ASD Parents Resource Group

Thursday March 23
Welcome & Review of Agenda
Introductions

Julie Scaff
Assistant Vice Provost of Student Support Services, Director of Student Disability Services, Section 504 Coordinator

Emily Heier
Assistant Director of Student Disability Services

Dr. James McCauley, PhD.
Faculty, Dept of Psych Researcher

Emily Lascala
Neurodiversity Success Coach Disability Services Graduate Intern
Quick Research Overview & Tools for Parents
A few factors related to positive work experiences for adults with ASD:

- How reliable is the employment?
- Is it meaningful/interesting? Does it align with strengths?
- Does the workplace understand autism? Do they have autism-specific accommodations or amenities? Are they open to them if not?
Some Challenges for Employment

- Job interviews are often one of the most persistent barriers to employment for autistic young adults
  - Practice is important
  - Helps to talk with recruiters a few times
  - Disclosure during interview has mixed results

- Parents and children can have different expectations for work, money, career, & opportunities:
  - Important to discuss early, but also allow for exploration and autonomy
How can families help?

- Set up mock interviews
- Help to seek out and identify opportunities to gain experience
- Help to identify mentors and encourage them to seek help
- Develop goals for post-graduation
- Be patient with the career trajectory
- Explore job seeking tools specific for neurodivergent individuals
Career Support
Support on Campus
Career Support Philosophy

• Students are met where they are:
  • Most incoming students are not sure of what career they would like to pursue, what are available nor how to research them.
  • The sooner students start exploring/trying – the more successful they will be.
  • It’s a multi-year year process.

• General support provided to all students

• Specialized resources available by School
Career Services Offered

- Career Exploration and discovery
- One-on-one advising
- Resume and cover letter development and review
- LinkedIn profile development
- Interview skills and preparation
- Fall – Career, Internship, Graduate and Law School Fair
- Spring hiring event
- Internship and job search strategy
- Networking opportunities and guidance
- Career services integrated into the curriculum when possible
  - FYAC: Focus 2 Assessment, career exploration and resume building
  - Guest speakers, etc.
Available career tools:

Handshake is the platform where you can:

- Create a Profile
- Upload a resume and cover letter
- Apply for a job/internship
- Register for events

Number of jobs currently on Handshake:

- Internships: 2,600
- On-campus part-time jobs: 15
- Full-time/part-time jobs: 7,500
- Find workshops, company information sessions, Career Fair and Spring Hiring Event

Assessments to help students select their major

8,300+ career videos

Mock Interview Practice
Outside Job Resources

- **Daivergent**
  - Job seeking support agency for autistic individuals
  - [https://daivergent.com](https://daivergent.com)

- **Inclusively**
  - Connects candidates to jobs with leading inclusive employers that match your experience, skills and needed workplace accommodations
  - [https://inclusively.com/for-candidates](https://inclusively.com/for-candidates)

- **Integrate**
  - Mission: Help organizations identify, recruit and retain professionals on the autism spectrum
  - [https://www.integrateadvisors.org/for-candidates/](https://www.integrateadvisors.org/for-candidates/)

- **Mentra**
  - Platform gives students and alums a chance to highlight their talents and interests and connect with potential employers who have expressed interest in hiring ND candidates
  - [https://www.mentra.me/](https://www.mentra.me/)
Executive Director
Career Center
Mary Beth Stadt
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● Drop In Resume Sessions - Wednesdays. 1-2pm
● Drop In "Senior Career Chats" - Wednesdays 1-2pm
● LinkedIn Workshop (Virtual) Date TBD
SMC Specific Support & Resources
The connect program is funded by the Neurodiverse Student Success (NSS) fund. Funding has been secured by generous donors and through this funding SDS is able to support the connect program offerings.

The program provides additional resources and supplementary support initiatives beginning with their first year and continuing through to graduation to help strengthen academic, social, employment and life skills to enhance the student’s college experience.
Connect Program

Academic Support
○ Meet weekly with the Neurodiverse Success (NSS) Coach to discuss academic progress and challenges and receive guidance about campus resources. The coach will customize appointments to meet the student needs, with a primary focus on strengthening executive functioning skills and communication strategies.

