

Winthrop Transition to College (WTC)

Project funded by a grant from College Transition Connection Partnership Project, Charleston, SC and the SC DOE OEC

Presenters:

**Lynn Helms,
Exceptional Ed.
Dept. Chair, Rock
Hill High School**

**Michelle Foster,
WTC Program
Coordinator**



The Need for Effective Transitioning to Adulthood

- ◆ **Students that remain in school until age 21 face**
 - *Repetition of electives and core courses**
 - *Limited experiences with same age peers**
 - *Limited opportunities to be life long learners are**
- ◆ **Students with intellectual disabilities (ID) experience significant difficulties in transitioning from high school to meaningful competitive employment and independent living.**
- ◆ **Many local students with ID transition from high school to a sheltered workshop and many continue to live at home.**

Addressing the Need

- ◆ **Institutions of High Education are successfully including persons with ID in their instructional programs** There are 32 two and four year colleges offering programs with dual enrollment and 54 for students that have exited. (Think College 2011).
- ◆ **Research indicates that individuals participating in these programs have an increased employment rate and higher wages than those not attending postsecondary programs** (Migliore, Butterworth, & Hart, 2010; Zafft, Hart, and Zimbrich, 2004)
- ◆ **Research supports that participants in Post secondary Education (PSE)**
 - Increased adaptive/social behaviors
 - Increased employability related skills
 - Increased autonomy and self-determination

Historical Overview of WTC

- ◆ A Transition Task Force was formed from the Transition Advisory Council (TAC) and Winthrop University faculty in 2008 to address these issues.
- ◆ The WTC Advisory Committee was developed consisting of a Transition Coordinator from each school district, two special education teachers, and three WU faculty members, later including the WTC Project Coordinator.
- ◆ In the fall of 2009, the Winthrop Transition College pilot project began with eight students from two local districts.



Winthrop Transition to College Advisory Board


- ◆ **Dr. Caroline Everington**
 - Associate Dean of the College of Education/Special Ed. Professor
- ◆ **Dr. Debra Leach**
 - Assistant Professor of Special Education, WTC Grant Coordinator
- ◆ **Dr. Antigo Martin Delaney**
 - Associate Professor of the School Psychology
- ◆ **Michelle Foster**
 - Program Coordinator, Winthrop Faculty
- ◆ **Lynn Helms**
 - Sp. Ed. Dept. Chair, Special Ed. Teacher at Rock Hill High School
- ◆ **Kim Sims**
 - Sp. Ed. Teacher Fort Mill High School
- ◆ **Brenda Graham**
 - Transition Coordinator- Rock Hill School District
- ◆ **Laura Antinoro**
 - Transition Specialist, Fort Mill School District



The Mission of the Advisory Board

- ◆ **Research existing postsecondary programs throughout the state and country**
- ◆ **Develop a postsecondary educational program that involves dual enrollment for students ages 18-21 between the local school districts and Winthrop University**
- ◆ **Identify funding sources**
- ◆ **Hire a coordinator to oversee mentors and organize communication between district personnel and Winthrop faculty and employers**

Advisory Committee Research

- **Penn State: LIFE Links Program**
 - **USC LIFE**
 - **Clemson LIFE**
 - **College of Charleston REACH**
 - **Think College/College Transition Coalition**
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- A stylized, layered mountain range graphic in various shades of teal, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

A New Movement

Tuition-Based Post-Secondary Options

- ◆ **Clemson University**
- ◆ **University of South
Carolina**
- ◆ **Coastal Carolina
University**
- ◆ **College of Charleston**

