

My Tips For Transitioning From High School to College

By: Steven Nguyen



March is here; which means for many of you, the semester is almost over. For those of you who are transitioning from high school to college; you are probably in the process of tying up the loose ends with scholarships, financial aid, college applications, etc. – all while senioritis is kicking in. As someone who has been through this transitioning phase; I would like to share some tips that I feel are important to achieve maximum potential at your college/university. Keep in mind when reading this that I am someone with an orthopedic impairment, who uses a wheelchair to get around, and I studied at a local college.

Contact Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Here in Louisiana, we have Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). Towards the end of high school career, I received help from LRS. Through my rehabilitation counselor, I received various evaluation services and, together, developed an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), which is written documentation which lists things such as services offered by agency, obtainable goals and objectives and progress notes. This will get your foot in the door at the college. The counselor will then follow up with you periodically to see that you're doing okay.

Meet with the College's Office of Disability Services – If you are in need of accommodations due to your documented disability, be sure this is one of your top priorities! A Disability Services Counselor is tasked with making sure reasonable accommodations and documentations are in place so that you can succeed on your educational journey.

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By law, a public school, which receives funding from the federal government is required to follow the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Although privately funded colleges/ universities are not required to follow the aforementioned laws, they are required to follow Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

You can find more information about the Americans with Disabilities Act by clicking [here](#). You can find more information on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by clicking [here](#).

Discuss Emergency Response Plans with your ODS Counselor –

This is especially important for those of you who may have orthopedic impairments, and take classes on different floors and in different buildings. Plans should include such incidences as active shooter on campus, fire drills, and natural disasters.

Perform A Dry Run of your classes ahead of time - Finding out ahead of time where all your classes are is important. Along with the benefits of being on time, it can help you determine if changes need to be addressed because of an issue with accessibility. Also, be mindful of all the accessible restrooms nearby, if needed.

Contact Families Helping Families of Jefferson for their Transition Resource Guide - This easy to read, informative resource guide was developed by Families Helping Families of Jefferson staff.



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