

NAVIGATING THE COLLEGE SEARCH FOR STUDENTS WHO LEARN DIFFERENTLY



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**“Everybody is a genius.
But if you judge a fish by its
ability to climb a tree, it will
live its whole life believing
that it is stupid.”**


- *Albert Einstein*



THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF KNOWLEDGE

- Who am I and what do I want from my college experience?
- What type of learner am I?
- What are my strengths & weaknesses?
- What accommodations do I need?
- What types of support do I need?
- In what environment do I learn best?
- Why do I want to go to college?
- What type of college do I want to attend?





THE PATH AHEAD — BY THE NUMBERS

In Secondary School

- **94% of students with LD's receive assistance in high school.**
- Fewer than 25% of these students utilize the resources available in college.

College Outcomes

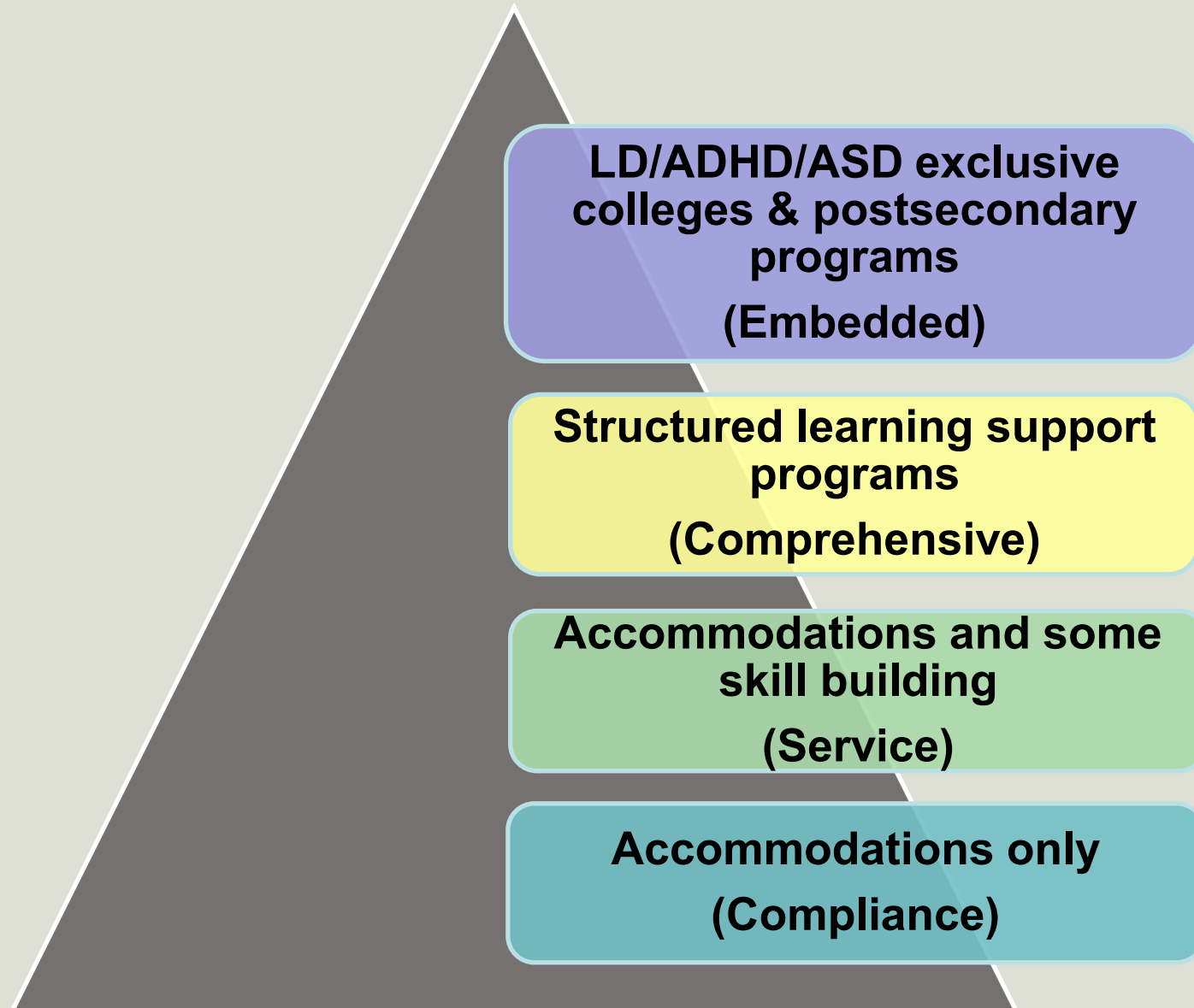
- Nationally, fewer than 60% of students seeking a **Bachelor's Degree earn one.**
- Only a third of students who have **LD's** earn their degree.