➢ Career Support
○ Work in paid on-campus internships with departments across the campus
○ Work with a Student Disability Services staff member to talk specifically about career goals, get help with resume writing and interview practice and support

● Some of the departments students are currently working in
  ○ Admissions, IT, Library, Museum, Politics, SDS, Business Office
● If students have a particular career interest in mind we will reach out to a department that can support their interest.
Connect Program

➢ Social Support
  ◦ Attend SDS sponsored events to support social opportunities in a safe and inviting place
  ◦ Meeting about once a week to share meals, participate in activities of their choosing and attending campus events with a peer mentor and fellow students.
    • Events that have happened this semester: dinner at oliver hall, ice cream and basketball watch party
    • SMC Connect Group chat is on Whatsapp

➢ Additional Support
  ◦ Use of the Sensory Room located in the library & checkout of hammocks to use across campus
  ◦ Invitation to attend guest speakers and special events
Is your student feeling stressed, overwhelmed or uncertain about the future? Next Move can help!

SDS, in conjunction with Next Move, is offering a six-week program designed to help students:

- Manage the complexity and uncertainty they experience in school, work, & life
- Get clear about what matters to them and move forward toward their goals
- Learn how to build their own network of support and accountability

Email eml10@stmarys-ca.edu to reserve a spot (20 person limit)

Schedule
6 Tuesdays: March 28, April 11, April 18, April 25, May 2, & May 9
7:00-8:00 pm, via Zoom
Sleep Research
Sleep Research

● Between 40-86% of autistic people have some sleep disturbance (Maxwell-Horn & Malow 2017)
  ○ Some evidence that sleep disturbances are related to biological differences, but could be due to poor sleep habits, anxiety, or depression

● Sleep loss contributes to academic difficulties associated with focus and memory, mental health, and can contribute to social challenges (Johnson et al 2018)

● Sleep quality can be impacted by sensory sensitivities (Whelan et al, 2022)
Sleep Tips

1. Have a consistent bedtime and wake up time
2. Avoid caffeine later in the day
3. Give yourself a wind-down time (relaxing, boring, low energy activity) not in bed
4. Exercise more in the day
5. Avoid naps in the day
6. Make your sleep environment comfortable
7. Avoid using screens in bed!
8. If something is bothering you, have a pen and paper handy to make a ‘parking lot’ for thoughts and worries
Sleep/Wellness Resources

- Headspace App
- Calm App
- TED Article
Zoom Events Month of April

Emory University is hosting events for Autism Celebration Month in April 2023. The theme this year is **Authentically Autistic: Intersecting Identities**

**Event Details and Dates:**

**Autistic Student Panel**
April 12th, 6 to 7:30 p.m., virtual (Zoom): Come check out our Autistic Student Panel, a must see and hear event, featuring three autistic college students discussing their unique experiences. Our events co-Chair, Rachel Harmon, will be moderating the Panel. You won’t want to miss this powerful conversation!

**Research Symposium**
April 17th, 6 to 7:30 p.m., virtual (Zoom): This year, we feature three autistic researchers in our virtual Research Symposium! Come learn about new research being conducted by these early career researchers, and hear their perspectives on intersectionality and future directions for their work and beyond!

**Closing Keynote**
April 20th, 6 to 7:30 p.m., virtual (Zoom): We wrap up our series of events with our Closing Keynote, delivered by Dr. TC Waisman. If you’ve never heard Dr. Waisman speak, you won’t want to miss it; and if you have, we know you’ll be here for sure! Dr. Waisman will speak on their personal journey and experiences, and on the rich diversity of the autistic and community and all that an intersectional perspective can bring to our efforts to foster belonging in our spaces.
Important Dates/General Upcoming Events

- 3/28 Next Move Program Begins
- 4/3-4/10: Easter Recess
- Friday 4/14: Last day to withdraw from classes/ submit pass/fail request
- April 25th Goal Setting Workshop/Smoothies
- May 1st-4th: Fall 2023 Class Registration
- Friday 5/12 Student Disability Services Graduating Students Celebration
- Final Exams May 15-18th
- 5/10 Stress Management Fair
Autism Celebration Month Events

- Diverse Abilities Club & J Pop World Autism Day Event
  March 30th 5-7PM
- Diverse Abilities Club Event with Nic Hite on Disability Activism: April 18th 5-6:20
- Sensory Room Open House April 14th 12-2:30
- Carrie Matran Faculty Presentation April 27th
- Social Connection Group April Outing -Ice Cream
- Autism Month Event April 19th 1:00-3:00 PM

Follow us on Instagram @sds_stmarysca to stay informed on upcoming events
Thank you for coming!