



GOTTSCHALL ACCESS PROGRAM

A College Experience

“It’s a beautiful thing when a career and a passion come together.”
Lusindiso Mpulu

The *Gottschall Access Program* offers adults on the autism spectrum a unique opportunity to enhance their life, vocational and social skills which will enable them to participate in internships, and then eventually the pursuit of gainful employment. This will take place on the Fall River, MA college campus of Bristol Community College. Here, students will enroll in a 3-year program of specially designed courses and have full student access on the college campus.

Program Overview

Students will be enrolled into a 3-year program where they will complete 648 hours of core courses and 432 hours of health and elective courses. Students will be placed in an internship in their desired field, and receive a Certificate of Completion from Bristol Community College upon fulfilling all program requirements. All courses focus on developing self-determination skills, critical thinking and soft skills. Students construct a career pathway throughout their program that is specific to their learning styles, strengths and interests.

Measuring Success

The *Gottschall Access Program (GAP)* uses a variety of different tools to evaluate the students’ progress, satisfaction with their courses and overall program. This includes:

- **Individual action planning, personal action planning and goal setting** -- The drawing up of individual action plans will be carried out during the initial assessment session and then reviewed at regular intervals to gauge whether goals have been met. An action plan can include personal objectives, priorities and reflections on progress
- **Learning Outcomes** -- Each courses offered through the *Gottschall Access Program* will have designated Learning Outcomes. Students will be assessed on assignments, which may be tailored for varying learning styles; projects; as well as class participation and team collaboration.
- **Diary or personal journal** – Students will be encouraged to write about progress towards soft outcomes. Issues of confidentiality will be considered. Writing exercises will be accommodated based on the student’s skills and abilities – this may include use of specific writing apps.
- **Recorded observations of group or individual activities** -- There will be in place comprehensive documentation systems that will allow for the recording of additional anecdotal evidence of outcomes achieved and progress made.
- **Portfolio assessment** -- The construction of a portfolio is the selection and aggregation by individuals of evidence of their own achievement of particular skills (which may include soft skills). Portfolios may be paper-based or electronic. Compilation will begin in the first year of the program.

- **Assessment of Soft Skills** -- for purposes of this program, *Soft Skills* are defined skills as intra- and inter-personal (socio-emotional) skills, essential for personal development, social participation and workplace success. They include:
 - Communication and Listening
 - Confidence and Self-Promotion
 - Creativity and Problem-Solving
 - Leadership and Collaboration
 - Multi-Tasking and Goal-Setting
 - Strategic and Critical Thinking
 - Patience and Respect
 - Technological Proficiency
 - Time Management
 - Work-Ethic
 A specific rubric has been designed to assess each of these areas.

Characteristics of Potential Students

- Must have a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum
- Self-motivated and is a hard worker
- Exhibits drive to obtain a college experience
- May have attended college classes, but did not succeed in the traditional setting
- Have a knowledge of their own learning style, strengths and weaknesses
- Have the ability to express their needs and advocate for themselves
- Have the skills and willingness to solve problems
- Demonstrate vocational motivation, have realistic vocational goals and the potential to work independently
- Have the ability to interact with peers, instructors and supervisors in a positive and constructive manner in the classroom, work, internship and social settings
- Demonstrate effective time management, organizational skills and the ability to focus on the task-at-hand for 30+ minutes
- Have the ability to control behavior, manage emotions and recognize safety risks
- Are free from disruptive behavior and do not pose a substantial health and /or safety risk to themselves or others.
- Demonstrate the ability to use good judgment, maintain professional behavior, and perform in a community college and employment environment
- Able to arrange own transportation

Learn more at www.community-autism-resources.com Click on the services tab, then click on “Other services”. The link to the Gottschall Access Program page is at the bottom of the left hand column.

Potential Students and their parents are invited to schedule a visit to see the program for themselves by contacting Program Director: Kate Dansereau at katedansereau@community-autism-resources.com

You can also listen to current [students discuss the Gottschall Access Program](#) on our podcast.