CAREER AND WELLBEING INITIATIVE
EMPLOYABLE AND DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
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JFCS EMPLOYABLE PROGRAM

TOPIC 1
OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYABLE

- Began as a small program with funding from United Way in 2007
- 2014-increased scope of program to include young adults on the Autism Spectrum
- 2017-expanded to universities
- Funders
  - United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
  - Trees Charitable Trust
  - Fine Foundation
  - Private Family Foundation
- 60% of people with mental health concerns are unemployed
- EmployAble has a 65-75% placement rate
- 300+ clients served
EMPLOYABLE ASKS...

How can we shape our career counseling to recognize the connection between mental health and success during the job search?
OUR MODEL

- Individualized services
- Staff with professional licensure and/or mental health/autism spectrum experience
- Knowledge of the current job market and local employers
- Successful clients are:
  - motivated to work
  - some post-secondary education
  - willing and able to commit to the process
- Retention services

- In 2017 asked: How to we offer this support to clients before they graduate?
DISABILITY SERVICES AT DUQUESNE

TOPIC 2
OVERVIEW OF DISABILITY SERVICES

- Procure reasonable academic and environmental accommodations for students with a diagnosed disability
  - Collect and review relevant and supporting medical and/or psychological documentation
  - Conduct intake appointment with student to agree upon and discuss reasonable accommodations in the classroom/residence halls and proper implementation of any granted accommodation
  - Draft Letters Of Accommodation and disseminate to a student’s respective professors/academic advisor
Duquesne University’s Office of Disability Services currently has 628 actively registered students.

The Americans with Disabilities Act cites a broad definition of disability, and at Duquesne, we feel proud to accommodate so many students with varying diagnoses. Below is a breakdown of our current diagnostic domain populations:

- ADD/ADHD – 139
- Psychological/Invisible Mental Health – 161
- Learning Disability – 74
- Medical/Physical – 240
- ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) – 14
At Duquesne, the Office of Disability Services is housed under Student Life and because of that, we are afforded the opportunity to take a holistic perspective when considering our students’ college experience.

- Students have access to a myriad of services including access to career services through Duquesne’s Center for Career Development.
- As both a mental health professional and member of a university administration, it is important to consider the continuum of care and services for our students.
- Helping students to learn that accommodations in the workplace, too, may be accessible.
VALUE OF COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

- Connecting students with community partners, and perspective employers, who value their unique contributions and skillsets

- Tremendously valuable to meet with perspective students and their families and be able to inform them of the collaboration that exists between JF&CS’s EmployAble and Duquesne University
PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
JFCS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND DUQUESNE

TOPIC 3
CAREER AND WELLBEING AT DUQUESNE

- **Key stakeholders:**
  - JFCS Career Development Center
  - Center for Career Development at Duquesne University
  - Disability Services at Duquesne University
  - Center for Student Wellbeing at Duquesne University
  - Office for Military and Veteran Students at Duquesne University
  - Students, faculty, and staff at Duquesne University

- **Goals:**
  - Onsite career/wellbeing counseling and case consultation to ensure all student needs are being met
  - Promoting self-advocacy for the students
  - Faculty and staff trainings
  - Student workshops
  - Partnership and Invitation to events
OVERVIEW OF DUQUESNE EVENTS
FALL SEMESTER

Fall Semester

- Weekly On-site Appts. - Center for Career Development/Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Presentation: Introduction to Career Development and Disabilities - Disability Services
- Resume Workshop – Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Motivation Presentations - Strategies for Academic Success Classes – Center for Student Wellbeing
- Career Transitions Career Fair @ JFCS (Disabilities Focus) – Open to All
- Presentation: Disclosure and Accommodation - Disability Services
- Study Skills Workshop – Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Presentation at the President’s Luncheon
- Featured in Student Newspaper
INITIAL OUTCOMES AND FUTURE GOALS

TOPIC 4
Total current students served individually: 12
- 30 total individual sessions (1-5 sessions per student)
- Duquesne alumni from EmployAble who were reintroduced to Duquesne’s Alumni Career Services: 3
- Total students served through at Duquesne workshops: 180
- No additional charge to students courtesy of funding through the United Way of Western PA

- Since launching the program at both Duquesne University and Point Park, we have seen about 50 students and conducted trainings for over 100 professors and staff members.
- We continue to work with around 70 EmployAble clients through our office in Squirrel Hill.
REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION

- Discussion of wellbeing and summer internships
- Exploration of appropriate future career choices based on strengths and challenges related to disability/life circumstances
- Finding part-time work while in school
- Self-advocacy within both academic and employment settings
- Possibility of continuing services through JFCS Career Development Center after graduation
CHALLENGES

- Individual counseling numbers low
- Counselor only on-campus on Wednesday afternoons,
  - More interest than counselor availability
- Interest does not necessarily lead to follow up
  - Continue to strategize ways to improve soft hand off

Meetings were held with key stakeholders to strategize ways to address these initial challenges in the coming semesters.
FUTURE GOALS

- Additional promotion of the program
- Planning more structured events, particularly if they can be incorporated into existing classes
- Extending hours to the full day on Wednesday, to improve availability
  - Potential office time in the commuter center, which was described as a “popular site” for students to work.
- Presenting to additional staff and professors, who may also provide valuable referrals
- Incorporating “Veteran-friendly” and “Disability-friendly” labels into the Handshake system
- Building additional collaborative events into the schedule, where the four student services utilizing this program can be introduced to students.
QUESTIONS?

Contact us:

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