

College Living Experience

About College Living Experience: College Living Experience (CLE) was established in 1989. The program provides intensive assistance with academic, independent living and social skills to students with special needs as they attend community colleges, vocational schools or universities and transition to independent adulthood. CLE students include young adults with autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, Asperger's syndrome, non-verbal learning disorders and other learning disabilities.

Philosophy: CLE believes all children can advance academically, socially and behaviorally, given the right instruction in the right environment. CLE helps students with special needs prepare for life as independent adults. With newfound skills and a degree or certificate in hand, our students find meaningful work and relationships as independent adults.

Approach: CLE assists students in every step of their post-secondary education, starting with registration. Once enrolled, students live together in apartments near local CLE offices and student centers while taking classes at community colleges, vocational schools or universities. Professional staff members, including a clinical psychologist, work closely with students to provide structured tutoring sessions, independent living skills training and social outings.

Programs: CLE provides individualized support in the following areas to complement students' higher education goals.

- **Academics:** CLE collaborates with certificate programs, two-year colleges and four-year universities to provide a variety of opportunities for students to earn an associate's degree, bachelor's degree or vocational certificate. Students attend sessions with content-specific professional tutors and study hall sessions each week. In addition, weekly course reviews help students keep pace with their peers.
- **Independent Living:** Students are introduced to the responsibilities of apartment living and receive help establishing and maintaining a bank account, paying bills, shopping, preparing meals, cleaning their apartment and other daily activities. They learn how to create and follow a schedule, use public transportation and interact with roommates and neighbors.
- **Social Skills:** Students have the opportunity to plan and participate in a variety of activities each week, such as bowling, movies or outings to local events and attractions. Students are paired with a mentor who is a graduate student in psychology or a related field. The mentor facilitates the guided application of the social skills CLE students are learning. Students also participate in group sessions with staff members and fellow students. The ultimate goal in providing social skills training is to help students succeed and become independent in different environments.
- **Transition Services:** To assist students with job readiness, CLE provides instruction and coaching on essential skills such as searching for jobs, completing applications and seeking out volunteer opportunities. Students learn these valuable skills through experiential education guided by professional instruction.

Locations: Students travel from all over the country to attend CLE programs in:

Austin, Texas • Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. • Monterey, Calif. • Washington, D.C. • Denver



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