

# *Inclusive Post Secondary Education*

Adults with developmental disabilities want to pursue an education for the same reasons as students in general - fulfill their dreams, career opportunities, learn, experience life.

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education inspires and enables individuals with developmental disabilities to succeed in life through meaningful participation in the campus community.

The following Alberta colleges, universities and technical institutes offer inclusive post-secondary education opportunities:

University of Alberta  
University of Calgary  
Olds College

The King's University College

St. Mary's College

NAIT

Concordia University College  
Keyano College  
Bow Valley College

Grant MacEwan College  
Red Deer College  
Lethbridge College

Athabasca University

Mount Royal College

Grande Prairie Regional College

Augustana Campus, U of A  
Norquest College  
Lakeland College

## ***Education & Career Development:***

Students choose a program of study that will lead to a potential career path. Some of the fields that students have studied include: Bachelor of Arts with varying majors and minors, Early Childhood, Teacher Assistant, Theatre Production, Nursing, Fine Arts, Police and Security, Office Administration, Digital Arts and Media, Physical Education, Psychology, Physical Therapy, Mechanics and Welding, Public Relations, Religious Studies.

## ***Inclusive Post-Secondary Education means:***

- Students register in college programs as auditor though not limited too
- Attend classes
- Complete assignments
- Work in groups and individually
- Students are supported by peers
- Students participate in practicums
- Students have access to post-secondary supports
- Instructors have access to supports

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education involves participating in all aspects of campus life. Students are supported to become involved in many extracurricular activities.

## ***Life Enriching Experiences:***

Campus life, both inside and outside of the classroom, provides a multitude of experiences that help students to grow and mature. With the support of their peers, students are involved in classes, clubs, associations, social settings and recreational pursuits.

### ***Connecting with Other Students:***

Attending classes at college and learning with your peers creates opportunities that can lead to friendships and meaningful connections with other students that can continue beyond the post- secondary years.

## ***Student Supports:***

Funding for student supports is provided by Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Boards. The means of delivering supports is tailored to each college or university.

Support is provided in a manner that is appropriate to each student's academic and personal goals. Student supports work with instructors, classmates, field placement staff and employers to ensure positive educational experiences and outcomes.

Students attend classes throughout the school year. During the summer students are supported in employment and/or practicum's related to their studies.

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education recognizes the value and importance of personal growth through all aspects of post-secondary education.

A well rounded education based on career goals, individual aspirations and capabilities is the ultimate goal.

## **Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL)**

- AACL has developed, in partnership with universities, colleges and technical institutes, most of the inclusive post-secondary education options in Alberta.
- AACL operates an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education network, which represents every initiative in the province, to ensure quality and continuing staff development.
- Inclusive Post-Secondary Education has received international recognition
- AACL completed research regarding Inclusive Post-Secondary Education in Alberta in 2004
- AACL has developed an Evaluation Framework that articulates the founding principles and values of inclusive post-secondary education and benchmarks which allows us to evaluate our practice.

# Employment

- Employment ranges between 74% - 84% for students completing their studies through inclusive post-secondary education
- 2/3 are supported by natural or informal supports
- some students also volunteer
- salaries range from minimum wage to double minimum wage
- some are unemployed

# Faculty

- An overwhelming majority of faculty who have had experience with inclusion identified positive outcomes for students (e.g., learning, increased self-confidence, opportunity to belong, etc.)
- Faculty with experience identified benefits to themselves, non-disabled students and the university (e.g., learning to adapt teaching and assignments, responding to a challenge, enriching the lives of others, valuing diversity, etc.)
- 69% who did not have any experience reported a positive disposition to including students in their classrooms

# Friendships

- Most students develop friendships on campus
- Many develop multiple friendships
- About 1/2 the friendships are with students in the same faculty
- More than 1/2 of these friendship involve some contact off campus
- About 1/3 of friendships involve mutual participatory activities off campus

# Identity

- Almost all students report positive or improved self-perceptions
- All parents report improved student identity and confidence
- Students and parents report positive perceptions from others
- Parents and students report positive expectations for the future