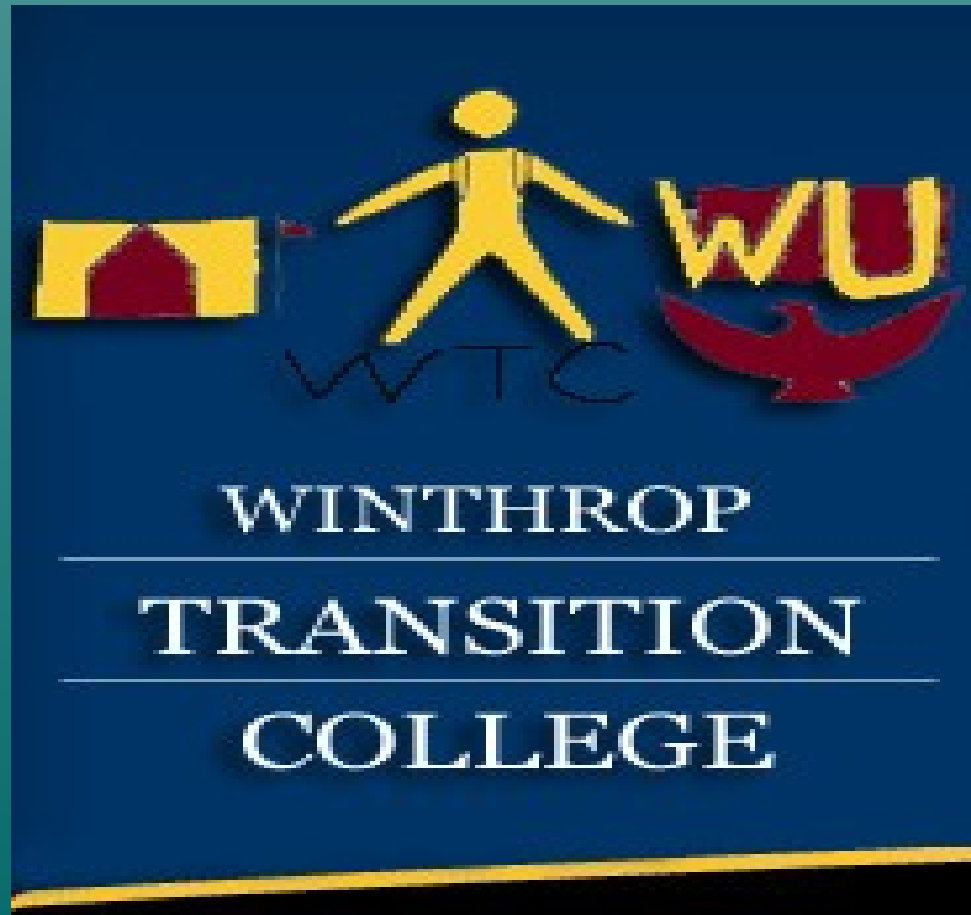
Dual-Enrollment Options

- ◆ **Winthrop University**
 - **First/Only one in
South Carolina**

The Winthrop Transition to College (WTC)

- ◆ **WTC is a dual enrollment program designed for students with intellectual disabilities, ages 18-21 that provides a postsecondary experience while still enrolled in high school.**
- ◆ **It provides meaningful inclusive college experiences to students that would typically not be included.**
- ◆ **It enhances the programming for high school students after their initial four years at the secondary level**

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/transitioncollege/>



Funding

- ◆ College Transition Connection Grant
 - \$120,000 for the first year 2 years
- ◆ South Carolina Office of Exceptional Children Competitive IDEA Grant
 - \$50,000 for 1 year

WTC Program Coordinator

- ◆ **Program Coordinator- Michelle Foster**
- ◆ **Primary key to linking us with Winthrop**
- ◆ **Identifies professors willing to include pilot students in classes**
- ◆ **Supports Winthrop Faculty**
- ◆ **Coordinates/hires/trains student mentors**
- ◆ **Liaison between high school and university personnel**

CURRENT FOCUS

- ◆ 2 year program for Intellectually Disabled students
- ◆ Person Centered Planning
- ◆ Students age 18-21
- ◆ Focus on age appropriate learning and employment in an inclusive setting with natural supports
- ◆ Class integration and community based instruction as well as employment opportunities
- ◆ Participation is based on IEP team decision



Programming

- ◆ **Students attend the Winthrop campus 4 days a week from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM**
- ◆ **Students may take evening classes if they are able to provide own transportation**
- ◆ **Students and staff are issued Winthrop IDs which provides access to everything on campus**
- ◆ **A classroom is available for one-on-one instruction throughout the week**

Programming continued...

- ◆ **Students attend classes with a peer mentors**
- ◆ **Students work with peer mentors and school personnel for activities/instruction**
- ◆ **Students participate in campus service-learning projects and are encouraged to join at least one club and participate in campus events/activities.**
- ◆ **Lunch is provided by the student**

What does the University provide?

- ◆ Program Coordination
- ◆ Ecological Assessments
- ◆ Pre/Post Program Surveys
- ◆ Peer Mentors (Natural and Paid Supports)
- ◆ Access to University Facilities
- ◆ Access to courses for enrollment
- ◆ Classroom for one-on-one activities
- ◆ Natural setting

What do the High Schools provide?

- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Personnel for on-site supervision
- ◆ Coursework modifications
- ◆ Independence/Mobility activities
- ◆ Job Coach services
- ◆ Formal/Informal Assessment
- ◆ Person-Centered Instruction
- ◆ Educational records for students

Benefits to Students

High School

- ◆ Academic Skills
- ◆ Enrich Independence
- ◆ Vocational/Functional
- ◆ Social/Emotional
- ◆ Leisure/Recreation
- ◆ Employability Skills

Winthrop

- ◆ Academic
- ◆ Enrichment
- ◆ Vocational
- ◆ Social
- ◆ Leisure/Recreation
- ◆ Practical Experience

Dr. Peterson's Special Education Class Requirements

- ◆ **Complete at least 1 observation at the student's home school and 2 on campus**
- ◆ **Complete an ecological survey**
- ◆ **Prepare and teach a lesson based on survey results**

Academic Enrichment

- ◆ Small Group instruction for social development and functional/independent skills
- ◆ Jake – Teaching Science for Elementary Teachers
- ◆ Kevin – Cardio Kick and Badminton
- ◆ Jacob – 3-D Art
- ◆ Brandon S. – Aerobic Walking
- ◆ Sara – Creative Activities for Young Children
- ◆ Branden B. – Teaching Math for Elementary Teachers
- ◆ Marissa - Yoga

Inclusion and Support



Classroom Instruction

- ◆ Ecological Surveys
 - Better prepare students to function independently on campus
- ◆ Person Centered Planning
 - Courses relative to student interests
 - Community-Based Instruction Needs
 - Work sites that correspond to student goals



Independence and Functional Living

- ◆ **Navigating the campus and surrounding community**
- ◆ **School's cultural and sports events**
- ◆ **Accessing University resources such as the Career and Civic Engagement Center**
- ◆ **District Functional assessment**



Self-Advocacy and Determination

- ◆ **Student-driven choices and planning**
- ◆ **Independently performing the steps necessary to achieve goals.**
- ◆ **The Arc's Self-Determination Scale**
- ◆ **Being self-sufficient**
- ◆ **Opportunities for socialization**



Employability Skills and Preparation

- ◆ Kevin is a clerk at the university post office and during basketball season, he helps the Eagle's equipment manager and Coach Peele.
- ◆ Amanda and Brandon in the Printing Shop on campus
- ◆ Aaron working in the West Center at the front counter
- ◆ Sara works in the McFeat Child Development Center
- ◆ Kevin is doing a job try-out with Winthrop Eagles Basketball as an equipment manager
- ◆ Jacob has a peer trainer in the Art Department that will teach him how to mat, exhibit, and market his own work and has an exhibition in Mugg's Coffee in Charlotte, NC
- ◆ Brandon S – works in the university's greenhouse

Socialization



- ◆ Included in non-academic and academic classes
- ◆ Encouraged to join university clubs and organizations
- ◆ Attend extra-curricular campus activities

Leisure/Recreation



- ◆ **Ping Pong/Billiards**
- ◆ **Basketball**
- ◆ **Exercise Equipment**
- ◆ **Movie Nights**
- ◆ **Badminton**
- ◆ **Dancing**
- ◆ **Swimming**
- ◆ **Kick-Boxing**
- ◆ **Athletic Events**
- ◆ **Campus Clubs**
- ◆ **Cultural Events**

Monitoring Progress

- ◆ **Participants receive unofficial grades for each class based on student performance**
- ◆ **Journal entries are kept by mentors**
- ◆ **Student work samples**
- ◆ **Conferences with student/mentor/coordinator/teacher**
- ◆ **Pre and post surveys for WU students are used to monitor effectiveness of WTC participants in the inclusion classes**
- ◆ **A rubric is being developed to evaluate social and communication skills**
- ◆ **Evaluation of individual goal attainment**

OUR VISION

- ◆ **Provide an effective and affordable college experience for all eligible students**
- ◆ **Dual Enrollment ages 18-21**
- ◆ **Tuition-based program post-graduation (age 22+)**



Details, Details, Details

- ◆ Admission and Exit Criteria
- ◆ Developing community partnerships
- ◆ Securing agreements for class participation/employment

Future Issues

- ◆ **Tuition costs**
- ◆ **Funds for eating on campus**
- ◆ **Transportation, no public system**
- ◆ **Sustainability of teacher cost**
- ◆ **A need for seamless transition into community and work**

QUESTIONS???

THANKS FOR ATTENDING!!!!

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