live in campus residence halls at the beginning of their college careers. As the students approach graduation, the program assists in their transition to independent living off campus.

## SEEKING INFORMATION

For more information on Project STEPP (Supporting Transition and Education through Planning and Partnerships) at East Carolina University, please contact Dr. Sarah Williams in the College of Education.

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