Improve the odds.

Access AND utilize supports!

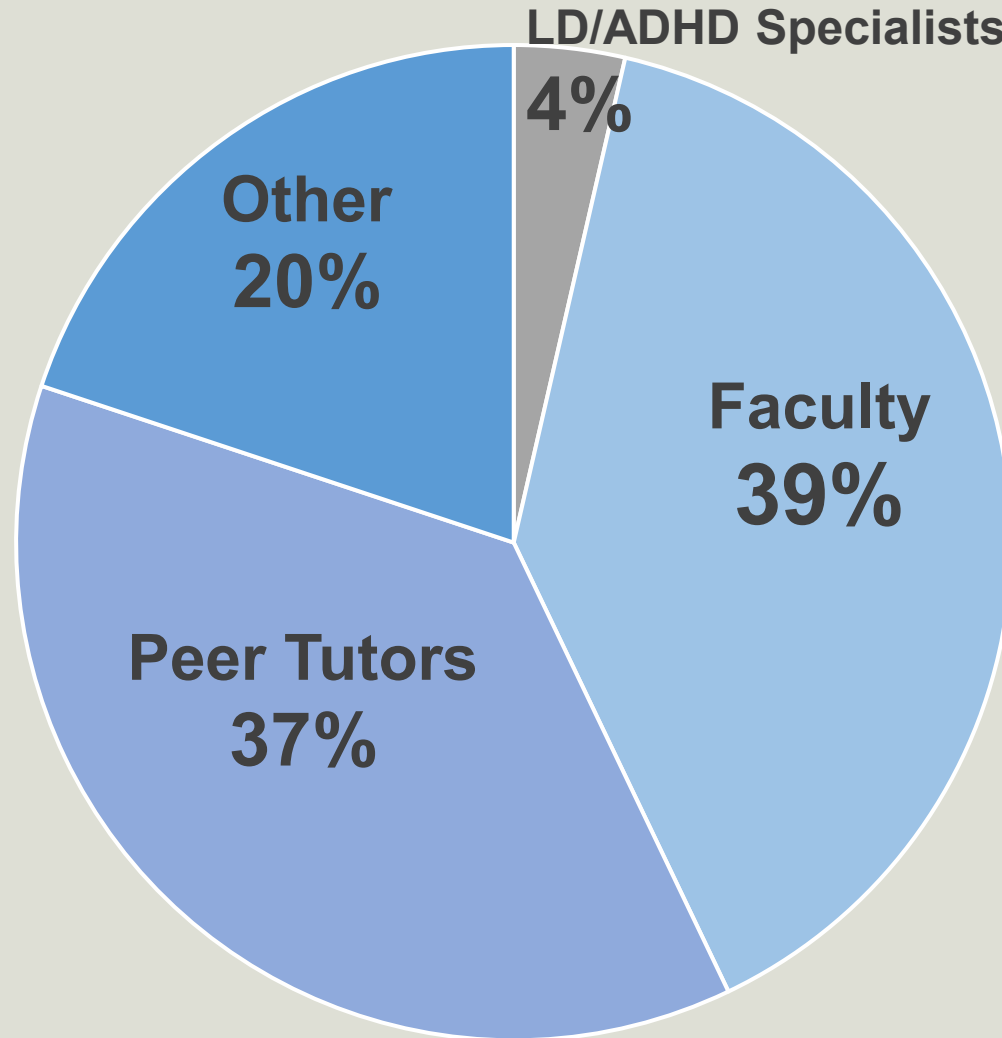


COLLEGE SUPPORT STRUCTURES



WHO PROVIDES THESE SERVICES?

2007 AHEAD Survey



HOW THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE CHANGES AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
& Section 504
VS
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
& Section 504



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

K-12 (IDEA & 504)

- Federal law of entitlement: Education is a right
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in least restrictive environment.
- District is responsible for identifying and evaluating students with disabilities and must cover costs.
- IEP or 504 plan is developed by the team, based on evaluation results.
- Parents are included in developing the plan.
- IEP is legally binding. Annual meetings to formulate goals and review the plan.
- Students can receive a modified curriculum based on an IEP.
- **IEP's must include transition plan. (Section 504 doesn't require one.)**

COLLEGE (ADA & 504)

- Federal civil rights law. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability but **doesn't look at education as a right.**
- Students must gain admission on academic merit. Professors do not alter course content.
- High School IEP not legally binding.
- The college bears no responsibility. Students choose whether to disclose.
- To receive supports, student must self-identify and provide proof of disability. If additional documentation required, student bears responsibility for cost.
- **"Reasonable" accommodations must be requested by student.**
- If student is over 18, no parental involvement.



