



# SHEPKY

## SUPPORTED HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT

### SHEP

Supported Higher Education Project



## Murray State Racers are up and Running

MURRAY, Ky. — Murray State University is giving adults with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to attend higher education programs without a regular high school diploma through the Supported Higher Education Project (SHEP). Pam Matlock and Cindy Clemson wrote the Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Education earlier this year.

This program is the first to be offered in Kentucky because of the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute. It allows students with intellectual disabilities to apply for Pell Grants and Federal Work Study while attending higher education universities like Murray State.

The initiative at Murray State is called the College to Career Experience (CCE). It allows students to take 6-7 credit hours of selected courses each semester and to choose a field

of study based on their interests using the College to Career Experience program. The Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and MSU's office of student disabilities services provides supports for the CCE program.

Blake Hopkins, 21, from South Fulton, Tenn., is the first CCE student at MSU. Hopkins is taking classes three days a week and enjoying the overall college experience. His extracurricular activities include volunteering at MSU's Wellness Center to complete youth and nonprofit leadership (YNL) service learning hours, having lunch in the Thoroughbred Room located in the Curris Center with Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority members, and participating in a weekly Bible study with the on-campus Intervarsity program. "There is a lot more freedom in college than high school," Hopkins said. "You are treated like an adult."

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## BCTCS-SHEP STUDENTS HIGHLIGHT OF CEC PRESENTATION

Louisville, KY – The Supported Higher Education Project staff and students in conjunction with College and Career Readiness Initiative presented at the 2013 Conference for Exceptional Children on Monday November 25<sup>th</sup> in Louisville, KY.

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BCTCS students Will Lyon and Claire Mynear along with SHEP's Bev Harp share their college experience at the Council on Exceptional Children Conference

## Student Spotlight



Paige Noll, NKU student, participating in her Theatre class

### Paige's Story

I am a strong, confident young woman. I am eighteen years old. I know who I am and embrace all of the wonderful qualities that make me who I am. I am a friend; I am a peer; I am a student. I am a Boone County High School graduate. I am now a Northern Kentucky University College student. I am Paige Noll and I have a disability called Williams Syndrome.

This year I am participating in the SHEP program at NKU. I am taking a Musical Theater class. In the class I sing and do performances in front of everyone and learn about many theatre concepts that include the different decades of music and their characteristics and how to break songs down in to their various parts for interpretation. I also volunteer in the health center three days a week. At the health center, I scan in All Cards, wipe down the lobby, clean windows,

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## Being a SHEP Mentor was Eye Opening for Christina Allen



Mentoring, for me, has always been a great experience. I started mentoring in high school at a local elementary school where I had various jobs. I mostly helped around the classroom, helped the teacher grade papers, made copies, walked the students to their classrooms, read to the class, and my favorite part, worked with the students individually. The students I worked with individually had difficulties in the classroom setting. It was through this experience that I really fell in love with helping others.

When I left for college I did not continue mentoring. However, before my fall semester of my junior year, I was asked to join the SHEP Mentor Program. This program is a college level program where a college student can mentor other college students. I began mentoring a boy with Aspergers September of 2013. I met with him first and discussed his schedule and the times and places we would meet. For the first couple of meetings it was difficult for him to build a relationship with me. I felt like he needed that comfort level to happen first before he could really trust me to help him. In one of our meetings, he told me that he wanted to transfer to Murray State when he is finished at his community college. I made sure to him that he can do anything as long as he worked hard, stayed focused, and kept his dreams alive. He and I meet twice a week and go over his homework to

gether, discuss any troubles that he has in his classes, and any life situations that I can help with in any way.

Working with him has been such an eye opener for me. Because of this, I am considering getting my master's degree in special education. I love helping others and especially working with him. This program has really helped me strengthen the ability I have to help others. I have many goals for my student. I hope that he develops an understanding that everyone needs help at times. I hope that I can help him understand the importance of staying organized and studying during his college career. I also hope that he learns that in order to fulfill his dreams he has to work hard, stay focused, and keep his dreams alive.

***An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest. ~Benjamin Franklin***

### CEC PRESENTATION

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Although overviews of both projects were presented, the highlight of the morning's presentations were SHEP/BCTCS students, Will Lyon and Claire Mynear. Will and Claire have been part of the Supported Higher Education Project since its inception. They spoke about their college experiences and future goals after completing their college program.

Will Lyon spoke of his love for learning, art and books as well as his desire to be a writer. Will is currently working on a book set in Louisville and thinks his college classes are helping with that goal. Will is pursuing his interest in Library Science at Bluegrass community and Technical College.

Claire Mynear enjoys working with young children and is pursuing the Para-Educator Certificate at Bluegrass Community and Technical College. Claire feels that college classes are better for her because they are geared more toward her interests instead of the format of most high school classes. She feels that she has matured both academically and socially since she has been in college and looks forward to beginning her work. Claire also wishes to continue her education after the certificate to become a kindergarten teacher.

After their presentation, Will and Claire also took questions from the audience. The presentation was moderated by Bev Harp with SHEP.



**Lindsey Allen, center, with her NKU mentors Northern Kentucky University**

Written by Lindsey Allen

My dream and goal was to always go to college. This year I started my second year at Northern Kentucky University. "Go Norse." My first semester, I became the manager of the dance team, which I am still doing to this day. For the past three summers I have even been working at the child care center on campus and I have also been working at the rec center for the past two years. I've also become a self-advocate, public speaking at several schools, talking to people about Down syndrome and encouraging them to pursue their dream and go to college.

