



VISION, MISSION, & VALUES

VISION: LifeWorks at WKU's vision is to create an inclusive community where individuals with autism and other learning differences learn to lead fulfilling and self-directed lives.

MISSION: To provide education and experiential learning for young adults with autism and other learning differences to empower them to live independent, self-directed lives as valued community members.

PURPOSE: To facilitate a living, learning environment that empowers individuals with autism and other learning differences to realize their full potential and successfully lead lives of independence, self-direction, and inclusion.

CORE BELIEFS:

Participants First

We value each participant as an individual – having unique backgrounds, talents, and life dreams. We believe that individuals with autism, and other learning differences, have inherent value and should be defined by their gifts and abilities rather than diagnosis or label.

Community Inclusion

We believe that community membership can facilitate invaluable personal opportunities, resources, and relationships. We hold that autistic individuals deserve access and opportunity to fully engage in all areas of the community – including work, leisure, and living.

Valued Social Roles

Individuals with autism are often marginalized because of societal attitudes and misperceptions. We believe that gaining valued social roles (i.e. employee, volunteer, neighbor) better positions individuals with autism to experience the *good things in life* – acceptance, respect, friendship, career opportunities, safety and so on.

Community Contribution

Individuals with autism, and other learning differences, possess tremendous potential to make meaningful contributions to society through employment and volunteerism. We believe that such opportunities can enrich and add purpose to each person's life.



LifeWorks Intern Task List

- Assist with developing and revising various program documents, handbooks, assessments, support plans, progress monitoring charts, etc.
- Lead or co-lead classroom discussions and psychoeducational small group sessions
- Create and lead presentations on various topics related to independent living, social skills, employability skills, etc.
- Model positive social behavior and provide support, encouragement, and guidance to participants.
- Assist participants with individual and group activities – i.e., cooking classes, recreational activities, community outings, shopping, and volunteer work at local nonprofit organizations.
- Assist staff with weekly monitoring of participant apartments – using a checklist to monitor for cleanliness, safety hazards, and to provide guidance and training for participants.
- Engage in person-centered planning sessions with participants – assisting them with developing their individual goals.
- Complete various assessments with participants related to personal interests/preferences, vocational skills and career goals, and instrumental activities of daily living such as budgeting, managing medication, interpersonal relationships, safety skills / safety awareness, etc.
- Research evidence-based practices on how to best support young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- Assist participants with general activities such as homework assignments, completing employment applications, and resume development.
- Assist participants with case management (type) activities, such as connecting with community resources, scheduling appointments, accessing transportation, monitoring, and recording progress toward outcomes.
- Assist participants in planning leisure and social activities.
- Assist staff with assessing participant progress and developing appropriate interventions.

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