MAKING THE TRANSITION EASIER



- ✓ Transition Planning
- ✓ A good college match means understanding what you expect, need, and want from your college years.
- ✓ Aligning these factors with what a college offers and delivers.
- ✓ ACCESS IMPACTS SUCCESS!



DISCLOSE
OR
DON'T DISCLOSE?

WHY STUDENTS DON'T DISCLOSE

- To establish an identity independent of disability status
- Shame or fear - being perceived as lazy or unintelligent, or of getting an unfair advantage
- Fear of receiving no response or a negative response from faculty
- Not knowing what services are available or how to access them
- Underestimating how important accommodations are to their success

Horowitz, S.H., Rawe, J., & Whittaker, M. C. (2017) *The State of Learning Disabilities: Understanding the 1 in 5*. New York: National Center For Learning Disabilities.





...I RECOMMEND DISCLOSING EARLY

Best opportunity to evaluate a **college's services**, the attitude of the school towards learning disabilities, and how easy or hard it is to access the services that will ensure success.



EVALUATING DISABILITY SERVICES

- IDENTIFY THE SERVICES YOU NEED
 - Review your IEP or 504 plan
 - Make a list
 - Compare what you think your needs are with what your parents, teachers, and counselors think
 - Have a discussion of your college needs as part of an IEP or 504 meeting
- INVESTIGATE
 - Explore college websites: disability services & universally available services
 - Call/email Admissions or Disability Services
 - Determine location of Disability Services
- USE DISABILITY SERVICES WORKSHEET

LANDMARK COLLEGE
INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING

Disability Services Evaluation Worksheet

Institution Name:	
Disability Services Office Name:	
Type of Office:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Compliance - The primary focus is ensuring access to students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.<input type="checkbox"/> Service - The primary focus is the provision of accommodations and the delivery of some beyond-access services.<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive - The focus is on the provision of accommodations in addition to the delivery of services beyond accommodations such as strategy and skills training, academic coaching, tutoring, and so on.<input type="checkbox"/> Embedded - All accommodations and beyond-access services are built into the natural teaching and functioning of the institution.
Office Hours:	
Number of Staff:	

Services
Offered:

- ☐ Tutoring
- ☐ Study skills workshops
- ☐ Academic/executive function coaching
- ☐ Assistive technology support/evaluation
- ☐ Diagnostic testing
- ☐ Mentorship programs
- ☐ Honor societies
- ☐ Support groups
- ☐ Social programming
- ☐ Orientation services
- ☐ Other: _____
- _____

Pros:

Cons:

Notes:

My Rating:

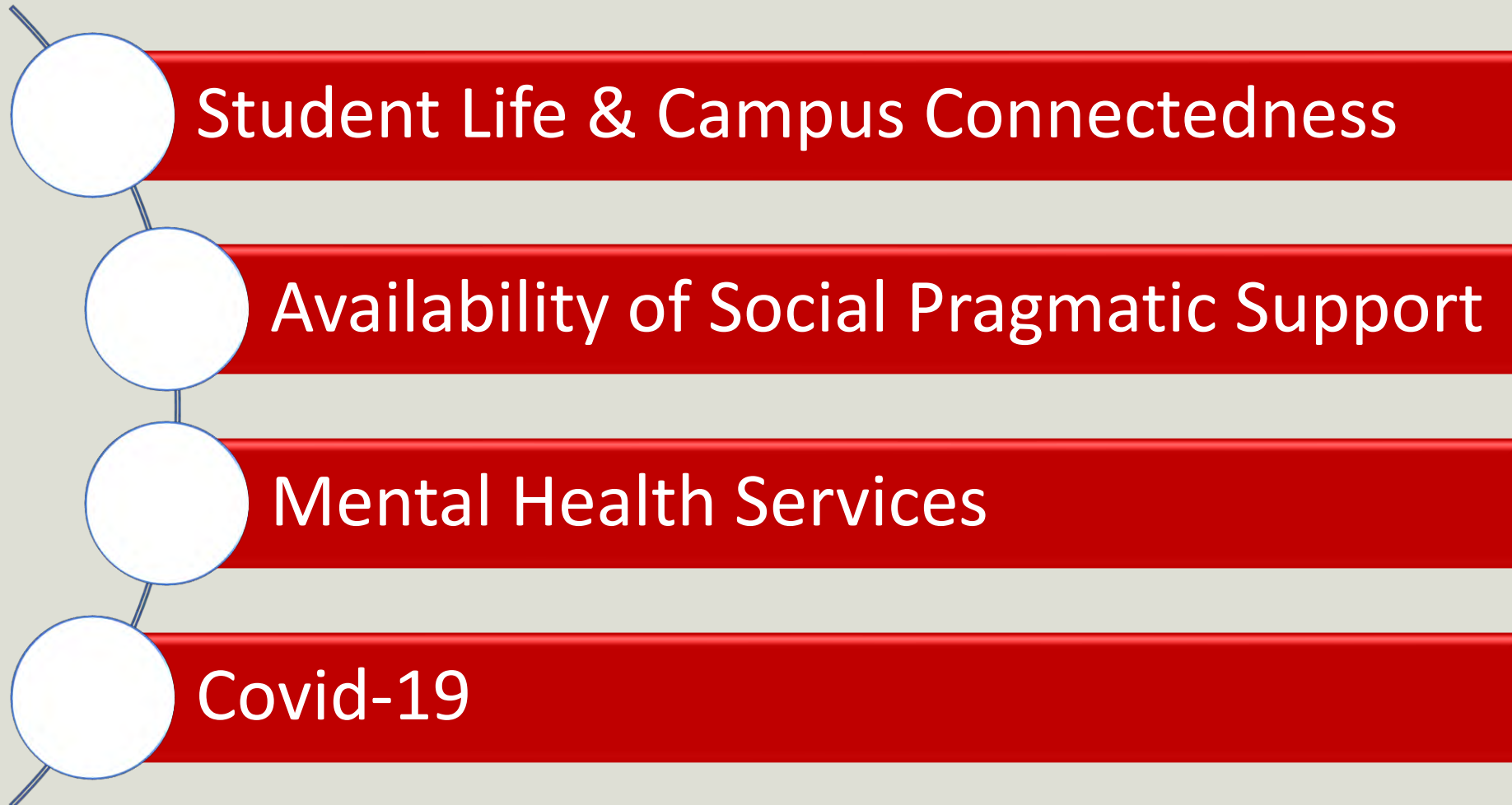




EVALUATING ACCOMMODATIONS: AN ONGOING PROCESS

- Students should meet regularly to discuss the effectiveness of accommodations
- Disability can vary as can courses and life
- Important for students to monitor the extent to which they are able to access the content
- **if access is diminished at any point, SELF-ADVOCATE.**

FINDING A COLLEGE MATCH: MORE TO CONSIDER





SERVICES & ACCOMMODATIONS:

- ☐ What accommodations and services are offered?
- ☐ Can students take a reduced course load?
- ☐ Who delivers these services?
- ☐ **What types of LD's does the college serve?**
- ☐ Are there services both in and out of the classroom?
- ☐ What are the attitudes of the campus community and faculty?
- ☐ Is assistance 1:1 or in a group?
- ☐ What is the student to support specialist ratio?
- ☐ Who does the academic advising for LD students?
- ☐ Is it a fee for service structure?

APPLYING:

- ☐ What documentation is required?
- ☐ Is the college test-optional?

OUTCOMES:

- ☐ **What are the college's retention, graduation, & placement rates for students with LD's?**



VISIT— IN PERSON AND VIRTUALLY!



- ✓ Large and Small
- ✓ Urban and Rural
- ✓ Traditional Colleges, Schools with LD Programs, Schools Exclusively for Students Who Have LD's
- ✓ Attend Open Houses



WHEN COLLEGE ISN'T THE “BEST” NEXT STEP

Transition Programs

GAP Year

Travel

Volunteer

Job Internships
Training



LANDMARK COLLEGE



#1 Most Innovative College

#1 Best Undergraduate Teaching

US News & World Report 2022

Regional Colleges – North





LANDMARK

FAST FACTS

- **Location:** Putney, VT, **125** acres
- **450** Students from 38 U.S. States & 12 countries
- **6:1** Student/faculty ratio, **8-12** average class
- **11** Associates & Bachelor's Degree Programs, + concentrations
- **40%:** The number of students who transferred to LC in search of a better college experience.
- **65%** LC associate degree grads earn a Bachelor's Degree





LC HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Different Paths: Online Dual Enrollment, Summer Programs, Bridge Experience, College START, TaC, **Associate and Bachelor's Degrees**
- ✓ Perspectives in Learning: Students learn how they learn
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Landmark College Institute for Research and Training (LCIRT).
- ✓ Center for Neurodiversity
- ✓ Centers for Diversity & Inclusion
- ✓ Activities: Sports, Speaker Series, Clubs, Social Events, Trips off Campus
- ✓ Study Abroad led by LC Faculty.



Katie Godowsk

LANDMARK LD SUPPORT

- ✓ Wraparound, fully integrated support services
- ✓ No additional fees.
- ✓ Academic advising and executive function coaching
- ✓ Drake Center for Academic Support - Faculty-run
- ✓ Educational technology
- ✓ Counseling & health services
- ✓ Residential support system
- ✓ Therapy Dog Program
- ✓ Social Pragmatics Support for Students with ASD
- ✓ Career Connections





QUESTIONS

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