Since I have started public speaking about Down syndrome I have also been promoting others to stop using the "R" word. The reason why I am promoting eliminating the "R" word is because so many people use it and don't realize how derogatory the word is. I want others to embrace people with special needs, like myself.

I have enjoyed speaking in front of others; it is a lot of fun for me. I have actually taken a speech class and truly enjoy the experience and the knowledge I gained from it. The class helped me become a better public speaker and the class made me want to do more speeches.

### Murray Racers ...From Page 1

"As one of Blake's teachers, we are so pleased that Blake has the same opportunity as other students to participate in a college culture where diversity is valued," said Clemson, who is also the associate director of student disabilities services.

The Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation provides CCE students assistance in finding employment, developing job skills by providing a job coach and developing job shadowing opportunities. MSU's student disabilities services provides additional academic advising and a Murray State student mentor for each CCE student. Sharon Arant, MSU college of education lecturer, oversees MSU's program.

"Efforts are ongoing to give Blake an inclusive and authentic college experience," Matlock, a lecturer in the MSU college of education, said. "This is an amazing opportunity for students with intellectual disabilities and for the MSU community. It reflects the collaborative and welcoming MSU spirit of so many who were instrumental in developing this program. We welcome Blake and future CCE students as MSU Racers."

For more information on the program, contact Matlock at [pmatlock@murraystate.edu](mailto:pmatlock@murraystate.edu), Clemson at [cclemson@murraystate.edu](mailto:cclemson@murraystate.edu) or Sharon Arant at [sarant4@murraystate.edu](mailto:sarant4@murraystate.edu).



**Paige's Story from Page 1**

and fold laundry. I have met a lot of new people there and enjoy the social experience. Volunteering there has also helped me to learn new work skills that will be very beneficial for my future.

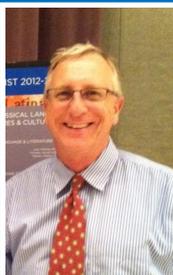
Over the course of my first semester in college, I have met a lot of new friends and also made stronger bonds with old friends! Two of my new friends are my mentors. My mentors help me with my assignments and come to class with me. They provide me the support and modifications that help me to succeed. One thing that they have done for me that I thought was helpful was taping down my dance steps for my group performance so I wouldn't forget them. We have become really great friends, and have hung out outside of class. We sometimes have lunch in the Student Union, go to Starbucks for coffee and even

went to paint pottery! I have really enjoyed and value the time I have spent with my mentors.

Here is what one of my mentors, Bridget Laake, has to say about her experiences with me this semester. *"I am a senior in the College of Education and Human Services here at NKU and I am currently studying to be certified to teach Elementary Education and Special Education. I have had the most meaningful and enlightening experience working with Paige this semester. I have learned a great deal about working with students with disabilities that I can directly apply to my studies thus far in my educational career. Paige has impressed me with her extensive knowledge of Musical Theatre and has inspired me to use my knowledge base to be the best mentor I can be to help her to succeed. More importantly, I have made a new, lifelong friend in Paige. She and I have so much fun when we are together;*

*we share in great conversation, love to laugh and tell each other about things going on in our lives as well as share our goals for the future. I cherish every minute I get to spend with Paige but if I had to pick a favorite moment it would be when we went to paint pottery because we made a stronger bond away from an academic setting. Paige has truly been an amazing addition to my life and I look forward to all the great times that we will share."*

I have a bright future ahead of me full of amazing friends, exciting learning opportunities, and good work experiences. I have a lot of goals for my future. These goals include learning new work skills, to take more classes, and to meet more people. I want to stay in the SHEP program for as long as I can because of the amazing opportunities it has provided for me. I am not sure what the future holds, but I am very excited to see what it brings my way!

**Words from Barry Whaley, SHEP Director**

Big things are happening at the Kentucky Supported Higher Education Project (SHEP)! Our objective is to create a statewide model of Supported Higher Education for students with intellectual disabilities. We are, as always, grateful for the support of our key partner, the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and our collaborating institutions, Northern Kentucky University (NKU), Murray State University (MSU), Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC), Spalding University (SU), and Morehead State University (MU).

In the past few months we have seen the establishment of Kentucky's first CTP at Murray State University. We have also assisted in the submission of CTP applications at BCTC and Spalding University. Our goal is to provide real choice for those students who choose to be life-long learners.

The biggest news in the past year has been our work with the Kentucky Legislative Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. This work led to the passage of House Bill 45, enabling students with ID to have access to Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) funds. Previously, these funds were only available to students based on grade point average and ACT scores.

SHEP currently supports 16 students at 5 institutions of higher education. We have also seen 5 students graduate with a meaningful credential in the past 2 years.

In the coming year we plan to increase capacity at institutions across the state. We will also continue to contribute our knowledge and practices to institutions seeking greater diversity on their campus. Finally, the project will continue to build funding options to sustain our project beyond the federal grant period.

**Upcoming Events****Kentucky APSE Presentation**

Feb 13, 2014 Time & Location TBA

For More Information, contact Barry Whaley at [bary.whaley@uky.edu](mailto:bary.whaley@uky.edu)

**HDI Seminar "College and Intellectual Disability? Absolutely!"**

April 11, 2014 1 – 3:00 p.m.

For More Information, contact Beth Harrison at [b.harrison@uky.edu](mailto:b.harrison@uky.edu)



<http://www.hdi.uky.edu>

<http://www.shepky.org/>

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